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Media Discourse and Ethnic Conflicts:

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Online Newspaper Editorials in Kenya.

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The function of the media to shape agenda in society has generated interest in many spheres of study. Media discourse is thought to be an integral factor in coexistence of heterogeneous societies. The discourse in media can foster peace or ethnic conflicts. Studies focusing on newspaper discourse and ethnic conflicts have not been exhaustive. This paper presents the findings of an assessment on the ways through which media discourse may ignite or escalate ethnic conflicts. The analysis focuses on online newspaper editorials in Kenya.

The study evaluates three newspapers: The Daily Nation, The Standard and The Star. The papers appear both online and in hard copy. The study analyses editorials from these newspapers between the year 2010 to 2016 using the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis postulated by Fairclough, Van Djik and Wodak. The study analyses the use of attributive words referring to certain ethnic communities while discussing issues affecting ethnic coexistence.

A total of twenty articles are analysed and the results indicate that The Star and The Standard newspapers adopted neutral and peace journalism which emphasizes harmonious and peaceful coexistence, whereas The Nation newspaper was found to publish opinions in a language that could inflame ethnic tensions. Most of the columns analysed were found to be sensational, sometimes out rightly putting blames on one ethnic community, in effect creating the ''otherness'' and victimization. However, there was a patchwork of peace journalism in the paper. This journalism was dwarfed by the other many articles that preached hatred. The Standard and the Star newspapers mostly had columns that reasoned out with readers on the importance of analysing issues using objectivity as opposed to ethnic prisms. The pattern of this tone was consistent in the Star Newspaper. In the Standard Newspaper, this pattern was interrupted with one article that sought to portray one community as oppressive against other Kenyans.

The implication of the findings is that if the tone of discussion in online newspaper media platform is not regulated, it could lead to situations that may ignite and escalate ethnic conflicts because these discussions can influence the thoughts and perceptions of people. The discourse as used by The Nation Newspaper can agitate communities to fight against one another. The findings also imply that online newspapers can be strong instruments for fostering peace and tranquility in the community. The study has suggested that future research should expand the tools of data collection and analysis. This should include the use of tools like interview guides and questionnaires. The editorial policies of publishing houses should also be points of focus in future studies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Aims of the Study

Peaceful and harmonious coexistence of people in the world has always been under constant threat of violent conflicts. These conflicts have led to poverty, displacement of people, abuse of human rights and death (Luehrs, 2010). The spread of information is an ingredient in the fanning of violent conflicts in most societies. The content of information and the way through which it spreads can influence the peaceful coexistence of people. Indeed, as argued by Oenbring (2011), the language practices of given societies constrain the ways that the individuals in the society think about the world and their neighbors. Language is used to construct conventional beliefs and this determines in some ways the nature of intra and inter society relationships. In order for information to be spread from one source to another, there has to be a means of transmitting it. As such, the medium through which the information is transmitted should be a point of focus when analyzing some of the ways through which information influences conflicts in societies.

There has been a rapid change in the contexts and mechanisms through which human beings communicate. New global cultures, new technologies and new domains of interaction have brought about a renewed realm of human communication process. The new media is said to have reinvigorated ways that are used to cause conflicts (Caldwell et al. 2009). Contemporarily, the discourse in the new media involves use of a wide array of technologies. The interaction of people on this media has thus taken a new path where the encoding, transmission and decoding of information have taken new dimensions. It is thus vital to carry out content analysis and discourse analysis in order categorize, critique and analyze important features of new media discourse. One salient feature of online newspapers that makes it attractive for this study as

opposed to hard copy issues is that online newspapers are easy to access by many readers. A hard copy issue of newspaper needs someone to physically purchase it from a shop and is thus limiting in space and in time. This thesis intends to analyze the role that media discourse plays, through new media, in promoting ethnic conflicts in Kenya.

Media and its discourse can influence the ways through which people interact. It helps shape the thinking of members of societies as well as ignite debates about pertinent issues affecting all sections of the society. In media, there are people who provide content and those who consume it. This creates a special relationship where those who author the information can influence, positively or negatively, the people reading the information. Furthermore, exchange of ideas through the media can also influence the participants. The media is a useful tool that can aid in shaping public discourse and in influencing public attitude towards some beliefs and practices. The perception of the public towards certain communities is partly influenced by the way the media presents them (Schiffrin et al. 2008). Such perceptions can lead to ethnic conflicts.

The media has been used as a tool of inciting old ethnic conflicts in countries like Cambodia and the former states of Yugoslavia. Hughes & Pupavac (2005) documented some of the instances where media discourse has been used in pathologisation of the people who were affected by wars in Cambodia and Yugoslavia. Opposing sides in Cambodia framed the violence in the country to show their favored positions as the victims. In Yugoslavia, the Serbian press was used to depict the ethnic Serbs as the people who were under siege in Bosnia. This information misrepresented the situation in Sarajevo where the Muslims and Croats were under siege from the ethnic Serbs that lived in Bosnia. Such framing helped whip sympathy from the Serbian public and in effect enabled the Serbian government win public support. The public, especially the youths, were

motivated to ensign into the Serbian military and assist their people whom the media discourse had portrayed as facing persecution (Hughes & Pupavac, 2005).

Similar problems have been reported in Africa conflict zones where the media is used to influence the thoughts of the public about contemporary issues, ranging from politics, sports and entertainment. According to Hackett, the media in Nigeria for instance has been blamed for perpetrating religious conflicts between Christians and Muslims. It is said that the Muslims use electronic and print media to insult Christians. Muslims on the other hand blame the western media for facilitating the propagation of hate towards the Muslim religion. The press is used for defending religious identities in the country. Part of the media used to fan interreligious wars includes television/radio news items, audio cassettes, public broadcast information and government broadcasts (Hackett, 2003).

The use of media and its influence on the public discourse on various issues in Kenya has been documented by various authors. Oucho (2002) argues that the British instituted what could be compared to an apartheid system in Kenya, a decision that divided the country along ethnic lines. The country is said to have experienced recurrent ethnic conflicts since its independence and politicians have used such situations to their advantage. Media owners have also used this advantage to further divide the communities for utilitarian gains such as improving their sales volume.

The introduction of new media has aggravated the situation because of the ability of the media to reach a bigger audience (Mäkinen & Kuira, 2008). For instance, users have utilized cyberspace to propagate hate towards politicians whose ideologies or tribes they are opposed to. A number of the users have been arrested and charged in courts of law with hate speech. Whereas some of

the comments they made on social media may not be construed to be directly inciting social disharmony, some of the accused have had to face charges related to hate speech (Mäkinen & Kuira, 2008).

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the way discourses on the online newspapers can lead to situations that may propagate ethnic conflicts in Kenya. The study is purposed to carry out investigation of the various discourses on the Kenyan online newspaper editorials and relate it with the possibility of causing or helping avoid ethnic conflicts in the country. The study carries out a critical discourse analysis of attributive words used with certain ethnic communities while discussing issues affecting ethnic coexistence.

Kenya has undergone political and socio economic transformations and these have had effects on the ways that the variegated society interacts with one another. The new political dispensation ushered in the country in the early 1990s and the new constitution promulgated in 2010 have caused shifts in various aspects of life. Freedom of speech has expanded, the communication platform has grown bigger and the audience has even increased. These changes have had accompanying effects in the ways that the media discourse influences all the spheres of life. Majority of Kenyans rely on new media, especially online newspapers, for information that can help form their opinions. Studies have been carried out relating to the role that the media plays in shaping conflicts.

In the aftermath of the 2007 post-election violence in Kenya, where neighboring tribes engaged in clashes that killed more than 1000 people, studies were carried out to analyze the role of media in perpetuating the ethnic conflicts. Ismail & Deane (2008) carried out a study with an aim of analyzing the role that vernacular radio stations played in the violence. The study analyzed 20

vernacular radio stations. The study concluded that the media contributed substantially to the violence in 2007/2008.The study showed that broadcasters and journalists faced political and commercial constraints which contrasted their journalistic integrity and independence. Some of the local language radio stations were found to have incited fear and hatred at the height of the violence. Talk shows also provided opportunities for hate speech. This was aggravated by the fact that the talk show hosts were not trained in conflict reporting. It was however also found that some of the stations were involved in cooling down the tensions after the conflicts.

Oucho (2002) carried out studies about the media coverage of ethnic conflicts in Kenya. The study found out that in all the ethnic conflicts, the media took sides, reporting the events to fit certain official narratives. As such, even though the media may not have contributed to the causes of the conflict, it helped propagate the psychological warfare between the warring ethnic groups. These studies concentrated on the radio stations and hardcopy newspapers. It did not focus on web 2.0 technology.

The magnitude of the influence that online newspaper discussions have had on the ethnic conflicts in the country has not been established. This is an unexplored yet an attractive area of study. This study intends to find out the ways through which media discourse on online newspapers may incite ethnic conflicts in Kenya. The study carries out a discourse and content analysis with focus on the ways through which it can ignite and escalate ethnic conflicts in the country.

The existent political undercurrents in the country and the emergence of online communication tools have become areas of study interest. In Kenya, it has been said that online communication has been used as a tool for political propaganda. This propaganda in turn allows politicians and

other players get political and sectarian gains. One of the ways of avoiding this situation is through finding out ways of manipulating the media discourse. A manipulated discourse on the media can help reduce ethnic conflicts. Such manipulation should be informed by objective studies which can link the media discourse and ethnic conflicts. This study is vital to this cause as it will help furnish the stakeholders with enough information about the use of online media and its effects on ethnic violence.

1.2. Research Questions and Significance of the Study

The research questions of this study are:

i. Given that the Kenyan online newspapers are involved in discussing topical issues that touch on the ethnic dimensions in the country, how do they achieve the ends of these discussions using language?
ii. Is there evidence that can be found in the online newspaper's use of attributive words, that promotes ethnic violence in Kenya?
iii. How do the different online newspapers differ in their language use? Can these differences say anything about their differences in journalistic values, objectives and principles?

The main assumption of this study is that the media discourse in online newspapers has discussions that may lead to ethnic conflicts in Kenya. This study speculates that the discussions in Kenyan online newspapers can lead to situations that may cause or escalate ethnic conflicts between different ethnic identities. This study also presupposes that the online newspapers in Kenya have meaningful discussions and news that touch on ethnic identities of the subjects under discussion. As such, these discussions provide platforms for discourse based along ethnic lines.

The results to be found in this study will be useful in all spheres of life. The media houses, both print and electronic, will benefit in that these results will be used to put in place strategies that will increase the quality of debates that take place in their platforms. Moreover, the Web 2.0 platforms will also benefit from the results of these studies in the sense that the companies will understand how debates can contribute to ethnic conflicts. If they understand the relationship between media discourse and ethnic conflicts they will be able to regulate the tones of discussions. The research findings will be useful for further research. Researchers who wish to do more studies about media discourse and their contribution to ethnic conflicts will use the information to do a literature review for future studies. In addition, the government as well as nongovernmental agencies can also draw lessons from the studies and help the media with ideas on how best to regulate debates.

This study is limited to the fact that there is not much previous research available in the area of online newspapers in Kenya. Most research has concentrated on hard copy newspapers. The use of new media newspapers is a new phenomenon especially in Kenya and all who have employed its use are more or less operating on a trial and error basis. In this regard there are no specific structures or points of measurements defined. The case study methods limit the generalization of the results. This study also only deals with the major online newspapers. There is a likelihood that the discourse found in these newspapers is not the same found in other online news outlets. Research is also limited by time. The study will be analyzing events in retrospect. It may not be true that the modes of discussions in online newspapers for the previous years could be the same mode for the current year. As such, even though the analysis might establish that media discourse may lead to ethnic conflicts, this might not hold true throughout all time bounds. Changes in political terrain of the country might have led to changes in the way in which people

interact with one another in online newspaper platforms. This study thus identifies these as weaknesses of the results that will be found after the investigation.

