

Research Article

Relationship between Islamism and Al-Shabaab Activities in Garissa CountyAlinur Hassan Haji¹ and Crispinous Iteyo²^{1,2}Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
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ABSTRACT: *Terrorism has been a major threat to global peace and security in the recent years. The rate at which terror groups keep changing has brought concerns to various security stakeholders and to local communities affected. The Al-shaabab terror network that operates in the horn of African has been a major concern to various neighbours of Somalia with Kenya being the most affected Garissa County. The Al-shaabab activities which have largely been associated with extreme Islamic teachings have been a concern in the county. The study was underpinned by the Rational Choice Theory. The sample size was 384. The study was conducted in Garissa County. The results showed that there was a relationship between Islamism and Al-shaabab activities Garissa County. The Al-Shabaab militia had on many occasions used extreme teaching to justify their terrors attacks in Garissa county in the name of jihad which had caused serious concerns in the area.*

Keywords: *Alshaabab activities, Islamism, Terrorism.*

1.0 Introduction

The global threat of Islamism inspired terrorism has witnessed an upsurge in different parts of the world in the recent past. In North America and Europe, a wave of Islamic terrorist attacks has been responsible for a lot of deaths in the United States, France, Brussels, United Kingdom, just to mention a few of the countries. This “new normal” as once declared by the Economist, has also seen some of these countries declare a “state of emergency” as in the case of France (most parts of 2015, 2016 and 2017), and Belgium on the other hand raising the threat levels to three out of a maximum of four (in 2016) for months.

This similar trend has been replicated in other parts of the world, most notably in the Middle East (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq among others) where Islamism inspired terrorism. Almost no day passes without a terrorist attack being reported. This trend of new wave of attacks has had a striking aspect in that, the incidents are seemingly able to take place anywhere, anytime, and to be carried out by virtually anyone.

In parts of Africa, Islamism instigated terrorism continue to persist. This trend has seen literature on this area burgeon with different scholars addressing diverse aspects of the correlation between Islamism and terrorism. Scholars such as (Hoffman, 1998; Rinehurt 2009,) have argued that there is a positive correlation between Islamism and terrorism, but most of these studies have either been carried out from a generalist perspective, or does not touch on the Kenya’s case thus lending credence to the need to carry out more specific case studies for more nuanced understanding of the dynamics that underpin terrorists activities.

Uzodike and Maiangwa (2012) have mooted that, the rise of Boko Haram (in Eastern Nigeria) has stemmed mainly from the point of view of the failure of government policies. However, in a similar study carried out for Aljazeera Center for Studies (2012), Maiangwa and Uzodike pointed out the Islamism imperative was a key instigator of terrorism acts.

In Kenya, at least five major phases of terror attacks classified according to the actors involved and time period, are identifiable. First, is the March 1975 attack on an Overseas Transport Company (OTC) bus (claimed by Poor People

Liberation Movement). Then, December 1980 terror attack at Norfolk hotel (claimed by Palestine Liberation Organization), Nairobi. This was followed by the August 1998 and November 2002 bombing of US Embassy, Nairobi and Paradise hotel, Kikambala near Mombasa (claimed by international jihadi groups). The next phase has largely been the “era of Al Shabaab” (an Islamic militant group) terror attacks in Kenya. This era began in 2011 with the kidnapping of tourists in the Kenyan coast (a Briton and French). This spate of events precipitated a military incursion into Somalia by the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) to hunt for the Al Shabaab militants.

However, since the incursion of the KDF into Somalia, the intensity of Islamism-inspired terror attacks in Kenya particularly in Garissa County have upsurged astronomically. The number of terror attacks had risen to over thirty, with majority of the attacks concentrated in Garissa County. This was due its location next to the Kenya-Somali border, and near the Dadaab refugee complex which has been touted by independent experts and the Government of Kenya, as a centre of radicalization and recruitment for terrorist group. The upsurges in this attack had been partly motivated by Islamic militancy with the Al Shabaab being accused of exploiting the fault lines between Islam and other religions (Miguta, 2013). This was in a bid to promote Islamism and justify their activities.

From the foregoing this study has attempted to address the question of the centrality of Islamism as a key factor underpinning Al-Shabaab terror activities. In responding to the above question, this study sought to examine the nature of Islamism, the relationship between religion and terrorism as well as the effectiveness of the mechanisms that have been put in place to curb against Al-Shabaab activities in Garissa County.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

The study was underpinned by the Rational Choice Theory. This theory was operationalized by Margaret Levi (1997) to explain how actors do a cost-benefit analysis to determine the course of action to take. According to the rational choice

theory, terrorism acts emanate from rational, calculated, conscious decisions. Such decisions are an optimal strategy to fulfil the socio-political objectives of the perpetrators which potentially and exponentially explains why terrorist actors use Islamism as a cover for their acts.

The rational choice theory holds the view that an individual, or a group of people are the units of analysis, and is embedded on the economic concepts of cost-benefit analysis and constrained utility maximization. Under cost and benefit analysis, potential terrorists are “rational actors” who performs a cost-benefit analysis before committing an act of terror. Terrorists try to minimize the expected costs necessary to achieve a specified set of objectives while maximizing on their expected returns for any resources invested (Levi, 1997).

The weakness of this theory lies in the fact that it is yet to add a substantial stock of knowledge to existing literature on terrorism. Rational choice theory is also a restrictive theory that operates under the notion of *ceteris paribus*. Critics argue that the theory controls too many assumptions and fails to recognize constraints (cost, time, and availability) and neglects negative externalities like deception. Lastly, rational choice theory does not accurately predict events and thus provides little use outside of its models. It also excludes exogenous variables that may aid in partially or fully explaining terrorist behaviour.

