

**THE ROLE OF COUNTER NARRATIVE IN RESPONSE TO YOUTH  
RADICALIZATION IN GARISSA TOWNSHIP SUB COUNTY, GARISSA  
COUNTY, KENYA**

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the Degree of Master of Science in Governance, Peace and Security in the  
Department of Governance, Peace and Security Studies, School of Humanities  
and Social Sciences of Africa Nazarene University**

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis describes my original work and that it has not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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**DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my wives Farhia and Magool for their support and patience while I pursued my studies.

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## ABSTRACT

Radicalization among the youth takes place in the country and affects the grass-root areas. The youth are believed to be the most vulnerable and are targeted by militia organizations like Al Shabaab to execute their missions against the people. This study, therefore, sought to determine the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. The study was based on the radicalization theory, framing theory and cognitive dissonance theory. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: To establish the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, to establish how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, to determine challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization and to assess the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization. The study used a descriptive research design and used a target population of 13,511, out of which a sample of 384 was drawn. The study relied on primary data collected using semi-structured questionnaires and key informant interview guides (KIIs). Secondary data was also used especially data on radicalization in the study area. The pilot study was carried out in Lagdera, a sub-county neighbouring Garissa Township sub-county, and has similar radicalization issues as those of the study area. A Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.877 was obtained. Validity was enhanced by university supervisors. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics which include frequency counts and percentages to capture the distribution of responses on the key issues addressed in the study objectives. The findings from quantitative data was presented using figures and tables. The qualitative data collected from KIIs and open-ended questions in the questionnaire were analyzed using thematic analysis and presented through verbatims/ narratives. The study found that radicalization was going on in the sub county. The study found that 181 (56.4%) of the respondents indicated that radicalization was going on in the sub county. Factors such as palatable ground laid by the local community, poverty, unemployed youths, lack of education, low numbers of rehabilitation centres, and poor relationship with the government contributed to radicalization in the sub county. The study also found that 270 (84.1%) of the respondents identified existence campaigns geared towards addressing stereotypes/ prejudice of the Christian religion, sustained stereotypes and strengthening the community. Further, the study determined that the residents (63.2%) were not involved in designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub county. However, the residents were aware of the measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization. The study concluded building trust among communities, involving religious leaders, conveying knowledge to the youths and understanding of radicalization were some of the strategies used to prevent radicalization in the sub county. However, financial constraints, lack of support from the government and lack of education for the youths were major challenges faced in the development of counter narrative strategies. The study recommends the implementation of county action plan which addresses the issues of the youth joining radical groups, re-establishment of the community security committees, involvement of the affected parties and an affirmative action to allocate resources both at the county and national level to fight radicalization at the grass root level.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Al Shabaab:** In this study, it refers to a terrorist, jihadist fundamentalist group based in the study area, trying to influence the youth to join them through radicalizing them.
- Community cohesion building:** In this study, it refers to increasing the efficiency of youth from different communities so that they are less likely to be influenced by radicalized views.
- Counter narratives:** In this study, this refers to the deliberate interventions by the government or non-state organizations or individuals engaged in countering violent extremism that challenge the legitimacy and credibility of the stories and worldview promoted by radical groups and the recruitment campaigns.
- Counter-radicalization:** In this study, it implies inhibiting the spread and influence of radical ideas both generally and in specific cases among the youth.
- De-radicalization:** In this study, it refers to the acts to reduce the role of radical ideas among the youth where they have gained traction by enabling them to reject the ideology they once embraced and also decrease

their commitment to or engagement in the radical groups.

**Emotional counter-narratives:** In this study, these are counter-narratives which mainly address the “pull” factors, that is, the emotional or psychological incentives that a youth may feel are beneficial by identifying with a radical group or organization.

**Extremism:** In this study, it denotes advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic or political objectives.

**Factual counter narratives:** In this study, these are counter-narratives which underscore the incorrect components of radicalism narratives, reinforcing factual evidence.

**Islam counter-narratives:** In this study, these are counter narratives that reinforce the positive and peaceful aspects of Islam that provide an alternative to the narratives advanced by radical groups.

**Peace counter-narratives:** In this study, these are counter narratives which encourage general support for peace and nonviolence as well as tolerance between youth of different ethnicities.

- Radicalization:** In this study, it refers to the process by which youth leave mainstream society and join or identify with groups that are extreme in either ideology or behaviour.
- Religious counter-narratives:** In this study, these are counter-narratives that Kenya OR the study refute and dismantle the religious and ideological elements of the radical narratives, utilizing religious texts and religious leaders to refute religious claims.
- Youth:** In this study a person residing in Garissa Township sub county in the age bracket 18-35 years.

**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CI</b>	Counter-Insurgency
<b>COPRA</b>	Community Policing Preventing Radicalization and Terrorism
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>CT</b>	Counter-Terrorism
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism
<b>GCERF</b>	Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
<b>HUMINT</b>	Human intelligence
<b>ICCT</b>	International Centre for Counter-Terrorism
<b>IGAD</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>IS</b>	Islamic State
<b>ISIL</b>	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
<b>ISIS</b>	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
<b>ISM</b>	Islamic State Movement
<b>JCCP</b>	Japan Centre for Conflict Prevention
<b>KECOSCE</b>	Kenya Community Support Centre
<b>KIIs</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>KMYA</b>	Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>NCIC</b>	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
<b>NCTC</b>	National Counter Terrorism Centre
<b>NIS</b>	National Intelligence Service
<b>PDI</b>	Peace and Development Initiative
<b>PPP</b>	Public–Private Partnerships
<b>RAN</b>	Radicalization Awareness Network

<b>SIT</b>	Social Identity Theory
<b>SUPKEM</b>	Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives background information pertaining to the concept of youth radicalization giving a global, regional and local perspective of the issue. It also highlights the concept of counter narratives and their role in response to youth radicalization. The chapter further outlines the statement of the problem which gives an account of the problem and the knowledge gaps, objectives and research questions. The significance of the study, study hypothesis, scope, delimitations, limitations, assumptions, theoretical framework, and the conceptual framework are also discussed.

#### **1.2 Background of the Study**

The world is faced with a threat of extreme violence, which is preceded by radicalization processes. Radicalization has been associated with extremism, violence, and terrorism (Neumann, 2017). Radicalization can be both violent and nonviolent meaning that an individual or group may be radical without necessarily being engaged in violent extremism or terrorism although, for the better part, the focus has been on radicalization which leads to violent extremism (Borum & Neer, 2017).

Both developed and developing nations have experienced increased radicalization of their youths into internationally affiliated terror networks as well as home-grown terror groups. In developed countries, countries like Germany, England, Sweden, France and the United States have suffered terrorism attacks or threats that are tied in the die-hard youths who have been radicalized and trained by the Al-Qaeda that operates in its bases in the



middle east countries like Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran and many more (Schatschneider & Edinger, 2016).

Numerous international and domestic Islamist extremists had been influenced by al-Qaeda's narratives that are documented in magazines and online websites in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq (Weimann, 2015). For instance, the perpetrators of the Boston marathon bombing in 2013, brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, had viewed online magazines and various other extremist writings and videos (Gunaratna & Haynal, 2013). The Norwegian far-right extremist Anders Breivik, responsible for the Oslo bombing and Utoya massacre, had also been influenced by far-right bloggers (Bangstad, 2016).

Across Africa, the radicalization has been witnessed lately in almost all the Muslim rich countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Somalia and lately Boko Haram of Nigeria. Northern Nigeria and Uganda have been the locus of an upsurge in youth radicalization and virulent militant Islamist groups (Dyrenforth, 2018). In Nigeria, the internal security has been significantly undermined by violent activities of armed non-state actors, largely made up of radicalized youth groups as foot soldiers.

In East Africa, radical groups thrive by spreading their message based on the individuals, their location and local grievances (Romaniuk, Durner, Nonninger & Schwart, 2018). According to Badurdeen (2016) these groups, particularly Al-Shabaab, adapt their message to what is most likely to resonate. In addition, the radical groups use different frames to reach to their audience. The way ideologies and propaganda of these groups are framed both online and offline facilitate radicalization.

In Kenya, the emergence of Al-Shabaab has particularly posed a great threat to Kenya because of its widespread activities of radicalizing and recruiting of youth across

the country. Al-Shabaab is alleged to have capitalized on perceived and/or real experiences of marginalization to radicalize and recruit its members (Gatimu, 2014). For instance, Abdirahim Mohammed Abdullahi, who plotted the Garissa University attack, spent hours on the internet reading materials on jihad before he became self-radicalized and recruited by al-Shabaab talent spotters (Abdi, 2015).

Despite the fact that Garissa County at large was declared as the safest town in East and Central Africa in 2009 by Interpol, Garissa County continues to face numerous peace and security challenges particularly radicalization and terrorism (Botha, 2016). Al Shabaab in particular has been known to capitalize on radicalizing youth from many parts of the county especially Somali-dominated Refugee camps in Garissa County. Responses to the threats posed by radicalization have invariably been dominated by counter-insurgency (CI) and counter-terrorism (CT) tactics (Villa-Vicencio, Buchanan-Clarke & Humphrey, 2016). These approaches often discount or ignore local specificities and can exacerbate grievances that may contribute to increasing levels of radicalization and even recruitment into violent extremist groups.

### **1.2.1 Counter Narrative as Response to Radicalization**

Counter-narratives have been defined as responses to increased propaganda available online, from groups such as Islamic State (IS) and Al-Qaeda (Hemmingsen & Castro, 2017). Counter-narratives may be understood as a presentation of a story that is aimed to undermine the strength of the dominant narrative of radical groups either by presenting information or arguments that counter the dominant attitude or by presenting a story in which an alternative coherent world view is being put forward (Colaert, 2017).

There are countries where counter narratives have been used and have been effective. For instance, in the United Kingdom (UK), Abdullah X has been used (Tuck & Silverman, 2016), Extreme Dialogue in Canada (Radicalization Awareness Network, 2018), Radical Middle Way in Britain (Ginkel, 2015), Jordan: Hero-Factor (Zeiger & Aly, 2015), EXIT USA in the USA (Glazzard, 2017), ‘Rechts gegen Rechts’ Charity March and Operation Trojan T-Shirt in Germany. In Kenya, the Kenya Community Support Centre (KECOSCE) implemented the “Countering violent extremism through multimedia and forum series” project in Mombasa. The project uses dialogue and multimedia to engage youth with key CVE messages countering the narratives of Al-Shabaab. However, this project has not been effective as the developed countries (Badurdeen & Goldsmith, 2018).

The key challenge to increasing the volume and quality of counter- and alternative narratives is governments, civil society practitioners and private sector companies not working together in productive, long-term partnership (Briggs & Fève, 2013). The complexity of the radicalization process poses a challenge, which makes it difficult to develop nationwide, general programmes which can increase the difficulties of developing useful national programmes and sharing best practices (Uhlmann, 2015). In addition, the thinking and action on counter-narratives is fragmented and program development and implementation under-resourced (Koehler, 2013). There are also limitations to governments’ credibility in terms of delivering counter-narratives directly and a lack of innovative funding and collaboration models that consider the challenges facing each of the relevant stakeholders (Uhlmann, 2015).

### **1.2.2 Youth Radicalization in Kenya**

According to Ringquist (2011), certain parts of Kenya such as the North Eastern and Coast regions are vulnerable to radicalization, taking the form of either separatist or extremist ideologies. With repeated conflicts, North-eastern Kenya and parts of the Coast Region lack services like schools, hospitals, and roads. In addition, these parts of Kenya suffer from increasing population growth, lack of employment to the youth, poverty and general insecurity. Because of these factors, resentment against the government is high leading to ingrowth of illegal groups that promise alternative income to the population.

Kenya introduced the suppression of Terrorism Bill in 2003 in parliament but the Bill had to be shelved due to widespread civil society and Muslim opposition (Badurdeen & Goldsmith, 2018). Appropriate legislation only took effect nine years later when former president Kibaki ascended Terrorism Act into law that aims at prevention. This Act complemented separate legislations that regulated on money laundering, firearms licensing, anti-corruption and prosecution of suspected criminals (Davis, 2016). Kenya also established a national counter-terrorism centre and a dedicated unit in the Kenya police to handle terrorism issues (the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit; ATPU).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Radicalization is an international problem that many countries are facing. Globally, radicalization of youths has led to socio-economic effects in vulnerable communities, from fear of profiling of these communities in economic opportunities, to loss of large number of youths into radical groups that engage in terror activities (Robinsmith, 2018). Most countries have used diverse ways to counter radicalization. For instance, extreme dialogue has been used in Canada, the radical middle way has been applied in Britain, the Hero-

Factor has been extensively used in Jordan and the Rechts gegen Rechts' Charity March and Operation Trojan T-Shirt has been used in Germany. These strategies have been found to lower radicalization levels in these countries. In Kenya, Qureshi (2014) discusses Kenya's counter-radicalization strategy pointing out that each element of the strategy pays attention to the unique tactics exploited by terror groups in radicalizing youths. However, the strategies applied by counter radicalization responders are not covered.

Counter-narrative approach is gaining widespread acceptance in governments, think-tanks and civil society organizations as one of the strategies in fighting radicalization. Nevertheless, the existing studies show that the most well-known counter narrative campaigns have been undertaken in other nations and these campaigns within the Kenyan context have not been explored in detail. For instance, the study by Ensor (2017) conducted a study in Myanmar, and found that counter-narratives were important in curbing radicalization. Similar findings were posited by Faris and Zeiger (2017) who concentrated on Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

In addition, Hemmingsen and Castro (2017) covered the challenges faced when adopting counter-narratives in Denmark, and found that increased propaganda available online was the main challenge in countering radicalization. However, the role of counter narratives especially in relation to the youths who are mostly affected has not been extensively in Kenya, especially in Garissa County. It is against this background that the current study sought to determine the role of counter narrative as response to youth radicalization in Garissa township sub county, Garissa County, Kenya.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

Counter narratives have been used to prevent youth radicalization in different contexts. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. To be able to determine the role, the study examined the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, how counter narratives had contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization and the measures that could help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization in Garissa township sub county in Kenya.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of this study was to evaluate the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i. To establish the counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya
- ii. To establish how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya
- iii. To determine challenges faced by stakeholders when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya

- iv. To assess the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization in Garissa township sub county in Kenya

## **1.6 Research Questions**

The study objectives were achieved by answering the following questions;

- i. What are the counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya?
- ii. To what extent have counter narratives contributed to reduction of youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya?
- iii. What are the challenges faced by stakeholders when developing counter narrative strategies while dealing with youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya?
- iv. Are there measures that can be used to mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

Significance of the study is a description of contribution(s) a research study makes to the broad literature and set of broad educational problems upon completion (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine & Walker, 2018). Given that youth radicalization is a national issue not only affecting the peace and security but also the wellbeing of citizens, the findings of this study are of significance to the government policy makers in peace and security. These include security operators and national and county governments. The policy agencies would benefit

from the study by comprehending the applicability and benefits of a counter narrative strategy in dealing with radical and extremist radicalization activities in Kenya. This will help avoid incidences such as the Garissa University attack. The study would help these agencies in drawing lessons from counter narrative campaigns undertaken by governments in other countries and how they can design local campaigns given that government facilitated campaigns are few. The findings would spark the need for benchmarking their campaigns with the counter narrative initiatives that have worked and what can be done to improve the efficiency of such campaigns.

The findings would be important to researchers in security management, by helping provide related literature to developing and delivering counter narratives to the messages and propaganda of radical groups influencing youths in Kenya. Additionally, the study would help the community to be able to identify terror and radicalization narratives and know how to respond and action they can take to ensure that these campaigns have the desired impact to the targeted audiences. The study would be beneficial to the government, organizations and scholars respond to some of the research gaps that are identified in this research regarding effectiveness of counter narrative campaigns in preventing youth racialization.

### **1.8 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study provides for the boundary of the research in terms of depth of investigation, content, and sample size, geographical, time-frame and theoretical coverage (Mills, Harrison, Franklin & Birks, 2017). This research focused on evaluating the role of counter narratives a way to respond to youth radicalization in Garissa township Sub County in Garissa County. The other sub counties in Garissa County were not studied.



The objectives included the objectives which included: Establishing the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, establishing how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, determining the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization and assessing the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization in Garissa township sub county in Kenya.

This study covered the period starting October 2011 when Kenya Defence Forces crossed to Somalia to join the AMISOM soldiers fighting the al Shabaab which saw a spike in the attacks targeting Kenyans. The sample included 384 youth, local community leaders, security officers, religious leaders (imams or khadis) and civil society organizations' representatives.

### **1.9 Delimitations of the Study**

Delimitation is an aspect that provides the boundaries of the study and can be controlled by the researcher but can also affect the results of a research. This is the characteristic that limits scope and defines the boundaries of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The study covers youth radicalization in Garissa township Sub County in Garissa County, but did not discuss any issues that have legal restrictions, such as the individuals that have been prosecuted in the fight against youth radicalization, and their locations.

### **1.10 Limitations of the Study**

Bryman and Bell (2015) assert that limitation is a function of the factors that might affect the outcome of the study, but over which the researcher has no control. Based on the

nature of this study, the researcher encountered various limitations. To begin with, environmentally, the study was limited to Garissa Township Sub County thereby excluding other areas which are also vulnerable to youth radicalization. The study therefore engaged research assistants, who were locals, who helped maximize in the data collection process. This was also in mitigating socio-cultural barriers, such as language barrier, which were mitigated through use of local research assistants who undertook the translations.

The researcher experienced security difficulties in data collection basically because the nature of information gathered particularly radicalization was very sensitive and confidential, and therefore the unwillingness to share the most relevant information required in the study. This challenge was mitigated through assuring the respondents on confidentiality of the information given. There were no study participant's identifiers like names that would linked the participants to any particular information and that only the study participants and the researcher had access to the data/information collected. The researcher took steps to initiate a favourable impression and rapport in order to earn trust of the target population and their neighbourhoods.

Based on methodologies, the study was based on questionnaires and key informant interviews. Due to the challenges of access and resources, focus group discussions could have also been conducted to help the study. This challenge was however mitigated through extensive conducting of interviews and making sure the response was big enough, to enable the study to draw conclusions from the findings. The study was also limited to three theories, the radicalization theory, framing theory and cognitive dissonance theory. The study conducted a critical review of the theories, and ensured that they covered the study variables.

