

**MEDIA COVERAGE OF ISSUES OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS  
VIOLATIONS IN KENYA: CASE STUDY OF NATION NEWSPAPER  
AND THE EAST AFRICAN STANDARD NEWSPAPERS**

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## DECLARATION

I MAUREEN W. KANYANGO, declare that to the best of my knowledge this work has never been presented anywhere in any university for any award of a degree.

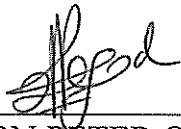
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MAUREEN W. KANYANGO

Date: 22.09.06

## APPROVAL

This is to certify that this work has been submitted for examination with my approval as supervisor.

Sign



SIMON PETER ONGODIA

Date:

25-09-06

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my parents, Mr. and Mrs Kanyango not forgetting my brothers, Muroki and Timothy.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor Mr. Simon Peter Ongodia, whose insight and wisdom has guided me to completion of this project.

I would like to thank all those in the heavenly city, God the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and Angel Gabriel for the divine intervention.

All those who held me down the earthly city Evanso, Bibo, Charlo, ~~Simo~~ Babu, Baonsa, Pish and Ken. I still have your backs.

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## ABSTRACT

The study aimed to study the media coverage of issues of children's rights violations in Kenya. It employed A quantitative assessment of secondary data was carried out on The Daily Nation and The East African Standard for the period of six months (January 2005 - June 2005).

The major recommendation was that media houses should seek to establish objectivity when covering children's issues. They should not portray children always as people who only need to be helped, but rather as people who also contribute actively in the society; from our observation most of the children's coverage was concerning charity functions. The increase of coverage of children's issues in the months after the Children's Bill was passed is an indicator that the two papers paid more attention to children's issues after the passing of the Bill. Children are important members of our society and the Bill should not have been the one to prompt the papers to give children more coverage.

Judging from the increase of Hard News items on children by both papers, issues concerning children gained a lot of prominence after the Bill\was passed. As such, they were covered more in form of hard news as- compared to letters to the editor. Both papers allocate substantial amount of space to photographs on children's issues although the Standard allocates more as compared to the Nation.

The study showed that there was an increase in the coverage of children's issues in the months after the Children's Bill was passed is an indicator that the two papers paid more attention to children's issues after the passing of the Bill.

## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background

The welfare of children is now a major concern to the government, non governmental organisations, the international community - and other stakeholders whose goal is to improve the lot of children- For years, the rights of children have been ignored but the passing of the Children's Bill aims at ensuring children are given a chance to grow up in an atmosphere conducive to them.

The Children's Act was primarily inspired by recommendations of the Child Law Task Force Report Li March 1991, the Attorney General appointed a task force to review and update the laws governing children's welfare and recommend more comprehensive new laws, taking into account the local circumstances and the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The force presented the report in 1994 and most of its recommendations are the essence of the Children's Act.

The Children's Act provides against all acts that are likely to affect negatively the child's life, health, social welfare, dignity: physical or psychological development the Act defines a child as any human being under the age of 18. A child of below 10 years is considered to be of tender age and requires protection and assistance from responsible adults in making decisions.

In this study, the focus was on a comparative study of coverage of children issues of the leading news paper that had a wider circulation and readership. These are The Daily Nation and The East African Standard. The Daily Nation's circulation ranges between 180,000 to 200,000 copies in a East African Standard's circulation is between 50,000 to 60,000 Copies daily. The two papers also have a country wide reach.



A content analysis of the two newspapers on the coverage of children issues three months before and three months after the Children's Act became operational on March 1 2002, was done. This is important because the public will be educated on how to improve and deal with the problems of children:

The research question, therefore, is: "Have the Nation and the East African Standard newspapers improved in their coverage of children issues following the passing of the Children's Bill 2001 and it's becoming operational on March 1, 2002

Problems of children range from child labour, rape, assault, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, lack of basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and good health. Other problems of children are manifested in bodily harm as relatives –guardians and other adults-assault them whenever children are covered in the media, in most cases it is in relation to crimes committed against them. This scenario shows that the rights of children are not respected.

In an attempt to improve the condition of children, the Act defines the roles expected from adults or parents towards the children. It defines parental responsibility as the duties, rights, powers and authority that by law a parent has over a child. The parental responsibility includes the duty to maintain the child and in particular provides diet, shelter, clothing, medical care, education and guidance the objectives of the Children's Bill are:

- To implement the provision of the UN convention on the Rights of the Children, 1989.
- To promote the welfare of the family.
- To assist parents in the discharge of their parental responsibilities.
- To establish and promote services and facilities in the community designed to advance the wellbeing of children and to according to the use of such services and facilities.
- General protection and discipline of the children and sets out to establish children's courts to replace the current juvenile courts.

