



## Exploring Language As A Tool For Religious Leaders In Countering Radicalisation And Religious Extremism Among The Youth In Eastleigh, Nairobi County

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### ABSTRACT

The gist of this study was to explore language as a tool for religious leaders in preventing and countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth. This study emphasised on language an indispensable tool that religious leaders can use in curbing this recruitment which has claimed lives and has had economic repercussions. The study specifically assessed the collaboration between the Government of Kenya (GoK) and religious leaders in Eastleigh towards countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth and it proposes a common discourse that religious leaders could use in preventing radicalisation and religious extremism of the youth. The study was anchored by the Social Movement Theory (SMT). The target population comprised of the religious leaders, security operatives and youths in Eastleigh. The study implored simple random sampling technique. In total a sample of 100 respondents were randomly selected from the study site. The researchers collected primary data from the respondents by administering questionnaires (to the youth) and interview schedules on religious leaders and the security personnel. The data was analysed using quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 program while qualitative was analysed through narrative descriptions. The study findings established that among many other tools and means, language is key in curbing youth radicalisation and religious extremism. It also revealed that the Government of Kenya should directly engage the religious leaders on matters prevention of youth radicalization and religious extremism. The youth bemoaned lack of employment and political participation as the factors that pull them to radicalisation and religious extremism. They also want to be fully engaged in occasions where language is used between the GoK and Religious leaders.

**Key Words:** Countering Radicalisation and Religious Extremism, Government of Kenya, and Religious Leaders

## INTRODUCTION

Terrorism which is the manifestation of radicalisation and religious extremism has become a serious threat to the world peace. The reality of radicalisation and religious extremism has troubled the whole universe. Extreme religious groups have chosen a path of wanton mayhem and destruction as a way of addressing their grievances. Their tactics keep changing, making it difficult for available counter terrorism means to curb this evil. Radicalisation of the youth into religious extremism is on the rise. The vulnerable youth are recruited as vehicles to ferry acts of terror on innocent civilians. The cases of loss of lives and property due to terror attacks are on the increase globally. The predicament is aggravated by the complexity that comes with defining and comprehending the terms radicalisation and religious extremism (Borum, 2011; Humphrey and Buchanan-Clarke, 2016).

Scholars have neither reached an agreement on a single definition of what radicalisation includes nor have they agreed on a single path on which this heinous act falls. Religious extremism on the other hand poses even more challenges due to its confusing nature (Borum, 2011; Humphrey and Buchanan-Clarke, 2016). The two share common elements, however, they are diverse in significant respect. Humphrey and Buchanan-Clarke (2016) supported the view that lack of a definitional consensus between various stakeholders holds a number of significant implications that go beyond semantics. Borum (2011) adds "governments and organisations responsible for national security should make a concerted effort to define 'radicalism' and 'extremism' primarily as it relates to strategic outcomes". Radicalisation is generally defined as the process of developing extremist ideologies and beliefs (Vurmo et al, 2015).

It should be noted at this stage that radicalisation may be violent or non-violent. In fact, if it is not linked or associated with violence or other extreme acts, radicalisation is not a threat to the society (Humphrey and Buchanan-Clarke, 2016). The nonviolent radicalisation has been used as a tool for change against human slavery and other oppressive powers throughout human history (Allan et-al, 2015). This study is only interested in radicalisation that is connected to violence and is religiously instigated. To this effect, Precht (2007) defines radicalisation as a process of adopting an extremist belief system and willingness to use, or facilitate violence and fear as a method of affecting changes in society. For Crosset and Spitaletta (2010) radicalisation is the process by which an individual or a group undergo a transformation from participating in the political process via legal means to the use or support of violence for political purpose.

Radicalisation and religious extremism have ravaged world's peace. Many countries have set up different strategies that may help to counter this worldwide influx of radicalisation and religious extremism. In all these efforts however, this research emphasises on language as a tool that religious leaders, in collaboration with the GoK could use in curbing these dastardly acts of terrorism that have ravaged Europe, America and Africa.