Terrorist organizations just like the non-state organizations make cost and benefit analysis when deciding on the best path of action to follow. They calculate the cost of engaging and not engaging in an action and also the probability of success in their actions. A key preoccupation of terrorist groups is achieving success in instrumentalism, which is accomplishing the intended political ends and the survival of the terrorist organization (Levi, 1997). Al-Shaabab is an Islamist terrorist organization and some of its goals, is to achieve some political ends.

This theory is simple and comprehensible because the intentions of actors are conditional to their behaviours according to logical rules. It is also intellectually satisfying and provides researcher with a rather easier context of study since information requirements about secretive terrorist organizations are relaxed. However, this theory has been criticized for not explaining how the preferences of the actors are determined as it does not incorporate analyses of the internal workings of terrorist organizations. The assumption that actors are identical, clouds the differences in understanding how different terrorist actors act differently (Levi, 1997). This lent credence to the need to use another theory.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted descriptive correlational survey design. The study was conducted in Garissa County. Garissa County has six constituencies namely: Garissa Township, Ijara, Dadaab, Lagdera, Fafi and Balambala which formed the study area. The study population included radicalized youths; security agency officials including County Commissioner, Deputy County Commissioners, Regional Police Commanders, Anti-terrorism Police Unit, OCPDs and OCS's and Islamic scholars. The sample population was 384. Data was collected using questionnaires and Key informant interviews. Data analysis was done using SPSS version 17. Quantitative data was presented in tables charts and graphs while qualitative data was presented in narrative reports and verbatim quotations.

4.1 Al-shaabab Activities in Gariss County

The study sought to establish the nature of activities that the Al-shaabab terror network is involved in within the County of Garissa. The household heads were in this regard asked to identify if the Al-shaabab militants were in one way or another involved in any of the activities shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Al-shaabab Activities in Garissa County

Activites	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Collection of Taxes	5%	85%	10%
Recruitment of fighters	64%	18%	18%
Converting people to Islam through radical Teachings	76%	4%	20%
Kidnappings and Hostage taking	62%	23%	15%

Source : Field Data, 2018

4.1.1 Collection of Taxes

The findings of the study revealed that out of the 384 household heads, 5% agreed that al-shaabab was involved in tax collection in Garissa county, another 85% indicated that they did not agree with tax collection as one of the activities of Al-shaabab in the county while, 10% stated that they did not know whether or not al-shaabab were involved in tax collection in the county. In this regard therefore, it was evident from the study that the al-shaabab were not involved in Tax collection within the County of Garissa.

The findings were supported by the Regional commander of the Northern Eastern Kenya who revealed during interview that:

We have had concerns of Al-shaabab attempting to use the North-Eastern part of Kenya as part of the Caliphate that they would want to have in the region, however, the Kenya authorities are fully in control of the Region and specifically Garissa county which is the closest to Somalia. The Al-shaabab are therefore not capable of collecting taxes in Kenya at all cost. We are fully in control of our territories, and al-shaabab activities are extremely limited in this area (Interview with Regional Commander, Regional Commander - 18/5/2018).

Garissa county has in the last few years especially after 2013, seen tremendous development in terms of the economy of the county as well as the general improvement in the living standards of the local people. One particular fact in the county is that the county government is fully in charge of the county and despite the fact that in one way or another the al-shaabab may try to influence a few things in the area, the Kenyan government and the county government of Garissa are all fully in charge of the county and as such the al-shaabab are not involved in any tax collection activities in the county.

Tax collection is one of the most commonly used strategies by various terrorist organizations all over the world as a way of raising revenue. The al-shaabab have been known to collect taxes from the locals in areas that they control in Somali. In 2015, there were concerns from the political class that the terror group had extended their activity of tax collection into the Kenyan borders.

4.1.2 Recruitment of fighters

The findings of the study revealed that 64% of the household heads agreed that recruitment of fighters was one of the key activities of al-shaabaab in Garissa county, 18% of the respondents however disagreed while another 18% were undecided. In this regard therefore majority of the respondents were in agreement that Al-shaabaab was involved in the recruitment of fighters from Kenya especially in Garissa county.

One of the former radicalised youths who was interviewed revealed that

Al-shaabaab recruiters are very present in Garissa County. The methods of recruitment into terrorist group include having people who support the militants collect information (amniyat) on likely individuals to be recruited especially young boys in the Madarasa and Duksi as well vulnerable Sheikhs with minimal knowledge on Islam (Interview by Radicalised Youth, 20/5/2018).

The case of Al-shaabaab recruiting fighters in Garissa County was attributed to the proximity of Garissa County to Somalia. Furthermore, Garissa County is mostly populated by ethnic Somali's who share both ethnicity and religion by Somali's from Somalia where Al-shaabaab originates. Further, it is important to note that the fact that majority of the residents of Garissa county are Muslims makes it an easy target for the Al-shaabaab since it simply means the Al-shaabaab find it easy to prey on those who are Muslims and who are also made vulnerable through marginalization or economic difficulties so as to find a way to entice them into joining the Group. As one of the youth who had been radicalised indicated in an interview, he was attracted to join the militant group due to financial benefits. For instance he had been promised a monthly salary of 500 US dollars, an equivalent of Ksh. 50,000. To a poor ordinary Kenyan living in a marginalised area like Garissa this is a lot of money that one believes can easily change his or her life for the better. The interviewee further indicated that when they were getting recruited they were told that they will fight the infidels (Kufar) and advocate the rights of Muslims in Northern Kenya and coast regions where prominent Muslims clerics were killed by Kenyan security agency this on the other hand motivated us to join terrorist. In this regard, the terrorist appealed to both their material need and their conscience and as such they would join the fight without any reservations. It is evident therefore, that societal problems including economic problems made it easy for the terrorist to recruit fighters across borders.