### **1.11 Assumptions**

Assumptions are statements that are presumed to be true, often only temporarily or for a specific purpose, such as building a theory and are conditions under which statistical techniques yield valid results (Weber, 2017). The study assumed that the targeted respondents helped provide transparent, honest and truthful information to the researcher that is free from any level of bias. The researcher assumed that counter narrative had impact on radicalization which can be negative or positive. The researcher also assumed that the targeted respondents were familiar with the strategies being used in preventing youth radicalization in the area. The researcher assumed the instruments used were valid and helped to measure desired outcomes and also assumed the targeted location could be accessed.

### **1.12 Theoretical Framework**

A theory is a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena (Head & Noar, 2014). The study was based on the radicalization theory, framing theory and cognitive dissonance theory; which are discussed in this section.

#### **1.12.1 Radicalization Theory**

Radicalization theory by Monaghan and Molnar (2016), was developed from an assumption that individuals who hold extreme views that are away from moderate mainstream beliefs are radicals. Hence, the theory adopts an indicator-based approach, which aims to identify persons who are probable to engage in political and/ or religious

motivated violence. The indicators in radicalization theory focuses on push and pull factors to radicalization and violent extremism. Push factors are personal reasons pushing individuals to radical ideologies while pull factors attract individuals that are potential radicals (Borum, 2011) and includes narratives that give answers to (negative) push factors.

Bakker (2015) argues that push factors are similar for males and females. These factors include perceived oppression of Muslims worldwide, strong conviction to support jihad as part of their religious and ideological duty, desire to change the world and build a new state and the attraction of travelling and adventure associated with foreign land (Saltman & Smith, 2015). However, others assert that women are pushed by desires to find love or romance, getting married to heroic fighters and rebellion against their environments (Bakker, 2015). Pull factors differ by gender although they are greatly influenced by groups. This is because the group becomes the focal point for extremists. The factors include the glamour associated with the jihad war, which is perceived to have a cause (Peresin, 2015).

Radicalization theory is important in the study as it explained a pass through which individuals get radicalized. This entails individuals join radical collectives, which develop in real-world location, such as mosques, prisons, shisha bars, sport clubs, and bookshops among other places. The study found that other factors that led to radicalization included factors such as the palatable ground laid by the local community, especially those people dealing with contraband goods who want to use the youth for their self-interests, poverty which lures the youth into radical groups to earn income and lack of government support to vulnerable youth especially the unemployed. The criticism of radicalization theory is that its indicator-based approach easily translates to profiling practices (Monaghan &

Molnar, 2016). The theory also does not cover the challenges faced in countering youth radicalization, which necessitated other theories.

### **1.12.2 Framing Theory**

The framing theory was first developed by Goffman in 1974 under the title of frame analysis. According to Chong and Druckman (2007), the major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and be construed as having implications for multiple values or considerations. Framing normally refers to the whole process by which a particular conceptualization of an issue is developed by people or the way they reorient their thinking about a particular issue. Framing is the process of “selecting and emphasizing certain aspects of issues” in messages to help create symbols that organize and create meaning that is “socially shared and persistent over time.” (Lepre, 2013).

Chong and Druckman (2007) further noted that one’s frame in thought can have a marked impact on one’s overall opinion (such as a free speech frame inclines one to support the group’s right to rally). For this reason, politicians for instance attempt to mobilize voters behind their policies by encouraging them to think about those policies along particular lines. This is accomplished by highlighting certain features of the policy, such as its likely effects or its relationship to important values. In so doing, the speaker is invoking a “frame in communication”. Frames in communication matter that is, they affect the attitudes and behaviours of their audiences.

Since radical and extremist groups use narratives to spread their ideology, it is possible to produce an effective counter-narrative campaign, that is, a campaign with a narrative that either directly opposes the extremist narrative or that provides an alternative

for the radicals' narrative (Doosje & Eerten, 2017). As such, framing theory can be useful as a guideline to develop counter-narratives. Reframing the original radical propaganda might work better than denying it.

In this context, this theory helps in comprehending the framing of the narratives of radical groups and also how counter narratives campaigns are framed. This approach looks into how radical groups reinterpret, amplify, extend ideologies, use historical events and conditions to mobilize radicals. Framing also justifies acts of violence of radical groups as defense or as their cause. The study found that fighting terrorist frames was hard as there was lack of political and financial support and the government as a partner and the custodian of the County Action plans are not supporting CVE interventions. In addition, education about radicalization is low, which makes the youth an easy target for radical groups. The theory however fails to discuss the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies while dealing with youth radicalization.

### **1.12.3 Cognitive Dissonance Theory**

Cognitive Dissonance Theory was postulated by Harmon-Jones and Mills (1999). The theory postulates that cognitions are elements of knowledge about behaviours, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. When two or more cognitions that are relevant to each other are inconsistent, individuals will experience an unpleasant mental tension or discomfort, called cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT) also postulates that individuals seek consistency among their cognitions. Cognitions can be thought of as elements of knowledge about behaviours, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999). When dissonance reaches a sufficient level, people will engage in

dissonance-reduction work. The amount of dissonance is determined by the number of dissonant and consonant elements, and the importance of those elements.

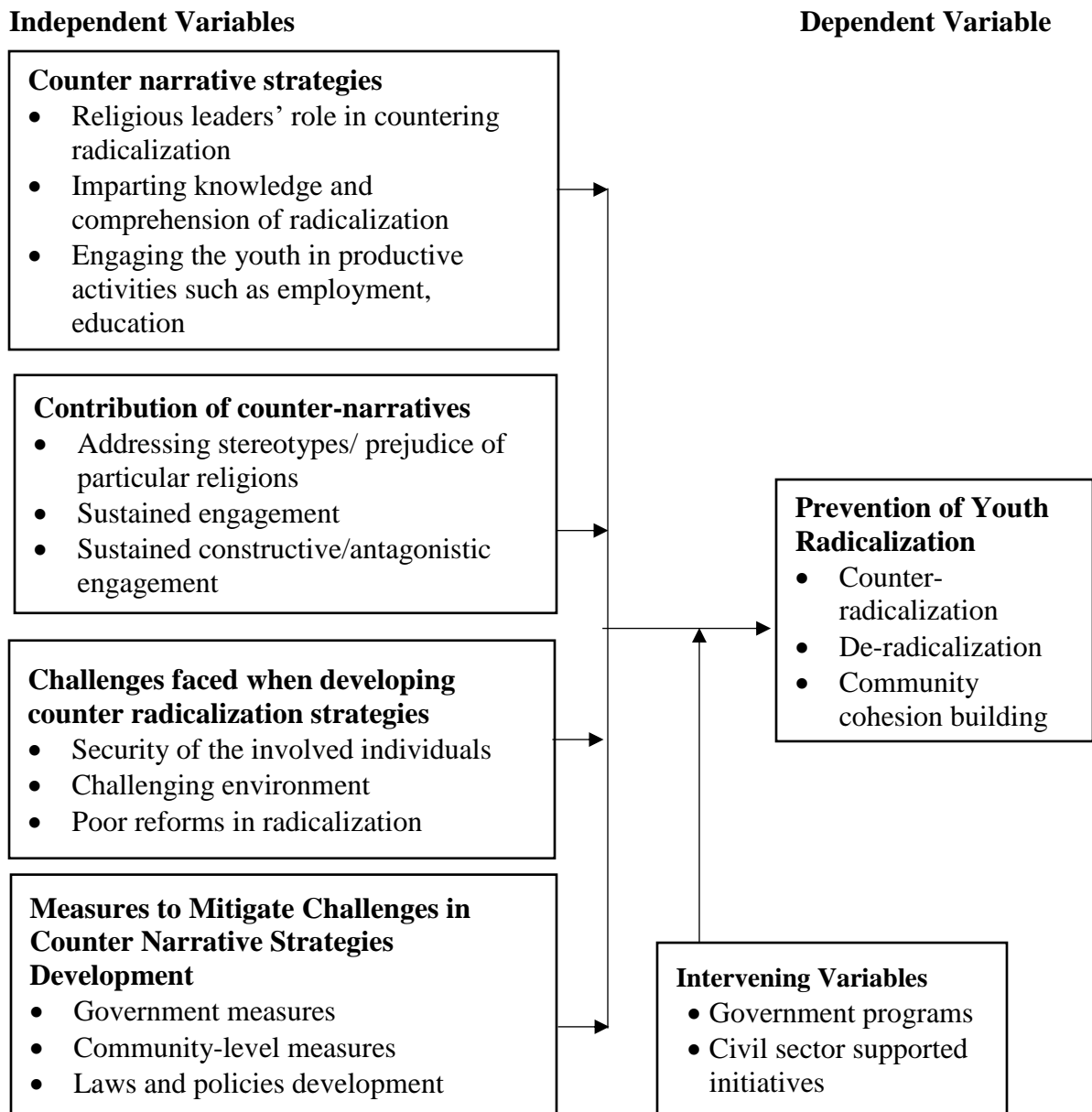
To reduce dissonance individuals can change one of the discordant cognitions, add consonant or remove dissonant cognitions to reduce the overall level of inconsistency, or decrease the importance of the elements involved in the inconsistency (Harmon-Jones & Harmon-Jones, 2007). Typically, dissonance reduction efforts focus on the cognitions that are less resistant to change. The theory helps determine the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization in Kenya. The study found that these strategies included mentorship, career guidance, psychological support, education and community sensitization, community participation and empowerment.

### **1.13 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a schematic representation showing the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Mills *et al.*, 2017). The conceptual framework shows the independent variables (counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization and challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization) affect the dependent variable (prevention of youth radicalization).

The study findings agreed that several strategies are employed by the different stakeholders in fighting radicalization. How these strategies are applied and the conditions under which they are employed determine the success levels in the prevention of youth radicalization. There are possible challenges in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns which include issues around security of the involved individuals. The

intervening variables include government policies and the civil societies that support the prevention and reduction of youth radicalization. These intervening variables are likely to affect the relationship between counter narratives and youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya. The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1.1 below.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Researcher (2020)



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter reviews related literature on the subject studied as previously presented by various researchers, scholars, analysts and authors. The study draws from materials from research works that are closely to the study topic and objectives. The empirical review is guided by the study objectives and organized as follows: counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, contribution of counter narratives to reduction of youth radicalization, challenges faced in the development of counter narrative strategies and measures to mitigate challenges in counter narrative strategies development. A summary of the reviewed literature and research gaps is presented as well.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Literature Review**

This subsection reviews theoretical literature based on the key variables in the study.

##### **2.2.1 Counter Narratives**

Counter-narratives are understood as a presentation of a story that is aimed to undermine the strength of the dominant narrative of radical groups (Colaert, 2017). There are different types of counter-narratives relevant to countering radical narratives. Positive/alternative narratives recognize that reacting to narratives from radical groups is not enough while strategic counter-narratives are useful for governments or large, multi-lateral organizations wishing to condemn radical groups and their efforts (Byrne, 2018). Ethical counter-narratives point out that violent action is not a moral way of achieving aims. These arguments according to Ljujic, Prooijen and Weerman (2017) point out the

commonalities between all humans, and call for a better cooperation between all nations and peoples.

The radical groups tailor the methods of radicalization based on the individuals, their location, and local grievances. Badurdeen (2016) assert that the way ideologies and propaganda of these groups are framed both online and offline facilitate radicalization. Radicalization is high because radical groups use narratives that are simple, their use of scapegoating, and their emotional appeals to fear, anger, shame and honour in Pakistan (Cohen, Kruglanski, Gelfand, Webber & Gunaratna, 2018). Their messages are crafted to exploit identity issues that many young people may be experiencing and it is upon this scaffolding that their violent and exclusionary ideologies are built.

Various counter narrative measures can be used to counter radicalization. The preventive measures can serve as de-radicalizing measures, for example by providing vulnerable individuals with tools to deconstruct harmful narratives and propaganda while strengthening their self-identities (Uhlmann, 2015).

For already-radicalized individuals, the “delegitimization and invalidation” of those narratives can help to guide the person to question them (Koehler, 2013). From de-radicalization of those already radicalized, they can also prevent radicalization by sowing the seeds of doubt among ‘at risk’ audiences potentially being exposed to or seeking out the content of radical and extremist groups (Schmid, 2014). Counter-narratives are therefore routinely suggested as responses to increased propaganda available online, from groups such as IS and al-Qaeda; and their use to prevent radicalization is gaining momentum (Hemmingsen & Castro, 2017).

Ideological and religious counter-narratives may be useful if the messenger has religious authority in the target community (Jacobson, 2010). Tactical counter-narratives are those that emphasize that violence in the long run is often less effective when compared to more peaceful methods, and not useful to an organizations' overall reputation and objectives (Colaert, 2017). Other counter narratives include peace, inter-faith and interethnic narratives, Islam as peaceful and non-violent, factual counter narratives and emotional and psychological counter-narratives (Doosje & Eerten, 2017).

Counter-insurgency (CI) and counter-terrorism (CT) tactics have been used to respond to radicalization in Kenya (Villa-Vicencio *et al.*, 2016). Such strategies according to these authors mostly involve military/police actions against groups identified as radical or even violent extremist. Over time, and as the Kenyan experience exemplifies, CI and CT methods often prove to be ineffective or counterproductive for a multitude of reasons. This has led to increased recognition of the need for nuanced and holistic conflict-sensitive security strategies that address the root causes of radicalization, and balance security and developmental challenges.

### **2.2.2 Radicalization**

Radicalization can be classified into violent and non-violent radicalization since an individual or group can be radical without acting violent or carrying out terrorism activities. The term radicalization has had many definitions with most security agents referring to it as the indoctrination of the youth who may be either Muslims or non-Muslims (Zeiger & Aly, 2015). Stephen (2016) defines radicalization as social or religious ideals and aspirations that may reject or undermine the status quo or contemporary ideas and freedom of choice. Clutterbuck (2015) views radicalization as a process whereby individuals and

groups develop, over time, a mind-set that can, under the right circumstances and opportunities, increase the risk that they will engage in violent extremism or terrorism and advocate (or practice) violence to achieve their goals. It has been described as the process by which individuals are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs toward extreme views (Robinsmith, 2018).

Radicalization is therefore a practice of increasing extremism of somebody or a group, in which the inclination to use violence to strive for or support radical changes of society or the democratic legal system grow or convince others to do so. It has been suggested that radicalization is a dynamic process and consist of three stages, or phases, characterized by fluctuations in the degree to which a person is radicalized: radicalism, extremism and terrorism (Sikkens, San, Sieckelinck & Winter, 2017).

During the radicalism phase people start trying to find a solution to deal with frustration thoughts legitimate attempts to find a way out of the situation and reject all forms of violence in this regard (Noppe *et al.*, 2012). During the extremism phase persons become convinced that the ideology to which they adhere is the only right one and that violence is the appropriate tool to be used to create a society based on the ideology in question. During the terrorism phase activities involve selecting targets, consulting manuals on how to build bombs, attending training camps, etc.

Sikkens *et al.* (2017) propose different methods to prevent radicalization; projects with regard to the educating of parents or educational assistance are possibilities in this respect. The main principle of these projects is that parents look for connections with society in the education of their children. Cultural associations, sport clubs, youth clubs

and other local organisations should focus more on people and groups that are now beyond their reach. Moving towards a more intercultural way of working should be aimed at the inclusion of people in the local community and in society.

It is imperative that the governments must create counter radicalization programs for the youth that are radicalized. For instance, since the inception of an uninterrupted democracy since 1999, Nigeria has recorded an unprecedented number of youths of military age (16 to 28 years) who have been radicalized as a result of personal grievances, unemployment and poverty (Effoduh, 2016). The Nigerian youths radicalized have resulted and accepted to use violence in achieving their aims and objectives for either political, religious or ideological reasons. The radicalized youths use terrorism, militancy, cultism, kidnapping, armed robbery as a source of livelihood and it has eaten so deep that they celebrate the wealth of radicals without knowing their source of income, the politicians use them as tools during elections and provide them funds to purchase arms and ammunition, parents and guardians feed fat from their ill-gotten wealth and sometimes publicly declare how proud they are about their children.

Nigeria is indeed sitting on a keg of gunpowder if measures are not taken to mitigate the rapidly increasing numbers of youth that are being radicalized on a daily basis. In the North Eastern part of Nigeria, the terrorism activities going on have created pains in the heart of Nigerians and have made Nigerians become refugees and Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) in their homes. The North has the highest number of radicalized youths and these have made the Insurgent group such as Boko Haram taking advantage of that. These youths radicalized serve as foot soldiers, field commanders, IED manufactures, suicide bombers and Boko Haram Intelligence agents (Ker, 2012).

As a result of these, the Intel Centre, a renowned world intelligence and counter terrorism research firm once ranked the Nigerian Boko Haram as the No 4 most dangerous terrorist group. The Niger Delta has also been known as the headquarters of Militancy in Nigeria (Effoduh, 2016). The militancy commanders/generals radicalized the youth in the region and arm them with guns and dynamites. As a result of the increasing cases of radicalization, countries like Singapore, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UK, Netherlands, Denmark, USA and many more came up with a robust program to counter / de-radicalized their youths which has helped in mitigating the power of the radicalism.

### **2.3 Empirical Literature**

This section presents reviews related literature on the subject studied as previously presented by various researchers, scholars, analysts and authors. The empirical review is guided by the study objectives and organized as follows: counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, contribution of counter narratives to reduction of youth radicalization, challenges faced in the development of counter narrative strategies and measures to mitigate challenges in counter narrative strategies development.

#### **2.3.1 Counter Narrative Strategies and Youth Radicalization**

Counter-narrative strategies are the core principles underpinning the strategic logic of information operations campaigns of radical groups (Abbas, 2017). Such strategies as argued by Rompuy, Bonazzi, Frontini, Ritzmann, Manea, Goodwin and Abbas (2017) need to first dismantle the messages, work with messengers who can reach out to a diverse body of people, crucially bringing with them vulnerable people on the borderlines of radicalization, and, finally, to actively work with media in order to promote the messengers

and help to break down the negative messages. This can take different forms depending on different opportunity frames (Stuart, 2017).

Fishman and Lebovich (2011) studied countering domestic radicalization specifically focusing on the lessons for intelligence collection and community outreach noted that it had been reported that within the period 2007-2010, 1120 “at-risk” youth were identified and referred to the program for intervention. According to the study, British officials were keen to use an outreach strategy that stressed profoundly on aspects connected to building relationships with Muslim community leaders and authoritative figures. The strategy was built on an establishing an integrated society defined by participation, integration, and a sense of co-existence among Muslim and British communities. This study however, does not discuss the challenges and the measures put in place to mitigate the challenges in counter narrative strategies, which are covered in this study.