The radical extremists groups in Somalia have spread across East Africa. The country hosting majority of these is Kenya. According to Solomon (2015), the terror groups penetrated Kenya with the main view of furthering their agenda of defending Islam against the siege mentality that it is under threat from westernisation. There could be other underlying reasons though. Kenya like many other countries has fertile conditions for both international and home grown radical extreme groups to flourish.

More so, Kenya hosts thousands of asylum seekers from the block and beyond. The protracted humanitarian crisis from her neighbours has raised the number of refugees. The number of

registered refugees went up from 12,000 in 1988 to over 380,000 in 2009, making it among the top ten major refugee hosting countries in the world. Today majority of them are living in the city. Research reveals that Eastleigh slum has the largest number of the registered and unregistered refugees. In 2012, Kenya had a total of 55,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Nairobi. According to UHCR (2009) the number of these asylum seekers include: Somalia 43%, Ethiopia 26%, Sudan, Rwanda, Uganda 5%, Congo 10%, Burundi 3%, Eritrea 3%; majority of these live in Nairobi's Eastleigh Estate (Pavanello, 2010).

The current study acknowledges that there are several strategies (though most of them are reactive instead of preventive) that the GoK has put in place. The above background serves to show that radicalisation and religious extremism cannot be separated from religion, more so religious leaders. The study has established that the most effective way to which the religious leaders can reach the youth is through language. The set strategies by the GoK fall short of the role of language as a tool for religious leaders in curbing radicalisation and religious extremism. The study hence sought to explore language as a tool for religious leaders in curbing radicalisation and religious extremism.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The outcomes of radicalisation and religious extremism have extreme economic, political, and social implications on the region and on the nation of Kenya. The efforts put in place so far are not bearing much fruits, the current methods from both the GoK and Religious institutions have not won the war. The problem of the continued radicalisation of the youth into religious extremism in Kenya and specifically in Eastleigh is alarming.

The above background has triggered the questions like: Are the religious leaders taking advantage of their voice in the society to counter radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth? Does the GoK acknowledge the position of religious leaders in the society and the role they can play in countering radicalisation and religious extremism? It is against this background that the present study sought to highlight the role of religious leaders in countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth using the case of Eastleigh in Nairobi County by focusing on language as a tool for this job.

Previous studies have focused on government strategies most of which are militaristic, with some mentioning the role of religious leaders in general and or in passing. Mogire and Agade (2011) in their research concentrated on the counter terrorism measures by the GoK while Aronson (2013) paid special attention on how Muslim community is countering terrorism. Recently, Mohammed (2017) concentrated on the general role of religious leaders in Mombasa.

The researcher sought to bridge the gaps in these previous works by championing first collaboration of the religious leaders of the two major religions based in Eastleigh namely Islam and Christianity. The collaboration is extended to the GoK and how it can fully engage the religious leaders in its strategies on countering radicalisation, religious extremism and terrorism. The new avenue championed by this study identifies language as a measurable and key tool which religious leaders can use in countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth.

### **The Main Objective**

The study main objective was to explore language as a tool for religious leaders in countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth in Eastleigh, Nairobi County.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Social Movement Theory (SMT)**

SMT is defined by Zald and McCarthy (1987) as: "A set of opinions and beliefs in a population, which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and or reward distribution of a society. The theory started in the 1940s. The basic principle in this theory was that movements were as a result of irrational processes of collective behaviour stirring under tense environmental conditions creating a mass sentiment of dissatisfaction. Sociologists referred to such a theory as "Strain Theory". The movement gained support from individuals in the society who felt burdened by overwhelming social forces.

The promoters of this theory argue that contemporary SMT theories have acquired more rational and strategic processes. Modern SMT researchers discern that the primary task of any group or movement is to maintain its own survival. This therefore means that the members or the adherents gather and maintain a body of supporters. The theory argues that human losses through attrition must be replenished, and new members must be added for the movement to grow. According to Borum (2011) growth is necessary to expand the movement's influence and capacity.

Klandermans and Oegema (1987) observe that in order to survive and sustain itself, any Social Movement must address the following tasks: 1. Forming mobilization potential; 2. Forming and motivating recruitment networks; 3. Arousing motivation to participate and 4. Removing barriers to participation. The SMT theorists further suggest that in order to be efficient and effective, the members look for every opportunity to recruit others. The members seek to identify individuals who are likely to agree and act, if asked, and to act effectively to further the cause.

