

TERRORISM AND AFRICA: A STUDY OF AGENDA BUILDING IN THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

An agenda-building model was examined for the question of Africa and terrorism. A path analysis compared real-world events (deaths and attacks attributed to terrorism), presidential emphasis, media coverage, and foreign aid for 20 African nations. Results show a clear agenda-building trend—when nations were emphasized with a terrorism frame. Presidential emphasis of nations' involvement in terrorism influenced media coverage and the policy agenda. The findings also suggest that deaths attributed to terrorism influenced the news and policy agendas. Media coverage of nations with a terrorism frame influenced the policy agenda. Only one significant path coefficient was found in the analysis of agenda setting without terrorism framing: The more President Bush mentioned a nation in his public statements, the more *The New York Times* covered the country.

This study approaches the international counterterrorism effort as a form of political discourse controlled by the competing perspectives of terrorism, governments, and the media through which different agendas are discerned. After the major terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States, the U.S. government intensified its global war to dismantle and eliminate international terrorism. From the beginning of 2002, the Bush administration embarked on building a case and support for the global offensive on international terrorists using various sensitization and communication strategies, including the news media briefings (OCT, 2002).

Through this global counterterrorism effort, the USA now works directly with other countries, including 20 African states that have been previously affected by terrorism. The joint counterterrorism efforts involve training and financial support to some African countries to eliminate international terror cells, terrorism financing, and the spread of terrorist networks (OCT, 2004).

This study examines how the global counterterrorism effort involving the USA and 20 African nations has played out. The analysis looks at the general frequencies of the press coverage of terrorism, the presidential pronouncements in connection with African nations or the foreign policy agenda on terrorism, and the overall U.S. funding of international counterterrorism efforts to those nations.

The purpose is to examine the processes through which these organs of the media, the presidency, real-world events, and foreign aid support to African states under the terrorist radar are interrelated. In other words, does the real-world agenda of terrorist attacks in Africa lead to either presidential emphasis or to media coverage? What is the relationship between the policy agenda (as indicated by foreign aid), the real-world agenda, and the media coverage of terrorist events? Does the presidential emphasis of terrorism in the 20 African countries lead to either media coverage or policy agenda? Other possibilities also are examined, such as whether media coverage of terrorism in Africa affects the policy agenda.

One of the motivations for this research endeavor is that there is a limited range of empirical studies on media and terrorism in Africa. Second, there is an increase in Islamic fundamentalist activity in Northeastern and Northwestern parts of Africa that has generated serious concern for the USA (Hyde, 2004). For instance, some African countries such as Somalia and Sudan have been accused of harboring Al-Qaeda terrorists. Some security analysts and scholars have argued that the continent is fast becoming a new breeding ground for modern international terrorism (Dagne, 2002; Lyman & Morrison, 2004). Also, studies have shown that terrorism emerges among people who are poor, and at the same time, victims of injustice (Rapoport, 2001).

The study is primarily guided by the agenda-building research perspective. Through this framework, we are concerned with how an agenda is built, from which issues can be created and come to command attention (Funkhouser, 1973; Lang & Lang, 1983; Elder & Cobb, 1984). The agenda building process allows us to provide an understanding of whether it is presidential emphasis of terrorism in these African nations that leads to either media coverage or policy agenda. Also, it allows us to determine whether the real-world agenda of terrorist attacks in Africa leads to either media coverage, presidential emphasis, or to the policy agenda.

TERRORISM AND AFRICA

Since authorities and experts have not come to a widely acceptable definition of terrorism, we join those before us who have emphasized the Modus Operandi conceptualization, nuanced to their syntactical and theoretical

approach. First, the USA defines international terrorism as the use of force or violence against persons or property in violation of the criminal laws of a state, for purposes of intimidation, coercion or ransom, by groups or individuals whose terrorist activities are foreign-based or whose activities transcend national boundaries (U.S. Department of State, 2000).

In Africa, some regimes do not distinguish between the global war on terrorism as defined by the USA and their domestic political insurgents or vigilante criminals (Hough, 2001). The African Union (2002) for instance, defines terrorism as a surprise use of violence against random and selected targets, by internal and transnational criminals who exploit the limits of the territorial jurisdiction of the State to target the innocent, to create fear among the public and antagonize the State. Wilkinson (1997) and Crenshaw (1972, 1981) outlined the dynamics of the terrorist enterprise to disorient a state through general insecurity, by antagonizing and exploiting the frustrations of common people, which attract media publicity.

