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# The Images and Rights of Migrants in the Kenyan Media

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### Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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## ABSTRACT

Existing research shows that media coverage has a significant influence on public and policy makers' attitudes towards migrants and migration. Yet in Kenya, scholars have ignored media coverage in research examining public opinion towards migration or media's portrayal of migration. The study examines how research has presented migration as depicted in the media, specifically; negative news portrayals of migrants have strong implications for opinion towards migration as opposed to positive portrayals. It is also important to note that high volumes of media coverage regarding any particular issue should increase awareness and concern in the minds of the public. Although the media highlights human rights perspective of the migrants, their reporting portrays migrants as a threat to national security. It does not challenge the involvement of those responsible for safeguarding borders; consequently such skewed coverage is likely to injure the reputation of the entire migration. Scholars and policy makers must acknowledge the agenda setting role of the media as it influences policy change and academic research. The research is part of the larger literature which seeks to increase more knowledge on media and migration. Further this paper utilized agenda setting theory and network theory in explaining portrayal of migration by Kenyan

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media. In addition, this paper used survey data and content analysis of media coverage of migrants and migration to examine the influence of news exposure on attitudes in the society. The paper purposively selected four main media outlets due to their regional coverage and data was retrieved from Media Council of Kenya's Newbase for print and Volicon for broadcast media while at the same time conducted 8 interviews on editors. The findings showed the media predominantly portrayed migrants as victims, threats to security; this increases awareness and concern about rights of migrants as witnessed from militarization of migration in Europe. While it is evident immigration issues attract media attention, there is need for human rights advocates and the media to increase information that reduces uncertainties surrounding immigration.

*Keywords: Refugee; news media; immigrants; asylum seekers.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In his book *why Africa? A continent in a dilemma of unanswered questions*; Bone Udeze explored the reasons why Africa is becoming synonymous with economic problems, political instability, civil wars, economic conflicts, hunger and diseases such as HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, women and child abuse and the list is endless [1]. This study extends Udeze's argument that fairness demands that the media revise their negative portrayal of Africa. Nonetheless negative news makes better headlines and the media is least expected to promote Africa in a positive manner. While the role of the media is recognized, it is critical for scholars and practitioners to sustain the debate on Africa's image globally. In the first place our greatest concern on the number of African migrants drowning in Mediterranean Sea which is against Article 3 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which posits that "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person". For the media, it is news as illustrated by recent literature: The media disseminates news they want the public to know instead of what the public needs to know about Africa [1].

Immigration stories makes news and economists view it as a source of economic growth in both the origin and host countries through remittance or individual investments. To illustrate this observation, Khosa and Kalitanyi [2] agree that a number of immigrants exploit business opportunities and receive financial rewards in host country and remitted to their country of origin. Kenya, one of the beneficiary of remittance, is a global player in international migration as host to about 600,000 refugees and as a major migration route yet the image of migrants has been branded by the western media from an illegal or threat to security perspective. The media in Kenya

remains silent on migration stories and seems to have influenced scholarly works as little has been written on how media portrays migration issues. This paper examines media's portrayal of migration and migrants, specifically the images in the newspapers and how globalization of news media has shaped migration debates in an ever changing Kenya's media scene.

It is essential to examine how media presents migration stories because it may alter traditional journalistic approaches and secondly continuously play an important role in the international affairs as long as migration debate exists in the public sphere. The role of the media in migration is increasingly developing at a time when Kenyan journalism sector has gone through profound transformation. For instance, the number of broadcast outlets and the quality and vibrancy of print media have risen steadily since 1990s in which Kenya Broadcasting Corporation remained the only television and radio stations up till 1989 when Kenya Television Network (KTN) was established opening up the sector for increased TV and radio station [3].

In recent times, sources of information and demand for news stories that make headline and controversies have shaped the way migration stories are covered not only in Kenya but across the world. By amplifying conflicting public opinion, the media tend to make stories on migration attract world attention. For example, when the government of Kenya announced arrests and deportation of Nigerians and Somalia migrants in May 2015, the media reports explicitly created global criticism resulting to government's withdrawal of the plan. Certainly, such level of attention exemplifies the way news media influences migration stories and according to Suro [4] when migrants are linked to controversies or crisis it

makes headline-becomes news. Additionally, Kim, Carvalho, Davis, & Mullins [5] found that media commonly frame stories related to the migration by presenting it as a problem and when referring to the consequences of illegal immigration, media are likely to refer to link immigration with crime.

