War or peace journalism? Kenyan newspaper framing of 2007 post-election violence

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Abstract

This study sought to examine the dominant frame in terms of 'war' and 'peace' in the coverage of the 2007/2008 post-election violence. At the time, Kenya had eight daily and over 10 weekly newspapers (Mbeke, 2008). The *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* were selected for the purpose of this study. The study applied systematic sampling method to select stories from *The Standard* and simple random sampling to select the stories from *Daily Nation*. A sample of 35 news articles (an average of 5 every day) for each of the newspapers and a maximum of 10 for each of the other categories were selected from 294 and 180 articles from *The Standard* and *Daily Nation* respectively. Details of each story were recorded in the coding sheet. This information was afterwards transferred to SPSS, a statistical data analysis programme. The study employs 11 of Johan Galtung's 13 indicators of war/peace journalism to analyse the framing of the conflict. Galtung has proposed a new approach to reporting war and conflict that he terms 'peace journalism'. The two newspapers had an equal number of war journalism-framed stories (6 or 2%). Peace journalism framing was dominant in both newspapers. The findings contrast Galtung's argument that in reporting war and conflict the media always give emphasis to war journalism frames.

Key terms: dominant frames, war journalism, peace journalism, post elections.

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INTRODUCTION

This study hopes to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on newspaper framing of conflicts by operationalising Galtung's peace/war journalism model to analyse the reporting of Kenya's 2007 election violence. It seeks to establish whether reporting of conflicts in the country is in consonance with Galtung's (1998, 2000, 2002) assertion that media reporting is more conflict-oriented (war journalism), a trait which has been confirmed by some studies (e.g. Lee and Maslog, 2005; Patel, 2005). Notably, most of the research on the role of the media in the coverage of Kenya's 2007 election violence has focused on the role of radio, internet and mobile phone technology. Not much effort has been dedicated to analysing the press coverage of the conflict. Scholars like Mbeke (2008), have attempted to analyse the role played by the media in general, but still give minimal attention to the press. This research hopes to make further contribution to the debate on the media coverage of the election violence, by focusing specifically on the press. It seeks to establish how the press, in this case, *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* covered the violence and, specifically, how they framed the conflict by applying Galtung's (1986, 1998) model classification of war and peace journalism. Considering that newspapers were commended for their 'peace effort', it is interesting to assess to what extent they employed peace journalism framing in their coverage of the conflict.

The violence was sparked by an announcement that opposition presidential candidate Raila Odinga had lost to the incumbent, Mwai Kibaki in the December 27 election. The aim of this study is to examine the dominant frame in terms of 'war' and 'peace' journalism in the two leading dailies in Kenya. The concept of peace journalism is the brainchild of Norwegian scholar Johan Galtung who has argued that mainstream media's dominant style of reporting war and conflict is violence orientated and is protected by a "massive cover of rationalisations" (e.g. 2002, 2006). Galtung terms this kind of journalism, 'war or violence' journalism. He contrasts 'war/violence' journalism with 'peace journalism' an approach to reporting conflicts supposed to be a "a self-conscious, working concept for journalists reporting wars and conflicts" (in Lynch and McGoldrick, 2000). He further argues that the way the media present conflict and violence is a "major factor in determining the reaction: war, or peace...the media carry a heavy responsibility. They prepare, consciously or unconsciously, the premises for a dramatic choice" (Galtung, 2006: 4).

The idea of peace journalism, so far, has not gone down well with journalists and is therefore yet to take root in the profession. Notably, Galtung identifies the major differences between the two approaches and outlines 13 indicators of war journalism and 13 indicators of peace journalism (1986, 1998). This classification has been employed to study the framing of some conflicts in Asia (Lee, & Maslog, 2005; Patel, 2005; Lee, et al., 2006). Findings from the first two studies were in agreement with Galtung's theory that war journalism frames dominate coverage of war and conflict. However, Lee et al. (2006) found that some newspapers in Asia deployed more peace journalism framing compared to war journalism framing in their reporting of the Iraq war, and also in the Sri Lankan (rebel Tamil Tigers against the government) conflict. The current study seeks to pursue the same line by applying

Galtung's indicators of war and peace journalism to study newspaper framing of the Kenyan conflict, a country geographically, culturally and socio-politically different from Asia where similar studies were carried out (Lee and Maslog, 2005; Patel, 2005; Lee et al., 2006).

