

# Politics' Influence On Terrorism In Garissa County, Kenya

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**Abstract-** Most young men who feel isolated and deprived of economic activities are resorting to extremism as they search for a means of sustaining their livelihoods. This study therefore sought to make an analysis of politics' influence on terrorism in Garissa County, Kenya. This study adopted mixed methodology with a descriptive research design combining both qualitative and quantitative research strategies. The study targeted a population sample from each of the four categories of stakeholders namely police department -52, county employees -175, civil society organizations-43 and religious leaders in Garissa County -80. The total target population was 350. The population sample size of 140 respondents was arrived at using Cooper and Schindler (2003)'s formula of 40% of each strata. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data from the identified target population who were the main respondents of the study. The analysis of data was conducted using both SPSS and excel application software's. After analysing the data and coming up with the results, tables, graphs and figures were used to represent the findings. Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data were done systematically and objectively using a content analysis tools that helped the researcher to determine the existence of certain concepts captured in the qualitative data. The findings did reveal that; Politics, described by 68% of respondents was a major encouragement to terrorism in the County. It was recommended that; the government should intervene in dealing with political rigging to offer equal opportunities for all.

**Key Terms-** Resourced based, Conflict, Influence, Terrorism

## I. Introduction

Davies (2010) postulates that there are three perspectives that can be used to explain political instability. The tendency that regime change is likely to occur or government change is like to take place; secondly is the political upheavals that are likely to cause violence within the society; thirdly is the focus on the government policies and how stable are they or they likely to change quite often. The factors that are associated with political instability may include such issues like riots, wars and terrorism whose effects are likely to be detrimental to the growth of country's economy such as the tourism sector that booms in a stable and peaceful environment. Post, (2016) is in agreement that politically unstable nations often face many impediments, such as foreign investments pulling out of the counties, poor public image that affects government's efforts of executing strategic plans.

Political activities like coups and internally instigated political problems usually have severe effect on the tourism activities than one incident terror act (Porter, 2012). The effect that terror acts can easily be contained unlike full blown war that affects various integrated sectors of the economy. Similarly Baker, *et al* (2011) discovered that, the number of terrorists' events occurring reduces the number of tourist visitors by at least 8.8%; subsequently the incidents of human rights violations reduce the number of tourist visitors by 32 percent. Politically instigated terrorism events severely affect the counties economy.

## II. Statement of the problem

In the North Eastern region of Kenya especially in Garissa County, illicit politics that has impacted on terrorism in equal measures. According to Sageman, (2017), Politics in North Eastern region of Kenya is based on clans and the winner takes it all leaving affected resorting to orthodox means including; becoming easy prey to organized criminal activities by getting attachment to radicalized groups to gain recognition. These has led to increased terrorism activates in Garissa in the past years. In view of this background, the study endeavored to investigate Politics' influence on terrorism in Garissa County of Kenya.

## III. Research Methodology and Design

The study adopted mixed methodology where qualitative and quantitative data were utilized. A descriptive research design strategy was embraced during this study.

### 3.1 Location of the Study

This study was carried out in Garissa County. The county was formerly the headquarters of North eastern province before the promulgation of the constitution which established counties. The choice of study location was picked by the researcher because the county has over time experienced the biggest number of terror related incidents than any other part of the country due to political influence.

### 3.2 Target population

The studys' target population was 350 representatives drawn from four gatecories including police department 52, County works (clan elders, village elders, assistant chiefs, chiefs, department of water, ICT, lands, housing and County gorvenres office) 175, Civil society organizations 43 and religious leaders (Islamic / Christians) 80. Out of the 350 total populce, 140 respondents of Garissa County were sampled.

### 3.3. Determination of the Study Sample and Size

The researcher sampled 40% of each strata of the entire population of 350. Thus, the total number that participated in the study was a sample of 140 respondents. As indicated by Cooper and Schindler (2003) a sample above 10% of the population as in this study is appropriate and representative. The study utilized stratified random sampling method since the number of the population of interest was not homogeneous.

The researcher employed Cooper & Schindler's (2006) formula for calculation of sample size for the respondents as indicated in table 3.1

**Table 3. 1:Sample size**

Stratas	Target population	Sample percentage	Sample size
Police Department	52	0.4	21
County Residents	175	0.4	70
Civil Society	43	0.4	17
Religious Leaders	80	0.4	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>140</b>

Source: Researcher 2019

### 3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The study used the designed questionnaire forms administered to respondents to collect qualitative data. Open-ended questions in the questionnaire represented qualitative data while closed ended questions in the questionnaire represented quantitative data. Collected data provided an in-depth understanding of the fundamental issues that the study sought to unravel.

### 3.5. Validity and Reliability of data instruments

The researcher used content validity so as to ascertain whether the tools measured what was stated in the objectives. This was done through cross checking with the supervisors. In this study, a valid measure of 0.5 was acceptable as in spearman correlation coefficient.