- To establish a national council of children's services to exercise general supervision and control over the planning, financing and coordination of child welfare activities and to advise the government on all aspects relating to children.
- Proposes that a director-of children's services should be appointed and a sufficient number of children's officers named to implement the proposed law.

Kenya is signatory to and has duly ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child article 18(2), which states that every State should enable parents and guardians to provide basic needs to their children. Unfortunately, 3.5 million children in Kenya, below 14 years of age fend for themselves- According to an Undugu Society (an organisation which rehabilitates street children) 2002 report, there are 300,000 street children in Kenya, who survive mainly on pick pocketing, begging, and scavenging in garbage pits and glue-sniffing.

Thousands have not gone to school although they have reached the school going age. According to a government report released in April 2002, 1.9 million Children are victims of child labour while according to a UNICEF's 2001 report, Kenya is ranked position six in- the world where abuse of children is most rampant. Section 10 (1) of the recently enacted Children Act stipulates that every child shall be protected from any work that is hazardous or interferes with their mental, spiritual or moral development. According to the Director of Education, Mr Naomi Vangai (2002), close to 4 million children drop-out-of school nationally due to child labour.

These comprise some of the problems that are faced by our children and a greater insight into them through coverage in the media would go along way in influencing a change in the public's perception and treatment of children.

## **1.1 Statement of the problem**

Problems affecting children are thus worth serious scrutiny- The purpose of the Children's Act is to ensure that the children are protected 'and that they enjoy their rights just like other human beings.

Coverage of children's issues by the media has been minimal; they have not been taken with the seriousness they deserve when it comes to coverage.

In most functions meant to discuss the problems of children, they (children) are not given a chance to give their views. They will only dance, sing and recite poems to entertain guests. Along this reasoning, functions meant to generate- news about children will only focus on the views expressed by adults and not what the children themselves say. As such, journalists report the adult's views on children's issues and not the views of the children themselves. This to some extent amounts to biased reporting by the journalists.

This research sought to find out whether there is a change (for the better) in the coverage of children's issues after the Children's Act 2002 in the print media.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

More often adults have referred to the children as future leaders but society has failed to prepare them by providing the best education, best health and best care for them to reach the desired levels. When children are left to fend for themselves; they are unlikely to perform well or in extreme cases, continue with school. Their health is threatened when they abuse drugs especially the case of street children. This raises the fear of the street children becoming hard criminals when they grow up.

Research has shown that drugs threaten the physical, psychological and intellectual development of the youth, which are in a critical period of human development Young girls become housemaids, overburdened and sexually harassed. Fragile bodies of children are forced to work in plantations, factories, and quarries.

According to the Children's Act, any person who wilfully infringes the rights of the child will be liable to conviction to a maximum of 12 months imprisonment or to a fine not exceeding Sh50, 000 or to both.

The study was to find out whether the coverage of the problems and issues of children changed after the law became operational.

The media plays an important role in setting the agenda for the public. The media should report on children issues, bringing to light the hidden violence visited on children as well as exposing the incidences of violations of children's rights.

### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

The media plays an important role in setting the agenda in a society. This study will be rooted in the Agenda setting Theory:

It is stated that media practitioners have the power to determine news values on different issues, prioritize them and to influence public's interest and opinion on the issues (Dais 1976, Griffins 1991, Magayu 1992, Ald Mcquail, 1987).

There is evidence that the media plays an important role in influencing people's way of thinking. People turn to the media for the interpretation of issues. (Okigbo 1994:32). The Media gives the public what it wants, thus setting the agenda (Lazarsfeld et al 1971).

According to Reese and Shoemaker, the Media have an advantage over other modes of communication in the manner they deliver messages. They, have persuasive and cognitive impact by emphasizing & "1 agenda of issues that ten people not what to think but - rather what to think about (Reese and Shoemaker 1996).

The media holds a high potential in influencing awareness levels (Nwosu 1990 Wanyande 1996). However, children's issues have most of the times taken a back seat in society's agenda.

The under representation of children in - the media can be that it is much more difficult to establish contact with children than with adults, that children are harder to direct... knowledge and sensibility are demanded in order to work with them in the media production process (Cecilia and Ulla, 1999).

There is one exception where children -are more often represented in the context of the media advertising. The fact that children are more common in advertising than in media contents generally is a sign of their comparatively high economic consumption value in society as present and future consumers and as selling concepts and advertising strategies for products, values and lifestyles (George Gerbner, 1999).