LITERATURE REVIEW
While the media have generally been used in the promotion of conflicts, there is burgeoning believe that in the same vein they can be used in the promotion of peace. Some researchers and journalists (Galtung, 1998; Manoff, 1998; Lynch, & McGoldrick, 2000; Tehranian, 2002; Wolfsfeld, 1997, 2004) believe that the media can play a more proactive role in conflict resolution. Wolfsfeld (1997) for example argues that just as the news media can serve to rally citizens "round the flag" in times of crisis and war, so can the press be an important tool with the onset of peace. In addition, there are cases where the media have deliberately engaged in the search for solutions to conflicts. In Burundi the work of some privately owned radio stations in the promotion of peace and good citizenship has been noted (Bratic, 2008; Frère, 2007). In Kenya, the media appealed for peace and reconciliation among rival leaders and communities during the 2007 election violence. In most cases, however, media's calls for peace come long after the war has been fought and damage wrought.

Galtung (2002) claims that contemporary war journalism is modelled after sports journalism where one side has to either win or lose. McGoldrick and Lynch who argue that also propound this notion "war journalism, commonly frames conflict as a 'tug-of-war' between two antagonists: "a zero-sum game [in which] anything, which is not winning, risks being reported as losing" (2000: 8). According to Galtung (2006), the main characteristics of contemporary war journalism are that it is violence orientated, propaganda orientated, elite orientated and victory orientated. On the other hand, he argues, peace journalism is peace/conflict orientated; truth-oriented, people-oriented and solution-oriented (Table 1.). Tehran Ian (2002) describes peace journalism as "a kind of journalism and media ethics that attempts...to transform conflicts from their violent channels into constructive forms by conceptualising news, empowering the voiceless, and seeking common grounds that unify rather than divide human societies." He proposes 'Ten Commandments' for peace journalism.

Table 1: Galtung's peace versus war journalism dichotomy

PEACE/CONFLICT JOURNALISM	WAR/VIOLENCE JOURNALISM
I. **Peace/conflict- orientated** Explore conflict formation, x parties, y goals, z issues. General win/win orientation.	I. **War/violence - orientated** Focus on conflict arena, 2 parties, 1 goal (win), war general zero sum orientation
Open space, open time; causes and outcomes anywhere, also in history/culture.	Closed space, closed time; causes and exits in arena, who threw the first stone
Making conflicts transparent	
Giving voice to all parties; empathy, understanding	Making wars opaque/secret
See conflict/war as problem, focus on conflict creativity	"Us - them" journalism, propaganda, voice, for "us"
Humanisation of all sides; more so the worse the	See "them" as the problem, focus on who

weapons Proactive: prevention before any violence/war occurs Focus on invisible effects of violence (trauma and glory, damage to structure/culture)	prevails in war Dehumanisation of "them"; more so the worse the weapon Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting Focus only on visible effect of violence (killed, wounded and material damage)
II. Truth - orientated Expose untruths on all sides / uncover all cover-ups	**II. Propaganda - orientated** Expose "their" untruths / help "our" cover-ups / lies
III. People - orientated Focus on suffering all over; on women, aged, children, giving voice to the voiceless Give name to all evil-doers Focus on people peace-makers	**III. Elite - orientated** Focus on "our" suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece Give name of their evil-doer Focus on elite peace makers
IV. Solution - orientated Peace = nonviolence + creativity Highlight peace initiatives, also to prevent more war Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation	**IV. Victory - orientated** Peace = victory + ceasefire Conceal peace-initiative, before victory is at hand Focus on treaty, institution, the controlled society Leaving for another war, return if the old flares up

There are two theories of particular importance to this study framing and gatekeeping. Various scholars have offered definitions for framing but there is still no one standard definition of the concept (Entman, 1993; McCombs, et al., 2000; Scheufele, 1999). Tuchman (1978) argues that Mass media actively set the frames of reference that readers or viewers use to interpret and discuss public events. The media, give the story a 'spin,'...taking into account their organisational and modality constraints, professional judgments, and certain judgments about the audience (Neuman, et al., 1992). To frame, according to Entman, is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (1993). Tankard et al. (1991) define a media frame as the central organising idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is with selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration. Through repetition, placement, and reinforcement, the texts and images provide a dominant interpretation more readily perceivable, acceptable, and memorable than other interpretations (Entman, 1991). Some studies have operationalized framing in combination with other concepts such as agenda setting or priming (Iyengar, & Kinder, 1987). Others see framing as actually being an extension of agenda setting (Jasperson, et al., 1998; McCombs, 1994; McCombs and Bell, 1996; Shaw et al., 1997). They use the term second-level agenda setting to describe the impact of the salience of characteristics of

media coverage on audiences' interpretation of news stories (Scheufele, 1999).