2. ANALYSIS OF MEDIA DISCOURSE AND ETHNIC CONFLICTS

2.1. Introduction

In this section, I discuss previous research on ethnic conflicts and media discourse. First, I look at definitions and explanations of the concepts of media discourse. This includes discussions of discourse, discourse analysis in social, political power contexts and communicative context. Secondly, I review the studies done in the past about media discourse and ethnic conflicts. Finally, I discuss the theoretical framework used to approach this problem. The approach used is derived from the arguments postulated by Norman Fairclough and Van Dijk which draws a connection between the uses of language and exercising of social power (Gillespie & Toynbee, 2006).

2.2 Media Discourse

Media discourse is defined as the interactions that occur through a broadcast platform. O'Keeffe (2006) elaborates on this definition further. He states that this can either be written or spoken and it is oriented to a viewer, a listener or a non-present reader. In the olden times, the discourse could not give room for instantaneous responses to those who produced it. The written discourse is oriented towards readership audience while the spoken discourse is directed towards viewing or listening audience. Media discourse can neither be spontaneous or ad hoc. Media discourse is again not off the record or private.

When understanding media discourse therefore, it is essential to consider the basic characteristics as discussed by O'Keeffe (2006). It is essential to consider how the media discourse is manufactured at an ideological level and in literal sense. Discourse analysis is an essential tool

that can be used in understanding media discourse and its role in the society (O'Keeffe et al. 2007). Media discourse is always on record and this fact has made it interesting for discourse analysts due to the availability of radio stations, television programs and newspapers, all of which can be accessed online.

Other scholars have approached the topic of media discourse from different viewpoints. For example, Talbot (2007) observes that media discourse can be understood as the ways through which the media frames some issues and comes up with public discussions. In practical sense, the media is used to further some discourse as an essential function of its nature. For media to fit into its own realm, it has to disseminate information with particular binoculars or certain slants. Discourse can be understood in different ways. One of the approaches is to look at the discourse as the manner through which groups and individuals communicate. On a deeper level, discourse can be viewed as a symbol or a system of beliefs and thoughts which determines the way individuals interpret and understand the world.

2.3 Media Discourse Analysis

Discourse is defined by John Fiske (See Butler, 2012) as a language or system of representation that has developed socially in order to make and circulate a coherent set of meanings. These meanings serve the goals and interest of sections of the society. Discourse and language, as observed by Fiske, does not limit itself to grammar, spoken language or words. It instead spans out to encompass other meaning generating systems like newspapers, televisions, cinemas and photography. Discourses are seen as ways of representing certain aspects of the world. These include the social world, feelings, beliefs, processes, relationships and mental processes or thoughts. Further, the author explains that discourse has ideological effects. Ideologies are the

aspects of the world that help in establishment, maintenance and changing of the social power relations. From these definitions, it is understood that discourse shapes ideologies and ideologies help change the social power relations. Analysis of media discourse can help us understand how the use of language affects the behavior and actions of people towards others in the society. This can be accomplished through critically assessing the language used by the newspapers in relation to its potential to incite violence.

Language and discourse are inseparable. During analysis of discourse, the functions of language should be analyzed. Johnstone (2008) argues that language formulates the world that people live in. For instance, the method of paraphrasing information reflects the cultural mindsets and the accompanying worldview embedded in them. Discourse is shaped by different types of structural conventions. These conventions are in turn influenced by the motives of the speakers/writers that create the discourse. Use of language can therefore indicate social relationships like social distance, power and relatedness among communities (see also Bhatia, 2004).

The news content on any media can be understood well using discourse analysis. It is vital to understand the definition and the functions of discourse analysis. Lam (2011) approaches this issue from two perspectives. Discourse analysis can be defined using two major frames of evaluation. The first definition looks at discourse as an interaction and social action between human agents. It can also be approached as a construction of reality that creates a knowledge system and influences the social practice and relations of people. As such, based on the two approaches, discourse analysis considers a link between the content of the media and a larger sociopolitical framework. It is a quantitative approach to content analysis. The media can thus be used to shape the political and social discourse of a country. This definition is useful in

understanding the ways through which the media discourse and conflicts in a society can be related.

Given the fact that media discourse is related to sociopolitical powers, it can then be said that powerful institutions can use the media to frame the social and political practice. Some authors share in these thoughts. Wodak & Meyer (2009) argued along these thoughts while stating that critical discourse analysis can only be embedded within the social structure where the discourse takes place. Language can be used to mystify social events. Discourse analysis is required to systematically elucidate the mystified social events. By analyzing discourse therefore, one can unravel how the use of language leads to certain social and political events.

Analysis of media discourse should take into consideration the fact that the language of the media is complex in communicative and socio-economic contexts. Bednarek (2006) stated the essence for analysts to focus on methodological decisions. According to the author, during the analysis of media language, decisions have to be based on three areas; the genres, the outlets and the outputs. The genres focus on the type of content in the media, the outlets focus on the type of media used and the outputs concentrate on the specific newscast, programs and the time period covered. When one is analyzing discourse, emphasis should be placed on the genre of interest. This helps the researcher define the boundary of the problem and stay on course of the analysis.

Newspapers are part of the dominant media where discourse is used. This discourse can be evaluated in a communicative context. The communicative context of discourse in newspapers has some features that should be understood. Bednarek (2006) has analyzed some of the features. The first feature is that the discourse has multiple originators and complex process of writing news. In this context, it is assumed that there are many versions of news stories edited by the

editors, subeditors, journalists and news reporters. It is not as such possible to regard one story as a first hand and solo product of one journalist.

A second feature of this communicative context, as described by Fowler (2013), is that the mass media is impersonal and has a fragmented audience. It is therefore not possible to get a direct feedback from the audience, regardless of the fact that there are media surveys, call-ins and letters to the editors. There is stereotyping in the news used in mass media. The impersonality of mass media communication results in the stereotyping of the speaker and the reader. Lastly, as a communicative context feature of mass media, news is embedded in talk. Within the text generated by the news author, there are other speech events.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

The ways in which media discourse leads to ethnic conflicts can be studied using the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis abbreviate as CDA (Qian, 2010). The analysis can be used for critical social research on a wide range of texts. As stated by Baker (2006), newspaper texts can be analyzed using this framework. Several researchers (Teo, 2000; Baker et al, 2008; KhosraviNik, 2010) have used critical discourse analysis in evaluating textual content in newspapers. This framework was developed by Van Dijk and Fairclough in 1988 and 1992 respectively. According to the theory, discourse analysis can either be critical or non-critical. Calling the approach critical is a recognition that our social practice and our use of language are bound up with causes and effects which we may not be aware of under normal conditions. Connections between the use of language and power are often not very clear to people (Fairclough 1995). Critical discourse analysis framework covers the description of discursive

practices as well as the ways that discourse is constructed referring to relations of power and ideologies. A critical approach is also concerned with a discourses effect on social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief (Fairclough 1992:12). Classical Marxist theory has been a common reference point to most critical discourse analysts because the analysis of language in conflict is closely intertwined with notions of power and ideology. I am selecting this approach because news activities mirror the power behind media discourse and the position of the capitalist class and other power holders.

Fairclough (1956:57) further notes that discourse practice means the process of text production and text consumption. These relate to questions surrounding the circumstances under which the text was produced (who wrote the text and why, what editorial discussions were made, were any aspects of the text censured) and consumed (who were the intended and actual consumers of the text, what were their responses, under what circumstances did they consume the text). Finally, sociocultural practices and sociocultural goings on which the communicative event is part of. Fairclough suggests that CDA also takes into account the wider context of a text's relationship to the society it is produced in. Since this research is investigating three online newspaper editorials in Kenya, this framework is an attractive approach to consider.

CDA is a perspective that a researcher takes towards his/her subjects and therefore media discourse is rather subjective in nature. It is always argued that media is not as neutral as it claims to be or as it is supposed to be. Ideologies play a vital role in constituting attitudes and specifications of different elements of society and provide propagation of goals and interest of that very element (Van Dijk 2003, 352)

CDA framework can also be viewed using the social theory. As stated by Blommaert & Bulcaen (2000), CDA conceives discourse as a social phenomenon. The framework therefore seeks to improve on the social-theoretical foundations for situation discourse as well as for practicing discourse. CDA seeks to take a starting point from social theory. Here, the theories of ideology and power take center stage.

The field of CDA draws on techniques used in stylistics in order to understand how texts affect readers in particular ways. Whereas stylistics uses devises such as modality and transitivity to look at how fiction writers create certain textual effects, CDA uses this and other tools to look at nonfiction texts and how they affect readers. CDA analysts consider certain properties of a text which covers traditional forms of linguistic analysis such as vocabulary and semantics, the grammar of sentences and smaller units and the sound system (phonology) and writing system (Fairclough 1995:57).

The texts for analysis are drawn from many different contexts however most critical discourse analysts focus on political texts. This means that newspaper analysis is the backbone of CDA. CDA was developed with the understanding that language plays an important role in shaping how people perceive the world and text producers use this to their advantage to shape readers perception of the world. From the explanation of the theoretical framework of CDA, it is clear that the topic being studied in this thesis can put the CDA to good use. Ideology and power are intertwined. Ethnic conflicts have been defined to include the fight for power to control resources, sometimes using incompatible means even to eliminate or neutralize rivals. In this research, CDA can be used to find the link between the ideologies being propagated in the new media and the power generated from such ideologies thereof.

Studies have been carried out erstwhile using the CDA theoretical framework. Authors have come up with advantages of using CDA as a theoretical framework. Baker et al (2013), for example, lists several benefits of using CDA as a theoretical framework. The first advantage is that the larger amount of data studied using this framework makes the findings conclusive and more reliable than those that could be found from a handful of examples. For instance, newspapers are known to write about given topics by selecting one method and theme from a wider variety of those available. In this respect therefore, the analysts can come up with a pattern that the newspapers use to disseminate the news to people. If CDA framework is used, the analysts can also see the type of choices that are privileged. Such a study will give evidence for popular, mainstream or entrenched methods of thinking. CDA framework is also advantageous because of the presence of powerful tools like personal computers which augment the analysis of available vast amounts of data in electronic forms.

The use of Fairclough's theoretical framework of CDA has been evidenced in the works published by Iqbal et al (2014). In their study, the authors examined all attributive words that had the word "Muslim" in a time magazine corpus. The study focused on the choice of the attributive words which the magazine had used for Muslims. In the publication, the authors state that CDA explores the social aspects that analyze ideology, power and the interactions of languages in different contexts. The use of Fairclough's three-dimensional model was instrumental in showing the ideology of the American people about Muslims. The use of vocabulary was analyzed under the textual analysis dimension. The result of the study indicated different approaches of Americans towards the Muslims. It showed that various authors used specific attributive words to show the image of Muslims through different words. In the conclusion, the study found out that various attributive words were used for Muslims in a negative sense with an aim of

propagating the negative concept of the community of Muslims in the entire world. The media was found to establish negative discourse in the society through the use of negative attributes. The study also presented the bias thinking about Muslims and the internal fear that people held against them. The media used evaluative attributive words without necessarily evaluating the Muslim communities.

CDA has also been used by other players to analyze the attitudes of society towards refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and immigrants. Baker et al (2008) used corpus linguistics to critically evaluate the discourse of racism in British newspapers. The authors analyzed 140-million-word corpus of news articles in Britain about asylum seekers, migrants, immigrants and refugees. A corpus based CDA was thus used to show the level of racism exhibited in the British press against people that are deemed as foreigners in the country.

