



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

## The Influence of Perceived Post Election Violence on Emotional Well Being among Secondary School Students in Nakuru County, Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*Violence has a negative influence on people's wellbeing. The emotional wellbeing of people is of great significance if they are to remain healthy. This is particularly so with the secondary school students who require to be emotionally fit in order to achieve their academic goals. In 2008, Kenya experienced post election violence (PEV) and Nakuru County was one of the areas affected by this violence. The post election violence claimed about 1200 lives, maimed others and about 350,000 were displaced. The secondary school students were not spared either, some schools were destroyed and others closed down. The study investigated the influence of perceived post election violence on emotional well being among secondary school students in Nakuru County in Kenya. The study adapted ex post-facto research design. Njoro, Molo and Kuresoi were some of the districts adversely affected by post election violence. The three districts have 82 secondary schools and a population of 6,380 form four students and 75 teacher counsellors. Proportionate sampling was used to select the number of schools per district, the number of boys and girls, and teacher counsellors per school. A total of 30 teacher counselors, 187 boys and 173 girls constituted the sample size. Two questionnaires were used to collect data from the students and teacher counsellors. The instruments were pilot tested using 30 students and 6 teacher counselors from Naivasha District which experienced similar events. Cronbach's Alpha formula was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the research instruments. The instruments were considered reliable after they yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.722 All the hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level. Statistics included descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and inferential statistics such the use of Pearson's product moment correlation. Data was analysed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17.0 for windows. The findings indicated that there was a moderate positive influence between perceived post election violence on emotional wellbeing among secondary school students,  $r=0.468$ ,  $p<0.05$ . The study recommended the need to enhance counseling services to promote emotional wellbeing among secondary school students. There is need to allocate more resources for effective implementation of guidance and counseling programmes in secondary schools.*

**Key words:** Emotional wellbeing, grief, trauma, post traumatic stress disorders

### **1. Introduction**

Violence is the expression of physical or verbal force against self or others, compelling action against ones will or pain of being hurt (Wainryb & Pasupathi, 2007). It is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development or deprivation (Ahmad, 2004). This definition associate's intentionality with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces.

Globally, violence takes the lives of more than 1.5 million people annually: just over 50% due to suicide, some 35% due to homicide, and just over 12% as a direct result of war or some other form of conflict. For each single death due to violence, there are dozens of hospitalizations, hundreds of emergency department visits, and thousands of doctors' appointments (Andrews *et al*, 1998). Furthermore, violence often has lifelong consequences for victims' physical and mental health and social functioning and can slow economic and social development.

Violence, however, is preventable. Evidence shows strong relationships between levels of violence and potentially modifiable factors such as concentrated poverty, income and gender inequality, the harmful use of alcohol, and the absence of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between children and parents. Scientific research shows that strategies addressing the underlying causes of violence can be effective in preventing violence (Ahmad, 2004). Examples of scientifically credible strategies to prevent violence include; parenting education to prevent child maltreatment; life skills training for children ages 6–18 years; school-based programmes to address gender norms and attitudes; reducing alcohol availability and misuse through enactment and enforcement of liquor licensing laws, taxation and pricing; reducing access to guns and knives; and promoting gender equality by supporting the economic empowerment of women.

Violence is one of the leading causes of adolescent morbidity and mortality around the world. Young people are disproportionately represented among both the perpetrators and victims of violence. There are multiple factors within the contexts in which young people live, their families, schools, peer groups, neighborhoods, and sociopolitical environments, that predispose to and buffer against violence. Likewise, there are multiple preventive strategies that effectively address these factors and reduce violence involvement and injury. Youth violence can be prevented by applying science-based public health approaches to defining the problem, determining root causes, correlates, and modifiable risk and resilience factors, and designing, implementing, evaluating, disseminating, and sustaining effective interventions (Ahmad, 2004).

Violence in society can perpetuate itself over decades, long after a nation has suffered an initial traumatic experience (CITCK, 2002). As medical research has shown, excessive exposure to traumatic violence may alter the developing central nervous system probably by changing receptor sensitivity (Passer & Smith, 2004). This may predispose the victim of violence to be more impulsive, reactive and violent individual. Hence, violence may breed more violence in the future.

Political violence has occurred in many parts of the world. The war in Iraq has resulted in the deaths of thousands of people and turned over 2,000,000 into refugees (International Herald Tribunal, 2000). In Rwanda, the tribal conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi led to the genocide of 800,000 people within a hundred days (Bennett, 2003). Similarly, the civil war in Somalia has killed 21,000 people and caused immense displacement of people (Munene, 2011). The election disputes that brought about the post election violence in Kenya appears to be bringing copycat conflicts in the region as witnessed in Ivory Coast and the 'Walk to Work' protest in Uganda (Matumbo & Mwaniki, 2011).