Framing is especially important for this study because its aim is to identify the salient frames (war or peace journalism) used in the coverage of the election violence in Kenya. Several studies have been done on media framing of war and conflict (Carruthers, 2000; Gamson, 1992; Wolfsfeld, 1997; Pfau, et al., 2004Z; Gamson, 1992) (identified four frames used in the reporting of the Arab-Israeli conflict: strategic interests, feuding neighbors, Arab intransigence and Israeli expansionism. Pfau et al. (2004) whose study focused on reporting of the Iraqi conflict found that embedded journalists framed the US military more favourably compared to unilateral journalists. However, studies that have more direct relevance to this study were done by Lee and Maslog (2005), Lee et al. (2006) and Patel (2005). Lee and Maslog (2005) tested Galtung's peace/war journalism model in newspaper reporting of four Asian regional conflicts involving India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Philippines and found that their coverage was dominated by war journalism frames. Patel (2005) carried out a similar study on newspaper coverage of the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir and concluded "news coverage of the conflict invariably focuses on violence and details of violent events."

Gatekeeping theory implies that journalists hold the privileged position of acting as gatekeepers, selecting what information to allow or to block from passing through the gate. Although, different journalists may make different (gatekeeping) decisions, research suggests that assessments of newsworthiness are broadly consistent and result in comparable judgments about what should pass through the gate (Shoemaker, et al., 2001). In carrying out their gatekeeping role, journalists are mostly guided by professional ethics. News values also play an important part in determining what should be allowed through the gate. As gatekeepers, journalists are deemed to have responsibilities "both to the people on the other side of the gate - the audience, or the public broadly defined—and to the other gatekeepers, including the journalist's employer and other journalists within the profession as a whole" (Singer, 2008).

However, although journalists are guided by journalistic ethics, this does not imply that they always carry out their gatekeeping duties 'professionally'. In times of conflict, journalists sometimes willingly disseminate information that is potentially detrimental to the public. The Kenyan media, particularly, vernacular FM stations were accused of escalating the violence during the 2007 election conflict. In sum, gatekeeping gives journalists the discretion to decide what information reaches the public domain through media.

Table 2: Coding categories: Galtung's war/peace journalism indicators

War journalism	Peace journalism
Approach	
1. Reactive (waits for war to break out, or about to break out, before reporting)	1. Proactive (anticipates, starts reporting long before war breaks out)
2. Reports mainly on visible effects of war (Casualties, dead, wounded, damage to property)	2. Reports also on invisible effects of war (emotional trauma, damage to society and cultures)
3. Elite-oriented (focuses on leaders and elites as actors and sources of information)	3. People-oriented (focuses on common people as actors and sources of information)

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4. Focuses mainly on differences that led to the conflict	4. Reports the areas of agreement that might lead to a solution to the conflict
5. Focuses mainly on the here and now	5. Reports causes and consequences of the conflict
6. Dichotomises between the good guys and bad guys, victims and villains	6. Avoids labelling of good and bad guys
7. Two-party orientation (one party wins, one party loses)	7. Multiparty orientation (gives voice to many parties involved in conflict)
8.Partisan (biased for one side in the conflict)	8. Nonpartisan (neutral, not taking sides)
9. Zero-sum orientation (one goal: to win)	9. Win-win orientation (many goals and issues, solution-oriented)
10. Stops reporting with the peace treaty signing and ceasefire and heads for another war elsewhere	10. Stays on and reports aftermath of war-the reconstruction, rehabilitation, and implementation of peace treaty
Language	
11. Uses victimising language (e.g. destitute, devastated, defenceless, pathetic, tragic, demoralised) that tells only what has been done to people	11. Avoids victimising language, reports what has been done and could be done by people, and how they are coping
12. Uses demonising language (e.g. vicious, cruel, brutal, barbaric, inhuman, tyrant, savage, ruthless, terrorist, extremist, fanatic, fundamentalist)	11. Avoids demonising language, uses more precise descriptions, titles, or names
13. Uses emotive words, like genocide, assassination, and massacre, systematic (as in systematic raping or forcing people from their homes).	12. Objective and moderate. Avoids emotive words. Reserves the strongest language only for the gravest situation. Does not exaggerate.