Our working definition of terrorism draws from a combination of a U.S. State Department's definition, as well as conceptualization of Wilkinson (1997) and Crenshaw (1981). For this study, terrorism is defined as the unlawful use or threat of violence by disgruntled factions or extremists who have an ethnic, social, religious, or political agenda against state actors, or a group of citizens, with intentions to intimidate, frustrate, or coerce a government, individuals or groups, or any sector thereof. Much of the African literature on terrorism tends to assume that the motive behind terrorism manifests from dissatisfaction with an ethnic, religious, social, or political system and an inability to change the status quo. This assumption is also shared by the U.S. counterterrorism guidelines and policy affirmation (Hough, 2001; Dagne, 2002).

It should be noted here that several political actors, terrorism experts, and scholars argue that a genuinely African brand of international terrorism that threatens Western interests is somewhat improbable (Dagne, 2002; Cronin, 2006). However, several terrorism incidents in Africa inspired the U.S.-led global counterterrorism efforts in Africa. The twin attacks on U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998, brutally demonstrated the willingness of these terrorists to target U.S. property and personnel and cause carnage in all corners of the earth.

AGENDA BUILDING

From several decades of agenda-setting research that consistently confirmed how the agenda of issues covered in the news media influence the public agenda (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Ghanem, 1997; Golan & Wanta, 2001) emerged scholars who examined possible sources of the media agenda (Cobb &

Elder, 1971; Funkhouser, 1973; Weaver & Elliot, 1985). Several notable communication studies determined that agenda building evolved from the theory of agenda setting (Elder & Cobb, 1984; McCombs, 1992; Johnson et al., 1996). However, others have proffered that such conclusion begs a foremost understanding of the processes and premises through which the media agenda is formed (Sheafer & Weimann, 2005).

MEDIA AGENDA, PEOPLE'S AGENDA, SOURCE AGENDA; AND REAL-WORLD CONDITIONS

When we compare various agendas and their influence on the media, we recognize a plausibility of a cyclical process that involves various players such as news editors, policy makers, members of the public relations field, and audiences who may all create attention to issues (Walters, Walters, & Gray, 1996; Sallot, 1997; Sheafer & Weimann, 2005). For example, a few studies have examined the influence of press releases in building the news agenda, contributing to both media and public agendas (Weaver & Elliot, 1985).

Based on the proposition of Lang and Lang (1983), agenda building assumes a mutually interdependent relation generated in the public sphere between those who consume mediated messages, and those who ratify policy that is passed to a higher spot on the agenda. Empirical research in communication studies that employ the framework of agenda building concentrate on two important influences on the media agenda: The activities of political actors and real-world conditions and events (Johnson et al., 1996).

A frequently cited agenda-building study by Behr and Iyengar (1985) hypothesizes that change in real-world conditions that are of interest to the public render increased media coverage of the issue or event. Likewise, political actors such as the president act on these indicators they regard as salient and form a media agenda about the issues they consider important for citizens (Cobb, Ross, & Ross, 1976).

In fact, Behr and Iyengar (1985) found that news coverage was significantly determined by actual conditions and that indicators of national conditions be brought to bear on the relationship between news coverage and issue salience. The idea is that policy makers as well as citizens do have direct experiences with real-world events, and therefore, more attention should be paid to the relation between policy agenda and media agenda.

Lang and Lang (1983) used agenda building in the case of President Nixon and Watergate. They argued that the agenda-building process often involves three actors: The news media, the public and news sources. The news media and public are at the heart of agenda setting, but adding news sources implies that there is an interrelationship among the three actors. Lang and Lang (1983) argue that issues become part of a cycle of debate in which media coverage influences statements from sources, which in turn creates more media

coverage, which influences public concerns with the issue. The media continue to cover issues, sources continue to react to the issue, and the public continues to be concerned with the issue until one of the actors tires of the issue, and it falls off the agenda.

