Research Article

The Nexus between Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Islamic Radicalization in Garissa County, Kenya

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Abstract: The global threat of Islamism inspired terrorism has witnessed an upsurge in different parts of the world in the recent past. The threat of terror has been alive in Kenya in the recent past and hence the desire to understand the link between the social and demographic characteristics and Islamic radicalization. The study adopted Social Distance Theory. The descriptive correlational approach described the status of the variables while showing how the variables relate in the natural setting. The study was conducted in six sub-counties of Garissa County where respondents included Islamic clerics and scholars, government security officials (County commissioner, chiefs and ATPU), the community (Nyumba kumi committees and household heads) and former radicalized youths. The study established that Islamism influences Al-shaabab activities in Garissa County by playing on the emotion of the locals in the area in terms of the economic status with factors like poverty and economic marginalization being the major areas of weakness that the Al-shabaab terror group is exploiting to infiltrate the community in Garissa County

Keywords: Islamism, Socio-demography, Al-shaabab, Radicalization.

Introduction
The threat of Islamism-inspired terrorism has evolved from being a state-centric challenge to become a global phenomenon of concern. Frequent terror attacks by terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Islamic State, Taliban, Al-Shaabab have dominated headlines around the globe and challenge governments in the region (Africa) and globally. This trend has astounded both Islamic and non-Islamic scholars, who in their discourse have questioned whether this is a by-product of some sort of culture war, or what Huntington (1993) labelled *clash of civilisations*. But both the discourse and violence has raised fundamental questions about the relationship between Islamism and terrorism.

Islamism has a connection to terrorist groups, Hubbell (2016) indicates that Islamism has been adopted by organizations such as the Al-Qaeda and ISIS due to its adaptability. Islamism shows the ability to be both broad and Universalist. Further to this, it has been narrowly focused on a single nationality. Islamist organizations are not Universalist but focus on the national backgrounds of Muslims from wherever they are. Hezbollah reaches to Muslims in Lebanon, Hamas to Palestinian Muslims, and Muslim Brotherhood to Egyptian Muslims

The motivations for terrorist acts or attacks are multifaceted. D'Souza (2010) opines that principal among the many factors that has driven terrorism (at global, regional, and local levels) in the 21st century, is religion. He states that, it is certainly true ,that many horrible things have been done under the cover of religion. The inquisition springs to mind along with Islamic terrorism and Catholic protestant wars which raged and influenced European and America politics for centuries' (D'Souza, 2010). In the same vein, Wilson (2002) reinforces D'Souza's (2010) argument by noting that though human conflicts and terrorist attacks such as September 11 can be explained in political and social terms, there is an explicit or implicit religious component that shapes and motivates such acts

In Africa, terrorist groups, and thus activities tend to occur in some particular countries or regions more than others. In both North Africa and Sahel and the Horn of Africa, terrorist attacks have been more frequent than in other parts of the continent. Gray and Stockham (2008) have traced the emergence of Islamic terrorism in North Africa and the Sahel to a confluence of both local and transnational factors
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The Horn of Africa (Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan) has also been considered a source of international terrorism by the U.S, especially after the 9/11 terror attacks. United States Institute of Peace (USIP) report shows that the theme of root causes of terrorism in the Horn is characterized by religion which remains a major influence especially on informing Islamist worldviews and training programs. The radical Islamist trainings propagated throughout the region have increased terrorism not only in the region but internationally (USIP, 2004)

In Kenya, terrorist groups have normally existed as a coalescence of unemployed and largely economically disenfranchised youths operating in urban areas as well as activities of regional and international terrorist organizations. For instance, the Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda with the example of the 1998 US Embassy bombings in

Nairobi as well as the Westgate siege in 2013,have not rung far from the mind. Since 1998, Kenya has been a country rocked with intensive terrorist operations (Abidae, 2004).