Table: (Lee, & Maslog, 2005)

Based on these categories, questions were set to guide the coding process. The questions were supposed to help the coder decide which frame; 'war' or 'peace' journalism, was present in a particular category.

Table 3: Coder questions

Category	Questions
(a) Visibility of effects of war	(i) Does it focus on casualties, death toll, damage to property, *or* (ii) does it focus also on emotional trauma, damage to society and cultures?
(b) Elite orientation	(i) Does it focus only on elites, *or* (ii) Does it focus on common people as actors and sources of information?
(c) differences	(i) Does it focus mainly on differences that led to the conflict, *or* (ii) The areas of agreement that might lead to a solution to the conflict?
(d) Focus on here and now	(i) Does it focus mainly on the immediate (the prevailing state), *or* (ii) Also on causes and consequences of the conflict?

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(e) Good and bad dichotomy	(ii) Does it name good and bad people/parties, *or* (ii) Does it avoid such labelling of good and bad guys?
(f) Party involvement	(i) Does it only report two parties, *or* (ii) Does it give voice to many parties involved in conflict?
(g) Partisan	(i) Is it biased for one side of the conflict? , *or* (ii) Does it avoid taking sides? (i.e. neutral)
(h) Winning orientation	(i) Does it portray the conflict as a conflict where one side has to win (Zero-sum orientation), *or* (ii) multifaceted with many goals and issues, solution-oriented (Win-win orientation)?
(i) Victimising	(i) Does it use victimising language (e.g. destitute, devastated, defenceless, pathetic, tragic, demoralised) that tells only what has been done to people *or* (ii) Does it avoid such language and report what has been done and could be done by people, and how they are coping?
(j) Demonising	(i) Does it use demonising language (e.g. vicious, cruel, brutal, barbaric, inhuman, tyrant, savage, ruthless, terrorist, extremist, fanatic, fundamentalist) *or*, (ii) Does it avoid such language?
(k) Emotive	(I) Does it use emotive words, like genocide, assassination, massacre, systematic (as in systematic raping or forcing people from their homes), *or* (ii) Does it avoid such emotive words?

(Source: Lee and Maslog, 2005)

RESULTS

A sample of 124 stories was analysed in this study. The stories were retrieved from two Kenyan newspapers, *Daily Nation* and *The Standard,* between December 31, 2007 and January 6, 2008. These comprised of 70 (56.5%) news stories, 14 (11.3%) editorials, 20 (16.1 %) opinion pieces and 20 (16.1 %) letters to the editor. 62 stories were drawn from each of the two Kenyan newspapers under this study, *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*. 11 of Galtung's 13 war/peace journalism indicators were used in the coding to identify the frames. The two indicators excluded from the study were reactivity and continuity of reports. Studying these indicators would have required a longer research timeframe, which was not possible with this study. A score of 1 was recorded every time an indicator was identified. In the end, the scores on a particular story were tallied. If the total war journalism indicators were more than the peace journalism indicators, the story was classified as war journalism, and vice versa. The story was classified as neutral if there was an equal number of war and peace journalism indicators.

A dominant peace journalism framing

The *Daily Nation* and *The Standard,* the two newspapers under this study, overwhelmingly used peace journalism frames in reporting the 2007 election conflict in Kenya in the initial week of the conflict (see Figure 5.1.). Out of the 124 stories analysed, 109 (87.9%) used peace journalism

frames, 12 (9.7%) used war journalism frames while the rest (3 or 2.4%) employed neutral frames (see Figure 5.1.). This finding contrasts Galtung's argument that in reporting war and conflict the media give emphasis to war journalism frames.

Prominence of peace/war journalism indicators

The most salient indicators of war journalism in the two newspapers coverage were focus on here and now with 62 out of 124 stories (or 50% of all stories), elite orientation 61 stories (49.2%) and visibility of war 50 (40.3%) (See Figure 5.1.). By focusing on here and now, journalists failed to reflect on the causes of the conflict or even explore its consequences. Their stories consequently dwelt mainly on the prevailing situation, the 'here and now': the fighting, casualties and human displacement, and failed to provide background information on the conflict. On elite orientation, 49.2% of the stories were framed as war journalism. This means journalists relied more on elites as the main actors and sources of information. Among the most quoted elites were senior government officials, political party leaders involved in the conflict, senior police officials and church leaders. The voice of the rival groups involved in the fighting and the 'ordinary person' who is mostly on the receiving end in any conflict was suppressed or diminutive in stature in these stories. The stories also gave prominence to the visibility of war (40.3%). They emphasized mostly on the visible effects of the conflict: casualties, death toll and damage to property. They told about the number of people killed and injured, the houses, vehicles and crops destroyed but ignored the invisible effects of the conflict like the trauma on people resulting from the violence and damage to cultures.