The U.S. President has been examined as one potential influence on the media agenda. Wanta, Stephenson, Turk, and McCombs (1989) used issues mentioned in four State of the Union addresses to determine a presidential issue agenda, and compared the relative emphasis placed on issues in the speech to news coverage both before and after the address. They found President Nixon influenced subsequent media coverage and President Carter was influenced by previous media coverage. President Reagan, meanwhile, seemed to have influenced newspaper coverage but was influenced by television news coverage during one year, but influenced both print and broadcast coverage in another. The results suggested factors such as the personality of a President may have played a role in the analysis.

Other newsmakers have also influenced the agenda-building process. Zibluk (1999), for instance, found that education reporting in three small Ohio dailies was greatly influenced by school superintendents in the area. He argues that journalists rely on official sources, which leaves citizens out of the education debate. In turn, citizens are ultimately left out of the policy-making process as well. Horvit (2001) examined whether presidents influenced media coverage through their weekly radio addresses. The results revealed that President Reagan attracted more media coverage than President Clinton.

POLICY AGENDA

Beyond examining agenda building through an analysis of African nations and terrorism, our study extends agenda-setting and agenda-building research into one additional area. Most previous research has examined two main agendas: the media agenda and public agenda. A few studies have examined a third agenda: a source agenda. These studies have investigated the ability of important newsmakers to influence the news agenda. Fewer studies have examined a fourth agenda: a policy agenda, or how media coverage and public opinion influence political decision-making.

Zibluk (1999), in his analysis of education coverage, found that school officials actively sought to use local newspapers to build support for their policies. Journalists relied heavily on quotes from school officials, while providing less space to opponents of a tax levy. Thus, the normal reporting routines resulted in a heavy reliance on public officials for information, which in turn worked to the advantage of the public officials. Keefer (1993) makes the same argument. In his study of Congressional debate, he argues that the established routines of news reporting often deter citizen participation in the policy-making process.

Taha (1999) found a similar trend of passivity among journalists in their coverage of Somalia. He suggests that reporters who work near policy makers are less critical than reporters far removed from the policy makers. Overall, *The New York Times* played a minimal role in setting the policy agenda on Somalia.

These findings are in sharp contrast to the arguments of Linsky, Moore, O'Donnell, and Whiteman (1986). They found that policy makers believe that the news media play a vital part in agenda setting and policy evaluation. Overall, then, the effects of the press, president, public opinion and real-world events on U.S. policy remain unclear. More research is needed in this area.

AGENDA BUILDING AND THE COVERAGE OF TERRORISM

Several studies have examined terrorism and media coverage, but one study about building the terrorism agenda by Jablonski and Sullivan (1996) closely relates to this study. Their study examined the relationship between the President and the mass media regarding terrorism from 1981 to 1994. Jablonski and Sullivan indicated a high degree of correlation between trends of U.S. mass media and the presidential attention to terrorism. They found that the decrease in terrorist events in 1989 and 1990 could be used as evidence of a time lag between media coverage and the incidence of terrorism. Using the agenda-setting and symbiotic relationship theories, Jablonski and Sullivan predicted a relationship between the press and the President, and between the press and the incidence of terrorism. In a content analysis of various media, the authors found that, as terrorists depend on press coverage, terrorist groups may scale back their activities when they cannot guarantee their actions will generate publicity. They also established that 'the mass media take their cues on terrorism from the President and vice versa' (p. 198).

Due to the unique relationship between the media and government in responding to terrorism incidents, other studies have shown an increase in cooperation between government agencies and media in their effort to combat global terrorism. Clark (2002) found that since September 11, the Department of Defense has hosted more than 5,000 media visits to military facilities, given more than 1,500 exclusive press interviews, and held more than 225 press briefings. These figures suggest a growing media and government interaction in responding to terrorism issues, and journalists have enjoyed sufficient access to the war on terrorism.

