

Underlying Causes of Political Violence that Affects Tourism Security in Mombasa and Nairobi Counties, Kenya 1992-2024: Exploring Relationships and Consequences.

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ABSTRACT

Political violence poses a significant threat to tourism development and security, particularly in tourism-dependent economies such as Kenya, where the sector plays a critical role in economic growth and inter-sectoral linkages such as Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Transport, among others. In politically unstable environments, especially urban tourism hubs, insecurity undermines destination image, investor confidence, and the overall resilience of the tourism industry. Therefore, the study examined political violence and tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi City counties, Kenya, 1992-2024. The second objective of the study was to identify the underlying causes of political violence that affect tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya. The study used the theory of the Triangle of Violence and Media Dependency Theory. A retrospective longitudinal survey design was used to analyze quantitative data on underlying causes of political violence, while a phenomenological design captured qualitative insights on opinions, perceptions, attitudes, and interpretations of causes of political violence and tourism security. The target population for the study was employees from tourism stakeholders who were responsible for tourism security. Therefore, the target population was divided into study population strata, such as employees from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Hotels and tour managers, local and international tourists, security personnel, such as tourist police unit officers, and private security officers. A sample of 385 respondents was drawn using stratified and purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires, focus group discussions, interviews, and secondary documents such as OB, online databases, among others. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Findings revealed that Political motives, economic inequality, and corruption were identified as key causes of political violence in Mombasa and Nairobi City counties, Kenya. To reduce the causes of political violence, the study recommends strengthening political stability, reducing corruption, unemployment, and inequality, and enhancing tourism crime research tools. These recommendations guide the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the Ministry of Interior and the coordination of the national government, and other tourism stakeholders in promoting sustainable tourism development through enhancing tourism security.

Keywords: Underlying Causes, Political violence, Tourism Security, Tourist, Tourist Destination.

INTRODUCTION

Political competition is central to the development of societies, as it holds powerful elites accountable in shaping laws, policies, and resource allocation. And it determines how power is acquired, exercised, and maintained, influencing national security and the management of state institutions (Slyusar & Volkova, 2024). However, periods of intense political competition, particularly during elections, can trigger political violence, which profoundly affects the security and viability of tourism destinations. (Slyusar & Volkova, 2024; Neumayer, 2004). Therefore, Neumayer defined political violence as the deliberate use of violence to achieve political goals, and it can involve both physical and psychological harm, targeting individuals, groups, or entire populations (Neumayer, 2004; Slyusar & Volkova, 2024).

Consequently, Scholars have explored diverse typologies of political violence to understand its manifestations during electoral struggles, yet little granular knowledge exists on the exact causes of political violence (Rosenzweig & Siddiqui, 2025; Kravchenko & Livenko, 2024). Therefore, underlying causes of political violence may include unemployment, government incompetency, land grievances, Geopolitics, Ethnic and religion discrimination, Corruption, income inequality and poverty, Globalization, political goals, ideological differences and the use of media in spreading information among others (Rosenzweig & Siddiqui, 2025; Schwarzmantel, 2013; Schwarz & Mantel, 2013; Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). These causes of political violence are complex and may be driven by socioeconomic and political motives.

Media as a cause of political violence has taken a central point highlighting perceived suppression of citizens and unethical behavior by political elites, through modern communication such as social media which includes TV, X and WhatsApp among others, has created a gap on how events mediated through media shapes the causes of type of political violence that has a perceived safety and image of a tourist security in a tourist destination (Fubara, 2025). The media often exacerbate violence, targeting institutions like tourism to gain political authority and influence in an urban environment (Sakstrup & Bartusevicius, 2024; Davas & Tanik, 2024). However, despite political violence being discussed by different scholars, a few studies have contextualized the causes within urban tourism in an urban environment, hence creating a gap worth studying. (Neumayer, 2004; Matanovic & Cunjak, 2019; WTO, 2022; Slyusar & Volkova, 2024).

Political violence causes and has evolved in scale and intensity under influences such as globalization, media ideological extremism, and digital activism, among others (Slyusar & Volkova, 2024), which have led to different types of political violence in tourism-dependent destinations. Nevertheless, Tourism is a sector reliant on mobility, openness, and international connectivity, and is highly sensitive to political violence, which affects tourists who are the major promoters of the sector.

Consequently, Security in tourism, defined as protection from intentional harm, is crucial in maintaining tourist safety and institutional integrity (Jovičić & Daničić, 2019). It influences travel decisions, destination competitiveness, quality of life, and economic stability, with broader implications for social cohesion and national development (Amaro et al., 2023). Tourism security involves safeguarding tourists, businesses, workers, and attractions against threats such as political violence while maintaining confidence in the destination's stability. Effective tourism security integrates adaptive strategies beyond traditional policing to address forms of political violence (Amaro et al., 2023).

Globally, causes of political violence incidents, such as the 9/11 World Trade Center attack and domestic unrest, the 1992 Los Angeles riots, and the 2011 Wall Street protests, significantly disrupted tourism revenue and perception of tourism security in the USA (FBI Report, 2002; Leadenhall, 2018; Yap & Saha, 2013). The causes of such a type of political violence were aligned to religious differences, geopolitics, and ideological differences (Leadenhall, 2018). Second, the period of political unrest, and protests such as the Wall Street movement in 2011, were fueled by digital activism and created an impact on tourism security is an indication that political violence dynamic based on racial discrimination was seen as a social threat to the tourism industry (Yap & Saha, 2013; Perliger and Liu, 2022; Reny & Newman, 2021).

In Africa, causes of political violence have similarly led to different types of political violence affecting tourism security. For example, Egypt's tourism sector suffered from the 1997 Luxor massacre and the 2011 Arab Spring, leading to sharp declines in arrivals and revenue, demonstrating regional "spillover effects" that affect neighboring countries' tourism perceptions (Karimi et al., 2022; UNWTO, 2017). The cause of this type of political violence in Egypt was aligned with high youth unemployment, authoritarian repression, endemic government corruption, and acute economic hardships in the country.

South Africa's political sphere has been affected by urban crime and civil unrest, such as the 2021 Durban protests following former president Jacob Zuma's imprisonment, for refusing to obey a court order to testify regarding state-captured corruption in the country (Binns & Nel, 2002; Rogerson, 2021). These types of protests were caused by deep-seated economic inequality, high unemployment, and political factionalism within the governing ANC party. These types of political violence, which reduced tourist arrivals and harmed the destination image, have received little scholarship to fill the gap.

East African destinations, particularly Kenya and Somalia, face threats from terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab, targeting hotels, transport hubs, and public spaces to destabilize tourism as a result of the presence of the Kenya Defense Forces' operation "*Linda Nchi*" in Somalia (Erjok et al., 2020). The emergence of terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab was driven by factors such as historical, economic, and ideological factors.

Kenya's tourism, a key economic pillar, has been repeatedly affected by election-related political violence since the 1990s, notably in 1992, 1997, 2007-2008, 2017, and partially in 2022, resulting in fatalities, displacement, and economic disruptions (Thiongo et al., 2022). Nairobi and Mombasa City Counties, as major tourism hubs, have faced terrorist attacks, including the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombing, the 2013 Westgate Mall attack, and the 2019 DusitD2 attack in Nairobi, and Al-Shabaab attacks in Mombasa. These acts of political violence have been due to different causes. These causes of political violence resulted from political goals and religious extremism. However, very few scholars have studied the causes in relation to tourism security, hence creating a gap worth studying.

In response, Kenya has implemented security measures such as establishing the Tourist Police Unit in 1996, and legislative frameworks under the Tourism Act No. 28 of 2011 and the National Police Service Act No. 11 of 2011. However, challenges persist in institutional coordination, legislative coherence, and integrating tourism security into broader national security strategies. Conflicting mandates and limited prioritization of tourism security continue to undermine effective protection of destinations.

Despite extensive research on tourism economics and political violence, limited studies examine tourism security longitudinally, leaving gaps in understanding how causes of political violence affect the sector over time. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the underlying causes of political violence and tourism security in Nairobi and Mombasa City Counties, Kenya, from 1992 to 2024. It aims to generate evidence-based insights to inform policy, strengthen security strategies, and promote sustainable tourism development in Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Tourism is a key pillar of Kenya's economy, significantly contributing to foreign exchange earnings, employment, revenue generation, and GDP growth, while supporting national development goals such as Vision 2030. However, its performance depends heavily on political stability and effective tourism security, particularly in major destinations like Nairobi and Mombasa, where visitor safety directly affects tourist arrivals and revenue.

However, recurrent political violence since the reintroduction of multiparty politics in the early 1990s has undermined tourism performance. Episodes such as the 2007–2008 post-election violence, major terrorist attacks, including the 2013 Westgate Mall siege and the 2019 DusitD2 bombing, and more recent events, such as the 2024 Gen Z protests and disruptions at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, have heightened perceptions of insecurity, triggered travel advisories, disrupted travel operations, and weakened Kenya's destination image and tourism-dependent livelihoods.

Existing research on tourism insecurity in Kenya has largely concentrated on terrorism, overlooking broader underlying causes of political violence, such as political motives, corruption, and economic inequality. This narrow focus has created gaps in understanding how these factors collectively or individually lead to acts of political violence that undermine tourism infrastructure, disrupt visitor experiences, and weaken destination appeal, particularly in Nairobi and Mombasa. Addressing these gaps, the study investigates the root causes of political violence and their implications for tourism security from 1992 to 2024 to inform policy and strengthen sector resilience.

Purpose of the Study

The major aim of this research was to examine the causes of political violence that influence tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi City between 1992 and 2024.

Justification and Significance of the Study

Tourism is a key driver of Kenya's economy, with Mombasa and Nairobi City counties hosting the highest concentration of tourism enterprises and major transport hubs. However, these regions frequently experience political violence, which threatens tourism security and stability. Existing studies in Kenya have largely focused on isolated incidents such as terrorism, leaving a gap in understanding the long-term and recurring effects of political violence across election cycles. With the next general election scheduled for 2027, there is an urgent need to examine how political violence influences tourism security to develop preventive measures and protect the industry.

Tourism, being one of the most vulnerable industries, is significantly affected by political violence, which undermines public safety, national stability, and economic progress. These effects are often amplified by media coverage, especially through digital platforms, which heighten perceptions of insecurity in tourist destinations. The 2024 Gen Z-led demonstrations against the Finance Bill in Nairobi and Mombasa, targeting key national institutions and attracting global attention, illustrate how contemporary political violence—driven by media amplification and online mobilization—is reshaping tourism security concerns. Such dynamics highlight the growing need to understand how modern forms of political unrest impact tourist destinations and influence travel decisions. This study is therefore essential in informing policies, security strategies, and crisis management frameworks aimed at safeguarding Kenya's tourism sector.