Africa with vibrant media is the major contributor of migrants yet rarely studies are undertaken to examine how African media portrays migrants. International Organization of Migration 2013 report shows that Africa contributes 43% of the total world migrants. The report further illustrates Somalia-Kenya as one of the world's major migration routes especially those headed to South Africa. The media has often been accused of following a narrow edge in reporting migration. The media in Canada and UK largely portray immigrants in negative manner by using the term illegal immigrants most often [6]. Elsewhere even in instances where immigrants population is small the media has, in many respects, portrayed them as people who can cause troubles. U.S. media also frequently use the term illegal immigration when reporting on undocumented immigration (illegal entry and visa violations). According to Clark [6], 2% (about 492 Tamil entering Canada) of the total asylum seekers were branded bogus refugees seeking to take advantage of Canada's immigration system. Consequently, especially immigrants moving due to civil wars famine such labeling affects them negatively considering the role of media in shaping public opinion by acting as a source of learning about national trends and policies. Therefore this becomes a problem especially when depicted as destructive, uprooted and militarizing their movement. Consequently it increases immigrant's hostile environment because it reinforces stereotypes and constructs misleading perceptions among the non-immigrants in the host countries.

There are few studies on the role of the media apart from its news gathering and dissemination. In this case the prevalence of lifestyle in western world often centers around money and wealth reported and circulated by the media. Besides civil wars, violations of human rights and undemocratic regimes have contributed to immigration [7]. Further evidence confirms the influence of the media on people's decision to move through images of good and prosperous living conditions. Therefore to some people migration becomes a means of

upward social mobility from lower to higher class [7].

## **1.1 Media - The Intermediary**

Migration is multifaceted comprising several players: police, media, human rights advocates etc. The focus of this paper is how media portrays migration. Research has shown that the media information promotes para-social relationship existing across boundaries and allows migrants to connect from different regions in the world. A study by Matei [8] shows that as intervention agency, the media promotes interaction between migrants and non-migrants and hence shared sense of belonging. It can be argued that what the public considers very important is a product of interaction that occurs through personal space (images individual agenda), interpersonal space (shapes group agenda and public agenda) and institutional space (shapes media and policy agenda) [8].

## **1.2 Migration in Kenya**

Kenya produces and host migrants and as international migration gains importance in the policy agenda, demand for migration is increasing. By 2015 there were 1,084,357 immigrants in Kenya making up 2.35% of the total resident population. Recent reports show that Kenya produces about 446, 331 (0.96%) migrants and as shown in Fig. 1 Kenya is home to immigrants from 13 African countries with Somali and Uganda having the largest population respectively. Immigrants fear being prosecuted for illegal stay in the country and hence media coverage often increases during arrests and detention of migrants.

Over the years, the contribution of migration in shaping the world has been evident. For instance the 2014 data show that over 14 billion USD was remitted to Kenya with North America making largest (55%) sources of remittances and 27% from Europe. Therefore it is imperative to recognize the important role played by migration in the development of many modern states, shaping labour dynamics. As such various stakeholders including the media in Kenya should sustain the discussion on the linkage between media and development.

Kenya's recognition of migration is evident through creation of The Directorate of Immigration and Registration of Persons whose

main functions include – registration of persons, births and death; providing immigration services, managing refugees, border management and maintenance of Integrated Population Registration system (IPRS). The IPRS which stores data of all Kenyans and migrants in a central location was launched in Kenya by President Uhuru Kenyatta in March 2015. According to Greiner & Sakdapolrak [9] this increased data-collection system meant for administrative functions is not valued as sources of information by many including scholars and media practitioners. Precisely, Mary Shisky in her article “*the Role of scholars and scholarship in economic Development*” challenges scholars to utilize the media to stimulate radical institutional charges scholars to utilize media in stimulating radical institutional charges. At this point, the relationship between the media and scholars has become very crucial in integrating data into news report not only us press release as witness earlier. As immigrants continue to enter the country, Kenya’s population is projected to hit 50 million by 2020 and people aged 15 and 39 accounting 35.4% of the population. President Uhuru Kenyatta reiterated the importance of IPRS on development