Kosseim (2011) while investigating counter-radicalization with a focus on the best practices in the United States and lessons learned from abroad highlighted that community oriented policing had been successful in countering radicalization in Britain. The study mentioned that the “Channel Project”, a community outreach program that was founded under the contest strategy aimed at preventing radicalization in the nation had proven effective in motivating the police as well as other representatives of Muslim societies in detecting persons who were susceptible to radicalization besides developing the necessary interventions. This study fails to provide the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (2012) conducted a study on the prevention of youth radicalization in East Africa. The study noted that the urgency of promoting

interagency collaboration in dealing with the problems of youth radicalization. According to the study, youth ministries needed to harmonize their undertakings with that of security agencies and institutions, for instance, the police, gendarmerie, army, and intelligence agencies. The study also highlighted that it was crucial for security institutions to always be in touch with non-defense related agencies among them education, health, and labour ministries. Civil society groups, such as religious organizations, community associations, recreational clubs, sports teams, and others, according to the study, served as a fundamental line of defense against radical ideologies. These groups had the ability and capacity to enhance their interactions with the youth in ways that public institutions could not. The study recommended that governments as well as external donors could offer support in setting up mentorship programs that could be undertaken by civil society groups. It also recommended a favourable regulatory environment that allowed CSOs to undertake their operations and interactions with the youth. This study however, does not discuss the challenges and the measures put in place to mitigate the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

Abdikadir (2016) explored the role of youth radicalization as a tool for terrorism in East Africa using a case study of Kenya. The study recognized the efforts by religious leaders and groups as a strategy in countering radicalization. According to the study, the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) had been on the fore front in counter terrorism measures within the Muslim community. SUPKEM had carried out a survey within the coastal region with an aim of first getting an enhanced comprehension of the factors that motivated individuals to become radicalized and in cooperation with the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) was also involved in backing an



amnesty regulation guide to dealing with youth returnees who had the Al-Shabaab organization. SUPKEM together with the Council of Imams and the council of elders from both the Borana and Somali communities that mostly professed the Islamic faith had combined forces with the Kenyan government to get rid of any false ideologies by Muslim radicals that had led to loss of many innocent lives. Nevertheless, this study does not discuss the challenges and the measures put in place to mitigate the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

Yarrow (2016) examined counter-radicalization and its effect on the security of nations in East Africa focusing the use of the diplomatic approach in Kenya. The aim was to discuss the impact of Kenya's diplomatic initiatives to countering radicalization. The study highlighted that as a result of recurrent threats and their adverse effects on the security and economy of the nation, the government had instigated both multilateral and bilateral initiatives aimed at building partnerships with nations that had suffered from such treats within the region and beyond. As part of its regional counter terrorism initiatives under which counter-radicalization is established, the government had held several discussions under the umbrella of regional organizations such as Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union (AU), the Commonwealth and the United Nations (UN). This study however, does not discuss the challenges and the measures put in place to mitigate the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

According to Davis (2016), the most noticeable diplomatic initiative was the bilateral cooperation with the US government on refining Kenya's counter radicalization and counter terrorism readiness majorly through military training. These efforts had been termed as a "high priority" in the fight against radicalization and terrorism in the region.

However, the priorities have not been very successful, as radicalization still rampantly exists in the country.

Ratemo (2015) examined counterterrorism in Africa focusing on countering radicalization in Kenya. The study applied a qualitative approach where content analysis was conducted. The study highlighted that public-private partnerships (PPP) played a great role as part of the efforts towards countering radicalization in Kenya through the provision of narratives and messages against violence. According to the study, this approach also presented an alternative as well as a non-violent way to reaching mutual goals and it promoted diversity in the institutions involved in fighting radicalization. The study pointed out that it was crucial for the nation of Kenya to build trust among communities and also ensure their active participation in the war against radicalization so as to mobilize the resources of a community. The study concluded that it was crucial for law enforcement agencies to recognize that among the crucial rules of CVE was building trust with those predominantly at the risk of being radicalized.

Qureshi (2014) discusses Kenya's counter-radicalization strategy pointing out that each element of the strategy pays attention to the unique tactics exploited by terror groups in radicalizing youths. According to Qureshi, the occurrences in Kenya signaled the actuality of a diverse intelligence led counter-terrorism strategy. The study pointed out the shutting down of radicalization and indoctrination into terror cells and groups in East Africa by the National Intelligence Service (NIS) was an indication of an effective multifaceted strategy. The Intelligence Service had also undertaken profiling of lots of terror recruitment agents that operated on the cyber-space and numerous had been detained. Human intelligence (HUMINT) operations that targeted terror cells that were run by the

Somali Islamist group Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen were scaled up since the last quarter of 2014 throughout 2015.

Kumba (2016) discussed the crucial role of the Judicial System in the fight against radicalization in Kenya. He noted that although Kenya was among the nations that earlier powerfully fought the burden of enacting a counterterrorism legislation in the post-9/11 period, in 2014 it was the Kenyan government, at least the executive branch and its allies within the legislature, that introduced and fought for the passage of the Security Laws. The court allowed up to 14 years in prison for saying anything “that is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism,” whether or not that person actually does so. Another section allowed any NIS officer to “detain any person whom the officer suspects of engaging in any act or thing or being in possession of anything which poses a threat to national security,” thus allowing a wide berth for interpretation. Other provisions left in the bill reduced legislative oversight over the NIS, allowed the organization to demand any information from any government entity, allow suspects to be detained for up to 90 days, and allow individuals to be arrested more than once for the same crime without any new evidence and without a warrant.

In its assessment of the susceptibility of Kenyan youths to radicalization and extremism, the Institute of Strategic Studies (2013) recognized the success of the Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA) that was set up in November 2003 as a counter-radicalization strategy. This alliance was formed by youthful Muslim activists who held the belief that Muslims could dialogue with the rest of Kenyan societies. The alliance was formed with the aim of addressing the unique problems that Muslim youths encountered

since they were the chief targets by radical groups. By carrying out civic education and participation programmes, KMYA sought to build a platform through which Muslims could comprehend what various concepts among them democracy, gender equality, human rights, freedom of expression, religious tolerance and jihad actually meant. Essentially, KMYA sought to address the misconception of the concepts by particular Muslim scholars who had exploited their extensive support by the public to confuse and mislead Muslim youths into believing that concepts such as democracy were anti-Islam. By amplifying the crucial role played by the CSOs in countering radicalization, KMYA had continuously challenged the narratives of radical groups by using media and setting up moderate Muslim scholarship networks.

Hellsten (2016) while exploring radicalization and terrorist recruitment among Kenya's youth pointed out the importance of paying increased attention to the youth by expanding the openings for education, employment as well as their participation in the political arena. The study emphasized on the importance of engaging youth in a productive manner in politics that cultivated unity, founded on shared values as well as holding out the actual vision of change through democratic ways if the ideologies of radical groups and extremists were to be deprived of new recruits. The study supported the promotion of youth leadership exchange programmes by both international and regional partners. Furthermore, the study recognized the crucial role of organizations working in the slums and informal settlements on supporting education, youth activities, vocational training and also employment. This study however, does not discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) (2020) discusses how messaging the counter narratives should be done, and recommends the centralisation of coordination of CVE efforts for effective counter-narrative messages. As the organization acts as the central point for coordinating all counterterrorism efforts in Kenya, the government should set aside designated funding for CVE programming. This will enable the organization to fast track the review of the national strategy to counter violent extremism in order to incorporate gender ideals, and designate an information management or command post where information on suspected terror/ violent extremism acts are likely to occur. This study however, does not discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

### **2.3.2 Contribution of Counter narrative in Youth Radicalization**

The aim of counter-narratives is to expose the shortcomings of radicals' and extremists' narratives and to counter their ideas (Neumann, 2017). By highlighting the flaws, lies and contradictions within the propaganda by radical groups, counter narratives can make those vulnerable to this kind of propaganda re-think their views (Bizina & Gray, 2014). These initiatives aim to challenge extremist ideas and influences in society; promote tolerant, moderate and democratic principles; and address factors that can increase vulnerability to radicalization (Danish Government, 2014). Various programmes seek to promote self-awareness and critical thinking in young people.

Funk and Said (2014) examined the narratives of conflict and conflict transformation focusing on Islam and the West. By adopting the narrative analysis approach, the study explored the most common "stories" used by parties that identified themselves with Islam and the West in organizing their thinking about conflict: a story of intercultural confrontation and a story of intercultural compatibility. According to the

study, since both Western and Muslim narrators of these stories made various outstandingly comparable claims, proposing a “new story” that emphasized intercultural complementarity could assist agents of conflict transformation in reframing differences as well as advancing the cause of peaceful coexistence. The study highlighted that an affirmative approach to relations between Islam and the West needed to underline peace as a common ideal of both civilizations as well as drawing attention to the ever-present possibility of choice. The study recognized that Muslims and Westerners shared several common ideals and yet followed cultural traditions that formulated and applied these ideals in distinctive ways that were fully commensurable. For the West, peace meant an absence of war, terrorism, and gross violations of human rights. For Muslims, real peace signified a presence of justice, self-determination, and social equilibrium or harmony.

Bukar (2017) conducted a study on transforming violent extremism. According to the study, in crafting narratives, the opportunity lies on augmenting credible voices in a community that reinforced inclusive values and highlighted peaceful avenues for change. The study pointed that, through the use of media, peer-to peer outreaches, and even personal interactions innovatively, it was possible to build progressively resilient and multi-ethnic societies that rejected violence. The risk according to the study, was possibly sowing disconnect and mistrust in relationships with vulnerable communities by targeting their deeply held beliefs and values through counter-messaging. The study recommended that selecting voices as and role models for empowering societies needed to remain ideologically neutral and founded on fostering constructive ways to redress grievances. This study however, does not discuss the challenges and the measures put in place to mitigate the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

Heffelfinger (2010) assessed the creation of an effective counter narrative to Jihad. After assessing the jihadist narrative and its main elements, the study highlighted that the most effective counter narratives would argue persistently that Islam was compatible with democracy and pluralism; and that al-Qaeda and similar jihadist ideology was a perversion of mainstream Islamic belief and its proponents had a record of indifference toward both Muslim and non-Muslim life. The study further noted that an effective counter narrative would also erode the jihadists' religious legitimacy and ideological justifications for violent acts by targeting points of weakness and highlighting divisive issues, thereby diminishing the popular opinion and public support from Muslims on which they depend. This study does however fails to discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

Ensor (2017) examined peacebuilding and violent extremism focusing on the key insights and lessons from a global consultation. The assessment revealed that for peacebuilders, deconstructing the extremist narratives as they emerged and concurrently producing narratives of peace, unity and coexistence was a preventive measure. Some of the strategies used in re-constructing narratives that promoted peaceful coexistence included the humanization of marginalized groups, harmonization of diversity with strength and unity, supporting the understanding that violence and war were not innate or inevitable as well as the promotion of an inclusive society/national identity. The study showed that in Myanmar, local peacebuilders had undertaken several approaches to countering hate speech and promoting narratives of peaceful co-existence. According to the study, some organizations had used peace education strategies in transforming the roots of intolerance while others worked through the social media to fight hate speech and deliver alternative narratives.

Faris and Zeiger (2017) while focusing on how violent extremist narratives in the Middle East and North Africa could be undermined noted that religious leaders had the ability to refute the religious and ideological narratives of Daesh by contradicting the appeals they made to justify violence in the name of Islam. Culturally speaking, popular religious figures were deeply respected by their local followers, and the guidance provided by these figures carried significant weight in the communities. There were many Islamic scholars who had been engaged in countering Daesh propaganda from the MENA region. This study does however fails to discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

While discussing the guiding principles for countering and displacing extremist narratives, Beutel (2016) contended that rather than being torn in confrontations related to ideologies, counter narrative messages needed to recognize the issues that endorsed the much of the empathy towards radical or extremist groups without authenticating the means normally advocated by these groups, sometimes involving violence. He cited a case of designing narratives that acknowledged the complaints or grievances of a particular group, nonetheless suggested alternate (and legal) means to handling a particular issue contrasted to the violent solutions that radical and extremist groups presented. Such a strategy that recognized people and their concerns seriously, almost certainly made them less disposed to counter-argue the counter-message. This study does however fails to discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies.

Devine (2017) while examining radicalization and extremism in Eastern Africa asserted that, religious institutions had a vocational role and responsibility to play, first and foremost, in fostering the values of truth, justice and mercy over deception and division. Religious leaders and their followers had a duty to continuously be engaged in promoting



tolerance, bearing in mind that their spheres of influence and opportunities to persuade others were often, for example, psycho-spiritually more in-depth and further-reaching than governmental institutions. Essentially, there was often a ‘war of ideas’ at the heart of conflict and violence. According to the study, there was a need for religious leaders to have greater exposure to and proficiency in the areas of peace studies, development, comparative religion and international relations. This study does however fails to discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies, which are covered in this study.

Mwangi (2017) highlighted the importance of promoting religious tolerance through open dialogue and economic integration. According to the study, interreligious dialogue forums for open deliberation between leaders of different religious communities and civil society actors were needed to strengthen mutual respect and also to address negative stereotypes/attitudes that led to stigmatization and marginalization. The study recommended the standardization of the religious curriculum for Islamic religious teaching. It also recommended constructive dialogue between Muslim and Christian communities through knowledge exchange and the preaching of peace and unity rather than division in promoting religious tolerance. This study does however fails to discuss the challenges in counter narrative strategies, which are covered in this study.

### **2.3.3 Challenges Faced in the Development of Counter Narrative Strategies**

Briggs and Feve (2013) while reviewing the programs to counter narratives of violent extremism highlighted the failure of the government to ensure coordination in the operations of their departments and building partnerships with strategic partners was and hindrance to designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns. This affected the coherence in spreading the counter messages. They also noted that the failure of

governments to get rid of bureaucratic constraints and improving their services in order to timely respond to the messages of radical groups, raising awareness of possible threats emanating from radical groups were also major obstacles. They also added that governments failed in supplying their communication staff with tools and skills that were required besides being unable to deal with arising challenges and proactive manner. Explicitly dealing with the counter messages that target them in few cases was also a challenge. This study does not, however, provide measures to mitigate these challenges, which is covered in this study.

In examining narratives as a means of countering the radical right, Dafnos (2014) noted that even though governments have the reach and possessed the resources, mainly in the promotion of alternative narratives, they lacked the credibility or trustworthiness as effective messengers with target audiences (time and again, governments endorsements could act as a 'kiss of death' for possibly sound messages or messengers). He also cited the risk averseness of governments particularly the kind of messages that they could comfortably support (for instance, the messages that criticized foreign policy, or were highly radical by nature). This study does not, however, provide measures to mitigate these challenges.

According to Head and Noar (2014), it is important for the creators of counter-narratives in the area of CVE to cautiously segment their target audience in the process of identifying the audiences that can be considered as 'at risk'. The study highlighted that at times, these producers designated 'at risk' so broadly which led to the risk of programmes targeting a very large audience. For instance, some efforts that targeted sections of Muslim societies, labelled as socially marginalized had majorly succeeded in reaching mainstream

Muslims. Therefore, these kind of programmes were exposed to the risk of tagging entire sections of Muslim societies as ‘suspect’. Hence, this effort alienated Muslims who felt that they had been unfairly profiled. Intrinsicly, instead of countering radicalization, such programmes ended up being counter-productive. This study does not, however, provide measures to mitigate these challenges.

Berger (2016) determined that failing to direct efforts to smaller and more narrowly defined segments of an audience and also the failure to employ highly sophisticated segmentation approaches that had the capacity to differentiate individuals based on the issues at hand affected the effectiveness of counter narratives. Lack of capacity to adequately examine and comprehend audiences due to lack of audience analysis that was carefully and rigorously carried out was also an obstacle.

Colaert (2017) studied de-radicalization focusing on scientific insights for policy. He pointed out that a challenge in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns in an online environment was that at times, the message or post source could be diluted. He gave an example of a challenge in finding out the source of a message initially posted by organization but was picked up by a Facebook friend from a blog by another friend, who may or may not indicate the original source. According to the study, these numerous points of origin/sources confused the readers and complicating matters even further, all the multiple sources possibly added to, altered and/or rephrased the message with an aim of presenting their own perspectives. This according to Colaert (2017) changed the meaning of the counter messages. The study therefore, emphasized the need to integrate online counter narrative campaigns with face-to-face campaigns. This study does not, however, provide measures to mitigate these challenges.

The Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) Centre for Excellence (2018) while providing insights on counter narratives and alternative narratives noted that technology and social media firms along with creative marketing and advertising firms could use their know-how as well as their experience to conceptualize and disseminate counter ideas both online and offline besides influencing or altering attitudes. However, these firms lacked the explicit knowledge of extremist movements and radicalization and they primarily focused on their main business which was accountability to shareholders. This meant that the mentioned companies as important stakeholders in fighting radicalization lacked the time and investments in the creation of counter narrative campaigns. The main concern for these companies were working in an extremely challenged and contentious area and/or concerns that working too closely with governments could impact on brand reputation. This was an obstacle to designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns. This study does not, however, provide measures to mitigate these challenges.

Zeiger and Aly (2015) noted that an obstacle to designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns was the lack of studies pertaining to how audiences received, interpreted, decoded, internalized and in a number of cases acted on the messages entrenched in narratives and propaganda of radical and extremist groups. According to the study, the emphasis on counter narratives as a means of preventing terrorism was attached to the flawed notion that messages of radical groups reached and influenced a subservient audience. By themselves, general and generic counter-narrative campaigns that attempted to depict a 'true reality' and correct the lies of the propaganda, risked sending the signal that the target audience was considered as ignorant and naïve individuals who had been

fooled. That was not certainly a productive starting point for convincing the target audience to listen with an open mind.

Uhlmann (2015) explored the obstacles and potential opportunities for crafting effective counter-narrative measures to the “Islamic State” Movement. According to the study, the development of a narrative that fostered a sense of belonging was not a one-way road. The challenge was that already a dominant master narrative existed: the one of Muslims as “the other.” This damaging outstanding outlook on Muslims and Islam was not only a major hindrance to building associations between non-Muslim mainstream societies and Muslim communities, but also offered a narrative for those who wanted to delineate themselves from the mainstream (non-Muslim and Muslim alike). They were using the stigmatization reinforced by third parties (such as Islamic State) through the ascription of negative identity markers to construct a resistance identity. This “exclusion of the excluded by the excluded” created a high degree of group coherence, which enhanced the group’s agency and potency and allowed them to transform their marginalization into sovereignty. This study does not, however, provide measures to mitigate these challenges, which is covered in the current study.