Additionally, the study contributes to academic discourse, supports international and local stakeholders in improving security responses, and aligns with the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife Strategic Plan (2023–2027), which emphasizes the critical role of security officers and tourism policing in ensuring safety and effective service delivery within the tourism industry.

Scope of the Study

This study examines political violence and tourism security in Kenya's two major tourist destinations, Nairobi and Mombasa. Mombasa County is a leading coastal destination with Moi International Airport, serving as a key entry point for international beach and cultural tourists, while Nairobi plays a strategic role as a diplomatic, business, and tourism hub, hosting Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and a national park within the capital city. Mombasa's proximity to conflict-prone areas such as Somalia heightens its exposure to transnational threats. The study, therefore, analyzes these dynamics over 32 years (1992–2024), beginning with the reintroduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya. The study focused on a study population stratum such as tourists (local and international tourists), tourism enterprises (hotels, restaurants, and resort managers), security personnel (Tourist Police Unit officers and private security officers), government officials (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the Ministry of Interior and Coordination), and political elites. The study also incorporates critical indicators such as tourism revenue, international tourist arrivals, and GDP to ensure comprehensive analysis and depth in understanding the relationship between political violence and tourism security.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

During the study, the researcher experienced different limitations. The vastness of the study site presented limitations, because data were collected from two counties that are geographically far apart. Therefore, research assistants with advanced knowledge of the geographical nature of specific areas of study and countries were identified and trained to help the researcher during the study.

Second, Political violence is a very sensitive matter, and some of the participants were reluctant to give information on issues relating to political violence because they believed that their safety might be compromised. Therefore, the participants were assured that this study was an academic work and would not be used for any other purpose to overcome the limitation.

Finally, language barriers impede communication because tourists from different nationalities often speak languages other than their own. To counter this barrier, the researcher utilized interpreters within the study population segment to assist with language interpretation as needed.

The respondents' and participants' recognition and perception of various sorts of political violence was a limitation of the study. To circumvent this constraint, the researcher and assistant explained to the respondents and participants the issues surrounding political violence and tourism security. This invoked the respondents' perceptions and experiences with various concepts of the study.

EMPERICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Political violence is a central concept in this study that provides the foundation for understanding its influence on tourism security. Though definitions of political violence vary across scholars, disciplines, and geographical contexts, it is generally understood as a violence perpetrated to achieve political objectives through physical or psychological harm, often driven by political, social, and economic factors among others (Bardall et al., 2020; Neumayer, 2004). The limitation in the definition of the term political violence has created a gap in understanding the causes of political violence. The underlying causes of political violence may lead to forms of political violence such as riots, terrorism, armed conflict, and demonstrations, all of which pose significant threats to tourism security. Therefore, in this study context, tourism security refers to the measures and practices employed by government agencies and security stakeholders to protect tourists, host communities, tourism enterprises, and infrastructure from risks arising from political violence and related crime, thereby safeguarding destination stability and the sustainability of the tourism industry (Jovičić & Daničić, 2019).

The Underlying Causes of Political Violence That Influence Tourism Security.

The fundamental problems or elements that fuel political violence internationally, globally, and nationally are referred to as the "underlying causes." Numerous factors, including unemployment, government incompetence, land grievances, Geopolitics, Ethnic and religious discrimination, Corruption, income inequality and poverty, Globalization, political motives, ideological differences, and the use of social media in spreading information, are among the causes of political violence that have been studied by different scholars (Schwarz & Mantel, 2013). These types of causes can be grouped as political and socio-economic factors (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). Therefore, for the researcher to understand the influence of political violence on tourism security, it was essential to comprehend the underlying causes of political violence in tourism security in an urban-based environment. (Schwarz & Mantel, 2013; Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). Although various scholars have examined the causes of political violence, limited research has situated these factors within urban tourism contexts. (Kravchenko & Livenko, 2024; Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006).

These causes of political violence led to types of political violence that may interfere with tourism security by targeting tourists, tourism facilities and enterprises, transportation infrastructure, and businesses in the tourism sector (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). Pizam and Mansfeld (2006) argue that analyzing the underlying motives and intentions driving such actions, which helps identify the likely targets within the tourism sector in specific tourist destinations by acts of political violence (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006).

Therefore, one of the causes of political violence is the media platforms that always amplify perceptions of citizens and visitors in a tourist destination. Modern communication channels—such as television, X, and WhatsApp—mediate how violent events are framed, thereby shaping perceived safety and the security image of tourist destinations. According to Lujvo & Pejanovic (2019), the scholars state that the globalization of media platforms and their increased capability to report on events as they unfold may bring a combination of advantages and disadvantages for tourism authorities, potentially leading to acts of political violence (Lujvo & Pejanovic, 2019). The scholar further states that the international media often appears to focus on several key fundamentals that determine the newsworthiness of an issue that may lead to acts of political violence. Therefore, the extent to which the media exaggerate these issues determines the degree to which publications, television, radio programs, and websites may create a perception and belief that may lead to the emergence of political violence (Lujvo & Pejanovic, 2019; Schwarz & Mantel, 2013).

Democracy and governance are also factors that may contribute to political violence in the travel and tourism industry, depending on how they are perceived within a society (Mantel, 2013). For example, according to Rana et al (2021), weak democracy and governance can contribute to political violence through the Manipulation of electoral processes, Fraud, vote rigging, and a lack of transparency during the election process. (Schwarz mantel,

2013; Rana et al., 2021). The scholars argue that government institutions may, through inefficient election management bodies, fail to prevent or resolve election-related conflicts, leading to the deterioration of the moral fabric in society and interfering with cultural aspects, thereby compromising tourism security and escalating political differences in a tourist destination (Rana et al., 2021).

The findings by Rana et al. (2021) also reflect on how government incompetence may lead to unequal distribution of resources, fueling grievances in areas regarded as tourism-rich destinations, which leads to the failure to deliver public services and resources. Consequently, the scholar states that, when governments fail to meet basic needs, citizens may resort to protests, which can turn violent, leading to the destruction of tourism enterprises and infrastructure. Rana et al. (2021), further state that the emergence of impunity and lack of rule of law within the ruling government may escalate to other sectors of the government institutions. For instance, a weak criminal justice system may fail to hold perpetrators of political violence accountable, encouraging further violence in every election cycle.

Geopolitics has been a significant contributor to political violence and may impact the tourism sector. According to Frank Cass (2005) in the book titled "The Geopolitics of Resource Wars," The scholar noted that geopolitics is a cause of political violence due to competition for resources and political power. Therefore, for example, the expansion of European global power plays into interstate competition and the planned denial of access to resources. At the same time, it is significant to note that geopolitical treaties and practices of resource competition are not only defined at the international level but also at the sub-national level. According to Akidiri et al. (2020), as cited in Njoya et al. (2022), geopolitical risk can also negatively affect tourism growth, but the understanding of these relationships in the context of tourism security remains understudied (Akidiri et al., 2020).

It is also evident that countries that rely on natural resources for income tend to be influenced by geopolitics and are more authoritarian, corrupt, and prioritize military spending, which may be an indication of preparation for war through the procurement of war equipment from politically allied countries (Frank Cass, 2005). These countries tend to be the most conflict-ridden due to poor economic development and always ally with other developed countries to increase instability in the region. Notwithstanding other factors, such as consistent issuance of travel advisories by tourism source markets, this puts the tourism industry at stake. The travel advisories on a tourist destination may pose political risk factors that may deter international tourists from visiting a tourist destination based on ill-intended travel advisories against certain tourist destinations (Cobert et al., 2019).

For example, according to Niemeyer (2004), when political violence is likely in a country or region, tourism source markets countries such as the UK, USA, Belgium, and India among others, which are the majority of tourism sources markets always issue travel advisories to their citizens not to travel to a given destination hence reduction to the number of international tourists and cancellation of hotels bookings. Therefore, these travel advisories are regarded as part of geopolitics, which often discourages tourists from traveling to tourist destinations due to concerns about their safety and belongings, thereby affecting tourism security. However, geopolitical risk can impact tourism growth, but the linkage to tourism security from the concept of deliberate cause of political violence remains incomplete (Akadiri et al., 2020).

Sharma (2024) also identified that Corruption may also lead to the development of political violence through the misuse of public office or power for personal gain, such as bribery, embezzlement, favoritism, or fraud, which undermines the integrity of government institutions and erodes public trust in institutions and political systems. The scholar further states that corruption contributes to political violence directly through the creation of political instability by weakening democratic institutions, which may lead to demonstrations, rebellions, wars, and conflicts as citizens compete for state resources among others (Sharma, 2024). This finding was supported Kirsanli (2023), the scholar employed panel quantile regression to estimate the effects of corruption on tourism, and the results confirmed that corruption in developing countries often exploits the travel and tourism industry and may lead to other forms of crime that affect tourism security (Sharma, 2024). For example, one of the leading causes of political violence in Arab countries is thought to be corruption in the MENA region (Kirani, 2023). For instance, a study by Sharma (2024) examined the positive and negative impacts of political unpredictability and corruption on the relationship between tourism and growth. The researcher used global panel data from 1995 to 2018. The study findings revealed that tourism development relies on institutional factors. In particular, the

study shows that political violence brought on by corruption significantly hinders a country's or state's positive benefits on tourism and economic growth.

Political violence may also arise due to social causes that may include geographical factors. For example, according to Gures et al. (2011), geographic positions can also contribute to political violence in the tourism business due to a cascading effect, such as wars spreading from one country to another within a geographical region. The position of political violence within the geographical space may also create risk perception among local and international tourists, hence interfering with tourism security. The perception of the safety of tourist destinations varies based on nationality and the location being visited (Gures et al., 2011). Both domestic and foreign tourists may feel less safe than native residents in the event of violent political events in a neighboring country or region. Second, the perception of impacts model is another tool used to evaluate risk perception in a geographical position of a tourist destination. This approach is used to quantify the degree of damage caused by unfavorable occurrences, such as political violence, which can include attempts to obstruct and sabotage tourism-related operations, monetary losses, and fatalities (Gures et al., 2011). The volume of property damage, the number of victims, and the degree of risk depicted by media coverage during and after politically violent events are all taken into account when estimating the influence and significance of political violence, even on tourism security.