Test and retest techniques where used to check reliability of the same data instrument which was administered twice to the same respondents after a period of 2 weeks. After the research instrument had yielded the same results the researcher went ahead and administered them to the selected samples in Garrissa County, Kenya.

## IV. Findings

The study's objective was to investigate the influence of politics on terrorism in Garissa County. The researcher sought to determine the respondent's opinion on whether politics influences terrorism in Garissa County and its extent. Table 4.1 shows findings

**Table 4. 1: Influence of politics on terrorism in Garissa County**

	N	%
No	35	34
Yes	68	66

### Source: Field data, 2020

The findings in table 4.1 indicated that 68% of the respondents agreed to the notion that politics have an upper hand when it comes to terrorism. A respondent argued;

Garissa's politics is a battle between clans where each one is showing it's mighty over the other. It has nothing to do with terrorism or an act of terror. Kenyan politics, whoever wins an election takes 98% of stakes for jobs and hence leave out others and out of anger and desperation, youth seek alternative livelihood and get radicalized easily (Source: Religious leaders 2020).

Responds at a point believed that Politics create tribalism, conflicts and later it widens into terrorism in the country. Further, Council of Imams had this to say,

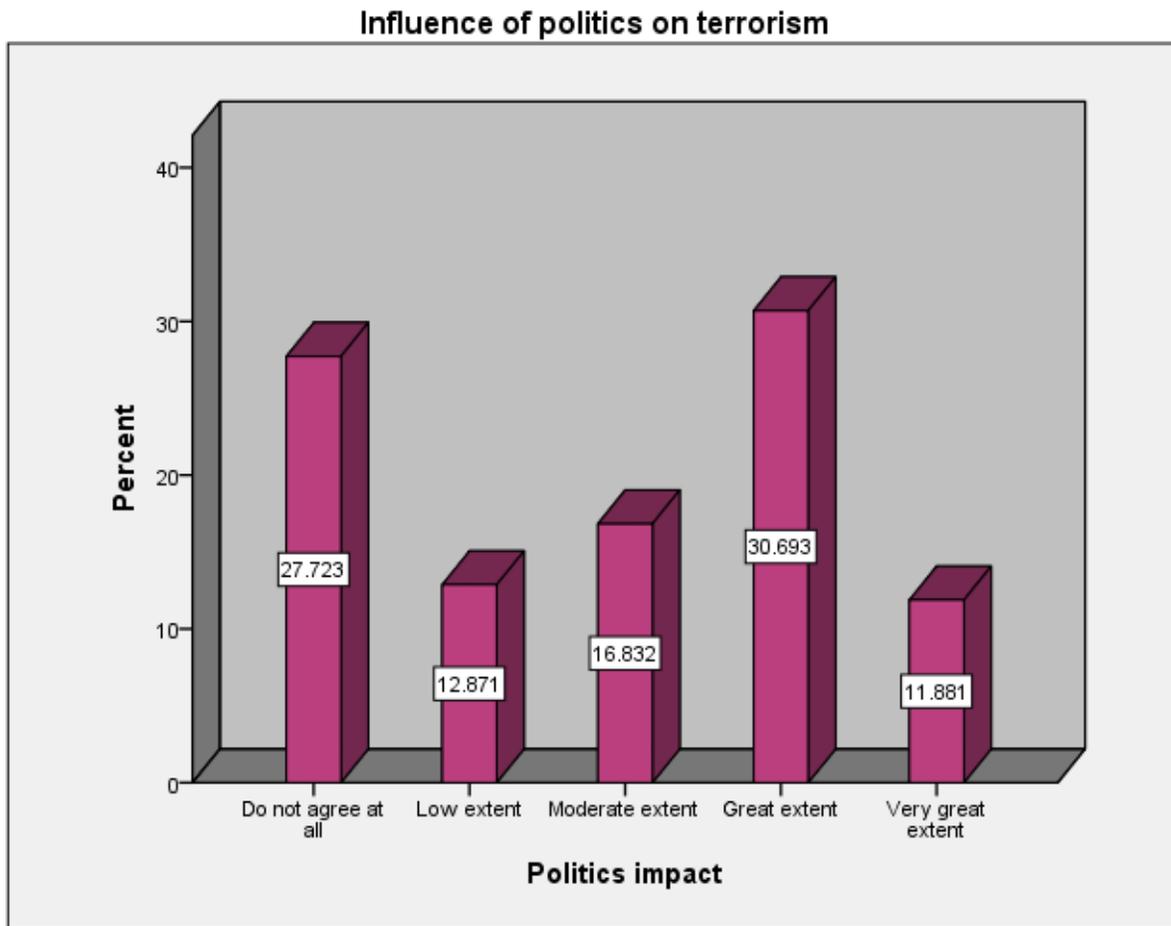
Politicians are using youths to fight in any way and terrorism is not an exception and in Garissa, the clan that wins an election takes 98% of good jobs and hence leaves out others. Out of anger and desperation, youths see alternative livelihood in radicalization. Again, sometimes they do it to discourage the winning clan and make leadership difficult. Politicians who are opposed to an establishment/regime may plan to wreak havoc in a nation through terrorist groups. It might be a way of settling political score for a defeated candidate (Source: Council of Imams 2020)