Based on these theories and postulates, the media therefore has an important role in setting agenda on children's issues.

#### **1.4 Hypothesis**

a) Following the passing of the Children's Bill to become a law, the researcher expects that there will be more coverage of children issues in the newspapers because the new law generates news as various stakeholders comment about it

b) After enactment of the Children's Act on March 1 2005, the researcher expects that most of the children's issues covered to be hard news (agenda setting and more important) as opposed to commentaries, features, opinions, editorials, or letters to the editor.

c) Since children's issues have not been taken seriously in the past the researcher expects that most of the news items about children carried in the Daily Nation and East African Standard will be given more concern and highlighted when put in the inside.

### **1.5 Research questions.**

- Has the print media provided more consideration to children's rights stories and article?
- Have children's rights articles been given more priority than leisure and feature articles?
- Have children's rights issues been taken more seriously after the Children's Bill became law?

### **1.6 Scope**

The study was conducted on The Daily Nation and East African Standard newspapers in Kenya.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The findings of the study will be important in the following ways

1. It will be used by the ministry of education in formulating their policies so as to cater for guidance which is crucial in a pupil's education achievement,
2. Teachers will use the study to understand the importance of the child's rights
3. Parents will use the study to ensure that they fall into understanding limits of parenthood and not subject the child to abuse.
4. The study may be used by the print media to improve on their coverage of such pertinent information as rights of children.
5. It will be proved that the Bill has not done much in relation to the print media's publication tendencies on Children' Rights

### **1.8 Study Limitations**

The study was limited to analysis of past issues of the newspapers. It is possible that the situation may have changed in other areas.

Only three months before and three months after the Bill was passed was analysed. This is a very brief period and it is possible the results could be different if a longer period such as a year before and after is taken

The study was concentrating on print media only. If the electronic media too had been included, the results would have more conclusive.

There are many local newspapers in Kenya but the study only focused on two of them only. It is possible that the coverage by the other local dailies- could have brought some new diversity.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section will be concerned with presenting existing information on the study or work of other scholars, who have studied similar studies. This section will guide the researcher as she embarks on this study. Various scholars have done research on the impact and roles of the media in society and notable view are listed below.

#### **2.1 Literature Review**

The mass media, through selective presentations and emphasis on certain themes, creates an impression among their audiences, that common cultural norms concerning the emphasized topics are structured or deemed in some specific way (De Fleur 1970:129).

According to Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, the media plays an agenda setting role. They coined the term Agenda-Setting Theory in 1972 to explain that the media "creates topics for people to talk and think about. Maxwell McCombs says the press presents the public with a continuous stream of cues about the relative importance of various topics and news.

Newspapers will communicate the salience of news items through page placement The power of the media has a negative implication when journalists try to redefine realities by presenting some information as being more important than other information.

Gerbner and Cross (1976) note that people's ideologies and beliefs are shaped by the mass media's processing and main streaming of the ideas, as such, should Kenya's mass media focus more on children's issues, no doubt the public's opinion and view would be reshaped for the better.

Bernard Cohen (1963) asserts that the press may not be particularly successful in telling



people what to think but sternly successful in telling people what to think about.

Agenda setting states, that there is a correlation between issues presented by the media and order of priority and importance accorded to those issues by ' the people exposed to reports of them. (Omwanda 1996:118).

The above line of thought identifies cancellation between what people think and the media content they are exposed to. As such, change in people's thinking and lifestyle can be channelled through their favourite media outlets.

Dan Akolo writing in Charles Okigbo's text, Reporting Politics, says the media provides the fodder used for public discussion and ultimately becomes public opinion. The 12 up he depends on mass media for comprehensive reports and it's these topics that the readers use for interpersonal communication. And at the end, the media are seen to have set the agenda for the community in which they operate.

Those who influence people to adopt new innovations have the mass media as their primary sources of information (Severians and Tarkard, 1982:21)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHOLODY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This part of the study was be concerned with the way the study will be conducted. It will explain in details methods of data collection and analysis. It will show the instrument used to collect data, research area and design. It will also show the sample and how the sample will be selected.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

A quantitative assessment of secondary data was employed in the study. The researcher used this design because it enabled her to collect relevant data necessary for the research. A quantitative assessment of the coverage of children's issues in The Daily Nation and The East African Standard for the period of six months will be done: All the issues in the said period of time was analysed and the content on children's issues categorised as hard news, features and commentaries, photographs and cartoons, editorials, letters to the editor and health and science features.

#### **3.2 Study Area.**

The study was carried out on The Daily Nation and The East African Standard for the period of six months (January 2005 - June 2005).

#### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique.**

The study was a content analysis of data gathered over a period of six months for each of the newspapers. The researcher's study interest was in the placement of children's issues in the two newspapers, whether front, back or inside pages, the length of the stories, the type of stories, (whether hard news, commentaries, features, opinions, editorials or letters to the editor). The sample covered all copies of the Daily NATION and THE EAST AFRICAN STANDARD three months before the enactment of the Bill (January 2005 - March 2005) and three months after the, enactment of the Bill (April 2005 - June 2005).

A comparative analysis was done to check on the impact of the Children's Bill on news coverage before and after its enactment.

The space the articles covered was measured in squared centimetres.

The sources of the news was categorised in the following groups; government, NGOs, UN agencies, Politician, Societal, groups and Individuals, Researchers and Social-scientists and Religious group's leaders as well as local and foreign news.

Features of prominence were counted and categorised as cross - heads, front and back page placements, kickers, boxed articles, reversed headlines, photographs and editorials.

### **3.4 Data analysis.**

The researcher had put data into tables, calculated percentages, and made deductions and conclusions in relation to the objectives and research questions.

### **3.5 Limitations of the study.**

The researcher fears that the study will be confronted by the following limitations.

1. The study was limited to analysis of past issues of the newspapers. It is possible that the situation has changed in other areas.
2. The study period was too short before the true effects of the Bill could come into practice.
3. The study concentrated on print media only. If the electronic media too had been included, the results would have been more conclusive.
4. There are many local newspapers in Kenya but the study only focused on two of them only. It is possible that the coverage by the other local dailies- could have brought some new diversity.

### 3.8 Time frame of the Study.

The researcher carried out the in the following time schedule.

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT</b>
Proposal Writing	June
Data Collection	June
Dissertation Writing	June – July
Handing in	July

### 3.9 Proposal Budget.

The Researcher expenditure during the study is as in the table below;

#### EXPENSES INCURED DURING THE STUDY

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>COST/UGshs</b>
Typing and Binding	112,000
Literature collection	190,000
Transport	65,000
Food and Beverage	45,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>412,000</b>

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**Table 1: General Information on Data Collected from The Daily Nation and The East African Standard**

The Daily Nation												
	January		February		March		April		May		June	
Editorial Category	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Hard News	15	39.4	6	46.2	14	70	6	37.5	16	41	6	20.7
Commentaries/Features	6	15.8	1	7.7	2	10	2	12.5	9	23.1	9	31
Photographs/cartoons	10	26.3	5	38.5	2	10	6	37.5	11	28.2	14	48.3
Editorials	3	7.9	1	7.7	0	0	1	6.3	0	0	0	0
Letters to the editor	3	7.9	0	0	2	10	0	0	3	7.7	0	0
Health/science Features	1	3.6	0	0	0	1	1	6.3	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
The East African Standard												
	January		February		March		April		May		June	
Editorial Category	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Hard News	0	0	1	2.7	13	35	15	12.9	12	16	7	17.5
Commentaries/Features	1	2.4	2	5.6	2	5.4	10	8.6	10	13.3	0	0
Photographs/cartoons	0	0	0	0	2	5.4	0	0	3	4	0	0
Editorials	0	0	0	0	2	5.4	2	1.7	0	0	0	0
Letters to the editor	41	97.6	30	83.3	16	43	81	69.8	48	64	26	65
Health/science Features	0	0	3	8.3	2	5.4	8	6.9	2	2.7	7	17.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.1 Discussion of Table One

Changes before and after the Passing of the Bill

Editorial Category	Nation		Standard	
	Before	After	Before	After
Hard News	26	28	14	34
Commentaries/Features	9	28	5	20
Photographs/cartoons	17	31	2	7
Editorials	4	1	2	2
Letters to the editor	5	3	2	2
science /Health Features	1	1	87	193
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>231</b>

Source: Primary Data

**Table 2: Category of Information shown in the Two Newspapers**

There was an increase of the frequency of articles of all nature in the three months after passing the Children's Bill as compared to the months before.

In the Daily Nation, the total frequency of children's articles three months before the Act and three months after was 71 and 84 respectively; the increase was by 1-1.3 percent while the "East African. Standard it was 115 and 231 respectively; the increase was by 33.5 percent.

In both papers, the frequency of photographs on children's issues increased the three months after passing the Bill as compared to before. In the Daily Nation, before and after the bill the frequency was 17 and 31 respectively while in the East African Standard it was 87 and 155 respectively. In general, the East African- Standard had more photographs on children issues as compared to the Daily Nation. Both papers have low frequencies of Hard News Articles on children. However, there was an increase of Hard News Articles in the three months after the Bill. In the Daily Nation there was increase from 26 to 28 while in the East African Standard it was from 14 to 34.