Use of a corpus based approach to analyze discourse has been widely used in both spoken and written texts. The use of this approach, which includes investigation of concordance, collocation, word usage and frequency, has its advantages. The first advantage is that it is empirical in nature. It analyzes the actual pattern use in the natural texts under investigation. As well, the use of these approaches uses a principled and large collection of texts where the analysis is based upon. These methods use both qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques. The most important to note is the functional interpretation of language use during the corpus based approach (Wang, 2005).

Studies also carried out by Teo (2000) used critical discourse analysis to understand how reporting of newspapers in Australia contributed to racism. This study analyzed the ideological construction of racism in Australia within the structure of newspaper reporting. The study

focused on the reporting of criminal activities of a Vietnamese gang operating in Australia. The study revealed systematic construction of racist ideologies by white people against the other races.

Studies have also been carried out in the British newspapers, using critical discourse analysis, to evaluate the way the media constructs refugees and asylum seekers (Baker et al, 2008). This study focused on 140 million word news articles about migrants, immigrant, refugees and asylum seekers. This study identified processes such as concordance and collocation and how they were used to represent these groups of people. This study however only focused on the importance of combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics in analyzing news texts. Similar studies on British newspapers, using critical discourse analysis, were reported by KhosraviNik (2010). The author studied the discursive strategies used by different British newspaper to represent asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants. The author used qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the representation of this group of people. In the findings, it was concluded that all the studied newspapers used similar strategies to represent asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants.

The strategies and framework used in the newspaper analyses is appropriate because it helped in understanding the discourse about given subjects. It is however important to note that even though this framework was used, it did not seek to relate media discourse with violence in their respective communities. My thesis thus seeks to bridge the gap by using critical discourse analysis to relate discourse in online newspapers to ethnic violence in Kenya.

2.5 Ethnic Conflicts and Media Discourse

The term ethnic conflicts can be approached from different angles, depending on the situation of interest at hand. Ethnic conflict is an armed insurrection between ethnic groups (Gülalp, 2006). Ethnic conflicts are a component of international politics. Ethnic wars are the most common forms of armed conflicts in the world. Ethnic conflicts, it should be noted, are different from civil wars. In civil wars, a single nation or a single ethnic group fights among itself. Elements of ethnic conflict theory can be used to elucidate on the definition of the term. Lewis Coser, while explaining the theory, stated that a conflict is a struggle where the aims are to gain specific objectives and simultaneously neutralize, eliminate or injure rivals (Horowitz, 2001). A conflict, in this context, entails a struggle for mutually exclusive ends or an incompatible means to achieving a goal. In the theory, prominent words like strife, collision, struggle, incompatibility and objectives are used and they are useful in understanding the concept of ethnic conflicts.

Causes of ethnic conflicts could be diverse. CQ Researcher (2010) stated that ethnic diversity had potential to cause violent conflict. This argument postulates that ethnic nationalism stems from a need for each group of people to have its own state. The nationalism in effect results in violent ethnic conflicts. Peace and stability in Europe, the story goes, points to the triumph of the ethno-nationalist projects in the continent.

Ethnic conflicts have been represented in media discourse using different ways. Whereas some of the discourse has been praised to help bring the plight of victims of past ethnic conflicts to light, some have been said to have had negative effects on cohesive living in the society. Media discourse has been thought to have an effect on race relations in multiracial communities. Media discourse is the interaction that happens through a platform of broadcasts, whether in spoken or

written, where discourse is oriented to a listener, a viewer or a non-present reader. As such, media discourse and ethnic conflicts can be related (Molina, 2006). Discursive formation is the description of regular spoken and written communication which produces discourses in the media.

It would be important, before looking at the relationship between ethnic conflicts and media discourse, to dwell slightly on examples of ethnic conflicts in the contemporary world. Ethnic conflicts have been part of international politics. Ethnic wars are some of the common types of ethnic conflicts in the world. Examples of these conflicts have been witnessed in Somalia, Iraq, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Chechnya and Turkey. Some states and places are more prone to these conflicts. One of the ways of dealing or ending ethnic conflicts is to study some of the causes of these events. Many theories abound to explain the causes of ethnic conflicts in the world. These conflicts have gained a lot of attention since the end of the First World War. Sometimes, ethnic conflicts are operationalized into simple dichotomous variables. Theoretical underpinnings give the distinction between the different approaches used to study the causes of ethnic conflicts. In these underpinnings, media discourse can be analyzed (Nguyen, 2010).

There are several studies that explain the relationship between media discourse and conflicts in societies. An example is the study carried out and published by Höijer (2004). The study sought to evaluate the impact of media reporting on the perceptions of readers about the plight of victims of past conflicts in the world. The study argued that there was a growth in focus on the victims of genocides, civil wars and massacres. The research postulated that the audience was generally unmoved regardless of how the media presented the suffering of pain inflicted by past conflicts. In the results, it was found out that media discourse presented a two sided effect on the global compassion about the victims of past conflicts. The female audiences are said to have had

more compassion than the male audiences. It was also found that the forms of compassion generated were different.

Höijer's study is essential to this thesis because it brings to the fore the fact that media discourse can influence audience reaction. The results show that there is a link between the discourse in the media and the ideologies of the audience in relation to the past conflicts. Even though the study results are essential, they have not dealt with other aspects of media discourse and ethnic conflicts. For example, the studies have not carried out contextual analysis to understand the ways through which the words used could have affected the audience. My thesis on the other hand evaluates the words, punctuations and phrases used and relates them with the likelihood of causing ethnic conflicts in societies.

Negative race relations can lead to divisions and race related conflicts. Van Dijk's (2000) study about media discourse and new racism showed that the way the media presents news relating to races affects race relations in countries that have different races. The study revealed that racial inequality systems were propagated using media discourses in the western countries. The media is used to systematically portray "others" in negative light. This leads to negative mental nodes, prejudices, stereotypes and ideologies about others. These indirectly contribute to the enactment and reproduction of racism in the countries.

The results of Van Dijk's study are instrumental to this research which proposes to relate media discourse and ethnic conflicts in Kenya. Even though the studies are vital for understanding of the relationship between ethnic conflicts and media discourse, it does not tackle the issue of online newspapers and ethnic conflicts in Kenya. The study focuses on racism and it may not

directly translate to ethnic conflicts. My study will thus help bring to the fore the problem of ethnic conflicts and the way it is shaped by media discourse in the online newspapers.

Racial and ethnic profiling has been thought to be some of the major contributors to racial and ethnic conflicts in heterogeneous societies. Previous studies have shown that newspapers can be used as tools of propagating hatred towards ethnic and racial minorities. A case in point of such studies is a research carried out by Peltonen (2010) whose aim was to investigate the way that the newspaper internet forums in Romania presented the Gypsies. Three newspapers were analyzed where stories relating to the Romas and the ensuing comments from the readers were analyzed. In the study, it was found that some of the internet users used the forum to complain of the "injustices" that the Roma people had subjected the entire Romanian nation to. In these arguments, most of the commentators suggested that the Romas should abandon using their name because it coincided with the name Romania and it caused them shame and sometimes humiliation when they visit countries that cannot differentiate between the Romas and the Romanians. In the same analysis, it was found that the internet forum was used to discuss the solution to the Roma problem. Some solutions border on the extreme and the barbaric. Internet is used to encourage torturous killing of the Romas or deportation back to India where they originated from, a millennium ago. However, it is worth noting that of the three newspapers, one did not have comments that clearly called for the annihilation or deporting of the Romas. This, the researcher argued, was due to the strict online censorship applied by the newspaper.

The problem of Romas in Europe spans to other countries like Slovenia, France and Italy and other studies have been carried out to investigate the discrimination against the ethnic minority groups. Erjavec (2001) carried out a study to investigate media representation and discrimination of Romas in Slovenia. The studies found out that there was very little difference in the discourse

about Romas in all the news forums. The lead and the headlines all constructed a closed interpretation of the Roma situation. The rest of the reported news legitimized, strengthened and naturalized the interpretation. There was misuse of information with an aim of legitimizing the ill treatment of the Romas.

The research about the profiling of the Romas is essential to my study because of the methods and the analysis used by the researchers. The published studies about the Romas and my thesis have some similarities in the ways of approaching the problem. The Roma issue has been analyzed from the online newspaper stories. My study also uses online newspaper editorials to analyze the ways through which media discourse affects ethnic conflicts in Kenya. However, it should be noted that there are also differences in the research about profiling of the Romas and my research. My research focuses on media discourse and ethnic conflict across all the ethnicities or on all the tribes in Kenya. This is as opposed to the Romas' study which laid focus on only one minority group.

In close relation to the Romas problem in Romania and Slovenia is the problem of Kosovo conflict and the media presentations that has been discussed by various scholars. Berinsky& Kinder (2006) evaluated the issues of ethnicity in the Kosovo conflict using media frames. The studies showed that the framing of news about conflict affected what people remembered and their opinions about the actions that their respective governments should take. This study informs my research in relation to the format and the content of media presentation to the audience. The study however differs with my thesis in terms of the subjects under observation in that the study discusses the general public opinion about an international conflict whereas my research lays focus on the ethnic conflicts across the country.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, methods that will be used to obtain the needed information to meet the objectives of the research are explained. The sections of the chapter include the research design, the target population, the sampling design, data collection and analysis tools.

3.2. Research Design

The design used in this study is documentation and contextual analysis. In this method, social production of the document at hand and its theme is done at the initial stage. The document is then organized with respect to who the writers are, who decides what is to be written, the time it is written and the angle that is picked for the text to be presented to viewers. After organizing the text, a direct analysis of the text is done in order to understand its meaning.

Document analysis entails examining a wide variety of materials used to pass across information. This includes analyzing written and visual images. Document analysis looks at public records, biographies, private papers, photographs, artifacts, motion picture and sound recording. Qualitative context analysis is also defined as a method of analyzing documents' contents using qualitative measures of the frequency with which a particular element appears in a text. Here, the number of times that a given item is used and the number of context into which it appears are used to measure the importance of ideas and meanings in the analyzed document (Widdowson, 2008).

During context analysis, definite steps are followed. First, a researcher is expected to determine the type of data that is needed for the analysis (Jenner & Titscher, 2000). In my thesis, the data to

be analyzed deals with the topic of ethnic conflicts in the Kenyan society. The second step in context analysis is to decide on how the data will be defined. The third step is to choose the population from which the data will be drawn. In my study, the population of interest is the news that made headlines in three major online news outlets; The Daily Nation, The Standard Newspaper and The Star. The fourth step in doing context analysis is to determine the context relative to which the data is being analyzed. The context of interest in this study is how the media discourse affects ethnic conflicts. The second last step in doing context analysis is to determine the boundaries of the study. This study is limited to articles that dealt with news which generate discussions that relate to ethnic relationships in Kenya.

Document and content analysis has advantages and disadvantages. A researcher is able to get comprehensive and historical information. When collecting data, the researcher does not interrupt programs of other people because information is already in existence. The design is inexpensive and is useful for corroboration. The flip side of this design is that it is time consuming and a researcher is restricted to the data that already exists. Again, access to some content is limited. While analyzing some data, passages could be missing. This means that the data cannot be coded easily. The researcher could be forced to do without the missing parts of the passage. Such analysis could give inappropriate inferences. In case a substantial amount of passages is missing in the articles to be evaluated, a researcher may be forced to stop the content analysis. This design may not provide an insight into personal thinking of the participant (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

The design is appropriate for this thesis because it will help me do an in-depth analysis of the way the discourse in the selected online newspapers affects ethnic conflicts in Kenya. This method is ideal because my study is based on a critical discourse evaluation of contents in the

three online newspapers. The advantage of using document-based data is that it is easily accessible in electronic media, print media or internet.