#### **2.3.4 Measures to Mitigate Challenges in Counter Narrative Strategies Development**

Saberi (2019) identifies formal measures by the police that contribute to preventing radicalization. Belgium, for example, developed Community Policing Preventing Radicalization and Terrorism (COPPRA), that has developed a training program that helps first-line police officers to determine and detect signals in an early stage of the process of radicalization. When signs of radicalization are detected, a number of social actors should react and cooperate in dealing with this problem, such as the city’s service for prevention,

schools, social workers and religious organisations. This study however, does not provide the extent to which counter narrative strategies contribute to youth radicalization.

Schmid (2014) identifies the government measures in mitigation of the challenges facing counter narrative programs. The study contends that the efficacy of governments' counter narrative initiatives might be limited and instead, they need to pay attention to augmenting and supporting the efforts by the community to come up with positive stories. Schmid (2014) also adds that governments should use alternative messages in public dialogue that are conveyed by political figures as well as public statements besides making an assurance that their actions correspond with the content of messages in order to ensure that there is no contradiction. This study fails to provide the extent to which counter narrative strategies contribute to youth radicalization.

Noppe, Verhagen and Easton (2012) observe that local opportunities for deliberation and consultation, which could enable the dialogue between local communities and the police can not only as important instrument to vent one's opinions, but also as a channel for communication and information. Policemen should be made aware of their potential role in the prevention of radicalization. They should – for example through training – be informed about the phenomenon, how to recognize signals, and how to interact with individuals that have entered a process of radicalization. This is a necessary condition to dedicate policemen/women to the prevention of radicalization. Inadequate knowledge has also been seen to be a factor in many accidents and terror related incidents. In certain situations, lacking the proper skill or knowledge for a task can result to errors that can be managed. This study however, does not provide the extent to which counter narrative strategies contribute to youth radicalization.

Scrivens, Davies and Frank (2020) identify the role of the community informal counter narratives. The authors argue that to deal with the radical and extremist messages that are spread all over the internet, communities such as the Muslim community, could be asked to set up websites that offer a contra-narrative with regard to radical and extremist websites. This study, however, fails to provide the extent to which counter narrative strategies contribute to youth radicalization.

Gunaratna and Hussin, (2018) note that constant surveillance of the environment around the mosques and the cultural centres has been so far prioritized by the national authorities, suspicious of the Wahhabi propaganda financed by Saudi Arabia and of the donations coming from *zakat* in Italy. A small part of the mosques was animated by the activities of militant imams, engaged in the recruiting of manpower for jihadi networks and blamed for the radicalization of some individuals. However, above all in the 1990's and the early 2000's, a growing herd of followers were lured by the call for jihad echoing in all Italy. This study however, does not provide the extent to which counter narrative strategies contribute to youth radicalization.

In Ghana, Christensen and Edu-Afful (2019) argue that counterterrorism strategies and policies require accountability. Accountability here means that the approaches taken to address radicalization should be public and open for scrutiny by various institutions and the civil society. They should involve the executive and the legislative arms of government, as well as an independent, impartial and informed judiciary. Moreover, involvement of the public: non-state actors, the media and the general public is essential. Terrorism is argued as the extreme posture of radicalism. It has multiple foundations and to understand these

underlying forces, security studies need to adopt more interdisciplinary perspectives to the causes, operations as well as counter terrorism mechanisms.

Botha (2014) notes that Kenya is experiencing waves of terrorism and terrorist attacks targeting soft targets especially the civilians during shopping and even students while sleeping as it was the case of the Garris University attack. In response to these security threats, the Kenyan authorities have taken several measures including enactment of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and establishment of several units within the security organs and architecture with an aim of detecting and averting terrorist acts before they happen besides holding the terrorists accountable of their acts if they have already occurred. This study fails to provide the extent to which counter narrative strategies contribute to youth radicalization.

#### **2.4 Summary of Review of Literature and Research Gap**

The review of literature has shown that the issue of youth radicalization is not only a problem in Kenya but also in other nations around the globe. In line with this, several studies have been undertaken to show the various approaches or strategies applied in countering youth radicalization. Some of the strategies identified in the Kenyan context include building public-private partnerships (Ratemo, 2015), diplomatic approach which constitute of multilateral and bilateral initiatives aimed at building partnerships with nations that have suffered from such treats within the region and beyond (Yarrow, 2016), enhancing intelligence operations and shutting down of terror cells through the National Intelligence Service (Qureshi, 2014) as well as the collaboration between SUPKEM, the Council of Imams and the council of elders working together with the Kenyan government to get rid of any false ideologies by Muslim radicals (Abdikadir, 2016).



The review of existing literature has also shown that several studies have been conducted to show the role of various counter narrative campaigns in preventing radicalization. There is a common consensus that these counter narrative campaigns have an influence in the prevention of radicalization. Among these include Funk and Said (2014), Bukar (2017), Heffelfinger (2010), Ensor (2017), Faris and Zeiger (2017), Devine (2017), Uhlmann (2015) and Doosje and Eerten (2017). The review of existing literature shows that research work on success of counter narrative campaigns in preventing radicalization is little within the Kenyan context as compared to the global approach. For the reviewed studies, studies by Zeiger and Aly (2015) and Devine (2017) focused on East Africa region in general with few in Kenya such as Mwangi (2017). The literature review also shows that the most well-known counter narrative campaigns have been undertaken in other nations and the campaigns undertaken in Kenya are not explored. By undertaking this study, existing counter narratives will be highlighted and suggestions for their design in cases where they lack will be given.

The literature further shows that the design and delivery of effective counter narrative campaigns has been hindered by among others poor coordination and partnership among key/strategic stakeholders, bureaucratic constraints and lack of adequate resources from the government (Briggs & Feve, 2013), governments lacking credibility or trustworthiness as effective messengers (Dafnos, 2014), challenges in target audience segmentation and analysis (Noar, 2012), dilution of the message or post source on online environments (Colaert, 2017), lack of capacity in terms of funds, resources and expertise among civil society groups, the lack of emphasis on flexibility in designing the campaigns

(Ginkel, 2015) as well as lack of research or evidence on the effectiveness of these campaigns (Zeiger & Aly, 2015).

The gap that exists in the study is that most of the reviewed studies such as Bukar (2017) and Ensor (2017) explore counter narratives in relation to violent extremism while this study focuses on radicalization which can be both violent and nonviolent hence a conceptual gap. The review also reveals that some counter narratives such as factual, peace and inter-ethnic narratives as well as Islam as peaceful and non-violent narratives have not been adequately explored and major focus has been on religious and ideological narratives and emotional and psychological counter-narratives. The study therefore expanded the body of knowledge in the mentioned counter narratives.

In addition, from the findings of empirical studies conducted clearly indicate conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps. From a methodological point, most of the studies have either been quantitative or qualitative. The present study combined both the quantitative and qualitative data techniques to come up with the findings. Further, methodologies adopted by different researchers are varied in terms of research design, population, sampling design, and research instruments and data analysis methods.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the research methods and procedures that were employed in carrying out this study. Under this chapter, the research design, study site and population as well as the sampling technique are discussed. The data collection instruments, data processing and analysis and also the legal and ethical considerations are also outlined.

#### 3.2 Research Design

Research design refers to a plan outlining the methods and procedures for data collection and analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). It is a plan and structure conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions. The study used a descriptive research design. According to Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015), descriptive research design is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals to obtain information about people's attitudes, opinion or habits on social issues. Descriptive design was appropriate for this study as it provides a framework for collection of data based on objectives that require a description and data collected using questionnaires and interviews to gauge the opinions of respondents about counter narratives as a response to radicalization. This ensured that the issue under study is not through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in the study.

### **3.3 Research Site**

Research site is the selected physical boundaries from where the target population of study is drawn (Klenke, 2016). The research site for this study was Garissa Township sub-county which is one of the sub-counties in Garissa County. Garissa County is the administrative County in the former North Eastern Province of Kenya. The County has a total population of 923,060 covering an area of 45,720.3 km<sup>2</sup>. Garissa Township sub-county has four wards which are; Galbet, Iftin, Waberi and Township ward. The choice of the sub-county was based on the fact that County is one of the areas with higher levels of terror attacks, and radicalization has been reported in the area. The area is a fertile ground for radicalization as indicated by recent attacks by *Al Shabaab* terror group in the area including the terror attack that involved Garissa University College are among the key radical attacks reported in the County. The concerned authorities had also put measures imparting knowledge and comprehension of radicalization and engaging the youth in productive activities such as employment, education to counter-radicalization, and therefore the site was suitable for the study.

### **3.4 Target Population**

According to Taylor *et al.* (2015), population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement or it is an entire group of persons, or elements that have at least one thing in common. The study targeted the youth in Garissa Township sub-county, local community leaders, security officers under Kenyan Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, religious leaders as well as representatives from civil society organizations involved in counter radicalization efforts in the area. The targeting of these different groups of individuals was justified because counter narrative campaigns and

counter radicalization efforts in general involve multiple stakeholders and that different counter narratives can be handled effectively by different parties. This also ensured that the subject matter under study was comprehensively explored. Table 3.1 presents a summary of the target population for the study.

**Table 3.1: Target Population**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target Population</b>
Youth	9,509
Local Community Leaders (Chiefs, sub-chiefs, and village elders).	197
Security Officers	1,090
Religious Leaders (Church leaders, Imams or Khadis)	2,507
Civil Society Organizations' Representatives	208
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,511</b>

**Source: Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government Records (2019) and Census (2019)**

### **3.5 Study Sample**

Taylor *et al.* (2015) assert that a sample is a subset of a population that has been selected to reflect or represent characteristics of a population. In research, the study's research objectives and the characteristics of the study population (such as size and diversity) determine which and how many people to select.

#### **3.5.1 Study Sample Size**

In this study, the researcher recognized that the population for the study was 13,511. Since the population is large, the researcher adopted Fisher's method of sample size determination from populations of more than 10,000 (large populations) as follows;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2},$$

Where;

n = sample size;

Z = normal standard deviate (at 95% confidence level z=1.96)

p = estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population (taken as 0.5 in this case),

q = 1-p and

e = is the desired level of precision (0.05).

In this regard therefore, the estimated sample size was;

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 (.5)(.5)}{.05^2} = 384$$

A sample of 384 respondents was therefore selected for this study. Based on the strata formed, the proportionate sample size for the study was determined as shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Sampling Framework**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>
Youth	9,509	270
Local Community Leaders	197	6
Security Officers	1,090	31
Religious Leaders (Imams or Khadis)	2,507	71
Civil Society Organizations' Representatives	208	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,511</b>	<b>384</b>

Source: Researcher (2019)

### **3.5.2 Sampling Procedure**

Creswell and Creswell (2017) defined sampling procedure as the methods used and the systematic process of collecting data from a smaller group out of a larger one. This study used purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was used gather information from youth with first-hand information. The method also helped in picking the local community leaders, security officers, religious leaders (Church leaders, Imams or Khadis) and civil society organizations' representatives.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

This section discusses the development of the study instruments, pilot testing of research instruments, instrument reliability and validity. Each sub-section is discussed in the subsequent subheadings.

#### **3.6.1 Development of Data Collection Instruments**

The study relied on primary data collected using semi-structured questionnaires and key informant interview guides (KIIs). KIIs were administered to local community leaders and CSO representatives in the sub-county. The questionnaire was meant for the youths, security officers, religious leaders, local community leaders and CSO representatives in Garissa Township sub-county. The questionnaire contained a number of different sets of questions including open ended questions, Likert scale, structured and skip questions, and contained four sections. The first section had the general information about the respondents, while section two, three and four contained questions addressing the specific objectives on the counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, the extent to which counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization

and the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies while dealing with youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya respectively.

The respondents filled in the questionnaire as the research assistants waited to reduce non-response. The schedule for the interviews with KIIs was 40 minutes for each administered to local community leaders and CSO representatives in the sub-county. The interviews were administered to these groups as they possess first-hand information on dealing with youth radicalization in the sub-county. An interview protocol, which is a set of rules and guidelines to be used for conducting the interviews was developed and was aligned based on the specific objectives of the study. Unstructured questions were used. The interview was taped and transcribed into words before analysis. The study also used content or documentary reviews. This was obtained on secondary sources of data from journals, books and articles.

### **3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments**

Pilot testing is the pre-testing of particular component such as the questionnaire (Garg & Kothari, 2014). The researcher carried out a pilot study using a pilot sample of 38 respondents in Lagdera sub-county. This represents 10% of the sample size. The pilot study was carried out in Lagdera, a sub-county neighbouring Garissa Township sub-county, and had similar characteristics as that of the study area. Both areas have been subjected to radicalization. The results obtained from the pilot study helped shape the final questionnaire in terms of the questions, content validity and duration of administration.



### **3.6.3 Instrument Reliability**

Reliability is the extent to which the instrument can yield similar results in repeated trials (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Since the pilot involved a single test treatment, the reliability of the test instruments was determined using Cronbach alpha coefficient to test for the internal consistency of the items. A reliability coefficient of 0.877 was established, which was deemed ideal for the study, as recommended by Garg and Kothari (2014). This applied to structured and Likert scale questions.

### **3.6.4 Instrument Validity**

According to Garg and Kothari (2014), validity determines whether the research instruments truly measure that which it is intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In the context of the study, the researcher used content validity. Content validity is a subjective decision of whether measures of a certain concept will appear to measure what is intended to measure. In this regard, the researcher gave the data collection instruments to the experts who included the university supervisors and fellow researchers to be able to get their feedback on whether these measures are relevant in measuring what the researcher intends to measure. Qualitative aspects were therefore covered. For quantitative aspects, the pilot study aided determine their validity. Importantly, validity was enhanced by project supervisors.

### **3.6.5 Data Collection Procedure**

Before data collection commences, individual permission for access to the respondents was sought from the relevant authorities. The study used questionnaires and key informant interviews. Research assistants were trained for purposes of data collection.

Before the data collection exercise commenced, the researcher sought for permission, approval and clearance from the relevant authorities which included Africa Nazarene University, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Institutional Review Board (IRB), Ministry of Education and County Commissioner. Informed consent was also sought from the various study participants, where respondents had a right to withdraw from the study wherever they felt like doing so. Additionally, the researcher provided assurance to the respondents that the information obtained from them would be safe and would only be used for the purpose of the research.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The questionnaires were adequately checked for data quality. For all the objectives, quantitative data was analyzed with the aid of SPSS version 23 for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequency counts and percentages to capture the distribution of responses on the key issues addressed in the study objectives. The findings from quantitative data was presented using figures, graphs, pie charts and tables.

The qualitative data collected from KIIs and open-ended questions in the questionnaire was analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis emphasizes pinpointing, examining and recording patterns or themes within data (Guest & Greg, 2012). The data generated from the study was presented as a report in a narrative form. The data analysis was conducted in the following steps: familiarizing with data, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report. Interpretations were done on the basis of the data collected and was organized based on the specific objectives.

### **3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are the moral standards that the researcher observes in carrying out the study at all stages. Approval from the university was sought before the process commenced. The researcher avoided using inappropriate research methodology, for example, by selecting a highly biased sample, as this is unethical. The researcher also avoided incorrect reporting, that is, reporting the findings in a way that changes or slants them to suit one's own or someone else's interest.

Before the data collection exercise commenced, the researcher sought for permission, approval and clearance from the relevant authorities which included Africa Nazarene University, NACOSTI, Institutional Review Board, Ministry of Education and County Commissioner. Informed consent was also sought from the various study participants. The researcher sought the assistance of two well trained research assistants given the sensitivity of the study subject to assist in the data collection exercise.

The researcher further avoided inappropriate use of information that is, using information in a way that directly or indirectly adversely affects respondents, for example, asking respondents for information that is likely to be used against them. The researcher first informed the respondents of the kind of information that was required from them and allowed them to decide if they wanted to participate in the study. In addition to this, the researcher provided assurance to the respondents that the information obtained from them would be safe and would only be used for the purpose of the research. Assurance was also provided that the names would not be used in the report, ensuring that the respondents were assured of their confidentiality. Again, the researcher was bound to show respect for participants and readers by ensuring use of non-discriminatory language.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data that was collected from the field through questionnaires and key informant interviews from the respondents who included the youths, security officers, religious leaders, local community leaders and CSO representatives in Garissa Township sub-county. The first part of this chapter is the introduction, the second part is on the demographic information attained while the third part examines the issues as per the objectives which included: Establishing the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, establishing how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, determining the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization and assessing the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization in Garissa township sub county in Kenya.

#### 4.2 Presentation of Demographic Information

The study sought to determine the demographic information of the respondents who took part in the study. The demographic information sought was the gender, age, marital status, employment status, highest level of education, religion, number of years lived in Garissa Township Sub-County and the type of respondents. The response rate was also given to show the number of questionnaires which were positively returned from the field. The demographics findings are presented in sub-sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.9.

### 4.2.1 Response Rate

The study targeted to collect data from 384 youths, security officers, religious leaders, local community leaders and CSO representatives in Garissa Township sub-county. However, there were non-response incidents encountered during data collection and therefore 100% response was not achieved. The researcher managed to collect data from 321 respondents; however, 63 questionnaires were not returned. The study therefore achieved an overall response rate of 321 (84%) and a non-response rate of 63 (16%) as presented in Table 4.1. This response was excellent as per Creswell and Creswell (2017) who recommend a response rate of 70% or more, and therefore, this response was considered sufficient for analysis.