In support of the findings UN Report (2017) revealed that foreign terrorist fighters mostly were mostly male, young and disadvantaged economically, educationally, and in terms of the labour market. These factors made them an easy target for recruitment into terrorist groups. These people were also more likely to have come from a marginalized background, both socially and politically. Most were unemployed, or underemployed and/or said that their life lacked meaning. The study was done on the basis of the fighters who had decided to join and fight for the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. The decision to go to Syria is the result of a mix of factors that form a complex set of motivations. It also emerged that the Social media was another important channel for recruitment of fighters into radical Islamic groups such as ISIS. Social media often seem to play a key role as a mechanism channelling the energies of youth towards departure for Syria.

Cingranelli, *et.al* (2014) further opines that what is equally important is the role and identity of the recruiters, who are not necessarily members of armed groups. They are more likely to

be sympathizers who are well known, well connected and even well established in their communities, according to most of the UN survey. The individual determination (self-motivation) to leave home more often than not results from the influence of these social networks, coupled with poor prospects for political, social and economic advancement. Ultimately, the radicalization process and the decision to become a FTF follow a highly individualized path. Some personal experience such as the failure to find a job, stigmatization at school, discrimination in the labour market, trouble at home, a dysfunctional family background, the experience of prison, violation of personal rights, or a multitude of other factors, can facilitate a process of empathy and identity with the suffering and pain of an in-group elsewhere.

Narratives found on the Internet and images available in the media reinforce this resonance and make the suffering of the distant group both intimate and local. The change in the political environment of the Arab World since 2011 has also proved conducive to the unprecedented transfer of fighters to Syria and Iraq. Downward economic and political trends have encouraged the 'adventurous,' the 'ideological,' and the manipulated to find their way to Syria/Iraq'. Whatever the mix, the motivations of the FTFs in this sample seem more emotional than ideological. This is particularly the case with the younger fighters. The belief that it is one's duty to defend members of the in-group is often confused in their minds with ideas of 'jihad' and other tenets of religious ideology.

Yet few of these FTFs claimed to be motivated purely by ideology or religion. The notion of injustice, such as the perception of crimes being committed against fellow Sunnis, overlaps with the notion of jihad, which they understand to be justified in their faith when Muslims are under attack, but it also intersects, on the individual level, with the idea of opportunity for self-betterment in material rather than spiritual terms. For many, therefore, going to Syria is akin to performing jihad as an added bonus to seeking a better life (Fields, 1979). When asked about the justification for jihad in Syria, 16 (or 37 per cent) of the survey cited the need to defend the people of Syria from aggression as a key motivator. However, a large number, over 50 per cent, appeared to be religious novices, lacking any basic understanding of the true meaning of Jihad or even the Islamic faith; many did not even know how to pray according to the Islamic tradition. Most saw their religion in terms of justice and injustice rather than in terms of piety and spirituality (Coleman & Bartoli, 2003). This has significant policy implications. If Muslim youth around the world perceive attacks against their in-group in Syria and Iraq as unjust, aggressive, and part of a wider conspiracy to eliminate their community, then any military operation against violent extremist groups may encourage more FTFs rather than stem the flow.

4.1.3 Converting people to Islam through Radical Teachings

The study established that Al-shaabaab also targeted new converts who they would easily radicalize in their quest to increase their influence. In this regard therefore 76% of the household heads agreed with the argument that Al-shaabaab was involved in converting people to Islam though radical teachings as compared to 4% who disagreed as shown in table 4.1. New converts mostly did not have any knowledge of Islam and as such would find it easy to believe the teachings they got from the terrorist as opposed to those who were born

in families within the Islamic faith.

4.1.4 Hostage Taking and Kidnappings

The study further established that of 62% of the household heads agreed that Al-shaabab were involved in a numbers of cases of Kidnappings in in Garissa county as compared to 23% who disagreed and 15% who were undecided as shown in table 4.1. The Kidnappings by the al-shaabab were attributed to various reasons. During interview the Garissa county commissioner revealed that, the first reason was for financial gain especially for ransom. The case of Al-shaabab trying to raise funds through Kidnappings can be traced back to the operations of the Somali pyrates in the Indian Oceans where Cruise ships were hijacked and people taken hostage for Ransom. Several foreingers have been kidnaped by the Al-shaabab in the region and particularly in Garissa county. The terrorist have over the years targeted aid workers in the Daadab refugee camp, teachers, tourist and other high profile personell in the region including government employees whom they believe are likley to attract payment.

The interviews from Anti-terrorism police unit indicated that there were a numbers of cases that had been reported with regards to kidnapping in the area with women and girls being targeted .

The findings of the study are in tandem with Crenshaw (2011) who revealed that Terrorist hostage taking and kidnapping has become an international concern in recent years. Since the mid-1990s, hostage taking and kidnapping have dramatically increased as a preferred tactic of political terrorists. According to police statistics from around the world nearly 5,000 people worldwide have been taken hostage during the last 10 years. However, the actual number of cases could be several times higher. Hostage taking and kidnapping can occur anytime and anywhere. No community or country is immune to this growing phenomenon (Amstrong, 2011). On one hand, the renewed popularity of hostage taking and kidnapping seems a by-product of a series of important international developments in the war on terrorism.