In discourse analysis, the researcher will aim to answer certain research questions. The first question will be: Given that the Kenyan online newspapers are involved in discussing topical issues that touch on the ethnic dimensions in the country, how do they achieve the ends of these discussions using language? What does this achievement of discussing ethnic dimensions say about the online newspapers in Kenya? Given the fact that the study will dwell on different newspapers, a comparative study will also be established. The research will also aim to answer the question: how do the different online newspapers differ in their language use? Can these differences say anything about their differences in journalistic values, objectives and principles? These questions will be answered using the analysis of the contents in the online newspapers sampled by the researcher.

3.3. Materials

This study uses data from electronic copies of three newspapers which are available online; the Standard newspaper, the Star newspaper and the Daily Nation newspaper. The total number of editorials analyzed are twenty (20), seven from the Daily nation, nine from the Standard and four from the Star newspaper. This study uses purpose sampling to gather data. Purpose sampling involves looking out for the groups, individuals and settings where the variables to be studied are most likely to occur. The advantage of this sampling method is that the study subjects are always available and accessible. The study samples are drawn from features, hard news and opinion pieces that discuss topical issues that deal with ethnic conflicts in Kenya. The search for the online stories used the online search engines with specific words relating to tribal and ethnic

conflicts. The words of interest to this research includes “ethnic”, “conflicts”, “ethnic violence”, “land and ethnicity”, “ethnic politics” and “ethnicity”.

The Daily Nation newspaper is owned by the Nation Media Group, which is in turn owned by His Highness the Aga Khan. The newspaper has been operating in Kenya for more than 62 years and it boasts the largest share of readership in the country, standing at 53 %. The newspaper trades its shares in the Nairobi Stock Exchange. Discussion of news and issues related to tribal identities in the country has been thought to be one of the avenues that can be used to fan ethnic conflicts. A critical discourse analysis of some of the articles in the Daily Nation revealed various ways through which the newspaper can affect ethnic conflicts.

The Standard Newspaper is the oldest in the country. It was established in 1902 and it currently has a market share of 30 %. The newspaper is owned by the Standard Group and it trades on the Nairobi Stock Exchange market. This research also carried out contextual analysis of news features and editorials from the Standard Newspaper, the online version. The study focused on different articles that discussed or reported news about ethnic conflicts amongst different communities.

The Star Newspaper is the youngest of the three major dailies in Kenya. It was launched in July 2007 and it currently has about 6 % of the market share. The newspaper is owned by Radio Africa group. Unlike the other two newspapers, it does not trade on the stock market. As is with other dailies, this newspaper contributes to various topical issues that affects the country and the entire world. This research searched various articles that discusses issues of negative ethnicity and ethnic conflicts, with an aim of assessing how they might affect flaring up of ethnic conflicts in Kenya.

Time boundaries are used in this study. This study purposes to focus on the publications made between 2007 and 2010. This time has been selected because it encompasses the period when Kenya underwent the post-election violence and the aftermath when the suspects of the violence were taken to court. The year 2010 is when the new constitution was formulated and it was sort of used as a closure to the problems that had plagued the country. This period will therefore be enough to generate the much needed information about media discourse and ethnic violence in the country.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data collected is evaluated using discourse analysis. This study aims at evaluating ethnic conflicts in Kenya and the language used by the media to construct them. The selected copies of newspapers will be used as the natural boundaries of the context analysis. They will be used for coding of the results. In the analysis, the study looks at headlines in the newspaper, titles, leads and general abstracts.

Discourse analysis captures a broad focus and refers to a general framework within which ideas are formulated. During discourse analysis, conversation, writing, discourse and communicative events are evaluated in terms of a sequence of propositions, sentences and speech. This method is essential in analyzing of various disciplines of social science. This tool is ideal for examination of relationships between culture and context (Bell, 1991).

Language is an important element in discourse analysis. Language informs perceptions of people and shapes their views of the surrounding. Language is looked at as a social interaction tool. It is used to evaluate social contexts into which any discourse is used (Gee, 2013). All the relevant features that discussed ethnicity and related issues in the selected editorials of online newspapers

are analyzed in this thesis. This study evaluates the language used by the authors of stories in the selected newspapers and how they influence ethnic conflicts.

In the analysis of media discourse, the researcher looks at the frequency of use of words related to negative ethnic connotations. This includes the frequency of use of words associated with one ethnic community, as well as a critical analysis of phrases and sentences. The number of times that words and phrases which instigate ethnic conflicts is counted. I also compare the three newspapers in terms of use of such phrases, words and sentences. Focus is on the attributive words, phrases and sentences related to ethnic identities in the country. An attributive word is an adjective, or any other modifier, which precedes a word and it modifies it, and expresses an attribute. An example of an attributive word used in a phrase is, “the old dog”. The word is attributive. If used as “this dog is old”, then it is not attributive (Hildebrandt, 2004). The qualitative part of the analysis includes interpretation of some of the interpretive sentences and phrases used in the online newspapers. The researcher then uses the qualitative and quantitative approaches to conclude the study. In the quantitative analysis, I classify all the editorials into those that adopt peace journalism and those that are likely to escalate ethnic conflicts.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

Presented in this chapter are the results and analysis of the study carried out. The aim of this study was to find the ways through which media discourse in the Kenyan online newspapers leads to situations that may propagate or escalate ethnic conflicts. First, I present what I found out while carrying out the search for relevant texts in the newspapers, from online sources. I then explain the choice of texts which I decided to analyze. Secondly, I critically assess the discourse in the news whose texts are likely to influence ethnic violence in Kenya. I also analyze the editorials and attempt to deduce if such discussions can ignite ethnic conflicts.

The initial objective of writing this thesis was to carry out an investigation of the issues surrounding ethnic conflicts in Kenya. One of the aspects that I analyzed is the ways through which media discourse can lead to ethnic conflicts in the country. The study intended to analyze how issues related to ethnicity were conceptualized by three newspapers and their contributors between 2007 and 2010. I was specifically keen on obtaining data from 2007 because it is during this time when ethnic related violence suddenly broke out in the country as a result of the disputed elections and the media was blamed for taking sides. In 2010, the government pursued domestic reforms to prevent recurrence of violence through implementation of a new constitution. Whereas these are significant time frames in the history of the country, I realized it was more authentic to establish if the forms of discussions currently in the online newspaper platforms have adopted neutrality as opposed to taking sides in reporting. I also found out that the online news and comments contributed by readers between 2007 and 2010 had been deleted. As such, in the analysis, the comments of the readers have not been included. The Star, which is

one of the newspapers whose texts were targeted for analysis, began selling nationally in 2009. This indicates that the earlier time period selected of between 2007 and 2010 could leave out the paper for two years of the analysis. Perhaps, the counsel given by Hardt-Mautner (1995) (in Baker, 2006) about the approach to corpus holds true. The author advised that it would be important for a researcher to have a prior interaction with the texts before formulation of a hypothesis. This challenge nonetheless gave me a useful idea of categorizing the time frame of the news published by the three newspaper houses. My analysis therefore focuses on the editorials published in the years 2010 to 2016. In this study, I carried out a textual analysis of three newspapers, The Daily Nation, The Star and The Standard. This section presents the analysis of the texts found in the newspapers, with focus on the attributive words related to tribes in the country. I have divided the texts in their respective newspapers and discuss each newspaper in turn.

4.2 The Daily Nation

4.2.1 Demonization of some Tribes

A case in point where issues are articulated in the newspaper by associating violence with ethnic identities is in an opinion editorial (op-ed) column published by Prof. Peter Kagwanja. In this article, the author uses the word "Satan Strategy", "Vote Rigging", "Luo Nyanza"[1]and "Revolt" to explain why the campaign strategies used by an opposition chief, Raila Odinga, are uncouth. In Kenyan politics, Raila Odinga is from the Luo community, which is perceived to be an

[1] Luo Nyanza politics is often thought to be associated with populism and to be of riotous nature. The region experiences more street riots than anywhere else in Kenya during elections. The term Luo Nyanza is often used to exclude other tribes like Kisiis, Subas and Kurias who live in the region but are thought to be friendly to the political establishment in Kenya.

archrival to the community of the current president, Uhuru Kenyatta. Even though the author does not give any evidence where the opposition chief associated the plans to rig elections with a certain tribe, he concludes that claims of rigging have been used before to stem revolt among the Luos. The following sentence attests to the fact that this piece seeks to associate a certain tribe with violence;

1. "In Kenya, critics posit that the Odinga dynasty has used rigging claims to remain relevant and **stem revolt** particularly in **Luo Nyanza politics** after a series of electoral losses in 1992, 1997, 2007 and 2013." (DN January 10 2016)

This is an attempt to convince the reader that Luo Nyanza has been responsible for revolts in the last four general elections. This is akin to stereotyping of one ethnic identity. The Luos have been thought to be attracted to flamboyant yet lazy lifestyles. This is one of the ways through which conflicts can be perpetuated in cosmopolitan societies. Here, the author is attempting to fortify the thought that Luos are inherently violent and are the ones to be blamed for all the violence in the country. This criminalizes the tribe and reduces it to an object of hatred by other ethnic groups. Studies carried out by Bar-Tal & Teichman (2005) attest to this. According to these studies, children in Israel and Palestine are fed with stereotypes about the "other" community. This is identified as one of the ways which increases conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians. Similarly, stereotypes such as the ones depicted in the article can also lead to conflicts in Kenya.

Publications relating to land issues in the country have also been thought to attract ethnic stereotyping and profiling which may result in ethnic conflicts. An opinion column published by Ahmednasir Abdullahi attests to this fact that newspapers can in a way affect the manner in which ethnic relations unfold in this country. In this article, the author claims that other

communities are bent on grabbing the grazing lands of the Maasai community. Maasais are a pastoralist tribe in Kenya who live close to Nairobi, the capital city.

A look at the attributive terms used to define the Maasai community shows that the author seeks to portray the community as vulnerable to other oppressive tribes. A sample of the article, as follows, brings out this point clearly:

2. "A **small and weak pastoralist community** is being systematically **overrun** by **powerful neighbors** who have set their **insatiable appetite** and **wandering eyes** on their grazing land."(DN March 30, 2014)

The words I have bolded in this sentence show that the author has attributed different traits to two types of ethnic identities. First, he shows the Maasai community to be under siege. The use of words "small", "weak" and "overrun" creates a mental picture of a group under persecution. This creates sympathies among the members of the group and they might think of themselves to be under siege. In contrast, the author portrays the neighbors to the community using the words "powerful", "insatiable appetite" and "wandering eyes". He uses these words to stress on the seriousness of the threat of land loss that the Maasai community faces. Words associated with conflicts, like "overrun", "annihilate", "disenfranchised" and "marginalize" have been used to portray the dangers that the Maasais face from their neighbors. Such an approach is bound to put the Maasais on the defensive, fearing the losses they might suffer should the predicted consequences in the article become true. In the article, the author suggests that the county governments where the lands are "being grabbed" should repossess them, through a buying back scheme.

Both the theme and the style of the article can cause ethnic conflicts between the Maasais and the communities that bought their grazing land. The entire article, although having intentions of

educating the public about the Maasai land grazing problem, is inciting in its approach. This thought is in agreement with studies carried out by Paluck (2009), who explains that the media can be used to shape the beliefs, the prejudices, the norms and behaviors of communities towards their neighbors. Media discourse can therefore help increase or reduce behavioral prejudice and conflicts.

