The Path to Persuasion: An investigation into how al-Shabab constructs their brand in their digital magazine Gaidi Mtaani.

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Abstract

Branding strategies are becoming increasingly important for terrorist organisations who need to take a more purposeful approach at imbuing aspirational associations to their organisations in order secure recruits and funds in an increasingly competitive environment. The creation and implication of these individual brands are further amplified through the sophisticated harnessing of ICT and digital media, where the harnessing of novel tactics and digital trends feed into the increasing use of branding. It is a strategy being employed by numerous terrorist groups, and a burgeoning research field is rapidly evolving to represent this development. This study seeks to explore how al-Shabab constructs their brand in their digital magazine *Gaidi Mtaani*, using Aristotle's rhetorical triad of ethos, pathos and logos. This study has the hopes of contributing to comparison studies between *Dabiq* and *Inspire* and wider terrorist branding, terrorism, ICT and communication studies. Understanding the differences between how some of the most notorious terrorist organizations distinguish themselves will help counter the rhetoric and brand associations projected through their publications. In order to answer this research question, this study will consist of a two-part theoretical framework situated in the concept of branding and rhetoric theory. Rhetoric theory will help this study understand how al-Shabab communicate and constructs their brand. It will allow for the analysis of any persuasive communications that express al-Shabab’s brand associations and help analyse al-Shabab's divisive use of language in order to ultimately promote their brand and ideas. The empirical data will be analysed through the use of qualitative content analysis.

Key words: al-Shabab, terrorism, digital magazines, branding, rhetoric
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Chapter 1. Introduction

The real and perceived threat of terrorism has been amplified since the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11th, 2001 (9/11). This iconic event is central to understanding and shaping contemporary discourse surrounding terrorism. On 20th September 2001, George W. Bush declared “war on terror” (Washington Post, 2016). A slogan that went on to establish a rhetoric that framed an apparent universal threat and a worldwide enemy “…seeking to overturn the existing Western dominated world order” (Zalman and Clarke, 2009:104). During George W. Bush’s first State of the Union address on January 29th 2002, his concept “axis of evil” was introduced; an additional slogan employed to prime a more aggressive U.S foreign policy. The ‘axis of evil’ was a concept used in reference to any government suspicious of terrorism leniency or support and proved integral in the makeup of the succumbing campaigns for the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq (Washington Post, 2016). The rhetoric of killing in the name of democracy appeared a superior moral compass to those killed in the name of a religion: a clash of civilisations propped by opposing ideologies. Additionally, this perceived and real increase in the threat of terrorism since 9/11 is marked by a development in the symbiotic relationship between media and terrorism, where initial interest in the cyber realm saw terrorists not only stay a breast with rapid technological development but adapt to it with unprecedented ease: "...a large number of terrorist groups moved to cyberspace, establishing thousands of websites that promoted their messages and activities" (Weimann, 2014:2). Social Networking Sites (SNSs), Apps and Digital magazines are some examples of the means at which technological innovation has been harnessed by terrorists to further serve the practice of persuasive communication strategies in their endeavour to influence the thoughts and actions of intended stakeholders. Digital media has changed the interaction and communication of terrorist groups as well as influence tactics, where the ideological fight over “ideas, values and perceptions” takes place in a virtual and communication realm (Archetti, 2010:1). This period of recent history sheds great insight into the ever-evolving tensions of political violence perceived from Africa and the Middle East, and vice-versa, as well as evolved communication strategies witnessed in the cyber realm. Consequently, a burgeoning research field has developed.

Whilst terrorism is not a new phenomenon, the degree at which terrorist organizations adapt to the progressively dynamic technological landscape may be just. The potential of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and SNSs in mobilizing political
participation has not gone unrecognized by terrorist organisations, where their main intentions are for “…propaganda, radicalization, and recruitment” (Weimann, 2014:2). One common strategy implemented by varying terrorist organisations is the use of media products, more specifically the publication of digital magazines. The pdf format of these digital magazines makes a more reliable and preferable communication route for terrorists, that not only reduces the direct digital footprint but avoids the cat and mouse chase from various authorities in the race against time to close down the never ending emergence and creation of new SNS accounts. To name a few Islamic terrorist magazines: Al Qaeda have Inspire, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS, ISIL, IS, Daesh) have Dabiq and the Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahideen (al-Shabab, al-Shabaab) publish a digital magazine called Gaidi Mtaani. The magazines reflect some of the distinct nuances of ideology and brand between some of the most notorious terrorist organisations, all of which are vying for publicity and relevance in attracting funding and recruits. The ability for horizontal media to transcend space and time offers new possibilities and tools to promote terrorism and influence public opinion explicitly and/or passively. The increase in persuasive tactics and employment of interdisciplinary practices such as branding and rhetoric are being optimised in this new virtual realm. Thus serving as great incentive to contribute to this increasingly significant research field.

There has been a growing recognition of Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW) since World War 2 and has ultimately disrupted the power tendencies between the media and military. 4GW has established the necessity of the more intangible aspects and psychological mechanisms in war (Stewart, 2004; Simons, 2010). Terrorism is ultimately used as a method of psychological warfare (Melki and Jabado, 2016), where in this decentralised form of warfare, “…the word is every bit as powerful, if not more so, than the sword” (Simons, 2010:2). On one hand, analysing these intangible dimensions explains how one can prime sympathy for recruitment and influence actions. On the other hand, these intangible mechanisms can be used to prime fear for support in a ‘war’. Brands are a rhetorical mechanism serving to influence the thoughts and actions of stakeholders in order to distinguish themselves in an overcrowded market place of terrorist groups seeking support. The mainstream media and digital media play a central role in the politics of perception, no matter which side of the coin you examine. Perceptions will be skewed. Understanding the significance of the constructed nature of strategic rhetoric helps identify meaning in the war of words and ideas. Especially
when looking at the impact these skills have in packaging ideologies and brands with digital media’s ability to transcend space and time. Therefore, what and how al-Shabab communicate to differentiate themselves is important in understanding how they intend to appeal, persuade and resonate their aspirational associations with their target audiences.

1.1 Research Summary

Research Question: How do al-Shabab employ Aristotle’s rhetorical triad of ethos, pathos and logos to construct their brand?

There are now sixty “Foreign Terrorist Organizations” (FTO) according to the U.S Department State; one of those designated is al-Shabab (the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen – meaning ‘Movement of Warrior-Youth’) (U.S. Department of State, 2016; Vidino et al., 2010). The transnational trajectory of al-Shabab is creating concern around their desired transformation into a wider regional organisation, where not only are al-Shabab demonstrating their confinement to no longer be within the borders of Somalia, but “Al-Shabaab’s ‘reinvention’ may have very serious implications for Kenya” (Anderson and McKnight, 2014:26) (Shay, 2017). Al-Shabab considers Kenya to be a beacon of light for the success of the African continent and the demise of Kenya’s economy, stability and reputation is at the heart of groups’ agenda (Hartley, 2017). The aim of this thesis is to investigate how this particular Somali based Islamic terrorist group construct their brand through persuasive, rhetorical mechanisms in order to distinguish themselves from an apparent increasingly crowded ‘market-place’ of terrorist groups, whom seek to influence the thoughts and actions of various stakeholders for different purposes, such as attracting supporters, sympathisers, recruits, and of course to intimidate their enemies. Therefore, their digital magazine Gaidi Mtaani will be analysed in the hopes of identifying what their brand is and how they communicate it. An in depth analysis should accomplish an understanding of the intangible brand associations they want to project and through which rhetorical means they (reinforce) achieve this.

You may be more familiar with the concept of branding being applied in a political or commercial context, but is increasingly accumulating an interdisciplinary nature. Organisational theorist and business consultant David Aaker (2014) argues the development of branding now involves a much more purposeful practice, where brands need to build aspirational brand associations, which includes attributes, values, and emotional and
functional benefits to name a few. Terrorist communication theorist Jonathan Matusitz confers with Aaker (2014), but adds the key to a successful brand is also “differentiation, credibility and authenticity” (2015:241). It is these components that help form a brand by building trust and a unique set brand associations that represent what an organisation stands for (ideology). The practice involves the careful curation of the right associations in order to prime any desired outcomes and involves shaping perceptions in order to build fundamental relationships that ensure brand loyalty and awareness. Therefore, a brand involves the harnessing of association appeals and is in the business of convincing and converting a potential consumer, or in this case a recruit or sympathiser.

Now when this study talks about Rhetoric it refers to persuasive communications (Wenzel, 1990), and can be defined as the “discourse in which source encoders (i.e., message senders) aim at informing, persuading, or motivating particular message receivers in specific situations” (Matusitz, 2015:334). The main approach to Rhetoric derives from Aristotle, (1991:74) who understands rhetoric to be “…the power to observe the persuasiveness of which any particular matter admits”. Walton (2007) adds it be the art of persuasive argumentation. The primary art or technique of rhetoric is invention, less about the truth and more about style and composition (Aristotle, 1991). Aristotle’s scientific approach is deemed the main way to approach the art of rhetoric, with his approach dating back to Ancient Greece and being practiced still today. There are three main pillars in his approach, which this study will be theoretically situated within: “ethos (the nature of the communicator), pathos (emotional state of the audience), and logos (message arguments)” or the logic of arguments (Perloff, 2010:28). If we understand a brand to be a rhetorical, psychological mechanism, serving to influence al-Shabab’s potential recruits/sympathizer and funds, then their ability to compete against other terrorist groups requires them to successfully differentiate themselves from others. It is then important to identify and understand what it is they appear to communicate in terms of their aspirational brand associations. Rhetoric theory will help this study understand how al-Shabab communicates and constructs their brand. It will allow for the analysis of any persuasive communications that express al-Shabab’s brand associations and help analyse al-Shabab's divisive use of language in order to ultimately promote their brand and ideas.
This study will proceed by justifying further the relevance of this study and what it will contribute to the field, before commencing by presenting an extensive literature review on the role of branding in terrorism. This research consists of a two-part theoretical framework that is the concept of branding and rhetoric theory. This research sets out to examine how al-Shabab build their brand and the material under investigation is a sample collected from al-Shabab’s digital magazine Gaidi Mtaani. The methodology will be presented in chapter five and will explain the qualitative research design, the choice of qualitative content analysis as a research method, data collection, operationalisation of the theoretical framework and the wider ethical and validity considerations. The empirical data and findings are presented in chapter six, where the rhetorical findings will also be interpreted and analysed through the conceptual lens of branding simultaneously. Finally, a discussion and conclusion will follow in the final chapter.

1.2 The Aim and Relevance of Study

Counter-terrorism has become a focus of concern for several national and intergovernmental institutions. The latest European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (2016:1) stated that today, “…terrorism, radicalisation, recruitment and terrorist financing…” are some of the main concerns threatening the stability and security of the EU. Propped with a growing focus on cyber-security in particular. However, radical Islamic ruptures on the African continent appear to be intensifying in parallel to those in the Middle East. Al-Shabab is a radical Islamic terrorist organization based in Somalia, who operates within an increasingly competitive environment of over sixty official FTO’s. A threat is established when greater measures may be taken in order to stand alone in an overshadowed marketplace of ideas and organizations. The research field is pursuing this interesting development: “Reputation and brand are extremely important to terrorist organizations, such as al Qaeda and ISIS, as a ‘good’ (i.e notorious) association brings additional funding, support, active participation and greater publicity among those with a favourable view” (Simons, 2017:206).

Melki and Jabado (2016:94) claim it is “…a matter vastly understudied”. In their study from 2016, they successfully demonstrate this trajectory further by deconstructing the branding and marketing strategies employed by ISIS. Beifuss and Bellini (2013:11) also claim branding is a practice not limited to corporations and political parties and adds “…branding employed by terrorist groups is an understudied subject…current studies of terrorism are limited to the
discussion on the definition of the word, and the nature and scopes of the acts”. However, this development is increasingly being recognized as integral. The creation and implication of these individual brands are further amplified through the sophisticated harnessing of ICT and digital media, where the harnessing novel tactics feed into the increasing use of branding by non-state and virtual state actors (Nacos, 2002). As exemplified by one of al-Shabab’s most deadly transnational attacks in Kenya on the 21st of September 2013. Al-Shabab gunmen stormed through Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi killing 75 people and injuring a further 175 (Agbiboa, 2014). Simultaneously, the group launched a twitter campaign to provide a live commentary of events and creating a direct communication channel: novelty at the time for terrorism communication (Menkhaus, 2014). A time when some considered al-Shabab the most dangerous and organized terrorist group affiliated with al ‘Qaeda (Fergusson, 2013). However, ISIS’ claim to a worldwide caliphate in 2014 not only left al-Shabab with a weaker footprint and fading publicity, when once they too led in this cyclical pattern of terror, but also established a dangerous digital blueprint. This study wants to look at how al-Shabab may be re-strategizing in order to compete and look at what values they are attempting to project to their target audiences in order to distinguish themselves. Therefore, this study will analyse one of their information products, their digital magazine *Gaidi Mtaani* (*meaning ‘Terrorism in the Streets’*). To see what aspirational associations they have integrated into the magazine in order to shape opinion and behaviour.

This study has the hopes of contributing further to comparison studies between *Dabiq* and *Inspire* and wider terrorist branding and communication studies. Currently, little to no research has been conducted on *Gaidi Mtaani* and will consequently contribute to the mosaic of current research. Understanding the differences between how some of the most notorious terrorist organizations distinguish themselves will help counter the rhetoric and brand projected through their publications. Particularly in the cyber realm, where the likening between companies and terrorist organizations sees the promotion and packaging of certain values to compete and differentiate. Terrorist groups fully embrace modern technology and digital trends in order to achieve this and further project, create and re-brand themselves.
Chapter 2. Background

2.1 A Historical Lens: Islam in Africa

In order to understand how and why al-Shabab brands themselves and who they are today, we need to comprehend the current political landscape and some historical context. Gordon and Gordon (2013) provide an invaluable historical analysis to the cyclical nexus between violence and religion on the African continent. The authors argue that deep resistance and conditioning towards external influence, particularly Western imperialism, dates back to the 18th century and is a driving force to the creation of more contemporary radical Islamic groups such as al-Shabab. They observe the ‘first wave’ of Islam on the African continent to go back to 632 CE (Gordon and Gordon, 2013:357). Christianity, Islam, and other religions peacefully co-existed in many regions in Africa, where the respective missionaries used various trade routes to spread their religious teachings and practices. However, whilst a religious scramble on the continent became increasingly evident, religious pluralism endured. The eighteenth century saw the ‘second wave’ of Islamization, which saw a more strict accordance to Islam arise (Gordon and Gordon, 2013). This more militant movement saw Islamic consciousness spread from the elite to the masses as a form of resistance to European influence and imperialism “…under the religious banner of jihad (holy war)” (Gordon & Gordon, 2013:359). Whilst post colonialism saw independence rein the continent, the succumbing turbulent social, political and economic conditions in several countries motivated an increasingly popular fundamental re-commitment to Islamic religious identities and beliefs in response to prevailing the contemporary needs and challenges (Gordon and Gordon, 2013). The rejection of Western ideals has consequently become the axel and backbone driving the resistance from Islamic extremism and appears central to a lot of extreme religious ideologies. However, whilst the United States “…regards Africa as a breeding ground for terrorism due to such factors as widespread poverty, failed states, and poor governance by undemocratic and corrupt governments” (Gordon & Gordon, 2013:364). Lonsdale (2005) calls for the acknowledgement of western bias in this field, by re-affirming the presence of the majority moderate Muslims on the continent whom consist of both non-violent traditionalists and more progressive reformers. Religious pluralism still trumps militant religious segregation: “Europeans no longer fear African protest—unless they happen to be Muslim” Lonsdale (2005:393). This theme of defiance appears to be a driving force for the
‘third wave’ of Islamization on the continent today and central to the transformation of The Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (‘Movement of Warrior-Youth’) from a radical militant youth fraction of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) into a transnational terrorist organisation.

2.2 The Rise of al-Shabab

President Mohamed Siad Barre had been in power for nearly 22 years when he was toppled in 1991 by warring clans and a continuing conflict since has permitted a stable central government being established (Vidini et al., 2010). The AIAI (al-Itihaad al-Islamiya) arose during this period and took control over several regions in Southern Somalia with the aim of implementing an Islamic state (Lorenzo et al., 2010). It was the AIAI who formed an official alliance with al Qaeda in 1993 and lead to the US embassy bombings in 1998 in Nairobi and Tanzania (Lorenzo et al., 2010). Ethiopia’s failure at tackling radicalism in Somalia saw the small branch of AIAI (al-Itihaad al-Islamiya) fully establish a powerful Islamic movement. However, internal dissent among the AIAI led to further fractions and ultimately the formation of the UIC (Union of Islamic Courts) in 2000 and “...by 2006 the ICU extended its control to much of southern-central Somalia, part of Mogadishu, and had encircled the city of Baidoa, where the United Nations-supported Transnational Federal Government was based” (Vidini et al., 2010:220).

Al-Shabab was initially a military wing of the ICU but broke away to form its own independent organisation in 2006, becoming a radical fraction of the ICU, bringing leaders from the AIA and strengthening the relationship with al Qaeda. One of the most defining moments for al-Shabab’s legitimisation and mobilisation was the Ethiopian invasion in 2006. With the US military’s operation in Somalia from 1993 as a point of reference, the Ethiopians were seen to be conducting a proxy on behalf of the United States in a quest for revenge for “Black Hawk Down” (Vidini et al., 2010). The group leveraged national populism for increased support and sympathy with the jihad rhetoric. Agbiboa, (2014:8) adds, it “…provided al-Shabaab with the opportunity to draw on deep-seated Somali history towards Ethiopia to recruit thousands of nationalists voters…and also to mobilise public support for its armed rebellion, especially jihad.” Whilst the UIC was a rivalling administration to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), who had a local agenda of implementing an Islamic state and Sharia law, al-Shabab took a drastic transnational trajectory after their official

2.3 Al-Shabab’s Transnational Trajectory and Global Jihad

Al-Shabab is considered a terrorist group by numerous international governments, the United Kingdom, the United States and New Zealand to name a few, as well as listed as a terrorist organisation by numerous international intelligence agencies and intergovernmental organisations such as The United Nations. The current leadership is under al Qaeda. However, the regional leader is Ahmed Umar and are fighting the current UN backed government (Terrorism Research & Consortium, 2017). There are deputy leaders, branch leaders and spokesman. In 2015 the Islamic State (IS, ISIL, DAESH) called for al-Shabab to pledge alliance with them and not al Qaeda, however, nothing has been confirmed (Shay, 2017). This explicitly demonstrates the level of competition between these groups. However, Shay (2017) highlights the unique position al-Shabab are in in terms of wider support: “Al-Shabaab has the support of both Al-Qaeda and IS followers… al-Shabab’s propaganda materials are often released through, and shared on, both pro-IS and pro-Al-Qaeda online forums”. The group follow the “Saudi-inspired Wahhabi version of Islam...and is believed to have between 7,000 and 9,000 fighters” (BBC, 2016). An increasing influx of foreign recruits is another phenomenon being noticed with the group (Agbiboa, 2014; Lorenzo et al., 2010). The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (Shay, 2017) claims al-Shabab are “making a comeback after having steadily lost ground over the past five years...and has the ability to outmanoeuvre the Somali government and international partners”. They have lost major ports but still control substantial amounts of rural areas and their regrouping is of great concern. Shay (2017) further adds: “The group has been on the offensive since the middle of 2016, retaking at least 10 towns from Ethiopian and African Union troops. The group has also increased its attacks on African Union bases, Somali government facilities and officials and security forces, hotels and targets in neighbouring Kenya”.