Another cause of political violence is ethnic and religious discrimination. The religion factor as a cause of political violence is supported by Sonmez (2004), the scholar indicates that religious tensions or intolerance can lead to violent incidents, including attacks on individuals or cultural landmarks, by religious extremists such as Islamic military which tarnish the destination's reputation (Sonmez, 2004). Therefore, the model of tourist behavior based on risk is usually associated with the human psychological response to problems that are related to religion and politics that emerge from the probability of judgment, choice, cognitive process, and societal risk-taking that may make tourists avoid areas with tense religious inclinations that may lead to acts of political violence (Sonmez, 2004). In another study by Poprawe (2015) Ethnic or racial conflicts may lead to clashes between groups of individuals based on their ethnicity, historical grievances, political inequalities, and cultural differences, which may lead to acts of political violence (Poprawe, 2015). For example, elections may exacerbate tensions, as groups compete for control of resources, and power may also lead to different forms of political violence that may affect the tourism security in a tourism destination. However, the scholars left a significant in the study by not examining the theories that are aligned to these phenomenon in the urban environment which are prominent as tourist destinations.

According to Rana et al. (2021), globalization, the interconnectedness of the world through technology, may also cause acts of political violence in a tourist destination. Globalization may determine the range of attraction that motivates political violence events, such as terrorism, corruption, conflicts, and wars, among others (Oya-Sola, as cited in Rana et al. 2021). On the same school of thought, Lujvo & Pejanovic (2019) state that globalization of media platforms and their increased ability to report on events as they unfold may bring a combination of advantages and disadvantages for tourism stakeholders, potentially leading to acts of political violence. Thus, the international media often appears to focus on several key fundamentals that determine the newsworthiness of an issue that may lead to acts of political violence. Therefore, the extent to which the media exaggerate acts of political violence determines the degree to which publications, television, radio programs, and websites may create a perception and belief that may lead to the emergence of other types of political violence in a tourist destination (Lujvo & Pejanovic, 2019). Hall (2019) also indicates that Globalization, due to the Massive and fast movement of people associated with international tourism. Terrorism has been a risk to the tourism industry due to globalization, and it involves its darkest side based on political and ideological differences (Raza et al., 2023). Therefore, the sensitive tourism infrastructure that is targeted by various types of dangers and threats, including political violence, includes traffic infrastructure and tourism services, among others. (Lujvo & Pejanovic, 2019).

According to the World Development Report 2011, it also indicates that unemployment can lead to acts of political violence. The scholar shows that unemployment as a cause of political violence is linked with an increasing age -structure of demography, particularly in the observation of a common youth bulge. The scholar states that unemployed youths may lead to insurgencies. For example, the occurrence of Xenophobic attacks in South Africa and insurgent groups in West Africa and violence in urban Brazil also confirms the phenomenon

of unemployment as a cause of types of political violence (World Development Report 2011). The report concludes by indicating that there is sufficient evidence from the methodologies and analytical evidence that people's experience of labour markets often plays a role in acts of political violence, because labour markets are sources of status and loci of struggles over norms of fairness and ideologically validated identity. The report also indicates that social interaction between friends, ethnic bonds with certain groups who are underemployed, can lead to political violence when it interacts with identities, masculinity, race, or ethnicity or religion. The findings from the report also indicate that the study of Gangs in the USA emphasized not just unemployment but also the way employment that was available interacts with status and access to opportunities for particular racial and ethnic groups.

A Lujvo & Pejanovic,(2019) further states that the demeaning and monotonous tasks with little prospect of promotion or skill development, or conditions that are often exploitative and coercive, and little remuneration may also drive people to participate in acts of political violence. Again, when there is no structured institutional mechanism for people in employment to express their complaints and to press for improved conditions or for conflict resolution with employment relations, it may also lead to acts of political violence that may affect tourism security in a tourist destination.

In conclusion, the motives and intentions behind political violence can help predict its implications in a tourist destination, as well as inform mitigation strategies to prevent such acts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Triangle of Violence Theory

The Triangle of Violence theory was postulated by Johan Galtung (1969;1990) to explain violence as a three-dimensional phenomenon that consists of three tenets: direct, structural, and cultural violence. This theory shows how visible acts of violence are sustained by deeper, less visible forms of violence that are evolving in different geographical areas and within specific timelines.

Therefore, direct violence involves physical and verbal aggression that are visible and are directed to specific actors and they may include warfare, physical assault, murder, rape, state sanctioned repression terrorist acts riots and it is characterized by use of force by military units or authorized security forces as well as actions by non-state actors such as armed groups and political parties competitive violence during election periods (Costalli et al.,2025; Costalli et al.,2025).

Therefore, according to Ruggeri et al.(2025),violence can manifest as groups and or terrorist activities. Even within a democratic system, which may be considered less affected by acts of political violence than an autocratic one, it is generally directed at electoral, ethnic, and terrorist acts of political violence. In the concept of tourism security, such violence may include assault on tourists, terrorist attacks on hotels, and destruction of tourism infrastructure, which leads to immediate insecurity, triggers travel advisories and bookings cancellations, and directly affects tourist and tourism enterprises' security.

Second, structural violence is also embedded in the socioeconomic foundation of a society by causing harm through inequality and injustices rather than the direct physical violence (Ruggeri et al.,2025;) A Lujvo & Pejanovic,2019). These causes of violence may include poverty and Employment, political exclusion, corruption, and unequal distribution of tourism benefits. These may create grievances that fuel violence, weaken institutional capacity (Tourism Regulatory Authority and Tourist Police) to protect tourists, and increase vulnerability of tourist destinations such as Nairobi and Mombasa City. However, these causes of violence are difficult to attribute to specific perpetrators and operate through institutional mechanisms that supersede individuals' ability to meet basic needs or achieve their full potential.

For example, according to Ruggeri et al. (2025), economic disparities between ethnic groups that have diverse tourist attraction sites and services, and injustices are significant predictors of acts of political violence. The weak and politicized institutions, including manipulation and failure to address fundamental human needs, can create an environment in tourist-dependent destinations conducive to acts of political violence. This is evident

in countries such as South Africa, where the erosion of social fabrics, often driven by socioeconomic factors, contributes significantly to acts of political violence.

Finally, the cultural violence includes aspects of religion and ideology that legitimize the direct and structural violence (Ruggeri et al.,2025; A Lujvo & Pejanovic,2019). Such a type of violence functions by making direct and structural violence appear natural, acceptable within the society and social context. And it suits the narrative, belief system that dehumanizes certain groups to justify discrimination, and normalize aggression. These beliefs may promote ethnic stereotyping, extremist ideologies, and narratives that influence tourists' perception of security in a tourist destination (Ruggeri et al.,2025). For example, the use of media by political elites to enhance movements to perceive suppression of citizens to legitimize certain forms of political violence, such as the GN-Z movement in Nairobi that destroyed the parliament in 2024. And was enhanced through social media by amplifying the narrative. Thus, this theory is important to explain the connection between political violence and tourism security variables. However, a second theory was found to be important in explaining how media can be used to cause and moderate acts of political violence in the tourism destination.

Media Dependency Theory

The Media dependency theory was postulated by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur in 1976. The scholars were interested in examining the connection between individuals, society, and the media. Therefore, Media Dependency Theory posits that information disseminated through newspapers, books, magazines, satellites, and cable links has a substantial impact on the image of a tourist destination. Thus, in the context of political violence and tourism security, the theory was important for understanding how media can influence public opinion and perception, government responses, and the security of tourists in a tourist destination.

The media plays a vital role in shaping how tourism stakeholders perceive political violence, because the media can either escalate or de-escalate political violence depending on how information is framed. This school of thought, is supported by Beiman (2020), who states that the media is responsible for publishing the actual crisis in a tourist destination, which leads to recovery and restoration of a destination affected by acts of political violence. This can be achieved through media framing, which enhances how political violence is framed to influence public perception by supporting or condemning the political acts of violence.

The media also helps in the information flow and perception through the globalization of the media. This may lead to a mixture of benefits and problems for tourism authorities and business people in the tourism destination, because international media are believed to have a fixed focus on key elements in the tourism industry, such as terrorism, crime, conflicts, and corruption, which always dominate the media reporting industry and travel faster across the world (Beiman,2020).

According to Pizam and Mansfeld (2006), most media industries believe that tourists have limited personal knowledge or experience of a given act of political violence in a destination. So, they will rely on the media during an act of political violence because people depend on the media for several reasons, including information, entertainment, and social integration. According to Pizam and Mansfeld (2006), p.41, states that television has turned *homo Sapiens* to *homo Videns* and made the world a global village whereby any place is every place. That fear can now be transmitted at the speed of light, and the manipulation of the media is vital in postmodern warfare. Therefore, in the context of political violence and tourism security, the tenet explains how media can travel faster and influence public opinion and government responses to insecure situations in a tourist destination, as well as a strategy to promote the tourism destination's image after an act of political violence.

Media as a source of information is often increased when a politically violent event disrupts daily lives, forcing international and local tourists to depend on media reports for safety information, in politically violent areas, and on government agencies and law enforcement responses (Sonmez et al.,1999). Therefore, in this context, the media as a source of information shape public perception of safety and security, and may contribute to the escalation of political violence affecting tourism in a destination. Media are crucial in shaping tourists' understanding of their destination by sharing facts and knowledge about the nature of political violence present or likely to occur in their desired tourist destinations. At the same time, politically violent actors may also use media to achieve their mission; most political violence, such as terrorist groups, constantly targets tourists or the

tourism industry to advance their international media (Sonmez et al.,1999). This always happens through crisis communication during acts of political violence, such as terrorist attacks or political violence affecting tourism areas. The media becomes important in delivering information to tourists, the government, and local authorities.

According to (Beiman,2020) Media can also be used as a tool to manipulate the perception of the public by the government or political groups. In regions where political violence occurs, government or opposition groups may use media strategically to influence public opinion, justify violence and increase tension in tourism dependent countries (Beiman,2020). The intense coverage of an event always influences the public perception of safety due to media channels such as social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) may, in some situations, boost the media's influence over a destination due to the speed and ease of access for tourists and individuals over various forms of political violence that hurt the tourist destination (Beiman (2020).

On the other hand, media dependency theory is also important in explaining tourism security because it also affects tourists' perception of security in a tourist destination, which may influence tourist behavior and destination security. According to Onsite et al. (2020), media can also, at its worst, lead to over-tourism, where local communities may feel that there are so many visitors negatively affecting their social lives that it may result in anti-tourism movements, such as riots and demonstrations, as tourists tarnish the destination's image.

At the same time, it can positively increase brand perceptions of a tourist area, increasing business exports, manufacturing, and attracting investments, visitors, inhabitants, and talented people in the tourism industry that may be coupled with acts of organized crime, such as money laundering, among others (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). Therefore, highly publicized political violence can cause a drop in the number of tourists, while positive publicity can improve or boost tourist confidence in a tourist destination.