Kenya is a land of contrasts. This is not only true of the physical, geographical and climatic conditions of the land, but also of the social and cultural characteristics of its people. These unique circumstances which had in the past engendered national pride, unity in diversity and tribal harmony, have regrettably in recent times has been the cause of tribal clashes (Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence in Kenya, (CIPEV) (2008).

The tribal clashes that have been experienced in our nation have been encountered since 1991 have been a sad chapter in the history of our beloved republic. They have resulted in considerable loss of lives and injury to persons and destruction of property, they have caused fear, suspicion, mistrust and insecurity among the general population in the Republic; they have inhibited the progress towards social cohesion and the integration of our society; they have been detrimental to public peace, national tranquility, law and order, human rights and the rule of law which are the cornerstone of economic and social development (Commission of Inquiry into Tribal Clashes in Kenya Report, (CITCK) (2002).

One of the problems that befell the first independent African government was the existing deep rooted tribalism which was there because of lack of contact between the various tribes promoted in the colonial days. In spite of various attempt to eradicate this fundamental problem, it has continued today to hamper the consolidation of Kenya into a United Nation and adversely affects the political life of the country (CITIC, 2002). Further causes of tribal clashes have been outlined as ethnicity and clanism, land ownership, politics, political affiliation, cattle rustling, supremacy and illegal arms.

The issue of land in Kenya is often treated with fervent sentimentality and sensitivity and in many ways, considered explosive. Whereas the constitution guaranteed the right of ownership of property anywhere in the country, the peaceful co-existence of the forty two tribes that live within our national borders, appears to have been profoundly undermined by diverse man-made problems that either directly or indirectly are connected to land. Recent development in the political arena have tended to exacerbate rather than ameliorate the situation and by the same token, have ushered in such problems that have far-reaching implications to communities within multi-tribal farms.

The Commissions of Inquiry into Tribal clashes in Kenya (2002) recommended the following as a measure of putting an end to tribal clashes;

- The police and provincial administration to take firm and drastic action to prevent tribal clashes.
- Social political leaders, security, police and administration services to shun from incitement.
- The government to embark on an ambitious programme to issue title documents to all people who were either allocated land there by the government or who bought the same from previous owners.
- All those displaced from their farms during tribal clashes should be identified and be assisted to resettle back on their farms and appropriate security arrangements made for their peaceful stay thereon.
- Discontinue tribally based settlements
- Educate all residence of the places where the tribal clashes occurred.
- Improve infrastructure in those areas where cattle rustling was a problem to improve mobility and communication in tracking down stolen livestock.
- To deal with incitement firmly especially from the politicians.

- To delink police force from the provincial administration and be made independent.

All the above recommendations were not acted upon because even the report was made public after Human Rights activists demanded its release (CIPEV, 2008).

The Commission of Inquiry into post election violence in Kenya (2008) was set to establish and analyse the extent of post election violence made the following observations about post election violence;

- The post election violence had a distinct ethnic dimension.
- Initial violence witnessed in the Rift Valley (Nakuru County) was spontaneous and was in part a reaction to the perceived rigging of election.
- Subsequent the pattern of violence showed planning and organization by politicians business and others who enlisted criminal gangs.

Some of the pointers to the organization included the fact that in some instances, warnings were issued to the victims before the attacks. The violence involved large numbers of attackers, often mobilized from areas outside the location of violence. Petrol and other weapons were used in various places to carry out the attacks and destruction, which required arrangements as regards to acquisition, concealment and transport. Sometimes the attacks specifically targeted only members of a given ethnic group to the exclusion of others.

The report also indicated that a total of 1,133 people died. The geographical distribution of the deaths was unequal, with Uasin Gishu district leading with 230 people followed by Nakuru with 213 people. The post election violence led to a total of 3,561 people being injured which resulted from sharp pointed objects, blunt objects, gunshots, arrow shots, burns and assault. A total of 117,216 private properties were destroyed which included business premises and residences, while 491 government own properties were destroyed.

Previously, Molo district had experienced serious incidences of violence before the presidential and parliamentary elections of 1992 and 1997 (Government of Kenya, 2008). In 2007, the main difference was that the violence was more intense and it also covered both the rural regions as well as the urban centres. Another phenomenon is the fact that it lasted for a longer period and occurred after rather than before the elections (CIPEV, 2008). The post election violence exposed people to problems. Some communities were forced to flee, leaving behind their history, homes, property and cattle, to save their lives (Gwiyo, 2008). This brought great loss to the victims of violence who experienced loss and grief as a result. Some communities became displaced and some ended in camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP).