credible data is critical for development and essential for planning and delivery of public services.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of media and migration are two distinct fields of study which overlap in many respects but their interconnectedness; have rarely been explored [10]. Available studies have examined migration from economic view communication [11]. The current paper examines the role of the media in constructing the immigrant images in Kenyan which has become an emerging gateway with an exponential growth in immigrant population across the world. Spoonley and Butcher [12] in an article “*Reporting super diversity: The mass media and immigration in New Zealand*” focusing on the print media found that the media stereotyped immigration by publicly articulating racialization and they concluded that the media often presenting immigrants as “others” mainly by some journalists. Nonetheless the media can bridge the gap that exists between immigrants and non-migrants by constructing and brokering their relationships.

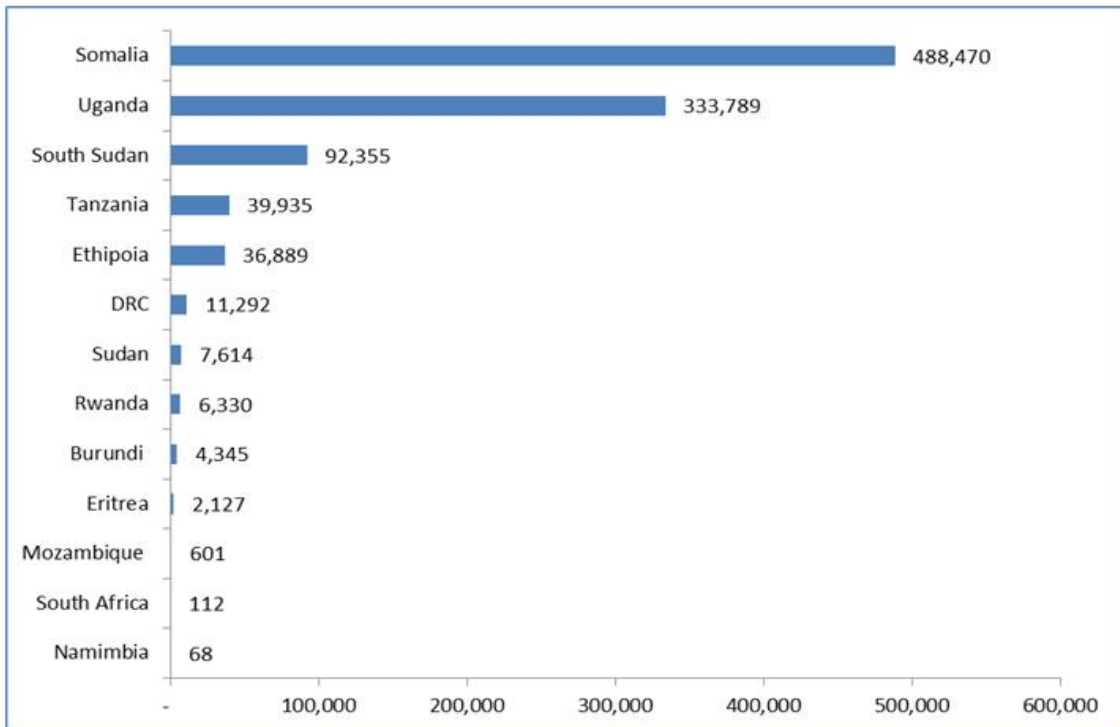


Fig. 1. Trends of Immigrants flow into Kenya in 2015 [13]

Adeyanju and Oriola [14] investigated African migrants and reported that western media have openly misrepresented Africa's as bad with regard to humanity. Africa is the land of disease and misery while western world have been identified by the media as the land of peace. Most certainly such representation reinforces the available rhetoric of Africa as hotbed of civil wars, hunger, diseases, poverty etc. According to Baker et al. [15] media coverage of migration in the recent past has been increasing steadily and there is general agreement among scholars and practitioners that the media in UK have shaped issues surrounding immigration [16]. For instance, the images of more than 500 death people in the media along migratory routes around the world have captured attention of the world. Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Right during a keynote address in March 2016 termed such deaths a human rights crisis<sup>1</sup>

Migrants often experience numerous challenges while on transit to other countries and studies have explains control measures along the transit migration include legislation that criminalizes irregular migrants, many are jailed and prosecuted. Moreover migrants lack regular channels for entry and these restrictions makes them opt for irregular channels such as smugglers and brokers [17]. At times, instead of reinforcing authorities' perception of migrants, the media needs to expose any human rights violation by countries along the migratory routes. The media should understand these immigrants are communities of the tortured and tormented and prisoners of conscience as Zizek calls it [18].