The frequency of letters to the Editor on children's issues in both papers is quite low both before-and after the Bill. In the Daily Nation, there were three letters before the Bill and one after, while in the East African Standard it was two both, before and after. This may mean that either that the editors receive very few letters concerning children or they do not consider the letters on children a priority thus not publishing them.

Editorials are very important articles since they are the voice of the media house. In both papers, the number of editorials on children as compared to other articles is few. The Nation have four editorials on children's issues the three months before the Bin and one after the Bill. The Standard had two editorials on children's issues three months before the Bill and maintained the number three months after the Bill. This may mean that the passing of the Bill sustained a lot of interest so as, to have a major increase in editorials on children issues in both papers. At the same time it may mean that there were other important issues that were given priority by the media houses as compared to children's issues.

In both the Nation and -the Standard, the number of commentaries/features increased to 28 and 20 from 9 and 5 respectively. Since seasoned journalists usually write commentaries and features, the huge increase indicates that the writers in both papers gave a lot of importance to children's issues after passing of the Bill.

**Table Two:** Distribution of Articles on Children Issues In Terms Of Indicators of Prominence

The Daily Nation												
Indicator of Prominence	January		February		March		April		May		June	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Cross heads	3	11.5	3	25	4	50	5	17.9	11	27.5	4	14.3
Front and Back Pages	2	7.7	1	8.3	0	0	2	7.1	3	7.5	2	7.1
Kickers	6	23	2	16.7	1	12.5	4	14.3	4	10	4	14.3
Boxed Articles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	7.1
Reversed Headlines	2	7.7	0	0	0	0	4	14.3	2	5	1	3.6
Photographs	10	38.5	5	41.7	3	37.5	12	42.9	20	50	15	53.6
Editorials	3	11.5	1	8.3	0	0	1	3.6	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>
The East African Standard												
Indicator of Prominence	January		February		March		April		May		June	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Cross heads	3	5.5	1	2.6	2	6.3	4	4.4	2	3.0	2	6
Front and Back Pages	4	7.3	4	10.5	11	34.4	1	1.1	11	16.7	3	9
Kickers	5	9	1	2.6	0	0	1	1.1	2	3.0	2	6
Boxed Articles	2	3.6	1	2.6	1	3.1	2	2.2	1	1.5	0	0
Reversed Headlines	0	0	1	2.6	0	0	1	1.1	2	3.0	0	0
Photographs	41	74.5	30	78.9	16	50	81	90	48	72.7	26	78.8
Editorials	0	0	0	0	2	6.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>



## 4.2 Discussion on Table Two

Changes before and after the Bill

Indicator of Prominence	Nation		Standard	
	Before	After	Before	After
Cross heads	10	20	6	12
Front and Back Pages	3	7	19	23
Kickers	9	12	6	5
Boxed Articles	0	2	4	3
Reversed Headlines	2	7	1	2
Photographs	18	47	87	115
Editorials	4	1	2	0
<b>Total space allocated to the indicators</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>189</b>

The number of cross heads in both papers increased by 50 percent after the Bill; from 10 to 20 in the Nation and from 6 to 12 in the Standard.

This means that both papers gave a lot of importance to cross - heads as indicators of prominence on children's issues after the Bill was passed.

Front and Back pages of newspapers are considered very important. This is because they are the pages that are easily seen by the readers. As such, media houses as agenda setters place what they consider the most important stories on those pages. Stories on children issues in front and back pages in both papers increased after the passing of the Bill.

The increase in the Nation was by 70 percent while in the Standard it was by 54.8 percent. However, in terms of frequency, the Standard had more articles in the front and back pages after the Bill as compared to the Nation.

There were no boxed articles on children's issues in the Nation before the Bill. After the Bill, there were two of them. The number of boxed articles in The Standard decreased from four to three after the Bill. Judging from the total number of

indicators of prominence, both papers had very few boxed articles, boxed articles in 'the Standard as compared to the Nation. This may also mean that the Nation, as an in-house style, does not use cross-heads often as compared to the Standard.

The number of reversed headlines increased from two to seven in the Nation after the Bill and from one to two in the Standard. The few number of reversed headlines both before and after the Bill in the standard may mean that they did not prioritize children issues or that they do not use reversed headlines much as an in-house style. There was a big increase of reversed headlines in the Nation after the Bill. This means that children's issues gained- more importance in the Nation after the Bill.