Ethnic conflicts can also be as a result of incitement of youths from different communities. However, the media reporting and discussion of such incitements can turn the tide either in appeasing the warring communities or in escalating the conflicts. An example of such discussions is demonstrated in another op-ed column titled, "Take deliberate steps to probe and punish youth incitement" by Gitau Warigi.

In this article, the author laments that youths have been incited into violence for political gains. He then calls for punishment of the people who incite the youths. However, the article is full of stereotyping, something that can lead to ethnic tensions among the communities that read the column. First, the author begins by segregating the "warlike" tribes from the "peaceful" ones. Even though he does not exactly use the words as stated in this sentence, the following phrase and the subsequent analysis of attributive words bring it out properly;

3. "As far as I know, the **Luo people are not** into cattle rustling– which is the euphemistic way our media refers to **armed, organized cattle thefts**. That **activity is the province of the Pokot, the Samburu and the Turkana. The Kisii** are certainly not into it either, so when they complain, as the **Luo in Nyakach** are doing, of **rampant cattle raids across the border from the former Rift Valley Province**, they are making a point." (DN March 30, 2014)

In this phrase, the author is attempting to attribute cattle rustling to specific tribes. He has, again, tried to portray two tribes as the victims. The Luos and the Kisiis are depicted in this article as peaceful people who suffer at the hands of the armed and thieving tribes of Pokot, Samburu and

Turkanas. In Kenya, cattle-rustling is a criminal act. It is unlikely that an entire tribe can have the propensity to commit criminal acts. It is thus surprising that the author, and to the extent the newspaper, are painting a whole tribe with a single criminalization brush. A proper language would have used the word "some" to show that this behavior is not inherent in every Pokot, Samburu and Turkana. The author goes further to associate the three tribes from Rift Valley to possession of warrior mindsets and killing people. This is expounded in the phrase;

4. "The **Rift Valley tribes, the Turkana, Samburu and Pokot**, have opted to stick to this "**warrior mindset**" of cattle raiding; this is dangerous because **people get killed** in such raids……. We all saw what happened in 1991, 1992 and 1997. It happened again in 2007, but in a different context. " (DN March 30, 2014)

The author blames the three communities for the clashes that took place in the electioneering years of Kenya. This is hardly the truth because ethnic clashes related to the general elections have been spread across various communities, even clans, in the country. The Luos, Kisiis and other people reading this article might start looking at the settlements of Pokots, Samburu's and Turkanas as territories of murderous and bloodthirsty enemies whom they should protect themselves against. That such profiling of tribes can lead to ethnic hatred and conflicts have been supported by Sigona, (2005) (in Pusca, 2010) in his studies about the profiling of the Romas in Europe. In his study, the author asserts that the fetishizing of nomadism of the Romas across Europe is akin to stereotyping and this is a recipe for creating insecurity of the tribe.

The author argues that there have been cultural and political tendencies to fetishize and aestheticize the Romas, which leads to stereotypes. These stereotypes spread hatred for the Romas in Italy. Such stereotypes are seen in the article published by Gitau Warigi. The Pokots, the Turkana and the Samburu, just like the Romas, might be victims of ethnically inspired conflicts, stemming from the stereotypes created by the newspaper. Like the Romas have been

stereotyped as nomads, the Turkana, Samburu and Pokot are being portrayed through a stereotype of cattle raiders. It goes without saying that the stereotyping created in this article is clear and should have been moderated by the newspaper before publication.

However, it is beyond the scope of this research to judge the editorial policy of the newspaper. What can be deduced from the article is that the newspaper published an opinion that could be construed to stereotype some communities in Kenya. Even though this might not have been the intention of the author, the words used in the publication reveals that the contents could lead to stereotyping. This kind of newspaper discourse where some communities suffer as victims of stereotyping could lead to conflicts as a result of the publication.

After conflicts and violence in a country or community, the media houses should pacify the combatants through spread of reconciliatory messages. After the post-election violence in Kenya between 2007 and 2008, newspapers have been publishing pieces, discussing the likely causes of the violence and the preventive measures that can ensure that such does not recur. An article published in Daily Nation by one of its reporter, titled, "Kiambaa-a monument to man's evil ways" is one such, although it does not seek, in the opinion of this research, to reconcile the communities.

In a synopsis, the author is lamenting the sorry state of the graves where the bodies of the Kiambaa church arson victims were interred. He attempts to relate this cemetery to the one at Sachangwan where victims of a petrol tanker fire have been buried in mass graves. Here, it should be noted that these two types of mass deaths are unrelated but the former was made up of the Kikuyu tribe and the latter of the Kalenjin tribe. The author thinks that the Sachangwan cemetery has been well taken care of and the one of Kiambaa church has been left to ruins. The

comparison of the ways the cemeteries at Sachangwan and those at Kiambaa church have been maintained reveals an attempt by the author to use rhetorical devices to demonize one community. In discourse, it is possible to use irony, hyperbole and metaphor to focus on the negative sides of one party and the positive sides of another community. This is evident enough that the article may lead to a situation where the readers may take sides and indeed develop animosity against their perceived enemies, as presented by the author.

Even though the letter of the article could be noble, the spirit can be evaluated to have been calculated to cause discomfort or to accuse the Kalenjin tribe wholesomely. This research has extracted the following paragraphs and analyzed the likelihood to elicit ethnic passions and conflicts.

5. "The **attack on** members of the **Kikuyu community** who had sought shelter in the church of the Pentecostal Assembly of God was **blamed on Kalenjin youths** protesting at the results of the 2007 Presidential election, which they claimed had been rigged."(DN April 6, 2011)

The sentence victimizes one community, and then blames another community for the belligerence. Although it is true that the attack was on the Kikuyu community, it does not automatically happen that Kalenjin youths were responsible. Even though there might be evidence that the perpetrators were youths from this community, the way of presenting it in this article makes it appear as if all the youths from this community were responsible for this murder. According to this research, the proper phrase could have been, **"some youths from the Kalenjin community".** This would then exempt the entire community from blame and make it clear that only a section of people from the community were involved in the torching of the church. Here, syntax has been used by the author to criminalize the Kalenjins. The author of the article has used active sentences to pass responsibility for action to all the Kalenjins. Instead of using the

word Kalenjin in passive form, he has sought to emphasize that the youths were Kalenjins instead of saying they came from the Kalenjin community.

The author further seeks to demonize the Kalenjin community by insisting that three of the people put on trial are Kalenjins. According to this research, this addition (see the entire sentence and the whole article) was of no relevance to the topic and the theme of the story. The excerpt below is from the same article analyzed in number five above.

6. "The event that became a watershed in the country's history has resulted in indictments for **crimes against humanity** by the International Criminal Court at the Hague. Three of the six people wanted **for trial are Kalenjins**."(DN April 6, 2011)

The quoted sentences manages to cap the entire story by making it known that half of the accused people are from the Kalenjin community. The approach taken by the author can be compared to the ways in which the media reported the Kargil and Gujarati riots between Hindus and Muslims. Studies carried out by Chatterji (2004) found out that the media discourse resorted to demonization of the enemy. The media houses that had leanings towards the Muslim communities portrayed the Hindus as the aggressors while the newspapers that had leanings towards the Hindus sought to demonize the Muslim communities in the region.

4.1.1. Peace Journalism

In the discourse analysis of the newspaper, it was however found out that not all the columns tended to lay blame on certain communities. A good case in point is the analysis of clashes in the coast region where the author, Njuguna Mutonya, sounds neutral even though he mentions tribes. In the analysis of the Likoni Clashes of 1997, the author only reports what was believed to be the reason behind the violence. He does not give his own voice in blaming the Digo tribe although

he mentions them to express his points. The following sentence shows the neutrality of the approach by the analyst in Nation Newspaper;

7. "…the stake in Likoni then was **the belief** by some politicians in the Kanu camp that unless the **Digo evicted upcountry people who had settled there**, their candidate **could never** beat the Ford Kenya candidate, courtesy of the upcountry votes like had happened in 1992."(DN July 23, 2014)

Here, the author shies away from asserting that the Digos really fought to uproot the upcountry people from Likoni. He only talks in terms of the believed possibilities that might have caused the clashes in the region.

The author of the opinion column does not dwell on only one tribe while discussing the clashes in the coast region. He goes further to discuss the clashes in other areas of the coast region. Still, he does not apportion blame to any of the tribes involved in the clashes. In Tana River, for instance, he insists that the Pokomo and the Orma have been known to exist in peace and that any clashes between the two could not develop because they had mechanisms of dealing with such problems. The following phrases indicate that the opinion piece seeks to sow harmony and demystify the belief that neighboring tribes can spontaneously fight one another by the mere differences in their ethnicities.

8. " The report de-tailed an oil exploration which had been taking place in the Tana Delta which immediately raised my interest in the near meaningless conflicts by neighbors who had **coexisted peacefully** for many years save for a couple of individual cases which were always resolved using the **Pokomo and Orma traditional peacemaking instruments**". …. While conflict over land and other resources have been the order of the day at the Coast since 1992 when multipartyism was reintroduced, Mpeketoni, with its cocktail of communities **but dominated by the Gikuyu had never erupted into ethnic conflict…."**(DN July 23, 2014)

As seen in these sentences, peaceful coexistence has been associated with the tribes which have been thought to be warring over natural resources. The author seems to strike a conciliatory tone

in his analysis of the events of clashes. He portrays hostilities among neighboring tribes as an exception rather than the norm.

Newspaper analyses of some of the problems leading to tribal conflicts rarely end up without mentioning the fight over land or natural resources. In this context therefore, most analysts tend to give their opinion through use of tribal dichotomies. A review of some articles, as seen earlier, shows that some authors are blunt by blaming some communities for being aggressors by buying land from the supposedly weak community. However, an editorial authored by Ibrahim Mwathane in Daily Nation gives a different approach and to this effect a more acceptable way of describing the tribal conflicts that arise from land issues in the country. In the article, the author is expressing fear that unless land problems in Coast region are solved with sobriety, they might lead to ethnic tensions. He goes ahead to explain what is thought to be land injustice in Kenya. However, one surprising element of this analysis is that the author refrains from mentioning the tribes involved in the alleged injustices. He only focuses on the phrases **"indigenous communities"**, **"local people" and "outsiders"** when making a dichotomy between the perpetrators and the victims. An example is the following paragraph:

> 9. "There are also cases of people who used their privileged public offices to acquire government **land which initially belonged to indigenous Coast people**. This has left local people with unhealed grievances. And then there is the category of sincere investors who bought property from **local people or outsiders** in possession of land along the Coast and have subsequently made heavy investments. This category feels rather "trapped", after having made genuine investments only to later be viewed with suspicion and **hostility by local people**." (DN August 12, 2014)

This research looks at this approach as a benign way of discussing issues that are emotive to the Kenyan public. As opposed to the other articles that shunned political correctness and openly discussed the tribes that were likely to cause mayhem, this author has taken a careful approach. The entire article of 685 words has not used a single word to name the tribes that are involved in

the land disputes in the country. Maybe this could point out that the editorial policy of The Nation newspaper does not necessarily demand that authors be as realistic and pragmatic as possible when discussing issues of public interest.

It is thus possible to use a politically correct language to influence the ways in which different members of the society interact with one another. Defenders of politically correct language, according to O'Neill (2011), think that the use of such a language influences the society in a civilized way. In addition, political correctness discourages the use of words that many have offensive or negative connotations. As such, it affords respect to people who can unfairly be victims of stereotypes. The use of politically correct languages can thus prevent offensive behavior and bullying. The language used by Ibrahim Mwathane in his article can therefore be said to be politically correct and it seeks to sow harmony. It has adopted an impartial approach even as it laments about the injustices that some communities in the country could be facing.