Brady et al (1999) argue that the members conceive of two stages in the recruitment process. These are: (1) rational prospectors use information to find likely targets; and (2) after locating those, recruiters offer information on participatory opportunities and deploy inducements to persuade recruits to say 'yes.' The strength of social ties and relationships are vital in both tasks, and understanding relationships among potential prospects is deemed critical in understanding recruitment networks. Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen of the Danish Institute for International Studies concludes that: SMT generally might be useful for understanding radicalisation because it focuses on processes, not socio-demographic, and because it emphasises a mid-level analysis.

The SMT has been successfully applied in the research on radicalisation and terrorism. Donatella Della Porta (1995) was one of the first serious terrorism researchers to connect this theory with violent extremism in her studies of Italian and German militants. Even closer to this study, the theory was recently, utilised by Wiktorowicz (2005) in studying how people came to join a militant Islamist group (Al-Muhajiroun) based in a Western democracy outside London, England (Wiktorowicz, 2005). Using this theory, Wiktorowicz presented a four-component developmental model for radicalization. It reveals of "Those who came to be radicalised first revealed an openness to new, world views (cognitive opening), then came to view religion as a path, to find meaning (religious seeking), eventually found the group's narrative and ethos to "make sense" (frame alignment), and ultimately, through a process of socialization, became fully indoctrinated into the movement.

The Social Movement Theory is therefore one of the most reliable theories that can be applied to this particular study. The two major stages of recruitment suggested by Brady et al (1999) namely the use of information to find likely targets and promising opportunities and deploying

inducements to persuade recruits give this theory relevance. The hybridity of the Eastleigh population makes it easier for the first stage while poverty and unemployment of the youth dovetails with the second stage.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Kenya's Current State on Radicalisation and Religious Extremism**

According to Hopkins and Hopkins (2009) there is little discussion and even less consensus on the meaning of the terms radicalisation and extremism. This lack of a common definition cuts across the globe. Borum (2011) adds "given that researchers and governments cannot reach consensus in defining terrorism, perhaps it should not be surprising that such a diversity of views exists in defining even more nuanced concepts related to radicalisation." Consequently, the GoK does not give a direct definition of radicalisation and of religious extremism. Instead, it provides the definition of terrorism which is placed as 'anti-state violent activities undertaken by non-state entities which are motivated by religious goals' (Mogire and Agade, 2011). Critics argue that the government has been operating without official and encompassing anti-terrorism laws and standards, and worse with no definition of the root which is radicalisation. The supplied definition excludes political, ideological and criminal reasons but specifically nominates religion. This limited view poses challenges especially on every attempt of countering radicalisation and religious extremism. Instead of them positively engaging religious leaders in the fight, the known strategies barely include these major stakeholders.

Available literature shows that the cases of radicalisation and religious extremism are on the rise in Kenya. Al-Shabaab attacks Kenya more than any other frontline states in East Africa (Botha, 2014). As the nation engages foreign powers to supplement the domestic strategies, the enemy seems to be upping their recruiting style and methods of attacking. In supporting a group like Al-Shaabaab as a strategic terrorist organisation, for example, Piazza as quoted in Cannon and Pkalya (2017) argues that strategic terror groups exhibit behaviour and actions that are informed by limited and discrete goals. One would again want to pause and ask why Kenya is being attacked by terrorists and why radicalisation is on the increase. As already established, the recent attacks have been associated with Somalia's terror group Al-Shabaab.

Kenya stands as one of the most strategic and important states in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is no doubt that she is East Africa's economic hub. This places her at the centre of attention making her a target for radical groups like Al-Shabaab. Nairobi which is the capital city and the centre for multinational businesses and headquarters, has many international NGOs which attracts extreme groups to thrive. The metropolitan city accommodates 81 embassies (Bruton, 2013). The hybridity in Eastleigh's population and the condition of the youth also makes it a good breeding den for radicalisation and religious extremism. The defunct Al-Itihaad al-Islami (AIAI) created in Somalia by al-Qaeda in the early 1990s branched to Kenya and one place is Nairobi's Eastleigh area where it was linked to Somali refugees, ethnic Kenyan Somalis and the Muslim community (Prendergast and Bryden 1999; Morrison 2001, Quinn and Quinn 2003, Austin 2002) in Mogire and Agade (2011).

