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MIGINGO ISLAND BORDER DISPUTE IN EAST AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF KENYAN AND UGANDAN NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

Cyrus Kinyungu & Thomas Ibrahim Okinda

ABSTRACT

Drawing on agenda-setting, priming and framing theories, this study compares the coverage of Migingo Island ownership dispute in Kenya's *Nation* and *The Standard* and Uganda's *Monitor* and *New Vision* newspapers. Contents published in 92 issues, between March 1 and December 31, 2009, were studied. The analysis established that both Kenyan and Ugandan newspapers published the conflict mainly in their interior pages with both sides identifying an in-existent borderline as a cause. However, the Kenyan press published the issue more frequently and front-paged a few of its stories while blaming the Ugandan security forces as the main cause of the conflict. Skewed coverage pattern, arising from reporters' nationalistic behavior and desire to serve a domestic audience, was noticed. This has implications for conflict-sensitive reporting of interstate border conflicts in Africa.

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