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The al Qaeda rhetoric is global in nature; the group’s recent activities confirm their allegiance to the global jihad with multiple attacks in neighbouring African countries. Al-Shabab have carried out over “360 attacks in the last decade” (Moshin and Billard-Arbelaez, 2017). The Westgate Mall siege in Nairobi in September 2013 killed 67 and injured over 200 (Okari, 2014). The Garissa University attack in Kenya in April 2015 killed 147 people and injured many more (Okari, 2014), as well as many other major attacks across East Africa. One such indicator of their transnational agenda includes the creation of their media division Al-Kata’ib (Brigades) to pursue a range of transnational strategies through the production of high quality media products. Andre LeSage (2014:11) helps establish what we already know about al-Shabab’s media strategy, which is to recruit and radicalise with: “…well-organized media campaign to radicalize East African youths, including audio recordings, Web sites, social media, and a sophisticated online magazine called Gaidi Mtaani that is published in both English and Swahili”. These align with many of the main strategies used online by terrorists identified by several theorists previously.

This chapter will now proceed by presenting an extensive literature review on the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media, specifically digital media before proceeding with presenting literature on the rapidly evolving research field of terrorism and branding.
Chapter 3. Previous Research

This literature review firstly focuses on defining terrorism, before proceeding with identifying the available literature regarding the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and media and the inevitable impact of digital media. This chapter then identifies key studies in the rapidly evolving academic field that deals with research on terrorism and branding/rhetoric more generally before moving onto analysing the role of digital magazines and what we know thus far about al-Shabab’s branding strategies.

3.1 Terrorism

Defining terrorism is a complex process due to the multiple inter-disciplinary interpretations. The act and the word itself are often deliberately left ambiguous to connote as much fear and uncertainty in its application. However, the lack of consensus on the definition explains why there is immense speculation on what terrorism is and who terrorists are. Academics, governments, experts, journalists, politicians, and the terrorists themselves employ varying definitions. According to both Ganor (2002) and Tuman (2010) definition depends on the definer in this process of negotiating meaning, especially when seeking to define ‘who’ terrorists are. After all, one common school of thought is “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” (Laqueur, 1987:7). If we start from the beginning or discuss the etymology of the word ‘terror’ it derives from the word ‘terrere’, which is Latin for ‘to frighten’ (Tumam, 2010). Some broader comprehension lies in academia’s understanding of terrorism to be ‘revolutionary violence’, ‘national liberation’, or the targeting of the innocent applied for the promotion of divisive agendas (Ganor, 2002). Ganor (2002) nonetheless reminds us and goes on to explain the importance of creating an objective and internationally accepted definition, distinguishing between multi state warfare, to non-state warfare, guerrilla warfare and domestic and transnational terrorism.

Daniel Agbiboa (2013), expert on terrorist activities on the African continent heavily relies on implementing the 1999 Algiers Convention’s definition of terrorism, which carefully balances the careful line between physical violence and symbolic communications. A defining dimension to terrorism is that information operations are a primary interest and focus, where military operations can often support information operations (Simons, 2017).
Weimann (2005:380) supports this notion further by adding the word terrorism has historically lent itself to “a mass psychological aspect”. However, the degree of emphasis placed between information and military operations will vary between terrorist organisations. Like many in the field, Brian Jenkins, tried to identify the common ground in the various definitions. Jenkins ultimately understands terrorism as political communication (Tuman, 2010). Jacob Svensson (2015) and Mouffe (2001) expand on the perspective of terrorism being communication by presenting notions of radical activism and radical political participation. Mouffe (2001) and Habermas (1976) understand the success in the polarisation of politics and ideologies as it ignites passion, which is often lost through consensus. The reference to curating a clash of civilisations between those either side of the ‘axis of evil’, arguably represent polarized politics and extreme ideologies. Terrorists are adopting and evoking passion through the promising of change. This perspective helps us understand terrorism as a form of strategic political communication, like public diplomacy, where the message should be viewed as a way of communicating. These approaches reinforce the psychological, intangible dimensions in terrorism, often used by the weaker actor in an armed conflict, with inferior strength and capabilities.

Both Jonathan Matusitz (2013) and Christina Archetti (2012) understand the underpinning of terrorism to lie in processes of communication too, persuasive forms of communication to be specific, such as rhetoric or propaganda. This perspective is historically rooted in Schmid and de Graaf (1982) and Crelinsten’s (1987) school of thought. Several theorists such as Alex Schmid (1989) argued that the mass media and the press are to explain for the rise in “modern non-state terrorism” (Archetti, 2012:2). These mentioned theorists all understand that often the acts of violence/terrorism can be understood as a message, as communication. Schmid (1983:70) finds there to be 22 components in his definition, which ultimately recognises how this form of communication acts as an amplifier: “Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby—in contrast to assassination—the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) from a target population and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organisation), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to
manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought”. Perception trumps the truth and creating this perception of increasing fear is integral for terrorists. This definition alludes to the important intangible elements of terrorism that can be conducted by a state, non-state or individual, by adopting and promoting ideologies through either physically deliveries or media products in the pursuit of particular values, ideals and objectives. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, it will rely on this definition.

Understanding terrorism as a form of communication will help comprehend how one constructs a message, perceives it and how it ultimately shapes reality. A simple communication model has “…a sender of a message [who] encodes the message just before sending it, usually by reducing it to some form of symbols (such as language—words, after all, are symbols), which is then sent to the receiver, who in turn decodes it (translating and interpreting the symbols) and then considers it” (Tuman, 2010:32). Often the terrorist attacks or violent actions are not the message, but the message is encoded within the act that could be intended for multiple audiences desired to curate a desired reaction (Tuman, 2010). Beheadings can be seen as the promotion of brutality, which in some cases may be a desired brand value and rhetorical act. The style of attacks too, such as ISIS’ orange jumpsuits. Therefore, we can understand terrorism as not only a communication process, but as persuasion.

3.2 International Terrorism and Media

The ability and level of sophistication demonstrated by many terrorist organizations in adapting to the ever-evolving technological and political landscape is becoming more significant to counter-terrorist agencies as well as the growing academic research field. Digital media is a contemporary extension of the symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorism, adding a more complex dimension to the role information plays. This chapter will commence by contextualizing why and how these groups are leaning heavily on digital media and ICT and what role and opportunities that play in supporting branding strategies in order to appeal and entice funding, recruitment and publicity in what appears to be an overcrowded marketplace of competing ‘products/ideologies’.
The nature of the relationship between media and terrorism has always been of great tension, existing long before the rise of digital media. The mass media have often been accused of being oxygen for terrorists. Mahmoud Eid (2014:1) goes on to explain how “…the media are a double-edged sword used both by and against terrorism…they can disseminate terrorist messages as much as they can manipulate terrorists…” However, social media’s ability in challenging dominant mass media frames and processes of gatekeeping has added another layer of complexity, where “over the past couple of years, groups such as IS and Al-Qaeda have turned to the Internet as a recruitment tool, presenting their ideology in often fairly slick packaging” (Huey, 2015:2). With al Qaeda first making this transfer back in 2011, demonstrating their awareness of controlling the media and the narrative. Terrorist organisations appear to successfully stay abreast with the rapid rate of technological innovation, placing importance on the rise of digital media and social networking sites. Interaction, reach and speed have changed the dynamic of contemporary warfare, including terrorism. Horizontal communication allows for the transcending of space and time, offering even more functions than the traditional media and that of the Internet. Christina Archetti (2012) explains how technological innovation witnessed over the last decade and the establishment of global communication networks sustain and spread transnational terrorism. Greg Simons (2016:93) confers by adding it, "… enables the more rapid spread and dissemination of ideas and information instantly and cheaply to otherwise scattered individuals across the planet..." The war of words and the battle of hearts in the confrontation of ideas exceed those of military might (Simons, 2016; Archetti, 2012).

ISIS is a relatively young terrorist group, who started a brutal ground operation in Iraq and Syria in 2014, whilst simultaneously storming into the social media timeline and newsrooms of millions around the world. Spreading their doctrine and terror across borders and establishing their dominance in the virtual realm. The importance of these tools is recognized in the restructuring of many terrorist organizations that now have dedicated media divisions. To name a few, al-Shabab's media branch is called al-Kata'ib, ISIS has al-Hayat Media Centre and Al-Sahab Media is Al Qaeda's propaganda branch. These media divisions serve the purpose of press releases, managing media content on their websites,
distributing digital magazines, managing (official and unofficial) social media accounts, releasing docu-videos and providing an official spokesperson.

The evolution of older terrorist groups such as al Qaeda and al-Shabab to harness these wider digital developments was witnessed during their mentioned 2013 Nairobi Westgate attack, where they used Twitter as live running commentary and provided real-time coverage during the attack; a tactic never seen before and at a time when ISIS had not yet fully taken social media hostage so to speak. Agbiboa (2014:11) calls al-Shabaab “extremely media savvy”. Their harnessing of ICT and digital media has enabled their recruitment strategy to go international, with foreign recruits becoming more prevalent for this group. Cyber operations have become integral for multiple reasons outside of glorifying and branding terrorism and the jihad 'lifestyle'. Cyber terrorist expert and academic Gabriel Weimann (2014:1) states how ICT and digital media are proving integral apparatus for recruitment and radicalization, where "...the global jihadi movement have turned to social media for propaganda, psychological warfare, and weapons tutorials". YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, Skype and multiple apps such as Telegram, WhatsApp and Snapchat are some examples of various digital media being harnessed in modern terrorism communication, where the various encryption and sharing functionalities allows for the easy dissemination of promotional content. Weimann (2014:3) goes on to highlight the commonalities in the way in which terrorist groups can harness user data in the same manner as marketers: "They can develop lists of potential recruits or sympathizers through online groups. Just as marketing companies can view member's’ information to find potential customers and select products to promote to them, terrorist groups can view people’s profiles to decide whom to target and how to approach each individual".

Weimann (2014:6) provides an explanation on what purpose these different platforms serve: Facebook is used to "share operational and tactical information...a gateway to extremist sites and other online radical content... a media outlet for terrorist propaganda and extremist ideological messaging". Whereas the microblogging platform Twitter allows for real-time coverage, internal communications and disseminating information and links (Weimann, 2014). Such links can include pdfs to press releases or official digital magazines. Specifically tailored platform tactics are consequently becoming increasingly evident. Twitter enables
terrorists to 'hijack' hashtags and trends, creating 'twitter bombs' to gain traction and publicity. YouTube is considered an online television substitution, where it's "...massive global audience ensures that jihadists can simultaneously aim at both potential recruits and targets for terrorism...resulting in a vibrant jihadist virtual community" (Weimann, 2014:10). According to Pejic (2016), YouTube is a very popular means for spreading videos for domestic or international audience, which serve recruitment purposes; all of which are harnessed by al-Shabab in their multi-tiered media strategy.

Their online presence fosters the creation of imagined online communities (Anderson, 1991), providing a political arena that incites political action and connection. The transfer to the cyber realm has seen the establishment of a phenomenon called the 'electric jihad' and the 'cyber jihad' and feeds into the dangerous phenomenon and strategy of 'lone wolves', encouraged by al-Qaeda, al-Shabab and ISIS. Reflecting the wider structural shifts of a more leadership-less membership approach to these organisations. Several authors (Conway, 2006; Matusitz and Minei, 2011) stress how the Internet is providing new opportunities for terrorists to engage in direct communications with their stakeholders and disseminate tailored content for their different target audiences. Ultimately, the Internet helps terrorists "...control over the content of their message(s)...extends their ability to shape how different target audiences perceive them and to manipulate not only their own image, but also the image of their enemies" (Conway, 2006:284). The opportunities these new methods of communicating and informing stakeholders possess is central to this thesis. This study will contribute to the field demonstrating how the Internet is providing opportunities for terrorists to engage in branding too. Digital magazines offer a controlled outlet for communication directly from the terrorists, providing an opportunity to control or at least shape public perception. Conway (2006) expands on how the Internet enables terrorist activity further through enabling fund raising and financial donations; it fosters the decentralized nature of such networks, recruitment and information gathering. Whilst increased exposure creates more vulnerability to these groups the pay offs are clearly worth the risk (Conway, 2006). These pay offs being the result of well-created messages heard by a global audience that influence public opinion, and recently developed digital magazines are becoming one reliable means of delivering these messages.
3.3 Al-Shabab and (Social) Media

Al-Shabab was at their most notorious between 2007 and 2008 (Menkhaus, 2014). When they were once considered the most dangerous al ‘Qaeda affiliated group (Fergusson, 2013) and today deemed the biggest threat to peace in Somalia (United Nations, 2017). In the ever-evolving competing marketplace of ideologies and terrorist groups, al-Shabab has fared well in the competition of staying abreast with technology innovation. Evolving to the demands of the political and technological landscape and have “…distinguished itself as one of the most sophisticated—and in more recent times, conflicted—jihadi users of communication technology” (Menkhaus, 2014:309). Demonstrating their digital prowess during their 2013 terrorist attack in Westgate shopping Mall in Nairobi, using social media site Twitter to carefully constructed 140 characters to maintain control of the message, perceptions and act as the point of contact (Agbiboa, 2014). Digital media has enabled al-Shabab to “…better coordinate, fundraise, recruit, and demoralize its enemies” (Menkhaus, 2014:309). The Internet and digital media have created the opportunity of having a global audience, which is reflected in their targeting of multiple audiences. Interestingly, Menkhaus (2014) found al-Shabab employ ICT for various international audiences such as Somali diaspora and Muslims in general and that it has helped the group transform further into an established transnational terrorist group. This is mist likely due to issues concerning accessibility to the Internet within Somalia and parts of East Africa, showing critical reflexivity on the groups’ behalf. However, Menkhaus’ (2014) study found social media starting to become a double-edged sword for the group, whose branding strategies appear weak in a communications context dominated by ISIS.

As noted, al-Shabab inherited a historical and sentimentally loaded nationalist narrative to use in fuelling their globally recognized brand, of being an “… Islamic resistance…a legitimate act of self-defence by a Muslim people occupied by imperialists Ethiopian Christian invaders…” (Menkhaus, 2014:312). Furthermore, much like ISIS, Menkhaus’ (2014) study found al-Shabab’s Internet strategy to encompass several themes. One is to implement a global caliphate (Menkhaus, 2014). Positioning the group to be adventurous in order to romanticise Jihad, and to encourage the displaced Muslims to return to the land of the izzat (honour), which has been a very effective message conveyed digitally (Menkhaus, 2014). Much like they do with their digital magazines, the posting of their Youtube videos on various websites has proven successful (Menkhaus, 2014). With video testimonies
empathizing the excitement of jihad. Al-Shabab also makes great use of chat rooms and Facebook, particularly for encouraging participation and interaction. The 2013 Westgate attack proved the group able of not only inheriting narrative and brand, but creating it too. However, social media may provide some obstacles and al-Shabab “… may face real difficulties gaining traction beyond a narrow demographic. Waging a war of narratives requires not only the right medium and right message, but also the right messenger” (Menkhaus, 2014:318). With public internal conflicts on social networking sites hindering the credibility of the group as well as their slower recovery to accounts being shut down once tracked or traced, this paranoia feeds into the irony of the group being considered tech-savvy and further influences the digital magazine medium for delivery. Consequently, the field is seeing a rise in the significance to their lower risk, highly sophisticated digital magazines. Driving the importance in the analysis of this medium not only by al-Shabab but other terrorist groups too.

3.4 Terrorism and Branding

British Prime Minister Theresa May confirms the noticeable trend and rapid evolution of terrorism at the latest G7 meeting in May 2017, where she acknowledged the grave consequences of terrorists’ shifting to the cyber realm in order to pursue agendas (Parker and Chassany, 2017). However, one dimension former MI5 director General Jonathan Evans pointed out back in 2007 was the reference to the Al Qaeda brand. Evans’ speech addressed the increasing concern of transnational terrorism, which without a doubt is aided by technology innovation, where the extension of the al Qaeda brand and its franchises is of great concern for UK stability and their campaign targeting the UK (The Guardian, 2007). Particular stress was placed on Somalia. As predicted, al-Shabab officially re-established their alliance with al Qaeda in 2009, two years after this speech, becoming a franchise and an ‘extension’ of the al Qaeda brand. Al-Shabab has also formed alliances with Nigerian based Boko Haram since and provides training (Agbiboa, 2013). Demonstrating another internal organizational benefit of ICT for them.

Branding is a concept often applied in a commercial context but is now too leading an academic trajectory in terrorism research that sees branding theories lending themselves to the field of terrorism. Similar buzzwords such as “strategic communication”, “narrative”,

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“franchise”, “logo” and “brand” are at the forefront of this field, lending themselves to the analysis of modern terrorism (Archetti, 2012:1). Archetti (2012) further advocates for the significance of the application of branding and brand management approach toward understanding and deconstructing terrorism. Archetti (2012) acknowledges the similarities between companies and terrorist organisations and uses Al Qaeda to exemplify how and why terrorist groups are increasingly being referred to as brands and how terrorists use branding and marketing skills to attract recruits online. The promotion of their product online is integral in order to compete against other terrorist organisations and brands in this constructed competitive marketplace. The ‘product’ being varying values and dimensions to extremist ideology that are packaged and sold in order to gain publicity, support and recruits, or in commercial language, customers.

As mentioned previously, Melki and Jabado (2016) claim the use of branding strategies by terrorist organisations is a field vastly understudied, and is a practice not limited to political and commercial realms. Laura Huey (2015) looks into how initially the encompassing and mastering of ICT and digital media in itself contributed to the creation of the rebranding of terrorists and terrorism more broadly. Keene (2011) describes how al Qaeda is known to be the first terrorist group to fully harness technology innovation and served as means to develop their brand of being tech-savvy. The phenomenon of political jamming referred to as ‘jihadi cool’ rebranded terrorism as being cool through their sophisticated adaption to the digital landscape, appealing to youth populations and subcultures through music videos, and magazines to name a few (Huey, 2015).