This kind of symbiotic relationship between the media and government is not only enjoyed by those two institutions. Cho and colleagues (2003) and Nacos (2000) argued that, while publicity is not the ultimate objective, terrorists recognize that media coverage of terrorist incidents is the means to get attention and further their political ends. Despite the U.S. media's consistent attack and negative publicity on Osama bin Laden, he shared center

stage with President Bush in the mass-mediated global crisis (Nacos, 2003). Nacos argues that bin Laden and his followers preoccupied not only the U.S. media but literally the entire world. Kaplan (2003) and Jenkins (1981) state that terrorism achieved a firmly international character during the 1970s and 80s evolving in part as a result of technological advances and partly in reaction to the dramatic explosion of international media influence. With press yearning for sensational ‘news that bleeds,’ terrorists assume that they can attract attention for their cause, provoke the government, intimidate opponents, appeal for sympathy, and promote the adherence of the faithful through media coverage (Alexander, 1976; Rapoport, 2001).

METHOD

DATA

Data for this study were collected from U.S. government sources and from LexisNexis Academic, based on this study’s conceptual definitions of media agenda, presidential agenda, policy agenda, and real-world agenda. Twenty countries were examined: Angola, Algeria, Burundi, D. R. Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Although there are 54 countries in Africa, only 20 countries met the criteria to be tested within our conceptual framework. A country was excluded if any three of these four criteria were not met: (a) if the country had not been officially listed to have experienced any terrorist incidents within the period being studied; (b) if it did not receive any counterterrorism aid from the U.S. in that period; (c) if *The New York Times* did not report any terrorist incidents within that period; and (d) if it did not have any mentions in presidential public statements on a terrorism-related issue. According to the U.S. Government’s Incident Review Panel, a country meets the first criterion of inclusion if it has suffered a significant international terrorist incident (attack) that resulted in loss of life or serious injury to persons, major property damage of more than \$10,000; and if the act or attempt could reasonably be expected to involve premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents (OCT, 2004).

Data for the media agenda were generated from LexisNexis Academic. The total number of news stories in which *The New York Times* focused coverage on an individual country is examined in this study. *The New York Times* was selected because of its elite national reputation as a U.S. newspaper of record. Data from *The New York Times* were collected in two parts: (a) all stories from each individual country that reported terrorism or a terrorist attack and (b) all stories on each individual country that reported any

TABLE 1 The President's, the news media's and policy agendas

	<i>Presidential agenda: Citations in presidential documents</i>		<i>New York Times agenda: Number of stories</i>		<i>Policy agenda (Million \$ spent in U.S. aid)</i>	
	<i>Any issue</i>	<i>Terrorism</i>	<i>Any issue</i>	<i>Terrorism</i>	<i>General</i>	<i>Security</i>
Angola	34	15	63	0	340.9	10.1
Algeria	25	15	74	14	9.7	0.8
Burundi	22	13	64	1	93.3	6.8
D.R. Congo	49	18	274	1	265.7	12.2
Egypt	146	63	279	54	1,794.5	1,773.3
Eritrea	19	12	18	0	155.8	6.1
Ethiopia	21	13	57	1	936.6	5.3
Kenya	51	27	173	40	356.2	15.4
Libya	227	96	124	54	0.0	0.0
Niger	20	15	28	2	39.2	0.3
Nigeria	56	19	206	3	272.9	25.1
Rwanda	35	15	106	0	121.2	5.8
Senegal	46	16	29	1	112.6	8.4
Somalia	27	17	85	16	77.4	3.2
South Africa	75	23	392	14	214.9	2.3
Sudan	136	37	310	16	377.0	11.6
Tanzania	24	14	13	2	209.7	12.2
Tunisia	24	13	23	10	0.1	0.0
Uganda	40	14	83	3	276.0	11.2
Zimbabwe	51	18	386	3	111.4	8.4
Total	1,128	473	2,787	235	5,847.0	1,977.0

other issue. A total of 235 stories about terrorist attacks from all 20 countries were published in *The New York Times* between January 1, 2001, and July 30, 2005, and a total of 2,787 stories about issues other than terrorism from all 20 countries appeared in the paper in the same period. This time period was selected because it matched well with datasets for the other three agendas. The number of stories focusing on the 20 nations in the study is listed in Table 1.