Indeed, much of modern-day transnational and globalized terrorism seems to be generating from grievances against rich countries (Rinehurt, 2009). Further to this, in some cases, terrorist groups may decide to attack property or nationals of rich countries to gain international publicity. As a result, transnational terrorism has predominantly affected rich countries (Abadie, 2004). Arguably, different scholars have advanced the discourse of terrorism by linking it to a myriad of factors. Some of which have been economic inequality (poverty), access to natural resources, globalization, religion among other factors. Hoffman, (1998) 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 terrorist radicalization.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Social Distance Theory. The proponents of the Social Distance Theory include among others Black. Black states that the point of departure of this approach from other approaches is that, long-standing grievances alone cannot explain extreme violence. Hence, one needs to identify the sociological interrelationships between the terrorists, their grievances, and enemies or the 'social geometry' of the actors (Black 2004). Another major proponent, De la Roche (1996) proposed that terrorism is most likely to occur under conditions of high levels of 'social distance' between perpetrators and the victims. Also a high degree of cultural and relational distance, inequality, and functional independence represent the divide that may cause terrorist attacks.

Black (2004) identifies several other social distances and argues that terrorism has an 'inter-collective' direction. First, terrorists strike against civilians associated with another milieu which include another ethno-religious group or nationals. Secondly, terrorism has an upward direction where terror attacks are directed towards targets that symbolize the central government, dominant regime or socio-economic or political superior group. Therefore, terrorism represents 'social control from below' (Black 2004).

Black further opines that terrorism in its most destructive form, would most likely occur when perpetrators are socially far and widely removed from the victims. He argues that the greater the social distances, the greater their destructiveness (Black 2004). De la Roche and Black's propositions are interesting in terms of explaining mass casualty terrorism, but remain to be tested systematically and empirically, and so was the purpose of this study.

The Al-Shabaab capitalizes on the huge differences between Islam and other religious and cultural groups. It discriminates against Christians and other mainstream religions. This makes non-Muslims based in Northern Kenya an easy target for Al-Shaabab attacks. These groups are attacked and eliminated in the name of banishing evil and the wrongdoers who don't live according to Islamism advocated by the Al-Shabaab. To this end, there have been attacks on places of worship and cultural centres of other faiths and cultures. Any institution that hosts and provides sanctuary to other distant religions and cultures have been targeted as well.

This theory however, is limited by the fact that in modern times technology and globalization in general have converged cultures and beliefs. This has made people more alike and easy to relate. Therefore, the theory is limited in this regard especially having in mind the technological and communication revolution which has made places and people more alike and harmonious to that end.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive correlational approach described the status of the variables while showing how the variables relate in the natural setting (Creswell, 2013). It was conducted in six sub-counties of Garissa County where respondents included Islamic clerics and scholars, government security officials (County commissioner, chiefs and ATPU), the community (Nyumba kumi committees and household heads) and radicalized youths. Data from these groups was collected through questionnaires and key informant interviews. To arrive at the sampling frame, the study applied two sampling techniques (purposive and snowballing). The sampling frame and methods of data collection for the study was as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Summary of Sampling Strategies and Data Collection Methods

Sample Category	Sample	Sampling Strategy	Data Collection Methods
Household Heads	384 (Fishers Formula)	Simple Random	Questionnaires
Islamic Clerics	6	Purposive	Interviews
Former Radicalized Youths	30	Snowball	Interviews
County commissioner	1	Purposive	Interviews
Deputy County	6	Purposive	Interviews

commissioners			
Regional Police commanders	3	Purposive	Interviews
Anti-terrorism police Unit Garisa County boss	1	Purposive	Interviews
Anti-terrorism police Unit in charge of Sub-counties (Garisa and Daadab)	2	Purposive	Interviews
OCPDS	6	Purposive	Interviews
OCSs	6	Purposive	Interviews
Chiefs	6	Purposive	Interview
TOTAL	**445**		

Source: Researcher, 2017

Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic techniques. Beneficiaries of this study included the Garissa County community as well as the Kenya population as a whole.Quantitative analysis was used for responses (data) on closed ended items of the questionnaire and the interview guide. As part of the analysis procedure, data was processed using the Scientific Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 17.0 and Microsoft Office Excel (MOE), respectively. In this study, primary data was analyzed through Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) where the information was coded and entered into a spread sheet. The material was then run in the (SPSS) software. Statistical tests were run for purposes of correlating variables of the study. Further to this, content analysis was carried out on the issues under investigation for purposes of making inferences. The descriptive analysis tools generated included percentages and frequencies. The data was then presented in the form of graphs and charts. Qualitative data was presented in form of narrative reports and verbatim quotations.