On the other hand, Galtung's indicators of peace journalism were most prominent in non-partisanship 116 stories (or 93.5% of the entire sample), avoidance of emotive language 115 (92.7%), avoidance of demonizing language 108 (87.1%), and in not dichotomizing between good/bad 97 (78.2%). Notably, the most salient indicators for peace journalism had a higher number of stories compared to the salient indicators for war journalism (Figure 4). That the journalists avoided taking sides (non-partisanship) implies that to a large extent they neutrally presented facts without siding with either of the warring parties. This finding was especially interesting because during the 2007 election campaigns, journalists, and media organisations had been accused of being biased in favor of the rival parties in the conflict. It would, however, be misleading to assert that the stories were utterly devoid of bias. The researcher takes cognizance of the fact that, even with a story appearing to be 'neutral' Eldrekin (2008), it could still be biased. Bias can, for instance, be purveyed through choice of sources. A journalist may choose sources, which support a particular line, which is favored by his/her newspaper. The stories also avoided use of emotive language (115 or 92.7%). Although such emotive words like 'genocide' and 'massacre' were invoked, largely, they were rarely used in the stories. In the same vein, the stories avoided dichotomizing between good and bad people. Journalists avoided pointing fingers on which side was to blame for the conflict. Most stories saw the rival parties, and particularly Kibaki and Raila Daily Nation (2008) who were tussling for the presidency, as holding the key to peace.

Figure 4: Overall prominence of war/peace journalism indicators
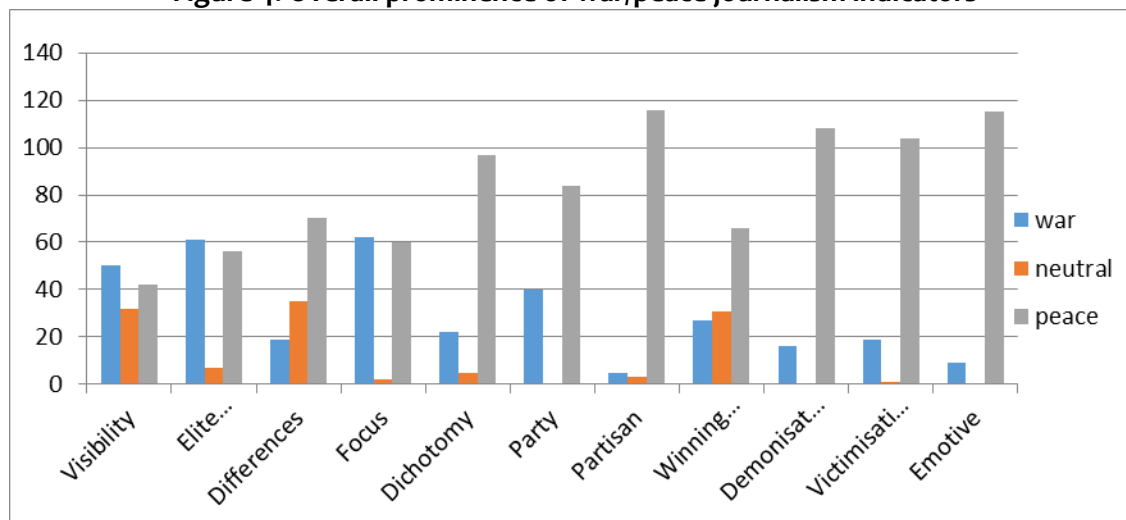
The main finding of this study was that a peace journalism frame dominated coverage of the 2007 election violence. Two similar studies in Asia (Lee, & Maslog, 2005; Patel, 2005), have come up with findings which support Galtung's theory that war journalism framing dominates coverage of contemporary conflicts. Lee et al. (2006), however, found that although Asian press coverage of most conflicts was dominated by war journalism framing, some newspapers deployed peace journalism framing in their reporting of the Iraq conflict. In Sri Lanka, their study found that some two newspapers coverage of a local conflict was, at one point, dominated by peace journalism frames. The current study like that of Lee et al. (Ibid.) has found substantial peace journalism framing in the coverage of the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*'s coverage of the 2007 Kenyan election conflict. Overall, 109 (87.9%) out of the 124 stories analysed employed a peace journalism frame.