**Table 4.1: Response Rate**

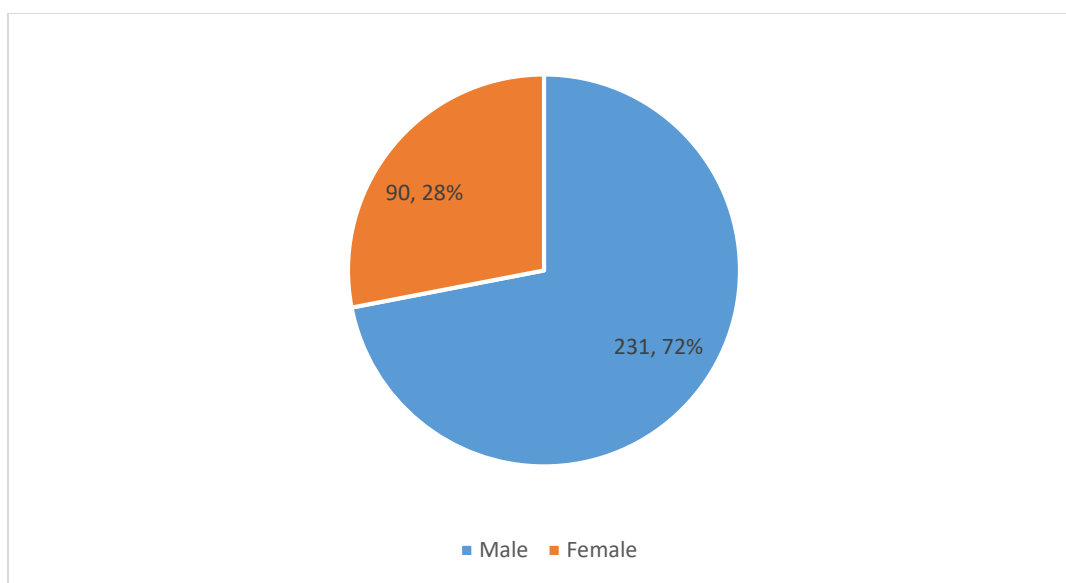
Category	Sample Size (n)	Response (n, %)	Non-response (n, %)
Youth	270	219 (81%)	51 (19%)
Security Officers	31	27 (87%)	4 (13%)
Religious Leaders (Imams or Khadis)	71	63 (89%)	8 (11%)
Civil Society Organizations’ Representatives	6	6 (100%)	0 (0%)
Local Community Leaders	6	6 (100%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>321 (84%)</b>	<b>63 (16%)</b>

Source: Study Findings (2020)

### 4.2.2 Gender of Respondents

The respondents were required to indicate their gender. The intention of this was to be able to understand the gender dynamics, especially in the sub county. The study found

that a majority of the respondents were male at 231 (72%) while 90 (28%) were female. The inference here is that when it comes to the security officers, religious leaders, civil society organizations' representatives, local community leaders and youths, the ratio of males was higher than those of females. This could be attributed to several factors such as the lower number of women who head religious centres and lower numbers of females in the community leadership roles and security sector. In addition, since youth radicalization was the main subject of the study, men are the ones who were mainly targeted by the study owing to their high possibility of being targeted by radical groups. However, all genders are involved in radicalization, the men are higher than females. The findings are presented in Figure 4.1.



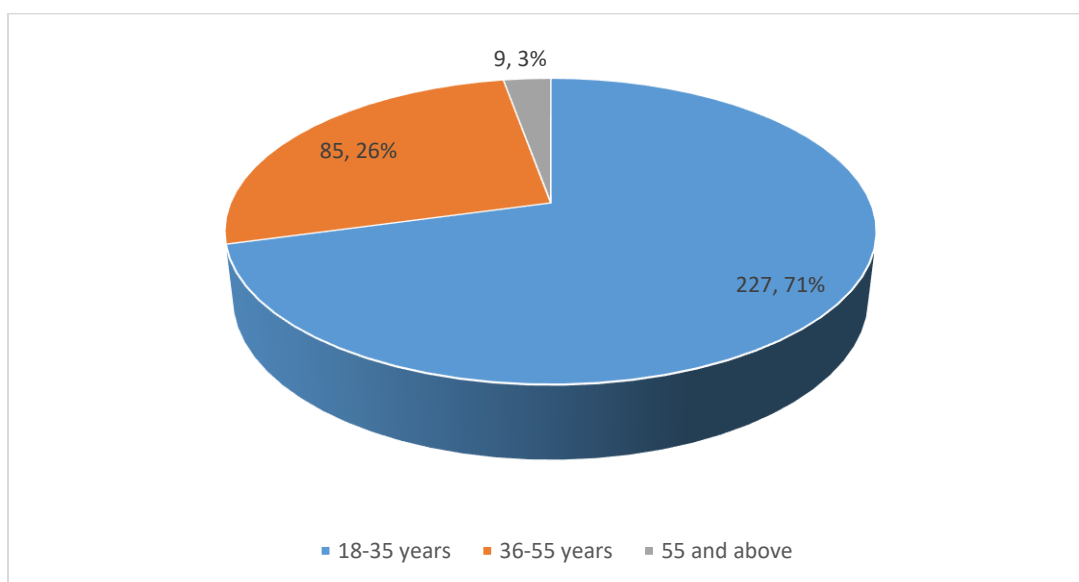
**Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents**

Source: Study Findings (2020)

#### **4.2.3 Age of Respondents**

The study sought to assess the age category of the respondents in order to determine the type of respondents who participated in the study, and the findings presented in Figure

4.2. The findings indicate that 227 (71%) of the respondents were aged 18-35 years, 85 (26%) were aged 36-55 years and 9 (3%) were aged more than 55 years. This can be attributed to the sampling framework of the study, where the youths formed the majority of the targeted respondents.

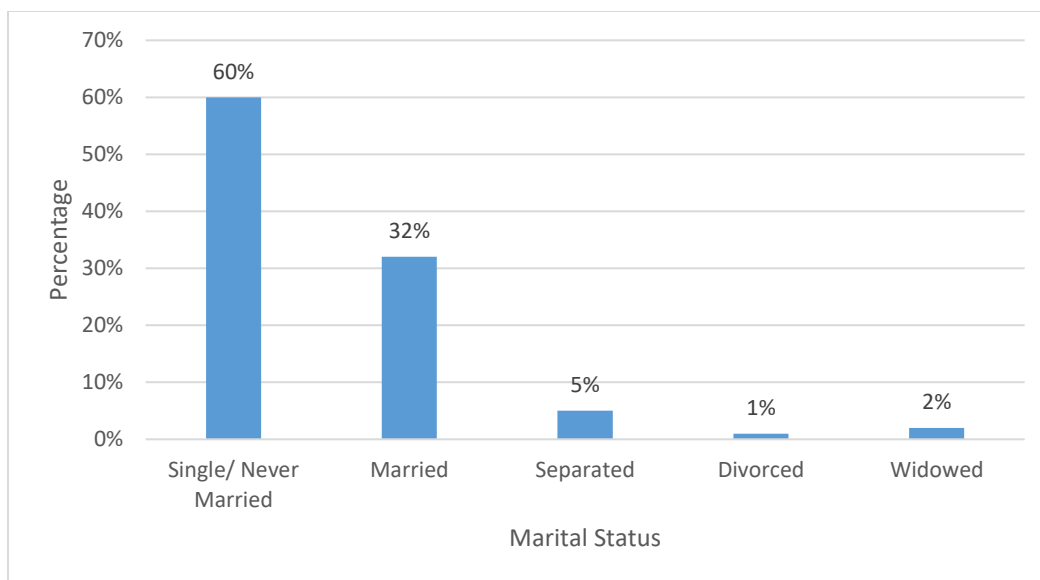


**Figure 4.2: Respondents' Age**

Source: Study Findings (2020)

#### **4.2.4 Marital Status of Respondents**

The study further sought to assess the marital status of the respondents in order to determine whether the respondents were married or not, and the findings presented in Figure 4.3. The findings indicate that 192 (60%) were single (never married), 102 (32%) were married and 17 (5%) were separated while 5 (2%) were widowed. The findings clearly indicate that most youths were not married as they formed the majority of the respondents. This implies that those are not married, tend to be involved more with radical groups, as opposed to their married counterparts.



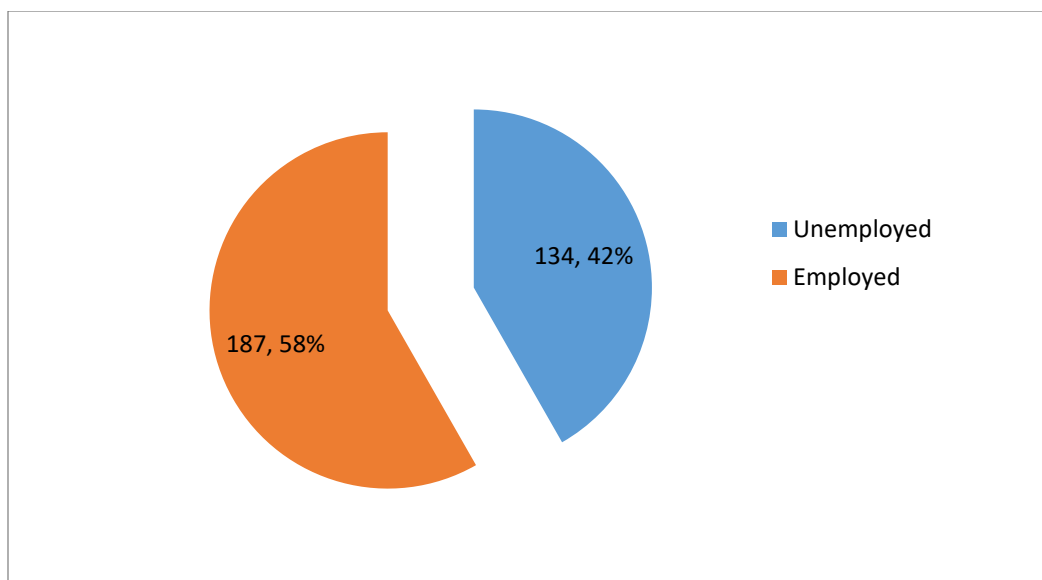
**Figure 4.3: Respondents' Marital Status**

Source: Study Findings (2020)

#### **4.2.5 Employment Status of Respondents**

The respondents' employment status was also captured in the study. Since the study was aimed at evaluating the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization, understanding the employment status of the respondents especially the youth was considered as a very important phenomenon to understand. This is because radical groups mainly target unemployed youths. From the findings, 187 (58%) of the respondents were employed while 134 (42%) were unemployed. Therefore, as much as there is presence of salaried personnel in the study such as CSO representatives, religious leaders and security officers, most youths can be said to be unemployed. The findings are presented in Figure 4.4.



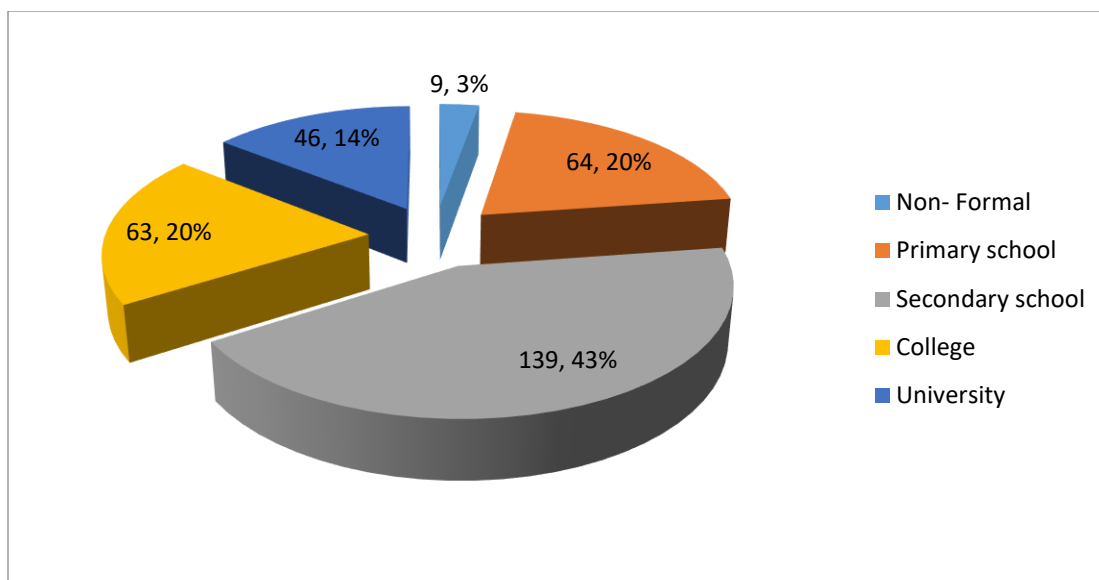


**Figure 4.4: Respondents' Employment Status**

Source: Study Findings (2020)

#### **4.2.6 Highest Education Level Attained by Respondents**

The level of education of the respondents was sought in order to determine capability of respondents to answer questions posited to them. The findings indicate that 139 (43%) of the respondents had attained secondary education level, 64 (20%) had attained primary school education, 63 (20%) had attained college education level and 46 (14%) had attained university education while 9 (3%) had attained non-formal education. The findings show that secondary level education is the most attained by the respondents, therefore they were capable of answering questions posited to them, as presented in Figure 4.5.

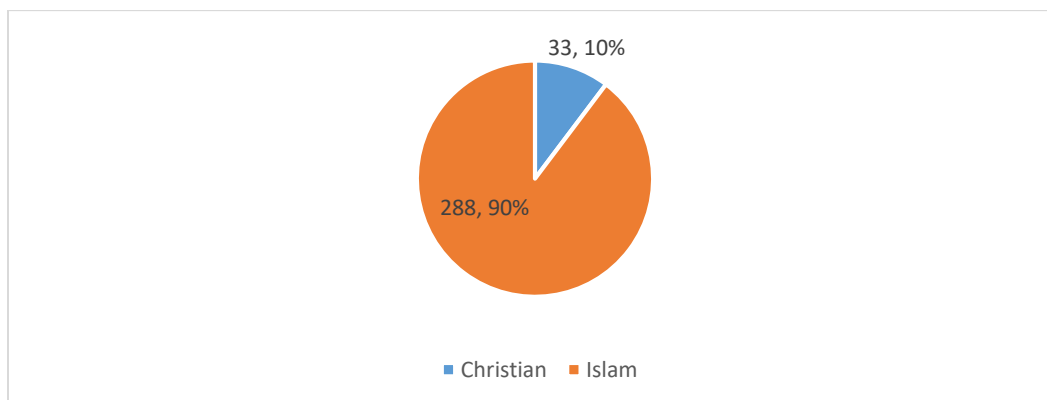


**Figure 4.5: Respondents' Highest Education Level**

Source: Study Findings (2020)

#### 4.2.7 Religion of Respondents

The study sought to assess the religion of the respondents in order to determine the major religion of the respondents and the findings presented in Figure 4.6 indicate that 288 (90%) of those who took part in the study were Muslims while 33 (10%) were Christians. The findings imply a majority (90%) of the respondents were Muslims.

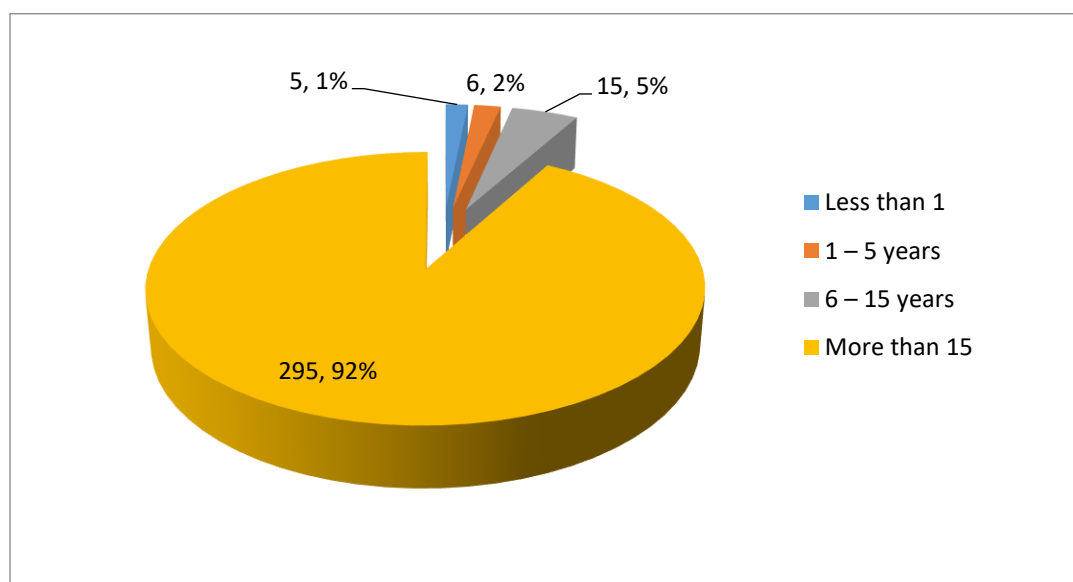


**Figure 4.6: Respondents' Religion**

Source: Study Findings (2020).

#### 4.2.8 Length of Residency in Garissa Township Sub-County

The study sought to determine the number of years the respondents had lived in Garissa township sub county in order to determine if they were residents or not. The findings obtained indicate that 295 (92%) of the respondents had lived in the area for more than 15 years, 15 (5%) had lived for 6-15 years, 6 (2%) had lived for 1-5 years while 5 (1%) had lived for less than a year. The findings imply that the majority of the respondents had lived in Garissa township sub county for more than 15 years, showing that they were residents of the area as shown in Figure 4.7.



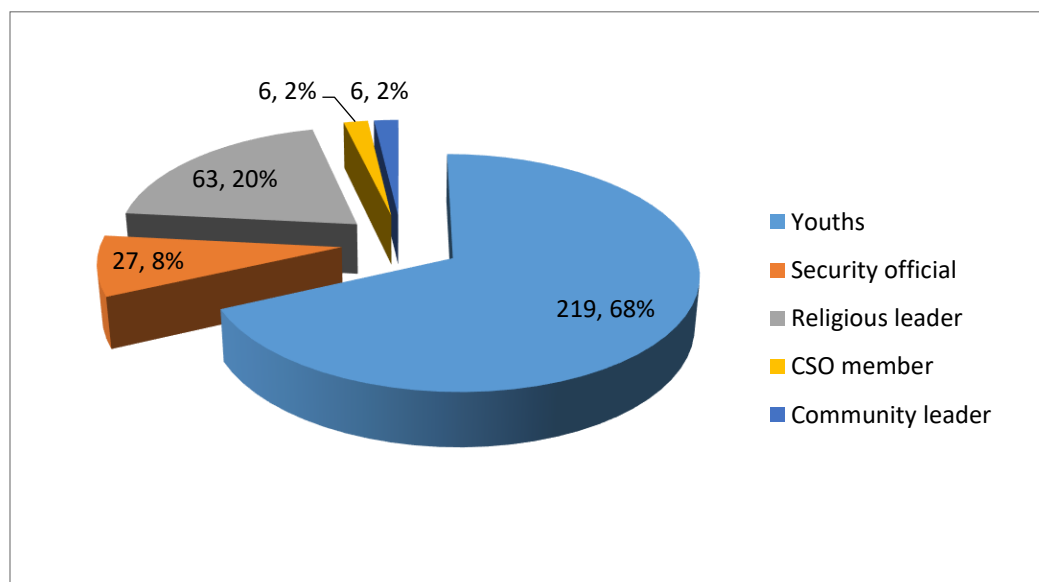
**Figure 4.7: Length of Residence in the Study Area**

Source: Study Findings (2020)

#### 4.2.9 Type of Respondent

The study sought to understand the types of respondents in order to understand the respondents who contributed most responses to the study and the findings presented in Figure 4.8 indicate that 219 (68%) of the respondents are youths, 63 (20%) were religious

leaders, 27 (8%) were security officials while 6 (2%) are community leaders with a similar percentage from the CSO representatives. This can be attributed to the sampling framework of the study.