Internally Displaced Persons are the human face of the problem caused by post election violence (CIPEV, 2008). Internally displaced has been a permanent feature of Kenyan history from colonial times onwards. Colonialism led to the evictions of natives from the ancestral land, to make way for settlers in colonial Kenya, to recent violent evictions accompanying the 1992, 1997 and 2002 elections. IDPs have been country's political landscape. Approximately 350,000 persons were displaced from their normal abodes of residence and business (CIPEV, 2008).

People were displaced as a result of violence. They moved to places considered safe like police stations, administrative posts, churches and trading centres. The settlement conditions in IDPs camps in churches, trading centres, chief's camps, administrative police camps and police stations were reportedly bad (CIPEV, 2008). They were the subject of attacks by criminal gangs and marauding youths. They were also ethnically divided reflecting the ethnic divisions at the time. Most IDPs further had to leave their home with nothing except the clothes they were wearing. The situation was aggravated during the height of the violence when basic services were not available and the supply lines were blocked. The IDPs depended mainly on relief food and basically had no way of earning a living. They lacked access to basic facilities such as medical, educational, social and economic services.

Among the displaced people were students of secondary schools who got cut off from their colleagues, friends, teachers and schools (CIPEV, 2008). This was a challenge to the education sector which had to come up with workable solutions. The perpetrators of post election violence raided houses summarily executed persons on the spot, looted houses and burnt them down (CIPEV, 2008). A total of 1133 deaths were reported. Such extreme experiences of violence may bring traumatic consequences for individuals and their families (Gwiyo, 2008). This caused fear, and forced people to relocate to new setup with assumed security. This may explain the present efforts of internally displaced people to try and settle elsewhere rather than go back from where they were uprooted during the post election violence. The post election violence led to displacement of people from their homes and forced them to settle in camps for Internally Displaced Persons.

The secondary school students were not spared either. In some cases, schools were burnt down while learning environment was disrupted (CIPEV, 2008). This may have led to wastage of time and resources which may have negatively affected the educational sector. Some students may have suffered the most devastating influence. Parents during violence lacked ability to protect and care for their children (CIPEV, 2008). Violence may have negative influence on students who may develop ideologies and psychological mechanisms that may promote and perpetuate communal violence. Violence may destroy basic trust between persons within communities and government institutions (CIPEV, 2008). This may have brought hatred, suspicion, feelings of insecurity, desertion and hopelessness among the post election violence victims.

The post election violence had a negative influence on the education sector. The environment for systematic and coordinated learning may have been disrupted irreparably (Gwiyo, 2008). Worse still there may be some students who lost parents and for whom getting fees and other necessities would be a real challenge. Trauma and depression may be common among the displaced students. It is from this background that the research intended to establish the relationship between perceived post election violence, emotional wellbeing and academic performance among secondary school students in Nakuru County.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

The period following the December 2007 general election, Kenya experienced unprecedented post-election violence. Molo, Njoro and Kuresoi were some of the districts adversely affected by post election violence. The effects of socio-political violence may have negative consequences on the overall development of the victims. This led to losses of life, property and livelihood. Injuries were also sustained while thousands of people were displaced. The post election violence of 2008 may have brought great loss to the education sector. Some parents were killed, maimed, while others lost their means of livelihood. This may have affected the parent's ability to provide effectively and sufficiently the basic needs of the students. Some students lost their parents, books, home and became displaced. These students may have experienced great losses and agony. Mostly they may experience adverse psychological problems which may have been manifested in their behaviour in schools. This may result in serious emotional problems such as lack of interest in any social activities, irritability, aggression and suicide. The study sought to establish the influence of perceived post election violence on academic performance among secondary students in Nakuru County in Kenya.

## 3. Purpose of the Study

The study was to establish the influence of perceived post election violence on emotional wellbeing among secondary school students in Nakuru County.

## 4. Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objective:

1. To determine the influence between perceived PEV on emotional wellbeing among secondary school students.

## 5. Literature Review

### 5.1. Influence of Violence on Emotional Wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing is an important health element for every individual. On the other hand, trauma may be defined as a bodily injury, shock, or an emotional shock often having a lasting psychic effect. Violence is a major cause of trauma (Gitahi & Mwangi, 2008). It does not matter whether trauma results from psychological, emotional or sexual abuse, war, hunger or pestilence. The experience may change the way a person operates in life. Experiencing trauma can alter human brain in profound ways, even sometimes preventing individuals from placing boundaries on appropriate or inappropriate behaviours (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). A good example is in Sudan where prolonged violence has brought about traumatic experiences to the people (Tannock, 2011). Further, trauma may cause strong intense, negative emotions such as "toxic shame" abandonment, prolonged fear, anxiety, rejection, loneliness and despair. Events perceived as traumatic can change brain chemistry and can result in behaviour such as violence, crime, depression, change in thinking patterns and other behaviours (Masters, 2004). It is a feeling of being very upset, afraid or shocked after a bad experience. The perceived post election violence was a situation which could cause trauma which affected their emotional wellbeing.