4.0 Study Findings and Discussions
4.1.1 Marital Status
The study sought to establish the marital status of the household heads. Respondents were thus asked to indicate their marital status as shown in Figure 4.1
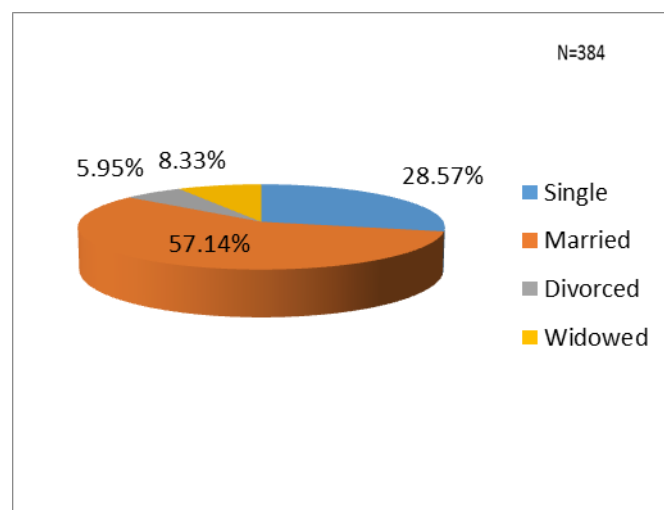

Figure 4.1 Marital Status of Household heads
Source: Field Data, 2018

The findings on figure 4.1 indicated that 28.57% of the household heads were single, 57.14% were married, 5.95% were divorced and 8.33% were widowed. In this regard there majority of the respondents were married and as such were senior member of the society who could easily relate with social issues affecting the society in various ways.

Marriage is considered as a serious social institution by the residents of Garissa County and as such the locals see marriage as the very foundation of the existence of the society. The majority of the people living in the county are ethnic Somali's most of whom profess Islamic religion. In this regard, many people are married based on the fact that a number of them have more than one wife since Islam allows the marriage of up to four wives. Marriage of many wives also easily translates to one having a large number of children some of whom they may not properly educate or take care. This therefore has the chance of easily creating a situation where there too many young people in the community who cannot be properly taken care of thereby leading to the situation where a number of the these young people are exposed to radicalization as a result of the kind of economic situation they find themselves in. In this regard therefore Islamism through allowing the marriage of many wives it leads to creation of large families where young people become easy target for Groups like the Al-shabaab which have in many cases targeted poor and vulnerable youth for terror related activities in the name of Islam.

In the study of terrorism, marriage has been used as a method of creating stronger ties between radical Jihadists with the aim of continuing stronger relationship and bolstering terror related activities around the world. There are a number of Islamic Jihadist from around the world who have used marriage as a tool of ensuring that the they remain relevant either by marrying of their close relatives Islamic jihadists or marrying people they believe are influential enough to help them in the continuation of the activities they

are engaged in either through recruitment of radicals or through material support.

Family relations and close friendships have been taunted as one of the major ways through which people get recruited into terrorism. Several case scenarios have shown that people involved in terror related activities have either a family member who may include siblings or a spouse who is in one way or another involved in terrorism and as such marriage and family are key in understanding terror activities such as the Al-shaabab related activities in Garissa County.