### **Causes of Radicalisation and Religious Extremism among the Youth**

According to Otenyo (2004) researchers are not in agreement on a unified theoretical framework for understanding the causes of terrorism. The 2016 research on why people join radical or extremist groups by Sauti za Wananchi (2016) placed unemployment at 56%, frustrations with the government and political system at 20%, religious motivations, social media, influence from religious leaders with radical views at 15%. Several other sources support unemployment and generally the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities as the primary cause of radicalisation and religious extremism in Kenya. Maclean (2013) posits

that people who are drawn to radicalisation have an aspiration to take action and simultaneously they view the world in black and white terms and seek out to side themselves with a 'virtuous' cause.

There are several other factors that drive the youth into radicalisation and engaging in religious extremist behaviours. They include both internal and external forces. The Brookings Institution study of 2008 hinted that the growing number of radicalisation among the youth in Pakistan was due to multiple factors. The process is complicated that no one reason can draw one into joining these terror groups. The Centre for Non-proliferation Studies (2002) revealed that although existing literature try to identify several pull factors to radicalisation and violent extremism, none of these may be applied generally to all terrorist organisation because the behaviours of these groups vary from country to country (Sobek and Braithwaite, 2005).

The radicalisers consider both the push and pull factors and make sure that the vulnerable youth feel that the only solution to the problems they face is by joining a radical group and taking action by carrying out extreme acts that include terrorism. The youth struggling with identity crisis, unemployment, lack of political and economic participation become easy targets for recruitment (Fadare and Butler 2008). Sparago (2007) forwards religion, age, sex, marital status, economic background and level of education as the most important factors that radicalizers consider when recruiting the youth. Botha and Abdille (2014) in their empirical study of Somalia concluded that religious and economic gains are the major reasons the youth join Al-Shabaab. The study revealed that the youth were lured with money, jobs and opportunities. Comparatively, a study by Botha and Abdille (2014) shows that in Somalia they were paid 50 dollars minimum a month while in Kenya they would get 700 dollars monthly salary.

Novel literature on radicalisation and religious extremism in Kenya places youth unemployment and poverty as the major causes to youth radicalisation and involvement in religious extremism. There is sufficient literature to support why the youth are targets of radicalisation and how poverty and unemployment are among the reasons they get radicalised and join extreme groups which promise them riches. According to a report by the UN Department of Economic & Social Affairs (UNDESA) (2004), in sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of youth unemployment is worrying, reaching as much as nearly 80% of total unemployed in some countries. In the 1990s, both sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa recorded the world's highest youth unemployment and total unemployment rates. Hassan (2017) in his research established that lack of employment; economic marginalisation and poverty are major causes of radicalisation and involvement in violent extremism among the youth. According to Katindi, Sivi and Njonjo (2010), majority of Kenya's young people are unemployed, underemployed or underpaid.

The youth who migrate from their rural homes and in this specific case from other countries in search of jobs in Nairobi are faced with shocking reality that it takes them years before they can land themselves anything to do that can generate income; but as the long wait continues, some turn to criminal activities to cater for their most basic needs. Hellsten (2016) in *Radicalisation and Terrorist Recruitment among Kenya's Youth* wrote: "youngsters with little hope of education and good jobs are particularly easy prey." Todaro and Smith (2009) add that there is evidence that joblessness, particularly among the youths leads to increased crime, violence and alienation from the society. Stack (1984) proposes that, as the gap between the rich and the poor widens, crime levels are likely to rise especially by those who consider that existing political structures will not improve their condition. Some unemployed youth, in a bid to secure employment have found themselves agreeing to carry out acts of terrorism.