Threadgold [19] investigated media coverage of migration from 1999-2009. He found that asylum and immigration received attention during and whenever there is any terrorists attack. Threadgold cites Iraq war in 2003, London transit bombing on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005 and 2007 failed jury trials of three British citizens accused of aiding the bombing in which print and broadcast media predominantly covered the event. Threadgold's study that news frames of migration issues around panic on numbers, crime, and welfare state crisis is evident in Kenya especially a time

when Al shabaab<sup>2</sup> increased its activities in Kenya. Amnesty International in its 2014 report entitled, "*Somalis are Scapegoats in Kenya's Counter-Terror Crackdown*" documented violation of human rights during government's counter-terror operation known as 'Usalama Watch' conducted following an attack in Mombasa on 23 March and explosions in Eastleigh on 31 March 2014, which killed at least ten people and injured scores of others. The dramatic events around counter-terrorism make them receive huge coverage as there had been allegation of rape, looting, detention, harassment by the security officers.

A study by ICAR cited by Threadgold found that 22% of stories analyzed associated asylum seekers with crime. Such negative associations certainly create more barriers to the migrant as public in host countries become non-receptive to them. The arrest of 23 Ethiopian immigrants arrested in Nairobi exemplifies resistance migrants face as they were almost lynched by angry residents, who accused them of being criminals [20]. The media in Kenya like many other countries is considered a very powerful and influential tool. In an article, "*Undocumented immigrants or illegal aliens? Southwestern media portrayals of Latino immigrants*" Sternberg [21] observes that several media elements including language issues and actual news stories influence public perception of the reality. Noted Wilson and Gutierrez [22] inaccurate images are often created by the media and tend to stereotype different immigrants. As stated elsewhere the most common and overused term used to refer to undocumented immigrants is 'illegal alien' 'illegal immigrants'.

Meanwhile migrants in Kenya especially Somali speaking have been portrayed as social deviants, criminals or illegal immigrants. Migrants remarks Sternberg [21] are often stereotyped because they lack power to control images portrayed in the media. Indeed such stereotyped fails to distinguish between various migrant nationalities and in many instances these migrants are attacked as witnessed in South Africa, in 2015 xenophobic attacks against migrants.

<sup>1</sup> Keynote address: Side event "Migrants in transit" by Ms. Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights - Retrieved on May 3, 2016 from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=18485&LangID=E#sthash.8nXGQqfm.dpuf>

<sup>2</sup> Al shabaab is a Somalia based Islamic Courts Union which evolved from a grass-roots community driven Islamic Jihad movement inspired by Somali Islamic scholars who were trained in Saudi Arabia. The group has destabilized most countries in East Africa including Kenya.

There is evidence to suggest that the media drives policy through framing stories around migration control which certainly drives policy monitoring and reform [19]. Buchanan et al. argues that it is journalist's responsibility to hold the government accountable and as such this can be determined by increased coverage. Sommerville [23] in his study of media's influence on policy in UK concluded that by shaping the interacting between leadership and public attitudes it was able to effect the policy development. Drawing from King and Wood [24] arguments that the way media constructs immigrants in the host country influences migrant's integration into the society people hosting them tend to view their presence.

Migrants use various sources in gathering information before migrating [25]. Further studies have confirmed that a wider network-family, funds including former migrants abroad enhances migration [26,27]. Olken [28] investigated the impact of exposure to television and radio on social capital in Indonesia. Ludwig and Schierl [29] investigated use of sports media in integrating German residents who had Turkish migration background. Using a sample of 728 respondents aged 14 years and above, the authors found that a significant population of people with Turkish migration background used television (84%) as a source of information and most migrant were interested in sport in newspaper. However we can see that almost all these studies focused on Television and none or few - if any - on print prompting the current study which focuses on Kenyan media.