Apart from visibility of war (i.e. focus on visible effects of war: deaths, destruction of property), elite orientation (focussing mostly on elites and ignoring ordinary people as sources of information) and focus on here and now (focussing on the prevailing state of affairs, ignoring the

causes and consequences of a conflict) which had more war journalism compared to peace journalism frames all the other categories analysed were framed as peace journalism. But even with the three categories, the difference between the war/peace journalism framing was not significant**.** From these findings, one can conclude that peace journalism was practised in Kenya, albeit during the one-week period covered by this study. Notably the findings are in conflict with Johan Galtung's (1986, 1998) assertion that contemporary coverage of war and conflict is conflict-orientated, meaning that it is dominated by a war journalism frame.

There were differences in how the various indicators were framed by the two newspapers, in terms of war and peace journalism (see Table 5.2.). The visibility of war; that is focus on casualties, death toll and damage to property, was more pronounced in *The Standard* with 30 (or 48.4%) out of 62 stories framed as war journalism compared to *Daily Nation* which had 20 (32.3%) of 62 stories. In focus on here and now, *Daily Nation* had 27 out of 62 stories (43.5%) stories framed as war journalism while The *Standard* had 35 (56.5%). There was minimal difference in framing elite

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orientation with *Daily Nation* having 31 (51.6%) stories framed as war journalism against *The Standard*'s 30 (48.4%). This means both papers equally focused on elites as actors and sources of information. Generally, there was little difference in the salience of the various indicators in terms of peace journalism framing in the two papers.

On party involvement, the *Daily Nation* had 38 stories framed as peace journalism against *The Standard*'s 46 (74.2%). On avoidance of use of emotive language *Daily Nation* had 56 (90.2%) stories framed as peace journalism compared to *The Standard*'s 59 (95.2) and on avoidance of use of demonizing language the *Daily Nation* had 50 (80.5%) and *The Standard* 58 (93.5%).

Table1: Difference in framing between the two papers according to indicators

	Nation (No. of stories)			**Standard** (No. of stories)		
	War	Neutral	Peace	War	Neutral	Peace
Visibility of war	20	18	24	30	14	18
Elite orientation	31	3	28	30	4	28
differences	9	16	37	10	19	33
Focus on here and now	27	1	34	35	1	26
Good/bad Dichotomy	9	3	50	13	2	47
Party involvement	24	--	38	16	--	46
Partisanship	1	2	59	4	1	57
Winning orientation	13	13	36	14	18	30
Demonising language	12	--	50	4	--	58
Victimising language	14	1	47	5	--	57
Emotive language	6	--	56	3	--	59

The fact that the two newspapers' coverage of the conflict was dominated by peace journalism framing is especially interesting considering that Kenyan journalists have conceded that they had scant knowledge on how to cover conflicts by the time the election violence broke out. They had no knowledge of peace journalism either as advocated by scholars such as Galtung. Early into the conflict, a senior editor and veteran journalist, Catherine Gicheru while emphasising the need to train journalists on peace journalism said: "We would like to stand out for peace in our country and as media professionals we should be vigilant on the use of language, pictures and voice-overs" (Standard, 2008). But it was not until February, 2008 that a roundtable meeting held jointly by media practitioners, civil society and scholars identified the need for local journalists to be trained on 'conflict sensitive journalism' (IMS, 2008). The training was consequently held and a handbook published in May, 2008 to guide journalists in covering conflicts. From the foregoing, one question particularly begs for an answer: how did Kenyan journalists overwhelmingly employ a peace journalism frame in their reporting while it was evident that they knew little about peace journalism and even lacked adequate knowledge on how to professionally cover conflicts?

I strongly believe that the answer to this question lies in the local media's conscious effort to cultivate peace (Daley, 2006). Kenyans journalists, it is apparent, followed an

important principle of peace journalism: "asking themselves what contribution they can make to bring peace in their society" (Peace Journalism, 2002). Most stories in the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* from news to editorials, opinion pieces and letters to the editor were fraught with calls for peace and coexistence among Kenyans and suggestions on how the conflict could be resolved. To underscore the enormity of the conflict, the two newspapers editorialised on the conflict, sometimes on frontpage, for each of the seven days studied. Regarded as the voices of media, editorials are important indicators of issues considered important by newspapers, and seek to "encourage critical thinking, to mould opinion and promote action" (Roy, 2004). The editorials in the two newspapers were in themselves daily appeals, if not prayers, for peace. *The Standard* (2008) for instance wrote:

> *Until the last gun falls silent we shall preach peace. Until the last panga is thrown to the ocean we shall be at the watchtower condemning inter-ethnic feuds. Until the displaced find solace in the homes out of which they were hounded because of the circumstance of their birth, we shall say no to the fissures opened up by political disagreements. Until normalcy returns to our cities and villages, with the mark of unrestricted movement of people, goods and services, our message shall remain peace is the harvest of love as war is the fruit of hate.*

But one did not have to read the content of an editorial to tell its gist, reading the headline was good enough. Apart from the headline "Tallying fiasco must never be repeated" which appeared on December 31, a day after the outbreak of the postelection violence, all other editorial headlines in *The Standard* were bold attempts by the newspaper to broker and revamp peace: "Violence does not help in this crisis", "Hardened positions will only fuel conflict", "Save our beloved country", "Let us all join in the push for peace", "True peace is the beauty of a country" and

"Search for peace must include the long term" (Standard, 2008). The case was no different for the *Daily Nation* which carried such headlines as, "Kibaki and Raila: Stop the senseless slaughter", "Promising signs from Tutu peace initiative", Save our beloved country" and "Our leaders must make peace happen" (Nation, 2008). As this study has showed, there was no significant difference in the manner the two newspapers reported the conflict as they both framed it heavily as peace journalism. Their common interest was to end the fighting and revamp peace.

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However, one did not have to read the content of an editorial to tell its gist, reading the headline was good enough. Apart from the headline *"Tallying fiasco must never be repeated"* which appeared on December 31, a day after the outbreak of the postelection violence, all other editorial headlines in *The Standard* were bold attempts by the newspaper to broker and revamp peace: *"Violence does not help in this crisis"*, *"Hardened positions will only fuel conflict"*, *"Save our beloved country"*, *"Let us all join in the push for peace"*, *"True peace is the beauty of a country"* and *"Search for peace must include the long term"* (Standard, 2008). The case was no different for the *Daily Nation* which carried such headlines as, *"Kibaki and Raila: Stop the senseless slaughter"*, *"Promising signs from Tutu peace initiative"*, Save our beloved country" and *"Our leaders must make peace happen"* (Nation, 2008). As this study has showed, there was no significant difference in the manner the two newspapers reported the conflict as they both framed it heavily as peace journalism. Their common interest was to end the fighting and revamp peace. This interest was especially foregrounded on January, 3, 2008 when all local dailies published front-page editorials under a common headline; "Save our beloved country", calling for an end to the fighting and urging the two rival political leaders to come to a consensus for peace's sake. There is

no doubt that the media acted as a podium to promote peace and harmony in the country.

This study has further shown that there was a shift towards more positive peace framing after January 3, 2008, a pointer of the two newspapers' determination to encourage peace. Indeed, the entire local media community was united in waging a campaign for peace. The Media Council of Kenya even organised several inter-religious meetings to pray for peace that were aired live on all local radio and TV stations (Nation, 2008b). Individual journalists too joined hands and committed themselves to the promotion of peace. Women journalists, for example, launched a peace campaign, "Healing the Nation, The White Ribbon Campaign", an initiative they said aimed to "bring out voices of ordinary people who are making a difference in their communities" (Standard, 2008). The public took note and commended the media for 'fighting' for peace. One letter to the editor for example read: This is a letter to thank the NMG for their efforts in trying to restore peace and reconciliation in our beloved country (Daily Nation, 2008).

Demonization, use of emotive language, partisanship etc., are the antithesis of good journalism. This is perhaps why Hanitzsch (2007) contends, "Peace journalism oftentimes reinvents the wheel to the extent that it repeats a 'classic' debate on quality in journalism that has a long tradition in communication and media research." It is not my intention, however, to discuss here the merits and demerits of the two approaches to reporting war and conflict.

If the media's decision to advocate for peace explains the overwhelming peace framing by the two newspapers, it is important that we explore why the Kenyan media, and specifically the two newspapers under this study, were massively in favor of peace. The political campaigns for the 2007 elections were a most polarising exercise. Kenyan political parties are constructed along, and draw their

power from ethnicity. Journalists, being part of the same society, were not immune from the mesh of polarisation. They became partisan in their reporting supporting one side in the conflict or the other, as they identified with their various ethnicities. Notably, the country quickly slid into anarchy within hours of the release of the results with violence being reported in various parts of the country. The scale of the violence appears to have served as a wake-up call, which finally sobered up many Kenyans including journalists Matters were not made better by the fact that several journalists among them senior editors were threatened, through emails and SMS, with death by anonymous people over the way they covered the conflict (RSF, 2008).