Depression is an emotional state usually characterized by prolonged feelings of gloom, despair, futility, profound pessimism and a tendency towards excessive guilt and self-reproach. Other symptoms of depression include fatigue, insomnia, poor concentration, irritability, anxiety, reduced sexual interest and overall loss of interest and boredom (Mckeown et al., 1998). At times, depression appears in the guise of other disorders such as vague pains, headache or recurrent nausea. It may also include cognitive symptoms (negative cognition about self, world and future), motivational symptoms (loss of interest, lack of drive, difficult starting anything) and somatic symptom (lack of appetite, lack of energy, sleep difficulties and weight, loss or gain). Research has shown that experiencing the death of a father or mother while young is associated with a great increased risk of later depression (Browlby, 2000). The students who lost parents and loved ones are at risk of developing depression.

Extreme experiences of violence may bring traumatic experiences for the individuals and families which may impede the emotional wellbeing (Ai & Ubelher, 2002). They may also directly influence the co-existence of people and community. For example, in Congo a combination of violence and official neglect destroyed the country's roads, telephones and organs of government. Dozens of smaller, local conflict continue to blaze. They fight with low-tech weapons such as Machetes, bows and a few guns. An endless cycle of atrocities create an endless cycle of grudges which fuel more micro wars (Mansback & Rhodes, 2006). The perceived PEV may bring about endless cycle of grudges and micro wars among various communities if not checked.

One situation that may produce psychological after effects and nightmare involve experiencing interpersonal violence and may result to PTSD (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The post election violence that was witnessed in Kenya involved interpersonal violence which may give rise to trauma. This is a disability condition that may result from experiencing an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury or from witnessing such an event happen to a family member or close friend. People suffering from PTSD may experience a number of psychological symptoms including recurring and disturbing memories, terrible nightmares and intense fear and anxiety.

Trauma caused by human activities such as war, rape and torture may tend to precipitate more severe PTSD reactions than do natural disasters (Sorendon, 2002). The psychological wreckage caused by PTSD may increase vulnerability to the later development of other disorders. The secondary school students who either observed or were victims of PEV may require counseling interventions in order to enhance emotional wellbeing as well as academic performance. This highlights the importance of prompt post traumatic intervention (should be offered preferably between 24 hours and 7 days after the stressful events) aimed at preventing the development of PTSD. Adolescents who witnessed or were victims of violence may show symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder similar to those of

soldiers coming back from war; with the distress symptoms increasing according to the number of violent acts witnessed or experienced (Ai & Ulbelher, 2002).

### 5.2. Effects of Loss and Grief

Losing someone or something that one loves is very painful. Loss that is unacknowledged or unattended can result in disability (Worden, 1991). Grief refers to the emotions and sensations that accompany the loss of someone or something dear to a person (Aileen, 1999). Further, grief that is expressed has a potential for healing that eventually can strengthen and enrich life. Grief is a process through which we work out and eventually resolve deeply felt loss and the accompanying pain and anxiety (Worden, 1991).

When we think of someone as grief stricken, we usually associate the condition with death of a loved one (bereavement) yet there are other sources of grief which require deeply challenging readjustment (Aileen, 1999). These include a change of circumstances. A good example is loss of a job or on-going financial problems that are status or security related. Another example is change in relationship which may involve the death of a loved one, divorce or separation and a child growing up or moving away from home.

People experience the cycle of grief differently (Milne, 1999). Some find that within a few weeks or months the period between waves of distress lengthens and that they are able to feel peace, renewed hope, and enjoy life most of the time. This is a step forward towards healing. Others may face fears of being hit with what feels like relentless waves of grief (Worden, 1991). This suggests the possibility of the loss and grief suffered by victims of violence to hold them back for years to come unless counseling services are made available.

Social support can also be a source of healing and adjustment (Crandell & Crandell, 2000). People who receive the support and comfort of family and friends typically have a lower incidence of mental and physical disorders following bereavement. For most, people the expression of grief following the death of a loved one is an important component in recovery. There are exceptions of grieves which includes an intense yearning for and a higher degree of dependency on the deceased person tend to have a harder time recovery from loss (Crendell & Crandell, 2000).