Calls for unity by newspaper articles can also be considered to help foster harmony among different ethnic groups and as a result lead to averting of ethnic conflicts. An analysis of a piece authored by Mutuma Mathiu in The Nation newspaper in the aftermath of the 2013 general elections attests to the fact that the media can be used to reduce ethnic conflicts. In this article, the author calls for need to have issue based ideas and issue based politics and shun tribal based politics. The author ascertains that this is the only way that people could live harmoniously. The following sentence shows that the author is interested in seeing the country live in harmony.

10. "**For the sake of the future,** what we need are **not tribes and parties,** but a couple of good ideas about how to live with each other in honesty and fairness." (DN March 29, 2013)

In the sentence, the author may manage to convince the readers that if they avoid thinking along tribal lines, then the future would be good for the country. This is an example of peace journalism and it has been discussed by Lee &Maslog (2005) in their evaluation of conflicts that involve Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Philippines, Pakistan and India. The studies revealed that some journalists engaged in war journalism while others engaged in peace journalism. In peace journalism, the authors found out that the journalists avoided demonizing language and used nonpartisan approaches and multiparty orientations. The article authored by Mutuma Mathiu can also be categorized as peace journalism because it seeks to champion the adoption of nonpartisan approach to issues affecting the country. This is as opposed to war journalism whose focus is on the now and here. It can therefore be stated that the newspaper has been used to make call for issue based politics which detribalize the country and as a result reduce the incidences of ethnic conflicts. The findings of the article are also contradicted by a study carried out by Ndonye (2014) who found out that the use of online forums in Kenya killed peace journalism. The studies centered on the use of social media forums of Facebook and Twitter. This indicates that while some journalists adopt peace journalism which in turn reduces tendencies of ethnic conflicts, others adopt hate journalism.

From these analyses of The Nation newspaper, it is indicative that the editorials adopt different types of journalism when dealing with subjects that could elicit ethnic passions among the readers. Whereas there should be editorial policies about the tone to adopt while writing the editorials, the paper seems not to have a distinct direction that should be taken when dealing with topics touching on ethnic relations.

4.2. The Standard Newspaper

4.2.1. Peace Journalism and Neutral Reporting

Peace journalism was found to be part of the news items and features published in the Standard Newspaper. A good case in point is an article authored by Nzau Musau titled "Ugly side of bitter Pokot-Tugen ethnic clashes". This article reports that conflicts and ensuing tension among three tribes, the Pokots, the Ichiamus and the Tugens has driven animals from the antagonizing sides to starve while grass grew tall and disused. This article is neutral in its approach because it mostly highlights on the negative effects of conflicts without necessarily pointing a finger at a particular community as the aggressor. For example, in the following statement, a tone of neutrality is identified;

> 11. "A stand-off between two warring communities, the Pokot and Tugen, has left the grass unattended for several seasons now. None of the two sides is ready to give in. The grass in the hilly area continues to grow taller and taller as cattle from both sides of the divide continue to starve for pasture."(SD July 19, 2015)

In this phrase, it is seen that the author tries to link a standoff with starvation of the cattle. It can be concluded that this phrase seeks to bring out the negative effect of the standoff that has been taking place between the Pokots and the Tugens. This can be classified as an attempt to negatively reinforce good neighborliness among different communities that live side by side.

The findings in this article are different when compared to the results of a study carried out by Hackett, (2003), who sought to find out the contribution of the media to religious violence in Nigeria. In his analysis, the author found out that newspaper reporters quoted people, in verbatim, as they exalted their own sides. As opposed to the tone of the reporting in this newspaper, which highlights the dangers of conflicts, newspapers in Nigeria quoted belligerents

who wanted to outshine others in terms of the superiority of their deities. Hackett's study quotes several newspapers whose message seeks to elevate one side to another. This creates an adversarial mood among the readers and it can easily lead to conflicts among two opposing sides. This thus shows that it is not a norm that all newspaper reports about sectarian and ethnic conflicts will be neutral.

Another case of neutral reporting and peace journalism is identified in an article authored by Mohamed Guleid, titled, "Let's act before bandits take over Northern Kenya". In this article, the author decries the destruction that ethnic conflicts have brought in the former Northern Frontier District of Kenya. First, the author gives the history of battles among various sides in the pastoralist communities in the region. One point to note is that the article avoids mentioning the names of the tribes involved in the conflicts. This is another case of political correctness where the author carefully circumvents the urge to lay blame on one side and victimize the other side. The following phrase partly demonstrates that the author is not interested in creating a dichotomy of the aggressor and the aggrieved.

12. "Traditionally, **pastoralist communities engaged in cattle rustling** as a rite of passage where manhood was demonstrated through either killing a fierce beast of the bush like a lion or going to raid neighboring communities for their livestock".(SD Oct 26, 2015)

As opposed to some of the articles discussed before, this article does not indicate the specific roles played by each ethnic community in the raids. These findings are in tandem with the findings of studies carried out by Krabill (2001) which found that the media in South Africa helped the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to cement peace in the country after the apartheid system. The findings also state that the media embraced pace journalism which helped reconcile the blacks and the Boers in the country.

Besides opinion editorials and features, the Standard Newspaper also reports field events that involve ethnic clashes. An example is the piece of news reported by Philip Mwakio, titled, "Hundreds flee ethnic violence along Tana River-Kilifi boundary". The author reported about ethnic clashes between the Mijikenda and the Orma communities in the Tana Delta. From the analysis, it is found that the author discusses the clashes by mentioning the tribes involved but does not come up with a dichotomy of the right versus wrong tribe. The statement below attests to this analysis:

13. "The violence which began on Sunday between Giriama farmers and pastoralist Orma led to at least four deaths and some kidnappings leading in the several border regions including Hurara and appeared to spread despite the heavy deployment of paramilitary forces."(SD August 7, 2015)

In this statement, it is evident that the author does not mention the tribe which suffered the deaths. The author avoids creating a situation where the reader might identify the victims and the aggressors.

Further analysis indicates that the author does not mention the group that began the violence. In a normal situation of violence, there must be a group that begins the aggression. The author seems not interested in stating which group began the fight, although he may be aware of the facts. In the following statement, it can be seen that the author is avoiding committing to the reports he is writing about the clashes:

14. "The recurring violence is **believed to emanate** from difference between farmers from the Mijikenda community and pastoralists of the Orma from the delta." (SD Aug 7, 2015)

The author avoids authoritative reporting by electing to use the word "believed". Hanitzsch (2007) praises the practice of peace journalism, stating that it takes more than an individual effort to come up with peace journalism practice. The author opines that structural

constraints of news production have to be overcome first. This resonates with the findings of the reporting about the Mijikenda and Orma conflicts. Newspapers are supposed to be objective and report facts as they are on the ground. However, when reporting about the clashes, the journalist has to avoid revealing sensitive information to the public. There therefore has to be delicate balancing between objective reporting and peace journalism. The practical implications of news production structures are thus limited by peace journalism which calls for political correctness.

4.2.2. Victimizing one Side

Reports about clashes involving some of the ethnic identities do not look identical in terms of revealing the identities of the victims. An editorial about clashes between the Orma and the Pokomo in 2012 gives the true identity of the victims. In this editorial, with the title "Village burnt as violence rages", the author is clearer that houses of the Pokomos were torched by pastoralists. The pastoralists in this case are the Ormas. In the following statement,

> 15. "Kau village was also **burnt in a revenge attack by the Orma** and pastoralists from Ijara in North Eastern Province. On Wednesday, four men with gunshot wounds were admitted at Malindi District Hospital."(SD Aug 16, 2012)

It is clearly seen that the author reports the Ormas as the aggressors and the Pokomos as the ones on the suffering end. This is in contradiction with peace journalism which would have avoided drawing distinction between the belligerents.

Given that this report is published in the same newspaper, and it is in contrast with the previous report on the same issue, it can be said that the newspaper does not confine its news reporting to peace journalism. It could be at the discretion of the journalist to decide the best ways of delivering the message to the readers. However, it is also worthy to mention that the journalist

has not put in his own voice while reporting the clashes. He thus does not intervene in the news to give his opinion or even to explain further the genesis of these clashes.

4.2.3. Calling for sobriety

Other opinion columnists in The Standard newspaper have been found to use the publication space to denounce ideologies that can lead to ethnic conflicts. As opposed to what has been discussed before, some pieces do not necessarily dwell on ethnic conflicts as the central themes but use their theme of choice to disabuse the readers of the notions which lead to ethnic conflicts. This research analyzed an opinion piece authored by Dr Duncan Omanga, titled, "Why our politics have never been ethnic, it is ideological!" The author argues that the concept of relating politics to ethnic identities should be left alone because politicians only embody certain ideological positions that are divorced from ethnicities. He states,

16. "Closer scrutiny shows that Kenya's politics has an appearance of ethnicity, but it is actually ideological — it is only packaged in ethnic colours."(SD Feb 2, 2016)

Politics in Kenya are riled with violent confrontations that are mostly based on ethnic, clan and family identities. In this article, the author states that politicians use the pretext of ethnic differences to sow seeds of discord among Kenyans. The author tries to persuade the readers that differences between people are not inherently tribal but based on other ideologies. The author goes further to give history of the perceived tribal differences, and he alludes to the bipolar world of socialism and capitalism. In this discourse, the author states that the opposing sides wrongly used tribes to propagate their ideologies.

In this article, the author seeks to reduce ethnic conflicts and prejudice through persuasion. This approach is discussed by Paluck (2009). The author suggests that the mass media can shape

prejudiced beliefs, norms and behaviors. This approach has been said to work in Rwanda where the perceptions of listeners in regards to other groups were changed. These led to change in behavior in respect to empathy, trust, open dissent, trauma healing and cooperation. Here, communication of social norms was taken as a priority rather than communication about individual behaviors. The findings here support the findings of the works published by Paluck (2009) which suggest that media can help influence people's attitudes towards other groups.

Another piece analyzed from the Standard newspaper also dissuades the public against tying politics to ethnicity and going down the violence lane. The article, titled "Polls must be based on unity, not ethnicity" and authored by Benard Amaya, begins by acknowledging the societal polarization of the country along ethnic lines. He goes ahead to vilify the "primitive tribal politics" where some tribes have considered other tribes as sworn enemies.

From the discourse, the author is opposed to the capitalization on tribes which is used by politicians and some professionals. For instance, the author states,

17. "So intense is the competition that it has degenerated into ethnic hatred. There are communities which consider certain ethnic groups as their sworn enemies. How can citizens of the same country exhibit a deep dislike for each other?"(SD Oct 19, 2015)

This statement, among others in the article, shows that the author is condemning ethnicity as a repugnant practice used by politicians to get utilitarian gains. In this sense therefore, it is assumed that the author can help readers steer clear of ideologies and practices that might lead to ethnic conflicts and confrontations. The structure of the sentence is composed in a way that it narrates first the problem, that is, the political competition and the ethnic hatred it generates and then it goes ahead to condemn this behavior among citizens. This is another case of negative reinforcement where the media content attracts considerable attention and it can lead to positive

behavior. Nabi& Oliver (2009) discuss this behavior influencing technique by stating that emotionally evoked stimulus has the ability of capturing the attention of the audience and influencing behavior.