Secondly, there were fears of the violence escalating into a full blown civil war. Indeed, several inferences were made by the government locally, and by the international media that the violence was evolving into genocide with parallels being drawn with the Rwandan conflict (Thielke, 2008; CNN, 2008). Fully aware of the role of the Rwandan media in the 1994 violence, the Kenyan media opted to temper their reporting, fearing the possibility of escalating the violence. Indeed, RSF (2008) observed that fear of escalating violence "dominated the behaviour of editors and journalists and they firmly chose restraint in their coverage of the situation". The fear could have been amplified by the journalists' lack of knowledge on how to report wars and conflicts. This lack of knowledge, and with the Rwandan case still at the back of their mind, could have made the journalists to tread carefully to avoid being blamed for advertently or inadvertently escalating the violence.

Another possible explanation of the overwhelming peace journalism framing of the conflict is grounded in the nature of the media in Kenya. Most media are in the hands of private owners, whose main motivation is making profit. Nation Media Group (NMG) owns the Daily Nation while

Standard Group (SG), the largest and second largest media companies in the country respectively own The Standard. Few businesses thrive in a state of strive and this was evident in Kenya a few days after the outbreak of the violence. Shops remained closed and transport systems were paralysed as warring groups blocked highways, killing and maiming perceived enemies and destroying their vehicles. Newspaper sales quickly plummeted, as it was difficult to ferry them by road as usual to the market. As the fighting intensified two-newspaper carrier vans, one belonging to NMG and the other to SG were set on fire and their drivers nearly lynched as they transported newspapers to western Kenya (Kimutai, 2008). Advertising was hurt too, as most companies could not operate normally. Besides, rioters were setting houses and business premises on fire as the violence spread across the country. No one and nothing was safe anymore. The fear of dealing a blow to their bottom lines or even losing their business empires, I argue, could have forced the media and particularly the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* to tone down their reporting and engage in a campaign for peace.

Closely linked to the above argument, is the nature of the Kenyan media political economy. According to Alger (1996), although the relationship between the media and the state appears to be perennially oppositional, in reality it is not as antagonistic. Since independence, a close relationship has been maintained between the owners of the two newspapers and the state, which oftentimes has had a bearing in the way they operate. As Ogola (2009) notes, although the *Daily Nation* was highly critical of the Moi government "it would be wrong to ignore the fact that criticising the government did not mean destabilising the status quo". He notes that the state "exercised subtle influence on the group through its principal shareholder the Aga Khan who enjoyed cordial relations with Moi" (Ibid. 2005), who was "granted access to various business opportunities and became one of the major investors in Kenya owning a string of hotels, schools and hospitals

among other lucrative businesses." Notably, during the 2007 election campaigns, the *Daily Nation* was accused of being sympathetic to the incumbent president Mwai Kibaki who was running for a second term. In addition, the *Daily Nation* is a major, if not the main, beneficiary of state advertising, and it would be hesitant to jeopardise such business relationship. Although differences have emerged between *The Standard* and the government recently, similar if not closer ties have existed between the two parties over the years. Close associates of former president Daniel arap Moi acquired major stakes in the newspaper during his reign, which made them to influence its editorial decisions. They remain the main shareholders of the company, giving them and the former president a say in its running.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Conclusion: The study found that the two newspapers had an equal number of war journalism-framed stories (6 or 2%). The *Daily Nation* had 55 out of 62 (or 88.7%) peace journalism-framed stories, one more than *The Standard* which had 54 out of 62 (or 87.1%). The *Daily Nation* and *The*

Standard, the two newspapers studied, overwhelmingly framed the conflict as peace journalism. In sum, therefore, the newspapers predominantly used a peace journalism frame. This shows that the two newspapers' publicly stated commitment to peace during the time of the conflict was translated to peace journalism framing when it came to their reporting.

Recommendations: The study offers a new perspective by researching the (war/peace journalism) framing of a conflict in Kenya, a different geo-political, socio-cultural environment. It would be useful as well to analyse the newspapers' coverage of the conflict in the period preceding the onset of the conflict and after the signing of the peace accord. In addition, it would be useful to do an interview with journalists to determine why they framed the stories the way they did. Finally, it would be important to gauge the impact of the (overwhelming) peace journalism framing on the peace process to determine whether media reporting between standard newspaper and daily nation newspaper were framed differently.

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