Olang and Okombo (2012) add to this discussion by observing that "... unemployment stands out as a major threat to stability in Nairobi slums...the consequences of the problem of massive unemployment among the slums youth: the temptation and motivation among the youth to join militia groups and even the Al-Shabaab terrorist network". According to Ricardo and Arce as quoted in Abdikadir (2014) the youth form the militants who are the most important resource of every terror group. They enable the terror networks to thrive. The GoK and religious leaders ought to take this reality serious if they are to start the discussion on countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth. On the contrary, Kreuger (2007) argues that there is no link between poverty and terrorism. Sageman (2004) conducted an empirical study on the al-Qaeda network and concluded that the terrorists he studied were mostly from the middle class and not from impoverished backgrounds. With the few studies done, there is still no conclusive relationship between economics and terrorism. The narrative may however be different in Africa considering the unemployment and poverty levels.

According to Hellsten (2016) policy-makers must create better opportunities for the youth. This has been a key cause of radicalisation across the globe. The youth are not engaged productively in matters politics, economy, education and leadership. Okeyo (2016) argues that many youths fall prey to these recruitment chiefly because they lack basic needs including food, shelter, and clothing. Reports from Botha (2014) and Daily Nation Newspaper of November 1st 2015 indicated that recruits gain in terms of family, belonging and purpose. The lack of material resources may not be the only reason the youth are radicalised. Literature also reveals that some youth joining radical groups simply because they want attention or to be heard. The case of Ali, a former student of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology is of one who was actually educated and not necessarily from a poor background (Wardheer news 2015, December 14). One of the Garissa University attackers was a law student at the University of Nairobi (UoN) (Steers, 2015).

Adam (2005) in Aronson (2013) lists the following in the list of factors that makes Kenya a target for radicalisation and religious extremism such as: geography, ethnic composition, political stability, unstable neighbours, poverty, Islamic fundamentalism, and lax law enforcement. For Cannon and Pkalya (2017), the main cause of racialisation and religious extremism is Kenya's proximity to Somalia, Kenya's international status and visibility, high number of tourists, corruption.

Mogogo (2017) enlisted several causes of terrorism in Eastleigh. His study established that corruption was among the major causes of terrorism in Kenya. One should however note that the causes of terrorism may not necessarily be the causes of radicalisation. Corruption in the case of the former view could be on the side of security agents who for the love of money abandon their call, allowing the terror activities to take place. This is supported by Karacasulu (2015) who opines that the malpractices by police force contributes to the terror activities as the officers lean more to their self-interests. Other causes of terrorism according to his research included poverty and unemployment of the youth, with ethnic and religious conflicts.

Ghadbian (2000) opposes the view that Islam is the religion behind much of modern terrorism. He argues that Islam is neither violent nor pacifist. In his view, the oppressive political environment in the Middle East, the dictatorial leadership in most of the governments in the region, and their use of force, are behind violence and counter-violence by the alienated and the marginalized groups in the society. Merari (2004) concludes that suicide bombings are "neither an Islamic phenomenon nor a religious phenomenon: religion is just one more element in the persuasion, but it is neither necessary nor sufficient." Likewise, Scott (2004) does not believe that Muslims who support suicide attacks automatically abhor democratic

norms and freedoms and Western culture, although many of them detest American policy in the Middle East. He maintains that the failure of Middle Eastern governments to guarantee basic civil liberties and political rights for their citizens explains to a large degree their support for suicide terrorism (Watheka, 2015).

There are also causes that are dominantly Christian. The African Journal for Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (2013) becomes handy in showing some of the Christian Extremism. It notes of The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda which ruined peace in northern part of Uganda justifying its motive with the Ten Commandments and traditional beliefs. Those who willingly joined this force were convinced that they were doing God's work as revealed to the founder Alice Lakwena. Later under the leadership of Joseph Kony, majority were forced into joining this movement which paralysed economic and social activities in the area.

### **Collaboration between Religious Leaders and State in Countering Radicalisation and Religious Extremism**

Malango (2017) noted that the fight against violent extremism calls for a collective responsibility. Religious leaders are key partners positioned to enhance the response by 'religious institutions and communities to violent extremism'. In the case of Eastleigh however, there has been a lot of suspicion between the religions and the government. Aronson (2013) recommends that the GoK move from the belief that Kenyan Muslims are behind the attacks, instead, they should fight by "winning the hearts and minds of target populations" (Prestholdt, 2001) and include Islam in its political, social, and economic agendas. This means therefore engaging them in all activities that are meant to curb radicalisation and religious extremism. They need to view the leaders as partners and not enemies.