The process of grieving is painful and may be experienced and resolved by most individuals. In some cases however, morbid grief reactions may occur that prevent the successful conclusion of this life crisis. Three types of grief reactions are delayed reactions, distorted reactions and pathological mourning (Worden, 1991). In some cases, the intense reaction of the first stage may be postponed for days, months and in some cases years. In these cases it is common for some seemingly unreal incident to bring to the surface an intense grieving, which the individual does not even recognize as grief. In most cases distorted reactions are normal symptoms carried out to an extreme degree. They may include adopting the behavior traits of the deceased, such as aspects of the deceased's fatal illness and other types of psychosomatic ailment particularly colitis, arthritis and asthma. In pathological mourning the process is not skipped but is prolonged and intensified to an abnormal degree (Decay & Travers, 2004). It is important to establish whether the post election victims have gone through the whole process of grieving in order to adjust to life.

Grief is essential aspect of a healthy encounter with the crisis of death. Open confrontation with the loss of a loved one is essential to accepting the reality of a world in which the deceased is no longer present. Attempts to repress or avoid thoughts about the loss may only push them into subconscious where they may continue to cause problems until they are dragged out and accepted fully. This calls for the need to establish whether this has happened among the secondary school students who lost parents or had they injured.

### 5.3. Conceptual Framework

This section covers a description of the independent variables (post election violence) the dependent variables and the interactions with the intervening variables.

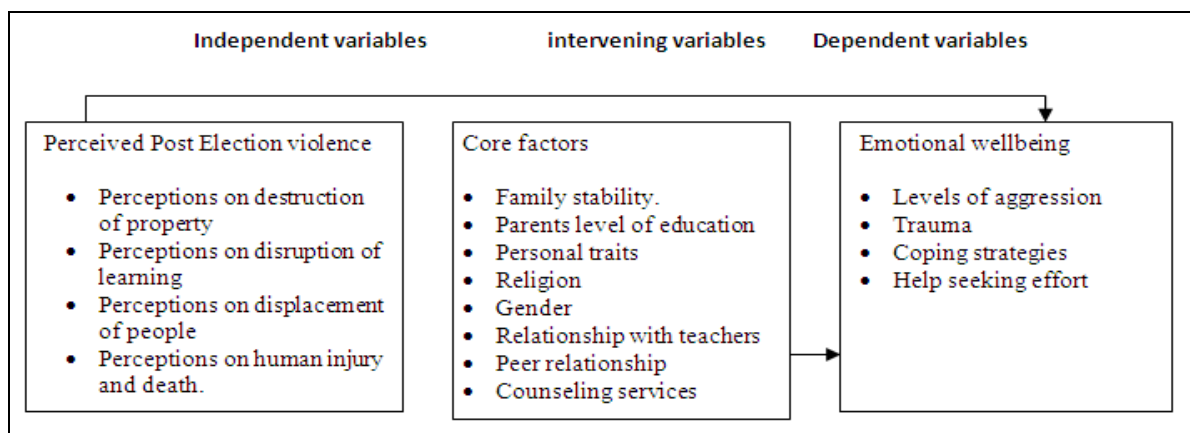


Figure 1: Effect of post election violence on emotional

The post election violence affected emotional wellbeing among secondary students not only to the victims of violence but also to those who watched the events as they were covered by the media. There was destruction of property, disruption of learning, displacement of people, human injury and even death. There may be a possibility of students learning to solve day to day conflicts through aggression as they may have observed their models behave likewise during the post election violence. The students whose houses were burnt down and parents killed may suffer trauma. These effects may give rise to depression and or post traumatic stress disorder. This may appear months or years after post election violence. It is also possible for some victim to adopt coping mechanism such as learned helplessness which may have a negative impact on their lives and influence their coping strategy. When student's basic needs are not adequately met, it may be difficult for them to achieve their academic goals. Factors such as family stability, academic level of the parents and social support offered to the students will determine how well they will address their emotional wellbeing. Gender, personality traits and religion will influence their coping abilities. The school environments which include the school curriculum, relationship with the peers and the teachers will be a source of hope as far as students' emotional wellbeing is concerned.

## 6. Research Methodology

The study employed *ex post facto* correlational research design which was appropriate due to characteristics of the population studied. The characteristics that served as independent variables could not be directly controlled by the researcher because their manifestations had already occurred and therefore not manipulatable (Kerlinger, 2000). These assessed the relationships among variables with the goal of predictive relationships (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister & Zechmeister, 2000). Inferences were made without manipulation of the independent variables which were the post election violence (killings, internal displacement of persons, injuries and property destruction). The dependent variable, emotional wellbeing was considered as resultant from the independent variables.