The number of photographs as indicators of prominence in both papers was substantially higher as compared to the other indicators. There was also a huge increase of the same after the passing of the Bill. This indicates that photographs are widely used by both papers and that after the passing of the Bill; children's issues gained more prominence and - thus the increase in the number of photographs.

There were very few editorials on children's issues both before 3.11d after the Bill, being only 1.5 percent of the total indicators. The number of editorials decreased in both papers after the Bill Editorials being the voice of a media house, this indicates that children's issues are not considered very important in both media, houses. However, in general there were more editorials in the Nation as compared to the Standard.

The total number of indicators or prominence in both papers increased after the passing of the Bill. The increase in the nation was by 35.2 percent while in The Standard it was about 20.4 percent. However more indicators in the Standard as compared to the Nation.

**Table Three:****Distribution of Article on Children Issues in the Daily Nation and the East Africa Standard in terms of Space in Squared Centimetres (cm<sup>2</sup>)**

The Daily Nation												
	January		February		March		April		May		June	
Type of Article	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%
Hard News	117558	55.2	11520	67.3	13485	72.3	7220	33.3	72186	68.9	13100	7.6
Commentaries/Features	69048	32.4	2394	14.0	2205	11.8	8080	37.2	7880	7.4	145017	83.6
Photographs/cartoons	1786	0.8	144	0.8	0	0	78	0.4	4514	4.3	0	0
Editorials	10800	5.1	0	0	2970	15.9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Letters to the editor	1204	0.1	0	0	0	0	874	4.0	0	0	768	0.4
Health/science Features	12700	6.0	3066	17.9	0	0	5460	25.1	20230	19.3	14550	8.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>213096</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17124</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18660</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21712</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>104810</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>173435</b>	<b>100</b>
The East African Standard												
	January		February		March		April		May		June	
Type of Article	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%	Area(Cm <sup>2</sup> )	%
Hard News	0	0	48	0.9	2857	39.1	1833	10.5	1608	12.3	762	15.7
Commentaries/Features	494	7.4	710	13.5	676	9.3	4245	24.3	2007	15.4	0	0
Photographs/cartoons	0	0	0	0	738	10/1	0	0	1627	12.5	0	0
Editorials	0	0	0	0	374	5.1	116	0.7	0	0	0	0
Letters to the editor	6213	92.6	4338	82.5	2600	35.6	10279	58.9	7725	59.2	3669	75.7
Health/science Features	0	0	163	3.1	59	0.8	976	5.6	90	0.7	414	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>6707</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5259</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7304</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17449</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13057</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4845</b>	<b>100</b>

### 4.3 Discussion of Table Three

Changes before and after the passing of the Bill

Editorial Category	The Daily Nation		East African Standard	
	Before	After	Before	After
Hard News	142,563	92,506	2,905	4,203
Commentaries/Features	73,647	160,977	1,880	6,252
Photographs/cartoons	1930	4592	738	1,627
Editorials	13,770	0	374	116
Letters to the editor	1204	1642	13,151	21,673
science /Health Features	15,766	40,240	222	1,480
<b>Total</b>	<b>248,880</b>	<b>339,957</b>	<b>19,270</b>	<b>35,351</b>

The total amount of space on children's articles increased after the passing of the Bill. However, the Nation allocates more space to children's articles as compared to the Standard. The difference of the space in centimeters squared allocated to children's articles between the two papers before and after the bill is 229,610 and 304,606. This is a very big difference that indicates that the Nation gives more priority to children's issues as compared to the Standard.

Hard News, by its very nature of being informative is very important in a newspaper. . The amount of space allocated to Hard News in the Nation both before and after the Bill is much - higher - as compared to the space in the Standard. However, the space in the Nation decrease after the passing of the Bill while in the Standard increased by 18.3 percent. This means that after the passing of the Bill, the Standard gave more priority to children's issues as compared to the Nation-whose-Hard-News space dropped by- 21.3 percent. Both papers registered an increase in the space allocated to commentaries and Children's issue after the Bill was passed. However, the Nation allocated more space both before and after the Bill as compared to the Standard. The space allocated to letters to the Editor in the Nation was very high before the Bill was passed there was not a single published letter written to the Editor after the passing of the bill. In the Standard, the space allocated to the letters to the editor decreased after the passing of the Bill This means that the Bill did not generate a lot of debate about

children among people after it was passed compared to the amount of space on the same issue allocated to Hard News by both papers.

Both papers had a marked increase in editorials after the Bill was passed. However the Nation had more space on editorials as compared to the Standard. Editorials, by their very nature of being the voice of a media house, it means the Nation gives more priority to children's issues as compared to the Standard.

