Electoral Violence in Kenya and Some Mitigating Initiatives
Assessing Hostilities With Reference to Kawangware Sub-County, Nairobi County

Thelma Nabwire Mondoh
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1833-8248
Daystar University, Department of Peace and International Studies
&
Justus K. Musya, PhD
Email: musyajustus@gmail.com
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0001-8382-6742
Daystar University, Department of Peace and International Studies

Abstract

In Kenya, election-related violence, involving the youth, has been prominent since 1992. This research article examines the initiatives employed in order to respond to electoral violence in Kenya, as it samples Kawangware informal settlement in the capital city of Nairobi. It utilizes a mixed method research design in its endeavor to unveil the problem statement. In its data collection, it has relied heavily on the youth of Kawangware, key informants from the police, NGOs and youth groups, the local administration, village elders, and community leaders. To identify the respondents, stratified and purposive sampling procedures were used. Questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were used to collect data. CAQDAS was used to analyze qualitative data, whereas IBM SPSS - 25 was used to analyses quantitative data. According to the findings, youth in Kawangware are considerably disenfranchised in all aspects of social life except voting. Politicians were also identified as the primary perpetrators of political mobilization that resulted in electoral violence. The study recommended that providing several options for youth advancement in life, as well as keeping politicians accountable, will minimize youth participation in electoral violence in Kawangware.

Keywords: criminal groups, economic activity, electoral violence, informal settlement, livelihood support.

Introduction

The persistent sense of helplessness felt by many young people, whether brought on by economic challenges or by exclusion in the society, has led to disenfranchised emotions such as frustration, marginalization, and neglect. These feelings of disenfranchisement, along with other forms of incitement, particularly those with a political bent, might lead to unrest and/or violent outbursts. The Arab Spring that was witnessed in many Middle Eastern and North African nation states in 2011, including Tunisia, are a good example of this dynamic. There, high unemployment rates, particularly among the educated youth, and rising discontent with the government sparked a wave of youth-led uprisings that ultimately led to the overthrow

of heads of state like Ben Ali's (Jazeera, 2020). Similarly, Greece saw a rise in unrest during the European debt crisis, which was mostly brought on by high rates of youth unemploymentthat led to anti-austerity protests (BBC News, 2012).

Additionally, to acknowledge the crucial contribution made by incitement contribution to escalating conflict. For instance, political propaganda and incitement that were broadcast through the media and hate speech that was backed by the government were crucial during the Rwandan Genocide in 1994. The tragic historic event led to the mass killings of thousands of the Rwandan populace and a refugee crisis (BBC News, 2019). A more recent illustration, is the targeted violence and persecution against the Rohinjya Muslim minorities in Myanmar, where the genocide has a strong correlation to political incitement and bigotry (Kinseth, 2017). This is a result of the rise of the Buddhist nationalist movements. The actions of the military, discriminatory policies and the failure of the government to protect the rights of the minority played a crucial role in the massacre, as it created an environment where violence and persecution could occur unquestioned (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

In Kenya, electoral violence is a cyclic occurrence, as almost each electioneering period is characterized by episodes of conflict, notably, the 1992, 1997, 2007, and 2017 general election-related clashes (Kimani, 2018). This can be attributable to the fact that underlying issues like youth unemployment and land grievances are purposely left unresolved among other factors. Consequently, every electioneering period in Kenya entails the political mobilization of youth wings of political parties and other youth groups (ethnic groups like the Mungiiki), criminal gangs, and other forms of desperado, by certain 'bigwigs', to disrupt electoral process or dispute the electoral outcomes violently (Kagwanja, 2003).