On the same note, Pizam and Mansfeld (2006, pp. 40), state that terrorism is more like a war in nature, with a significant goal of victimization to seek public and mass economic destruction through loss of lives by using the media to create stories to propel their agenda through worldwide publicity. Therefore, tourism becomes a battleground for terrorism with a significant focus on the transportation system, attacks against major buildings, attacks against hotels, and attempts at mass murder through terrorism. These attacks have occurred in the USA, Israel, Egypt, and Kenya, among other countries. Consequently, most scholars have wondered why tourism has become a target for terrorists based on the media dependency theory and concluded that economic damage, severity of the attack, new travel and tourism targets, and deviation from fringe to the mainstream form of attacks are advantageous to military Islamism.

On the other hand, many tourist destinations have image issues that limit their ability to compete in the marketplace due to political violence. During crisis communication, such as terrorist attacks or political violence affecting tourism areas, media outlets become crucial in delivering information to tourists, which can lead to insecurity and erode public trust in the tourism industry due to misrepresentation. The local and international media always generalize the issue of political violence, hence exaggerating the threat level. This may be a result of erroneous information provided by the media and entertainment industry about the risk and vulnerability of visiting a specific tourist area. Destination image issues always have a significant impact on the tourist industry (Shirley et al., 2018).

On most occasions, during politically violent events, tourists and tourism stakeholders rely on the media as a source of information to assess the safety, risk, and attractiveness of their destination before making informed decisions. This is evident when political violence disrupts daily lives, leaving tourists and locals relying on media reports for safety information. Shirley et al. (2018) also observed that radio, television, newspapers, and other traditional media channels play an essential role in both emerging and established tourist destinations based on information disseminated to the tourists. Thus, media framing can be used to shape how the public perceives violence, or to escalate or de-escalate it, or lead to spillover effects of political violence in certain tourist destinations, depending on how the information is framed (Lull, 2000). For example, according to Lull, (2000) terrorism in Turkey will also have a positive impact on the Greek tourism industry. Acts of war in Somalia may have adverse effects on the Kenyan tourism industry, specifically in Mombasa and Nairobi City counties, depending on how the media frames and interprets the spread, risk, and vulnerability of tourists in a politically violent-affected region or country.

Media also creates an independent relationship between the audience (Tourists) and the society (Destination) for revenue generation. Therefore, acts of political violence may be exploited by media houses as a source of revenue without accurately reporting the facts surrounding the political event, which may lead to forms of political violence (Goodwin, 2017; Seraphin et al., 2018). The media agenda setting may also be accompanied by media framing of information, which involves portraying an occurrence of political violence in a specific way that distorts the actual data, resulting in an unfavorable perception of the destination. The public perception of political violence established by the media, through generalization and presentation, may also influence tourist destinations (Dirikx & Gelder, 2010). Similarly, For example, Dirikx & Gelder, (2010), the high visibility of politically violent events, often portrayed by the media on the front page of the world's media, and the reality, as evidenced, which is usually different from the media-generated perception, may be misleading and portray a distorted view of the tourist destination. The effects of media can be both positive and negative on tourist destinations, as they may promote biases, stereotypes, and misinformation, thereby influencing the attitudes, behaviour, and opinions of tourists towards destinations, and creating risks and vulnerabilities for the tourism industry (Calgaro et al., 2014). Therefore, the researcher to understand how political violence may create a negative image of a tourist destination. It may also pose a risk to the tourism industry; therefore, risk perception was also considered to support other theories used in the study. Therefore, to elaborate further on how the causes of political violence led to different types of political violence that affect tourism security.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, utilizing two research designs: phenomenological and retrospective longitudinal survey research designs to examine the underlying causes of political violence that affects tourism security.

The phenomenological design was therefore used to analyze qualitative data aimed at understanding the meaning behind pre-existing assumption-based perceptions, beliefs, and varying interpretations of causes of political violence on tourism security. This design provided insights into the subjective meanings participants attribute to their experiences and helped identify patterns and themes within their descriptions of political violence, based on their lived experiences at the local level. This enabled the researcher to address the question of *why* certain causes of political violence are evolving and led to a type of political violence that targets tourism security.

Phenomenological research was conducted through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to elicit diverse accounts of causes of political violence. To achieve this, the researcher temporarily set aside their own assumptions, biases, and perceptions, immersing themselves in the participants' experiences without imposing external interpretations derived from existing literature. Second, a retrospective longitudinal survey design was used to analyze primary quantitative data from the questionnaires to measure the opinions of the respondents on the causes of political violence that influence tourism security. Therefore, the researcher adopted the concept of *“ceteris paribus,”* through which all other phenomena affecting the tourism security were held constant except for the study indicator under study.

Target Population

The study focused on the employees in the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the Ministry, with a specific focus on the state department of tourism and the Ministry of Interior and Coordination. Therefore, the target population was divided into study population strata, which include local and international tourists, tourism enterprises, security personnel, and relevant government officials. This approach ensured that the primary data reflected the true composition of the target population while minimizing bias. The inclusion of diverse stakeholder groups was essential due to their roles in shaping travel experiences, ensuring safety, promoting sustainability, and managing tourism security. Given the sensitive nature of political violence, these stakeholders provided critical insights into its dynamics and management, enabling a comprehensive understanding of its effects on tourism security in Kenya, with particular emphasis on Nairobi and Mombasa.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was calculated using the confidence interval method, as described by Cochran (1977) in his book “Sampling Techniques,” which outlines formulas for sample size calculations for various scenarios where determining the exact size of the target population is not feasible (Lalongo,2019; Cochran,1977). The formula specifies three key elements: the confidence level, which indicates the degree of certainty in the results (in this case 95% confidence); the margin of error, which defines the acceptable range within which the actual population parameter is expected to fall ($\pm 5\%$ for this study); and the estimated proportion, which represents the proportion of the population anticipated to exhibit the characteristic of interest. Since the population proportion is unknown, a value of 50% will be applied to ensure the most conservative estimate. The formula shall be:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

n = Required sample size

Z = Z-value corresponding to the desired confidence level (1.96 for 95% confidence)

p = Estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic of interest
(Use 0.5 since unknown)

e = Margin of error (0.05 for $\pm 5\%$)

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 384.14$$

So, the required sample size is approximately 385 respondents.

Sampling Techniques

The study employed a combination of stratified, purposive, and simple random sampling techniques to ensure representative and reliable data. Stratified sampling was used to achieve proportional representation of respondents from Nairobi City and Mombasa counties by dividing the study population into key strata, including local and international tourists, employees from the State Department of Tourism, tour operators, and tourism enterprise managers, and security agencies such as the Tourist Police Unit and private security officers. From the target population, a sample size of 385 respondents was selected using simple random sampling, supported by an Excel-based random number generator from each of the study population strata. It also allowed the researcher to target respondents and participants who possess specialized knowledge, experience, and direct involvement.

Second purposive sampling was found to be the right methodology due to its effectiveness in sampling respondents and participants from study population strata where the exact number of individuals are difficult to ascertain due to different limitations as well as capturing the context of tourism security and location-based variation between Mombasa and Nairobi and being political and administrative hubs and selected respondents and participants were believed to give credible information. It also helped to examine sensitive and complex issues such as political violence, which may not be openly discussed, especially in the context of tourism security, which has government interest as a source of income.

Therefore, during the study, the respondents and participants were selected based on required characteristics such as direct involvement in tourism and security operations, years of stay in the study site, and how well they had been exposed to acts of political violence incidents, and their willingness to participate and provide informed consent. Therefore, from the data indicated substantial variation in the size of the target populations across strata, including 385 Tourist Police Unit officers, approximately 27 employees within the State Department of Tourism, and large affiliated agencies such as the Tourism Regulatory Authority and Tourism Fund. According to the documents obtained from the agencies, Kenya hosts over 33,000 licensed tourism enterprises, with 37% located in Nairobi and 26% in Mombasa, resulting in 20,790 enterprises considered in the study across the two counties. Purposive sampling was applied, followed by simple random sampling to select both local and international tourists through frontline tourism workers, and purposive sampling was used to identify 30 key participants from the different strata to provide in-depth insights relevant to the study objectives.

The selected respondents were issued with online questionnaires with controls in place to allow only one response per email to avoid duplication. Since the study involved two counties, and to eliminate biases, the sample size was equally distributed within the counties, as shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 1.1 Distribution of Respondents

POPULATION STRATA	NAIROBI	MOMBASA	TOTAL
Security Personnel (Tourist police and Private security companies)	87	87	174
Tourism enterprises (Hotel, restaurant, tour, and travel managers, security managers)	38	38	76
Tourist (local and International)	38	38	76
Political elites	10	10	20
Government/policy officials, State Department for tourism	20	19	39
Total	214	171	385

FINDINGS

Response Rate

The researcher gathered primary data over two months by tracking completed online questionnaires that were distributed among the study population strata such as tourists (local and international tourists), tourism enterprises (hotels, restaurants, and resort managers), security personnel (Tourist Police Unit officers and private security officers), government officials (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the Ministry of Interior and Coordination) and political elites.

The survey targeted a maximum of 385 respondents, distributed across different study population strata to achieve balanced representation and reduce bias in the study. In total, 311 participants completed the questionnaire within the designated period, yielding an overall response rate of 80.8%. The response rate was sufficient for data analysis as per Hagaman and Wutich (2017), which requires between 33% and 66%. The researcher also visited purposively selected participants to understand perception and opinions of the participants.

Underlying Causes of Political Violence that Affect Tourism in Mombasa and Nairobi Counties, Kenya.

The term underlying causes refers to the root issue or factor that contributes to political violence in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties. According to the literature review, incidents are caused by a variety of factors, such as unemployment, government incompetence, land grievances, Geopolitics, Ethnic and religious discrimination, Corruption, income inequality and poverty, Globalization, political goals, ideological differences, and the use of social media in spreading information, among others (Schwarz & Mantel, 2013). Thus, understanding the root causes of political violence is crucial for identifying possible targets of political violence in a tourism destination to enhance tourism security.

Therefore, the respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on the causes of political violence in their countries by placing a mark next to either Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, or Strongly Agree based on different types of political violence. The analysis was done at the ordinal level, as it was believed that their responses did not follow a normal distribution. As a result, the researcher focused on the mode and median to present the descriptive statistics, and the results are shown in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2: Level of respondents’ Agreement on the Causes of political violence in the two countries.