The target population was form four students in Njoro, Molo and Kuresoi which had 3,296 boys, 3,094 girls and 82 teacher counselors (GOK, 2009). The form four students represented one of the most senior classes in a secondary school system in Kenya and could be more reliable to involve them in the study as they are better placed to remember the post election violence as it unfolded. The teacher counselors form an essential segment of that population as they are directly involved in students wellbeing. They handle day to day challenges that the students encounter in their academic pursuits.

First purposive sampling of Molo, Njoro and Kuresoi districts from Nakuru county was done. Proportionate sampling was used to select the required number of schools per district, the number of boys and girls, and teacher counselors per school (in order to cater for gender balance). A sample of 360 students and 30 teacher counselors comprised the sample of the study.

The study adopted a formula by Kathuri and Pals (1993) for estimating a sample n as follows:-

$$n = \frac{x^2 NP (1-P)}{\delta^2(N-1) + x P (1-P)}$$

Where:

- n = required sample size
- N = the given population size of form four students 6,380 in this case
- p = Population proportion, assumed to be 0.50.
- $\delta^2$  = the degree of accuracy whose value is 0.05.
- x = Table value of Chi-square for one degree of freedom which is 3.841

Substituting these values in the equation, estimated sample size was

$$n = \frac{3.841 \times 6,380 \times 0.50 (1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2 (6,380-1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5)}$$

$$n = 360$$

Districts	No. of schools	No. of boys	No. of girls	No. of teacher counselors
Molo	5	53	61	10
Njoro	3	47	54	6
Kuresoi	7	87	58	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>30</b>

Table 1: Sample Frame

Two questionnaires, coping strategy and trauma inventories were used. The student's questionnaire consists of 15 questions seeking information from the students related to post election violence. This covered issues they encountered during that time. The trauma inventory (Bober & Regehr, 2006) assessed issues related to emotional wellbeing among the students. It consisted of 10 questions that assessed whether the students encountered life threatening situations and injury during post election violence. The teacher counselor's questionnaire consisted of 34 questions that covered variables such as students' emotion, trauma, and aggression.

Content validity of the instrument was determined by consultation with the supervisors and other research and social psychology experts in the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations of Egerton University in order to make adjustments where necessary and perfect the instruments. The instruments were pilot tested to establish reliability. Three schools were purposively selected; thirty students and six teacher counselors from Naivasha District were selected for pilot testing of the

instruments because it is an area that was affected by post election violence. The respondents bore similar characteristics to those of the participants of the main study (Banyard & Grayson, 2000) but were not included in the final sample. The respondents consisted of both girls and boys in form four classes. Split-half procedure which involved scoring two halves of a test separately for each person and the calculation of a correlation coefficient for the two sets of scores were used to establish the reliability of the instruments. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.722. For this reason, the instruments were considered reliable for this study. .

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. Descriptive statistics inform of frequency tables and percentages were generated to explain various attributes of the variables under study. Inferential statistics inform of Pearson's Product Moment correlation was used to determine the influence of perceived post election violence on emotional wellbeing. Data was coded and analysed by use of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for windows version 17.0. The package is especially designed for the analysis for social science data and contains most of the routines social scientists employ (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996).

## 7. Results and Discussion

Three hundred and sixty students and thirty teacher counselors indicated the influence of perceived post election violence on emotional wellbeing among the secondary school students in Nakuru County. Rating values were as; never, rarely sometimes, often and very often. The emotional trauma inventory was adopted to measure emotional wellbeing as shown in Table 2.

	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Very often		Missing	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
Exposed to life threatening situation	27	7.5	40	11.0	70	19.3	68	18.8	141	39.0	16	4.4
Suffer personal injury	159	43.9	49	13.5	43	11.9	40	11.0	61	16.9	10	2.8
Death or serious injury of parent	102	28.2	36	9.9	26	7.2	47	13.0	132	36.5	19	5.2
Witnessed violence towards others	34	9.4	40	11.0	51	14.1	69	19.1	143	39.5	25	6.9
Family suffering mental illness	127	35.1	43	11.9	48	13.3	43	11.9	84	23.2	17	4.7
Alcohol related problems with parent/guardian	168	46.4	40	11.0	37	10.2	36	9.9	70	19.3	11	3.0
Put down or ridiculed	75	20.7	57	15.7	81	22.4	49	13.5	70	19.3	30	8.3
Ignored or made to feel you don't count	73	20.2	54	14.9	55	15.2	57	15.7	102	28.2	21	5.8
Treated cold or uncaring	80	22.1	56	15.5	40	11.0	44	12.2	133	36.7	9	2.5
Failure to understand	110	30.4	41	11.3	45	12.4	51	14.1	106	29.3	9	2.5