In agreement with the findings of the study, Porta (1995) revealed that when he was studying the Italian Red Brigades in the 1970s and 1980s, he was able to establish that of the 1,214 militants, 298 "had at least one relative, usually husband or wife, brother or sister" who were part of the movement. This is almost a quarter of the numbers of all the militants. In this regard, it is evident that family and marriage cannot be divorced from radicalization related activities. (Hafez, 2014) further revealed that among the founders of the of the Red Brigades, two of them, that is Renato Curcio and Margherita Cagol, were a married couple, that is husband and wife. In this regard, family ties can therefore make it even easier for terrorist to penetrate a community since within a family people are likely to share an ideology which may impact a community both positively or negatively depending on how people view the situation. A report released in 2004 in the United states by the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States indicated that out of the 19 terrorist who hijacked the Plane during the September 11, 2001 attack 6 were brothers, in this case it comes clear that family ties are an important aspect when it comes to the issues related to activities of a terrorist group. There are a numbers of examples around the world that associate marital ties to terrorism. Some of these include; the case of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who sent his father-in-law Yassin Jarrad to execute a serious bombing that in the end claimed the life of the Shiite cleric Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr al-Hakim in 2003 (Hafez, 2014). In the year 2005, Amman, Jordan, hotel bombings were carried out by an Iraqi husband-and-wife team of Ali-Hussein al-Shamari and Sajidah al-Rishawi. In that same year, Muriel Degauque travelled to Iraq with her husband, Issam Goris, both with the intent to carry out suicide attacks. She succeeded; he was foiled and killed in the process (Hafez, 2007).

In this regard therefore, close family ties brought about by Tightly-knit kinship as well as cases of friendship offer an avenue for radical socialization that instantaneously can work towards the satisfaction of the satisfy psychological needs such as avoidance of differences in reasoning , the

need to ensure that these close ties remain intact and ensure that the relationships remain meaningful, as well as the need to ensure that there is some value attached to these relationships that is likely to bring out the some sort of cohesion in the relationships. Close associations through family ties and marriages are also likely entrap individuals through undercurrents of peer pressure and group-rationality, which then in turn may create a situation where the ties lead to a high level of loyalty and bonding between these associate to the extent that their commitment to their course remains unwavering even if it puts anybody in danger. Porta (2013) argues that may Radical Islamists groups have now turned using families and family loyalty as a major way home-grown terrorism and recruit foreign fighters since they are facing vigilant security services all around the world, these are psychological dynamics that have made it difficult for the security forces to find ways of dealing with terror in the modern error.

4.1.2 Gender
The study sought to establish the gender of household heads. Respondents were thus asked to indicate their gender as shown in Figure 4.2
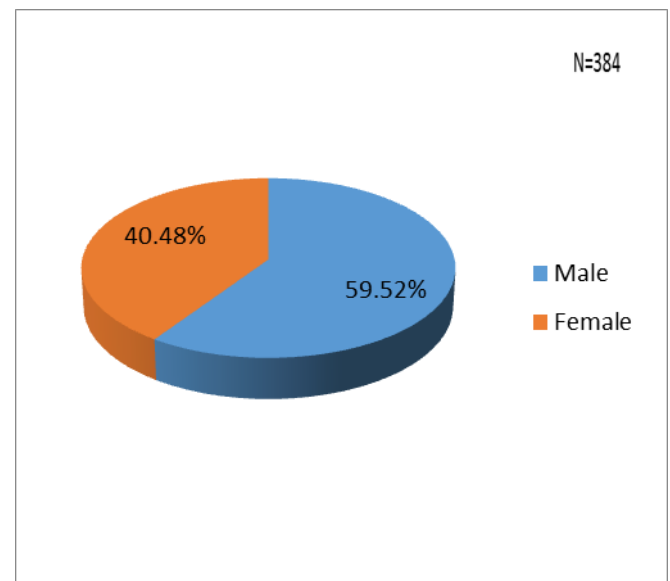

Figure 4.2 Gender of the household heads
Source: Field Data, 2018

The results in Figure 4.1 indicate that 59.52% of respondents were male while 40.48 % were females. The study established that most households are headed by male as opposed to their female counter parts. This was therefore an indication of the patriarchal nature of the society and as such indication that women were not considered key decision makers in the society.