The findings further revealed 34% of the respondents never agreed to the notion that politics have an upper hand in terrorist activities. *"Politics is clan based not ideology based and that no politician propagates terrorism or terrorists' acts"*. A religious leader concurred with these sentiments;

I hold the view that politics has nothing to do with terrorism in Garissa; this is so because of the fact that no politician propagates terrorism. Our leaders unanimously discourage anything to do with terrorism in the region (Source: Religious leaders 2020).

They argued that politics of Garissa County is purely a supremacy battle and so it has nothing to do with terrorism and their leaders unanimously discourage anything to do with terrorism in the region. Politics and terrorism are two different spheres of life and they cannot influence each other.

The findings in figure 4.1 were the respondents' agreement to what extent politics influence terrorism in Garissa County.



**Figure 4. 1: Extent of influence of politics on terrorism**

**Source: Field data, (2020)**

The findings in figure 4.2 indicate that 28 % of the respondents do not agree at all that politics has a hand in terrorism in Garissa County. 13% and 17 % of the respondents to low extent and moderate extent respectively agreed that politics influence terrorism. 31% and 12% of the respondents agreed to a great and very great extent that politics influence terrorism. Council of Imams conformed;

When the political temperature of the region is hot, it can sometimes trigger the uprising of terrorism groups who may tend to take advantage of the situation. Furthermore, some political leaders are radicalized to an extent and therefore influence terrorism (Source: Religious leaders 2020).

The study also sought to find out if frustrated youths become easy to prey to organized criminal activities.

The findings are illustrated in table 4.2.

**Table 4. 2: frustrated youths become easy to prey to organized criminal activities**

Statement	Mean
Frustrated youths become easy to prey to organized criminal activities	4.80
Frustrated youths are attached to radicalized groups	4.76
The affected resort to orthodox means to gain recognition	3.76
Politics is based on clans and winner takes it all	4.83

The findings on table 4.2 indicated that frustrated youths become easy to prey to organized criminal activities; respondents shown by mean of 4.80 supported this. The findings also illustrated that frustrated youths are attached to radicalized groups; respondents shown by mean of 4.76 supported this. The affected resort to orthodox means to gain recognition shown by means of 3.76. Politics is based on clans and winner takes it all shown by means of 4.83. This means that, politics has an influence on terrorism in Garissa County.

The following were the respondents obtained from the study;

Poor leadership nepotism and favourism in employment in public and private sectors has made many youths to join terrorist groups as a way of survival. Politicians especially do not give equal opportunities to their people forcing the youths into joining terrorisms (Source: Police officer 2020).

Politics play a major role in the sense that if the government of the day subscribes to their ideologies and doctrines, this will always trickle down to the local Mwananchi. Failure by political leaders to fully address and condemn terrorist activities does not help in combating terrorism. In my opinion, local leaders can mobilize locals to cooperate with security apparatus to share intelligence on terrorism (Source: Civil Society Organizations 2020).

Politicians do ride on any opportunities to rise to rise their political mileage. They don't value life but value the number of their supporters. When one wants votes, he may register refugees as votes and encourage them to attain IDs But you find that these people have zero attachment for our community and can easily attack given an opportunity. Furthermore when some politicians fail to get their seat, they revenge by supporting terrorism to frustrate the elected leader (Source: Police officer 2020).

Some politicians are very arrogant and fund these terrorism activities to manifest their superiority through terrorism and threaten their competitors. Furthermore, politicians who are opposed to an establishment /regime may plan to wreak havoc in a nation through terrorist groups. It might be a way of settling political score for the defeated candidate (Source: County employee 2020).

## V. Summary

68%. Said, politics has an impact on terrorism in Garissa County. However, 34% of the respondents never agreed to the notion that politics have an upper hand in terrorist activities. 43% of the respondents agreed to a great and very great extent that politics influence terrorism. On the other hand, 28 % of the respondents did not agree at all that politics had contributed to terrorism in Garissa County. Mean of 3.76 revealed that affected youth resorted to orthodox means to gain recognition by politics and mean of 4.83 indicated that politics is based on clans and winner takes it all.

## VI. Conclusion and recommendation

The respondents asserted that Kenyan politics is no longer democratic hence has a serious impact on terrorism in Garissa County. As the saying goes, "Siasa Mbaya, Maisha Mbaya" (Bad politics bad livelihood). The politicians say "it's out time to eat" these leave the unrepresented population with feelings of agony and desperation.

Politics has an impact on terrorism in Garissa County according the study's findings. The Government should therefore intervene in dealing with political rigging and give the rightful contesters their guanine winning than being compromised.

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