Gatuiku (2014) provides the measures the GoK has taken so far against radicalisation. These include: anti money laundering/ countering the financing of terrorism regime, revocation of NGO, increased participation in countering radicalisation charters, development of comprehensive National Countering Radicalisation Strategy, National Counterterrorism Centre, Operation Linda Nchi, AMISOM participation, legislation, law enforcement and border security, countering financing of terrorism. Surprisingly, among all these strategies, there is none that directly includes religious leaders. This is limited considering that the type of terrorism they are countering is connected to some religions. It will be more effective if the GoK directly engages the religious leaders.

Bowd (1998) provides literature that shows the significance of successful collaboration between the government and religious leaders in the case of Rwanda. The Gacaca system (a Rwandan system instituted for justice, unity and reconciliation) which was a product of a series of meetings called the 'Village Urugwiro' during the reign of President Pasteur Bizimungu comprised of leaders from government, business, civil society and religious leaders. This collaboration deliberated on the future of Rwanda's political environment. Although the Gacaca was accused of incorporating ex-combatants, it serves as an example of successful corporation of different stakeholders in the society towards a common goal.

According to the Report of the Interfaith peace Forums Phase II of Tanzania (2013), apart from recognising the role played by religious leaders in peace building, inspiring mutual understanding, reconciliation and tolerance to their followers and the society at large, the panel drawn from both Christianity and Islam suggested that "government should cooperate with religious leaders to strengthen and ensure that peace-building and promotion efforts are harmoniously conducted" this and many other resolutions and suggestions made in this forum serves to show how it is wise and prudent for the GoK to fully engage and collaborate with the religious leaders in addressing the nation's puzzle of radicalisation and religious extremism.



The current solutions to religious extremism and terrorism provided by the GoK are more prescriptive than preventive. Extra effort to combat radicalisation and religious extremism seem to only happen after a terror attack. One way of preventing religious extremism is by fighting radicalisation. The Kenyan government ought to adopt preventive measures to arrest this crisis. It is for this reason that this current study proposed the engagement of religious leaders. The limited engagement of religious leaders in the war on radicalisations and religious extremism means ignoring the remedy which does not only cure, but prevents the process of radicalisation and violent religious extremism. Studies done in most parts of Kenya where radicalisation and terror activities have been witnessed show very minimal engagement of religious leaders in countering radicalisation and religious extremism. Available literature only mentions religious leaders in the interreligious dialogues, most of which happen after a terror attack. The current study sought to investigate how the GoK engages religious leaders in the prevention of radicalisation and religious extremism. There are very few if any direct programs set by the GoK to prevent the thriving of these radical groups.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study followed the survey study design which was administered through questionnaires and interviews. The analysis was both qualitative and quantitative. This study used a mixed paradigm, which is also known as the pragmatic paradigm. This is an approach proved most appropriate because the study is concerned with the effects of relationships that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view or attitudes that are being felt or trends that are developing (Best & Kahn, 2000).

The target population comprised of the religious leaders, security operatives and youths in Eastleigh. This area was substantively selected as it has experienced numerous violent extremism cases in the recent past. According to some security experts this area is linked to breed a number of assailants as well as immigrants, most of whom are of Somali origins. In this research, the selected informants are listed in table 1.

**Table 1: Sample size**

DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Moslem youth	40
Christian youth	40
Imams	5
Christian Leaders	5
Government security	10
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>100</b>

The study used a multi-technique approach for data collection to obtain a holistic view of the problem. The researcher used two types of instruments namely questionnaire and interview guide. Interview schedules were used with the aim of collecting information from the religious leaders and government security agencies while the questionnaires were administered on the youth drawn from both Islam and Christian churches.

The researcher used the Cronbach's alpha and the test-retest reliability to measure the internal consistency of the test scores (quantitative and qualitative data) collected. Since the data collected was quantitative, the study used descriptive analysis method to analyse. Descriptive analysis entailed the use of means, standard deviation, and percentages.