For status it is important to understand the concept gender. Gender refers to a culture's social construction of differences between the sexes. These include the different traits, roles, behaviors, attitudes, and aptitudes males and females are expected to display. Gender displays reinforce claims of

membership in a sex. Expressions such as "gendered practices," "gendered language," and "gendered jobs" are used to emphasize the tenet that gender involves a process of social construction (Amanda, 1998).Gender describes the characteristics that a society or culture delineates as masculine or feminine, gender differences are therefore constructed and conveyed in social groups, institutions, the media and law. The gender perspective means that various questions are analysed and elucidated from the perspective of both women and men. This means that analyses such as this must focus on the perspective of both genders, not just one of them. A central dimension of the gender perspective is the question of the distribution of power between women and men with regards to decision making. Based on the findings, having more male household heads simply meant men were more powerful economically and in terms of decision making in the society.

The findings of the study were consistent with the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (2014) which indicated that most household in Kenya are headed by men thereby leaving women dependent on the decisions that are made by the male members of the society. This is an affirmation of the patriarchal nature of the society. The KDHS (2014) report further revealed that very few women married women make key household decisions which therefore make it almost impossible for the women to have serious control in the society. In further support of the findings KNBS (2015) report indicated that men had more control in the society that women with regard to ownership of resources and assets.

Despite the power shown through patriarchy in the society, there is a concern that women can face various risks as a result of being marginalised in the processes of decisions making and economic empowerment in the society. In this regard, women face various vulnerabilities that are likely to increase their chances of getting recruited into these terror groups. Some factors that are likely to push men and women into radical Groups such as the Al-shaabab is poverty, low educational attainments and social exclusion. Women and girls are particularly more vulnerable than men due to the fact that the local communities tend not to take issues that are associated with women's development lightly. Women especially from marginalised communities ted to face the most difficult moments when it comes to economic empowerment due to the fact that many of them are under pressure to provide for the families. Such women are therefore an easy target to activities of radical groups as they would do anything put food on the table for the family. In some cases such women would even allow their children to have radical teachings and join radical groups for their economic gains. The loss of loved ones through wars and conflicts also have serious consequences on communities.

Women and Men who have lost their loved ones such as children, wives fathers, husbands and mothers may feel the urge to join radical groups for the sake of getting revenge for their dead. Just like Men involved in Extremist groups, women's roles in extremist groups range from recruiters to providers of basic services and, in some cases , militants involved in bombings. Some Enticements to radicalization for women include material benefits, greater self-esteem and religious pressure.

Therefore from the foregoing it is evident that men are more dominant that woman as reflected from the perspectives of the data given in the households. Male members of the society therefore should enormous responsibility that is likely to make them vulnerable to radicalization and eventual involvement in terror related activities as a means of subsistence in the community.

4.1.3 Age

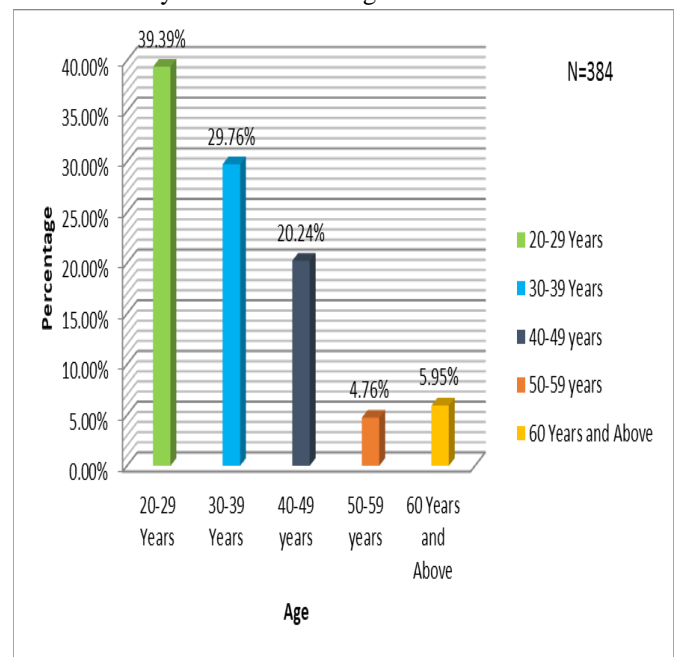The study sought to find out age the household heads in Garissa county as indicated in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Age of the Household Heads
Source: Field Data 2018

The results revealed that 39.39% of the respondents were between the ages of 20-29 years, 29.76% were of the ages 30-39 years, 20.24% of the respondents were of the ages of 40-49 years, 4.76% of the respondents of the ages 50-59 years and 5.95% of the respondents were above 60 years. The results therefore revealed majority of the of the household heads were below the age of 40 and as such fitted in the age bracket was considered to be youthful.