4.2 Relationship between Islam and Terrorism

The study sought to establish whether Islamism is related to terrorism. In this regard, the researcher sought to find out from the respondents whether or not they agreed or disagreed with is this assertion. The results shown in Figure 4.1 revealed that 64.3% of the household heads strongly disagreed, 8.3 % disagreed as compared to 6% who agreed and 20.2% who strongly agreed.

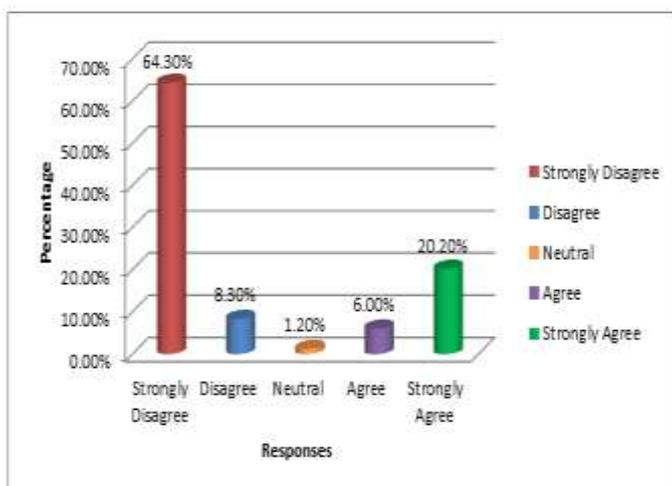


Figure 4.1: Islamism is related to terrorism

Source: Field Data, 2018

In support of the results from the household heads, an Imam indicated that:

Terrorism and Islamism are different, Islam propagates for peace but terrorists are against peace hence they are not practicing Islamic faith to the letter. However, terrorists like Al-shabaab group justify their actions from the Holy Quran in that they are on the right path fighting infidels (Christians) propagate and advocate the use of Islamic Sharia (laws) in governance. Al-Shabaab are misusing the religion to achieve their own political goals for instance, they use the concept of Jihad to justify their actions but they are not following the principles or tenets that are contained in the Quran to act as such, there are no compelling reasons that enable Muslims to resort to jihad in the contemporary world. Secondly, there are no Christians in Somalia and part of northern Kenya other than those working for government that doesn't pose any threat to the religion (Interview With chairman of imams in Garissa County, 17th May 2018).

Another Imam from Ijara Mosque revealed that;

On terrorism, actions by Al-shabbab are irreligious since they do not conform to the teachings of Islam and the practice of prophet Mohammed (Pbuh) because they have little understanding of Quranic interpretation for example, Jihad during the prophetic time was necessitated by the fact there was a need to spread Islam and this was done in a systematic revelation of Quran to the prophet on that. For example, the prophet used to write to the kings of Christian kingdoms telling them about Islam as the true religion others have accepted i.e. the Roman Empire while the Roman refused and later faced by combat Mujahideen (foreign fighters) as per instructions from the prophet that the adversaries are given a date, where and the numbers of soldiers who will fight them. (Prior Knowledge) is given to the enemy which is a major requisite for Jihadism which Alshabaab are not confirming to it. Secondly, that Jihad can only be directed by one Imam or Muslim leader who authorizes Jihad but in the current Muslim worlds there is no one Muslim leader (or Imam). Thirdly, there should be some justifiable reason that compels or calls for Jihad, which there is no such reason in the contemporary world (Interview with the Ijara Mosque Imam, 18 May 2018).

The Subject of Islamic fundamentalism has been widely and its links to terrorism has been widely debated by Islamic scholars and academicians around the world. Extremists and terrorists have used Islam as a way to justify their actions through the concept of Jihad while Islamic scholars have given contrasting views and referred to the teachings of Mohamed through the as the Key pillars of Islamic fundamentalism (Sayyid,2003;Rudolph, 1996;Silke 2006).

4.4 Factors for Radicalization in Garissa County

The study sought to know the reasons that push individuals towards radicalization in the study area. The results are as indicated in Figure 4.2

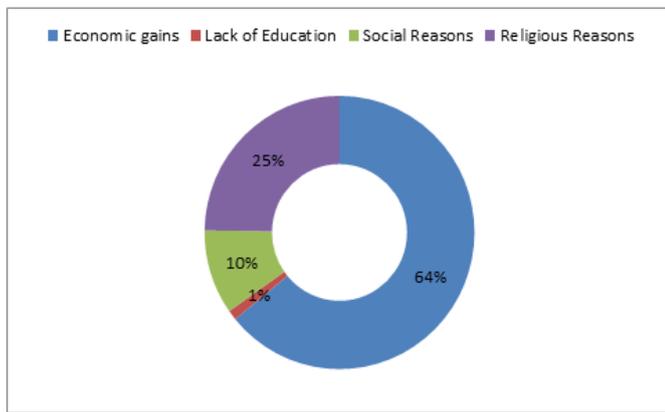


Figure 4.2: Reasons that pushes individuals towards radicalization in Garissa County
Source: Field Data (2018)

4.3.1 Economic gains

The Study sought to establish the extent to which economic gains contributed to radicalization. According to the results in figure 4.2, 245 (64.05%) of the household respondents asserted that economic gains were a fodder for radicalization. They further argued that this was augmented by black market of charcoal trade that was a key source of funding for the Al-Shabaab.

In support of economic reasons as a cause of terrorism, the Garisa Sub-county administrator revealed that

Al-shabaab recruits aggrieved individuals based on some historical injustices, marginalization and unemployment that makes the victim vulnerable for conscription, economic need also gives them upper hand for unemployed youths (Interview with Garisa Sub-county Administrator, 15th May 2018).