Fahoum and Width (2006) analysed the branding and marketing strategy of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (SGPS), an Algerian-based extremist Islamic terrorist group. Their study sought to investigate the importance and concern surrounding the way governments and terrorists project their image through strategically motivated messages and narratives. Their study into this developing phenomenon found the psychology behind marketing is the same behind terrorism: “Both business advertisers and terrorist group recruiters seek to gain more individuals who are willing to buy their ‘product’, and more importantly who would be willing to market that product on their behalf. The goal: more customers, more committed and motivated buyers of the product which translates for the
businessman to more capital, and for the terrorist, more ‘believers’ from which to choose from for operations” (Fahoum and Width, 2006:2). The study found that there is a correlation between the message construction used by SGPC and their success in resonating this message with intended stakeholders for influencing recruitment. The authors identified the SGPC to be conducting a successful persuasion campaign much like Al-Shabaab and ISIS, and leverage cultural historical grievances to help the content for their advertising resonate with their audience(s) and convince them of the buy-in benefits if joining their group or mission. In a competitive market place and overcrowded environment, brand management is key to entice recruitment and funding.

Pelletier et al. (2016:894) investigated ISIS’ messaging strategy and identified various mobilisation mechanism the group use and found them to be the most effective at directing and disseminating a message, allowing: “…widespread appeal and legitimacy, ISIS relies heavily on Islam and Sharia as a vehicle to further its message”. Furthermore, Melki and Jabado (2016) conducted a similar study, which investigated the role social media and branding plays in ISIS’ mediated public diplomacy and proves most significant to the field. ISIS has so quickly and successfully captured the attention the mainstream media and has used it to strengthen their brand, generate worldwide exposure and recognition. Their success in capturing the attention of a global audience guarantees the continued enforcement of their brand, both through detail oriented visual signals as well as in the acts and messages themselves, imbuing the brand associations to a global audience. Melki and Jabado (2016) explain how ISIS employs branding for differentiation purposes, to express their brand values and to gain or convert potential (international) recruits. The production of highly sophisticated choreographed videos of violent spectacles, for example, strengthens their “…ominous and terrifying image” (Melki and Jabado, 2016:93). Their consistency in branding themselves with military prowess, as digital media savvy, as ruthless yet as a solution to disenfranchised Muslims around the world, give them an important element of authenticity (Melki and Jabado, 2016). Ultimately, “ISIS’s synergistic use of terrorism, social media, effective storytelling, and branding achieves at least five public diplomacy aims: Gain mainstream media exposure and push advantageous news frames; create the illusion of a powerful unified group; project a favourable image to target global audiences; recruit supporters in foreign states; and portray life under the Caliphate as a sustainable alternative
lifestyle to the West and as a response to deeply rooted grievances” (Melki and Jabado, 2016:94). However, Colas (2017) reminds us that even though ISIS is the most recognised terrorist brand, they aren’t monopolists. Consequently, they may prove essential in providing inspiration or blueprints for other likeminded groups.

Szenes and Shamieh (2015) investigated the extent and effectiveness of ISIS’ propaganda in the virtual space. Their analysis of various SNSs and information products found ISIS to use their carefully constructed and often emotionally charged messages for not only recruitment purposes and to create an illusion of power like Melki and Jabado (2016), but as a means of religious justification. Their study found ISIS to often use their supporters and members as messengers, and indirectly publish through their social media accounts. Furthermore, they found the practice of nation branding was heavily relied upon in various digital mediums. Brutality and the glorification of violence and extremism is justified by religion: “…they are decisively trying to maintain a nation brand based on extremism through beheading under the umbrella of the right Islam and the right religion” (Szenes and Shamieh, 2015:28). Gilboa (2008) understands this theoretically applied trajectory as a new development for public diplomacy. A concept relevant here is a “brand state” (Gilboa, 2008:67), a concept applicable to ‘virtual states’ too, where in this case terrorists need to attract investors and recruits. The Internet provides opportunities for self-promotion, for the employment of branding and PR with digital magazines being one such outlet worth investigating.

Beifuss and Bellini (2013) conducted a study on branding terror, more specifically looking at the visual representations, expressions and extensions of a brand (groups aim), which can be understood through various visual icons, such as a logo. Now whilst this study focuses on symbolism and the different design practices in terrorist logos, their understanding in the application of branding by terrorists is to trigger certain emotions, associated beliefs and values. That is exactly what this study can take from Beifuss and Bellini’s study on branding terror. Adding, “With numerous active groups around the world (several of them having similar ideology and the same goals), ‘branding’ and ‘marketing’ become important elements of the terrorist group’s overall strategy” (Beifuss and Bellini, 2013:10). Logos are particularly important to differentiate from other groups and brands. They should communicate what the brand stands for but also encourage recruitment, fundraising and so forth through the various
triggers. Some symbols worth mentioning is their observation are swords and assault rifles to represent death, military strength, aggression and trigger fear. Features and quotes from the Qu’ran, images of mosques and imams as a Muslim declaration of faith. However, the logo is only one component of a brand or projection of a brand and Beifuss and Bellini (2013) are less focused on what the symbols in each go the logos necessarily mean, but more about how the practice of branding and marketing within terrorism respond to the same rules as branding a commercial product or organization. The brand should publicise the group’s ideology and help distinguish them from others, such as marking territory. How terrorists seek to brand themselves is key. So whilst logos are one branding device for moulding behaviour by enticing fear in this psychological strategy of terrorism, the symbols are meant to entice certain emotional short cuts and connotations.

Daniel Agbiboa studies terrorism activity more broadly on the African continent, looking at both al-Shabab and Boko Haram. ‘Jama’atu Ahlus- Sunnah Lidda’Awati Wal Jihad’, also known more commonly as Boko Haram. Boko Haram is an Islamic terrorist group from northeast Nigeria (meaning ‘Western Education is Unlawful’) (Agbiboa, 2013:53). Agbiboa (2013:54) reinforces this apparent commonality in most self-proclaimed ‘Islamic’ terrorist groups around the world, who understands the rise radical Islamism to be similar to that of Gordon & Gordon (2013). That it is due to the social, political and economically instability much of the continent face as a result of historical systems hindering real satisfactory development: “…The shortcomings of these societies created an aperture for extremists to exploit a sense of civilizational humiliation with a re-reading of Islamic history and doctrine that blames and abhors the West... jihadist groups are infusing religion into a long-churning brew of grievances about corruption, repression, injustice, and unfair distribution of wealth and power”. This rhetoric is becoming an increasingly common link and foundation for most terrorist groups and their brands. Vidino et al. (2010:224) exemplify al Qaeda’s attempts at hijacking conflicts to leverage credibility and manipulate them “rhetorically and operationally” to become conflicts between Islam and infidels. The noticeable shift in rhetoric to encompass global jihad and transnational jihad/terrorism is ever more apparent and strategic.
3.5 Terrorist Magazines

Digital magazines serve as one outlet or product that promotes, communicates and reinforces intended brands. This increasingly popular strategy has become a reliable means of communication among different terrorist organizations, particularly due to the easy dissemination of pdfs across the Internet and SNSs (Zelin, 2017). Digital magazines are one example of how terrorists are adapting to and harnessing modern communication tools, as demonstrated by the domino effect seen in the establishment of digital magazines by a lot of terrorist groups today. Not only are there few studies on al-Shabab’s brand, but also little-to-no studies exist on their digital magazine Gaidi Mtaani, particularly any analysis of any branding and persuasion strategies projected. However, what we do know from the few studies that do include acknowledgements to Gaidi Mtaani is that it is propaganda serving the promotion of the group. Analysis of their magazine gives great insight into their strategy and thus of great importance (Anderson and McKnight, 2014). Anderson and McKnight’s (2014) research investigated what impact Kenya’s invasion into Somalia from 2011 had and how al-Shabab has responded as a result. Part of their analysis was of al-Shabab’s transforming strategy with the creation of Gaidi Mtaani. However, their research only analysed the first four issues that were available at that time. These authors refer to Gaidi Mtaani as being a “…slick, visually powerful, professionally written and well argued” (Anderson and McKnight, 2014:22). Their study found the magazine “…demonstrates that Al-Shabaab (and Al-Hijra) can claim to be among the most technically competent and media-savvy of Islamist organizations… revealing important aspects of Al-Shabaab’s recruitment and propaganda strategy” (Anderson and McKnight, 2014:22). However, ultimately their study had an analytical angle of how Kenya’s actions may be contributing to the refocusing of the group, where they found huge elements of propaganda. Particularly, in the continuation of foreign invasions from Kenya and other nations into Somalia to feed into the groups call of the historical continuation of colonialism, as discussed in the background.

Amble and Meleagrou-Hitchens’ (2014) study investigates the success seen in al-Shabab’s recruitment strategies and tactics. These authors found Gaidi Mtaani to encourage violence, action and individual jihad, particularly in Kenya, where al-Shabab encourage East Africans to plan their own attacks, feeding into the ‘lone wolf’ phenomenon. Furthermore, we know that al-Shabab was directly inspired by al Qaeda’s digital magazine *Inspire* (Amble and
Meleagrou-Hitchens, 2014:528). Whilst it can be argued that Al-Shabaab are receiving less publicity today in the mass media and academia than what they may be used to, particularly when cast in the shadows of the success seen by ISIS’ communications and digital prowess. However, as Melki and Jabado (2016:94) state, “Regardless of ISIS’s fate, these tactics will probably be utilised by emerging groups, which makes examining such a phenomenon worthwhile”. Therefore, the thematic commonalities between the subjective magazines are becoming apparent, particularly in terms of what purpose these media products serve as a communication extension, some will be stated below.

A considerable amount of effort is put into the content of these digital publications, where the layout and style too allude to a sense of commercial professionalism. Greg Simons (2016, 2017) investigated the role of online magazines from two well known, competing terrorist brands: Al Qaeda and ISIS. The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how competing terrorist groups implement communication strategies in order to gain publicity and shape the perceptions of their target audience(s) (Simons, 2016). The analysis of Dabiq and Inspire deconstructed the information used to promote and project their subjective brands to English-speaking western audiences. Ultimately, to illustrate the message packaging, frames and narratives they employ and found both Dabiq and Inspire - ISIS’ and al Qaeda’s respective digital magazines to follow “...communication mechanisms that promote their brand identity and ideology”(Simons, 2016: 2). Brandon Colas (2017) looks more closely into ISIS’ English language magazine Dabiq and what this magazine serves. Now whilst Colas (2017:1) too acknowledges the level of sophistication and dedication in ISIS’ media effort, “The conventional view holds that ISIS uses Dabiq for recruiting, although this recruiting consists of urging emigration to ISIS territory”. However, Pelletier et al. (2015) note wider purposes than just recruitment for Dabiq. One interesting theme within the content of Dabiq noted by Colas (2017:180) was “The numerous articles criticizing other jihadi groups are ways not only to differentiate the ISIS brand but also showing zealots within their own organization that they could do worse elsewhere”.

This chapter has argued and exemplified the importance of this burgeoning research field and has provided an extensive review of relevant branding and terrorism studies. Furthermore, the development in the relationship between the media and terrorism has seen further mimicking of commercial strategies such as magazines, more specifically digital magazines. The
analysis of branding as projected in these magazines is key. This study will not only contribute to this rapidly evolving research field, but contribute to potential futures studies which could compare the brands not only seen in al Qaeda and ISIS’s magazines, but al-Shabab’s too. This will further aid potential counter strategies in terms of content and strategy. This study will now proceed by presenting the theoretical framework. Further explanation on branding will be briefly presented before a full discussion on Rhetoric theory will be employed and adopted to help answer the RQ will commence, in order to help analyse and explain how al-Shabab construct their brand in Gaidi Mtaani.

Chapter 4. Theoretical Framework

This chapter will conclude by bringing together the concept of brand and rhetoric theory to introduce a hybrid theoretical framework. This study will present a theoretically and conceptually informed analytical framework that seeks to answer the research question: how do al-Shabab employ Aristotle’s rhetorical triad of ethos, pathos and logos to construct their brand?

4. 1 Branding: More than just a symbolic entity

In order to answer the RQ it is very important to reiterate what it is we mean by branding and a brand. Much like rhetoric, branding stems from ancient Greece when traders would meet in the agora - Greek for a marketplace - to sell their goods (Moore and Reid, 2008). This is where the practice for identifying and differentiating goods and organisations originates, where branding “…served as names, symbols, or trademarks for quick recognition” (Matusitz, 2015:240). A crude understanding of a brand can quite simply be understood as a “…symbolic entity” (Lilleker, 2006:41). However, as stated by political communication theorist Lilleker (2006:43) brands have expanded and elevated beyond merely strategic purposes, “…at the heart of any brand is their kernel, which contains the ethos, ideology and beliefs”. Shaping perceptions through communicating (organisational or individual) values and beliefs is fundamental in building relationships in the hopes of generating brand loyalty and awareness. Organizational theorist and business consultant David Aaker (2014:1) confers with the conceptual development of branding by stating modern brands are “far more than a name and logo, [a brand] is an organization’s promise to a customer to deliver what the
Brand stands for not only in terms of functional benefits but also emotional, self-expressive, and social benefits...an evolving relationship based on the perceptions and experiences that a customer has every time he or she connects to the brand”. It is these more intangible and holistic attributions that affect consumer behaviour through the influence of various value systems; the values and meaning imbued with a brand (Kapferer, 2008). Therefore, brands are ultimately mechanisms that generate an intended automatic association based upon emotional resonance and desires and the practice of branding requires a much more deliberate and purposeful approach in building relationships and connections between the brand and the audience, as well as managing brand perceptions.

Christine Archetti (2012) also agrees and in her analysis of terrorist communication found three definitive components of a brand that also correlate with Aaker (2014). Establishing vision, values and mission was the key and forms a concept she refers to as a brand platform (Archetti, 2012). A brand platform “…defines the objectives in the long term (vision), establishes what the identity is about (values) and justifies action in the short term (mission)” (Archetti, 2012:9). Brand vision needs to distinguish itself from other competitors, and to build a brand vision you need to have brand values. These brand values need to be communicated, as this is what connects a brand with potential customers through the curation and uncovering of emotional responses. A successful branding strategy entails active buy-in to an organization’s mission, vision, organisational values and what it stands for. As advised by Aaker (2014:28) this study will “…identify all aspirational associations” in the process of identifying al-Shaabab’s brand vision. Brand associations “…can take many forms including attributes, functional benefits, applications, user-imagery, brand personality, organisational programs and values, and self-expressive, emotional or social benefits” (Aaker, 2014:28).

It is these components and more human like character attributes and values that help create a unique set brand associations that represents what an organisation stands for in an attempt differentiation. These refer to a set of beliefs or ideals that could be smart, curious, innovative, honest, and creative and so forth. So not only can we understand the wider purpose of a brand to represent and activate certain values through emotions or reason, they embed brand values with intended stakeholders. An effective brand is a short cut and automatic association of values, norms, and experience with a certain person, product, service
or organisations. Therefore, the analysis of data will deconstruct what associations does al-Shabab want various stakeholders to think of them as a brand. Therefore, the brand embodies a range of emotions and connotations that a stakeholder must be able to recognise (Matusitz, 2015). A brand needs to be easily recognised by its intended audience and convey the group's values, attributes, legitimacy or promise. This builds a relationship with the receiver (a consumer or intended stakeholder) who decodes the verbal and non-verbal information. Therefore the cognitive relevance of linguistics and semiotics is their ability to trigger and associate products to the emotional parts of the brain, that assists an emotional dimension to being imbedded with certain ‘products’, be it a person or an organization, for individuals to identify with and form an emotional connection (Gilboa, 2008). The deliberate use of words has the power of igniting certain action, behaviours and thoughts. Branding involves the careful curation of the right associations in order to prime any desired outcomes.

However, trust, credibility and authenticity are identified as being of shared importance for branding. Aaker (2014:33) refers to these as proof points, which are needed to ensure the execution of any promise or values, “...every brand vision element should ultimately have proof points”. Matusitz (2015) builds upon the importance of trust with his three indicators of a successful brand being. “Differentiation, credibility, and authenticity” are his three key components to a successful brand (Matusitz, 2015:241). Differentiation can be achieved through the curation of brand associations, what values and beliefs do they have, what emotional experience, desires and emotional resonance does the brand achieve on its audience. However, credibility needs these “proof points”, which Matusitz (2015: 240) confers “…the ability of an organisation to effectively publicize its mission and identity through its brand lends credibility to the reality that brand management plays …” This authenticity is achieved through the brand’s ethos, its character, such as honesty. These association appeals that are actively encouraged and witnessed being built into brands are persuasive buy-in strategies (Perloff, 2010)

As we have now established, branding is in the business of making meaningful relationships in order to gain loyalty. Therefore, branding requires a much more deliberate approach in building relationships and connections with stakeholders (Aaker, 2014). Beifuss and Bellini (2013:12) support the purposeful action of branding, where terrorist organisations “… attach
emotional associations to an undifferentiated ‘product’, and to allow the audience to identify
the organization and what it stands for”. Consequently, brands are seen as intermediary tools
that connect sender and receiver (Matusitz, 2015). Therefore, what needs to be reinforced is
that the practice of branding goes far beyond simple symbolic entities, to now needing to
actively involve brand management, with a brand strategy shaping and maintaining
perceptions and communicating their values (Matusitz, 2015). Brand management defined
“...a communication function that consists of examining and planning how a brand should be
positioned in the world, to what type of audience the brand should be targeted, and how the
ideal reputation of the brand should be preserved” (Matusitz, 2015:240). Therefore, it is these
components of credibility, authenticity, associations, vision and mission that form part of a
successful modern brand. As after all “A brand creates a mental shortcut that tells an observer
about an organisation’s goals, objectives, visions and positioning” (Simons, 2016:3). Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to identify the brand’s associations al-Shabab project
and convey in their digital magazine and looks to identify during the analysis. This study is
limited to the communicated values and expectations al-Shabab try to imbue as part of their
brand.

There may be some concerns with branding disconnecting or treating an organization as a
product and not focusing on the ideological implications, particularly when studying a
terrorist organization, but the established and evolved understanding of a brand needing to
actively build brand associations to any symbolic entity means the ideological components
can be analysed with this concept. As established in the previous research chapter, branding
proves integral in serving this thesis, with numerous parallels evident between branding and
terrorist organisations. A trajectory recognised in the academic realm, producing a rapidly
evolving research field: where the typically rigid concept can be applied for analysis to the
ever-competing market place of terrorist organisations in the war of ideas and words.
Branding takes a sender perspective, not an audience based analysis and seeks to understand
the attempts made in controlling and disseminating information to maintain or create various
goals or ideology, thus a suitable concept to analyse al-Shabab’s brand construction.

