

trained in effective communication who will be responsible among other things of ensuring free lines are open to the public on a 24 hour basis. This department would also have a research unit that would look into emerging trends in communication strategies and terrorism, and even in conducting research in and out of Kenya on communication and terrorism. This unit would be linked to security organs within the government so that any communication about an attack or an impending attack would be handled by them. This will ensure effective coordination hence the government could manage communication in a way that it flows from the national government to county government to the grassroots. This centre can be replicated across the entire country in the form of decentralization.

Mainstream media: While this is the traditional medium used to reach a wide number of Kenyans, respondents agreed that it can still be used but scaled up. Hence the government can continue using radio, newspaper advertisements and TV but increase the frequency of the messages and the creativity behind the messages. Even print media for example, can contain more commentaries, opinion pieces and others to relay the message across. Another thing the government could capitalize on is community radio which has the potential to reach each and every Kenyan due to its uniqueness in terms of the local language used in a particular area.

Using the local community: Respondents felt the war against terrorism would be half won if the government would embrace communication strategies that involve every citizen. This is where the government needs to package information and request local entities to help distribute or share that information. For example, fliers, brochures, leaflets and such brief messages can serve well to engage every Kenyan. The best avenue or distributor of such messages would be churches, mosques, schools, universities, markets etc. This will require concerted efforts between local leaders whether religious or administrative. Mandaville(2009) is of the view every citizen needs to be trained to be a soldier in their own right and the best avenue would be in local communities.

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Institutional visits: Some respondents felt the government could do well to organize a team of security experts who would go round institutions in terrorism hotspots in the country and have a one on one session eg in schools, churches, mosques, markets and anywhere where many people may be found congregating at one go. Similarly, the government could also organize the holding of public rallies across the country to engage citizens in safety procedures when faced with terrorism. These forums will enable the government to share ideas and information with citizens. Such forums can also be used to communicate to the public the law on terror, where people can report suspects, emergency hotlines and also inform the public on the dangers of radicalization. This is where citizens can be empowered to report any suspicious activities to the government.

Monthly sensitization forums: Rwanda is a small country in Central Africa that has managed to institutionalize 'Umuganda' a kind of community service that takes place

every last Saturday of the month. After the clean up, people sit down to be engaged or to engage local community leaders where all manner of issues affecting Rwandans are discussed (Uwimbabazi, 2012). In this study, some respondents suggested that Kenya could model this kind of set up and after the clean up, security personnel could engage the people on matters to do with terrorism. Such forums could easily assist local administration units to identify strangers or unusual activities. It is also at this time that seminars can be organized where the public would get an opportunity to interact with security personnel and learn a thing or two about terrorism. These meetings can also happen in estates in urban areas. This is also where the government could package and disseminate information that counters terrorism propaganda and also one that would assure people of security and avoid panic or false alarms. It is in such meetings where the government can inspire patriotism among the citizenry.

Private-Public sector dialogues and liaisons: Respondents said that the issue of cost could deter or limit the government in implementing safety procedures that could considerably reduce incidents of terrorism, or if an attack were to happen, then it could also limit the number of casualties. Hence, the government could source for partnerships not only with private firms but with international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations as well.

Government Control: A very small number of respondents suggested that the government should adopt radical measures like tapping phone lines and establishing free and secure lines, arguing that time to smile with terrorism is long gone. The feeling was that even though tapping phone lines may appear to be immoral, the need of the moment necessitates such drastic and invasive measures.

Measures put in place at universities: Mount Kenya University and Jomo Kenyatta University were sampled. One recurring comment was that both universities have build emergency exit doors. In addition, screening using metal detectors was ongoing at both campuses. Both universities have employed the services of professional security companies who man entrances and patrol the premises. Fire extinguishers are also placed at strategic places within the universities. However, 78% of the respondents felt nothing significant had been done that could deter or put off terrorists from carrying out an attack. Mount Kenya University respondents said that sensitization sessions with all stakeholders on security and terrorism had taken place and that programs for students on self defence are being drafted, soon to be released. There had also been memos on security awareness, and also, a security awareness creation public lecture was due to take place at their Thika campus in the month of June, 2015.