The Human Rights Watch (1993) reports that the 1992 clashes, that were termed to be politically instigated, ravaged parts of Nyanza, Western and Rift Valley Provinces. The violence rendered 300,000 people internally displaced and 1,500 people dead. The report also revealed that the attacks carried out in these provinces were organized by the Kalenjin and Maasai political elite (allied to the ruling party - KANU) to chase the 'outsiders' (referring to the supporters of the opposition parties), namely, the Luo, Kikuyu, Kisii and Luhya communities. Similarly, Mutahi and Kimari (2017) give an account of the 1997 the fighting, concealed as cattle rustling that occurred along the borders of Rift Valley and Nyanza Provinces between the Maasais, Luos and Kisiis. This round of election-related violence resulted in mass internal displacements as villages were burnt down. Later in the same year, it is reported that the 'Kaya Bombo Massacre' took place in the Likoni area, where an estimated 100 people were murdered and 100,000 people displaced. The report details interviews of the perpetrators (young men from the Digo community) of the attackagainst the 'outsiders', who claim that they were recruited, paid, armed and trained by local politicians (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

Khadiagala (2008) details the events that largely characterized the 2007/2008 election-related violence that shook Kenya to the core and only came to an end after the intervention by the international community led by the late former United Nations Secretary General Koffi Annan, who spearhead the mediation talks. He notes that several parts of the country, namely the Rift Valley, Central, Nyanza and Nairobi Provinces,were marred by election violence. Most notably, the unorganized, spontaneous riots, organized ethnic militia activities, killings, the destruction of property, forced displacements, and the excessive use of force by the Kenyan security forces led to the deaths of an estimated 1,500 people and the internal displacement of approximately 600,000 people. According to Musya (2017) in his study of the ethnic grievances in the instigation of political violence in Nairobi County, he established that the electoral violence in Kenya maybe spontaneous in some instances with cases of political mobilization of the youth into violence where this has promoted a recurrent of electoral violence every election year in Kenya.

In 2017, the Kenya National Human Rights Commission reports that there were several manifestations of electoral violence before, during and after the polling. For example, many incidences of the use of violence, extrajudicial killings, destruction of property, intimidation, harassment; destruction of voting material, among others were reported in various electoral violence hot spots across the country, like the Kawangware informal settlement in Nairobi County, that resulted in the death of 70 people (KNHCR, 2017). According to the Kenya National Human Rights Commission, Nairobi, being Kenya's Capital city, is undoubtedly bustling with numerous political activities. In addition, the Capital comprises of vast informal settlements, which are largely characterized by poverty, squalor, desperation, youth unemployment and criminal gangs.

Furthermore, the informal settlements in Nairobi are visibly carved up ethnically, for example in Kibera and Kawangware, some areas largely comprise of Luhyas, Luos and Kisiis, whereas, other parts comprise Kikuyus and Nubians (KNCHR, 2008). Moreover, the City's informal settlments were breeding grounds to ethnic gangsof ill repute, namely, Jeshi la Mzee (1992-1997), Jeshi la Mwenje, Siafu, Bukhungu, Jeshi la Darajani, Taliban, Ghetto, and Mungiiki. The ethnic gangs' membership consists of youth, bankrolled by 'godfathers' and politicians (KNCHR, 2008). Nonetheless, it is important to note that some of these ethnic gangs are still bred in the informal settlements. For example, the Mungiiki's presence was very much visible in Kawangware in 2017.