4.2.4. Militant discussion of tribes

This research analyzed discourse on the appointment of the Central Bank of Kenya governor Prof. Njuguna Ndung'u. This discourse included three opinion pieces all focused on the leaders' obsession with ethnicity even where merit matters most. The first article was written by Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o, who faulted the president for appointing another person from the Kikuyu tribe to head the Central Bank. The article is titled "Mr. President, Central Bank of Kenya appointments indicate ethnic balance lacking". In the article, the author states that in the 49 years of the existence of Central Bank, 29 have been led by people from the Kikuyu community. The author does not discuss the qualifications of the people who have headed the Central Bank of Kenya. It is worth remembering that ethnic identity does not form part of the qualifying criteria for the job. The author thinks that the selection of another Kikuyu to head the bank is exclusionist in nature and may rock the foundations of the nation. Consider the statement below;

18. "I am surprised you named Dr Njoroge to succeed Prof Ndung'u given the past history of the bank in a nation where the politics of ethnic exclusion has always shaken our foundation as a nation."(SD June 7, 2015)

These assertions, according to this research, appear sensationalist and may contribute to ethnic confrontations. This is in the context of the knowledge that one of the areas of contestation in the country is the appointments of certain tribes to state job positions.

The author continues to assert that the country could plunge into turmoil if the president did not consider ethnic balance in his appointments. He implicitly puts this across by quoting Karl Marx,

"Karl Marx once said that history, in the life of great men, usually likes to repeat itself: first as a tragedy and then as a farce! I would hate to see your presidency in tragic or farcical terms."

In some of Karl Marx's thoughts, he advocated for violent revolutions, confiscation of private property and democratic dictatorship of the masses (Marx & Engels, 2002).This is a tacit implication of an author who suggestively says that the tribe that has accumulated wealth might go down the path described by Karl Marx. The author goes further to give history of ethnic oppression that was instituted by the founding father of the country, who was a Kikuyu. It does not get lost to the researcher that poverty distribution in the country might not be only skewed in some ethnic areas. This article, as presented in the newspaper, can fan tribal animosity among Kenyans.

This discourse can be said to be suffering from effects of reductionism, where the author has reduced the entire ethnic problem in Kenya to appointments in the Central Bank of Kenya. Golay (2009) faults this method of approaching discourse about ethnic identities and exclusion. While discussing the problem of ethnic exclusion of the Gorkha in India, the author thinks such an approach only constructs tribal identities in their most essential stages and risks making wrong conclusions. The author of the article might have used this approach either knowingly or unknowingly. Either way, the approach is considered simplistic and it results in the wrong conclusion, which in this case, predicts that the country can plunge into chaos because of the ethnic exclusion.

A response to Prof. Nyong'os article seems to play down the issue of ethnic exclusion in the appointments. Karanja Kabage responded to the article, blaming Prof. Nyong'o for being obsessed with ethnicity and forgetting to dwell on merit. In his article titled "Obsession with

ethnicity is a national tragedy for Kenya", the author deconstructs Prof. Nyongo's thoughts and tries to put records straight about public office appointments. The author gives examples of the Federal Reserve in the United States which has been led mostly by Jews and he sees nothing wrong with one particular ethnic identity getting the job as long as he has the qualifications. In this discussion, even though the author logically tries to debunk Prof. Nyong'os assertions, he does not state if it was proven unreasonable doubt that people of other ethnic persuasions did not have the requisite qualifications for the job. Here, the author seems to be justifying ethnic lopsidedness in public appointments. Although he does not directly refer to ethnic conflicts, he tries to create the concept of otherness by blaming leaders who speak against ethnic appointments. The following statement attests to this;

19. "Some leaders always exploit identity or distinction based on race, ethnic, clannism or some other characteristic for their selfish ends to the detriment of the very people they claim to speak for."(SD June 15, 2015)

This could be an attempt to silence public discourse on ethnic integration in the country. The silencing of discussions around racism and ethnic exclusion has not only been revealed in this article. Harries (2012) carried out an analysis, in his doctoral thesis studies, which revealed that the problem of race, inequality and exclusion suffers from want of freedom of discussion due to various attempts to silence the discourse. This thus forces the oppressed to silently adapt to the existent system. This could lead to implosion among the affected people. As such, attempts to silence discourse on ethnic exclusion in the country could lead to conflicts.

In the last correspondence between Prof. Nyong'o and Kabage, a discourse that takes a conciliatory tone is published. The author, Prof. Nyong'o, seeks to make it clear that he has not ignited any hatred against the Kikuyu tribe and that it is unfair to be labeled an anti-Kikuyu. To this effect, this shows that the opinion does not seek to entrench ethnic conflicts in the country.

However, an all-inclusive analysis of the three articles shows that at no point was Prof. Nyong'o labeled to be anti-Kikuyu. This article however closes the discussion where the articles of the constitution that call for ethnic inclusivity are delved into. It is much neutral in approach and steers clear of making thinly veiled threats of ethnic strife in the country.

4.3. The Star Newspaper

4.3.1. Peace Journalism

One such article that discusses issues of ethnicity in the country was authored by Koigi Wamwere, titled, "Kenyans, stand and be counted against negative ethnicity". In the article, the author laments of the death of nationalism in Kenya from the year of independence to the current times. He describes what he sees as a sad story of affair where some people take pleasure in the existence of ethnic conflicts. Here, he puts blame on negative ethnicity, which he thinks has led to many problems in the country. Negative ethnicity, according to the author, leads to ethnic dictatorship. This is a recipe for ethnic conflicts. In some of his statements, he states,

> 20. "After 50 years of fighting one-party dictatorship, negative ethnicity now uses ethnic discrimination and enmity to obliterate democracy which ethnic bigots consider an ally of enemies." (Star March 7, 2015)

As such, he considers negative ethnicity to be a source of enmity and discrimination and wishes that it be dealt away with. This article is clearly against ethnicity and is takes an approach that can be used to eliminate ethnic conflicts in the country. The title of the article in itself is unequivocal about the author's opposition to ethnicity in the country. The author makes emotional appeal to his readers, first by taking them through the history of the country where nationalism mattered most than other sectarian considerations. He also appeals to their reasoning

by poking holes into the logic that most of the perpetrators of negative ethnicity use to meet their end gains.

The appeal to emotion is also brought about by the use of examples of the problems that negative ethnicity can cause. Although in the very first incidence the author discusses ethnic conflicts, he dwells on other negative effects of ethnicity. He uses words that have an image of fear and terror to describe what negative ethnicity might cause. For example,

> 21. "Negative ethnicity is even a foe of something dearer than democracy. By promoting ethnic discrimination, conflict, genocide and Holocaust, it is a great enemy of life."

This is a clear example of discourse that is used to fight ethnic conflicts in the country. Many readers may identify with his carefully articulated article and may spread this message to others.

In the same newspaper, Koigi Wamwere wrote another article, lamenting about negative ethnicity. Even though negative ethnicity is not a topic specifically assigned to him by the newspaper, the author wrote two articles about negative ethnicity within one month. The article is titled, "Non-Kikuyu Bigots Are Guilty of Negative Ethnicity". In this article, the author berates anti-Kikuyuism, and even equates it to anti-Semitism. In the opening paragraphs of this article, the author equated negative ethnicity to a disease that is ravaging many Kenyans. He then creates a dichotomy where he divides ethnicity in two camps: the anti-Kikuyu negative ethnicity perpetrated by non-Kikuyus and the negative ethnicity perpetrated by Kikuyus against other Kenyans. In his review, the author thinks that the two camps are all guilty. He calls for the end to the negative ethnicity and insists that each camp cannot cure its own disease. To show the degree of hatred that other tribes have towards the Kikuyus, the author listed some of the stereotypes existing against the community. This analysis samples some of the listed stereotypes as follows:

22. “First, **Kikuyus did not fight for independence** for the good of all Kenyans but to **dominate and exploit other communities**. Secondly, **Kikuyus are greedier and love money** more than other people in other communities. Thirdly, like Jews, **Kikuyus are incorrigible from their hate of others** and the only solution to their problem is the Final Solution or genocide. Fourthly, **Kikuyus can never accept and vote for leadership from another community**. Fifthly, politically, **Kikuyus are not compatriots.** They are the enemies – adui.”(Star Feb 21, 2015)

From the listed stereotypes and the arguments of the author, this analysis deduces two types of effects from the article. First, the article intends to reason out to people that negative ethnicity is wrong and it should be banished from their midst. In the same breath, the author tries to absolve the Kikuyu community from all the accusations leveled against them by the anti-Kikuyu activists. This approach is well thought-out because it may help reduce incidences of tribal hatred which could lead to conflicts in the country. He tries to reason it out that the perceived success of Kikuyus is not true as there are as many poor Kikuyus as there are poor non-Kikuyus.

The second deduction is that the article is unnecessarily sensationalist. The author’s listing of the stereotypes against Kikuyus was in bad faith. As per this analysis, there is no documented evidence that these are the reasons that other tribes do not like Kikuyus. Further, it is not verifiable that all other Kenyan tribes hate the Kikuyus. In addition, the author got it wrong when he stated that non-Kikuyus see the solution to the Kikuyu problem in terms of the final solution. Final solution in this context is related to the Jewish problem whose final solution was the extermination and the concentration camps. The magnitude of hate and suffering from ethnic inspired decisions in Kenya cannot be equated to the Jewish Genocide in Europe. However, in a bid to blow the issue out of proportion, the author thinks that the reasons that led to the extermination of Jews in Europe are similar to the reasons for anti-Kikuyuism in Kenya. This is bound to lead to a situation of unintended consequences where instead of helping reduce ethnic conflicts, it would instigate and escalate it.

This method of approaching issues related to ethnic conflicts is similar to the ones used by the press in Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia during the war in the region. Moser & Clark's (2001) study reveals that newspapers in the three regions tried to create their own people as victims. The authors for instance look at the issue of sexual assault of men during the war. In the findings, it was ascertained that the press in Croatian portrayed Croats as the victims and the Serbs as the perpetrators of violence. This is against the truth that the Croats were equally perpetrators of sexual violence against men. In Yugoslavia, similar observations were made. The press only dwelt on the Serbs as victims of sexual violence. This can be likened to the article written by Koigi which seeks to victimize the entire Kikuyu nation. Such efforts only result in a situation of otherness where the Kikuyus will feel pitted against other tribes of the country.

The newspaper editorial has also been used to address the issue of ethnic conflicts in Kenya. An example is an editorial published to react to the threats meted out against members of the Kikuyu community in the western part of Kenya. It is important to note that a bulk of the Kikuyu community lives in central Kenya and those found in western migrated there in post-independence days. In the editorial, the newspaper condemned the threats of physical harm posed to the Kikuyus due to the electoral fraud charges that were facing Senator Wetangula, a Luhya from Bungoma County. It was said that the charges were politically motivated by the Kikuyu community and this was the reason for the threats against them. The editorial argues against this reasoning and even calls upon leaders to unite in condemning the utterances by a member of parliament, who had threatened the Kikuyus in Bungoma with trouble should Senator Wetangula lose his seat in the senate. The author calls it grievous nonsense and should be stopped by the police. The author states,

23. “No one from Central Kenya who resides in Western should be anxious or lose any sleep just because Wetangula has lost a corruption case. Senator Wetangula and Bungoma police should be the first people to move to stop this grievous nonsense – and to press charges.”(Star Dec 1, 2015)

This article is straight forward as it directly condemns utterances meant to fuel ethnic animosity in Bungoma County. As opposed to other articles, this editorial has been straight to the point and condemned the people that uttered the inflammatory statements. Targeting the individuals involved in propagation of ethnic hatred could be one of the ways of improving the peaceful coexistence between various tribes in the country. Generalizations of issues to do with negative ethnicity and ethnic conflicts may not be adequate to solve the problem. The author is bold enough to call for pressing of charges against individuals that had propagated the ethnic hatred. The article’s calling for influential people in politics to denounce bigotry is a clear indication of media that is fighting the perpetration of ethnic conflicts in Kenya. This is despite the fact that the people hold powerful legislative positions in the country. If analyzed from the perspective of this article alone, it can well be stated that the newspaper champions against incidences of ethnic contempt.