In further support of the Economic reasons for radicalization, the regional for North Eastern revealed that;

Many young people join Al-shabaab for economic reason which is majorly affecting unemployed youth. Economic reasons being jobless and poverty level in Northern Kenya especially pastoralist's communities and refugees who have no formal source of income are lived (Interview with North Eastern Regional commissioner, 18/5/2018).

Garissa County is one of the Kenyan counties that has over the years been facing massive marginalization. Many of the residents of the county are ethnic Somalis who have for many years not been able to get equal treatment from the government and as such, it is important to note that.

In agreement with the findings Chang (2013) opined that Islamic fundamentalists certainly did not miss the chance to exploit the discontent of the masses, who in increasing numbers stuck fast to their religion. Islam, with its emphasis on equality and social justice, becomes a centre of attraction for many people who have lost every hope in life. The gap between rich and poor countries is one main cause of Islamic fundamentalism and radicalization (Enders *et al*, 2002, Ranstorp, 1996). According to the UN Human Development Report (2015), the income distribution in the world deteriorated, especially after 1980. The poorest 20% obtained 2.3 % of the world revenue in 1960, 1.7% in 1980 and 1.4% in 1990. The richest 20%, however, obtained 70.2% in 1960, 76.3% in 1980 and 82.7% in 1990. In other words, the richest were 30 times better off than the poorest in 1960, 45 times in 1980, and 59 times in 1990. This trend has been continued in the 2000s with the situation of the poor getting worse. Globally there is an even deeper rift separating the rich

classes from the poor in the Islamic countries. The richest 20% of the population in those countries has about 70-80% of the GNP, while the poorest 20% share about 5%. What is more important is the fact that the deterioration has continued to increase in the recent years. The situation in the global seen has also been witnessed in Kenya through, massive unemployment and poor standards of living.

In further support of the findings Strindberg (2011) argues that The economic motivation behind crime is essentially the appropriation of somebody else's property. Another motivation is the pursuit of illegal activity even at the risk of being caught and punished. Therefore, criminal offenders are likely to be found among those who have relatively more to gain from these activities and relatively little to lose in case they are caught. In the 1980's several countries that experienced great economic growth experienced a surge in militant Islam at the same time. In Kenya, this is supported by an interview of an Al -Shaabab fighter by BBC journalist, John Nene. The man claimed that most of the youths in Kenya are joining the terror group not because of jihad or Islam but because of the allure of money and an assurance of their next meal (Lowen, 2014; Martin-2010).

4.3.2 Lack of enough education

The study sought to know whether lack of enough education was a reason for radicalization. From figure 4.2, it was revealed that a paltry of 6 (1.19%) agreed to the fact that lack of enough education was a reason for radicalization in the study area.

The findings were constant with arguments of Schmid (2005) who revealed that levels of education is an important factor to consider when looking at causes of terrorism in the society. He further argues that education is an important social issue which goes hand in hand with human development. The Human Development Index includes per capita income, life expectancy, and education which may be associated with terrorism though this relationship has not been authoritatively verified through research (Schmid 2005).

4.3.4 Religious reasons

The study also sought to understand if there were religious reasons that led to radicalization. From the figure 4.2, 95 (24.76 %) of the household respondents said that religious reasons contributed towards radicalization. Religious reasons attributed to radicalizations are discussed. Amir (2001) and Stohl (2006) support the argument on the link between religion and terrorism. The scholar argues that, religion has been a cause of terrorism where those whose motivations and aims have a predominant religious character or influence. The biggest myth about religion and violence according to theologian Ariel Glucklich is that religion teaches hatred (Glucklich, 2010). The violence comes from a kind of love or desire for love for one's own group and a willingness to do whatever it takes to obtain it and as he calls it, the Prozac effect. some religions do, in fact, cause hatred, as he argues, but often the roots of religious violence are buried somewhere in the positive aspects of religion (Omboto, 2012). Terrorism is thus an effect of religion's socialization effect that is, when societies break down, individuals are susceptible to charismatic leaders who preach a perverted kind of religion (Okoro 2008,2009,2006; Mamdani 2002

4.4 Social Factors that Push Individuals to Radicalization in Garissa County

The study sought to establish the extent to which the

respondents know existing with the following social factors that push individuals to radicalization in Garissa County. The Results are as indicated in Figure 4.3

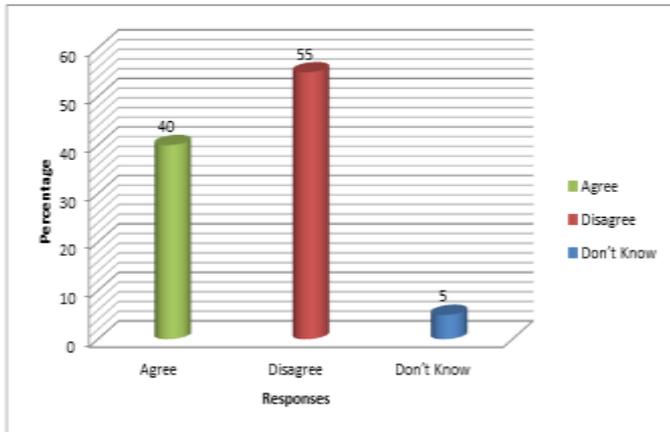


Figure 4.3 Social Factors that Push Individuals to Radicalization
Source: Field Data, 2018

From figure 4.3 154 (40 %) of the household respondents agreed to knowing that social factors contribute to radicalization. 211 (55%) of the respondents to did not agree to this inquiry whether there are social factors that lead to radicalization. On the other hand, 19 (5%) of the respondents did not know whether there are social factors that contribute to radicalization in the study area.