CAUSES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE		Valid					Total	Median	Mode
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree Strongly			
Economic inequality and poverty	Frequency(n)	34	15	33	84	145	311	4	5
	Percent (%)	10.9	4.8	10.6	27.0	46.6	100.0		
Political goals, grievances, and election injustices	Frequency(n)	19	17	29	100	146	311		
	Percent (%)	6.1	5.5	9.3	32.2	46.9	100.0	4	5
Ethnic Tensions	Frequency(n)	26	24	57	88	116	311		
	Percent (%)	8.4	7.7	18.3	28.3	37.3	100.0	4	5
Religion	Frequency(n)	47	59	71	109	25	311		
	Percent (%)	15.1	19.0	22.8	35.0	8	100.0	4	5
Corruption	Frequency(n)	28	28	10	90	155	311		
	Percent (%)	9.0	9.0	3.2	28.9	49.8	100.0	4	5
Ideological differences	Frequency(n)	30	40	60	146	35	311		
	Percent (%)	9.6	12.9	19.3	46.9	11.3	100.0	4	4
Government incompetence/abuse of power	Frequency(n)	35	27	23	96	130	311		
	Percent (%)	11.3	8.7	7.4	30.9	41.8	100.0	4	5
Globalization	Frequency(n)	53	54	77	98	29	311		
	Percent (%)	17.0	17.4	24.8	41.5	9.3	100.0	3	4
Land grievances	Frequency(n)	19	29	63	136	64	311		
	Percent (%)	6.1	9.3	20.3	43.7	20.6	100.0	4	4
The role of social media in spreading information	Frequency(n)	38	19	45	106	103	311		
	Percent (%)	12.2	6.1	14.5	34.1	33.1	100.0	4	4
Geopolitics	Frequency(n)	38	49	54	132	38	311		
	Percent (%)	12.2	15.8	17.4	42.4	12.2	100.0	4	4

Source: Field Data (2025)

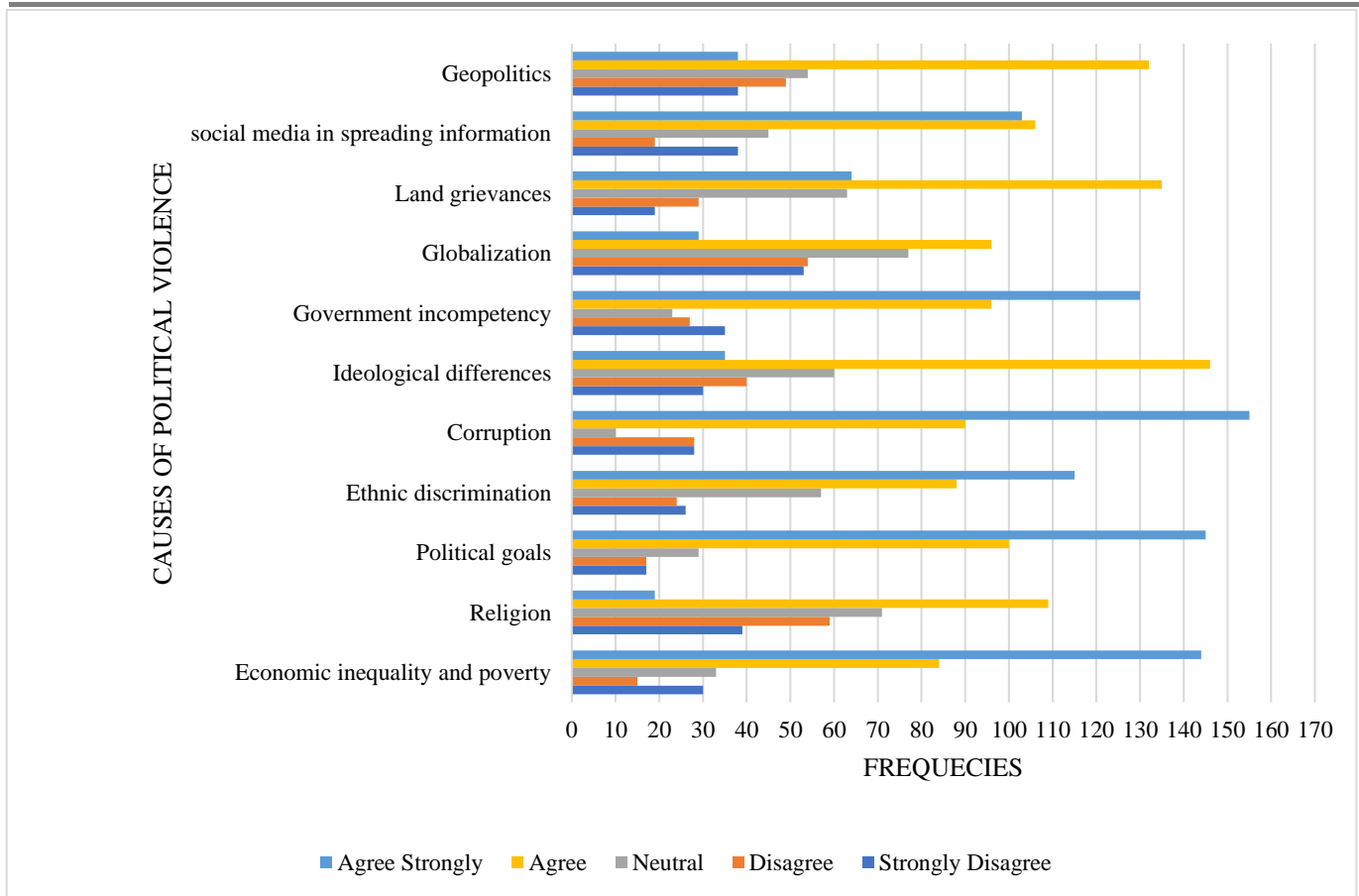


Figure 1.1 Level of respondents' agreement on the Causes of political violence in the two countries.

Source: Field Data (2025)

According to the study's findings in Table 1.2 above, 145 (46.3%) strongly agreed, and 84 (27.0%) agreed that economic inequality and poverty were major contributors to political violence in both countries. Similarly, 146 (46.6%) and 100 (32.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that political motivations are the root cause of political violence in both countries. In addition, 115 (49.8%) strongly agreed, and 90 (28.9%) agreed that corruption was a major cause of political violence, which is a significant issue hurting tourism security. Regarding government incompetence and abuse of power, 130 (41.8%) strongly agreed, and 96 (30.0%) agreed that these were relevant causes of violence. Likewise, 116 (37.1%) strongly agreed, and 88 (28.3%) agreed that tensions, ethnic prejudice, and dissent were factors in violent outbursts. A total of 146 (46.9%) agreed that ideological differences also fueled instability, while 136 (43.4%) agreed that land concerns were mostly responsible for political violence, and similarly, 136 (43.4%) agreed that land grievances were a source of political violence in both regions. Furthermore, 132 (42.2%) agreed that external interventions also contribute to acts of political violence in the region, and 106 (34.1%) agreed that social media is a cause and a spread of politically violent activity that affects tourism security.

On the other hand, 115 (36.9%) believed that religious considerations contributed to the incitement of violence, 71 (22.8%) remained neutral on whether religious considerations contributed to the incitement of such violence, while 77 (24.8%) were neutral regarding globalization. and 98 (30.9%) agreed that globalization plays a role in causing political conflict.

In general, the findings indicate a strong consensus that political violence is primarily driven by structural and governance-related factors. Support for political objectives, 79.1%, emphasizing the importance of contested elections as well as political exclusion and corruption (78.7%). With 73.6% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that economic inequality and poverty are major causes, and 72.7% agreeing that government incompetence or abuse of power is strongly linked to political violence, these findings reflect the general belief that poor governance, weak institutions, and a lack of accountability are major contributors to public discontent and unrest.

While still significant findings indicate that other elements are thought to have less influence. Land grievances (64.3%), ethnic discrimination and tensions (65.6%), and the importance of social media in disseminating information (67.2%) are recognized as major elements that frequently interact with more general political and economic concerns. The result from the study indicates also indicated, that Ideological differences (58.2%) and external interventions or geopolitics (54.6%) receive moderate support, while globalization (50.8%) and religion (43.0%) are perceived as the least influential. Overall, the results suggest that political violence is largely rooted in internal socio-economic inequalities and governance failures rather than external, ideological, or religious factors.

The finding rating political motive as the highest cause of political violence is also supported by Nolasco (2017), the scholar states that the majority of previous political violence in Kenya is caused by inciting words and the planning of violent acts by politicians and local elites. This view indicates that political elites have the upper hand in the politically violent events within the countries. Therefore, for a political elite to gain power they usually play a crucial role by utilizing incendiary rhetoric, forming followers along partisan or ethnic lines, and, in certain situations, purposefully organizing political violence such as demonstration particularly during election seasons when competition is fierce, such agitation raises tensions, deepens divisions, and lowers the threshold for violence, which affects tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties.

Second, finding from the study indicating that corruption is a major cause of political violence, was also corroborated by Rana et al. (2021), who claimed that political violence can be caused by corruption, government incompetence, and abuse of power through Election-Related Violence, which may arise from manipulation of electoral processes, fraud, vote-rigging, and a lack of transparency during elections. These issues can escalate and have an impact on tourism security (Schwarz Mantel, 2013; Rana et al., 2021). According to the feeling by Rana's feelings, as supported by the findings of the researcher, corruption can lead to Poverty and economic inequality due to unequal resource allocation, which ultimately makes it impossible to provide public services and resources in a profitable tourist destination. Therefore, residents may turn to violent protests when governments fail to provide for their necessities, which could result in damage to infrastructure and tourism businesses. A study conducted by Sharma (2024) also supported the study finding that Corruption can result in the abuse of public authority or power for private gain through fraud, bribery, embezzlement, or favoritism. This compromises the integrity of government institutions and erodes public confidence in political systems and institutions. By fostering political instability, which erodes democratic institutions and can result in protests, insurrection, and war, among other outcomes, corruption directly fuels political violence.

The finding of land grievances as a cause of political violence is also corroborated by Nolasco (2017). The scholar states that in Kenya, the causes and remedies of land conflicts are well understood; nonetheless, a lack of political will has occasionally hindered the implementation of land reforms. The scholar asserts that in Kenya, land contributes to history and a sense of belonging and has cultural and psychological value. It stands for both having access and possessing wealth. Armed community militias, which occasionally result in bloodshed and displacement, have been formed as a result of perceptions of unequal land distribution or the necessity to defend one's land. Therefore, the land conflicts may cause political violence that affects tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya.

The aspect of ethnic discrimination having a higher number is also supported by Nolasco (2017), the scholar indicates that politics and ethnicity are high-risk factors for turning tensions into violence, especially in places where civil society and government are weak, disorganized, missing, or mistrusted. At the same time, findings from SRIC (2022) contradict the findings from the study. The study findings indicated that while minority groups looked uncertain about the dynamics of peace and security during the election process, the majority ethnic groups in highly cosmopolitan counties seemed optimistic that the counties such as Mombasa and Nairobi would be calm. On some occasions, Ethnic or racial conflicts may lead to clashes between groups of individuals based on their ethnicity, historical grievances, political inequalities, and cultural differences, which may lead to acts of political violence. According to Poprawe (2015), the scholar indicates that elections may exacerbate tensions, as groups compete for control of resources and power, which can also lead to different forms of political violence that may affect the tourism industry. These socio-cultural factors are linked to risks to future generations, judgments of catastrophic potential, controllability, and fatalities.