The tone of this article can be related to the media coverage of terrorism in the wake of Bali bombings in Indonesia. The coverage was studied and analyzed by Mahony (2010) who found out that the media construction of Islamic fundamentalism was different in Indonesia when compared to Australia. Whereas the Australian media was out rightly calling for measures to tame in Islamic fundamentalism, the Indonesian media took a moderate and conciliatory tone. Perhaps the tone of the article condemning the threats against Kikuyus can be likened to the tone used by Australians to cover issues relating to the Bali bombings. However, it should be noted that the rhetoric used by Australian media was directed towards a distinct group while the one

used by the Kenyan article was directed towards individuals. Additionally, the Kenyan article did not seek to associate the individuals with any tribe.

The editorial of the newspaper also authored and published another article condemning ethnic strife on a border between two communities. In this article, the newspaper describes the genesis of the problem between two warring communities, which led to deaths of people from both sides, destruction of property and theft of livestock. The article's approach to the issue is seen to be neutral. First, it does not mention the tribes involved in the conflicts. It only mentions the names of the counties. This is a positive move because the newspaper shied away from compartmentalizing the problem into two ethnic communities. Actually, the only thing that makes the reader know that the conflict involved distinct ethnic communities is the title which uses the word ethnic strife. However, it is clear that the paper is apportioning blame to leaders who failed to act on intelligence and forestall the problem in its tracks.

> 24. "Where are the peace committees and the Nyumba Kumi neighborhood watch? Finally, where are the administrators across two counties? And why are they waiting for people to die? There should not be so many more questions than answers as innocent Kenyans are exposed to homemade terrorism." (Star Jan 11, 2016)

Similar to the other editorials, the author calls for leaders to take roles in forestalling ethnic strife in the region. The questions raised in the editorial are thought provoking and might lead to situations where the responsible people take action. This article also makes the reader call to mind that peace and coexistence among different communities is a responsibility of all members of the society. Similarly, as was with the observation of the previous article, this article is analyzed to be neutral and condemning in tone. The condemnation is against the complacency of leaders towards ethnic conflicts. The article nonetheless does not condemn the real actors who were perpetuating the violence across the borders of the community.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONLCUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

This study sought to find out the ways through which online media discourse can lead to ethnic conflicts in Kenya. In the research, three newspapers were analyzed. I searched for the online versions of newspapers and identified articles that dwelt on issues and topics of ethnic conflicts and relationships. The Nation newspaper, The Standard newspaper and The Star were the media that I analyzed. Table 5.1 shows a summary of the findings of the study. Critical discourse analysis was used as the theoretical framework to evaluate the content of the media. Presented in this section is the summary of the findings from the analysis.

Newspaper	Articles Analyzed	Positive Contribution to Escalation of Conflicts	Negative Contribution to Escalation of Conflicts
Daily Nation	7	4	3
The Standard	9	2	7
The Star	4	0	4
Total	20	6	14

Out of the 20 articles analyzed in this research, 14 were found to be inclined towards fighting ethnic conflicts while 6 were found to help escalate ethnic conflicts. The Nation newspaper leads in publishing articles that could jeopardize ethnic harmony. The Star was found not to have any article that could escalate ethnic conflicts.

5.1.1 Nation Newspaper

From the analysis of the content published in the Nation Newspaper, this research found out that the paper had mixed discourses on ethnic relations in the country. Whereas some of the discourses were bound to promote peace and good neighborliness among the people, others were bound to escalate ethnic hatred among communities. In this paper, seven articles were analyzed. Out of the seven articles, four were outright in their creation of the dichotomy of the bad versus the good tribes. Whereas some of the articles were discussing live events, others were into philosophical issues concerning the governance of the country. The four articles, which could incite hatred among the ethnic communities in the country, laid blame on specific tribes for creating trouble in the country. Considering the fact that these articles go through editing before being published, it became clear that they had been endorsed by the media house.

Three articles from the same newspaper were either neutral or conciliatory in their tones. They avoided mentioning the aggressor and the victim in the problems under discussion. One way through which these articles insisted on neutrality was by avoiding to mention the number of casualties from each side, whenever discussing violent conflicts between two communities. They also used the names of regions rather than the names of tribes to describe differences between communities. They thus made it to look more of a regional disagreement rather than a tribal disagreement.

5.1.2 The Standard Newspaper

The analysis of the standard newspaper shows that the media content is aimed at reducing ethnic conflicts in the country. The articles analyzed in this newspaper discussed both real issues and ideological issues concerning tribal relationships in the country. I analyzed nine articles, three of which involved an exchange between two authors. Out of the nine articles, only two were found to aim at presenting some tribes to be aggressors, evil or less human. In one of the articles, the author reported by implying that one tribe had launched an unprovoked aggression against their neighbors. The article did not nonetheless blame them, apart from the explicit reporting. In another article, the author chronicled what he termed as injustices and unfairness propagated by one tribe since Kenya obtained its independence.

Seven articles were found to adhere to the tenets of peace journalism. Four out of the seven articles went further to narrate to the reader the consequences of ethnic strife and ethnic based politics. They explained at length the essence of adopting issue based approached to problems affecting Kenyans. The articles dissuaded the readers against adopting the tribal based ideology where every aspect of life is analyzed using ethnic based telescopes. The other three articles were careful in their approach to discussing ethnic based conflicts. They dwelt on political correctness by avoiding to draw the dichotomy of good versus bad, virtue versus evil and inhuman versus human, when describing the conflicts between different ethnic persuasions.

5.1.3 The Star

In this newspaper, four articles were analyzed. Two of the articles were written by the same author while two other articles were written as editorials by the newspaper's editorial board. The analysis of the content of the articles shows that the newspaper seeks to strike a balance in its approach to ethnic issues. Out of the four articles, only one was identified to be biased and directed towards victimization of some sections of the country. In the article, the author used generalizations to conclude about the victimization of one tribe in the country. The article had adopted a revisionist and apologist tone, seeking to atone one tribe of any wrong doing and blaming other tribes for witch hunt. This article was explicit in its analysis of issues and split the problem into two factions, one faction representing one tribe and another faction representing 41 tribes of Kenya.

The other three articles were found to have a tone of condemnation against ethnic hatred. Two of the three articles called out for action to be taken against leaders who were perpetrating ethnic hatred in the country. The authors of the two articles went a step further and named the parties who should face litigation due to their abetting or their complacence towards ethnic conflicts in the country. The articles adopted a harsh rhetoric against ethnic profiling in the country. The third article sought to engage readers in disadvantages of ethnic profiling. Even though it did not adopt a harsh rhetoric, the article articulated properly the need for Kenyans to shun tribalism and adopt nation state politics.

5.2 Conclusion

From the analysis of the three newspapers, this research has found out that they contribute to ethnic conflicts both in a negative and positive manner. The Nation Newspaper is inclined towards authoring articles that can fan ethnic conflicts in the country. The media discourse used by the newspaper is divisive and meant to segregate the ethnic communities in the country. It can therefore be concluded that the nation newspaper positively contributes to escalation of ethnic conflicts in the country.

The discourse used in Standard Newspaper is conciliatory and tends to adopt peace journalism. The newspaper mostly authors articles that are meant to engage the readers about the disadvantages of ethnic conflicts and ethnicity. The paper also adopts neutrality when reporting about ethnic conflicts existing in the society. Incidences of use of divisive language in the articles are marginal. This study thus concludes that the Standard Newspaper negatively influences escalation of ethnic conflicts in Kenya.

The Star Newspaper takes a proactive approach in fighting issues that contribute to ethnic conflicts. As opposed to other newspapers, this newspaper calls leaders and readers to take responsibility in matters concerning ethnic strife. In all the articles, the newspaper adopts a stern stance against leaders who fan ethnic hatred. As such, the paper is unequivocal in its philosophy towards ethnic conflicts.

It can also be inferred from the results that The Nation newspaper has more attributive words as seen through the explicit bolding of words and phrases, when discussing issues that touch on ethnic identities. The writers mostly tend to profile the belligerents into perpetrators and victims. The Standard and The Star newspapers on the other hand have less attributive words

demonstrated by less bolding of words and phrases as the writers tend to adopt a conciliatory approach in their discussions.

The results of this study further confirmed that media discourse plays an important role in averting conflict and promoting peace or in initiating and escalating conflicts. It has also been ascertained that the ways through which the newspapers present their news, views and opinions about events involving heterogeneous communities can influence the attitudes, perceptions, thoughts and opinion of the public about their neighbors thus could incite people into conflict. Similarly, media discourse can be used to foster harmonious relationships between communities.

5.3 Recommendations

Even though this study has analyzed the contributions of online media discourse to ethnic conflicts in Kenya, it has not come up with exhaustive conclusion about the topic and the subjects. Improvement can be done in this area of study, to come up with more elaborate and comprehensive results. One approach that can be used to achieve such results is through carrying out of an in-depth analysis of each newspaper. For instance, the results found that The Nation newspaper is inclined towards publishing articles that are far removed from reconciliation approach. However, it did not find out further the philosophy behind this approach. Further studies should carry out interviews with editorial teams of the newspapers to find out why they take specific approaches towards issue of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in Kenya. Censorship and editorial policies also dictate the degree to which authors can incite violence using media discourse. Future studies should also seek to assess the role played by censorship and editorial policies in influencing discourses that can lead to ethnic violence.

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Appendix: List of Links to Newspaper Stories

Nation Newspaper

http://www.nation.co.ke/oped/Opinion/Populist-rigging-claims-a-threat-to-peaceful-2017-elections/-/440808/3027238/-/format/xhtml/-/ti37sqz/-/index.html

http://www.scribd.com/doc/221123151/Daily-Nation-30-04-2014#scribd

http://www.scribd.com/doc/221123151/Daily-Nation-30-04-2014#scribd

http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/Kiambaa-a-monument-to-mans-evil-ways-/-/1107872/1139928/-/format/xhtml/-/ujrnsp/-/index.html

http://www.scribd.com/doc/234841514/Daily-Nation-July-23rd-2014#scribd

http://www.scribd.com/doc/236560689/Daily-Nation-August-12th-2014#scribd

http://www.scribd.com/doc/132938887/Friday-Daily-Nation-Uhuru3#scribd.

Standard Newspaper

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/m/?articleID=2000169681&story_title=ugly-side-of-bitter-pokot-tugen-ethnic-clashes&pageNo=1.

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000180694/let-s-act-before-bandits-take-over-nothern-kenya

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000172009/hundreds-flee-ethnic-violence-along-tana-river-kilifi-boundary

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000064159&story_title=Village-burnt-as-violence-rages

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/bottest/article/2000190251/why-our-politics-have-never-been-ethnic-it-is-ideological

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/ureport/story/2000180075/polls-must-be-based-on-unity-not-ethnicity

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/lifestyle/article/2000164817/mr-president-central-bank-of-kenya-appointments-indicate-ethnic-balance-lacking

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000165739/obsession-with-ethnicity-is-a-national-tragedy-for-kenya

http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000166120/am-i-being-obsessed-with-ethnicity?articleID=2000166120&story_title=am-i-being-obsessed-with-ethnicity&pageNo=2

The Star Newspaper

http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2015/03/07/kenyans-stand-and-be-counted-against-negative-ethnicity_c1095985

http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2015/02/21/non-kikuyu-bigots-are-guilty-of-negative-ethnicity_c1087859

http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2015/12/01/leaders-should-stop-ethnic-contempt_c1252171

http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2016/01/11/where-is-government-in-nandi-kisumu-strife_c1273345