4.4.1 Specific social factors as push for radicalization

The study sought to establish the extent to which the respondents agreed with the specific social factors as push for radicalization in Garissa County; Political incitements, marginalization ,stigma from Government authorities, frustration stemming from Somalis being associated with Al-shaabab, sympathy Arising from mistreatment by government institutions . The Results are as indicated in Figure 4.4

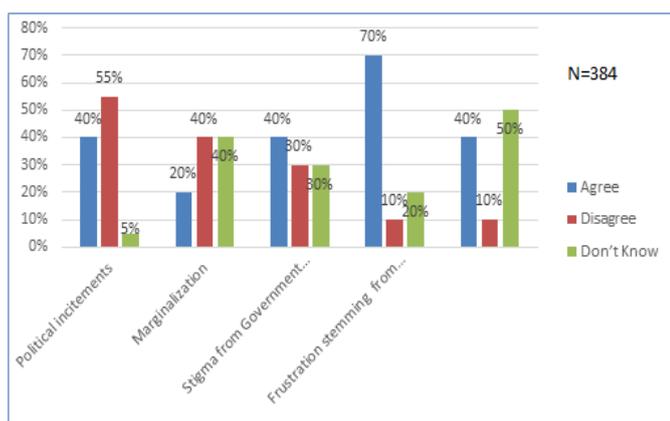


Figure 4.4 Specific social factors as push for radicalization in Garissa County
Source: Field Data (2018)

4.4.1.1 Political Incitement

From figure 4.4 154 (40 %) of the household respondents agreed that political incitement was a factor that contributed to radicalization, 211 (55%) of the respondents to did not agree to this inquiry whether political incitement lead to radicalization. On the other hand, 19 (5%) of the respondents did not know whether political incitement that contribute to radicalization in the study area. Contrary to the findings of the study Aremu (2010) opines that

political competitions have always caused sharp divisions and polarization on basis of political alliances in various parts of the world. These divisions, among various political groups and players, have in many cases divided groups in terms their political affiliations which in many instances are often on the basis of ideology or various forms of identity including ethnic identity. Division normally occurs in political competitions because political players tend have vested interests (favouring a particular clique or ethnic group), with narrow perspectives and strong elements of rivalry. Such differences can create a divided society with one group favouring a particular political ideology which many lead to radicalization of a section of the population.

4.4.1.2 Marginalization

The study sought to establish if marginalization was a factor contributing to radicalization. The result in figure 4.4 indicated that out of 384 household heads, only 76 (20%) agreed that marginalization leads to radicalization and it was a concern. 154 (40%) of the household heads disagreed that marginalization was not a factor that contributes to radicalization in the study area. However, 154 (40%) of the household respondents did not know whether marginalization contributed to radicalization. These finds posed a grim picture on the reality of marginalization as a factor that contributes to radicalization.

In Garissa County marginalization has been a major issue with majority of the locals suffering from discrimination that has been brought about through unfair policies. The issue of terrorism has been associated for many years with ethnic Somalis leading to a situation where it has been difficult for many young Somalis to get national identity cards. State authorities have for years treated many of these residents of the region as though they were in cahoots with the Al-shaabab Islamist group which has created a situation where some of the local people have become al-shaabab sympathizers as it emerged from an interviews with the radicalized youth.

In agreement with the findings of the study, Hinds (2013) opines that one of the key aspects of Marginalization is Social exclusion which is often the effect of a process of discrimination or ‘othering’ on the basis of cultural, social and/ or racial identity. In this regard, this form of exclusion or marginalization can lead to serious processes of exclusion of members of the community on various facets of development both economic and social. The powerful processes of exclusion can be both systematic and intentional. The process of marginalization which in this case can be structured in the policies and within formal government institutions can thus create resentment among the affected populace resulting into dissent as in the case of the Apartheid regime in South Africa.

4.4.1.3 Stigma from Government authorities

The Study sought to establish the extent to which government authorizes had stigmatized the local communities in the study area. The results as shown in figure 4.4 indicated that out of the 384 household heads, 154 (40%) of the respondents concurred that the government authorities had frustrated them and mistreated them as well. The respondents argued that they have limited access to legal aid concerning the stigma impacted unto them by the government authorities. 115 (30%) of the total respondents did not agree to this question, to them they had not seen the government authorities stigmatizing the locals. Additionally, 115 (30%) of the respondents did not know whether stigma was associated with government authorities. In arguing on how political leadership influences terrorism,

Hannah Arendt approaches the issue of legitimate authority and violence in a different manner; distinguishing legitimate authority from violence. In her thesis, she insists that the authority, strength, and power of the state rest upon its legitimacy, which gives it the power to foster collective action among its citizens. State violence, though it may be justified, suggests that the state lacks sufficient legitimacy to gain citizen compliance through non-coercive power (Reuven,1999).

This may attract a corresponding resistance from disenchanted sections of the population. This argument resonates with Ted Gurr's, 1970 thesis who argues that terrorism is inversely related to power. Terrorism separated from power takes on the character of a strategy more than a tactic, becomes more clandestine, and requires less organization and leadership (White, 2002; Couto, 2010).