In agreement with Elfersson (2022), informal settlements are more prone to electoral violence due to the nature of political mobilization used and the relationship between political elites and criminal gangs in these areas. KNCHR (2018a) reports that politicians take advantage of uncertainty and confusion that holds the country under siege, during electioneering periods, to incite violence, issue bribes, threaten their opposition supporters, among other unscrupulous strategies to influence the electoral outcomes in their favor. Correspondingly, KNCHR (2008), KNCHR (2018a) and KNCHR (2018b), report of the political elite taking advantage of the "ethnic balkanization" and the presence of ethnic gangs in Nairobi's informal settlements for political mobilization and to incite acts of electoral violence during electioneering periods in Kenya. This was quite evident during the 2007/2008 electoral violence, as these gangs were mobilized to kill, destroy property, burn houses and shops belonging to the 'enemy', conduct forceful displacements and evictions, pillage, forcefully circumcise Luo boys and men, as well as, carry out heinous acts of sexual and gender based violence on the 'enemy' to 'teach them a lesson'. Details of these atrocities are well elaborated in the Kriegler and Waki (2009) that reports the violence in Kibera, Kawangware, Mathare, Kariobangi and Dandora that left more than 100 people dead and lying unidentified at the Nairobi City Mortuary and approximately 230 cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence unsolved. Moreover, in 2017, Houreld (2017) and Lerneryd (2017) give detailed accounts of the electoral-related violence that ensued in October in Kawangware that resulted in 10 deaths, vandalism, arson, attacks fueled retaliation and revenge, destruction of property, looting, riots, the pelting of children in school with stones and the excessive use of force by the police.

Statement of the Problem

It is widely acknowledged that the youth are wrapped in electoral violence, as either perpetrators and/or victims, with the former being more renowned. This is because differing political camps often engage in the proliferation of youth militias and criminal gangs to intimidate their foes, as well as wreak havoc when the odds turn against them (Akoth, 2022). It is for these reasons that Kenya's National Cohesion Integration Commission (NCIC), 2022 reports that the current and previous state of propagation of violence in the country largely emanate from the inexpensive *quid-pro-quo* relations between politicians and the youth gangs. These youthful gangs mostly reside in urban informal settlements, where the living conditions are miserable and continue to worsen due to the high rates of inflation in the country, thus enabling these youngsters to emerge as "general suppliers of violent force" (NCIC, p.39 2022).

Research done in this area shows that political mobilization during electioneering periods has led to the death of an estimated 3,170 people and the displacement ofapproximately 1,000,000 million people, between 1992 and 2017. However, very few studies have focused on the initiatives employed to respond to electoral violence, and those that do tend to focus on the same study sites for example, Kibera and Mathare, thus resulting in a paucity of studies in some places, such as Kawangware informal settlement. Thus, there was need to address this gap. By giving research in understudied areas more priority, we moved towards a more equitable knowledge. Inequalities could persist if research is covered inequitably, as the dynamics, challenges, and characteristics of various informal settlements or areas inside the Nairobi metropolis vary. Exploring initiatives employed to respond to electoral violence was made possible by concentrating on particular places, such as Kawangware. Therefore, we beganto close the identified literature gap by carrying out more study in this area, which helped us comprehend these problems on a more in-depth and nuanced level. In turn, thisresulted in policy recommendations and actions that were more focused.

Literature Review

Election violence has the potential to ruin years of peace building and development efforts, to weaken democratic institutions, and even to start civil wars if it causes enough casualties to exceed the threshold for civil war (Birch et al., 2020). Likewise, Fjelde and Hoglund (2014) link a higher possibility of the occurrence of electoral violence to countries that have majoritarian electoral institutions, as these said institutions increase the stakes and competition. Additionally, the co-authors posit that the majoritarian institutions increase the likelihood of electoral violence in places largely characterized by ethno-political exclusions to power and socioeconomic inequalities. An explanation on this. First, in places marked with the exclusion of certain ethno-political groups to power, both the party in power and the opposition will resort to use violence as a tactic to sway the electoral outcome, as neither party wants to be excluded after being defeated. Second, significant amounts of socioeconomic inequalities also influence the occurrence and/or reoccurrence of electoral violence because the stakes are higher and competition becomes cut throat when the narrow and uneven distribution of power and wealth entwine and thus; To this end, Collier (2009) notes that the democratic practices in the bottom billion (Africa and the rest of the developing world) are "superficial", hence the often resultant political or electoral violence following elections or during the electioneering period in the region. This is attributable to the flawed and rather manipulated electoral processes visibly compromised by bribery, fraud,threats of the use of violence and actual violence in societies that are highly fragmented by ethnic divisions.