The age factor is key in the study area because age determines whether or not one engages in issues of radicalization or not. The youthful age according to the United nations is the ages of 15- 35 years. During this

period most people are either in schools or colleges. People between 25 to 35 are mostly active in looking for employment and are in the process of trying to be independent. In this regard the majority of the youthful population tend to look for ways of getting more stable means of incoming including Jobs. In Kenya today the unemployment rate stands at 39.1% with majority of the people who are unemployed being the youthful population. In this regard therefore, it is important to note that youths who are not employed are easy target for radicalization and as such it is imperative to note that these youths can easily be recruited into terror organization.

In Garissa County the youth constitutes about 28.5 per cent of the total population, these are people between the ages of 15 to 29 years (CIDP, 2013). With challenges of radicalization and threat of radicalization due to Kenya's proximity to Somalia, it is evident that a lot needs to be done to ensure that these youths are able to get ways of staying away from the activities that put them at risk. In this regard the county government has acknowledged the challenges facing the youths and as such, the county's youthful population is therefore large and more resources should be allocated towards activities and programmes that will benefit the youth. These include setting up of more vocational institutions, technical institutions, and putting in place policies that promote job creation for the youth. These are in the efforts to ensure that the youths in the county are kept busy with constructive activities that should see them more engaged in constructive work and such not give them room to be lured into radicalization and being involved in terrorism.

According to the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres Nearly half the world's population – 46 per cent – is 24 years-old or younger,). Young people are the prime targets of extremist recruiters but they can also play a leadership role in the fight against terrorism and creating greater opportunities for all. In this investing on the youths can help in the proves of countering terrorism (UN, 2018).

The radicalization of young people is a source of deep concern in rich and poor countries alike, as poisonous ideas flow across borders at the touch of a button or the tap of a tweet. Terrorist groups exploit social, economic and political injustices to entice young people through false propaganda that glorifies distorted ideologies, while unscrupulous recruiters using social media to lure unsuspecting teenagers down dangerous roads (UN, 2018). United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres further opines that "violent extremist groups target and invest in young people because they are aware of their potential and their strong desire for change."

The youths are also an easy target since the terrorist groups looking for those who believe that their only option is to rebel against the government because the government let them down and led them into poverty. Lack of economic opportunities and economies with slow GNP growth have strong ties with numerous terrorist activities (Bueno de Mesquita 2005). Therefore, it is more the process of going into poverty, or increasing poverty that increases the chances of terrorism happening. Tied together with this, is the concept that modernization is to blame for complicating societies to the point of vulnerability, which in turn creates poverty situations (Crenshaw, 2011). Within this category of economic variables is also unemployment, and social inequality (Laqueur 2014). These variables can combine to produce a situation that is ideal for terrorist organizations to recruit. When the people of a given area are so dissatisfied with the state of their lives, they are more likely to turn to extreme measures, or are more likely to be persuaded to do so. All of this evidence shows that at least initially, economic factors may be an extremely strong predictor of terrorism.

4.1.4: Religion
The study sought to establish the religion of the household heads. Respondents were thus asked to indicate their religion which was as shown in Figure 4.4
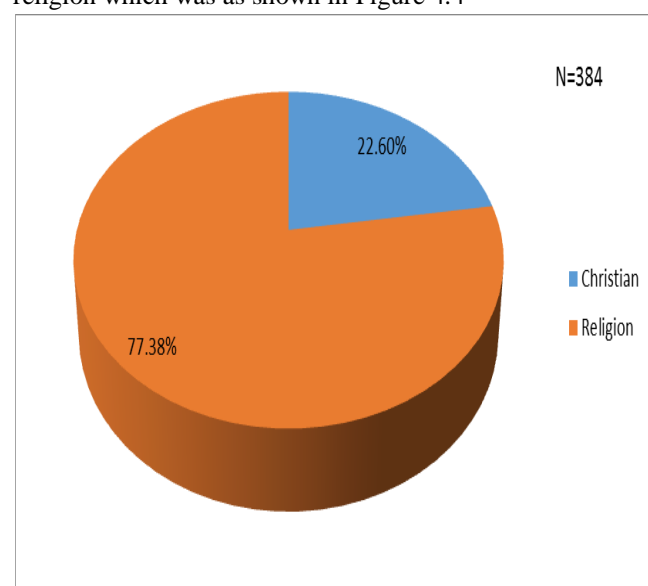