Data for the presidential agenda were generated from the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* database published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration. The compilation includes presidential proclamations, executive orders, speeches, communications to Congress and other federal agencies, acts approved by the President, and any other presidential material released by the White House. To identify relevant data, we searched by date, country, and the use of a word, such as 'terrorism' or 'terrorist', related to the issue or agenda under study. We then searched within each document that referenced these issues for

statements that specifically addressed our theoretical propositions. The unit of analysis was the entire speech. A total of 1,128 presidential citations about any issue other than terrorism from all 20 countries, as well as 473 about terrorist attacks, were listed in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* between January 1, 2001, and July 30, 2005. Table 1 lists the frequency of statements made by President Bush for each of the 20 countries in the analysis.

Data for the policy agenda were generated from the *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants* database published by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). To identify relevant data, the database was searched by date, country, total economic assistance (aid for development and other reforms) and security support assistance (including counterterrorism funding) for each foreign aid recipient.

To ensure the data we collected for counterterrorism funding represented the actual money spent and not appropriations, we also checked two other government sources for data related to Egypt, Kenya and Sudan: the *U.S. Security Assistance Database Search* published by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (U.S. Department of Defense), and the *Congressional Presentation Document* for the State Department's Foreign Operations budget. The database lists more than \$5.8 billion in general monetary foreign assistance for all 20 countries, which was given as grants between fiscal year 2001 and 2004. About \$2 billion in security support assistance (counterterrorism funding inclusive) for all 20 countries was granted in the same period. Table 1 lists the foreign aid each country received.

Data for the real-world agenda were generated from the *Patterns of Global Terrorism* database published by the U.S. Department of State's Counterterrorism Office. There were about 150 recorded fatal terrorist incidents in all 20 countries, and over 1,400 deaths reported in the same period. The actual figures are detailed in Table 2 by country. These data were cross-checked with the *Terrorism Knowledge Database*, developed by the National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

ANALYSIS

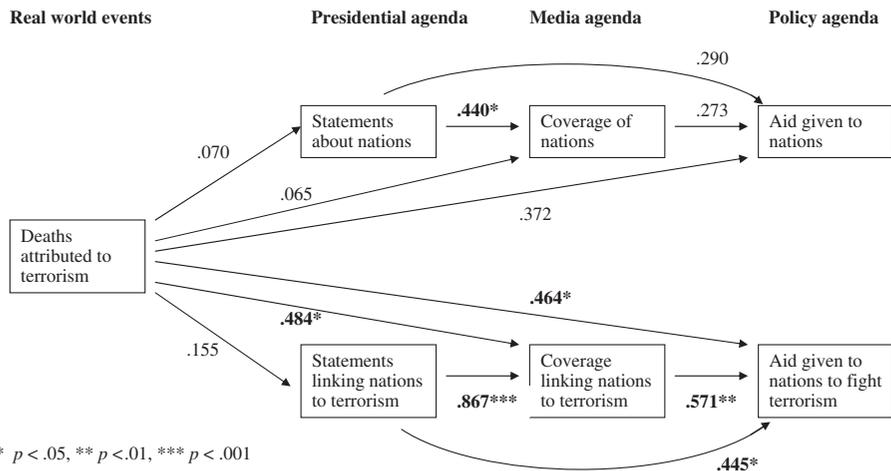
The analysis compared the four agendas based on the model in Figure 1. First, real-world events were compared with the other three agendas. Of question here was whether the frequency of terrorist attacks and deaths due to terrorism:

- (a) influenced the presidential agenda. In other words, were President Bush's public statements regarding African nations based on the frequency of attacks and deaths attributed to terrorism? Did President Bush's

TABLE 2 Terrorist attacks and deaths in Africa

	<i>Attack type</i>	<i>Number of attacks</i>	<i>Number of deaths</i>
Angola	Kidnappings, bombings	4	9
Algeria	Bombing, shooting, kidnapping	46	368
Burundi	Shooting, knife attacks, arsenal	5	17
D. R. Congo	Machetes/shootings	1	4
Egypt	Bombing, shooting, kidnapping	26	291
Eritrea	Shooting	2	12
Ethiopia	Bombing, shooting	7	45
Kenya	Missile attack, car bomb	3	269
Libya	Shooting/bombing	4	9
Niger	Hijacking, bombing	2	173
Nigeria	Kidnapping, hostage taking, shooting	3	10
Rwanda	Shooting, bombing	4	8
Senegal	Kidnapping, shooting	2	3
Somalia	Kidnapping, shooting	6	11
South Africa	Bombing, car bomb	11	46
Sudan	Shooting, kidnapping	4	61
Tanzania	Car bomb	1	11
Tunisia	Suicide bomb	3	23
Uganda	Bombing, shooting, infiltration	12	61
Zimbabwe	Machetes/shooting	6	16
Total		152	1,447

FIGURE 1 Agenda-building model with path analysis coefficients



statements frame African nations based on the frequency of attacks and deaths attributed to terrorism?