Knapton (2014) gives some sociological insight into why people join extremist groups and
how these terrorist groups attract members and sympathisers. He explains the need humans
crave for social interaction and how ostracising individuals or section of society plays a big
part: “Once ostracised, individuals may try to fortify their social needs by seeking out accepting groups. Research suggests that this makes individuals prone to social influence and joining negative groups” (Knapton, 2014:1). It is also these exact desires and needs brands tap into and try and leverage. Maslow’s (1943) hierarchical pyramid of needs and motivation theory helps us understand how and why terrorists harness the practice of branding. The five different interdependent tiers of needs, working from the bottom of the pyramid up and thus resembling importance are (1) physiological needs such as food, (2) safety, (3) belongingness and love, (4) esteem needs and (5) self-actualization (Taormina and Gao, 2013). It is the top three (latter) stages that terrorists really try to evoke and branding is one way in doing so. Words have the power to ignite certain action, behaviours and thoughts (associations), the right words used for curating the right associations through engagement can see the moulding of desired outcomes by the communicator. Perception, the construct of a reality and persuasion are the key dimension in focus. The divisive use of certain words may well be employed to generate desired brand associations for the purpose of influence and shaping perceptions. Rhetoric is a form of persuasive communication and the analysis of certain language will identify any persuasive communications that express al-Shabab’s brand (values). It will help analyse Al Shabaab's use of specific words and language in order to ultimately promote their brand and ideas. When we understand a brand to be a mechanism that generates an intended automatic association based upon emotional resonance and desires in order to influence the thoughts and actions of a stakeholder, rhetoric is used to bring this about. More specifically through the use of logic, emotion and credibility. This chapter will now proceed by presenting a discussion surround rhetoric theory, concluding that Aristotle’s model of persuasive communication principles will be best for identifying which rhetorical means al-Shabab implement for the expression/construction (consciously or not) of their brand (values) through their digital magazine Gaidi Mtaani.

4.2 Rhetoric

This thesis will focus on al-Shabab’s brand (values, ideology, credibility and emotional resonance) but also the modes of persuasion in the construction and maintenance of this perception. Therefore, rhetoric will help this study identify the how divisive construction influences the process in decoding certain language to identify their brand.
Rhetoric is known to be the art in using persuasive speech and is defined as “…discourse in which source encoders (i.e., message senders) aim at informing, persuading, or motivating particular message receivers in specific situations” (Matusitz, 2015:334); strategic political communication. The etymology of the word Rhetoric derives from the words ‘rhetor’, which means ‘public speaker’. However, much like branding, rhetoric historically dates back to ancient Greece, when the gathering for public speaking was commonplace and encouraged (Aristotle, 1991. Ultimately, these environments lead to the perfecting of sophisticated arguments for persuasion. This term refers to a group of teachers and practitioners known as The Sophists who would offer their expertise in effective public speaking. Although, it was considered a form of public speaking with less purpose and ethics by Plato due to its nature of arguing for the sake of arguing. Instead, Plato’s influence on Aristotle creates insight into Plato’s more discreet contribution to the rhetoric field. Aristotle’s (1991) definition of rhetoric entailed several concepts for successful persuasive communication that are still greatly practiced today (Perloff, 2010). However, due its nature of dancing between truth and persuasion there are a lot of negative connotations with rhetoric being a form of deception. Aristotle: The Art of Rhetoric (1991:74) states, “Let rhetoric be the power to observe the persuasiveness of which any particular matter admits”. Aristotle’s tradition of rhetoric identifies three main means of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. These can be understood as “logos (logic and reason), pathos (appeals to emotion) and ethos (character, ethics) to persuade audiences” (Soules, 2015:3).

The key in establishing a relationship between sender and receiver is valued in rhetoric as much as branding. As Simons (2006:580), confers “…rhetoric focuses on the relationship between the sender and the texts”, where often persuasion trumps truth. In the war of information and ideologies and the battle over legitimacy, acceptance in one’s actions is integral. It is a sender-based mechanism of persuasion to prime and mobile actions and thoughts. Burke (1950) places great emphasis on the process of identification in rhetoric, where through the act of persuasion, the rhetor should resonate with the audience and cause them to identify with their interests. It is worth noting for future research that both Burke (1950) and Barthes (1977) expand the application and analysis of rhetoric beyond language to images and broader visual domains. Acknowledging the way in which images can too be used in persuasive ways. Rhetoric speaks of the power of words, but it also expands to include visual domains too, where marketers or in this case al-Shabab, often use rhetoric to
build their brand. Therefore, manipulation of such non-verbal communication may be rife and is a point expanded upon in both the methodology and conclusion. The use of texts to communicate meaning, induce actions and/or form attitudes through rhetorical means is what is important for this thesis. The identification of these rhetorical means in their communication is essential. It will help us identify how they use persuasive communications to express their brand. It is worth noting that one particular phrase or sentence can have a multitude of rhetorical applications, it can be both ethos and logos or pathos and ethos and so is not just limited to one, it may use 2 or 3 of these rhetorical mean. Other available means of persuasion include labelling, slogans, catch phrases that see the application of meaning, as well as symbols and symbolism. Rhetoric tropes are also an effective act of persuasion, defined as “a figure of style, an analogy, a myth, or a metaphor” (Matusitz, 2015:334). This is the process of creating persuasive content. Some organizations or groups will be more successful in blending these persuasive communication strategies and consistency with their message/brand equity than others, whilst prioritizing the three different pillars subjectively when not evenly. Flags, analogies, figurative speech can be used to help ethos, pathos and logos.

4.2.1 Ethos, Pathos and Logos

This study will employ Aristotle’s rhetorical model of ethos, pathos and logos to analyse and deconstruct al-Shabab’s brand (associations, vision, mission, credibility etc). This is due to Aristotle’s pillars for creating compelling and powerful arguments remaining the golden standard for persuasion tactics. It is worth noting that certain words, phrases and wider units of analysis can serve multiple rhetorical devices at once.

(1) **Ethos** refers to the credibility of the speaker, whose character is the appeal; an appeal to stakeholders that is made through the nature of the communicator in order to indirectly or directly attain a certain level and type of credibility, ultimately to build trust (Perloff, 2010; Matusitz, 2013). In this instance, we need to ask ourselves ‘what is the ethos of the speaker?’ (Matusitz, 2013:185). The power of persuasion is found in the credibility of the speaker. The character of the speaker or author needs to sound credible in their delivery by communicating or demonstrating a good sense of virtue (Aristotle, 1991). Braet (1992:311) re-examined Aristotle’s rhetorical triad and concluded: “True credibility results when the audience
attributes these three qualities to the speaker because of what he said, these virtues are good sense, virtue and goodwill”. Ethos is thus manifested through the speaker’s personal character but also through ambassadors or notable figures and experts. Here we may look to identify the credibility of al-Shabab’s representatives, how they attempt to build credible authentic characters and ambassadors in order to ultimately build credibility for the group. They appeal to a sense of authority. Arguably, these are forms of ‘social proof’ in order to drive credibility and value, where the experience of the person involved is leveraged. The specific language employed will give great insight. Words such as quality and honesty would be direct ethos expressions if these are the virtues they deemed important. Condoning others as being less honest for example is an indirect attempt at communicating ethical proof of that being a virtue they adhere to. This alludes to human characteristics, so in terms of branding this can be seen as a brand ethos or personality, useful for affecting the behaviour and thoughts of intended audiences. This differentiates a brand as being trustworthy or caring for example, or with an authoritative endorsement as a reference. Ethos is one way in which a brand can generate an intended and required authentic and credible automatic association. It will help the study understand what al-Shabab stand for and build their reliability and trustworthiness and moral philosophy as we are more likely to listen and believe them.

(2) Logos involves the use of logic and reasoned discourse to persuade the audience (Aristotle, 1991; Soules, 2015; Perloff, 2010). It is the appeal to reasonable arguments and facts/evidence. Here we need to ask ourselves, “What is the logos of the message being sent…” (Matusitz, 2013:185). Therefore, logos can manifest in forms of justification for certain actions, and the use of ‘facts’ or statistics to support argumentation. The use of history, historical events and examples of human rights atrocities may well be leveraged and manipulated as forms of ‘proof’ or ‘reasoning’. Drawing upon Muslim grievances, for example, is a mechanism we already know is very common in Islamic terrorism content (Melki and Jabado, 2016; Vidini et al, 2010; Agbiboa, 2014; Menkhaus, 2014). This is where you can also find false logics or fallacies, such as ISIS claiming to be just a defensive organisation in their magazine Dabiq, trying to restore an ancient regime of geographical politics (Simons, 2016). This is the same with al Qaeda, who again position themselves as being defensive “…to protect a pure form of Islam” (Simons, 2016:5). The appeal to supporting evidence in order to convince an audience to embrace their brand by stating facts
and theories is the objective. Therefore, such themes may well be present in Gaidi Mtaani too. Therefore, identifying and interpreting the appeal of logic present in Gaidi Mtaani helps give insight into the ideological baggage of al-Shabab. Logos is arguably more applicable to the ideological and verbal (including writing) aspects of communication. When we talk of ideology we mean quite simple “a system of beliefs” (Jongman, 2017:45). This could be a doctrine, principles, ideas and so forth. It forms the basis of the connection and relationship between the speaker and intended audience as another the means to prime and mobilise individuals through influencing their thoughts, opinions and actions. Logos is the rational argument or the justification of events such as a terrorist attack and is often present in terrorist communication. It can be used to persuade people to believe something. Logos may be harnessed to justify violence or calls to action in the defence of noble and just goals and desire for self-determination would be another example. Melki and Jabado (2016) found ISIS to be creating themselves as an alternative solution to the increasing persecution against Muslims, offering a state of hope, joy and freedom/equality. This now leads into forms of pathos too.

(3) **Pathos** is using the power of emotional response to persuade a target audience (Aristotle, 1991; Soules, 2015; Perloff, 2010). The appeals of emotion are harnessed to create an emotional response in the audience in order to convince them of your argument. These emotions can be both positive and negative, such as fear, hope, anger, pain, happiness, patriotism, guilt, hate, desire, outrage and so forth. This rhetorical appeal is particularly important when looking at how a brand makes a stakeholder feel; the brand experience. For example, Coca-Cola's slogan is “open happiness”, which creates this jovial experience and association (The Coca-Cola Company, 2017). Pathos can then help a brand create an element of fun or youthfulness for example, or desirability with the audience. Another opposing example would be the use of ethos to evoke feelings of fear in order to project formidability or sacrifice. Therefore, pathos is used to generate associations based upon emotional resonance and desires. Simons (2016:6) found ISIS to at times “...create a psychological state whereby the audience experiences positive emotions and strive to accomplish a task or duty”. Melki and Jabado (2016) found ISIS to be creating a sense of belonging, a utopian solution. This particular rhetorical means is very useful for urging action through creating a sense of urgency with fear, gaining consent and priming publics. Much of terrorism is to keep the
intimidation levels high, to keep the perception of risk high even if the actual levels of risk are not increasing (Matusitz and O’Hair, 2008). This creates desired experiences associated with a brand. This method of emotional appeals is particular effective in explicitly communicating intended values and what it is they stand for too. Other rhetorical devices can support pathos such as emotionally charged catch phrases and repetition, connotations, figurative speech and emotional narrations.

This is precisely what rhetoric allows for. After all, as political scientist Niccolo Machiavelli (1984) said himself, “It is better to be feared than loved, if you cannot be both”. Throughout history, emotional appeals have been used for governance (self or state) purposes, political communication. French sociologist Gustave Le Bon (2014) pioneered the field of mass psychology and draws emphasis on the use of emotion and sentiment in a revolution. This dimension to psychology and persuasion understands how emotions can be manipulated to prime and motivate an audience into thinking or acting in a manner that may not be in their best interest. Rhetoric that induces emotional appeal through language and symbols such as anger, fear or hope is a mobilising and priming strategy. Positive and negative pathos has the ability to trigger and associate products to the emotional parts of the brain that assists an emotional dimension to being imbedded with certain brands (Gilboa, 2008). It allows a brand to connect with their target audience on an emotional, not a rational level like ethos and logos and draws upon more impulsive emotional reasoning.

The analytical framework will apply all three of Aristotle’s mechanisms for persuasion: ethos, pathos and logos. Looking at how al-Shabab use these tools to communicate and project their brand in Gaidi Mtaani. This study will now proceed with the methodology chapter and present the research design and data collection methods employed in this study.

**Chapter 5. Methodology**

This is a qualitative research design that implements qualitative content analysis as the research method in order to analyse al-Shabab’s digital magazines for expressions of their brand values and brand associations through the rhetorical tools of ethos, pathos and logos. The analysis of the magazine pdfs will focus on an English-language only
and written texts sample. Analysis extends to the context of the specific characteristics of the magazines and how the articles operate within the magazine as a whole. This chapter will describe the research design, the research method and its operationalization, data collection and finally any limitations and validity.

5.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

5.1.1 How to analyse Gaidi Mtaani?

The purpose of this study is to identify what desired brand associations and values al-Shabab are trying to project in their digital magazine Gaidi Mtaani. This study needs to analyse the content of their magazines, specifically their English articles, to identify what purposes the rhetorical forms of ethos, pathos and logos serve in their attempts at communicating and projecting their desired brand associations and values. Berg and Lune (2004) make a valid argument for the advantages of qualitative research methods, as it is an approach that deconstructs meaning. Specifically, qualitative content analysis will be an essential method to derive this deeper level of meaning and interpretation from the content of Gaidi Mtaani, as this methods is less concerned with the measurement of “social variables” and instead concerned with “… the qualities that social phenomena have for the members of a society: the meanings or significance they attribute to beliefs, practices, appearances, types of person, and so forth. Content analysis, as a primarily quantitative method, is not well equipped to give access to those understandings…” (Ball and Smith, 1992:30). Thus the most suitable research design for this study. The specific technique harnessed in this study is thematic analysis, as it is most appropriate for pulling core themes from the data in line with the literature, theory and research questions. Allowing processes of induction and deduction. It will identify when and where al-Shabab use ethos, pathos and logos and interpret these in terms of what it is these tools were used to express. The rhetorical instruments are a means of expressing values and attributes for the construction of the brand. Therefore, this methodology will allow for the inference of these more complex communication practices, which is not possible with quantitative content analysis (Drisko and Maschi, 2016). Rhetoric analysis was considered as an alternative methodology, however this study wants to identify how the author is arguing, as well as what information the author is arguing for. Thematic content analysis allows his study to attain the necessary results to consequently answer the research question.
There are a few practicalities to address in terms of what this study understands content and text to be. Drisko and Maschi (2016:7) lend further input by defining what the study will understand as text: “…text actually refers to a wide range of communication media that can be stored in many different formats… texts, audio recordings, television shows and movies, images, and telephone calls, as well as to many forms of electronic data, now including social media”. The texts under analysis in this research study are the digital magazines and the content are the written texts. When this study refers to content it refers to “…words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated” (Neuman, 1997:272).

5.1.2 Operationalisation of Theoretical Framework

As previously mentioned, thematic analysis is a form of content analysis and is a research method that ultimately structures the content guided by the research question and theory. It is an essential method for deriving meaning from communications, where the process includes a more extensive analysis to include identifying themes and key ideas of meaning in context. So whilst thematic content analysis reduces the body of content, it simultaneously enlarges the data through the identification of wider meaning (Drisko and Maschi, 2016). In this case the identification of ethos, pathos and logos should allow the study to identify broader and more complex communication processes and themes in terms of brand associations and values the material promotes. The text is analysed by classifying any overarching categories or themes, executed by “…coding and categorizing the data… ” (Stemler, 2001). This study considers keywords, phrases and the magazines and articles as a whole to be the units of analysis; these will in turn be coded into broader categories and themes. The scope for the manifestation of ethos, pathos and logos can be as small as a single word or the entirety of an issue. A code can be any of these units of analysis. The categories of brand values and attributes will be determined through the identification of ethos, pathos and logos. Identifying these theoretical means will help the study understand what purpose they served in promoting certain brand values. McMillan (2000:81-82) outlines more detailed steps for conducting this analysis, “First, the investigator formulates a research question… second, the researcher selects the sample… The third step in the content analysis process is defining categories… Fourth, coders are trained, they code the content, and reliability of their coding is checked… Fifth, the data collected during the coding process is analysed and interpreted”. 

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Coding procedures are essential and will be harnessed in order to make sense of the data. Jonny Saldana (2015:3) defines a code as being “…most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data”. This study will use theoretically informed open coding as the analytical process to identify concepts and most appropriate for this methodology. The method of open coding is guided by the rhetoric and brand literature. The goal is to find repetitive patterns or consistencies in the data, often until a level of saturation is reached and to expect the curated codes and categories to become increasingly refined throughout the process (Saldana, 2013). Theoretical open-coding will be harnessed to deconstruct the text and identify the rhetorical devices of ethos, pathos, logos, which in turn will see the application of open coding to identify communicated brand associations. Theoretical coding will help discover core categories that identify these primary rhetorical themes. This particular method lets the data speak through the discovery of concepts during analysis. This process is looking for hidden meaning within the language, thus inductive and deductive. Codes will form categories and subcategories that in turn will form themes or concepts. “A theme is an outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded” (Saldana, 2015:13).

With this in mind, the first part is to start by analysing all the texts from the sample for the application of ethos, pathos and logos, as this is guiding the first part of the coding. The author will look for examples of where the inciting of emotion and reason is present for example. The author wants to look at how these rhetorical means are employed in the broader sense of communicating values and attributes. Therefore, once the text has been categorized into ethos, pathos and logos, the researcher will be able to inference further meaning into what brand associations, attributes and values are communicated through these rhetorical means in order to form new codes. This is the second part of the coding as a result of interpreting the data. Identifying these three forms of rhetoric will give the researcher an analytical framework to deduce al-Shabab’s brand values. Thus the second step will be to analyse what these rhetorical examples mean in terms of constructing values and attributes. In the articulation of my results, the researcher will look into how ethos, pathos and logos were employed to communicate al-Shabab’s brand values and attributes, stating what values and attributes the analysis found. Clear definitions of ethos, pathos and logos, as well as what is understood as a brand association were presented in the theory and will further shape the
coding process, where evidence of appealing to authority will be ethos and the appeal to logic will be logos and so forth.

The rhetorical instruments are a means of expressing values and attributes for the construction of the brand. Therefore, the analytical framework will be a dichotomy process whereby there will be two tracks looking for elements of branding and elements of rhetoric. The categorization and coding process of the content is suitable for identifying forms of rhetoric in the texts, as well as the wider meaning in terms of brand projection.

5.2 Empirical Data

Here the study will proceed by describing how the data was collected, the unit of analysis and what are the categories were identified.

5.2.1 Data Collection

The Magazines

The artefacts under analysis are al-Shabab’s digital magazines titled Gaidi Mtaani, which is Swahili for ‘terrorism in the streets’. There are 8 issues between 2012-2017 and the sample includes articles from all issues to date. The magazine is clearly targeted to multiple audiences as indicated by their use of several languages throughout the issues: English, Swahili, Arabic and Somali. Although it is worth noting that the amount of English articles over time increased drastically. From there being only one English article in the first issue in 2012, to their being only one non-English article in their latest issue 8 released in 2017. This will lead to the first limitation of this study to be elaborated in chapter 5.3. The structure of the magazines develops throughout the issues too, and will contribute to the analysis as an attempt at using ethos to express a specific brand association.

Sample

There are 24 English language articles across the 8 issues. This sample analysed 16 out of the possible 24 articles as a representative sample, totalling 94 pages of analysis. The scope of this thesis results in these imposing limits being enforced. Images will not be included and a focus is placed on the written texts, but the context and characteristics of the magazines will be included. However, a sufficient analysis is conducted due to it involving over half of the
total number of English articles. The magazines are published in pdf format, found at jihadology (Zelin, 2017 <http://jihadology.net/category/gaidi-mtaani/>), but for the purpose of this research study and as advised by my supervisor, the pdfs were downloaded for analysis.