**Figure 4.8: Type of Respondent**

Source: Study Findings (2020).

### 4.3 Presentation of Research Analysis and Findings

This study sought to determine the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. Precisely, the study sought to establish the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization and the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies. The findings of the study are presented in four

sections from section 4.3.1 to section 4.3.4, each sub-section based on specific objective of the study.

#### **4.3.1 Nature of Counter Narrative Strategies used to Prevent Youth Radicalization**

The first specific objective of the study was to establish the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya.

##### **4.3.1.1 Radicalization Activities in the Sub-County**

The study first sought to determine the respondents' views on whether radicalization of the youth was going on in the Sub-county. The findings obtained indicate that 181 (56.4%) of the respondents indicated that radicalization was going on in the sub county, while 140 (43.6%) said radicalization was not going on, as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Radicalization Activities in the Sub-County**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	181	56.4
No	140	43.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Study Findings (2020).

For those who identified existence or non-existence of radicalization activities in the sub-county, responses from key informants and open-ended questions to support views were as follows;

Currently there are no known radicalization of youth in township sub county. However, there has been a massive sensitization of youth on violent extremism by stakeholders and that could be the reason. In addition, as opposed to the sub county, radicalization of the youth is still rampant in the

borderline areas such as Liboi, Dadaab and Hulugho (Source: Community leader).

While there is, still massive existential threat posed by Al-Shabaab in my sub-county the state of youth radicalization can be characterized as low. There are no known official cases of youth radicalization in Garissa sub-county (Source: Community leader).

Radicalization is contributed by factors such as the palatable ground laid by the local community, especially those people dealing with contraband goods who want to use the youth for their self-interests, poverty which lures the youth into radical groups to earn income and lack of government support to vulnerable youth especially the unemployed (Source: Youth, Garissa Township Sub-County).

Radical groups, *Al Shabaab* in this regard, take advantage of the frustrated youths who are unemployed and even the employed ones to lure them to join them. During the process, they convince people that the ideology to which they adhere is the only right one and that violence is the appropriate tool to be used to create a society based on the ideology in question (Source: Security officer, Garissa Township Sub-County).

Radicalization can be explained by factors such as security agencies being brutal especially the police during law enforcement. This has made individuals to turn against the security agencies, and radical groups provide a secure home for such individuals (Source: CSO representative).

Poverty, unemployment leading to idleness, lack of education, low numbers of rehabilitation centres, and poor relationship with the government, especially the police exist. These factors contribute to radicalization in the sub county (Source: Youth, Garissa Township Sub-County).

The study also sought to determine the religious dimension on radicalization with some findings from the KIIs. The assessment revealed that religious organisations were highly involved in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention and countering violent extremism. This particularly involved collective efforts of various religions as well as single religions. For instance, the interfaith council of clerics trust uses intra and inter-faith dialogue to promote peace, security and development. The reason for their involvement was because they contribute to radicalization, as shown in the following response from key informants.

The engagement of religious institutions in radicalization activities is based on the fact that religion has featured as a factor informing radicalization. This is evidenced by the inter-religious divisions engendered by terrorist acts against either religion in some of the sampled counties. Additionally, religion is contributing in CVE by inculcating values on humanity and integrity.

#### **4.3.1.2 Strategies Used in Preventing Youth Radicalization**

The study also sought to determine the extent to which the respondents agreed with statements given to them regarding the strategies used in preventing youth radicalization. The study found that 200 (62.3%) of the respondents agreed that building trust among Christian and Muslim communities yields positive results in countering radicalization, 84 (26.2%) agreed, 26 (8.1%) strongly disagreed while 11 (3.4%) disagreed. Also, 178 (55.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed that religious leaders play an important role in countering radicalization, 180 (56.1%) strongly agreed that conveying knowledge and understanding of radicalization is a strategy used to reduce radicalization, 172 (53.6%) agreed that use of media to inform and increase awareness on radicalization helps reduce radicalization among the youth and 184 (57.3%) agreed that engaging the youth in productive activities such as employment and education leads to reduced attraction to radicalization. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Strategies Used in Preventing Youth Radicalization**

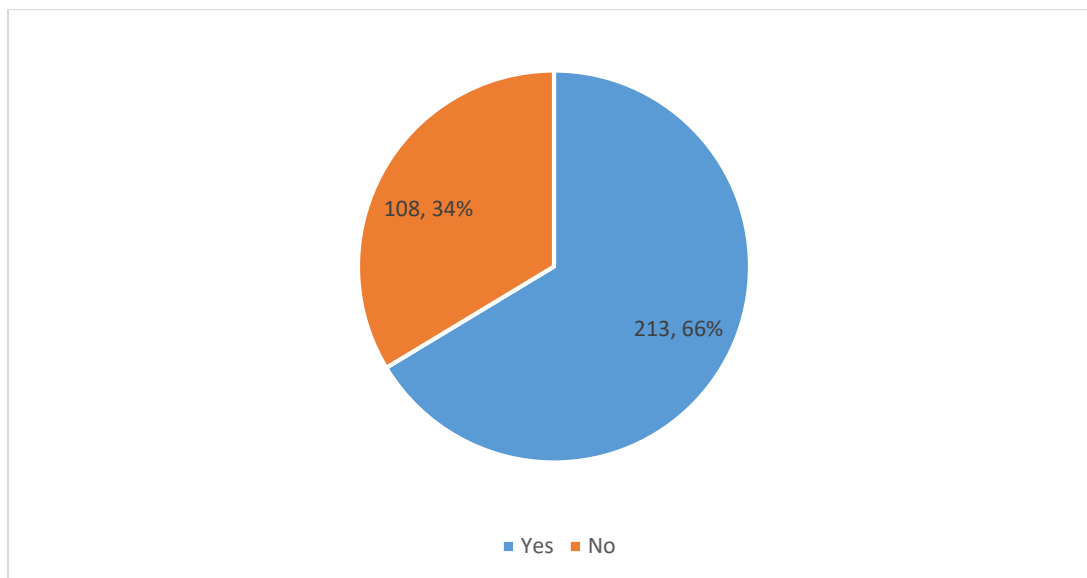
Strategies		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Building trust among religious communities yields positive results in countering radicalization	f	26	11	0	84	200
	%	8.1%	3.4%	0.0%	26.2%	62.3%
Religious leaders play an important role in countering radicalization	f	29	9	49	56	178
	%	9.0%	2.8%	15.3%	17.4%	55.5%
Conveying knowledge and understanding of radicalization is a strategy used to reduce radicalization	f	31	11	0	99	180
	%	9.7%	3.4%	0.0%	30.8%	56.1%
Use of media to inform and increase awareness on radicalization helps reduce radicalization among the youth	f	9	7	4	172	129
	%	2.8%	2.2%	1.2%	53.6%	40.2%
Engaging the youth in productive activities such as employment and education leads to reduced attraction to radicalization	f	13	11	0	113	184
	%	4.0%	3.4%	0.0%	35.2%	57.3%

Source: Study Findings (2020).

#### 4.3.1.3 Existent Counter Narrative Strategies

The study also sought to determine if there were counter narrative campaigns/strategies designed to prevent youth radicalization in the area. The findings obtained indicated that 213 (66%) of the respondents identified existence of counter narratives campaigns in the sub county while 108 (34%) did not, as shown in Figure 4.9.





**Figure 4.9: Existence of Counter Narrative Strategies**

Source: Study Findings (2020).

From the open-ended questions and interviews conducted, the findings indicated that mentorship, career guidance, psychological support, education and community sensitization, use of internet to counter radical narratives, community participation and empowerment were the major counter narrative campaigns/strategies used in the area. The following responses were obtained;

Some of the Youths in Garissa Townships and Hulugho sub counties were trained as mentors (*Shujaas*). These *shujaas* helps in mentoring other youths through Behavioral Change Communication Groups (BCCGs) and therefore acts as change agents in the community (Source: Community leader).

To counter radicalization, the government has taken a number of steps where education and providing information on the negative effects of radicalization takes priority. For instance, billboards have been erected in centre of the town illuminating on the effects of radicalization (Source: Security officer).

The government in now investing in the use of internet in countering radical messages. Parents and teachers are not always aware of what is going on in the world of the internet. Projects, that focus on providing both information

and support for parents and teachers with regard to their knowledge of the internet, could also make part of a preventive approach to radicalization on a local level radicalization (Source: Security officer).

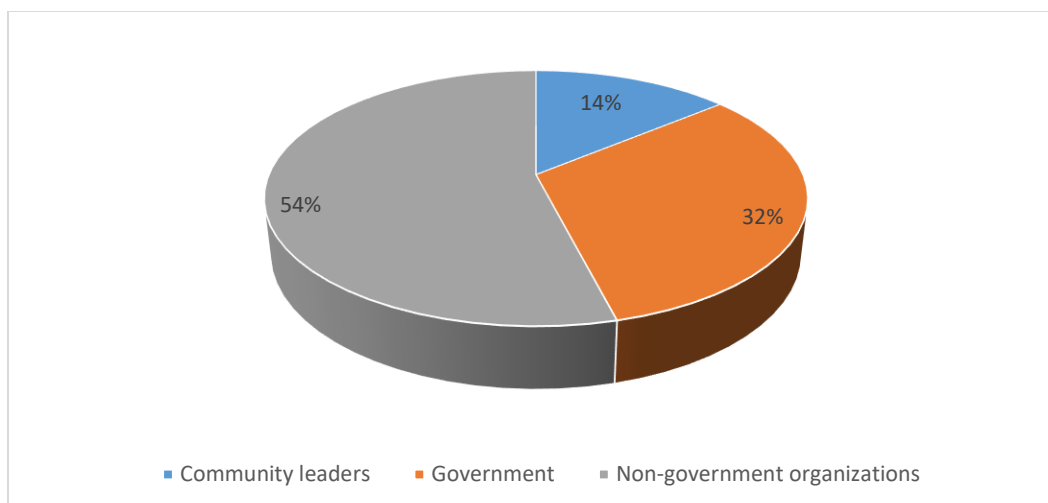
In countering radicalization narratives, there have been use of various groups such as the trainers of trainees, religious leaders, and peer educators who mentor and used to de-construct the narratives that have been fed into the heads of the radicalized individuals. In addition, there is establishing and strengthening youth network as a tool of empowering youths to be agents of change against radicalization to violent extremism through formation of youth groups and social entrepreneurship. There are also psychological support programs for most at risk youths (Source: Religious leader).

Organizations like Japan Centre for Conflict Prevention (JCCP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) programs and national security agencies have helped bring youths together and teach them on the dangers and effects of the narratives spreading across the sub county. This strengthens the relationship between security apparatus, youth and the community (Source: Community leader).

We usually have career guidance initiatives and mentorship. The most preferred scenario is using the youths who have had successful careers to mentor the youths and help de-construct the narratives they may have been fed. This has proved to be very successful (Source: CSO representative).

#### **4.3.1.4 Major Stakeholders in Counter Narrative Campaigns**

In addition, the study sought to determine the main parties/stakeholders involved in designing these campaigns, and findings obtained indicated that non-government organizations (54%), the government (32%) and the community leadership (14%) were the major stakeholders involved in designing these campaigns, as shown in Figure 4.10. The findings indicate the importance of non-government organizations in countering radicalization narratives.



**Figure 4.10: Major Stakeholders in Counter Narrative Campaigns**

Source: Study Findings (2020).

### **4.3.2 Counter Narratives and Reduction of Youth Radicalization**

The second objective of the study was to establish how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya.

#### **4.3.2.1 Campaigns Designated to Reduce Radicalization**

The study first sought to determine if there were campaigns designated to reduce radicalization geared towards addressing stereotypes/ prejudice of particular religions, sustained engagement and sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues. The study found that 270 (84.1%) of the respondents identified existence of campaigns geared towards addressing stereotypes/ prejudice of particular religions, 188 (58.6%) identified existence of sustained engagement and 179 (55.8%) identified use of sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues. The findings are shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Campaigns Designated to Reduce Radicalization**

<b>Campaign Strategy Or Approach</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Addressing stereotypes/ prejudice of particular religions	f	270	51
	%	84.1%	15.9%
Sustained engagement	f	188	133
	%	58.6%	41.4%
Sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues	f	179	142
	%	55.8%	44.2%

Source: Study Findings (2020).

#### **4.3.2.2 Reduction of Incidents/ Attacks since Employing of Strategies Identified**

The study also sought to determine if there has been a reduction in terms of incidents/attacks since the employing of the strategies. The findings obtained, shown in Table 4.5, indicate that 56.4% of the respondents agreed that the strategies adopted have led to a reduction of incidences/attacks since employing them while 43.6% of the respondents disagreed. The findings are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Reduction of Incidents/ Attacks since Employing of Strategies Identified**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	181	56.4
No	140	43.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Study Findings (2020).

The key informants also indicated that the radicalization has considerably reduced by a big margin (more than 20%), especially after employing strategies such as involvement of the community and women, sustained engagement and addressing stereotypes. The following response was obtained from the key informants.

Women were said to be sensitive and intuitive. As such they are in a position to detect some signals that may indicate that a person is being radicalized. Therefore, women are on the front line of defense in detecting early signs of radicalization among their family and friends. They are often the first to see very early subtle changes in behavior, attitudes, social networks or emotional responses. This has led to a reduction in radicalization by over twenty percent of the previous percentage (Source: Security officer).

#### **4.3.2.3 Campaigns/strategies to Address Stereotypes and Prejudice of Religions**

The study findings on how the campaigns/strategies been used to address stereotypes and prejudice of religions in the area, the study found that county CVE action plan, inclusion of the youths to address stereotypes and strengthening the community were all used to address stereotypes as shown from the following responses;

There is continued education on people that radicalization is not entirely inclined to the Muslim religion, and therefore everybody should be careful with their children, especially their sons, as they can also be lured to join the illegal radical groups (Source: CSO representative).

The CVE programs in the sub county have created an opportunity for youth to discuss their key issues and that has given them a voice to share their needs, including stereotypes and have been enlightened on how to address them (Source: Religious leader).

Empowerment of the youth is crucial way of making the youth busy and therefore making them stay away from the danger of being radicalized, which is essentially based on religious stereotypes (Source: Local community leader).

#### **4.3.2.4 Campaigns/strategies to Ensure Sustained Engagement**

On ensuring sustained engagement, the study determined that CVE and knowledge trainings for security officers, involvement of major actors in countering narratives and constructing working relationships were mainly used to ensure sustained engagement in the community. The following responses were obtained in the study;

CVE skills and knowledge trainings for government officers is showing some positive response from trained security officers in handling counter

narratives, as the way of approaching the radicalized youths is gradually changing from arresting them to ensuring they are rehabilitated from the ideas already running in their heads (Source: Security officer).

Womankind Kenya has established 13 youth peace groups in various places such as Fafi and Ijara sub-counties which are comprised of vulnerable youths from all over the county, including those from Garissa Township sub county. The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) funds the project. The youth are now instilled with great hope for the future because they are now registered and undergo through several trainings on Prevention of Violent Extremism and early warning signs of radicalization and linked to different microfinance institutions in the county where they apply for loans. Youth groups formed were registered and will receive in kind support through the program in terms of social entrepreneurship (Source: Community leader).

Garissa county has come up with county CVE action plan. One of key issues to be addressed is youth economic empowerment and engagement. Though there has not been much implementation of the same, but the fact that it is recognized and is part of the plan is a big progress (Source: Community leader).

There are a number of stakeholders that are addressing CVE drivers and carry out such activities as advocating for National identification cards for youth through the Garissa youth Bunge network, the citizenship issues like the large numbers of families who joined the Somali refugees for economic reasons and their children not getting national IDs - the government has started a process to address the same and strengthening community security relationships by building the skills and knowledge of the security and community on violent extremism (Source: CSO representative).

#### **4.3.2.5 Campaigns/strategies to Ensure Constructive/Antagonistic Dialogues**

For sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues, the study found out that constructive meetings and activities such as games, youth mobilization and community empowerment were used as shown from the following responses from key informants.

There have been meetings and football tournaments between security and youth which has created the opportunity for both to see the other in a completely different way (Source: Security officer).

The youth organizations are helping bring a constructive dialogue on how to empower the youths, and therefore reduce their chances of joining the radical groups (Source: CSO representative).

Narratives used currently by violent extremism is based on development and resource, the government is also working hard to counter the narrative by engaging and plaining with community on their development agenda and there is devising of actions to address the same. However, the government should have a holistic approach to CVE by engaging all levels of community (Source: Community leader).

#### 4.3.2.6 Success of Strategies Used in Countering Narratives

Finally, the study sought to determine the extent to which the campaigns being used had been successful in countering radicalization in the area. The findings of the study indicated that 88 (27.4%) of the respondents identified the strategies to be somehow successful, 101 (31.5%) said they were successful to a great extent while 74 (23.1%) identified the strategies not to be successful, as shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Success of Strategies Used in Countering Narratives**

Success Level	Frequency	Percent
Great extent	101	31.5
Some extent	88	27.4
Low extent	58	18.1
Very low extent	74	23.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Study Findings (2020).

#### 4.3.3 Challenges Faced in Development of Counter Narrative Strategies

The third objective of the study was to determine the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya.

#### 4.3.3.1 Participation in Designing or Delivering Counter Narrative Campaigns

The study first sought to establish of the respondents participated in designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub-county. The study determined that 2013 (63.2%) of the respondents were not involved in designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub county, as compared to 118 (36.8%) who were involved, as shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Participation in Designing or Delivering Counter Narrative Campaigns**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	118	36.8
No	203	63.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Study Findings (2020).

#### 4.3.3.2 Challenges in Designing and Delivering Effective Counter Narratives

For the challenges faced by stakeholders in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns in the sub county, financial constraints, lack of support from the government and conflicting roles between the county and national governments were mentioned. The following responses were obtained from the study;

For any strategy to work, there has to be political and financial support of the same. Currently only CSO's are engaged in supporting CVE programs and there is no government commitment both at the National and county in allocating resources for the same. The push by the government to develop countering violent extremism county action plans has not been supported by allocating resources on the same and thus negates the government commitment in operationalizing the action plan (Source: CSO representative).