## **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

In Kenya today, information is flowing at a high rate owing to the liberalization of the media sector. Article 34 of the constitution of Kenya guarantees freedom and independence of the media (electronic, print or any other) as long as they do not propagate war, incite people into violence, hate speech and advocate for hatred. In fact the constitution bars the state from exercising control over or interfering with people engaged in broadcasting, producing or circulating any form of publication or disseminating information through any medium.

It seems the power of the media to set the nation's agenda and the public's focus on key issues is being replaced slowly by leaders and politicians setting the agenda for the media. Principally, agenda setting means the media is

able to bring issues to the attention of the public. It is assumed that the more attention is given to an issue, the more public perceives them as important. McComb [30] suggests that agenda setting of any media organization is reflected in its pattern of coverage and the author further reported that in some occasion, the media is unlikely to set the agenda because in a democratic state, it is assumed that the public have adequate wisdom to determine the course of their communities. This begs the question whose agenda does media organization drive in the immigration debate? First the assumption in this study is that media's attention on immigration will leads to public perceiving migration as the most important problem facing the country. By making certain issues more salient in people's mind (agenda setting) the media can shape considering that people take into account while making judgments about migration issues. Agenda setting is explains why journalists determine which events they pick for their news and hence role of journalists continue to become more and more important due to the information overload [31].

As discussed elsewhere, the media increases social networks among refugees and immigrants across a wide geographical boundaries and interactionists contend that this information contains large scale influence on the way individuals view themselves, others and the institutions of society [32]. In this case, network theory provides us with an understanding on influence of returning migrants especially progressing well in terms of education, wealth etc. The theory sees the returning migrants as actors who gather resources needed for their return and migrants returning their home country maintain their strong link with their former places of settlement overseas [33].

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study examined newspaper articles that described migration incidents involving immigrants, migrants and refugees that appeared in the Daily Nation, Standard, Star and People Daily from Jan – December 2015. These four newspapers were selected for this study because of their high circulation rates (PWC Information Telecoms and Media). In addition the study had selected four leading television stations (KTN, KBC, NTV, Citizen TV and K24) but during the study there were system failures and retrieving the video TV clips was a challenge and hence I discarded TV

analysis. A content analysis was adopted in this study.

A database search using 'NewBase<sup>3</sup>', was conducted using several keywords: migration, immigrants, migrant and refugee. All these keyword searches produced a combined total of 130 newspaper articles which were examined for inclusion in the dataset. Once the newspaper articles were reviewed, the study determined that majority of the newspaper articles identified in the initial database searches would not be suitable for the study. Therefore the study followed certain criterion in choosing the articles to be included in the study. First all newspaper articles adapted but published under national and international sections but did not discuss specifically migration issues were discarded. For example several newspaper articles would discuss migration but in relation to annual migration of animals or digital migration or any other migration issues which didn't relate with human migration.

By using the inclusion approach presented in the above section we were able to identify only those newspaper articles that described specific incidents of migration. At the end, all the newspapers eliminated did not provide any specific information required on migration and thus we were able to examine the frequency of the coverage of migration issues in all the four major newspapers in Kenya.

### 3.1 Coding the Data

Meanwhile once the newspaper articles had been sorted and organized according month, grouping of similar articles were done. The database search showed that despite all newspapers covering migration, they offered new or additional details on the topic under study. What followed was giving identification codes to same articles.

The newspaper articles were coded and then examined for specific categories of interest coding included:

- Inclusion of the month the story was filed
- Whether the country of origin the migrant was mentioned

- The specific terms referencing on the migrant
- If the migrant is taken to court
- If human right advocated are mentioned
- Any specific details of the migration

After sorting all the newspaper articles identified for inclusion, a total of 130 articles on migration was included in the analysis (see Table 1). The high coverage was observed in May 2015 can be attributed to debate surrounding Kenya's announcement to close refugee camp and also increased cases of terrorism which occurred during the month.

Content analysis was considered for this study because it has evolved as a research technique since 1920s mainly social science [34,35,36] According to Mayring [37] content analysis is a systematic and rule-guided technique used to analyze informational contents of textured data. The techniques combined both quantitative and qualitative methods in making sense of textured data [38].