The sample collection followed a systematic process of including the first chronological English article featured in every issue. When there were two English articles available, both were included in order to guarantee at least 2 articles from each issue. When an issue featured more than 2 English article’s the sample would take the 1st, 3rd and 5th article and thereafter. Issue 1 took the only English article. Issue 2 took the 2 only English articles. Issue 3, took the only 2 English articles. Issue 4 included 2 out of the 4 English articles. Issue 5 included the only 2 English articles available. Issue 6 included 2 out of the possible 4 English articles. Issue 7 included 3 out of 5 English articles. Issue 8 included 2 out of 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaidi Mtaani Issue No.</th>
<th>Article Title</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
<th>In-Text Referencing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue 1 05/04/2012</td>
<td>Leveling the Scales</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>Article 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 2 30/06/2012</td>
<td>A Long Way to Kismayu</td>
<td>7-16</td>
<td>Article 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operation Lina UKAFIRI</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>Article 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 3 03/03/13</td>
<td>A Greater Scheme of Things’</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>Article 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is Democracy and what is the Islamic verdict on Democracy?</td>
<td>17-22</td>
<td>Article 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 4 12/11/13</td>
<td>Westgate Operation: Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>Article 4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Was the Badru Operation a Cowardly Act?</td>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>Article 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 5 (no date found)</td>
<td>Muslims of Bangui &amp; Mombassa: A Tale of Tragedy: Sheikh Mukhtar Abu Zubair’s last address</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>Article 5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Plight of Muslims from Bangui to Mombasa</td>
<td>11-17</td>
<td>Article 5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Sample Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue 6</th>
<th>My Journey of Hijra &amp; Jihad’</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>Article 6.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fight for the sake of Allah not for Democracy</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>Article 6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 7</td>
<td>War with Peace</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>Article 7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/02/15</td>
<td>From the hood to an eternal paradise</td>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>Article 7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May Our Mothers be Bereaved of us should we fail to avenge our Prophet</td>
<td>34-39</td>
<td>Article 7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 8</td>
<td>Muslim of the year 2013</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>Article 8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/02/17</td>
<td>Be like Khalid or Fazul</td>
<td>22-31</td>
<td>Article 8.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Limitations, Validity and Ethical Considerations

The first limitation of this study is the analysis’ focus on the English language articles only found in Gaidi Mtaani. Different and tailored brand values most may be deliberately conveyed to different audiences through the different languages with the use of different rhetorical means. Nonetheless, the noticeable increase and ultimate dominance of the English language throughout the magazines sends a loud message in how the group are prioritizing and valuing their English speaking audience as an important stakeholder. As well as potentially acknowledging the accessibility issues for citizens based in East Africa.

It is important to note that al-Shabab has a full media division - al-Kata'ib - set up to serve a multitude of high quality media strategies. This study is limited to their magazine and does not include other communication outlets such as Youtube and Social Networking Sites, where different and/or overlapping content may be present. With that said, their digital magazines is one of their main communication outlets so most of their aims and purposes will be in there and are thus considered a trustworthy choice for answering the research question. However, this does not mean that al-Shabab doesn’t use other communication channels to convey their brand. The scope of this thesis did not allow for the analysis of all communication outlets. However, the projection of al-Shabab’s brand and expectations in
Gaidi Mtaani is an assumed communication extension of their broader brand strategy and activity.

Finally, it is not the intent of this research to promote or glorify this terrorist propaganda but rather to understand it and understand if and why it works. It should instead contribute to the strengthening of counter strategies.

In terms of reliability and validity, Golafshani (2003) argues that these concepts need to be redefined for their application in qualitative studies, particularly when finding the truth, as these concepts were originally applied to quantitative studies. The more “naturalistic approach” of qualitative studies acknowledges the involvement of the researcher, unlike in quantitative studies, where often the researcher can be understood as a contributing research instrument (Patton, 2002) (Golafshini, 2003). This leads to a key point in terms of interpretation and the subjectivity of the researcher; a consequent limitation to all qualitative studies if understood in light of both Patton (2002) and Golafshini (2003). The level of interpretation involved in this study requires a degree of self-reflection. This study is from the perspective of an English-speaking Western audience member, so may not only receive a slightly different message through English, but may also have different interpretations than a Kenyan Muslim who speaks both English, Arabic and Swahili for example. The researcher is aware of their subject position and in order to address this concern, carefully defined mechanisms were done in advance of the analysis and can be found in the theory. This included how to identify ethos, pathos and logos, as well as clearly defining a brand. Justification of each example will be provided through the analysis too, as to why certain texts were considered rhetorical and how this deduces certain values and attributes, with objective as possible descriptions.

In terms of access, these magazines were easily accessible through the Google search engine. One of the top results for ‘al-Shabab’s magazines Gaidi Mtaani’ was a website called ‘Jihadology’, which has links to every magazine issues in pdf. Therefore, in these terms there were very few ethical considerations, due to the texts being in a public domain, easily downloaded, thus open to scientific research.
Chapter 6. Analysis/Findings
This chapter involves a concise summary of the rhetorical findings interpreted through the conceptual lens of branding. As we have established, trust, authenticity and credibility is key in forming relationships and loyalty with stakeholders in the process of branding. Creating relationships through emotional resonance in attempts at expressing aspirational associations is vital for creating automated associations and experiences for any brand. Increasingly more terrorist groups are implementing these more commercial strategies in order to differentiate themselves in an increasingly over-crowded marketplace of terrorist groups that consists of over 60 sixty FTO’s. It is becoming an increasingly valued strategy in order to secure recruitment and fundraising and to ultimately persuade stakeholders into supporting and sympathising with their group over others. Rhetoric is the art of discourse, where language is a means to persuade and motivate an audience(s). In Aristotle’s model, he names three modes of persuasion: ethos, pathos and logos. Rhetoric allows this study to look into the intent behind certain discourse that expresses al-Shabab’s brand values, attributes and credibility. The mechanism for creating and cementing a relationship based upon reciprocal needs of sender and receiver.

6.1 Ethos
Ethos is where the power of persuasion is found in the credibility of the speaker in order to persuade or motivate an audience. The speaker or in this case author must convince the audience that the speaker is qualified to address a certain topic through their essence, moral character and authenticity. By appearing credible it gives the impression of trustworthiness, which we know is key for a successful brand (Matusitz, 2015: Aaker, 2014).

Besides trying to shape the perception of the authors’ competence and character, another way to employ ethos is through forms of endorsement by either building credible and authentic characters or using ambassadors and relevant notable figures/experts. This study found al-Shabab to manifest this persuasive method throughout various issues of Gaidi Mtaani. Ethos helps identify how al-Shabab create credibility and express various brand attributes and values that help build trust with stakeholders, where the intent of the speaker or writer is to appear in a certain manner. They try to convince the reader of their credibility through the
display of character attributes and virtues such as being honest, intellectual and educated as well as having noble goals and morals such as family values and education. The two major themes identified during the coding (1) express the nature, essence and moral character of the group, (2) the use of notable figures, experts and endorsements as well as building credible and authentic characters through forms of storytelling articles to leverage their ‘first-hand experience’ and shared-values.

6.1.1 The Nature of al-Shabab

There were a further four main subcategories identified as to how al-Shabab try to construct the nature of the speaker, to be honest, intellectual and professional in order to convince the reader of their credibility. These aspirational associations are identified through (1) extensive English vocabulary; (2) engaging in debates and analysis’ of history, geopolitics, political systems, military tactics and media responsibilities (3) expressions of good sense, virtues and moral character, (4) Magazine layout.

Educated

Firstly, demonstration of an extensive English vocabulary creates a sense of eloquence and sophistication. Article 2.1 sees the use of language such as “ubiquitous” and “vehemently” to name a few, and article 3.1 uses vocabulary such as “myopic” and “unfathomable” to further reinforce this notion of authority. It is a tactic used extensively throughout articles 3.1, 4.2 and 6.2 too. The divisive use of these particular words is to generate desired brand associations. This is not basic English vocabulary and are trying to attribute the author as being well educated and well-spoken in order to convince the reader of their credibility. Therefore, desired brand associations being expressed here are appeals of being intellectual with the hopes of serving their brand credibility. However, exaggeration and overcompensation are almost a paradox in itself, therefore how successfully or not, they convince the reader of these impressions is outside the scope of this study. A further method used to reinforce this notion of academia, is the use of footnotes and in text referencing in articles 4.2 and 6.2. It is another means of manifesting ethos communicating the author is academically trained and educated.

Reference to history is another means of persuading the reader of impressive knowledge. This includes references to colonialism and the involvement of the French and British in African
politics. Specifically, article 5.1 specifically discusses the Berlin Conference in 1884. Articles 1.1, 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1 mention in varying detail Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Yemen, Algeria, Palestine, Somalia, Kashmir, the Philippines, Myanmar, Syria, Burma and Bosnia as demonstration of their knowledge, as well as legitimate their victimisation. A theme to be discussed further in Logos.

The nature of the some of the articles as an entirety serves as a form of ethos, with several articles conduct debates, question current affairs and political systems. Therefore, debating is another means in which al-Shabab try to convince the reader of the credibility through creating informed impressions. One strong theme in particular, was engaging in debates on democracy to further showcase their ‘knowledge’, as well as give the insight into their ideology. Articles 3.2, 6.1 and 6.2 all debate democracy and in reference to the Arab Springs, al-Shabab gives “a brief insight on the fallacy of this notion…” (Article 3.2). Here is the first example of how this sentence is both ethos and logos, as mentioned prior, words and sentences can serve multiple rhetorical modes. Not only does their demonstration of geopolitical events support their credibility of being informed, it also tries to argue for the Arab Springs to be some facade and consequently appealing to reason too. They claim to stand for freedom and justice, whilst arguing democracy does not. They call for Muslims to not be deceived with notions of “Islamic democratic governments”, “secularists” and “defeatists”. This is the start of cultivating a value system directly opposing that of the West’s.

Pride is taken in their claim of conducting “insightful” analyses in media and military tactics as another narrative or angle to convince the reader of al-Shabab’s know-how, specifically in articles 4.4 and 2.2. Article 2.1 demonstrates their understanding of warfare engagement, which is intended to make al-Shabab look informed and credible. Phrases such as “military cul-de-sac”, “perception management”, “information warfare”, “brand identity”, “embedded journalists”, “asymmetric warfare” and “gradual attrition of the enemy forces” are some specific examples. Their continual reference to proxy wars is projected in several articles too (1.1, 2.1, 3.1). Their awareness of such concepts is what reinforces their brand association of being intelligent. Furthermore, article 2.1 also specifically conveys their knowledge of the valued and symbiotic relationship between warfare and information when criticising Kenya’s apparent media strategy: “Having failed to monopolise Somalia media outlets to support its
failing endeavours in Somalia...embarked on a disastrous propaganda campaign to compliment the ground force and shape the military invasion in a favourable fashion at home” and referring to the media as being an “...invaluable tool in my war effort”. Their understanding of the importance of credibility and using imagination to create successful information campaigns is worth reinforcing.

Honest
Al-Shabab’s various analyses of Kenyan media and the general world media concludes that these sources to be untrustworthy. Honesty and integrity are the next associations and values they try to imbue in their brand, as another means of persuading the reader of their moral character and thus credibility. It is an attempt at convincing the reader to “verify news from Mujahideen's media platforms” (article 4.2) Article 1.1 and 5.1 emphasize the pride they take in identifying “biased media” and “propaganda”, particularly within Kenyan media. Articles 4.1 and 4.2 see them state the Kenyan media as being compromised and inaccurate. They even engage in a discussion on previous Kenyan elections where the Kenyan media was accused of “ignoring and hiding the truth”. This exemplifies their conscious effort in cultivating brand values of being trustworthy and consequently virtuous. Good-virtues are key for persuasion (Braet, 1992). Al-Shabab is appealing to the moral character of the author. They also try to reinforce their desired virtues of integrity and honesty through the participation in media monitoring. That they are “fighting for the truth” (article 5.1, 5.2). These articles are written with the intent of convincing the reader that they condemn these unethical practices, in order to appear as a transparent and trustworthy alternative, positioning these magazines as a reliable point of reference.

This theme of discrediting of the enemy in order to credit themselves through what they are not, recurs frequently throughout all the articles. Al-Shabab tries to project their level of authority in order to increase their credibility. The group claims in article 3.1 that “no force...has ever managed to fully destroy the Mujahideen’s will to resist”. Illustrated in articles 2.2, 5.1. These military successes are to serve as a form of proof and credibility in al Shabab’s promise to deliver. Continual reference to Black Hawk Down is to humiliate the US and taught them of being “too scared” to engage directly again (article 1.1). These success
stories serve as a form of ethos, pathos and logos. These references build their credibility but also trigger emotions such as fear and power (pathos) and act as supporting evidence (logos).

**Professional**

Finally, the magazines themselves serve as a form of credibility, particularly from Issue 4 onwards. The evolving more commercial format gives the impression of being professional as a way of convincing the reader of their credibility. It also demonstrates al-Shabab’s investment into Gaidi Mtaani. Issue 1 has no contents page or back cover. Issue 2 sees the introduction of a contents page and back cover and by Issue 4 the style of the contents page develops and introduces an editorial note. By issues 7 and 8, there is a very consistent and commercial layout. This reflects the previous point on how the group are embracing and proactively engaging in a deliberate approach in shaping perception with an information campaign. All images can be found at: http://jihadology.net/category/gaidi-mtaani/ (Zelin, 2017)
Figure 5. Issue 2 Back Page

Figure 6. Issue 4 Cover

Figure 7. Issue 4 Contents Page
Figure 11. Issue 7 Editorial

Figure 12. Issue 7 Back Page
Al-Shabab has strategically created opportunities to express their virtuous moral character. The extensive and at times over-compensated vocabulary, use of footnotes, awareness of history, conduction of debates and insightful analysis’ were the rhetorical means identified to persuade the reader of al-Shabab being (1) Intellectual and educated (2) honest (3) professional. These more human like attributes to a brand are the curated brand associations and values intended to support their credibility (Matusitz, 2015; Aaker, 2014). Intended to shape the attitudes of the audience(s). The nature or moral character of the speaker or author is one of two means to generate credibility according to Breat (1992). The character of the speaker or author needs to sound credible in their delivery by expressing a good sense of
virtue (Aristotle, 1991). Ethos is thus manifested through the speaker’s personal character by associating the attributes stated above. However, leaning on ambassadors, notable figures and experts as another means of building the ever-necessary credibility of a brand (Matusitz, 2015).

6.1.2 Notable Figures, Ambassadors and Character Construction

Above the findings identified which associations, values and virtues al-Shabab is attempting to imbue with their character. However, the use of ambassadors as a form of ethos is intended to appeal to the shared values or moral character of the endorser in the hopes of building a relationship with the target audience(s). A notable figure could be an expert within a certain industry or topic. This method involves leveraging someone else’s expertise or experience in the relative topic as a form of reference/guarantor for your own sense of character or authority. Al-Shabab employs various forms of this method through Gaidi Mtaani. However, al-Shabab tries to leverage their own ethos as Somalis to narrate Somali history or “the true experience of Somalia” as stated in article 2.2.

References to notable figures within Islamic terrorism became a prominent theme, where al-Shabab is trying to leverage their positions within Islam to give the impression of his credibility. A Sheikh contributed to the 5th magazine where he wrote article 5.1 to discuss the “Crusade that is being waged against the Muslims in Africa, and chief among them, the genocide being perpetrated against the Muslims in the Central African Republic and the Crusade against the Muslims in Kenya”. Article 3.2 has a Sheikh discussing democracy and uses his authority to legitimate their shared disliking of it and polarised positioning. These are forms of brand endorsement. This method stresses their position within the relevant field as being credible to speak upon such a topic. Osama Bin Laden was drawn upon for legitimation in articles 1.1 and 2.2 due to his position in relation to Islamic terrorism as the former head of al Qaeda. The appeal to authority here is an attempt at building their own credibility, whilst sharing key virtues or assumed values of the endorser. Much like how al-Shabab use the credentials and reputation of truth-seeking Wikileaks in Article 2.2 for support on various claims. Article 4.2 sees the quoting of a “British-Somali journalist”, with the idea of a journalist serving the fourth estate. Again, reinforcing identified virtues and brand values of honesty and integrity. However, there is inconsistency in when they use journalists, this
inconsistency will surely weaken their brand, and what appears to be a likening and leveraging of media which only serves to benefit them. It is ok to trust this particular journalist but not those from the Kenyan on global media?

The reference and use of quotes from “Allah” and “Muhammad/Prophet” are heavily used as another means to raise the authority of al-Shabab, the speaker and the ideas proposed. If those who believe their God is omnipotent and omniscient (as al-Shabab state of Allah in article 8.2 and 3.1), then God’s own words can’t be questioned. Nearly all articles sampled from Gaidi Mtaani extensively use Allah and Muhammed to support the ideas of al-Shabab and to legitimate them and their calls for action. This includes articles 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2. One specific example is article 4.2, which refers to Muslim scholars to legitimize the killing of women and children on their part: “sincere Muslim scholars have already expounded and exhausted on its ruling: one only needs to refer back to these ahkaam. As the Kuffar intentionally bombed and killed women and children in Mujahideen controlled area of Somalia, the Mujahideen, justifiably have the right to kill their women and children”. The logic, however, is a warped false logic and also serves as a mean of logos and will be expanded upon further in the logos subchapter. However, the overall means of using endorsement leverages their expertise as a form of reference for al-Shabab’s own sense of character or credibility, which here is again honesty, nobility and just causes.

Another tactic used is the creation of characters in storytelling or human-interest stories, where they use the experience of the characters to appeal to the audience's sense of character. These personal accounts or short stories describe characters or members of Mujahideen who are meant to represent and express agreement on the shared values and virtues with al-Shabab. Thus acting as ambassadors. This is a more subtle and indirect manifestation of ethos. Articles 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2 and 8.1 all in some degree use characters. In article 6.1 ‘My Journey of Hijra & Jihad’ the character uses his own experience and personal account to support the ideas of Hijrah and Jihad as an immigrant in America. At one point stating, “Honestly, I can narrate the physical aspect of the jihad …” This article also expresses the shared values between al Shabaab and the character, agreeing with his anti-capitalist standpoint with their being nothing worse than poverty of the mind, which can’t be achieved with the American dream. That instead it creates “moral and social problems”. The result is
“...the family structure has collapsed; no loyalty and obedience between the married couple, daughters move out with their boyfriends, the boys are in penitentiary and the teenagers are rolling up the joint”. These are not shared morals. Instead, the values they indirectly imbue to their brand through this character are ones of loyalty, family, anti-drugs and strict Islam. Offering functional benefits to their brand (Aaker, 2014). This article is specifically targeting Muslims in America. Initially this study clamed in the limitations chapter that the use of different languages exemplifies the multiple target audiences, but the break down of Western audiences, to American audiences to Muslins Americans can already be detected within the English language articles alone. However, different values can be identified from the five different characters and therefore will be included in the analysis. It demonstrates the wider and more complex branding process of al-Shabab. After all, Burke (1950) stresses the importance of the identification process in rhetoric. Al-Shabab strongly use ethos to resonate with their audience(s) and cause them to identify with their interests. The theoretical framework established the value of both branding and rhetoric forming relationships with their audience(s).