Ideologies have also been seen to breed terrorism. The factor of democracy as an instigator of terrorism is another theme under modern contemporary discourses on terrorism. A democratic government is supposed to represent the people and provide political means to voice grievances, hence essentially providing a sphere where terrorism has no place. To this effect, there cannot be an aggrieved group that is not adequately represented; otherwise, it is a violation of the doctrines of democracy and constitutionalism. In reality, this may not be the case. Such a situation would fit Wilkinson's assertion that political violence is morally justifiable in a democracy in two occasions; first, there is the case of the minority whose basic rights and liberties are denied or taken away by arbitrary action of the government or its agencies; secondly, when one minority is attacked by another minority and does not receive adequate protection from the state and its forces of law and order; and those who are the subjects of a liberal state, but who are not admitted to its rights of citizenship cannot be morally bound to obedience to the state. Wilkinson argues that they are not bound by political obligation for they have not been accorded any rights by the state. Arguably, based on these claims, one can say it is exactly absence of a correct implementation of democratic ideals and not democracy (Wilkinson, 1977; Keet, 2003).

However, a characteristic of democracies is their openness. Some scholars however consider this openness a major weakness of the system, and therefore a cause of terrorism. However, Keet (2003) argues that openness in itself cannot be a cause, only maybe easing terrorists in their preparations and facilitating publicity in the relative absence of censorship, but not the 'change of mindset' to resort to terrorism as a tool. What might be a cause is the so-called terror of the majority clothed behind the tyranny of numbers whereby the minority is represented and allowed to voice their grievances, but without this being consistently translated into desired policies because there are no sufficient votes to pass desired legislation.

4.4.1.4 Frustration stemming from Somalis being associated with Al-shabaab

The study sought to establish whether the Somali ethnic group were being frustrated as a result of being linked to Al-Shabaab by Government agencies. The results as shown in the figure 4.4 revealed that out of 384 household heads 269 (70%) of the respondents agreed to existence of frustrations among the Somalis on the basis of them being associated with Al-shaab. On the contrary, 39 (10%) disagreed to this inquiry and said that there are no cases of frustrations witnessed. Further, the study find out that 76 (20%) of the respondents did not know of any cases of frustrations in the study area. These findings

therefore, indicated that frustration was rife among the Somalis who are associated with the militia group-Al Shabaab. The findings of the study were consistent with the arguments of Ostwald (2011) who opined that government repression leads to terrorism.

4.4.1.5 Sympathy arising from mistreatment by government institutions

The respondents were asked to state the degree of agreement as to whether there is sympathy arising from mistreatment by the government institutions. The results as recorded in Figure 4.4 ,indicated that 154 (40%) agreed that there were instances where sympathy emanating from mistreatment by the government institutions. 38 (10%) the household heads respondents did not agree to the question if there were cases of sympathy. A significant number of 192 (50%) of the household heads did not know whether cases of sympathy arising from mistreatment by the government had been witnessed in the study area.

4.5 Economic Situation push individuals to Radicalization and Terrorism

The study sought to how the economic situation pushes people into terrorism. The household heads were asked to confirm whether these economic factors; poverty, unfair distribution of national resources and unemployment among youths were pushing individuals to radicalization and terrorism. The findings were as indicated in Figure 4.5

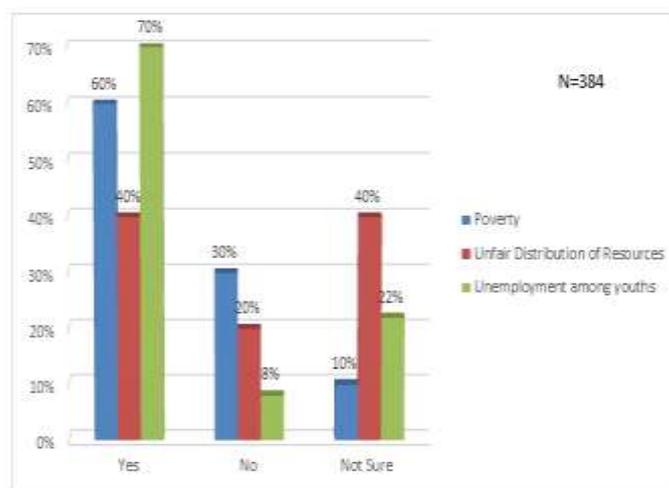


Figure 4.5 Economic factors that push individuals to radicalization

Source: Researcher, 2018

According to the results of the study indicated in Figure 4.5, 230 (60%) of the household heads asserted that poverty was major reason for radicalization. On one hand, 116 (30%) of the respondents said that poverty does not contribute to radicalization. Additionally, 38 (10%) of the household heads confirmed that they were not certain whether poverty led to radicalization within the study area. These findings indicate that significant number of respondents agreed that poverty was a serious economic factor as far as radicalization is concerned. The results further revealed that unfair distribution of resources in various part of the county has been a source of acrimonious existence among various communities. The study therefore sought to underscore whether unfair distribution of resources was a factor that contributed to radicalization in the area. As indicated in Figure 4.5, 154 (40%) of household heads confirmed that unfair distribution of resources was a factor that led to radicalization. 76 (20%) of the respondents confirmed

that unfair distribution of resources was not a factor as far as radicalization is concerned. Conversely and alarmingly, 154 (40%) of the respondents were not sure whether skewed distribution of resources was a factor to be considered insofar as understanding of radicalization is concerned.

Additionally unemployment among the youths was also identified as a factor that contributed to radicalization as indicated in Figure 4.5, 268 (70 %) of the household heads agreed that unemployment was serious problem among the youth and largely led to radicalization. Accordingly, 31 (8%) of the respondents did not concur with the question as to whether unemployment was a factor that contributed to radicalization. Another cynosure in the finding revealed that 85(22%) of the respondents were not sure if unemployment was an economic factor and if it contributed to radicalization in any way.