Likewise, Laakso (2007) notes that electoral processes in Africa more often than not lead to violence because most of these states are "weak", owing to the fact they lack the capability to establish political institutions that would be very useful in the design andimplementation phases of sound and clear policies. Those in, power to protect their interests and those belonging to their allies, evidently, weaken institutions. As a result, electoral processes are flawed, the judiciary is merely a puppet/rubberstamp for theincumbent party, rule of law is not applicable, and there are pervasive structural inequalities that leave constituents unhappy and more vulnerable to mobilization into violent activities, as they have 'nothing left to lose.'

Moving forward she advances the thought that electoral violence is employed as an "illegitimate strategy to win elections" by both the incumbent party and the oppositionparty. It is one of the 'dirty tricks' up the sleeves of leaders in Africa that are strongly averse to loosing given the high stakes and the perks of being in positions of power. For example, killings, attacks against property belonging to the 'enemy', voter and candidate manipulation, forceful displacement, unlawful detention and rioting. This has been the situation Kenya, as reports issued by bodies like the Human Rights Watch, KNCHR, show that since the onset of multiparty democracy in the country, electoral violence has been used as means to sway electoral outcomes. Given the fact that the Kenyan political environment is cut-throat i.e. '*siasa za kumalizana*', rival competitors will deploy whatever means possible to out smoke each other at the polls, hence, political henchmen mobilize youth in criminal gangs or ethnic gangs to abduct, assault and destroy property that belonging to the opponent (s) and the supporters. This point to necessity of research in this area.

Gathumbi (2018) sought to study "the impact of electoral violence of human security in Kenya", with specific focus on Kibera informal settlement, between 2007 and 2017. Additionally, the researcher aimed the role of governmental and non-governmental institutions, in Kibera, towards enhancing human security in the informal settlement during electioneering periods in Kenya. The study was qualitative. Thus, the researcher deployed the use of purposive sampling techniques to identify respondents and used qualitative methods (focus group discussions) to collect data from the target population (women youth in Kibera). The study found that there is need to improve human security (education, health, employment, etc.) in Kibera to foster peace and harmony among its residents. The study also found out that the non-governmental organizations in the informal settlement have been more visible than the state intuitions and hence played a pivotal role towards building peace and cohesion amongst the residents of Kibera. Although Gathumbi's (2018) study and findings may somewhat informed this research study, the gap on the interaction between youth disenfranchisement and political mobilization that possibly leads to electoral violence needed to be investigated further. Moreover, as he (ibid) recommended on the study, more research needs to be conducted in other informal settlements like Kawangware.

Prior to the post-colonial electoral violence, there were tensions in 1961 to 1963, as the leading African political parties (KADU and KANU parties) incited their respective supporters to reject the pre-election elections that ultimately led to Kenya's

independence in 1963. In this, scenario, KADU under Ronald Ngala, Daniel Moi and Masinde Muliro was likened to a camouflaging European Settler Farmer's party, while KANU under Jomo Kenyatta, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya was portrayed as a 'Mau Mau terrorist' political party geared towards bloodshed and disregard of minorities in the country. Hence, each group came out strongly to discredit the other team. In his article, "Consolidating democracy in Kenya," Julius Gathogo (2020:13) has explained thus:

> Tom Mboya was particularly notorious in mocking his competitors, a development that would evoke bitterness and thwart the idea of promoting a democratic culture. As Jeremiah Nyagah (Mboya's colleague in the first government of 1963) noted, Mboya was notorious in stoking political fires. As Hon. Nyagah and Hon. Dr. Gikonyo Kiano were busy delivering reconciliation speeches in January 1963, Mboya, the KANU Secretary-General, was at "Pumwani supervising political games against KADU. Mboya was holding charged political meetings boasting that one KADU office after the other, from Pumwani to Mbotela were voluntarily becoming offshoots of KANU." To this end, the leading Kenyan Newspaper, *Sunday Nation*, in its first edition of January 1963, splashed the names of 21 men (no women trouble makers!) who held the key to the Kenyan prosperity or bloodshed. The editor went on to invite them to put an end to the tension that was mounting in the country. The 21 leaders, who belonged to the two parties, were: Jomo Kenyatta (KANU President), Joseph Murumbi, Tom Mboya, Jeremiah Nyagah, Oginga Odinga, Kariuki Njiiri, Mwai Kibaki, Dickson Makasembo, Dr. Julius Gikonyo Kiano, James Gichuru, Ronald Ngala (KADU President), Masinde Muliro, Daniel arap Moi, Edward Khasakhala, Musa Amalemba, Taita Toweett, Justus Ole Tipis, Jean Marie Seroney, Wafula Wabuge, Paul Ngei, and Walter Odede.

Kyalo (2019) conducted a study that assessed the role of ethnicity in electoral violence in Kenya, between 1992 and 2017. The researcher chose Maathare informal settlement in Nairobi County, as his case study, whereby he sought to determine how ethnicity has been politicized and the role of political parties in precipitation electoral violence in Kenya. He also sought to study the efficiency of the approaches deployed to deter electoral violence in Kenya. The researcher deployed the use of purposive samplingand simple random sampling to identify respondents for the qualitative study. The study found that ethnicity and ethnic loyalty is deeply entrenched in Kenyans and by default in Kenya's politics. Consequently, the political parties are formed based ethnic loyalties, as opposed to ideologies. The study also found that the political parties are at the core of electoral violence in Kenya due to the influence they have on their supporters andgovernmental institutions like the judiciary and the electoral bodies. Additionally, the study found that the approached adopted to deter electoral violence in Kenya have not been effective. Kyalo (2019)'s study and findings are very elaborate and crucial on the politicization of ethnicity. However, this study did not give an in-depth analysis on the interaction between political bigwigs and youth militias during electioneering periods. This was a huge gap that needed to be addressed through substantive research.

Asego (2014) conducted a study to determine the role of the media in electoral conflict and electoral conflict management in Kenya, between 1992 and 1997, as well as study the impact the media had on electoral process within the stipulated time frame. The researcher conducted his study in Kibera informal settlement, Nairobi County, whereby he deployed purposive sampling techniques to source for respondents for the interviews and focus group discussions he held. The research study established that the media has actively fueled electoral violence in Kenya, as in the case of the General Elections held in 2007. The study also found that the media is heavily controlled by the state, hence media houses are used as mediums of spreading of political propaganda and due to this biased nature, they have failed to educate the general public of the hidden rot that is electoral malpracticesorchestrated by political elites in Kenya. Asego (2014)'s study needs to be conducted in more sites within Nairobi County and in other counties in order to determine the role of the media in electoral conflict and electoral conflict management in Kenya. This comparison would be important in order to get different perspectives on the problem. Moreover, given the increase in social platforms, it would be interesting to show which platform has been used frequently and effectively by agents of political mobilization.

Kegoro (2009) conducted a study to examine the role of ethnic militias in politicalviolence in Kenya, using Chinkororo (a Gusii community ethnic militia). The study also sought to establish how these militias came to be, how they finance themselves and their ties with political elites in Kenya. The researcher adopted the use of interviews and focus group discussions to collect data from the chosen respondents in Kisii County. The study found that ethnic militias like Chinkororo in Kenya are formed as a response to the Government's failure to provide adequate security to some communities across the country, especially during inter-ethnic skirmishes. Furthermore, even though these militias are formed to protect their

interests and defend their communities from external attacks, they have been mobilized and directed to act in other occurrences, such as influencing electoral violence by orchestrating violence. Drawing inference from Kegoro (2009)'s study, the researcher deemed it important to establish whether political players in Kawangware have similar quid pro quo relationships with the ethnic militias found within the informal settlement given the paucity of studies in this location in Nairobi.