Figure 4.4: Religion of Household Heads
Source: Field Data 2018

The findings revealed that 77.38% of the household heads were Muslims while 22.6% of the household heads were Christians. In this regard, majority of the respondents in the stud area were Muslims could easily relate to the issues that the study aimed to address. The presence of Christians in the study area was also key since it ensured that as there was balance in opinions about Islamism even from those who are not Muslims.

The Imams who were interviewed during the study indicated that most of the people in the area were Muslims and this notwithstanding, the Muslims coexisted harmoniously with their Christian counterparts. One Imam from Garissa Township however opined that; We have had challenges especially when these terrorists attack non local people with the aim of diving the communities on religious basis. Some of people from other parts of the Country have often felt like they are targeted because of their religion (Interview with Garissa Township Imam, 18 May 2018).

The Regional police Commander of Garissa County also indicated that: Al-shabaab group conforms and profess Islam hence making it look like religious violence though not so because Al-shabaab activities is inhuman and even targets innocent civilians in Somali. However, radicalization and recruitment take places in the local mosques and madrasas targeting young boys and clerics who are susceptible for recruitment into terrorist group. Al-shabaab terrorist group target mosques and madarasa since it's easy to radicalize, where Quranic teaching are used to indoctrinate students, certain madrasas probed due to the rate of radicalization taking place in it i.e. madarasatul Najah within Garissa town, where one of the Al-shabaab commander was once a teacher and many students have joined terrorist group (Interview with Regional Commander, 18th May 2018).

Religion as a social aspect that needs to be considered when it comes to dealing with terrorism. Modern terrorism has seen an enormous increase in religious extremism, the scale of violence has intensified, and the global reach has expanded (Martin 2010). Religious terrorism can be defined as political violence that is motivated by an absolute belief that an other-worldly power has sanctioned, or sometimes commanded, terrorist violence for the greater glory of the faith (Martin 2010). People who partake in religious terrorism believe that any acts they commit will be forgiven and perhaps rewarded in the afterlife (Martin 2010). Extremism is not limited to just one religion. There are many different forms of religious terrorism, but the most common is Islamic extremism (Martin 2010). Overall, there has been a dramatic increase recently in religious terrorism, making it one of the main contributors to terrorism globally.

From the foregoing it is evident that Islamism has been used by the Al-shaabab as a justification of their terror related activities which has put the community in Garissa County in a state of limbo in the quest to separate terrorism from Islamism.

4.1.5 Level of Education

The study sought to establish the highest level of education of the household heads. The results were as indicated in shown in Figure 4.5. the findings revealed that 33.33% of

the household heads had No education, 13.1% had certificate, 21.43% had Diploma, 23.81% had degree and 6.33 had master's degree. In this regard, the study revealed that majority of residence in the study area were highly illiterate and could easily be radicalised through wrong forms of education.
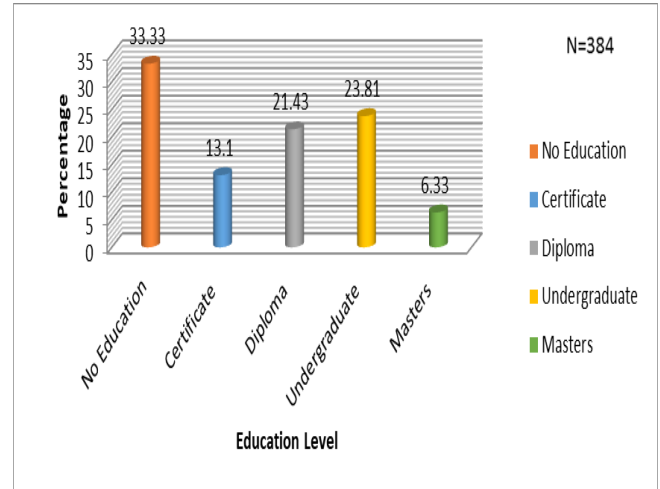