In article 7.1 ‘War with Peace’, is a story is told through the eyes of a boy from Somalia to vouch for al-Shabab’s positive influence and for Shariah law leveraging his first hand experiences under various tribal warlords and “foreign African troops”. The fact he is boy connotes a level of innocence and honesty, which is leveraged for his credibility on speaking of such topic: “...al-Shabab’s government was miles ahead of many developing nations in terms of economic independency, health services and literacy”. Again reinforcing al-Shabab’s virtues and wider aspirational associations of social services being important to them. They use the boy’s experience to vouch for al-Shabab saying “…I actually use to believe that the Mujahedeen would receive a Noble Peace Prize for their accomplishments”. Additionally, article 7.1 uses the Somali boy to share character traits such as not being idle as well as celebrating education and having security, he is warmed at the site of children running from school singing and playing and reassured of protected market stools when al-Shabab are present. Therefore, the very clear values projected here or shared with this character or ones of education, security, economic prosperity and social services. These are noble and just virtues and intentions that build and persuade the reader of the moral character of al-Shabab. These shared values are intended to resonate with the reader in order to generate support,
recruitment and or conversion by expressing their emotional benefits (Aaker, 2014). However, the scope of this study doesn’t include the measurement of success with these strategies and will be suggested as further research in the conclusion.

In article 7.2 ‘From the Hood to Eternal Paradise’ an American man uses his experience to legitimise conversion to Islam, as well as indirectly express their shared values through the denouncing of virtues they dislike: “...the hood, that is infested with drugs, gangs, gambling, illegal weapons, carjackings, violence, pre-marital relations, and so on”. The characters’ rejection of these values is what al-Shabab wants the reader to know they support. That instead “courage”, “loyalty”, “generosity”, “honor” and “justice” are virtues of al-Shabab Islam and Muslims. This exemplifies how al-Shabab is trying to shape the associations of their brand in order to entice certain actions, such as conversion or Jihad (Aaker, 2014). In this instance they are offering functional benefits to Jihad and conversion, another key component of aspiration brand associations (Aaker, 2014). Article 8.2 ‘Be like Khalid or Fazul’ operates in the same manner and uses two “role models” to describe and align their personal credibility as a result of similar virtues to those mentioned above. However, the two characters used in this article also reinforce the importance of being clever and technologically savvy. Through the process of cultivation of relations, the character traits they try to leverage to build credibility are being an “expert in tradecraft”, as well as staying “up to date with new technology” and always being “a step ahead of intelligence services”. This gives the impression that these ethical and moral character traits are one’s al-Shabab share and use to help build the credibility of the group, acclaiming these are the types of people they associate with and what you can be like if you too join al-Shabab. This starts to overlap with pathos and the emotional experience their brand. They use everyday characters with first-hand experience as a means of being identifiable and “examples of Muslim youth worldwide” (article 8.2).

This part of the analysis has identified how al-Shabab tries to build their ethos and the trust of the reader by indirectly appealing to the shared virtues and associations expressed by their ambassadors and human-interest characters leveraged for endorsement. It is all part of differentiating themselves as they attempt to build a unique set of associations (Matusitz, 2015). They convey their strict accordance to Islam as well as numerous good sensed virtues
(1) valuing of education, health services and security (2) loyal (3) brave (4) unmaterialistic (5) prepared (6) not idle (7) intelligent (8) technologically savvy (9) generous (10) honour (11) justice (12) family (13) peace (14) anti-drugs and violence. These are the aspirational associations (values, attributes, and functional and emotional benefits) Aaker (2014) refers too, where not only shaping the perceptions of targeted audiences is integral for a brand, but resonating with them is key too. These values, virtues and attributes build the credibility of al-Shabab through the character of the speaker and leveraging notable figures (Braet, 1992; Matusitz, 2015)

6.2 Logos

Logos involves the use of logic, including false logics, and reasoned discourse to persuade the audience, as well as persuasion through ‘supportive’ evidence such as statistics, case studies and references. Identifying and interpreting the appeals of logic present in Gaidi Mtaani helps give insight into the written ideological aspects of al-Shabab’s communication too. It consequently helps us understand what it is they stand for. Logos forms the basis of the connection and relationship between the communicator and the target audience(s). This is one means to prime and mobilise individuals, through influencing their thoughts, opinions and actions. It is worth noting that the relationship between logos and ethos shares some overlap, as logos can be used to support ethos by providing ‘proof points’ to validate the communicator’s credibility (Aaker, 2014). In this regard, all three types of rhetoric are used to bring this about: logic, emotion and credibility. The analysis continues nonetheless with presenting the findings of how logic is employed in Gaidi Mtaani to formulate a relationship with the target audience in order to influence various thoughts, opinions and actions. As guided by Aristotle, it will seek any evidence of any rational argumentation or discourse that appeals to reason (Aristotle, 1991). This chapter will first present what logical arguments were identified in Gaidi Mtaani in order to prime their audience(s) and influence stakeholders (reader)

6.2.1 Defensive Organisation

The most frequent rational discourse identified throughout Gaidi Mtaani is al-Shabab’s attempt at positioning the organisation as being defensive. That al-Shabab merely acts out in retaliation and “revenge” to the harassment and oppression of Muslims in Somalia and
around the world. “Take lessons from history” is a quote from article 5.1. In Gaidi Mtaani we see al-Shabab persuade the audience of being victims in order to legitimate their attacks and mission. Therefore, there is a lot of mention of key values, attributes and ideological insight to deconstruct too.

**Legitimation**

Gaidi Mtaani builds an impression of Islam and Somalia being under attack, claiming there is a systematic campaign to not only “distort Islam and the interpretation of its texts” (article 4.2), but to “capture Islamic provinces” (article 7.1). Article 2.2 goes as far as arguing Islam “is the ONLY religion that has faced every kind of Persecution from the Government and its agents simply because of its Faith!” and that “Somalia could be the ONLY country in the world that has NO churches inside its borders”. This is what the theory referred to as false logic, negative truth, or argumentative fallacies. The dance between truth and persuasion is very much apparent (Perloff, 2010). Every single article puts in copious amounts of effort in convincing the reader of the decade long “invasions”, that “America, France and Denmark...all have quite a historical enmity towards Islam”. This narrative helps legitimise the group and what it is they stand for, even if it is not entirely true. Furthermore, divisive use of key words reinforces this positioning of victimisation, which is ultimately geared to generate feelings of sympathy from the audience too. After all, branding involves carefully generating the right associations that prime desired outcomes. Excessive use of vocabulary such as “occupation”, “invaders”, “war against Islam”, “crusade against Muslims in Somalia”, “crusader occupation forces”, “troops on our land”, “oppressed Muslims” are just a few of the endless examples from every single article analysed (1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8.2). Article 3.1 sees al-Shabab claim to be “…a small band of Mujahideen fighters in Somalia...surrounded from all sides”. Here attributes of resilience, determination, hardship and struggle are identified. The literature demonstrated this to be common practice in Islamic terrorism (Melki and Jabado, 2016; Vidino et al., 2010; Simons, 2016; Agbiboa, 2014; Menkhaus, 2014). The irony is that the purpose of branding is to differentiate from other similar organisations, but it does lend it-self to a degree of authenticity.

**Opposing Value Systems**
Several articles argue that non-believers have turned their back on key ideological values such as freedom, peace and democracy. This is used heavily to discredit the US, Kenyan and wider East African nations. There are copious references to the plight of Somalia and Somalis due to the “natural resources” (article 6.1) as another means of proving the lack of authenticity for prosperity in Somalia. Article 2.2 claims foreign involvement is to “secure American interests and deplete the resources of the natives”, which is also referenced to in articles 5.1 and 6.2. This logic not only reinforces al-Shabab’s defensive position, but also positions the West and wider non-believer governments as having turned their back on key values, particularly values associated with democracy. Al-Shabab use this opposing value system to then claim their more noble and just intentions, where their mission is to secure peace and economic and social prosperity for Somalis and Muslims. Thus what the al-Shabab brand stands for. The second reasoning to the US and Kenya’s morally corrupt values and hypocrisy are given with examples of when they claim peace keeping forces stood by and watched the Serbs kill Muslim women (Article 5.1). Articles, 6.1 and 7.1 illustrate the same theme. This is used to indirectly label themselves as the opposite of this, as transparent and just. A key divisive word identified is the noun “façade” to label the Arab Springs. The Arab Springs are again used to position the West as being “devious” and “untrustworthy”. The fact al-Shabab condemn these values whilst claiming to have complete contradictory values to those “enriched in democratic societies” is an attempt at then imbuing associations again of honesty and transparency. However, democracy is not the only cause of deviance and “psychological disturbance”, capitalism is heavily argued against in articles 6.1 and 7.2. An abundance of branding associations identified with this logic. Therefore, their ideology condemns both capitalism and democracy, and instead offers alternative functional and emotional benefits (Aaker, 2014). These are systems al-Shabab does not stand for. The analysis can identify not only what it is their brand stands for, but also what it doesn’t.

**Justification**

It is this defensive reasoning they employ as one means to justify terrorist attacks committed by al-Shabab and other Islamic terrorist groups. Persuasive communications is harnessed as a means of justification, not just legitimating. This alludes to associations of nobility again; giving the impression they are fighting for just reasons. Article 1.1 is titled ‘Levelling the Scales’, which really speaks for itself. However, article 4.1 does explicitly state: ‘Those who
live in glass houses should not throw stones’. Similar device phrases are seen in articles 4.1 and 8.1, which talks of “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”. Not only are these emotionally charged catch phrases, but also they highlight their ideological stance on conducting a defensive “war”. Additionally, articles 1.1, 4.1, 4.2, 7.2 and 7.3 refer to and actively encourage “revenge”. Article 4.1 positions the Westgate attack, as “a reaction to what they see is Kenyan action”. Through this means of justification, insight into al-Shabab’s brand associations again are identified when for example article 4.2 states: “obsolete Kenyan air force bombing children and women in different parts of the Wilayaat in Somalia in their attempts to capture the port city of Kismayu”. Not only are the using these attacks are justification for their retaliation, but as a means of expressing their horror at the killing of women and children. Manifesting associations of being just and noble again. The group’s claim to condemn false information was presented as another reason for retaliation. Logic for Westgate attack was identified as also due to “the inaccuracy of media reports” by the Kenyan media not reporting Mujahideen activities (Article 4.1) and the attack offers the Kenyan media a chance to review its’ modus operandi on how they report the fighting in Somalia”. This is aimed at aiding their virtue of honesty and transparency again. Furthermore, article 4.2 states, “If they had done their job and reported KDF excessiveness and atrocities in Somalia, maybe the Kenyan public, analysts and opinion makers would have called for caution and accountability, thereby avoiding the retaliation from the Mujahideen”. This is illustrated in article 1.1 too. Article 7.3 states that the Charlie Hebdo attack (which they were not responsible for) was “revenge” for insulting Allah (Article 7.3). The Lee Rigby attack was in response to “British aggression” and “Muslims dying daily at the hand of British soldiers” (article 8.1). These “proof points” as Aaker (2014:1) called them, and serve as reasons for their actions and motivations; it is the execution of their “promise to a customer to deliver what the brand stands for”.

However, contradictions in their logic can be found throughout all issues. Article 6.1 states both: “we are Muslims and we have to live under the Islamic law. I don’t understand how such a statement would constitute a drone strike in response”, but also “… Jihad is to restore all acts of worship to its rightful owner Allah C, namely Shariah by any means necessary or get Shahada in the process. Besides, the concept is to revive, to preserve and to spread the religion of Allah”. This contradicts their logic of being merely defensive but also aggressors
in the fact they want to spread Islam: “…the eternal struggle for the establishment of His laws on earth” (article 3.1). This greatly harms the credibility of their brand. Al-Shabab’s inconsistency in justify when it is ok for the group to kill innocent women and children but not onto them is also damaging their credibility.

6.2.2 Religious Reasoning and Realities

The analysis identified the implementation of religious reasoning as a means of permission, as well as to explain and reframe any defeats as tactical and strategic retreats due to “Allah the omnipotent”. This includes articles 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2. So, whilst biblical writings are ambiguous in their factuality, it is still a form of argumentation for those who do believe in God. Throughout Gaidi Mtaani, the Quran is used as the reason for some of their actions, and calls for sacrifice and martyrdom. If we take articles 8.2 and 5.1 to analyse this further we see claim of “Allah has ordered us” in article 8.2. One example is the way the Quran is used to legitimate the killing of innocent people; this refers back to a previous point on contradictory cracks appearing in their branding strategy. Article 5.1 states there to be “no aggression except against the oppressors”. Their claims of being oppressed and victims thus justify retaliation. Article 5.1 also quotes the Quran: “Allah, the Exalted, said: ‘Permission to fight is given to those (i.e. believers against disbelievers), who are fighting them, (and) because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them (believers) victory’”. Religious reasoning, however false in logic, is used to prime and mobilise the audience. A sense of duty is identified as another aspirational association. Not only do they use quotes from the Quran to mobilise action, but even more concerning, is the way al-Shabab use Allah and Muhammad to legitimate the idea of martyrdom, and that the timing of your death is decided by him. That Allah has guided you to Islam through your testing times; he decides your death, so now you must obey him by fulfilling ‘obligations’ of martyrdom too. Article 8.2 states: “...as the Prophet, peace be upon him said, Whoever sought martyrdom with sincerity will be ranked by Allah among the martyrs even if he died on his bed (Sahih Muslim)”. This logic is further illustrated in articles 3.1 and 7.3. It gives less insight into their aspirational associations but more about what it is they stand for and their unwavering adherence to Islam. Or at least use others adherence to Islam as a means a leveraging support and credibility.
False religious realities are also used to justify and explain any defeats or “tactical retreats” or successes. Not only do they claim to “retreat” due to their ‘noble’ values when the Kenyan air force launches air raids on an al-Shabab occupied town killing innocent civilians. They use Allah to make religious realities to explain defeats and successes. If we take article 3.1 to exemplify this point, al-Shabab list a series of plane crashes and helicopter crashes to prove Allah is protecting them. The Ethiopian prime minister, Kenyan defence minister and multiple Ugandan helicopters heading for Mogadishu were all involved in serious crashes. This was a message from a “higher authority... exercising supreme control over the skies”. That “Allah, the Almighty, took down their helicopters and drones and killed their leaders as a way to uplift the morale of the Mujahideen, strengthen their belief in his promise and encourage them in their eternal struggle for the establishment of His laws on earth”. Another example is in article 3.1 when al-Shabab were preparing for a confrontation with the “enemy” and their guns did not fire. They argue it was a punishment as a result of “trusting in the abilities of their weapons” and further proves Allah’s involvement. It is this religious logic they create and use for legitimacy purposes as well as to convince the audience of wrongly interpreting any “…withdrawal of the Mujahideen from some cities as a sure sign of defeat” (article 3.1). The “simple minds” of non-believers would not understand these events as blessings not setbacks. That because they are “kafir” they can’t fathom the reality they are communicating that “Allah is orchestrating the entire battle, mobilising the Mujahideen, guiding them, coordinating the assault, laying down coherent strategies, directing the fire, detonating the explosives...” Again, this identifies their strict Islamic ideology and doctrine that they aspire to imbue into their brand.

6.2.3 Supporting Evidence

As the theory mentioned, both reason and evidence are used in the pursuit of appealing to logic. Supporting evidence are the attempts at which al-Shabab try to present credible proof or evidence in order to support their argumentation. This is also what David Aaker (2014) called “proof points” and important for a brand. The analysis identified a further two categories (1) presenting history as facts, using case studies in the form of examples or precedents (2) Use of graphs, lists, statistics and references.

Presenting history as facts: case studies, examples and precedents
Firstly, history is referred to heavily through the magazine as a form of legitimation of their claims of being a defensive organisation; a noble desire to not “repeat what happened in Bosnia”. Reference to different parts of the world are used to prove the wider oppression of Muslims: Burma, Bosnia, Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Chechnya, Syria, Egypt, Myanmar, Kashmir, Yemen, Algeria are all respectively repeated in articles 1.1, 2.1, 3.2 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2 7.2, 8.2. When not explicitly referring to case studies, heavy reference to the general struggle of Muslims is employed, such as is article 6.1: “the daily brutal images that are dispatched regularly from the Muslim world have become unbearable. Muslims are being slaughtered…” Also seen in article 7.2 “the dreadful situation of Muslims all over the world”. This legitimises their just, defensive reaction to these atrocities: that they are victims and will not accept these conditions any longer. However, they also use broader examples to prove the more deceitful agendas of the US and Kenya, particularly in regards to their critique of democracy and capitalism, as mentioned previously. It is worth repeating here, that their appeals to reason and choice of logics don’t have to be truthful.

They use the historical examples of Black Hawk Down and the Ethiopian ‘invasion’ continually as evidence of Somalia’s subjective struggle for self-determination and historical proof of America’s proxy war. If we look onto article 2.1 more closely, they try to prove “failed foreign interventions”, that the “US has tried and failed...with the black hawk debacle...Ethiopia followed suit” (article 2.1). However, the struggle and hardship now continues with Kenya “…waging war on behalf of the United States” (article 2.1), frequently using the port of Kismayu and confrontations as examples (2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 4.2). AMISOM is also referred to as further proof of the US’ involvement: “Crusaders have gathered all their might for this offensive, and that more than 10 countries are taking part – including the US which has officially confirmed the presence of its forces in Somalia and Ethiopia which has now become part of AMISOM…” (Article 5.1). These specific and more general historical examples and case studies are used as a means of providing proof of Somalia and Muslims in general are under attack. As also mentioned in the earlier section on ethos, success stories are also another common means of proof. These include the detailing of successful military attacks and the reference to the growth of the Mujahideen showcasing Islam’s strength.

*Graphs, Lists, References and Statistics*
The use of graphs, lists and statistics is another “proof point” of al-Shabab’s ability to execute their promise on what they stand for (Aaker, 2014). Article 2.1 uses a graph to document the “Average monthly raids, ambushes against Kenyan invaders” between October 2011 and May 2012. Whilst in text list these attacks: “Within the first few months alone, October and December 2011, an average of 23 raids, IED attacks and ambushes targeted the Kenyan convoys and military encampments each month”.

Articles 4.2 and 6.2 use references and footnotes to support their content.
Figure 19. Article 6.2 Logos References

Wikileaks is also referenced for supporting their defensive position article 2.2, when it was claimed by the Kenyan media that the 4 hostages were the reason for the attack on Kisamyu: “The wikileaks documents that were posted in late 2010, gave a hint to Kenya’s “Operation Linda Ukafri”. This document surfaced one year before the actual invasion proving that plans were underway years before the four whites were nabbed giving Kenya it’s vindication for war! Actually it’s not the four hostages that whistled the war, whoever thinks that has no idea of what has been going on before the Kenyan invasion”.