Kariuki's (2018) study on the link between poor governance, marginalization and youth-led violence in Nairobi sought to determine how poor governance and marginalization have influenced youth involvement in violence in Nairobi, as well as to examine the Government's efforts towards reducing youth involvement in violence. The researcher employed mixed research methods to collect data from the respondents (100)he sourced from Nairobi County. The study found that the growing issue of youthinstigated violence in Nairobi is directly linked to poor governance and marginalized within the Kenya's Capital city. This is because the youth face are continuously discriminated, excluded and disenfranchised by the State. The study also found that the State has come up with activities and initiatives, for example the Youth Enterprise Fund and the National Youth Service (NYS), which it perceives to be youth-inclusive to deter their participation in violence. Given the findings of Kariuki (2018)'s study, the researcher deemed it important to draw inference and compare if there will be a similar outcome in Kawangware.

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methods research design in its endeavor to unveil research question, as it is a n effective way in addressing complex areas on human wellbeing (Creswell and Clark, 2017). For instance, the nature of the research question in this study required a multi-faced (both qualitative and quantitative approach) design to exhaustively answer it, as well as allow the triangulation of the data collected in order to increase the reliability and validity of the study. In view of this, it was helpful in giving an in-depth description and statistics of the findings on the ground, as well as making sense of the emerging issues. Hence, the interventions/solutions identified emanated from the respondents (homegrown) rather than those of the researcher. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019), Nairobi County has a population of four million, three hundred and ninety-seven thousand (4.397) million out of which two hundred and ninety-one thousand, five hundred and sixty-five (291,565) people live in Kawangware. The study targeted all the people aged between 18-35 years (youth) who have resided in Kawangware between 2007 and 2017. Therefore, the researcher sampledrespondents from youth-based organizations and non-governmental organizations operating within the informal settlement. The study also targeted key informants from thelocal administration, the police, village elders and community leaders.

The researcher included three hundred and seventy-eight (378) out of the three hundred and eighty-four (384) targeted respondents, three hundred and sixty-nine (369) of whom were youth in Kawangware and distributed by age range as summarized in Table 2. The sample of respondents further included nine (9) key informants drawn from NGOs working with youth in Kawangware, the police, and the local administration, village elders and community leaders. The Local administration comprised of the Sub- County Commissioner, the Chief and the Assistant Chief. To attain this number of respondents the researcher used a formula, $n=p(100- p)z^2/E^2$, derived from Gill and Johnson (2010), whereby, n = required sample size, p = % occurrence of a condition, z= value responding to level of confidence required and E =themaximum error required, to attain the number of youth respondents for the study. Therefore; $384 = 291565(100-0.50)0.95^2/0.05^2$

The study adopted a stratified sampling technique to select the youth respondents. The strata was divided into 6 by age i.e. 18-20, 21-23, 24-26, 27-29, 30-32 and 33-35. Therefore, 369 ÷6 = 61 respondents per strata.

Table 3: Sample Distribution

S.No	Age (yrs.)	TOTAL
1.	18-20	61

2.	21-23	61
3.	24-26	61
4.	27-29	61
5.	30-32	61
6.	33-35	61
	TOTAL	369

(Source: Author, 16.02.2022)

This study also adopted the purposive sampling technique to select the key informant respondents during the course of the research. The purposive sampling technique was suitable for this study, as it allowed the researcher to select the respondents based on her judgement and knowledge on who can best provide informationpertaining to the study's objectives and would be willing to participate. The data collection instruments were specifically designed to meet the objectives of the study as outlined in Chapter One. Three types of instruments were developed and used for data collection, namely; [1] Questionnaire for Youth (QFY), [2] Structured Interview Schedule for Key Informants (SISK) and [3] Focus Group Discussion Schedulefor Youth (FGDSY) (refer to Appendices B-D). Two experts from the Department of Peace and International Studies at Daystar University determined face Validity and Content Validity of the data collection instruments.