### 3.2 Validity

Validity relates to how well the results of the study reflect the reality (Jones & shoemaker, 1994). In this approach, developing a coding scheme that measures the intended user claims and ensuring inferences drawn are able to provide information. In examining the validity of the newspapers, the researcher checked the keyword search results of prominent terms against the entire content of each newspaper as stored.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Characteristics of Migrants

Results presented in this section are based on selected 130 newspaper articles and interviews conducted among selected editors. The gender of the migrants could not be identified in 83 newspaper articles with Daily Nation constituting the majority of articles covering women while more male were identified in the Star newspaper (see Table 3). While the media identified the specific genders across all articles, most of the media images portrayed women and children as victims suffering more as refugee or immigrant (see Fig. 2).

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<sup>3</sup> NewBase is a media monitoring system installed and used by Media Council of Kenya. The system is a customized in house monitoring systems for scanning, cutting and storing newspapers and is owned by German Company.

**Table 1. Trends in international migrant stock in Kenya, 1990–2013**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2013</b>
Estimated number of international migrants at mid-year	162,981	527,821	755,351	790,071	817,747	955,452
Estimated number of refugees at mid-year	13, 452	243,544	214,901	245,553	269,130	-
Population of Kenya at mid-year (thousands)	23,433	27,492	31,441	35,817	40,863	-
Estimated number of female migrants at mid-year	79,850	261,796	379,281	401,620	415,688	485,688
Estimated number of male migrants at mid-year	83,131	266,025	376,070	388,451	402,059	469,764
International migrants as percentage of the population	0.7	1.9	2.4	2.2	2	-
Female migrants as percentage of all international migrants	49	49.6	50.2	50.8	50.8	-
Refugees as percentage of international migrants	8.3	46.1	28.5	31.1	32.9	-

Source: UN DESA, 2013

**Table 2. Migration coverage by month (2015)**

	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Daily Nation	3	2	5	12	20	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	48
Standard	4	2	1	9	13	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	33
Star	6	4	2	9	14	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	38
People Daily	0	0	1	2	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>130</b>



Most of the articles used in the content analysis identified some of demographic information about the migrant's country of origin or region, East African countries including Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda, Eritrea and Tanzania were mentioned 62 times or 48% of all the analyzed newspaper articles. The immigrants from Middle East were mentioned in 10% (13) articles of the total newspaper articles while those from other African countries mentioned in 29 times or 22%. Largely, various migrants regions were mentioned in all the newspapers (See Table 4). This articles support the claim that African and Middle East are the world's major contributors of immigrations. It further confirms previous studies that many people today live outside their country of birth and the number is expected to rise (IOM, 2011).

#### 4.2 Portrayal of Immigrants in the Media

Table 5 summarizes the thematic coverage of migration by the media and it is clear newspaper articles portrayed asylum seekers and refugees as the most prominent theme, followed by immigrants and migrants (36%). Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the media mentioned the term illegal migration 7 times (5%) while people smuggling and trafficking 6 times (5%). While the study cannot deny the impact of media on migration policies and how it is viewed, the extent to which media affects policy makers continue to stir scholarly debate suggests that 54 (42%) of the newspaper articles were presented as favorable to immigrations compared to 32% unfavorable and 25% presented as neutral (see Table 6).

To illustrate further, an in-depth examination of the newspaper articles reveals that the media does not always portray immigrants negatively but as depicted in some article where the media challenged western nations to demonstrate their commitment on migration by shifting their attention beyond rescues mission. In an article published on Daily Nation April 16, 2015, in headline *EU criticized as 400 migrants drown*, EU Foreign Policy Chief, Federica Mogherini noted "Europe should do more to end the wars that led people to embark on the world most deadly smuggling route" p. 30. As for local refugees, the media tend to portray refugees positively as witnessed in an article published in Standard Newspaper in May 7, 2015 when Kenyan refugees returned from Uganda. The newspaper carried a story "Tears of Joy as refugees return home from Uganda; describing refugees experience while in Uganda positively.

Based on Kent, Daniell, Davis and Daigle [39] arguments that media frames and enables individuals to see certain things, Table 7 exemplifies images of immigration framed in relation to security issues (46%). This holds true as studies have cited civil wars and conflict as some of the major causes of migration. When Lippmann [40] argued that the images reported by the media remained in people's minds can certainly influence how immigrants are viewed. In this study immigrants were structured or were perceived as a threat to security in 24 (19%) of the newspaper articles (see Table 8). Nonetheless agenda setting theory provides insights into how media spread information and based on the theory, these agenda includes emphasize and frequency in which these issues are reported.