Table 2: Influence of Perceived PEV on Emotional Wellbeing among the Students

The students gave responses which indicated their perceptions on perceived post election violence and emotional wellbeing as a result of their experience during that time. The students were required to indicate whether they were exposed to life threatening situations. The results were, out of 360 students, 27 (7.5%) indicated that they were never exposed to life threatening situations. Those who reported that they were exposed to life threatening situation were 277 (88.1%). This may have negative effect on the students. Ehrenreich (2001) had shown that exposure to life threatening situations affected emotional wellbeing. Some respondents suffered personal injury 101 (27.9%). This could cause trauma among them as indicated by Gitahi & Mwangi (2008).

Table 3 showed that 142 (39.2%) respondents indicated that there was strong influence between perceived post election violence on emotional wellbeing as a result of loss of a guardian or parent.

Emotional Wellbeing as a result of Loss of Guarding or Parent	Frequency	Percentage
No Influence	166	45.9
Very weak Influence	22	6.1
Weak Influence	29	8.1
Strong Influence	17	4.7
Very strong Influence	125	34.5
No response	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3: Influence of Perceived PEV on Emotional Wellbeing as a Result of Loss of Parents or Guardian

Table 3 showed that about 194 (53.3%) of the respondents encountered death or serious injury of parent or a caregiver. The loss of parent or serious injuries of parent or caretaker had emotional setbacks to the students. Follingstand et al., (1990), had reported that losses may lead to anger, hurt, sadness, grief, anxiety, depression, shame and fear. Besides feeling of hopelessness, wanting to protect oneself or seek revenge and feeling unloved are not uncommon.

Cradell and Cradell (2000) had proposed that counseling interventions would help people to cope with loss. Litchenthal and Cruess (2010) had also suggested the use of directed writing in helping people who had experienced loss of significant relationship. It involved individuals trying to make meaning out of the loss through sense making or through benefit finding. This meaning making can come naturally for some, but many need direct intervention. Other issues the respondents encountered were loss of siblings, family relationships, divorce of parents and living in the IDP camps as shown in Table 4.

Life in the IDP camps	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Influence	73	20.5
Very weak Influence	27	7.5
Weak Influence	38	10.5
Strong Influence	36	9.6
Very strong Influence	185	51.1
No response	1	.8
Total	360	100.0

Table 4: Students' Perception on Effects of Living in IDP camps

The study was to determine whether the life in the IDP camps had any influence on emotional wellbeing among the secondary school students. This study found that 73 (20.5%) of the respondents reported no influence between PEV, emotional wellbeing and the life in the IDPs camp. Very weak influence was indicated by 27 (7.5%). Weak relationship was reported by 38 (10.5%). Strong influence was experienced by 36 (9.9%), while 185 (51.1%) reported very strong influence as indicated in Table 4. The study showed that some students were subjected to the life in the IDPs camp which was wanting. CIPEV (2008) had earlier showed that victims of post election violence were forced into camps in schools, church compounds and shopping centres. They lived in makeshift structures of polythene sheets, cardboards and similar materials. Further, they had little food and lived in poor sanitary conditions with their children. Thus perceived PEV pushed the poverty index of victims higher. Hofferth (1998) had indicated a close relationship between school performance and socio-economic status. This had also been reported by Mackeown et al., (1998) where they had associated low educational attainment with socioeconomic disadvantage and the effects of poverty. These affected students' emotional wellbeing. The life in the IDPs camps was wanting. They lacked basic needs such as water, shelter and food which negatively affected the lives of victims of PEV. McarIFane (2008) had noted that people living in improvised neighbourhoods often are the victims of community violence and sometimes they are perpetrators themselves. The resultant behaviour is experimenting with drugs, or alcohol, sexual activity and risky behaviour. This was further supported by responses from the counsellors' report as shown in Table 5.