The use of statistics is used in article 6.2: “The US government hypocritically condemns the massacre of more than 1,300 Muslims through a chemical attack in Damascus by the Alawites and Raafidhas…” Article 5.1 states: “...headed by the French General, Bernard Janvier, they began disarming the Muslims. Then, in July 1995, the Serbs, armed to the teeth with a diverse range of weapons, came and killed thousands and displaced tens of thousands and violated the honour of Muslim women in the plain sight of the international forces. Following that massacre, a demographic transformation occurred in Srebrenica; before the massacre occurred, Muslims accounted for more than 80% of the population. After the war, however, they were reduced to only 5% and, adding to the conspiracy, the area was given to the Serbs in the Dayton agreement”. These statistics not only serve as a means of proof but also illustrates their desired association of being clever.
This sub category of supporting evidence feeds into their credibility (ethos), it offers reliability and credibility for the brand. It is a mechanism used to encourage stakeholders to embrace their brand. As we refer back to Matusitz (2015: 240) “...the ability of an organisation to effectively publicize its mission and identity through its brand lends credibility to the reality that brand management plays …” Logos was arguably more applicable to understanding some of al-Shabab’s ideological aspects too and discovered these concluding automated aspirational associations (1) A defensive organization (2) Follow a strict Islamic creed that condemns drugs, pre-marital relations, materialism and criminality (3) Anti democracy, corruption and capitalism (4) religious legitimation (5) noble and just (6) academic (7) Strict Islam.

6.3 Pathos

As we know, the brand is a mechanism that generates an intended automatic association based upon emotional resonance and desire. Therefore, pathos serves an integral role. Pathos is using the power of emotional response (both positive and negative emotions) in order to persuade the target audience. The importance of emotions in branding is that this approach creates deep and more intrinsic relationships with stakeholders, which in turn creates unwavering loyalty. It involves identifying the brand experience and how a brand makes you feel (Aaker, 2014). Sharing core brand associations (values, desires or ideology) evokes an emotional response. Bonds are created when people feel a brand represents or understands their needs or what they feel is important. Reference to Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs will help this analysis deconstruct which exact emotions and desires al-Shabab are trying to tap into too, as well as identify the emotional and functional benefits of al-Shabab’s brand (Aaker, 2014). Pathos is also another means in mobilisation, legitimation and is often used to soften up audiences as a means of justification for action.

6.3.1 Emotional Appeals and Brand Experiences

The feelings al-Shabab tries to evoke in Gaidi Mtaani are (analysis unit here keywords and phrases):
(1) Sense of belonging (2) Patriotism/Duty (3) Hope (Opportunity) (4) Youthfulness (5) Sympathy (6) Fear (7) Heroism (8) Humour (9) Negative v Positive Pathos for the branding of actors. Other means: (1) Storytelling (2) Repetition
(1) Sense of belonging
Creating a feeling of belonging to their brand appeals to the reader's self-interests and is one example of the importance of recognising their audience’s need. Article 7.2 ‘From the hood to eternal paradise’ and article 6.1 ‘My Journey of Hijrah & Jihad’ explicitly persuade through the expression of shared struggle of belonging in America. Having a sense of belonging is the third tier in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1943). However, the most explicit example in al-Shabab creating a sense of unity and belonging is their use of family members to describe members of Islam and the Mujahideen. “Nephew”, “uncle”, “sisters”, “brothers”, “dear brother”, “brotherhood”, “sons” and “Muslim brethren” are only a few examples of their attempts at trying to connect with their audience with a bond of kinship. The use of pronouns such as “us”, “our” and “we” help strengthen this appeal too. The level of repetition throughout all articles is explicit. This method appeals to members of society who feel ostracised, and thus more vulnerable to influence from extremist groups. Knapton (2014) highlighted the sociological implications of members of society seeking acceptance and is exactly what al-Shabab are accessing here. The first example of how populations more often then not think emotionally rather than rationally.

(2) Patriotism/Duty
Al-Shabab put a great amount of effort in evoking patriotism and a sense of duty amongst their readers by leveraging the “continuing aggression” in Somalia and against Muslims worldwide. Claiming there to be “a crusade against Muslims in Somalia” in numerous articles. That Somalia is being “invaded” and occupied, and appealing to a sense of duty by not letting “history repeat itself”. This is illustrated in the following article too 1.1, 2.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2 and 7.2. Interestingly a more geographically tied sense of duty to the homeland of Somalia was driven in the first 6 issues which then slowly expands to a sense of duty to Muslims in Africa, to Muslims worldwide, in line with their increasingly transnational trajectory. Heavy reference is Kismayu is seen in the earlier issues, but this Somali patriotism reduces and is instead replaced by the wider world wide struggle of Muslims and uses more such examples to drive this trajectory. This emotional resonance is intended to not only shape perceptions but entice action as result of appealing to duty. It may create feelings of guilt if ignored.
(3) Hope (Opportunity)
A sense of adventure and opportunity is created in association with Jihad and the Mujahideen when they explicitly state in article 1.1: “given the opportunity to Adventure their jihad back home...” Opportunity is mentioned several times within this particular article as well in reference to their adherence to a strict Islam, where you have opportunities to prove to Allah your commitment, with a Paradise waiting in return (article 8.2). Appeals to hope are expressed through a value system being created in direct opposition to that of democracy and capitalism and the “superficial” American dream. Hijrah and Islam are positioned as those solutions (articles 3.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2). A place and creed that can give one happiness and fulfilment and tranquillity (2.2, 3.1). Article 8.2 also creates a sense of adventure or rebelliousness in the way they describe their two martyred members by being “America’s most wanted” and being “wanted worldwide”, “the world’s most wanted” and “wanted worldwide”. This is the second example of how al-Shabab tap into the desires of their audience(s). Tier one and two in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs refers to feelings of self-esteem and self-actualisation (Taormina and Gao, 2013). Accomplishment and self-worth can be attained through Jihad and al-Shabab. However, the three emotional appeals above are also a specific manifestation of the emotional and functional benefits a successful brand can offer its audience and how al-Shabab are trying to do so with their audience(s) (Aaker, 2014).

(4) Youthfulness
Al-Shabab evoke feelings of youthfulness within several articles, which has various wider connotations. In article 1.1 they state “We the Muslim youth in Kenya” and “the new generation of Mujahideen”. There are several quotations demonstrating the manifestation of “youth”, “young”, “boys” are manifested in articles 7.2, 7.3. However, this is where reflection on the meaning of al-Shabab serves a greater purpose. As discussed previously. The Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen – means the ‘Movement of Warrior-Youth’ and al-Shabab was originally a radical militant youth fraction of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). This refers to a certain level of energy, new energy and even a degree of rebellion that may inspire one audience and unnerve another.

(5) Sympathy
The articles are laden with the documenting of the suffering of Muslims in Somalia and around the world. They manifest appeals of sympathy by leveraging historical grievances to emotionally charge current “invasions”, stirring feelings of pity in the reader and convincing them of their victimisation. It is a persuasive mechanism for enticing sympathisers of al-Shabab’s ideology, and what it is they stand for; fight for liberation. Article 1.1 talks of the “continuing aggression” they face from “invaders” and address the “atrocities and bombing of Muslims in Somalia”. Article 2.2 states “Kenya has been on the frontline in fighting against Islam and Muslims for decades… it's always Muslims on the receiving end and worse yet they get harassed, tortured…” Emotionally loaded terms such as “genocide”, “atrocities” and “massacre”, “torture”, “slaughter”, “imprisonment” and “rape” to name a few can be seen in article 1.1, 4.1, 4.2 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 8.1 and 8.2. The emphasis on the victims being innocent, unarmed Muslim women, children and elderly is guaranteed to shock the audience to the point of action. These emotional appeals are heavily reproduced in terms of the “war” and “battle” and “invasion” “hostility against Islam”, “crusade”, “war against Islam” “African invaders” in articles 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.14.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2 7.2, 7.3. Article 2.2 states: “The Muslims of Somalia long sought-after dream was shattered by the invasion of Ethiopia by orders from America, Kenya became an active player giving the Ethiopians air support in their invasion”. A great level of saturation was found with this emotional appeal. It is arguably one of the more stressed emotional appeals as it drives a heavy emotional response over a rational one. The audience is expected to buy-in to their suffering and persuade the reader of their “retaliation”. Instead, associations such as defiance and liberation are imbued with their brand. This brings us back to the importance of al-Shabab’s different target audience. This is to persuade sympathisers, attract recruits and conversion; to take action and join their struggle.

(6) Fear
Al-Shabab’s use of fear is another one of their more prominent emotional appeals and is most commonly expressed through intimidation, threats and the explicit detail of their desire to kill non-believers and almost directly contradicts the emotional appeal discussed above, demonstrating their clearly distinguished target audiences. Clearly this emotional appeal is targeted less at the ostracised members of society, but directed at the enemy: The West. Article 1.1 states they “do not distinguish between civilians and combatants”, which creates
associations of brutality. It is a value in direct contrast to an earlier identified attribute of being just in their condemning of innocent women and children in Somalia for example. It is intended to scare their enemy. This quote directed at America confirms who this emotional appeal is intended for: “America or those living in America shall not taste security, until we feel secure in Palestine, and until we free in our Muslim lands”. Furthermore, they taunt the Kenyans by claiming: “when we start attacking Kenya’s economy, look at how vulnerable Kenya is… just imagine how we can compromise your economy, kill one ‘mzungu’ and they all run away…” Here, we see al-Shabab try to create the impression that Kenya is weak and an easy target as method of scaring Kenyans into supporting any policies of al-Shabab engagement.

The emotional appeal of fear is being strategically manifested as a form of deterrent too. Article 2.1 ‘A long road to Kismayu’ illustrates this further by describing success stories in their defence of Kismayu (an al-Shabab stronghold) to deter the enemy from future attacks. Their understanding of the importance of the psychological dimension in warfare is evident in their attempts at diverging attention from any potential military setbacks. The road to Kismayu is described as having the “blood of fallen invaders” and “decaying skulls and pulverized bones”. That future attempts would be “doomed”. They use conducted attacks to keep up intimidation as well serve as promises to future threats. The excessive repetition of “revenge” throughout the issues is an emotionally charged word used to keep up intimidation and fear. It is all aimed at shaping the perceptions of the enemy. Articles 4.1 and 4.2 are dedicated to the Westgate attack and exemplify this point further where they threaten to “blow up the Americans” and “plan and scheme more shock and awe attacks” and to “cause havoc”. They narrate the Westgate attack in a way that should install intimidation and a “proof point” reality of these attacks happening: “a normal weekend...with families going out...normal weekend activities...an estimated 3,000 people walking in and out not aware of the fate which was to befall them” is meant to make the reader feel this could potentially happening to them, that they can indeed “strike anywhere and anytime they wish”. Here we see the fear evoked through the reinforcement of Kenya being “fragile” and the extensive repetition of revenge and vengeance is used to stir intimidation. It also the first time they talk of killing civilians, not just soldiers as seen in previous articles, where: “Gunshots” “explosions”, “confusion” and “blood and death” are some examples of how they describe
the fate of those normal families in Westgate. The normality of the day is supposed to create an emotional connection with the reader, who will most likely know exactly what is like to go to the Mall one weekend. Therefore, they are trying to express to their enemy that this could happen to them and is more believable for their audience with this connection established. That they fear they too may fall victim to a terrorist attack. Building a brand with emotions is essential proving essential (Matistiz, 2015; Aaker, 2014).

For the Charlie Hebdo attacks, they offer “celebrations” in article 7.3 and threaten, “recent operations should serve as a lesson” and to “take heed”. These are more ruthless and immoral associations being identified. They do the same with the Lee Rigby attack in London saying they were “thrilled” (8.1) and that the attacker was a “good man”. These directly contradict the virtues identified earlier in the analysis of being compassionate for suffering and just in their mission, and show a very flawed moral character and judgment in the celebration of these murders. Brutality is an attribute al-Shabab tries to imbue to their brand quite immensely. They excessively describe the way in which they slit the throats of Kenyan soldiers: “blood spurting from his throat (article 2.1). As well as celebrate and encourage martyrdom in numerous articles, specifically article 6.1 and 8.2. It also worth reflecting on the magazine itself, which means ‘Terrorism in the Streets’, which would immediately install fear for an Swahili reader, but is entirely missed by the English speaking audience. Another important reason further research on the articles in other languages would be hugely beneficial for the topic of this study.

Claims of a “burgeoning Jihad ideology” an “ideological strength.... that cannot be diminished or crushed” due to their claims of success leads evokes fear by giving the impression they are gaining traction, support and strength, even if not completely true. Very clearly evoking their readers to think emotionally and not rationally in order to achieve desired outcomes and shape their thoughts and actions. As discussed throughout the literature, the symbiotic relationship between information and military action in terrorism leans heavily on military action support information campaigns, not the other way round. Therefore, this allusion of strength and success are two further attributes al-Shabab desire their brand to be associated with.
(7) Heroism

Al-Shabab attempts to position themselves and their members as saviours on a noble mission, responding to the calls of Muslims suffering. In article 1.1 they state “the bombing of children, women and the elderly in jilib by KDF militia jets won't go unnoticed”. It reinforces an already established brand association of being just in their defensive war, but also brave enough to stand up and fight back against these oppressions. Creating a sense of heroism also gives the reader a desirable brand experience, that if you are in the Mujahideen you too can be a hero. Al-Shabab refers to martyrs as being “heroes” and “role models” in article 7.3 for example, and is illustrated throughout numerous articles.. This helps make al-Shabab more appealing and establish positive pathos and experiences to the group. We can refer back to Aaker’s (2014) notion of consumer experience helping brand buy-in. Reference back to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs on how al-Shabab achieves this is insightful. Through notions of heroism, all three of his top tiers are triggered: (1) belongingness and love, (2) esteem needs and (3) self-actualization. The feelings evoked through their praises of their human-interest stories and martyr case studies is packaged and sold as an experience the audience can too feel if they join. It is a persuasive call for action by again accessing those more ostracised members of society (Knapton, 2014). Again, as Aaker (2014:1) stated branding requires establishing a relationship between al-Shabab and their audience based on the perceptions they create and manage and “… experiences that a customer has every time he or she connects to the brand”.

(8) Humour

At moments, al-Shabab employ forms of mockery and jocularity. Satire and humour are used to deride the opponent and damage their brand and reputation. Adjectives such as “silly, “childish” and “immature” in article 1.1 in their description of Kenyans and the media exemplifies this. Furthermore, article 1.1 states: “It was expected that Ethiopian crusaders will invade Somalia (it’s been like a hobby for them), the Ugandans and Burundians...well…” The use of mockery and humour elites positive emotional reactions through smiling and laughing, and is thus an effective way of connecting with the audience. It makes the audience feel good. Additionally, humour is seen here “We can also argue that the Kenyans invaded Somalia, with their famous American flavoured jingle ‘OPERATION LINDA NCHI’ to create a buffer zone for their own security”. These key sentences help
make al-Shabab more relatable and memorable, key for successful brand differentiation let alone the obvious positive brand experience. There is also reference to the situation as being a game: “The point is that Kenya has started the game-and we already know the victors”. Again, this jesting at warfare may at a stretch fit into this code. Interpretation can be seen as demonstrating either/both their level confidence as well as their potential lack of seriousness.

(9) Negative v Positive Pathos in the branding of opposing value systems

There is a heavy negative campaign against the opponents of al-Shabab as well as simultaneous positive information campaign with the positioning of Islam, Muslims, the Quran and Somalis. They brand certain actors through the evoking of certain feelings that are to be associated with the Kenyans and Americans and around Islam and the Quran; in the creation of opposing associations and values. It as an attempt at creating a polarised set of ideals imbued in their brand: with positive emotions attached to al-Shabab and Islam. As stated in the theoretical framework, shaping perceptions can be achieved by communicating (organisational or individual) values and beliefs. It is fundamental in building relationships in the hopes of generating brand loyalty and awareness (Lilleker, 2006). However, it also exemplifies a particular component on Aaker’s (2014) aspirational associations: functional and emotional benefits. Al-Shabab offer a pragmatic and emotional solution.

Article 1.1 introduces the heavy and continual references to a clash of civilisation by with terms such as “crusaders” to describe the West and their allies. It the first attempt at aligning an opposing value system with “the enemy of Islam”. This is heavily reinforced in articles 4.2, 5.1, 6.3, and 7.3 too. Al-Shabab claim it is the American’s and Kenyan’s who do not want peace, who are instead driven by “selfish interests”, that in fact it is Islam and the Mujahideen who seek to implement a socio-political order (articles 6.2, 7.1). Subsequent positive and negative pathos is harnessed heavily to distinguish the two, with manipulative and deceptive attributes being associated with Kenya and the US and once again, just and noble attributes to al-Shabab. Earlier analysis already identified al-Shabab's immense effort at discrediting democracy and capitalism, ‘proving’ it to bring about “psychological disturbance” and “social and moral problems” (article 3.2, 6.1, 6.2 and 7.2). The small boy in article 7.1 acts as a guarantor for the Mujahideen's more noble and just agendas (values) of
securing health care, stability and education. Positive emotional associations arise as a result of these expressed values and virtues.

Negative pathos used to brand the opponent is manifested through devise words such as “Kafir”, which is repeated throughout almost all articles (2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 6.1) However, the virtues and values assigned to their opponents are intended to evoke primed feelings against them, either to aggravate and degrade the enemy, convert sympathisers and indirectly shed insight into the associations generated for themselves in this process. Article 2.1 introduces a new emotionally loaded label to describe the Kenyans as “slaves” and their western allies are their “slave masters”. This is almost exaggeratedly repeated in article 4.1 too. Drawing on deep-rooted historical grievances to insult the Kenyans and shame the Americans. The Americans and Kenyans are referred to as animals, as “dogs” and “donkeys” in article 6.1. Creating uncivilised and wild associations to the enemy, that they are subhuman. The Kenyan military are assigned an extortionate amount of listed negative associations, evoking feelings of hatred and humiliation. Attributions such as “inept”, “irrational”, “stupid”, “dejected”, “subordinate”, and that they are scared and “terrified” (2.1, 4.2). As well as being morally corrupt for their “aimless” and “indiscriminate” bombing of Muslim women and children (article 4.2). Article 3.2 states non-believers have “simple minds” and are ignorant and “delusional”. Americans are described less as being fools or stupid but as deceptive and hypocritical. Particularly in reference to democracy, capitalism and the American Dream. Results of aspiring for the American Dream are criminality and immoral relationship before marriage, giving further insight into their strict Islamic creed. Article 7.2 is one of example of how this is illustrated when al-Shabab describe the American dream and capitalism as “evil and immoral”, “a dreadful mirage” and “infested” with criminality. It is a “life of evil. They position this as to the reasoning why the American government is thus so manipulative and don't follow protocol in engagement (article 2.2) They manner in which they describe the authors at Charlie Hebdo to have “filthy hands, “vile fingers” and was “ a lair of evil” (article 7.2), helps reiterate the degree in which their hatred comes through their choice of language and heavy repetition.