This finding on geopolitics as a caused of political violence in the context of Mombasa and Nairobi city Counties Kenya, is corroborated by Frank Cass (2005) in the book titled “The Geopolitics of Resource Wars.” The scholar noted that geopolitics is a source of political violence due to competition for resources. On the same note, Akidiri et al. (2020), as cited in Njoya et al.(2022), also state that geopolitical risk can negatively influence tourism development, but the understanding of these relationships remains inadequate. However, this finding contradicts the findings by Frank Cass and Akidiri and others., by indicating that geopolitics and ideological difference, without the influence of political elites, can have a significant influence on tourism security in tourist destinations such as Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties.

The result of religious factors also causes political violence. For example, according to Sonmez (2004), religious tensions or intolerance can lead to violent incidents, including attacks on individuals or cultural landmarks, which tarnish the destination's reputation. The model of tourist behavior based on risk is usually associated with the human psychological response to problems that are related to religion and politics that emerge from the probability of judgment, choice, cognitive process, and societal risk-taking that may make tourists avoid areas with tense religious inclinations that may lead to acts of political violence.

Does media exaggeration of political violence affect tourism security perceptions?

Media exaggeration can also be referred to as sensational, and it involves amplifying facts or events to incite a strong emotional reaction and attract audience attention. Therefore, exaggeration in the media is a deliberate strategy where media headlines and stories are blown out to make them dramatic, urgent, and shocking. Media exaggeration may include, emotional language, selective reporting, hyperbole and overstatement as well as exaggerated language. Hence, the media may be used as a cause of political violence in a tourist destination hence affecting tourism security. The respondents were asked to rate their opinions on whether the media exaggerates political violence, affecting tourism security, by placing a mark next to either 'yes', 'no', or not sure. The results obtained were as indicated in Figure 1.2 below.

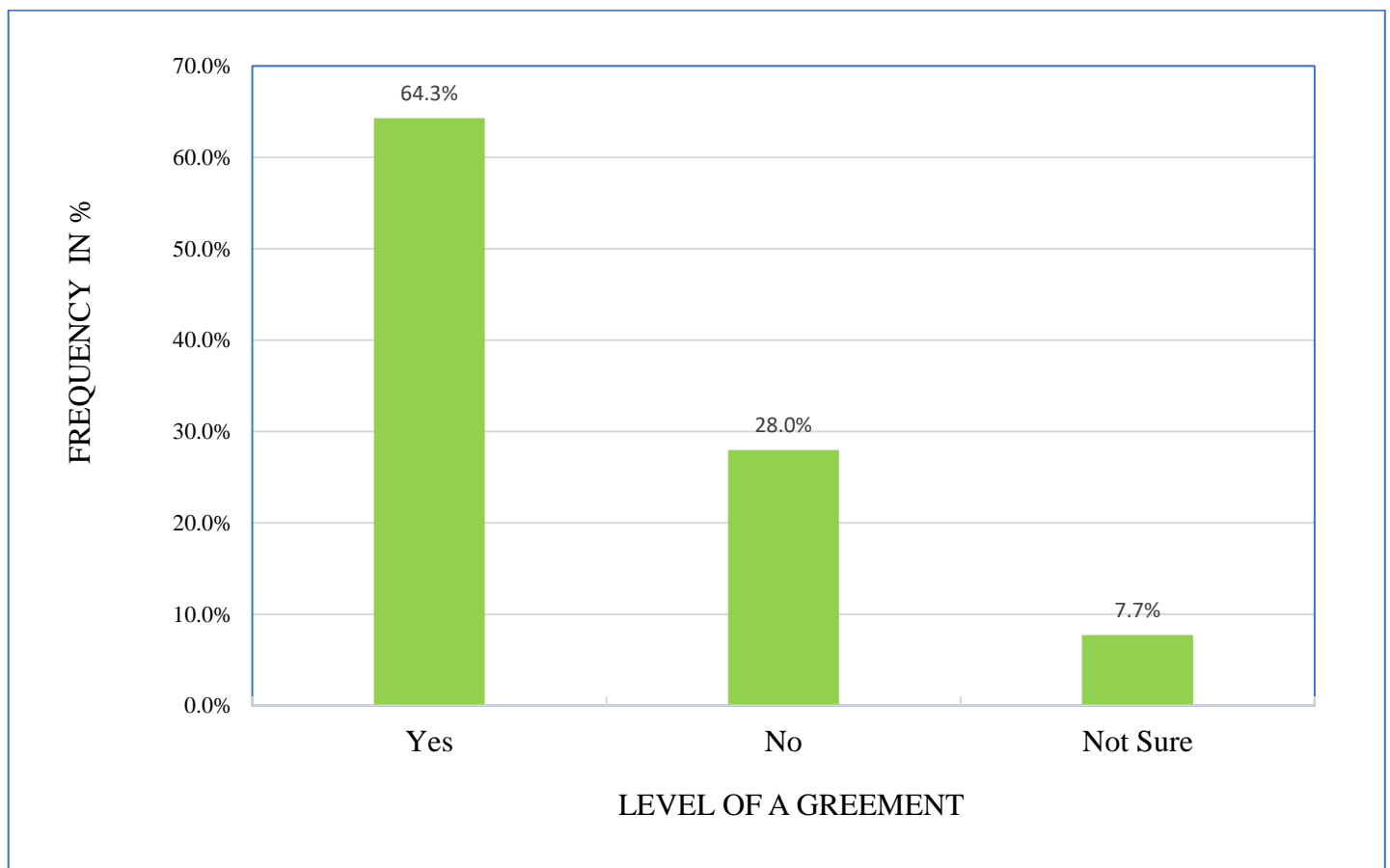


Figure 1.2 Media Exaggerates Political Violence Affecting Tourism Security

Source: Field data (2025)

Figure 1.2 illustrates respondents' perceptions of whether media exaggeration of political violence affects tourism security. The results show that a resounding majority of respondents (64.3%) think that political violence is exaggerated by the media, which has an impact on tourism security. On the other hand, 28.0% of respondents disagreed, indicating that they do not consider media coverage to be exaggerated or significant in this context. 7.7% of those surveyed, however, were unsure.

The findings from the study imply that the way political violence is portrayed in the media is generally seen to have a big influence on travel and travel safety.

One senior Security officer participant from the Ministry of Interior and coordination of the national government noted that....

"False or misleading reports from the media can cause chaos and riots, affecting sectors like tourism and local businesses, while the media frequently spreads propaganda and misinformation, causing political divisions and unrest" **(Interviewee 03/24/4/2025.From TPU Nairobi).**

The feeling from the participants highlights how a politically sensitive environment, inaccurate, deceptive, or propagandistic media coverage can aggravate political tensions, stoke public anxiety, and possibly lead to political violence like riots and demonstrations. From this statement, it was also evident that the media can exacerbate political divisions and undermine public trust by fabricating facts or pushing party narratives, which can lead to instability that has a detrimental influence on tourism security in a tourist destination. Exaggerated or false depictions of insecurity can cause serious reputational and financial harm, especially to tourism and local companies, which mostly depend on impressions of safety and stability. The findings from the interviewed participants show that political violence can be incited by the media, which has a negative influence on tourism security.

The opinion from the participant was corroborated by a study conducted by Schwarz Mantel (2013), claiming that the media frequently amplifies instances of political violence and enhances escalation, hence affecting tourism security in a tourist destination. The research conducted by the SRIC (2022) indicates that there appeared to be a systematic assault on the organizations and people in charge of overseeing the nation's elections, both via social media and by politicians. This was noted as a concerning tendency and issue. Similarly, Thiong'o et al. (2022) noted that media coverage of political unrest in tourist destinations can discourage tourists, disrupt tourism activities, and damage the destination's image, ultimately resulting in economic losses. The scholars further emphasized that political violence gains even more public attention with the rise of social media, portable cameras, and mobile phones, which facilitate the rapid spread of information.

Another senior employee from the State Department of tourism also noted that....

"Live streaming and broadcasting unverified content can provoke members of the public and incite violence. Bloggers and social media users contribute to the rapid spread of unverified or false information on acts of political violence" **(Interviewee 04/26/4/2025-From Nairobi).**

The feeling from the participants highlights how social media and live broadcasting may quickly broadcast unreliable or misleading information, which could stimulate violence and spark public outrage. The dissemination of such content, frequently without verification, by bloggers and individual users, contributes significantly to the escalation of tensions and the distortion of political event views. This quick spread can make people, visitors, and local businesses in the tourism sector feel more insecure in the event of political violence, underscoring the need for ethical digital communication and efficient verification systems.

Therefore, according to the above finding, the participant confirms the finding by Lujvo & Pejanovic (2019), the scholar states that diversification of media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and X, among others, has led to the evolving types of political violence that may disadvantage tourism security (Lujvo & Pejanovic, 2019).

Therefore, it was essential for the researcher to measure the respondents' opinions and perceptions regarding media as a cause of political using a Likert scale, and the results are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 1.3 Rating Media as a Cause of Political Violence

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT	N	%
Strongly Disagree	30	9.6%
Disagree	10	3.2%
Neutral	17	5.5%
Agree	100	32.2%
Agree Strongly	154	49.5%

Source: Field Data (2025)

From Table 1.3 above, the researcher aimed to determine whether social media facilitates the faster dissemination of information and pro contributes to the spread of political violence. It was also established that 154 (49.5%) of respondents strongly agreed, and 100 (32.2%) agreed that the media have been used to change the perception of individuals through propaganda and have contributed to acts of political violence in two countries.

One hotel manager participant from the study also supported the findings above by stating that.....

“Media sometimes air one-sided or exaggerated stories, fueling conflict and public mistrust. Media can take partisan positions, leading to misunderstandings among political leaders and citizens” **(Interviewee 05/26/4/2025-Hotel Manager Mombasa).**

The statement from the participants shows how biased or inflated media coverage can aggravate disputes, increase public distrust, and skew people's perceptions of political violence in a tourist destination. Political players or objectives may be distorted in partisan media coverage, which could worsen tensions and cause miscommunications between the citizens in a tourist destination. In the context of tourism, such slanted reporting can erode trust in a destination's safety and security, discourage travelers, and give the impression that the destination is insecure.