Fig. 2. Media image used portraying a Nigerian and Syrian Refugees published in a Daily Nation and Standard May 2015

**Table 3. Gender of migrant in the media**

	Daily nation	Standard	Star	People daily	Total
Male	6 30%	5 25%	8 40%	1 5%	20 (15%)
Female	7 54%	2 15%	3 23%	1 8%	13 (10%)
Both	4 29%	6 43%	2 14%	2 14%	14 (11%)
NA	31 37%	20 24%	25 30%	7 8%	83 (64%)
N	48 37%	33 25%	38 29%	11 9%	130

**Table 4. Distribution of migrants by region**

	Daily nation	Standard	Star	People Daily	Total
East Africa	24 39%	13 21%	21 34%	4 7%	62 (48%)
Other East African Countries	14 48%	6 21%	5 17%	4 14%	29 (22%)
Middle East	4 31%	5 39%	2 15%	2 15%	13 (10%)
Europe	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%	0 0%	2 (2%)
Other	6 25%	9 38%	8 33%	1 4%	24 (19%)
N	48 37%	33 25%	38 29%	11 9%	130

**Table 5. Thematic coverage of migrants**

	Daily Nation	Standard	Star	People daily	Total
Asylum Seekers and Refugees	29 43%	13 19%	23 34%	3 4%	68 (53%)
Immigration and Migrants	15 32%	13 28%	11 23%	8 17%	47 (36%)
Illegal migration	2 29%	4 57%	1 14%	0 0%	7 (5%)
Migrant Accommodation	0 0%	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	2 (2%)
People Smuggling and Trafficking	2 33%	2 33%	2 33%	0 0%	6 (5%)
N	48 37%	33 25%	38 29%	11 9%	130

**Table 6. Extent of polarization**

	Daily Nation	Standard	Star	People Daily	Total
Favourable	20 36%	15 27%	15 27%	6 11%	56 (44%)
Neutral	15 47%	6 19%	8 25%	3 9%	32 (25%)
Unfavourable	13 31%	12 29%	15 36%	2 5%	42 (32%)
N	48 37%	33 25%	38 29%	11 9%	130

**Table 7. Framing of media discourse**

	Daily nation	Standard	Star	People daily	Total
Socio-cultural	7 54%	1 8%	5 39%	0 0%	13 (10%)
Economic	6 22%	7 26%	10 37%	4 15%	27 (21%)
Humanitarian	10 33%	11 37%	7 23%	2 7%	30 (23%)
Security	25 42%	14 23%	16 27%	5 8%	60 (46%)
N	48 37%	33 25%	38 29%	11 9%	130

**Table 8. Media depiction of migrants**

	Daily nation	Standard	Star	People daily	Total
Security threats	8 33%	6 25%	9 38%	1 4%	24 (19%)
Non-security threats	15 35%	15 35%	11 26%	2 5%	43 (33%)
NA	25 40%	12 19%	18 29%	8 13%	63 (49%)
N	48 37%	33 25%	38 29%	11 9%	130

In a commentary published in the daily Nation May 17, 2015, Gitau Warigi portrays refugees as security threats by claiming that an increase in illegal firearm are attributed to refugees according article, “*Dadaab refugee camp a dangerous staging post let us close it Pronto*”. It might be concluded from this that public will selectively interpret such information to agree with their position on terrorism activities in Kenyan and hence respond negatively against refugees or immigrants. In the same way, on May 22, 2015, Daily Nation published a story in headline: “*27 Burundian refugees die as a cholera outbreak hits Tanzania*”. Such articles despite calling for world attention on challenges (e.g. health) facing migrations can influence the way non-immigrants will perceive them – diseases couriers. Elsewhere, Star Newspaper on October 6, 2015 in headline, “*Terrorism planned in Camps, say CS*”, provides a platform for negative portrayal of refugees. According to CS Joseph J.N Kaisser Final planning and Logistical support for nearly all terror attacks in Kenya takes place in Refugee camps”. Moreover another article in a headline, “*SA Church to evict hundreds of refugees as conditions worsen*”, The Standard Newspaper in January 1, 2015 portrays image of refugees as victims suggesting that “the refugees shared about a dozen toilets and cooked near any electrical outlets they could find”. An interview with editors confirms that while media houses are