## RESULTS

The chapter details the demographic, descriptive and inferential analysis results for the data collected. The total number of questionnaires that were administered for the youth in Eastleigh was 80 questionnaires, of which 40 questionnaires were given to Christian youth while the other 40 questionnaires were administered to Muslim youths. All the 80 questionnaires administered to youth were filled and returned. Out of the 10 questionnaires administered to religious leaders, only 9 were filled and returned. For the government security agency, all the 10 questionnaires that were administered were filled and returned. Therefore, the total number of the questionnaires that were administered was 100 questionnaires and those that were filled and returned was 99 questionnaires. Thus 99% of the administered questionnaires was the successful response rate for this study as shown in table 2. According to Babbie (2004) a response rate above 50% is acceptable, 60% is good, and 70% is very good while any response rate above 80% is excellent. Thus, a response rate of 99% was good for this study.

**Table 2: Response Rate**

Respondents	Administered questionnaires	Returned questionnaires	Response rate (%)
Youth	80	80	100
Religious leaders	10	9	90
GoK security agency	10	10	100
Total	100	99	99%

### Respondents Demographic Information

**Table 3: Respondent Demographic Information**

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Percentage
Respondent's gender	Male	62%
	Female	38%
Respondent's marital status	Single	65%
	Married	33%
	Divorced	2%
Respondent's age	between 25 and 30 years	53%
	between 25 and 30 years	27%
	between 15 to 20 years	19%
	between 40 to 50 years	1%
Respondent's level of education	secondary level of education	31.1%
	primary level of education	30%
	tertiary level of education	22.5%
Respondents' Occupation	Graduates	16.2%
	Employed	13.8%
	Unemployed	28.7%
	Businessperson	41.3%
	Any other	16.2%

### Descriptive Results of the Study

#### *Collaboration between the GoK and Religious Leaders in Eastleigh towards Countering Radicalisation and Religious Extremism among the Youth*

The objective of the study was to assess the collaboration between the GoK and religious leaders towards countering radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth in Eastleigh. The study sought to determine the whether Eastleigh was a home of radicalisation and religious extremism. A four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 was used whereby 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree and 4 = strongly agree was used for this statement. Table 4 shows the summary of responses obtained.

**Table 4: Eastleigh is a home of radicalisation and religious extremism**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Eastleigh is a home for radicalization and religious extremism	30.0%	10.0%	60.0%	0.0%	2.30	0.95

The results in table 4 indicated that 60.0% of the government security operatives (the chiefs, criminal investigation officers and police officers) disagreed with statement that Eastleigh is a home for radicalisation and religious extremism, while a total of 40.0% of the respondents agreed that Eastleigh is a home for radicalization and religious extremism. These findings were in agreement with some Kenyan government security operatives who suggested that there was no clear evidence linking Eastleigh to radicalisation and religious extremism. One of the police stated that;

*'There was no evidence connecting the same allegation to Eastleigh'.*

In another interview, the area chief added that;

*'Eastleigh is within the capital city of Kenya (Nairobi County), the police officers and counter terrorism unit plus the community policing are doing excellent job in preventing youth radicalization and religious extremism'*

These findings concurred with GoK interior Ministry, 2017 report that revealed in 2016, the GoK formed a national task named Kenya National Strategy that aimed at promoting national security. The aim of this board was to ensure that all the relevant ministries adopt the appropriate mechanisms that will help in preventing and countering terrorism. The study also sought to determine the group that is majorly targeted by the radicalisers in Eastleigh; the results are as shown in table 5.

**Table 5: The group(s) majorly targeted by the radicalisers in Eastleigh**

	Frequency	Percent
The youth	8	80
Do not know	2	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

The study findings on table 5 reveal that 80% of government security officers who participated in the study opined that the group majorly targeted by the radicalizers were the youth while only 20% of the respondents did not know the group that was majorly targeted by the radicalisers.

These findings are in agreement with literature which stressed that the people who are easily drawn to radicalisation were youths due to unemployment, frustrations and lack of political platform. One of the administration police officer stated that:

*'The youths are majorly targeted by the radicalisers due to peer pressure, and unemployment'.*

In another interview, one of the area chief added that:

*'Most of the youth are desperate for jobs, finance or better life and they can do anything to become financially stable.'*

These study findings are similar to that of Botha and Abdille (2014) in Somalia that revealed economic gains is the major reason as to why youth join Al-Shabaab. Their findings also revealed that the youth were lured with money and lack jobs opportunities.