Essentially, there is lack of political and financial support, the government as a partner and the custodian of the County Action plans are not supporting CVE interventions. In addition, education about radicalization is low, which makes the youth an easy target for radical groups (Source: Religious leader).



There is non-clarity of who is responsible for countering violent extremism (County Verses National). In addition, there are no clear legislations at the county level to allow resource allocation by the County (Source: Community leader).

There is lack of synergy among the various stakeholders, mistrust between government and non-government actors, failure to address the source of the problem and tokenism by the local community (Source: Religious leader).

#### **4.3.3.3 How the Challenges Faced Could Be Tackled**

The study also sought to obtain the opinions of the respondents on how these obstacles could be tackled to make the campaigns effective. The study found that the respondents recommended inclusion process, education on the locals and introduction of radicalization studies in schools. The following responses were obtained;

The application of inclusivity is crucial as it will help define clearly on how funding to counter narrative strategies is done. Funding is the main way through which counter narrative can be effective (Source: CSO representative).

Women empowerment, supporting religious leaders and empowering them, addressing issues of historical injustices and addressing issues of extra judicial killings are necessary (Source: Community leader).

Public campaigns to educate the locals on radicalization and how to counter narratives on radicalization is crucial in the sub county. There is continued use of publications like Gaidi Mtaani and sisters of Jana, which have convinced some youths into joining terror groups (Source: Religious leader).

There should be introduction of radicalization studies in schools especially secondary schools and colleges as they are among the primary targets by radical groups (Source: Security officer).

Most of these obstacles can be tackled by having a body/institution that plays an oversight role on; the relevance and the effectiveness of interventions, the avoidance of overlap, the ability to ensure complementarity of interventions and coordination and collaboration among the relevant stakeholders (Source: Religious leader).

The government needs to address issues of insecurity: there is need for cooperation between the government, the community and Non-state actors in addressing rampant insecurity. In addition, there is need for adequate resourcing to address the finance gaps – these interventions majorly rely on

development partners, it is high time for the government to appropriate some funding for this (Source: CSO representative).

#### **4.3.3.4 Suggestions to the Stakeholders on Effective Counter Narratives**

The study further sought to obtain information from the respondents on their suggestions to the stakeholders currently involved in designing counter narrative campaigns in the sub-county. Public participation, involvement of the youth and involvement of other parties were recommended, as shown from the following responses;

There should be involvement of the youth since they are the primary targets of radicalization. For a strategy to be effective, those directly affected must be involved (Source: Youth, Garissa Township Sub County).

Involvement of the parties that are close to the youth is crucial. The government should choose to involve non-government institutions such as religious leaders, community-based organizations and international organizations fighting radicalization in an equal measure. We all know that two heads are better than one (Source: Religious leader).

The government should consider coming up with publications that counter famous publications such as Gaidi Mtaani and sisters of Jana, that are very popular with the youths joining radical groups. With famous counter-publications, the youths will be educated on the right message about radicalization, and this may help reduce radicalization in the young groups (Source: CSO representative).

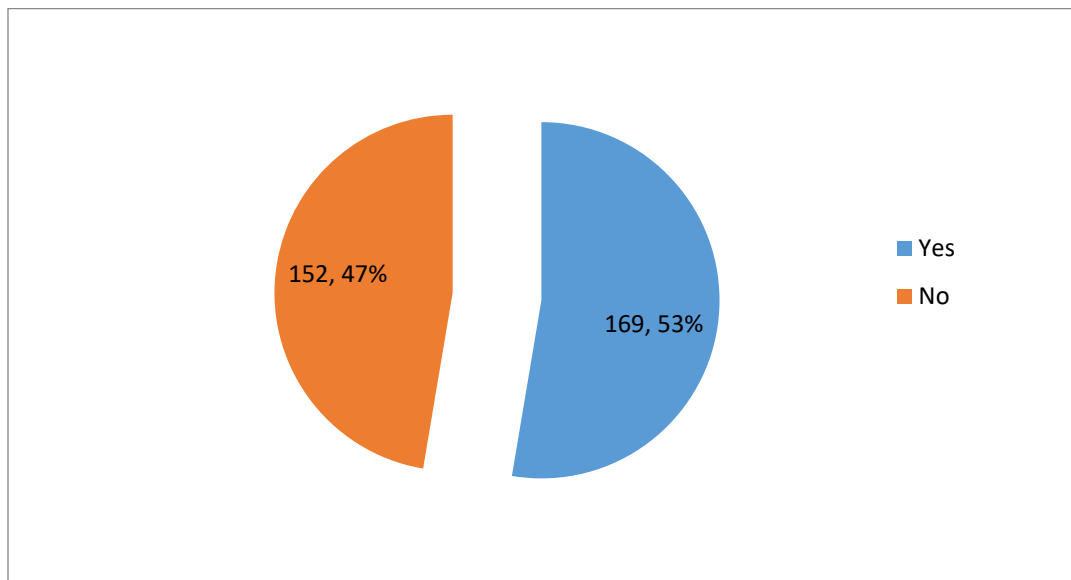
#### **4.3.4 Measures for Mitigating the Challenges in Counter Narrative Strategies**

The study sought to assess the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization in Garissa township sub county in Kenya.

##### **4.3.4.1 Measures by the Police/Security Officers to Prevent Radicalization**

The study first sought to determine if the respondents were aware of any measures by the police and other security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization. The

findings, shown in Figure 4.11, indicate that 169 (53%) of the respondents were aware of the measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization, while 152 (47%) of the respondents did not.



**Figure 4.11: Measures by the Police/Security Officers to Prevent Radicalization**

Source: Study Findings (2020).

In addition, the findings on the measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization indicate that public barazas, media campaigns, community dialogues as well as prosecution and jailing of radicalized individuals was practiced, as shown from the following responses;

Early detection of crimes related to radicalization and apprehension of radicalization kingpins and their prosecution is done. There are also media campaigns to educate the communities on the effects of radicalization to the entire community at large. Encouraging formal education in the affected areas to de-radicalize and keep the youth always occupied (Source: Security officer).

By avoiding punitive measures and embracing a more proactive measures in dealing with matters dealing with terrorism (Source: CSO representative).

Public members are being educated on Jihadism. This usually helps foster team work in Counter-Jihadism process. In conjunction with religious leaders, the police have been educating the community on the correct meanings of terms in the Islamic religion and also educating the community on violent extremism and ideologies that radicals use to radicalize individuals (Source: Religious leader).

Building the capacity of local community to identify early warning signs of radicalization among the youth and address them is used. This helps in improving youth's sense of identity and purpose and improving community cohesion and tolerance of diversity (Source: Security officer).

Some of the strategies like the meetings between the youth and the security have improved their relationship to some extent and may have addressed some of pull factors however others are just a way of clearing the work plan by the development actors (Source: CSO representative).

It is a well-known phenomenon that the security actors use collective punishment in responding to VE incidents. The platform for dialogue between the security actors and community sector groups including the youth has provided an opportunity for all actors to express their concerns and recommend better ways of responding to such incidents while at the same time giving the security actors the opportunity to air the concerns about the local community (Source: Security officer).

#### 4.3.4.2 Measures by the Local Community to Prevent Radicalization

The findings on the measures by the local community that contribute to preventing radicalization, the study found that 270 (84.1%) of the respondents said there were community measures while 51 (15.9%) did not know of such measures, as shown in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Measures by the Local Community to Prevent Radicalization**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	270	84.1
No	51	15.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Study Findings (2020).

For those who identified the measures by the community, community policing, public barazas, youth empowerment and role of religious leaders were identified as shown by the responses obtained below.

There are civil society organization that implement programs targeting youth radicalization and some of the strategies they employ are youth cafes, youth-led community dialogue, mentorship programs, youth and security consultative meeting and sports for youth deradicalization (Source: CSO representative).

Community policing is a major exercise practiced in the sub-county, especially the Nyumba Kumi initiative, peace committees, clustering areas, through platforms such as t-shirts, Barazas, and chief meetings (Source: Local community leader).

A majority of the youth are now involved in different social enterprises that assist them economically. The youth trainings being undertaken have greatly assisted as the youth who have been trained are mentoring other peers on the issues of radicalization. The relationship between the youth and the security apparatus has greatly improved due to the engagements being undertaken. There has been a very positive cohesion between the security and the community (Source: Community leader).

Chiefs are vigilant in case of any suspected form of radicalization, they report immediately to the relevant authority. Sheiks and Imams also usually discourage the youth from being radicalized by ill-gotten individuals and encouraging them to focus on positive way of life (Source: Religious leader).

Strategies like sports for youth deradicalization, youth-led community dialogue and youth cafes have removed the stigma of discussing terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization. Few years ago such topics were considered dangerous but these strategies applied over a period of time have allowed the normalization of such discussions (Source: Youth, Garissa Township).

#### **4.3.4.3 Existence of Laws and Policies to Prevent Radicalization**

On the existence of laws and policies that contribute to preventing radicalization, the study found that 171 (53.3%) of the respondents were familiar with such laws, while 150 (46.7%) were not, as presented in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Existence of Laws and Policies to Prevent Radicalization**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	171	53.3
No	150	46.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Study Findings (2020).

For those who identified the existence of such laws, National Strategy for CVE, Nyumba Kumi Initiative and the Prevention of Terrorism Act were identified. The following responses were obtained;

Through Nyumba Initiative, local leaders monitor any form of radicalization and report to the relevant authority to undertake the necessary actions (Source: CSO representative).

The Prevention of Terrorism Act as well as the National Strategy for CVE helps the security officials on strategies to follow while countering radicalization (Source: Security officer).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings, summary of findings after the analysis of the research, conclusion after interpreting the results, recommendations for both practical and policy implication and areas for further research.

#### 5.2 Discussion

This section explains the results on the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. The presentation of this section is guided by specific study objectives. Finally, the chapter presents discussions on how the findings relate to existing studies and findings from empirical studies.

A total of 321 respondents answered all questions correctly and were analysed giving a response rate of 84%. This response was excellent as per Creswell and Creswell (2017) who recommend a response rate of 70% or more. In terms of gender distribution, majority of the respondents were males (72%). The findings are consistent to a study by Ringquist (2011), which males are employed in the community and government programmes compared to their female counterparts. Most respondents (71%) are in the age category 18-35 years which is consistent with a study by Abdikadir (2016) in which age 18-35 dominated the responses.

Most respondents are single (60%) due to the inclusion of majority youths in the study, as is the case in a study by Abdikadir (2016), some respondents are unemployed

(42%) as also posited by Hellsten (2016) and most respondents had attained secondary school education (43%) as also postulated by Mwangi (2017) in Nairobi and Mombasa Counties. Most respondents are Muslims (90%), consistent with Abdikadir (2016) and 68% of the respondents are youths due to the nature of the study targeting youth radicalization.

### **5.2.1 Nature of Counter Narrative Strategies used to Prevent Youth Radicalization**

The findings obtained indicate that 56.4% of the respondents indicated that radicalization was going on in the sub county. From key informants, factors such as palatable ground laid by the local community, poverty, unemployed youths, lack of education, low numbers of rehabilitation centres, and poor relationship with the government were attributed to the radicalization activities. The findings are supported by those of Effoduh (2016) who found that Nigeria has recorded an unprecedented number of youths of military aged between 16 and 28 years who have been radicalized as a result of personal grievances, unemployment and poverty. In addition, Hellsten (2016) pointed out the importance of paying increased attention to the youth by expanding the openings for education, employment as well as youth participation in the political arena.

The study found that 62.3% of the respondents agreed that building trust among communities yields positive results in countering radicalization. Ratemo (2015) agrees with the findings of the study and pointed out that it was crucial for the nation of Kenya to build trust among communities and also ensure their active participation in the war against radicalization so as to mobilize the resources of a community. The study concluded that it was crucial for law enforcement agencies to recognize that among the crucial rules of CVE was building trust with those predominantly at the risk of being radicalized. However, Briggs and Feve (2013) and Uhlmann (2015) disagree with the findings of the study



because counter narratives of violent extremism highlighted the failure of the government to ensure coordination in the operations of departments and building trust and partnerships with strategic partners was a hindrance to designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns.

The study also found that the respondents strongly agreed that religious leaders, the media and engaging the youth in productive activities play an important role in countering radicalization. Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (2012) also postulated that civil society groups, such as religious organizations, community associations, recreational clubs, sports teams, and others, according to the study, served as a fundamental line of defense against radical ideologies. These groups had the ability and capacity to enhance their interactions with the youth in ways that public institutions could not. Hellsten (2016) also emphasized on the importance of engaging youth in a productive manner that cultivate unity, promotion of youth leadership exchange programmes and the crucial role of non-government organizations on supporting education, youth activities, vocational training and also employment.

The findings from key informants indicated that mentorship, career guidance, psychological support, education and community sensitization, community participation and empowerment were the major counter narrative campaigns/strategies used in the area. Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (2012) agrees with the findings of the study that mentorship programs that could be undertaken by civil society groups are very important in fighting youth radicalization. Further, Doosje and Eerten (2017) argue that psychological support, education and community sensitization as well empowerment play an important role in countering narratives and radicalization at large. Also, Sikkens *et al.* (2017) propose

different methods to prevent radicalization; education, cultural associations, sport clubs, youth clubs and other local organisations.

### **5.2.2 Counter Narratives and Reduction of Youth Radicalization**

The study found that 84.1% of the respondents identified existence of strategies geared towards addressing stereotypes/prejudice of particular religions. From key informants, the respondents indicated that these strategies included CVE and knowledge trainings for security officers, involvement of major actors in countering narratives and constructing working relationships. In agreement with the study findings, Saberi (2019) identifies formal measures by the police and security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization.

Training programs that help first-line police officers to determine and detect signals in an early stage of the process of radicalization were cited as major tools by security officers to prevent radicalization by from key informants. In addition, Noppe *et al.* (2012) also agree that training of security officers is important in making them being informed about the phenomenon, how to recognize signals, and how to interact with individuals that have entered a process of radicalization. This is a necessary condition to dedicate policemen/women to the prevention of radicalization.

The study also found that 58.6% of the respondents identified existence of stereotype campaigns that included county CVE action plan, inclusion of the youths to address stereotypes and strengthening the community. The same factors were also identified by the key informants. Bukar (2017) also identifies the importance of inclusivity of the youths and the media to build progressively resilient and multi-ethnic societies that

rejected violence. Qureshi (2014) also recommends the promotion of an inclusive society/national identity for fighting stereotypes related to radicalization in Kenya.

The findings also showed that 55.8% of the respondents identified use of sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues which included constructive meetings and activities such as games, youth mobilization and community empowerment. Bukar (2017) agrees with the findings of the study when the study recommended that selecting role models for empowering societies needed to remain ideologically neutral and founded on fostering constructive ways to redress grievances. For effective constructive dialogues, Yarrow (2016) agrees that engaging the youths in income generation activities, sports activities and engaging their leaders could help them avoid being radicalized in Kenya.

It was determined in the study that 56.4% of the respondents agreed that the strategies adopted have led to a reduction of incidences/attacks since employing them. Ensor (2017) agrees that radicalization had reduced in the study area due to peace education strategies in transforming the roots of intolerance by both government and non-government organizations while others worked through the social media to fight hate speech and deliver alternative narratives. The findings of the study indicated that 27.4% of the respondents identified the strategies to be somehow successful. The success of the counter narratives was also reported by Abdikadir (2016) in Kenya.

### **5.2.3 Challenges Faced in Development of Counter Narrative Strategies**

The study determined that 63.2% of the respondents were not involved in designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub county. In support of the study findings, Colaert (2017) argued that designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns did not involve those affected especially the youth. The study therefore,

emphasized the need to integrate counter narrative campaigns with face-to-face campaigns. Zeiger and Aly (2015) also noted that an obstacle to designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns was the lack of studies pertaining to how audiences received, interpreted, decoded, internalized and in a number of cases acted on the messages entrenched in narratives and propaganda of radical and extremist groups.

For the challenges faced by stakeholders in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns in the sub county, financial constraints, lack of support from the government and conflicting roles between the county and national governments were mentioned by key informants, Dafnos (2014) agreed that even though governments have the reach and possessed the resources, mainly in the promotion of alterative narratives, they lacked the credibility or trustworthiness as effective messengers with target audiences. Lack of support by the government and failing to direct efforts to smaller and more narrowly defined segments of an audience and also the failure to employ highly sophisticated segmentation approaches that has the capacity to differentiate individuals based on the issues at hand have been cited (Berger, 2016).

On how these obstacles could be tackled to make the campaigns effective, the study found that the key informants recommended inclusion process, education on the locals and introduction of radicalization studies in schools. In line with the findings of the study, the Institute of Strategic Studies (2013) also recommended carrying out civic education and participation programmes in fighting radicalization in Kenya.

Public participation, involvement of the youth and involvement of other parties were recommended by the respondents in this study. In line with the findings of the study, the Mwangi (2017) also recommended carrying out civic education and participation

programmes, that could comprehend what various concepts among them democracy, gender equality, human rights, freedom of expression, religious tolerance and jihad actually mean. Youth involvement as well as involvement of non-governmental organizations was also cited by the Institute of Strategic Studies (2013).

#### **5.2.4 Measures for Mitigating the Challenges in Counter Narrative Strategies**

The study found that 53% of the respondents were aware of the measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization. These factors as identified by the key informants included public barazas, media campaigns, community dialogues as well as prosecution and jailing of radicalized individuals. In support of the findings, Schmid (2014) identifies the government security measures in mitigation of the challenges facing counter narrative programs which include paying attention to augmenting and supporting the efforts by the community to come up with positive stories and use of alternative messages in public dialogue that are conveyed by political figures as well as public statements during public barazas. In addition, Christensen and Edu-Afful (2019) recommend public and open participation for scrutiny by various institutions and the civil society. Moreover, involvement of the public: non-state actors, the media and the general public is essential.

The study found that 84.1% of the respondents said there were community measures which included community policing, public barazas, youth empowerment and involvement of religious leaders as identified by the key informants. In line with the study findings, Ratemo (2015) also identified community outreach programs that are aimed at preventing radicalization; and the strategies have proven effective in motivating the police

as well as other representatives of Muslim societies in detecting persons who were susceptible to radicalization besides developing the necessary interventions.