- (b) influenced *The New York Times* agenda. In other words, was *The New York Times* coverage of African nations based on the frequency of attacks and deaths attributed to terrorism? Did *The New York Times* frame African nations based on the frequency of attacks and deaths attributed to terrorism?
- (c) influenced the policy agenda. In other words, was U.S. aid to African nations based on the frequency of attacks and deaths attributed to terrorism? Was U.S. aid to African nations to combat terrorism based on the frequency of attacks and deaths attributed to terrorism?

Next, President Bush's public statements were compared to *The New York Times* and policy agendas. Here, the analysis examined whether President Bush's statements about African nations:

- (a) influenced the media agenda. Was *The New York Times* coverage of African nations based on the frequency with which the nations were mentioned in President Bush's public statements? Was *The New York Times* framing of African nations' involvement with terrorism based on the frequency of terrorism framing in President Bush's public statements?
- (b) influenced the policy agenda. Was U.S. aid to African nations based on the frequency with which the nations were mentioned in President Bush's public statements? Was U.S. aid to African nations to combat terrorism based on the linking of terrorism to nations in President Bush's public statements?

Finally, *The New York Times* coverage was compared to the policy agenda. Here, the analysis examined whether *The New York Times* coverage:

- (a) influenced U.S. aid. Was the amount of aid African nations received related to the amount of coverage an African nation received in *The New York Times*? Was the amount of aid African nations received to combat terrorism related to the frequency a nation was linked to terrorism in *The New York Times* coverage?

The model, then, is based on the assumptions that the President would need to make his case for funding before the final funding was announced. The media would have to cover the decision-making process leading up to the announcement. Both media coverage and the presidential statements would likely be influenced by real-world events. Therefore, we would expect that:

- The real-world agenda leads to presidential emphasis.
- The real-world agenda leads to media coverage.

- The real-world agenda leads to policy agenda.
- Presidential emphasis leads to media coverage.
- Presidential emphasis leads to policy agenda.
- Media coverage leads to policy agenda.

In addition, the analysis looked at both the general frequencies of the respective indicators as well as terrorism-related indicators. The model was tested through a path analysis. Path analysis is based on regression analysis and is used to test causal models. The path coefficients determine whether one variable can predict subsequent variables—which is the purpose of the current study.

RESULTS

The results, of the path analysis model are shown in Figure 1. None of the betas for general agenda setting involving real-world events were statistically significant. In other words, the number of deaths due to terrorism in a country was unrelated to how often President Bush spoke about a nation, how often *The New York Times* covered a nation or how much general foreign aid a country received.

The results are vastly different for the tests of agenda setting involving a terrorism frame. Here, the number of deaths attributed to terrorist attacks produced statistically significant path coefficients in two cases. The more deaths attributed to terrorism in a country, the more *The New York Times* covered a nation with a terrorism frame, and the more money the nation received to combat terrorism. In other words, real-world events had an agenda-setting influence on both the media agenda and the policy agenda.

The results for the tests of the presidential agenda suggest a strong influence of the President, especially when a terrorism frame was involved. For general agenda setting, the more the President spoke about a country, the more *The New York Times* covered the nation. The frequency of presidential statements about nations was unrelated to the amount of general foreign aid a country received.

However, the frequency of presidential statements linking terrorism and countries produced significant path coefficients to both *The New York Times* agenda and the policy agenda. Thus, the findings show that the more President Bush spoke about nations and terrorism, the more *The New York Times* covered the countries with a terrorism frame and the more foreign aid that was allocated to combat terrorism.