Suggestions for increasing safety at universities and any other learning institution: 85% of respondents were categorical that universities and other learning institutions should provide self-defence classes even if it meant charging students a little bit more, and that these classes be compulsory, embedded into the curriculum. In addition, guidance and counselling sessions would significantly

prepare students psychologically in the event of an attack. Seely(2008) says counselling and psychological therapy is needed even long after the incident has happened. Another popular view by respondents was that institutions establish several more exit routes and also construct a safe house, like a bullet and fire proof basement where students can run to and be locked in. Institutions could also separate exits because the current ones merge at some point thus increasing the risk of lumping students in one location. Respondents suggested that more CCTV cameras be installed so that the entire establishment is put under surveillance, like it's done in all US embassies across the world. The US took those measures after being hit during the 1998 August 7 bombing in Nairobi. Some respondents suggested the use of simulations or emergency drills like it's done in fire drills. Another suggestion was the establishment of a police post in each institution across the country thus improving the ratio of police to citizens. A significant number of respondents felt that establishing a security plan for response and evacuation would go a long way to minimize casualties in the event of an attack. Some respondents felt that deploying military personnel to institutions would help while some were of the view that a thorough investigation of students' backgrounds before admission would be welcome. A toll free line from the nearest security services should be made available to students. Some respondents urged the government to make use of sleeper agents who would work as undercover agents while studying at the same time. Another suggestion was the installation of automatic lock systems on main doors or gates. Still, some respondents said that all students must show their IDs at the entrance which must include their blood group. Another idea suggested was the establishment of a system where there are several tiers of security checks, for example, at the gate, reception and the issuing of a card to visit other offices upon production of an ID. Security officers must be given VHF i.e two-way communication radios and that a sick bay be established while ensuring all students have medical cover. Still another suggestion was to establish forums where students can interact with security organs. A system needs to be devised where alarms and alert messages are sent to students as much as possible.

5. Conclusion

This study sought to examine the issue of communication and terrorism in the wake of several terror attacks in Kenya. There have been increased activities of terror attacks with most classified as successful due to the recorded number of deaths and injured. This study was born out of a concern that since October 2011, Kenya has borne the brunt of more than 50 terror attacks with more than 300 dead and many more injured. This translates into one terror attack in 2 weeks, too frequent for any developing nation.

Nick Thompson (CNN 2015), quotes David Mackenzie also of CNN who says Al-Shabaab is trying to maintain its relevance as other terror groups like Boko Haram, ISIS and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula who vie for power and influence. McKenzie says it's also possible that Al-Shabaab may have abandoned aspirations of seizing a large chunk of territory after taking losses in Somalia, and decided instead to focus purely on terrorism. This means Kenya cannot

afford a moment's rest from seeking means to protect her people.

More reason the government needs to change tactic and embrace communication widely is the profile of the present day terrorist. Today's terrorist is no longer the poor, hungry terrorist enticed by money. The *USA Today* (2015), in an article entitled, *Kenyan lawyer among terrorists killed in school attack*, by John Onyulo and John Bacon, identified well-educated Abdirahim Abdullahi, aged 24, and a son of a Kenyan government official as the mastermind behind the Garissa attack.

Abigail Higgins (AP 2015) quotes Kenyans who say they have lost faith in their government's ability to protect them. "It's not that Al-Shabaab is so good at what they're doing — the government just does such a terrible job that they make them look good. Al-Shabaab is probably at its weakest point since 2006," said Abdullahi B. Halakhe, a Nairobi-based East Africa researcher with Amnesty International. (AP 2015).

Ben Rawlence, an Open Society Foundation Fellow, in an article entitled, *Kenya's anti-terror strategy begins to emerge*, (2014) after the Westgate attack, gives his version of a pattern of the government's response to terror attacks: force where police have been issued with shoot-to-kill orders, 4000 people arrested in Mombasa and Nairobi, all urban refugees ordered to return to Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps, police going house to house in Muslim and Somali neighbourhoods beating, looting and ransoming people without proper ID cards; and finally with newspapers awash with vitriol against Somalis and ethnic Somali MP's who have made public statements questioning the utility and manner of the crackdown have been branded traitors.

Conspicuously missing in the above strategy is a clear communication strategy that this research recommends as an alternative to force since force targets only a few people while communication would seek to reach every fibre of society.

In conclusion therefore the study makes the following recommendations:

- a) The war against terrorism will only be won when every citizen is involved. However, a citizen cannot get involved if not shown how to get involved. The one organ that is able to reach every citizen with an organized strategy is the government that must begin to hold serious conversations with the public.
- b) Military reaction has been used time and again without tangible results. The effect is only that more and more terrorists are getting bolder and bolder instead of being deterred. This study offers the solution of the creation of a clear communication strategy that will find ownership in both the government and the people of Kenya.

6. Future Scope

The research focussed on citizen and government responsibility to ensure the safety of the nation of Kenya. The findings reveal Kenyans are tired of terrorist attacks and

want tangible solutions to the problem. They are also willing to spend time to be trained on self-defense. However, this research was unable to reach key government officials who would offer their perspective on what the government is doing about the issue. A qualitative study is therefore needed where key communication specialists from the government need to be interviewed and the findings documented. In addition, Muslim religious leaders also need to be interviewed on the depth of the problem of radicalization, especially in Mombasa and other coastal towns.

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