This finding is corroborated by research conducted by the Security Research and Information Center (SRIC) in 2022. The result showed that the most likely causes of violence in each county were incitement by political leaders, false information, propaganda, and fake news, through the media, in contested election results, and may lead to electoral violence. The study findings also indicated that political violence is a result of those who spread hate speech and those who incite conflict amongst communities through hate speech during general election periods, provocation on social media in Mombasa and Nairobi Counties. Thus, from this finding, SRIC indicates that the media may cause political violence that may influence tourism security through actors such as social media influencers in the vernacular radio station who have been identified as the promoters of political violence across the nation.

This result is also in line with Schwarz Mantel (2013), who stated that the media has also been used to exaggerate acts of political violence, thereby negatively affecting tourism security. Therefore, the media can also be used to cause cultural violence, hence interfering with the tourism host communities. Beyene (2002) has supported this view by stating that media can lead to ethnic violence during political transition in Africa in countries such as Rwanda and Kenya, where elites used political settings and media outlets to disseminate toxic messages of hate directed to other ethnic groups (Mwakikagile, 2001; The Waki Report, 2008).

As a result, these findings revealed that the media is more eager to spread "hate journalism" than truthful and responsible reporting by exaggerating and politicizing cultural conflicts (Nyamnjuh, 2005:56). According to Nyamnjuh (2005, pp. 56), elites dominate the media and distort information to encourage violence or further their own interests. First, by intimidation, imprisonment, and murder, elites ensure that critical voices are silenced.

Media can also take a partisan position, which can lead to political violence, as stated by one Hotel Security Manager participant during the study, who stated that ...

“Media can take partisan positions, leading to misunderstandings among political leaders and citizens, and Traditional media are frequently used as tools for agenda setting and

framing political narratives, which leads to violence?” (Interviewee 06/29/4/2025- Senior Security Officer, Nairobi).

The declaration by the participant provides an opinion on how biased media coverage and the intentional structuring of political narratives can intensify tensions, mislead the public, and lead to misinterpretations between citizens and political authorities. Traditional media can highlight some issues or viewpoints while ignoring others through agenda-setting and selective reporting, which can worsen social differences and, in some situations, incite political violence. Such actions can have a detrimental effect on tourism security as well as threaten societal stability in a tourist destination.

The finding from this study is also corroborated by Bayene (2022), who stated that Ethnic violence and political elite media manipulation are related, and the media has been used as a tool to sway complaints and hasten the development of different types of political violence in Mombasa and Nairobi Counties. This feeling by a scholar indicates that the media frequently acts as a tool for elites to influence public opinion and rally support along ethnic lines. Bayene (2022) draws attention to a crucial relationship between political elites, media manipulation, and the breakout of ethnic based political violence, such as conflicts. Political Elites deliberately use traditional and digital media platforms to build narratives that highlight historical grievances, marginalization, or perceived election-related injustices in many politically tourist destinations. These narratives by political elites can increase societal differences and raise ethnic consciousness by disseminating incendiary content or presenting facts selectively. This process creates an environment that is favorable to violence by intensifying already-existing tensions and legitimizing enmity against opposing ethnic or political groups in a tourist-dependent destination, hence influencing tourism security.

Furthermore, the scholar indicates that the media actively accelerates the development of political violence in addition to merely disseminating facts. Communities may internalize fear, anger, and mistrust as a result of being exposed to biased or inflammatory information regularly portrayed by the local media using local languages. This can quickly result in collective action and, eventually, bloodshed. However, the scholar also noted that the relationship between media manipulation and ethnic violence has not gotten much scholarly attention, despite its enormous significance, which leaves a huge knowledge gap on the mechanisms at play. Though, the findings from this study have offered empirical and contextual analysis, filled that knowledge gap, and advanced a more thorough comprehension of how media dynamics combine with political objectives to fuel ethnic conflict in a tourist destination, hence influencing tourism security. In order to reduce the dangers of politically motivated disinformation, it also emphasizes the necessity of more media regulation, ethical journalism, and counter-narratives.

Nevertheless, media scholars still pay little attention to how media may have a society and how it affects tourism security and should instead concentrate on how well the media performed their traditional role of reporting accurately, fairly, objectively, and comprehensively, to support economic, political, and social development."(Bayo, 2005, P.21).

One Tourist police officer observed that

“Despite the negative aspects, the media also play a positive role by educating the public about their rights and the media, being a powerful communication tool, and must verify facts to avoid misleading the masses” (Interviewee 07/29/4/2025- Tourist Police Officer, Nairobi).

The statement highlights how the media can spread false information, but it also serves a constructive purpose by informing the public about their rights and encouraging civic engagement. It can reach large audiences as a potent communication tool to promote social solidarity, encourage discussion, and increase awareness. However, to avoid deceiving the public and preserve credibility and confidence, this beneficial effect depends on responsible reporting, which includes fact-checking and verification. Because political scientists concentrate on the origins and causes of political violence as well as the connection between elite manipulation and ethnic violence, this suggests that the media has both positive and negative effects on tourism security (Bayo, 2005).

As a result, it seems that media, security, and tourism are at odds with one another as each tries to uphold its own borders. The majority of political science studies focus on structural, cultural, and economic aspects while

ignoring the media's contribution to travel security. (Bayo, 2005). Further corroboration emerged through media content analysis. News coverage and digital platforms amplified isolated incidents, contributing to broader risk perceptions among potential tourists to tourist destinations such as Mombasa and Nairobi city counties.

During the study, one private security Manager participant stated....

“Even a small protest becomes international news within hours, and that alone is enough to scare away visitors” (**Interviewee 07/29/4/2025- Private Security Manager in Nairobi**).

This feeling from the participant provides qualitative evidence that aligns with online media reports showing extensive international circulation of protest imagery during political violence incidents such as the 2024 Gen Z demonstrations, reinforcing tourists’ perceptions of instability and the spread of violence, hence interfering with tourism security.

Relationship between causes of political violence and the number of political violent events in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya.

Unemployment

The researcher also gathered secondary data on the rate of unemployment to estimate its effects on political violence. Due to a lack of longitudinal county-level unemployment data, this study applied demographic proportional estimation, combining KNBS population data and county population shares. According to the census that has been carried out in Kenya every 10 years, the results are as shown in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.4 Unemployment rate in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya.

Period	Avg Youth Population (Nairobi)	Avg Unemployment Rate (Nairobi)	Avg Unemployed Youth (Nairobi)	Avg Youth Population (Mombasa)	Avg Unemployment Rate (Mombasa)	Avg Unemployed Youth (Mombasa)
1992–2000	850,000	7%	60,000	215,000	7%	15,000
2001–2010	1,300,000	9%	120,000	325,000	9%	30,000
2011–2019	1,900,000	11%	210,000	475,000	11%	55,000
2020–2024	2,300,000	16.50%	380,000	575,000	14%	85,000

Source: Author's own calculation from the data obtained from the KNBS census (1992-2024) trends and county share.

According to the data in Table 1.1a above, both Nairobi and Mombasa saw significant increases in their youth populations between 1992 and 2024, along with an increase in unemployment. Mombasa's young population grew from roughly 215,000 to 575,000, while Nairobi's increased from about 850,000 to 2.3 million. Youth unemployment rates increased rapidly during that time, reaching 14% in Mombasa and 16.5% in Nairobi by 2020–2024. The number of young people without jobs increased significantly as a result, going from 60,000 to 380,000 in Nairobi and from 15,000 to 85,000 in Mombasa.

These patterns demonstrate the increasing economic strains in both cities, especially Nairobi, which has the highest rate of youth unemployment as a result of its quickly growing population. The current steep rise in unemployment points to structural issues with young people's economic integration and job creation. With possible consequences on industries like tourism, where youth unemployment might interact with concerns of political violence and security threats in both Nairobi and Mombasa, this situation has wider ramifications for social stability.

Therefore,

Table 1.5 Unemployment rate in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya

Period	Avg Unemployed Youth (Nairobi)	Number Of Political Violence In Nairobi	Avg Unemployed Youth (Mombasa)	Number Of Political Violence In Mombasa
1992–2000	60,000	19	15,000	9
2001–2010	120,000	18	30,000	8
2011–2019	210,000	14	55,000	7
2020–2024	380,000	22	85,000	14

Source: Author's own calculation from the data obtained from the KNBS census (1992-2024) trends and county share.

The results in the figure demonstrate a consistent increase in unemployment in both Nairobi and Mombasa, with the biggest increase taking place after 2010. This is due to fundamental economic changes, labor pressure, and the rapid growth of the urban population. Frustration, protest mobilization, and susceptibility to political manipulation could result from this. Nairobi may therefore have a larger population density since it is a center for political mobilization, and election years like 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2013, 2017, and 2022 have seen a greater rise in political violence. Youth unemployment and political violence in Nairobi and Mombasa are positively and statistically significantly correlated, according to the regression results. A unit increase in unemployed youth population is associated with a corresponding rise in political violence incidents, particularly during election periods, confirming the relevance of frustration–aggression and relative deprivation theories.

Poverty

Poverty is defined as living below \$1 per day, as well as the level of income across countries, groups, or individuals, and the nature of association with violence. It can also refer to low economic development or income, and is consistent with political violence, whereas countries with low income are considered poor. It can also relate to the relationship between economic inequality and education. Thus, others are in consensus that a low level of income is a significant condition for the emergence of political violence.

Due to a lack of longitudinal county-level unemployment data, this study applied demographic proportional estimation, combining KNBS population data and county population shares. According to the census that has been carried out in Kenya every 10 years, the results are as shown in Table 1.6 below.

Table 1.6 Relationship between poverty and political violence in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya

Interval	Mean Poor (Nairobi)	Number of Political Violence In Nairobi	Mean Poor (Mombasa)	Number of Political Violence In Mombasa
1992–2000	720,000	19	285,000	9
2001–2010	1,015,000	18	383,000	8
2011–2020	1,365,000	14	531,000	7
2021–2024	1,615,000	22	630,500	14

Source: Author's own calculation from the data obtained from the KNBS census (1992-2024) trends and county share.

Both Nairobi and Mombasa saw a consistent rise in poverty between 1992 and 2024, along with variations in political violence. The average number of Nairobi residents living in poverty increased by more than twofold over the course of three decades, from 720,000 in 1992–2001 to 1,615,000 in 2022–2024. Although the absolute numbers were fewer than in Nairobi, Mombasa likewise experienced a steady increase in poverty, from 285,000 to 630,500 during the same time period, showing ongoing socioeconomic difficulties.