## Analysis and Presentation of Findings
Response Rate
Between April and June 2023, data was collected from youth and key informants living in Congo, Sokoni, Gatina, Coast, and Kabiro regions in Kawangware Ward. The researcher gave questionnaires to three hundred and sixty-nine (369) youth (18-35 years),interviewed nine (9) out of the proposed fifteen (15) key informants, and did four (4) focus group discussions. The focus groups were formed from an existing pool of respondents met by the researcher while administering the QFYs and interviewing key

Demographics of the Respondents:
Gender of the Respondents
The study found that sixty-eight-point one percent (68.3%, n = 252) of the respondents were male, while thirty-one point seven percent (31.7%, n = 117) were female. This result demonstrated the gender discrepancy in political activity in the informal settlement, as men were more ready to participate in the survey due to the study's sensitive issues on politics and election violence. The findings are illustrated in Figure 4.1.
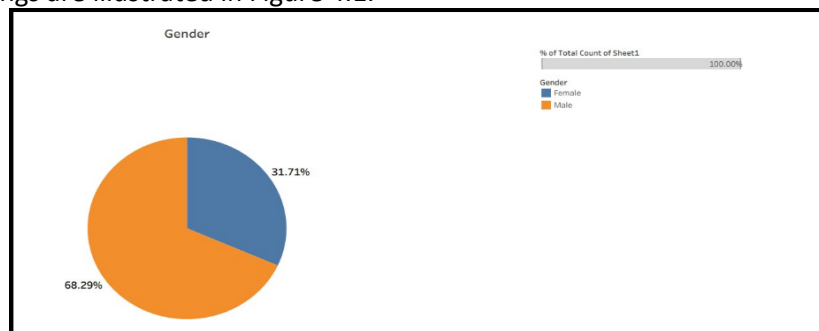
Figure 4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents (Source: Author, 10.07.2023)

Age of the Respondents

The study found that majority of the respondents were aged between 18-25 years thirty-nine percent (n=144, 39.0%) and 26-30 years thirty-three-point nine percent (n=125, 33.9%), while the minority were aged between 31-35 years twenty-seven point one percent (n=100, 27.1%). The data revealed that youth aged between 18-25 years constitute a great age demographic in Kawangware and are thus far more probable to be entangled with electoral violence as perpetrators, victims, or witnesses. Additionally, given that youth represent the majority, they are more prone to engage in violent activities to express their dissatisfaction with the status quo. The findings are illustratedin Table 1.

Table 4.2.2: Age of the Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	144	39.0
26-30	125	33.9
31-35	100	27.1

(Source: Author, 10.07.2023)

The Strategies Employed to Respond to Electoral Violence in Kawangware

The researcher sought to assess the initiatives employed to respond to electoral violencein Kawangware, most especially by the civil society, and collected data on the same. The results and subsequent interpretation are presented in this section. The researcher sought to know the types of activities employed by the civil society theQFY. The results are as detailed in Table 4.2.3;

Table 4.2.3: Overview of Interventions

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Sports activities	85	23
Formal meetings with community leaders ormembers	73	19.8
Discussions in schools	57	15.4
Advocacy campaigns	56	15.2
Informal conversations in the community	51	13.8
Training sessions for community members	30	8.1
Mentorship programs in schools	17	4.6

(Source: Author, 10.07.2023)

The findings reveal that sports activities (23%), formal meetings with community leaders or members (19.8%), discussions in schools (15.4%) and advocacy campaigns (15.2%) emerged as the most significant interventions. Training sessions for community members (8.1%) and mentorship programs in schools (4.6%) were the least mentioned factors. As evidenced by the findings, various measures have been identified as being effective in Kawangware. Sporting activities have emerged as the most successful technique because they provide a constructive release for stress. Formal communitygatherings and school discussions are also successful because they generate dialogue, community involvement, raise awareness, and encourage responsible citizenship among the youth. Although training and mentoring initiatives were the least mentioned, their importance in providing adolescents with skills and advice for peaceful political involvement cannot be overstated.