The amount of space allocated to Health and Science features in both papers increased in the last months. However, the-Standard had more space both before and after the Bill. The increase in both after the passing of the Bill indicates that children's - issues in matters of health and science gained more importance.

The Nation had more space on photographs both before and after the passing of the Bill. Both papers registered an increase of the space in the last three months.

Therefore, children's issues gained more prominence after the Bill was passed.

Table Four: Distribution of Articles on Children Issues in Terms of Sources

The Daily Nation												
	January		February		March		April		May		June	
Sources	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Government	11	37.8	6	46	8	47	3	18.8	9	29	4	21
NGOs	3	10.3	3	23	3	17.6	4	2.5	3	9.7	0	0
UN Agencies	2	6.9	1	7.7	1	5.9	2	12.5	8	25.8	1	5.3
Politicians	4	13.8	0	0	0	0	1	6.3	2	6.5	2	10.5
Social Group individuals	8	27.4	2	15.4	3	17.6	4	25	9	6.5	3	14.8
Researchers/social scientists	1	3.4	0	7.0	1	5.9	1	6.3	0	0	9	47.4
Religious Leaders and Religious Groups	0	0	1	7.7	1	5.9	1	6.3	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>
The East African Standard												
	January		February		March		April		May		June	
Sources	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Government	9	24.3	5	16.1	6	16.7	6	16.2	6	14.6	3	9.7
NGOs	8	21.6	3	9.7	1	2.8	7	18.9	4	9.8	8	25.8
UN Agencies	0	0	1	3.2	2	5.6	3	8.1	2	4.9	1	3.2
Politicians	5	13.5	7	22.6	3	8.3	5	13.5	14	34	3	9.7
Social Group individuals	11	29.7	13	42	20	55.6	13	35	9	22	13	41.9
Researchers/social scientists	0	0	2	6.5	2	5.6	2	5.4	6	14.6	2	6.5
Religious Leaders and Religious Groups	4	10.8	0	0	2	5.6	1	2.7	0	0	1	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.4 Discussion of Table Four

Changes before and after the Bill was passed

Sources	Nation		Standard	
	Before	After	Before	After
Government	25	16	20	15
NGOs	9	7	12	19
UN Agencies	4	11	3	6
Politicians	4	5	15	22
Social Group individuals	13	16	44	34
Researchers/social scientists	2	10	4	10
Religious Leaders and Religious Groups	2	1	6	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5916</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>108</b>

The number of articles carrying information sourced from the government decreased in both papers in the last three months. At the same time, the Nation gets more information from government sources as compared to the Standard.

Information from government sources is usually difficult to access because of the bureaucracy involved. The reduction of the number of articles sourced from the government may mean that the media houses started paying more attention to other sources of information as opposed to the government.

The Standard got more information from the NGOs both before and after the passing of the Bill as compared to the Nation. In addition, there was an increase of information in the Standard after the passing of the Bin while in the Nation, there was a reduction this may mean that the Nation does not favor the coverage of issues conducted by NGOs for some reason or Nation prefers getting its information from elsewhere.

In both papers, there is little information sourced from UN agencies as compared to the other sources. The Nation sources more information from UN agencies as compared to the Standard. However, there was a marked increase of information sourced from the agencies in both papers in the last three months. This indicates that UN agencies either started to release more information concerning children after the

passing of the Bill or that the papers found the information by the agencies more relevant after the Bill was passed.

The Standard publishes more information by politicians as compared to the Nation. In both cases, there is an increase of information from this source in the last three months although that of The Standard is much higher. This indicates that politicians may have started to speak about children's issues after the passing of also indicates that the Standard for some reason favors publishing information by politicians as compared to the Nation.

Information sourced form social groups increased in the last three months in the Nation while there was a marked decrease in the Standard. At the same time, the Standard sourced more information from social groups as compared to the Nation.

There was generally little information sourced from Researchers in both papers. However, there was a marked-increase of information from the same source in the last three months.

This indicates that both papers started paying more attention to issues raised by Researchers' on children, after the Bill was passed:

In both papers, there was a decrease of information from Religious leaders and religious groups in the last three months as compared to the months before. However, the Standard had more aticles sourced from Religious leaders and organizations as compared to the Nation. The decrease in both papers in the last three months indicates that religious groups may have reduced reacting on children's issues since the Bill had already been passed.