The study also sought to determine whether the Government of Kenya was working in collaboration with the religious leaders to prevent youth's radicalisation and religious extremism in Eastleigh. Most of the interviewed government security officers agreed that the Government of Kenya directly engages the religious leaders on matters prevention of radicalisation and religious extremism. One of the chief officer interviewed articulated that:

1. The government security officers are allowed to enter mosques and churches to sensitise the public on the dangers of radicalisation
2. We work closely with religious leaders under the concept of Nyumba Kumi initiative.

The study findings also revealed that fight against violent extremism is a collective responsibility. Religious leaders are key partners positioned to enhance the response by religious institutions and communities to violent extremism. These findings are supported by suggestion from one of the police officer who said that:

*'Yes, so that the GoK can reach the youth that are being radicalised in the places of worship (mosques and churches), the religious leader are the people on the ground and they know the youth very well'.*

The findings were similar with Malango (2017) study results that revealed that the fight against violent extremism is a collective responsibility. Religious leaders are key partners positioned to enhance the response by 'religious institutions and communities to violent extremism'. Aronson (2013) recommended that the GoK should move from the belief that Kenyan Muslims are behind the terrorist attacks, instead, they should fight by "winning the hearts and minds of targeted populations and including Islam in its political, social, and economic agendas."

## CONCLUSION

The study findings concluded that language owing to its measurability and easy access is an all-round tool that religious leaders in collaboration with the GoK could use to reach out to the youth in addressing radicalisation and religious extremism. The study gathered that the youths in Eastleigh should be included in inter-religious dialogue sessions on preventing and countering radicalization and religious extremism. The youth mourned the scarcity of such initiatives where the religious leaders and GoK security arm concurrently meet and talk with them concerning radicalisation and religious extremism. The youth preferred these talks as an avenue to have their problems addressed. The study also concluded that religious leader's approach towards curbing radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth in Eastleigh is very helpful and reasonable. The lack of a common manual on prevention and curbing of radicalisation and religious extremism needs to be addressed. Collaboration between the GoK with religious leaders alone may not be sufficient unless they have a shared literature they can use in addressing the youth. The findings of the study also concluded that churches, the government, and some NGOs provide rehabilitation programme for radicalised youth. Lastly, the study concluded that the Government of Kenya should directly engage the religious leaders on matters prevention of youth radicalisation and religious extremism. The study findings revealed that the fight against violent extremism is a collective responsibility.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

- By and large, the study recommends that the Governments of Kenya directly engages religious leaders in curbing radicalisation and religious extremism among the youth. A well programmed roadmap is a wise step towards prevention of radicalisation and religious extremism. The fight against violent extremism is a collective responsibility, and language is the indispensable tool in preventing and curbing this menace. The Government of Kenya should create more job opportunities for the youth. Economic gains and lack of job opportunities are major reasons the youth join terrorist groups, thus more job opportunity will significantly reduce the chances of youth joining Al-Shabaab. The GoK and religious leaders should fully engage the youth in community development programmes and political participation. It should also ensure that there are adequate rehabilitation facilities for radicalised youth. Rehabilitation programmes are effective in monitoring the youth against radicalisation and religious extremism.
- The study further recommends the youth to actively participate in forums that discuss the issues of radicalisation and religious extremism. The youth need to be vigilant towards radical elements in the society that masquerade in the name of religion with the single intention of using them in religious extremism. The youth should shun involvement in any form of violence and learn the power of language in solving problems and getting the attention from the government and religious leaders.
- For religious leaders, the study recommends that they use language as the primary tool in addressing the youth in matter radicalisation and religious extremism. They need to take advantage of the pulpit and any other forum they have to address the youth on the ills of radicalisation and religious extremism. They should use language as a tool to get to the Government of Kenya, the youth and religious leaders from other religions. The religious leaders need to be voice of the youth, creating opportunities for the youth to freely air their burdens and needs.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors

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