As the community empowerment programs were found to be important in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya, Scrivens *et al.* (2020) also identify the role of the community programs in counter narratives. The authors argue that parents and teachers are not always aware of what is going on in the world of the internet. Projects, that focus on providing both information and support for parents and teachers with regard to their knowledge of the internet, could also make part of a preventive approach to radicalization on a local level.

On the existence of laws and policies that contribute to preventing radicalization, the study found that 53.3% of the respondents were familiar with such laws. Such laws included Nyumba Kumi Initiative and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In line with the study findings, Botha (2014) noted the Kenyan authorities have taken several measures including enactment of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and establishment of several units within the security organs and architecture with an aim of detecting and averting terrorist acts before they happen besides holding the terrorists accountable of their acts if they have already occurred.

### **5.3 Summary of Findings**

This study sought to evaluate the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. More precisely, the study sought to establish the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal

with youth radicalization and the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies.

On the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, the findings obtained indicate that radicalization was going on in the sub county. Factors such as palatable ground laid by the local community, poverty, unemployed youths, lack of education, low numbers of rehabilitation centres, and poor relationship with the government contributed to radicalization in the sub county. However, building trust among communities, involving religious leaders, conveying knowledge and understanding of radicalization as well as use of media to inform and increase awareness on radicalization helps reduce radicalization among the youth. In addition, mentorship, career guidance, psychological support, education and community sensitization, community participation and empowerment were the major counter narrative campaigns/strategies used in the area.

On how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, the study found that there were campaigns geared towards addressing stereotypes/prejudice of particular religions and include CVE and knowledge trainings for security officers, involvement of major actors in countering narratives and constructing working relationships. There were also sustained stereotype campaigns that included county CVE action plan, inclusion of the youths to address stereotypes and strengthening the community. Further sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues campaigns existed and included constructive meetings and activities such as games, youth mobilization and community empowerment. The findings indicated that the strategies to be somehow successful.

On the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization, the study determined that the residents were not involved in designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub county. For the challenges faced by stakeholders in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns in the sub county, financial constraints, lack of support from the government and conflicting roles between the county and national governments were mentioned. On how these obstacles could be tackled to make the campaigns effective, inclusion process, education on the locals and introduction of radicalization studies in schools were needed. Public participation, involvement of the youth and involvement of other parties were also recommended by the respondents.

On the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization, the study also determined that the respondents were aware of the measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization. The measures included public barazas, media campaigns, community dialogues as well as prosecution and jailing of radicalized individuals. The respondents were also aware of community measures which included community policing, public barazas, youth empowerment and involvement of religious leaders. On the existence of laws and policies that contribute to preventing radicalization, the study found that most respondents were familiar with such laws. Such laws included Nyumba Kumi Initiative and the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

On the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, the study concluded that building trust among communities, involving religious leaders,



conveying knowledge to the youths and understanding of radicalization were some of the strategies used to prevent radicalization in the sub county. In addition, use of media to inform and increase awareness on radicalization, mentorship, career guidance, psychological support, education and community sensitization and community participation were also used to prevent radicalization in the sub county.

On how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, the study concluded that counter narratives had contributed to a reduction in stereotypes/ prejudice of particular religions through CVE and knowledge trainings, sustained stereotype campaigns through inclusion of the youths to address stereotypes and constructive activities such as games, youth mobilization and community empowerment.

On the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization, the study concluded that financial constraints, lack of support from the government and lack of education for the youths were major challenges faced in the development of counter narrative strategies.

On the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization, the study concluded that public barazas, media campaigns, community dialogues as well as prosecution and jailing of individuals involved in radicalizing the youth were existent in the sub county.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, the discussion and the conclusion made, the study makes the following recommendations:

### **5.5.1 Policy Recommendations**

On the nature of counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization, the study recommends the implementation of county action plan by the county government. Garissa sub-county and by extension Garissa county have successfully developed a county action plan for countering violent extremism, and addressed issues such poverty, unemployed youths, lack of education, low numbers of rehabilitation centres, and poor relationship which were found to be existent in the sub county. The action plan was developed in consultation with all the stakeholders including government actors or community actors. This document contains hundreds of activities divided into 14 pillars that if implemented may contribute to the solutions geared towards addressing the radicalization menace. However, the document was shelved and both county and the national government who owned the document and are relying on CSOs to implement the action plan.

On how counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization, the study recommends that the community should re-establish community security committees. This is especially essential in reaching out to the youths who might be at risk of being radicalized, and therefore help them avoid being radicalized in due time. The national government through the chiefs and sub-chiefs can also help create community groups, with an aim of identifying radical activities and addressing it.

On the challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies to deal with youth radicalization, the study recommends the national government should consider involvement of the affected parties, who are the youths, who were missing in the designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub county. Involvement can also be done

by CSOs, since involving the youth will ensure they reach those vulnerable to radicalization with ease.

On the measures that can help mitigate the challenges in developing counter narrative strategies to reduce youth radicalization, the study recommends to the national and county governments to have there an affirmative action to allocate resources both at the county and national level. It should also be made mandatory for all senior government officials to go through CVE trainings and be held accountable for actions under their command. The government needs also to consider coming up with publications that counter famous publications such as Gaidi Mtaani and sisters of Jana.

### **5.5.2 Suggestion for Further Research**

This study has been to evaluate the role of counter narratives as a response to youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. However, this study was only conducted in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. This limited the study in coverage. The study also measured the viewpoints of the youths, security officers, religious leaders, local community leaders and CSO representatives only; therefore, the views of other parties such as the international community were not taken-into-account. The study recommends that other studies be conducted on the same subject area in Garissa County using views of other stakeholders for comparative results.

Based on specific objectives of the study, the study recommends future studies on the existence of radicalization action plans and whether they are working, as well as the implementation of community-based projects for the youth. In addition, the perception of locals (parents of radicalized youths) can also be measured on counter radicalization

programs. The study further recommends future studies on how policies used in radicalization in Kenya are sufficient, and the required amendments on such policies.

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## APPENDICES

### **Appendix I: Introduction Letter**

I am a student at Africa Nazarene University currently undertaking graduate research study on the '*THE ROLE OF COUNTER NARRATIVE IN RESPONSE TO YOUTH RADICALIZATION IN GARISSA TOWNSHIP SUB COUNTY, GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA.*' I have selected you as one of my study respondents.

Kindly, if you chose to be my study participant, information you share during the interview as well as your identity will not be disclosed to anyone whatsoever and confidentiality remains utmost. In addition, the information obtained from you will be safe and will only be used for the purpose of the research

Yours Sincerely,

**ABDI MOHAMED ABDI**

**Appendix II: Questionnaire for Youths, Security Officers and Religious Leaders,  
CSOs and Community leaders**

Self-Introduction done and confidentiality of the information given: YES.....or  
NO..... (Tick)

This questionnaire is aimed at facilitating the research on **THE ROLE OF COUNTER  
NARRATIVE IN RESPONSE TO YOUTH RADICALIZATION IN GARISSA  
TOWNSHIP SUB COUNTY, GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA**. Your response will be  
highly appreciated.

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. What is your gender?

Male [ ]

Female [ ]

2. What is your age?

18-35 years [ ]

36-55 years [ ]

55 and above [ ]

3. Marital Status

1. Single/ Never Married [ ]

2. Married [ ]

3. Separated [ ]

4. Divorced [ ]

5. Widowed [ ]

4. What is your employment status? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your highest level of education?

1. Non- Formal [ ]

2. Primary school [ ]

3. Secondary school [ ]

4. College [ ]

5. University [ ]

6. Religion:-

1. Traditional [ ]

2. Christian [ ]

3. Islam [ ]

4. Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Number of years lived in Garissa Township Sub-County

Less than 1 [ ]

1 – 5 [ ]

6 – 15 [ ]

More than 15 [ ]

8. Type of respondent

Religious leader [ ]

Youth leader [ ]

Security official [ ]

CSO [ ]

Community leader [ ]

**Section B: Counter narrative strategies used to prevent youth radicalization in  
Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya**

9. Do you think radicalization of the youth is going on in the Sub-county of Garissa Township?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. If the answer to 11 above is yes, why do you think this is happening?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the strategies used in preventing youth radicalization? (Kindly tick one option in each question; 5 - Strongly Agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 - Disagree and 1 – Strongly Disagree)

	1	2	3	4	5
11. Building trust among communities yields positive in countering radicalization					
12. Religious leaders play an important role in countering radicalization					
13. Conveying knowledge and understanding of radicalization is a strategy used to reduce radicalization					
14. Use of media to inform and increase awareness on radicalization helps reduce radicalization among the youth					
15. Engaging the youth in productive activities eg employment, education etc leads to reduced attraction to radicalization					

16. Are there counter narrative campaigns designed to prevent youth radicalization in the area?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

17. If yes, give examples of counter narratives campaigns in the area?

.....  
.....

18. Who are the main parties/stakeholders involved in designing these campaigns?

.....  
.....

**Section C: Extent to which counter narratives have contributed to reduction of youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya**

19. Are there campaigns designated to reduce radicalization geared towards the following?

Addressing stereotypes/ prejudice of particular religions Yes ( ) No ( )

Sustained engagement Yes ( ) No ( )

Sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues Yes ( ) No ( )

20. Has there been a reduction in terms of incidents/ attacks since the employing of the strategies?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

21. How have the campaigns/strategies been used to address stereotypes and prejudice of religions?

.....  
.....



22. How have the strategies been adopted to ensure sustained engagement in Garissa?

.....  
.....

23. How have the strategies been adopted to ensure Sustained constructive/antagonistic dialogues in Garissa?

.....  
.....

24. To what extent have the campaigns used for countering radicalization been successful in the area?

Great extent ( ) Some extent ( ) Low extent ( ) Very low extent

**Section D: Challenges faced when developing counter narrative strategies while dealing with youth radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County in Kenya**

25. Did you participate in designing or delivering counter narrative campaigns in the sub-county? Yes [ ] No [ ]

26. If yes, what are the main challenges faced by stakeholders in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns in the sub county?

.....  
.....

27. In your opinion, how will these obstacles be tackled to make the campaigns effective?

.....  
.....

28. What will you suggest to the stakeholders currently involved in designing counter narrative campaigns in your sub-county?

.....  
.....

**Section D: Measures to Mitigate Challenges in Counter Narrative Strategies**

**Development**

29. Are you aware of any measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

30. If yes, what are the measures by the police/security officers that contribute to preventing radicalization?

.....  
.....

31. Are there measures by the local community that contribute to preventing radicalization?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

32. If yes, what are the measures by the local community that contribute to preventing radicalization?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

33. Are there laws and policies that contribute to preventing radicalization?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

34. If yes, what are the laws and policies by the local community that contribute to preventing radicalization?

.....  
.....

**Appendix III: Key Informant Interview Guide for the key stakeholders**

- i. What is the current state of youth radicalization in the sub-county?
- ii. What are the measures/ strategies currently employed to deal with the challenge of youth radicalization in the area?
- iii. How are the counter narratives identified above being used?
- iv. In your opinion, have these strategies been effective in countering youth radicalization in the sub county? Explain your answer.
- v. Give your detailed evaluation of the success of the mentioned strategies in preventing youth radicalization in this sub county?
- vi. What other strategies not currently applied would you recommend?
- vii. What is the religious dimension on radicalization in the county?
- viii. How have counter narratives reduced youth radicalization?
- ix. Which are the challenges faced by various stakeholders in designing and delivering effective counter narrative campaigns in the sub county?
- x. In your opinion, how will these obstacles be tackled to make the campaigns effective?

## Appendix IV: Introduction Letter from Africa Nazarene University



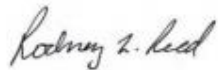
11<sup>th</sup> June 2020

**RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

---

Abdi Mohamed Abdi (**16S03DMGP001**) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University. He has finished his course work and has defended his thesis proposal entitled: - *“The Role of Counter Narrative in Response to Youth Radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya”*.


Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and finish his thesis is highly welcomed.




**Rodney Reed, PhD.**

**DVC Academic & Student Affairs.**


Appendix V: NACOSTI Research Permit

  
REPUBLIC OF KENYA

  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 644848 Date of Issue: 26/June/2020

**RESEARCH LICENSE**




**This is to Certify that Mr.. Abdi Mohamed Abdi of Africa Nazarene University, has been licensed to conduct research in Garissa on the topic: THE ROLE OF COUNTER NARRATIVE IN RESPONSE TO YOUTH RADICALIZATION IN GARISSA TOWNSHIP SUB COUNTY, GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 26/June/2021.**


License No: NACOSTI/P/20/5343

644848

Applicant Identification Number

  
Director General  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



**NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document,  
Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.**

**Appendix VI: Authorization from the Ministry of Education**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**  
**STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC**  
**EDUCATION**

Telegram: "SCHOOLING" Garissa  
 Telephone: 046-210-2458, Garissa.  
 Fax: 046-210-2002  
 Email: cdegarissacounty@gmail.com  
 When replying please quote



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
 GARISSA  
 P. O. Box 8-70100  
 GARISSA

REF: NEP/ED/6:26/VOL,III (119)

DATE: 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2020

**ABDI MOHAMED ABDI**  
**AFRICAN NAZARETH UNIVERSITY**  
**NAIROBI.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Refer to your letter Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/20/5343/644848** dated 3<sup>RD</sup> July 2020 from Director General/CDE on application for authority to carry out research on **"The role of counter narrative in response to youth radicalisation in Garissa township, Garissa Sub County, Garissa county Kenya"**, for the period ending 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake your research in Garissa County.

  
**KHALIF. I.HASSAN**  
**COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**  
**GARISSA.**

## Appendix VII: Authorization from the County Commissioner



### THE PRESIDENCY

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND CITIZEN SERVICES

Telegrams: "COUNTY" GARISSA.  
Telephone: Garissa  
[ccgsacounty@gmail.com](mailto:ccgsacounty@gmail.com)

OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
P.O BOX 1-70100  
GARISSA COUNTY

REF.NO: CC/EDU/7/3/(163)

3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2020

Abdi Mohamed Abdi  
Africa Nazarene University  
**NAIROBI**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Refer to your letter dated 03<sup>rd</sup> July, 2020 from Prof. Rodney Reed on application for authority to carry out a research on "***The role of Counter Narrative in Response to Youth Radicalization in Garissa Township Sub-County, Garissa County, Kenya***". For the period ending 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake your research in Garissa County.



SAMUEL NJUGUNA  
FOR: COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
**GARISSA COUNTY.**



## Appendix VIII: IRB Approval Letter



USIU-A/IRB/292-2020

USIU-A Institutional Review Board (IRB)

9<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**Abdi Mohamed,**  
Africa Nazarene University  
[abdi.mohd@yahoo.com](mailto:abdi.mohd@yahoo.com)

Dear Abdi

### IRB RESEARCH APPROVAL

The USIU-A IRB has reviewed and granted an ethical approval for the research proposal titled "The Role of Counter Narrative in Response to Youth Radicalization in Garissa Township Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya".

The approval is for twelve months from the date of IRB. A continuing review application must be approved within this interval to avoid expiration of IRB approval and cessation of all research activities. A mid-term report and a final report must be provided to the IRB within the twelve months approval period. All records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least 3 years after the research has ended.

You are advised to follow the approved methodology and report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

Should you or study participants have any queries regarding IRB's consideration of this project, please contact [irb@usiu.ac.ke](mailto:irb@usiu.ac.ke).

Sincerely,



**Dr. Juliana Namada,**  
IRB chair  
Tel: +254 730 116 628  
Email: [jnamada@usiu.ac.ke](mailto:jnamada@usiu.ac.ke)

## Appendix IX: IRB Proposal Review Form

### IRB PROPOSAL REVIEW FORM

IRB Proposal Number 118 Principal Investigator Name

**Instructions:** Each IRB primary reviewer shall review the assigned proposal prior to the scheduled IRB review meeting. The following criteria shall be reviewed and the primary reviewer will check yes or no regarding each item below. IRB reviewers shall bring the completed review form and proposal to the scheduled review meeting.

1. The proposal must meet the standard format, which must include the following six (6) sections:  
Front Matter, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, References, Appendices
2. Specifically, the following content items shall be reviewed by the IRB reviewers. All items must meet YES response for the proposal to be approved. Primary reviewers will then consult at the review meeting.

	Instructions: Check YES or NO for each of the following items in the proposal.	YES	NO	PIs Comments
1	The front matter follows standard format and numbering	/		
2	The introduction sections in Chapter 1 are documented and content is written clearly.	/		
3	The literature review in Chapter 2 is comprehensive and inclusive for aspects of the specific study.	/		
4	The methodology in Chapter 3 includes all required sections and content is written clearly.	/		
5	The specific protocol procedures for instrumentation and methodology are clearly explained.	/		
6	The data analysis in methodology is clearly explained and understandable.	/		
7	The selection of participants is adequately explained, including inclusion and exclusion criteria.	/		
8	The Informed consent form(s) are acceptable and are specific to the study, copy in Appendix	/		Provided and meets IRB standards
9	The assent form (participants under 17 years old) is written specific to the study, copy in Appendix			Not Applicable
10	The parental consent form (if assent form used) is written specific to the study, copy in Appendix			Not Applicable
11	The debrief form is written specific to the study, copy is in Appendix	/		Provided and meets IRB standards

12	The overall risks to research subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits	/		
13	The risks to research subjects are explained and procedures explain how risk is minimized.	/		
14	Adequate provisions are evident to protect the confidentiality of research participant.	/		
15	Adequate provisions are evident to store and maintain research data in a confidential space.	/		
16	Adequate description of how and when research data will be disposed at conclusion of the study.	/		
17	There are adequate safeguards to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.	/		
18	Format meets appropriate style (i.e. APA Style or other) for headers, margins, spacing and content for all pages of the proposal.	/		
19	Format meets appropriate style (i.e. APA Style or other) for citations within all pages of the proposal.	/		
20	Format meets appropriate style (i.e. APA Style or other) for list of references.	/		
21	All citations within the text must be listed in the references.	/		
22	The reference list must include all citations in the text (except when bibliography is utilized)	/		
23	Ethical requirements for human participants have been met.	/		
24	Ethical requirements for animal use have been met.			N/A
25	Ethical requirements for plant use have been met.			N/A
26	Other:			

	<b>Additional comments:</b>			
--	-----------------------------	--	--	--

Reviewer's Decision: The proposal meets IRB Scientific and Ethical requirements.

IRB Primary Reviewer Name:

Date: 9/7/2020

Results: Approved

**Appendix X: Map of Study Area**