The findings of the study are thus in agreement with that assertion by various scholars on this subject. There is indeed a general consensus among scholars that the economic wellbeing of people can lead to stability in the society, yet at the same time the most popular theory is that poverty causes instability which includes terrorism (Akhmat, et al. 2013).

4.6 Religious Factors that Push Individuals to Radicalization

The study sought to know whether: extreme teachings in Madrasas, misinterpretation of the Qur’an by some Sheiks , misinterpretation of the concept of Jihad, the need to make Islam a dominant religion and viewing faithful of other religion as infidels were religious reasons that pushed individuals to radicalization. The results are recorded in Figure 4.6

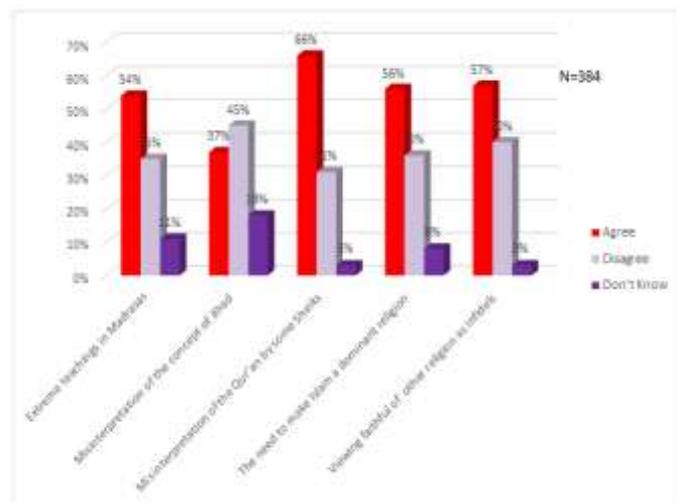


Figure 4.6 Religious reasons that Push Individuals to Radicalization

Source: Researcher, 2018

4.6.1 Extreme teachings in Madrasas

The study sought to underscore whether extreme teachings in Madrasas were pushing individuals to radicalization. As indicated in figure 4.6, 208 (54%) of the 384 household heads respondents agreed to the question that there were extreme teachings in Madrasas and this contributed to radicalization. According to the findings,134 (35%) of the respondents did not agree to the inquiry whether extreme teachings in the Madrasas led to radicalization. A paltry of 42 (11%) of the respondents did not know whether there were such teachings in Madrasas. These findings showed that a significant majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that there were extreme teachings in Madrasas.

4.6.2 Misinterpretation of the Concept of Jihad

Since the incursion of the KDF into Somalia, the intensity of Islamism-inspired terror attacks in Kenya particularly in Garissa County have upsurged astronomically. The study sought to find out whether misinterpretation of the concept Jihad (Holy War) was conduit for radicalization. As illustrated in figure 4.6,143 (37%) of the household respondents agreed that misinterpretation of the concept Jihad was a leading factor to radicalization. However, this finding was countered by 172 (45%) of the total respondents who argued that misinterpretation of Jihad was not a factor as far as radicalization is concerned. Moreover, 69 (18%) of the respondents did not know whether that was a factor to be considered in radicalization.

4.6.3 Misinterpretation of the Qur’an by some Sheiks

The study sought to establish whether misinterpretation of the Qur’an by some Sheiks, was a religious reason that pushed individuals to radicalization. According to figure 4.6,253 (66%) of the total household respondents agreed to the question that misinterpretation of the Qur’an by some Sheiks contributed to radicalization. On the contrary, 119 (31%) of the respondents disagreed to this inquiry. Additionally, 16 (3%) of the household respondents did not know whether this was a factor that contributed to radicalization. Indeed the study results confirmed that misinterpretation of Qur’an was a grave issue in the study area.

4.6.4 The need to make Islam a dominant religion

Religious imperatives have the potential to lead to more violent acts, this study sought to know if need to make Islam a dominant religion was a factor that pushed individual to radicalization. According to results in figure 4.6, 215 (56%) of the household heads agreed to the inquiry that the need to make Islam a dominant religion was a contributing factor towards radicalization. However, 138(36%) of the respondents disagreed with the question as to whether the need to make Islam a dominant religion really contributed to radicalization of individuals in the study area.31 (8%) of the household respondents did not know whether making Islam a dominant religion was any factor to consider.

4.6.5 Viewing faithfuls of other religions as Infidels

Religion is a legitimizing force that encourages violence against other groups, from one religious setting to another. The purpose of this study was to find out whether viewing faithful of other religion as infidels pushed individuals to radicalization. As illustrated in figure 4.6, 219 (57%) of the household respondents agreed that this was a serious concern and key contributor to radicalization. Conversely,154 (40%) of the respondents did not agree to this question. In their understanding, Islamism holds strongly to the tenets of Islamic faith and essentially important in reaching out to non-muslims.16 (3%) of the respondents did not know whether viewing faithful of other religion as infidels resulted to radicalization or not.

5.0 Conclusion

The study concludes there is a relationship between Islamism and Al-Shaabab activities in Garissa County. This is based on the fact that majority of the residents in Garissa County are Muslims and as such, Al-shaabab uses religion to manipulate people who are marginalized and economically deprived in order to get recruits who can help them in fighting the “Jihad” which may is not the true Jihad taught by the Holy Qu’ran.

6.0 Recommendation

The study recommends empowerment of the local people through education and economic empowerment especially among the youths to reduce the incidences of vulnerability to radicalization. This is in regard to the fact that many youths are exposed to radicalization by Al-shaabab due to marginalization as well as the high level of poverty in Garissa county which the local people partly blame on marginalization by the national government for many years.

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