Finally, the beta was again significant for the test of *The New York Times* agenda involving a terrorism frame, but did not reach statistical significance for general policy agenda setting. In other words, the more *The New York Times* covered a nation with a terrorism frame, the more foreign aid the nation received to fight terrorism. *The New York Times* overall coverage of

African nations was not related to the amount of general foreign aid that a country received.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the role played by four agendas in a political communication process involving 20 African nations. First, we examined real-world events: The number of deaths attributed to terrorism within the 20 nations. Next, we examined the frequency that the nations were mentioned in the public statements of President Bush, both overall and with a terrorism frame. Then, we examined the amount of coverage the nations received in *The New York Times*, again both overall and with a terrorism frame. Finally, we examined the amount of foreign aid the nations received, both overall and specifically to combat terrorism.

The agenda-building process model clearly worked well—when a terrorism framing was included. The data provide much less support for a more general model of agenda building, where only one significant path coefficient was found. Here, the frequency that a nation was mentioned in the public statements of President Bush led to the amount of coverage a nation received. In other words, President Bush was able to influence *The New York Times* coverage patterns for the 20 African nations through his public statements. This trend is not surprising. As the nation's number one newsmaker, the President often can highlight issues that he believes warrants media coverage. Wanta and Foote (1994), for example, suggest that the President can influence media coverage on his pet peeves. Similarly, the President was able to influence *The New York Times* coverage of nations based on his public emphases.

Unexpected was the lack of significant relationships in the other tests of general agenda building. Deaths attributed to terrorism did not necessarily make a country newsworthy enough for coverage, unless *The New York Times* linked the country to terrorism. Thus, countries with a high number of deaths due to terrorism received heavy coverage—not in general, but coverage that included a terrorism frame. This may be due to the U.S. media's tendency to concentrate on negative news reporting from other countries.

Similarly, the frequency with which President Bush discussed countries in general was not related to the frequency of terrorism deaths. The attribute of terrorism, on the other hand, was linked to nations in President Bush's statements based to a large degree on the frequency of terrorism deaths in a country. Finally, *The New York Times* and policy agendas were unrelated in the test of general agenda building. The amount of coverage a nation received was not related to the amount of foreign aid the country received. However, *The New York Times* and policy agendas were related when

a terrorism frame was included. The link to terrorism was important here: The more coverage a nation received linking it to terrorism, the more foreign aid the country received to combat terrorism. In other words, coverage led to policy implications.

While *The New York Times* coverage would be unlikely to have a direct impact on the amount of foreign aid a country would receive, this relationship may be an indication of a broader process. Presidents need to rally public support for their policies. One way Presidents can gain public support is by emphasizing their initiatives through the news media. In the case of the current study, President Bush influenced coverage through his public statements about nations and about nations linked to terrorism. The subsequent significant relationship between *The New York Times* and policy agendas, then, could indicate the success of the President to get his views on nations and terrorism covered in the news. Thus, the media-policy relationship may have been caused by the influence of President Bush on these two agendas.

Overall, the findings here point to the strong impact of President Bush in the agenda-building process involving terrorism and African nations. His public statements put into motion a process of news coverage, which in turn highlighted his policy initiatives. This process, however, was only evident when the President, media and policy agendas involved a terrorism frame. When African nations were linked to a terrorism attribute, the data strongly support the agenda-building model examined here.

Arguably, President Bush would be a key news source for the issue of terrorism. Moreover, anti-terrorism funding was an important policy initiative for President Bush. The issue of terrorism, therefore, may have been a unique case that underscored the strength of the President's impact. Thus, future research should examine other moderating issues under different circumstances such as presidential approval ratings in addition to other plausible intervening factors. Other factors such as outliers in the country cases where terrorism is on the increase or the amount of counterterrorism funding should also be examined using other methods such as an empirical nested analysis. Certainly, including countries such as Libya and Tunisia, countries that receive little aid, and Egypt, a country that receives a great deal of aid, could have affected the results here. Future research should examine individual countries more in-depth.

Regardless, the current study demonstrates the utility of examining a full communication process—beginning with real-world events and including the interplay of sources and media with ultimate policy implications. Further, the current study highlights differences in the agenda-building process depending upon the framing of the news stories. The linking of attributes to nations appears to be an important consideration in our model and should be further examined in future research.

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