interested in news stories, their main aim is to tell the world immigrant and refugee encounters and they cited Kenya’s attempt to close Dadaab considering stability of Somalia. According to one editor, “the media don’t serve the interest of any government neither are they serving the international community but report objectively issues affecting the issues especially arrests an detention or forced migration as in the case of Kenya regarding Somalia refugees”.

## 5. DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the images and rights of migrants in the Kenyan media. The basic assumption is that the world is increasingly becoming connected through the news media and as Shanto Iyengar observes when the media emphasizes on an issue public priorities is altered. Consistent with previous studies, this study found that most of the newspaper articles showed African and Middle East as contribute the highest migrant’s stories and whether such images influences policy change is something that has been studied and confirmed but from journalistic perspective, proximity is one of the news values and this explains why Kenyan media were likely to report mainly African migration stories. This findings further shows Europe contributed least to migration but media has often beatified the region as a land of wealth

and goodies attracting immigrants. African and Middle East which has witnessed increased civil wars conflicts, hunger and poor governance has become synonymous with international migration feeding media with news stories both locally and internationally.

In tandem with previous studies, this study found immigrants and refugees received media coverage during and when there were terrorist attacks. It also attracted intense discussion whether Al-shabaab had infiltrated refugee camps. By depicting immigration as potential threats, it contributes to how they are viewed and treated exclusively by people with little contact with the group [41]. As seen from Fig. 2 May 2015 migration received significant coverage exemplified by several terror attacks in Kenya coupled with Kenya's plan to close refugee camps contributed to high coverage. By depicting refugees and immigrants as not part of human in group, one can conclude that these are groups who deserve global recognition as such uncertainties surrounding the group paired with media portrayal leads to extreme reaction from advocates of immigrants and refugees rights. It is clear media may not contribute to negative portrayal of the refugees and immigrants by highlighting potential threats to non-immigrants or refugees but provides ready justification for such negative depictions. This is illustrated by Shanto Iyengar's book *"Anyone Responsible? How television frames political issues"*; who believes that the media's attention to certain issues (xenophobic attacks, malnourished images, terror attacks etc) changes the people perceives the group. Moreover McComb and Shaw [42], in their book *"The emergence of Americans political issues"* proposes that although media may not succeeded in telling us what to think about but by setting the agenda allows the public to perceive the issues as important. The consistent findings suggests that the medias framing proposes that the media framing of immigrants stories in the newspaper can contribute to breakdown in public confidence.

In addition, other studies show that the media increases interaction between and public attitudes in shaping policy agenda [23]. In the present study, results shows that by repeatedly emphasizing on violation of immigrants' rights or depicting them as victims, the media sought to draw global attention. To illustrate further, when government of Kenya introduced laws that would have reduced population of refugees, the media

sustain its coverage attracting attention of the world and most likely this contributed to Kenyans withdrawal on such policies. In one of the newspaper article entitle "Cord wins round one as count suspends eight news laws" illustrated barriers to refugees and immigration "...a law restricting the number of refugees entering the country and making it more difficult for them to be granted asylum was also suspend depending hearing and determination of the main petition".

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Studies have demonstrated that civil wars, conflicts, hunger etc contributes to migration of people from their origin country [1]. It becomes perhaps essential for the media to understand that any barrier to refugees and immigrants is a violation to article 3 of the universal declaration of human rights which provides for rights to life liberty and security of everyone. This way the media not only justify negative portray of such group from those in power but challenge any claim threats attributed to the group. Any media depictions on refugees and immigrants emphasizing on threats images of suffuse hatred towards the group result to negative perceptions towards the group. Therefore the media should emphasize on interactions which supports or enhance refugee and immigrant's relations with the public of the host country. The consistent findings have demonstrated refugees and immigrants face challenges not in the country but also along migratory route. From detention to negative portrayal from government and the media there is need for human rights advocates to work closely with this groups to increase information that reduces uncertainties surrounding refugees and immigrants.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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