	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Very often		No response	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
PEV related Depression	-	-	3	10.0	5	16.7	16	53.3	6	20.0	-	-
PEV related despair among students	1	3.3	6	20.0	6	20.0	9	30.0	8	26.7	-	-
PEV related hopelessness	2	6.7	6	20.0	6	20.0	7	23.3	8	26.7	1	3.3
PEV related to guilt	5	16.7	8	26.7	9	30.0	3	10.0	4	13.3	1	3.3
PEV related shame	7	23.3	7	23.3	6	20.0	5	16.7	4	13.3	1	3.3
PEV related isolation	5	16.7	4	13.3	7	23.3	5	16.7	8	26.7	1	3.3
PEV related distress	2	6.7	9	30.0	2	6.7	12	40.0	5	16.7	-	-
PEV related flashback	1	3.3	7	23.3	8	26.7	7	23.3	6	20.0	1	3.3
PEV related dreams and nightmares	9	30.0	12	40.0	4	13.3	2	6.7	2	6.7	1	3.3
Handling problems on their own	5	16.7	9	30.0	4	13.3	3	10.0	7	23.3	2	6.7

Table 5: Teachers Perception on Perceived PEV and Emotional wellbeing among the Secondary School Students

The study sought to establish teachers' perception on perceived PEV and emotional wellbeing among the secondary school students. The counsellors' responses had reported PEV related depression by 90% students. These findings had been supported by Masters (2004) who proposed that events perceived as traumatic can change brain chemistry and can result in behavior such as violence, crime, depression, change in thinking patterns and other behaviours. The counsellors also reported post election violence related despair and hopelessness among the students. This could precipitate depression as proposed by learned helplessness theory (Seligman & Isaacowitz, 2000). The theory holds that depression occurs when people expect bad events will occur and that there is nothing they can do to prevent or cope with them. The counsellors also reported cases of post election related shame 24 (80%), social isolation respondents 27 (86.7%), distress 28 (93.3%), anxiety 28 (93.3%), flashbacks 28 (93.3%) and post election related dreams and nightmares 22 (73.3%). This has been supported by Ai and Ulbelher (2002) who proposed that adolescents who witnessed or were victims of violence may show symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder similar to soldiers coming back from war, with the distress symptoms increasing according to the number of violent acts witnessed or experienced as shown in Table 5. To establish the influence



of perceived post election violence on emotional wellbeing among the secondary school students, Pearson's Product Moment correlation was used as shown in Table 6.

		Mean effect of PEV	Mean Emotional Trauma Inventory
Mean effect PEV	Pearson correlation	1	.463*
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	359	289
Mean emotional	Pearson correlation	.463	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
Trauma inventory		289	290

Table 6: Influence of Perceived PEV on Emotional Wellbeing among Secondary School Students

\*  $p = .463$ , Correlation is significant at 0.05.

A Pearson's product moment correlation yielded a coefficient  $r = .463$ ,  $p = .000$ . This meant that perceived PEV and emotional wellbeing were significantly correlated,  $r = .463$ ,  $p < .05$ . There was a moderate positive influence between perceived PEV on emotional wellbeing among secondary school students. Increase in perceptions on PEV led to increase in emotional problems. Findings by Follingstand (1990) had earlier indicated that experiencing hopelessness, wanting to protect oneself or seek revenge and feeling unloved are common among victims of violence. Students who experienced life threatening situations suffered trauma as earlier indicated by (CIPEV, 2008). Further, this trauma was as a result of human activities. This had earlier been indicated by Sorendon (2002) who noted that trauma caused by human activities such as war, rape and torture may tend to precipitate more severe PTSD reactions than do natural disasters. These findings agreed with previous research findings which indicated that violence bring traumatic experiences for the individual (Ai & Ubelner, 2002). This has been supported by the findings on experience of loss of a parent or guardian.

## 8. Conclusion

The study determined that perceived PEV had influence on emotional wellbeing among secondary school students. This was triggered by exposure to life threatening situation, personal injury and death of parents or guardian, witnessing violence towards others, parents having problems with alcohol, being ignored or ridiculed, being made to feel unloved and parents or caregivers failing to understand the needs of the students. Hence violence has negative effects on emotional wellbeing.

## 9. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:-

- The study emphasized the need to enhance counseling services to students' whose parents were killed or seriously injured.
- The government through the Ministry of Education needs to take a more active role in enhancing guidance and counseling programmes in secondary schools.
- The study also acknowledged the need to allocate more time for effective guidance and counseling services in secondary schools.
- The Ministry of Education should avail more finances to guidance and counseling department.
- More in-service courses should be made available by the Ministry of Education to enhance the capacity of service provided to improve service delivery.

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### 11. Acknowledgement

I highly acknowledge Prof. Fr. Mbugua and Dr. Catherine Mumiukha for their unfailing encouragement and support during my research. Their personal commitment has contributed in making this research journal what it is. Their valuable feedback and professional advice received from them were very instrumental towards the completion of this work. Finally my gratitude goes to the principals, teachers and students of Kuresoi, Molo and Njoro Districts especially those who were involved in the study for their unfailing assistance and understanding.