Figure 4.5: Highest Educational Attainment of Household Heads
Source: Field Data 2018

The low education levels are in Garissa County were an indicator of the fact that majority of the respondents are affected by financial constraints. There were also in low enrollment due to school inaccessibility. The low education levels can be used to aptly explain the vulnerability of the community members in Garissa County to radicalization. The results are in agreement with a report from KNBS (2013) which indicates that 74% of Garissa County residents have no formal education. Balambala constituency has the highest share of residents with no formal education at 90%. This is almost two times Garissa Township constituency, which has the lowest share of residents with no formal education. Balambala constituency is 16 percentage points above the county average. Two wards, Damajale and Jarajara, have the highest percentage of residents with no formal education at 94% each. This is twice Township ward, which has the lowest percentage of residents with no formal education. Damajale and Jarajara are 20 percentage points above the county average.

Contrary to the findings of the study, as study by World Bank revealed that recruits to Islamic militant groups are likely to be well educated with those aspiring to be suicide bombers among the best off. The World Bank study found that 69% of recruits reported at least a secondary level education while "15% left school before high school and less than 2% are illiterate". The educational level of recruits from North Africa or the Middle East was significantly greater than that of most of their compatriots, the researchers found (The Guardian, 5th October, 2016). A

large fraction have gone on to study at university. Recruits from Africa, south and east Asia and the Middle East are significantly more educated than individuals from their cohort in their region of origin." The World Bank report further revealed that majority of the highly educated ISIS recruits wanted either to be administrators or "suicide fighters" and this increased with education. "In countries with a large Muslim population, low degrees of religiosity, low levels of trust in religious institutions and strong government and social control of religion seem to be risk factors of radicalisation," On-going research into causes of Islamic militancy has underlined the complexity of motives of recruits and volunteers, as well as the differences between different conflict zones (The Guardian, 5th October, 2016).

It is therefore evident from the findings that both availability of and lack of education can facilitate radicalization recruitment into terror groups. Lack of education make people vulnerable to radicalization due to poverty and other socio-economic factors. High educational attainments on the other hand creates an environment where people need to compensate for the lack of trust in institutions by creating something they can believe in, something that the terrorists offer them. The social and government controls put these young educated people at the point of seeking some sort of liberalism that makes them radicalised, turns them against state and religions institutions and into terrorists. When people are highly educated and lack employment, there is also a chance that they would most likely seek alternative ways of getting income, one of them being the option provided by terrorist who would most likely offer money to these disgruntled young people who need to fend for themselves. For example there were media reports that one of the o gunmen of the Garissa University attack in 2015 was a law degree graduate from the University of Nairobi who was radicalised and joined Al-shaabab despite his educational attainments.

5.0 Conclusion

The study concludes that conclusion of the study is that there Islamism influences Al-shaabab activities in Garissa County by playing on the emotion of the locals in the area in terms of the economic status with factors like poverty and economic marginalization being the major areas of weakness that the Al-shabaab terror group is exploiting to infiltrate the community in Garissa County. The study also established the terrorists exploit extreme Islamic teachings and the Jihad concept to get sympathizers from among the local communities especially those who feel disgruntled by the discriminatory acts of the Kenyan government towards the Somali ethnic group which the Al-shaabab closely associate with in terms of ethnicity and religion.

6.0 Recommendations

The study recommends the use of Islam by those given positions of authority like the Imams to have teachings that have positive impacts on the society. The study specifically recommends serious monitoring of teachings in various Madrasas in the county of Garissa to minimise radical teachings that can lead to people being recruited into terror related groups.

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