Table five: Frequency Distribution of Articles on Children Issues in Terms of Local and Foreign News

The Daily Nation												
Foreign/ Local News	January 2005		February 2005		March 2005		April 2005		May 2005		June 2005	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Local (Kenya)	22	91.7	11	91.7	15	93.8	13	92.9	18	81.8	16	88.9
Foreign	2	8.3	1	8.3	1	6.3	1	7.1	4	18	2	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>
The East African Standard												
Local (Kenya)	31	75.6	26	72.2	25	62.5	85.4	85.4	55	77.5	25	75.8
Foreign	10	24.4	10	27.8	15	37.5	14.6	14.6	16	22.5	8	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.5 Discussion on Table Five

Foreign/ Local News	The Daily Nation		The Eastern Africa	
	Before	After	Before	After
Local (Kenya)	48	47	134	156
Foreign	4	7	35	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>193</b>

Understandably, since both papers are intended mostly for local circulation most of the News covered was local in nature.

There was an increase of coverage of children's issues locally in the last three months in the Standard, while in the nation was almost constant this may mean that the Standard started paying more attention to children's issues after the Bill was passed as compared to before while the Nation might not have changed much because it had been covering the issues even before foreign stories on children issues in both papers increased in the last three months. This might have been provoked by the Bill and thus the need to cover stories, which may be either similar or of very different experiences from Kenya, for comparison purposes.

#### 4.6 Summary

The results obtained from this study indicate that generally, there was an increase in coverage of children's issues after the Children's Bill was passed on March 1, 2002.

Judging from the increase of Hard News items on children by both papers, issues concerning children gained a lot of prominence after the Bill was passed. As such, they were covered more in form of hard news as- compared to letters to the editor.

There were few letters to the editor concerning children's issues both before and after the passing of the Bill in both papers. This may mean that the public may not have been very sensitized about –the Bill for 'diem to react to it.

In both newspapers, science, and health articles about children were very few. This may mean that there are no specialized writers on this subject

Both papers allocate substantial amount of space to photographs on children's issues although the Standard allocates more as compared to the Nation.

Although the saying is that 'a photograph is worth a hundred words' it is still debatable whether this was the case in children's issues and agenda setting in, Kenya by the two papers. However, there was an increase on the number of photographs in the last three months as compared to before.

There was an increase of foreign stories on children's issues in both papers. Most of the stories compared the state of children in other countries as compared to Kenya. A number of them also compared the contents of the Kenyan's Children's Bill to those of other countries also to what is stipulated by Human Rights Organizations.

The indicators of prominence in both papers increased in the last three months as compared to the months before. This is attributed to the Children's Bill that put children's issues a notch higher than they were before.

There was minimal placement of news concerning children in the front and back pages of both papers both before and after the passing of the Bill.

The study compared the manner in which the Daily Nation and the East African Standard, Kenya's leading local dailies covered stories related to children's issues before and after Children's Bill was passed.

The study proved the hypothesis that there was more coverage of children's issues after the passing of the Children's Bill. It also proves that there were more hard news as compared to letters to the editor, features and other articles.

It has also proved the hypothesis that the passing of the Bill did not do much to bringing children's issues to front and back pages of both papers.

#### **4.7 Study Limitations**

The study was limited to analysis of past issues of the newspapers. It is possible that the situation has changed in other areas.

Also, only three months before and three months after the Bill was passed were analysed. This is a very brief period and it is possible the results could have been different if a longer period such as a year before and after had been used.

The study concentrated on print media only. If the electronic media too had been included, the results would have been more conclusive.

There are many local newspapers in Kenya but the study focused on them only. It is possible that the coverage by the other local dailies could have brought some new diversity.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

The increase of coverage of children's issues in the months after the Children's Bill was passed is an indicator that the two papers paid more attention to children's issues after the passing of the Bill.

However, children are important members of our society and the Bill should not have been the one to prompt the papers to give children more coverage.

The news that received popular coverage during the course of our study was the forthcoming general elections and the transition question. Whereas these issues are also importance children's Issues should not have been sacrificed.

Children, being the future adults are an important part of our society. How they are treated presently determines how they will treat their children too.

#### **4.9 Recommendations**

There is need for more coverage of children's issues. Media houses should be the voice of children especially now that the children's cabinet was disbanded.

Media houses should seek to establish objectivity when covering children's issues. They should not portray children always as people who only need to be helped, but rather as people who also contribute actively in the society; from our observation most of the children's coverage was concerning charity functions.

Rather, what children say and do should also make headlines. Special desks to deal with children's issues should be established in the media houses. Editors and journalist should be trained on the coverage of children's issues.

More space should be allocated to hard news on children's issues in prime pages too, although photographs are good, the caption that go along with them are usually too brief to tell the whole story well.

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