Further investigation from the KFIs revealed that local community policing, youth training programs and community-based initiatives like "*Kazi Mtaani*" have been deployed to mitigate youth involvement in electoral violence, among other issues like drug abuse. The responses from the FGDs reveal that the local authorities do engagement in community activities such as Barazas that have been rendered ineffective due to the strained relations between them and the youth. Moreover, no efforts

have been employed by the national government in Kawangware. Additionally, most activities are led by NGOs and youth groups, and very minimally by religious leaders.

Discussions of key Findings:
Findings
Various interventions have been put in place to address electoral violence in Kawangware. This study found that NGOs are by far the most effective, followed by youth groups. Although local administration officials stated their strategies to involve youth in peace building initiatives, most youth indicated that such approaches are largely ineffective given the poor relationship between both factions. NGO activities to prevent youth involvement in electoral violence include entrepreneurial training, awareness campaigns, and peace meetings, especially during the election period. Youth groups also have periodic meetings and other entrepreneurial activities like operating car wash facilities to keep the youth employed. According to Claes and Borzyskowski (2018), electoral violence interventions are mostly effective when spearheaded by civil society groups. While government institutions might be involved, their influence is often limited since most civilians share apoor relationship with such agencies. This explains why NGOs and youth groups are the most involved in preventing electoral violence in the Kawangware ward. From the current study, youth-driven activities for peace are deemed more effective than local administration initiatives. Claes and Borzyskowski (2018) further explain that civil society groups often understand society-based problems better than government agencies.

Recommendations
In agreement with the findings, the study recommends that creating employment for the youth in Kawangware will reduce their feelings of economic marginalization, which has made them vulnerable to patronage and incitement to criminal and violent crimes. Employment will also instill a positive attitude in the youth, as they will be more inclined towards engaging in activities that build rather than destroy the community. Furthermore, youth empowerment in Kawangware is required to raise understanding about civic procedures, political institutions, and the Kenyan Constitution. These activities will teach the youth valuable skills such as critical thinking. In addition, the projects, such as the Peace Ambassadors Integration Organization (PAMBIO) should be long-term, i.e. ongoing year-round rather than just during election seasons, so that the impact on the community is continuous and will be felt across generations. Additionally, existing initiatives driven by organizations like PAMBIO ought to increase their visibilityand cast a wider net in communities like Kawangware.

Meaningful representation of the youth in Kawangware will also be critical in sustaining peace in Kawangware, as it will provide a platform for them to openly express their worries and frustrations to political authorities. This will thereby increase youth inclusion in decision-making, particularly on topics that directly affect them, minimising feelings of rejection and neglect. Moreover, leaders and politicians in Kawangware must be held accountable for their decisions and actions in order to dissuade youth from inciting electoral violence. The leaders should be aware that they could be indicted and tried in their home country for bribery and encouragement of violence, as seen in by intervention by the internationalcommunity in 2007/2008 post-electoral skirmishes. Furthermore, the Government's mechanisms should be improved so that the rule of law is enforced and the Courts are impartial and transparent. Non-state actors, such as the media and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), should keep leaders accountable by providing accurate and timely information to counter misleading messaging and hate speech. International censure of politicians that incite violence may also be used to hold them accountable for their conduct.

Areas Recommended for Further Research
Based on the study's findings and the recommendations' above, to evaluate the long-term effects of employment programmes on the youth in Kawangware, there is needto conduct a longitudinal research. This would include monitoring the participants' social and economic development over a number of years to assess if employment truly breaks the cycle of poverty and lessens their susceptibility to crime. Moreover, the researcher recommends that comparison studies are

conducted in other areas or towns dealing with issues comparable to those in Kawangware to find lessons that can be applied there and the best ways to deal with issues like youth dissent and electoral violence.

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The researchers' wishes to confirm that they followed full ethical considerations and acknowledged their sources appropriately without plagiarizing or duplicating other people's works unprofessionally.

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