Positive appeals were harnessed by al-Shabab for evoking positive emotions towards Islam, Muslims, the Quran and Somalis. The Mujahedeen describe themselves and their
ambassadors as “brave”, “lions”, “generous”, “loyal”, “honourable”, to “stand for justice”, “fearless”, ”warriors”, “skilled”, “respected”, ”victorious” and “worthy” just naming a few. Articles 2.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2 all illustrate this finding. These experiences, values and attributes are what al-Shabab are imbuing to their brand. They are very effectively creating a brand experience through these associations. Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs once again helps explain how al-Shabab tap into desires of (1) belongingness and love, (2) esteem needs and (3) self-actualization (Taormina and Gao, 2013). Through this emotional resonance, the reader can be like them too, that they can feel valued and worthy. It exemplifies why theorists consider emotional resonance so important in branding (Matusitz, 2015; Aaker, 2014, Archetti, 2012). It creates a feel-good feeling in the reader and establishes a relationship with the reader, all of which persuades the audience to embrace their brand. Furthermore, Feelings of happiness and peace are evoked in their descriptions of the Islam, that through conversion or Jihad you will experience “tranquillity”, “enlightenment” and “luminous rays of the new dawn of Islamic Shari’ah” (article 3.1). Islam and al-Shabab are made to give the impression of they desires of peace and stability. Jihad is branded as a Utopian alternative, exemplifying Somalia as a form of ethos: Somalia “relished the highest degree of stability in all of Somalia” under al-Shabab (7.1). Islam being branded as the answer is a common strategy used by ISIS too (Melki and Jabado, 2016). In Gaidi Mtaani, they specifically claim it provides “meaning and purity” and is the “sweetness of faith” (articles 6.2, 7.2). These are common human desires, and would appeal to most readers, not just the more ostracised members of society. Al-Shabab tries to create an emotional bond over these shared desires. Being positive in nature makes it easier for multiple audience(s) to embrace their brand. However, this positive pathos contradicts other identified associations and emotions of being bloodthirsty and celebrating terrorist attacks. Rational readers will be able to distinguish the agenda and tailored strategies for different audiences, whilst the masses of society who are emotionally driven may not. One final theme identified as to they ways in which al-Shabab manifest feelings of positive pathos and negative pathos simultaneously, is there commentary of the emotionally loaded event of 9/11 in article 8.2. It started by calling Americans “weak”, whilst branding the 9/11 attackers as “fearless”, “well trained”, “determined” and “Organised”. The same associations they try to stick onto the west, Kenya and their allies they also attach to themselves in their endeavour of navigating two audiences: the enemy and
recruits/followers. The close proximity of their tailored messages for their different audiences may make it less effective.

**Mechanisms used to intensify the emotions and desires**

*Storytelling and Repetition*

Storytelling and intense repetition with emotionally loaded words of appeal is an effective method for resonance as well as the use of slogans and references to emotive events and objects. Storytelling was a tactic increasingly used in the last 3 issues as a means of allowing the reader to identify with the characters, where the personal stories added pathos to the writing. An emotional connection is formed through the emotional journey the reader is taken on, where they hope you identify their feelings, struggle and desires. All storytelling characters exposed values and associations the group not only share as stated in ethos, but use to mobilise the reader. Demonstrating how persuasion is at the heart of branding. Where the deliberate warm nature and tone of the stories successfully presented the characters as just being normal people with normal hopes and dreams. Making them as accessible to their audience (s) as possible. These feelings help connect the brand with the reader through the evoking of these certain emotional reactions (Archetti, 2012:9). This helps al Shabaab appear more emotionally accessible and identifiable. There is great saturation in all 4 of the main storytelling-human interest articles. Article 6.2 can be used as a further example of al-Shabab knowing the reader will identify with the excitement and nerves of being in a new country, seeking “worldly opportunities”, being “thrilled”, “excited”, “nervous”. Having “goals”, desires of a “bright future”, which includes having a “job” and having a “family” and being “humble and simple”. All common human aspirations and desires: needs capable of acquiring through Islam and the Mujahideen (Malsow, 1943 in Taormina and Gao, 2013).

**Chapter 7. Concluding Discussion**

*Summary*

This study began by explaining the current political landscape of terrorism more broadly before honing in on al-Shabab. Presenting not only the number of terrorist organisations to be increasing, but that the rate at which many of these highly publicized groups are adapting to the ever evolving technological and political landscape. The literature paved the way for demonstrating how digital media has played an inevitable role in shaping modern terrorism,
in its ability of disseminating information and its nature of facilitating dialogue between individuals, communities, companies and brands. The ability for brands to form relationships is key and the lengths at which terrorist groups are willing to go in order to secure funds and recruits are taking a more innovative trajectory, with the harnessing of communication practices such as branding used to differentiate themselves from the increasingly competitive environment and the overcrowded space of ideas, ideologies and perceptions. Beifus and Bellini (2013.10) state “With numerous active groups around the world (several of them having similar ideology and the same goals), ‘branding’ and ‘marketing’ become important elements of the terrorist group’s overall strategy”. The level of competition these groups are operating at was demonstrated when ISIS released a statement explicitly and publicly asking al-Shabab to join them and to leave al Qaeda (Shay, 2017). Demonstrating the nature of this competitive environment and the value of al-Shabab.

Not only does the harnessing of digital magazines by several large and high profile terrorist groups reflect the direction terrorist groups are moving in, but their understanding of possessing a unique set of brand associations in order to stand out, compete and manage perceptions through the control of information with these magazines has not gone unnoticed either. One way in which terrorist groups can help compete is through the use of branding. The harnessing of branding strategies by terrorists is reflected in the rapidly evolving research field, where such practices by non-states actors and non-corporate companies are being practiced.

**Answering the research question**

This study set out to answer the research question: how do al-Shabab employ Aristotle’s rhetorical triad of ethos, pathos and logos to construct their brand in Gaidi Mtaani? The study is conceptually and theoretically situated in branding and rhetoric theory and reflects the academic field’s development in understanding a brand to be more than just a “symbolic entity” (Lilleker, 2006:41). Branding involves the deliberate effort of creating aspirational associations that includes identifying attributes, brand-personality values and emotional and functional benefits to name a few (Aaker, 2014) Therefore, what the brand stands for (Aaker, 2014), their ideology, beliefs and ethos (Lilleker, 2006) are important in forming relationships that connects the receiver to the brand. This study's definition of a brand also
draws upon the importance of trust, credibility, authenticity and differentiation (Matusitz, 2015; Aaker, 2014, Archetti, 2012; Lilleker, 2006) for brand success. A brand’s wider purpose serves as a form of differentiation. As we know, the brand is a mechanism that generates an intended automatic association based upon emotional resonance and desires. Rhetoric is this verbal connection, and a brand is trying to create an emotional connection through the use of words between sender and receiver. In this regard, all three types of rhetoric are used to bring this about - logic, emotion and credibility - that influence the communication. Some articles served or placed weight on different rhetoric depending on the objective, saturation on many brand associations and rhetorical mechanism was found.

This study found that Gaidi Mtaani does indeed act as an extension of al-Shabab’s brand. The rhetorical mechanism of Ethos was used to build trust, legitimise al-Shabab and build credibility, all important components for a successful brand (Aaker, 2014; Matusitz, 2015). They harnessed notable figures and ambassadors such as Sheikhs, Osama Bin Laden, Wikileaks, Allah as well as using quotes and human interest-storytelling characters to leverage their authority and express agreement on any shared values and virtues in order shape perceptions. Their moral character was constructed through creating opportunities within the content to project good sense virtues, engage in debates as well as put in a great amount of effort with the presentation of the magazines themselves. The rhetorical means of ethos allowed for the identification and projection of the following brand associations (attributes and values) (1) Intellectual and educated (2) honest (3) professional (4) noble and just (5) social values such as education, family and healthcare (5) Brave (6) Dedicated (7) Loyal (8) Honourable.

Logos is used as another means to manage perceptions giving insight into their brand values and what it is they stand for (ideology). It was another instrument for al-Shabab to form a relationship and connection with the target audience(s) and manage perceptions. They tried to persuade the audience with various reasons and logics, often false logic too, that they were fighting for truth, justice, standing up against corruption and the moral problems that result from pursuing democracy and the American dream. They position Islam, Jihad and the Quran as a tranquil and peaceful alternative and solution. Logos was arguably more applicable to understanding the ideological and verbal (including writing) aspects of communication and
discovered these concluding aspirational associations imbued with the brand (1) A defensive organization (2) Follow a strict Islamic creed that condemns drugs, pre-marital relations, materialism and criminality (3) Anti democracy, corruption and capitalism (4) religious legitimation (5) noble and just (6) academic (7) Strict Islam. This is ultimately what they do and do not stand for. Al-Shabab used logos to both build their credibility and ethos through various ‘proof points’ as a way of convincing the audience to embrace their brand as a result of demonstrating their ability to execute their brand promises and values. Several methods were used for legitimation too with various forms of supporting evidence: historical case studies of Somali and wider Muslim nation’s persecution and “interventions”, examples, personal precedents, success stories and the use of graphs, lists, references and statistics.

The use of pathos identified al-Shabab to be creating certain brand experiences and a brand personality. As we know, the brand is a mechanism that generates an intended automatic association based upon emotional resonance and desires. As we established, this is very important for a successful brand. More specifically their brand is used to tap into the psychological needs of humans. Their heavy emphasis on emotions and brand experience through pathos is of concern as it fosters extreme emotions, experiences and desires that cloud populations from separating rational and emotional incentives. The emotional appeals and brand experiences identified were: (1) Sense of belonging (2) Patriotism/Duty (3) Hope (Opportunity/Adventure) (4)) Youthfulness (5) Sympathy (6) Fear/Ruthless (7) Heroism (8) Humour (9) Negative v Positive Pathos for the branding of actors. Other means: (1) Storytelling (2) Repetition.

These are all examples how al-Shabab intends to appeal, persuade and resonate their aspirational associations with their target audiences. All three of these rhetorical mechanisms helped identify what aspirational associations al-Shabab were appealing to (Aaker, 2014). In particular, their organisational values and their emotional and functional benefits were identified in abundance.

*What does this mean?*

Brands need a deliberate approach in creating consumer relationships by imbuing aspirational associations, as well attaining credibility and trust with the audience. This study found al-
Shabab to be actively pursuing all these required for a successful brand. Now with regards to the latter, the appeal to the moral character (ethos) of al-Shabab and supporting evidence (logos) can be understood as their brands “proof points”. Al-Shabab established trust, legitimacy and credibility through the projection of the identified brand associations stated above and were the attributes and virtues that built the credibility of al-Shabab’s brand. It is al-Shabab’s projection of what it is they stand for with reasoned discourse and their attempts at triggering particular intangible desires and experiences through the appeal of emotions (pathos), that give great insight into how and why al-Shabab have a brand. All these mechanisms of ethos, pathos, and logos in some way contribute to building the brand as a whole, but pathos doesn’t necessarily build any credibility but instead is responsible for the broader attributes, desires and experiences of the brand.

Maslow’s hierarchical pyramid of needs and motivation helps us understand how and why al-Shabab has harnessed the practice of branding. Brands don’t help with the bottom two tiers of basic needs in the pyramid, the Biological and Physiological needs and Safety needs. Instead al-Shabab appeal to the top three tiers of needs throughout Gaidi Mtaani: ‘Belongingness and Love, Esteem needs and Self-Actualization’ (Taormina and Gao, 2013). Al-Shabab appeal to self-actualisation or self-fulfilment by creating the experience of being something or someone, that you can be brave, hero, savvy and as courageous as their storytelling/human interest characters and ambassadors. These are their brand experiences that a reader may buy into. Al-Shabab motivates the reader to contribute to this whole new brilliant, just and tranquil society by participating as a jihadist, where positive pathos such as hope, opportunity, brotherhood and adventure were imbued with their brand. This emotional appeal of belonging and patriotism is very similar to what both Melki and Jabado (2016) and Simons (2017) found in their analysis on ISIS and al Qaeda, as well as their findings of jihad being positioned as a utopian solution for those ostracised members of society, which supports another result from this study. Al-Shabab also tries to position themselves as a utopian alternative, through their attempts at creating a sense of unity, belonging and worldwide family. Their brand ideology was positioned in polar opposition to the acclaimed and argued morally corrupt values and virtues of the west, Kenyans, democracy and capitalism. The clash of civilisation and opposing value systems are reinforced heavily by al-Shabab as much as the US. In terms of esteem, they heavily reinforce how you can feel accomplishment when
This is why al-Shabab has a brand and a potentially effective one of that, targeting the masses of society who think emotionally rather than rationally. It is much easier to use emotions than pure logic; emotions tend to win over each and every time. This is demonstrated with the emotional response of global audiences to their intimidation and emotional appeals, where the point is to create the perception that their threats are a reality. This sociological dimension may be their only saviour for the frequent contradictions, identified particularly in their justifications on when it is ‘ok’ to kill innocent women and children. They use religious argumentation (logos) to legitimate their indiscriminate killing of innocent women and children, but pathos to prime audiences of the atrocities committed against them for decades. Great efforts in establishing the moral character or ethos of the group to be that of good will and good–virtue, are challenged. Depending on whether the reader is thinking rationally or emotionally, this will harm or save their aspired brand virtues and values. This goes for their claims of merely wanting to live under Islamic law, but then also state they want to spread it.

Furthermore, Menkhaus’ (2014) mentioned study found al-Shabab to be promoting emotional resonance in the form of excitement and adventure, which this study has found to be present in Gaidi Mtaani too. They have well-established emotional messages. Al Shabaab glorifies brutality with emotional appeals of fear through their celebration of wider attacks as well as heavy use of threats to keep up intimidation. This study found al-Shabab to be using key events to trigger emotions too, such as 9/11 and Charlie Hebdo too. They try to justify their attacks religiously much like ISIS too (Szenes and Shamieh, 2015), but this study found al Shaba use Gaidi Mtaani for calls for action, such as Jihad and Hijarh as well triggering emotions such as belonging or patriotism or hate.

As predicted by Anderson and McKnight (2014), al-Shabab is seen to mock the enemy throughout their issues. However, this study found the intensity to increase significantly from article 6 onwards. The level of aggression and emotionally loaded language increased drastically. The use of emotions becomes more intense in the way they put negative pathos on
the enemy. It went from “stupid” in the earlier issues to “slaves” and “dogs” in issues 4 and 5, to “vermin” and “evil” by issue 8. Differing the enemy is a common theme by mocking and degrading them and their values. This is all in parallel efforts to imbuing positive associations to al-Shabab, Islam and Somalia. Success stories and emotional appeals of fear were also meant to deter future attacks and shape perceptions of strength in order to distract the enemy of any shortcomings. By appealing to both fear and sympathy with ‘evidence’.

Melki and Jabado (2016) found ISIS’ sophisticated use of brand strategies to resonate cultural values. The values identified in Gaidi Mtaani become more broad and accessible as the issues progressed as their transnational agenda developed in an attempt of creating a wider movement that is not geographically tied to Somalia only. They leverage historical grievances for legitimation and ultimately imbue the brand associations of being just and noble. Fahoum and Width (2008) claimed resonance to be essential for terrorists’ marketing strategies looking to recruit and historical grievances will do exactly that. Leveraging historical grievance is after all how the group transitioned from a small branch of the ICU to a fully operating terrorist group (Vidini, et al., 2010). Somali patriotism and duty expanded to that of all Muslims throughout the issues. The enemy expanded from Kenya and the US, to the West and Israel. Menkhaus (2014) found al-Shabab to be their own worst enemy by having such a narrow demographic, but this study has clearly found that in fact, Somali patriotism and duty started to shift around issue 5 and 6 to appeal to the patriotism of Muslims and Islam in general, widening their appeal and membership. Pelletier et al., (2016) found ISIS’ ability to create a widespread appeal integral to the group's success and thus a strategy al-Shabab are clearly implementing. Daniel Agbiboa (2010) argues this is due to their aims taking on a transnational trajectory. Attempts at legitimacy and authenticity are an appeal to with ethos, pathos and logos. This widening of appeal may be due to their need for more recruits due to various setbacks from the US and US backed troops and the Kenyans and thus why a lot of effort is put into the legitimising the ‘misinterpretation’ of their strategic withdrawals. The most frequent rational discourse (logic) identified in abundance throughout Gaidi Mtaani, is al-Shabab’s attempt at positioning the organisation as being a defensive group, as being victims and the underdogs. All the articles had an overarching theme of struggle for self-determination. That al-Shabab is merely acting out in retaliation
and “revenge” for the harassment and oppression of Muslims in Somalia and around the world.

The reason the group may have also invested so heavily in the development of the magazines is due to it being a low risk option unlike the management of the Facebook and twitter accounts. Therefore, the huge amount of effort put into the layout and format from issue 4 to the latest Issue 8 not only serves their ethos but reflects their media strategy too and of being savvy and professional. We can conclude that al-Shabab are clearly being greatly inspired by al Qaeda’s Inspire magazine and ISIS’ Dabiq (Simons, 2016) and a comparison study between the three magazines would be of great interest, so to explicitly state the similarities and nuances. As it appears al-Shabab’s Gaidi Mtaani have many similarities to Dabiq and Inspire, which is ironic considering the purpose of the band is to differentiate. However, unlike Colas’ (2017) findings Gaidi Mtaani differs here and did not criticise other terrorist groups, unlike ISIS.

Limitations to the study and further research
It cannot be contested, that Gaidi Mtaani will be essential to monitor as they continue to publish and fine-tune their brand and what it is they stand for. Deconstructing their brand gives huge insight into what and how they connect with the audience, and what their objectives are. However, this study was limited to linguistics, non-visual texts. Further research is thus suggested on the divisive use of images throughout the magazines, as it would further contribute to the understanding of al-Shabab’s brand and rhetorical mechanisms. The deconstruction of branded visual symbols used by terrorists is a focus gaining traction within the field too, where logos are understood as an extension of a brand (Beifuss and Bellini, 2013; Melki and Jabado, 2016; Simons, 2017). Therefore, analysis on al-Shabab’s logo and the magazine’s logo would create a more rounded understanding of al Shabab’s brand as projected in Gaidi Mtaani. A lot of effort is being put into this particular information vehicle by al-Shabab but an analysis of their other media products would also be invaluable. However, the aim of this study was to mainly contribute to wider comparison studies on terrorism magazines such as Dabiq and Inspire. As already mentioned above, many similarities were identified and an investigation into these nuances would be interesting for the research field. However, further research on the articles in Swahili, Arabic and Somali
in Gaidi Mtaani would also help create a more rounded understanding of how al-Shabab project their brand, as well as identify the key nuances between any tailored branding strategies for their different target audiences. The implications of the scope of this study and language restrictions meant research on these suggestions were not possible. Finally, branding and rhetoric takes a sender based perspective, focusing on how al-Shabab communicates their brand. It would be interesting to see how effective their persuasion is in resonating with their target audiences. Therefore, a theoretical framework which takes and audience based focus would be an invaluable contribution to this topic.

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