A more complicated trend can be seen in the pattern of political violence. Over the first three periods, incidents decreased in both cities; in Nairobi, they went from 19 to 14, while in Mombasa, they went from 9 to 7. However, political violence rapidly surged to 22 in Nairobi and 14 in Mombasa during the most recent period, 2022–2024. This implies that while stabilizing forces may have helped in prior times, the latest spike may be related to deteriorating socioeconomic situations. Due to its bigger population and pivotal position in Kenya's political and economic landscape, Nairobi generally has higher rates of poverty and political violence than Mombasa.

Table 1.7 Relationship between corruption and political violence in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya

Interval	Nairobi (Est. /100)	Number of Political Violence In Nairobi	Mombasa (Est. /100)	Number of Political Violence Incidents in Mombasa
1992–2001	20	19	18	9
2001–2010	24	18	22	8
2011–2020	28	14	25	7
2021–2024	31	22	28	14

Source: Author's own calculation from the data obtained from Transparency International (1992-2024) trends and country share.

The table, which provides estimates per 100 population along with interpretive commentary on governance, illustrates the correlation between political violence and corruption levels in Nairobi and Mombasa between 1992 and 2024. From an estimated 20 per 100 in 1992–2000 to 31 per 100 in 2020–2024, corruption in Nairobi rose gradually, and Mombasa saw a similar upward trend from 18 to 28 per 100. Both cities saw fluctuations in political violence, with Nairobi seeing a minor decrease from 19 events in the early 1990s to 14 in 2011–2019 before experiencing a dramatic increase to 22 in 2020–2024. Mombasa experienced a similar pattern, declining from 9 to 7 incidents before increasing to 14 in the most recent time frame.

According to the interpretation, insufficient institutional capability and high levels of corruption in the early 1990s led to an increase in political violence. From 2001 to 2010, there were only slight reductions in political instability due to the persistence of institutional corruption. Despite continued difficulties with enforcement, institutional reforms resulted in a decline in violence between 2011 and 2019. But even if governance continued to advance gradually between 2020 and 2024, persistent inadequacies allowed political violence and corruption to resurface. Overall, the data point to a substantial link between political violence, corruption, and poor governance, with institutional reforms only reducing conflict when enforcement is efficient and reliable.

Table 1.8 Regression analysis of the relationship between causes of political violence, such as corruption, unemployment, poverty, and frequency of political violence in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.750	3	10.917	.	^b
	Residual	.000	0	.		
	Total	32.750	3			
A. Dependent Variable: Political_Violence_Nairobi						
B. Predictors: (Constant), Corruption Nairobi, Unemployed_Youth_Nairobi, Mean_Poverty_Nairobi						

Source: Author's finding (2025)

The finding in table 1.7 a regression sum of squares of 32.750, indicating that all observed variation in political violence is explained by the predictors (corruption, youth unemployment, and poverty), the residual sum of squares is zero, and the residual degrees of freedom are also zero. This situation implies that the model fits the data perfectly, leaving no unexplained variation. Therefore, from the findings, it is evident that there is a significant relationship between the causes of political violence and the frequency of political violence in Nairobi

Table 1.9 Regression analysis of the relationship between causes of political violence, such as corruption, unemployment, and poverty in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-33.399	.000		.	.	-33.399	-33.399
	Unemployed_Youth_Nairobi	9.439E-5	.000	3.981	.	.	.000	.000
	Mean_Poverty_Nairobi	.000	.000	-12.597	.	.	.000	.000
	Corruption Nairobi	6.154	.000	8.916	.	.	6.154	6.154

a. Dependent Variable: political_violence_Nairobi

Source: Author's finding (2025)

The coefficients table suggests that youth unemployment and corruption have positive effects on political violence in Nairobi, while poverty shows an unexpected negative relationship; however, these results are not statistically reliable. All standard errors are zero, and significance values are undefined, indicating a perfectly fitted (overfitted) model with no residual variance. This makes the coefficient estimates artificially precise and prevents any valid inference about their true impact. Consequently, despite the theoretical relevance of the predictors, the findings cannot be trusted or generalized because the data used were obtained from a reliable source, leaving a limited room for error.

Table 1.10 Regression analysis of the relationship between causes of political violence, such as corruption, unemployment, poverty, and frequency of political violence in Mombasa County, Kenya.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.000	3	9.667	.	. ^b
	Residual	.000	0	.		
	Total	29.000	3			

a. Dependent Variable: Political_Violence_Mombasa
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Corruption Mombasa, Unemployed_Youth_Mombasa, Mean_Poverty_Mombasa

Source: Author's finding (2025)

The ANOVA results for political violence in Mombasa show that the regression model explains all the variation (SSR = 29.000) with zero residual error, indicating a perfect fit; however, this is statistically problematic because the residual degrees of freedom are zero, making it impossible to compute the F-statistic and significance values. This outcome reflects model overfitting due to too few observations relative to the number of predictors (corruption, youth unemployment, and poverty), rendering the results unreliable and not generalizable. Although the variables are theoretically relevant, the model cannot provide valid statistical evidence, and a larger sample size or fewer predictors are needed for meaningful analysis.

Table 1.11 Regression analysis of the relationship between causes of political violence, such as corruption, unemployment, and poverty in Mombasa County, Kenya

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	26.295	.000		.	.	26.295	26.295
	Unemployed_Youth_Mombasa	.001	.000	5.538	.	.	.001	.001
	Mean_Poverty_Mombasa	.000	.000	-5.283	.	.	.000	.000
	Corruption_Mombasa	.266	.000	.365	.	.	.266	.266

a. Dependent Variable: Political_violence_Mombasa

Source: Author's finding (2025)

The coefficients table for Mombasa indicates that youth unemployment and corruption are positively associated with political violence, while poverty shows an unexpected negative relationship; however, these results are not statistically reliable. All standard errors are zero, and significance values are undefined, reflecting a perfectly fitted (overfitted) model with no residual variance. This makes the coefficient estimates artificially precise and prevents any valid inference, meaning the findings cannot be trusted or generalized without increasing the sample size or reducing the number of predictors.

Table 1.12 Political Motives as a cause of political violence in Mombasa and Nairobi City Counties, Kenya 1992-2024

Interval	Election Years	Number of Major Election Disputes	Nature of Disputes
1992–2001	1992, 1997	2	Ethnic clashes, state repression, localized violence
2002–2011	2002, 2007	1 (major)	2007–08 post-election violence (nationwide crisis)
2012–2021	2013, 2017	2	Supreme Court petitions; 2017 nullification & protests
2022–2024	2022	1	Legal dispute; the Supreme Court upheld the results

Source: Author's own calculation from the data obtained from Transparency International (1992-2024) trends and country share.

Kenya went through two significant election disputes between 1992 and 2001, the 1992 and 1997 elections, which were mostly marked by localized violence, official repression, and ethnic conflicts. These early conflicts demonstrated the difficulties of a fledgling multiparty democracy, when political rivalry frequently turned into open conflict and disturbances at the local level.

The character of election disputes changed between 2002 and 2024. While the 2013 and 2017 elections featured legal challenges, including Supreme Court petitions and the 2017 election nullification, along with protests, the 2007–2008 post-election violence constituted a national catastrophe. By 2022, the Supreme Court had upheld the election results, making disputes essentially legitimate. This change shows that although election disputes are still a common occurrence in Kenyan politics, they have evolved from violent altercations to formalized legal procedures, indicating a slow development of the nation's judicial and democratic systems.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study looked at the underlying causes of political violence that influence tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi. In order to triangulate the results and offer a thorough assessment of the study's conclusions, the discussion incorporates actual data gathered from participants, secondary data trend analysis from databases, and current academic literature and theories. The Triangle of Violence Theory, which views violence as occurring in three interrelated forms: direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence, was one of the three ideas that served as the theoretical foundation for the study. This approach offered a multifaceted perspective for analyzing how the underlying causes of political violence appear and influence tourism security.

According to the study findings on the underlying causes of political violence that affect tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi Counties, Kenya. The respondents and participant findings, structural and governance-related factors, such as economic inequality and poverty, unemployment, corruption, geopolitics, social media in spreading information, land grievances, globalization, government incompetency, ethnic discrimination, political goals, religion, and ideological differences.

For instance, corruption can lead to grievances that fuel violence, undermine the effectiveness of institutions like the Tourism Regulatory Authority and the Tourist Police Unit, and other tourism stakeholders to protect tourists, and make tourist areas like Nairobi and Mombasa City more vulnerable.

The Triangle of Violence Theory's theoretical framework, especially the idea of structural violence, provided considerable support for these discussions. The findings of the study indicate that the causes of political violence, such as direct physical force and structural violence, are primarily embedded in institutional injustices ingrained in political, economic, and social systems. For example, Communities residing in tourist destinations frequently feel left out of the economic advantages brought about by tourism, according to survey participants. This sense of exclusion might lead to complaints that could develop into political or social unrest.

Therefore, the study's empirical results support more extensive research that connects political instability in developing nations with socioeconomic inequality. During the study, it was evident that Nairobi recorded more instances of political violence than Mombasa, according to triangulation with secondary data. But the data also showed that there were sporadic rises in violence in Mombasa during times of national elections. This pattern implies that during times of high political contestation, political violence in Kenya spreads throughout important economic and tourism areas rather than being geographically isolated from major economic structures. Participants also underlined that in order to garner political support during election seasons, political elites frequently take advantage of socioeconomic issues and ethnic tensions, as well as the media, to air their personal political interests.

This finding is consistent with research on election violence in Africa, which shows that political leaders may use historical grievances and ethnic identities as a means of gaining control by attacking socioeconomic structures. The study also discovered that a climate of impunity may be exacerbated by irresponsible law enforcement and little responsibility for crimes with political motivations and intentions. The apparent lack of justice when perpetrators of political violence are not successfully prosecuted erodes public confidence in governmental institutions and raises the possibility of future hostilities.

However, the Media Dependency Theory clarified how perceptions of the causes of different forms of political violence were influenced by media coverage. in relation to political violence. The underlying causes and escalation of political violence are exacerbated by media narratives. When it comes to framing political events, ethnic relations, and security challenges, media outlets are crucial. In Kenya, political rivalry, ethnic identities, and complaints are frequently highlighted in media coverage, especially during election seasons.

These framed narratives have the potential to exacerbate tensions and promote differences when audiences strongly rely on such information to interpret their surroundings. According to the study's findings, a sizable percentage of participants believe that the media is their main source of information about security-related issues, especially during times of political unrest and terrorist threats. Regardless of their direct experience with such instances, respondents in both Nairobi and Mombasa tend to link increasing media coverage of violence with

higher dread and decreased confidence in safety. These results corroborate the main tenet of the media dependency theory, which holds that a high level of media dependence is associated with higher media effects that could lead to various forms of political violence.

These conclusions are further supported by qualitative data from focus groups and in-depth interviews, which offer contextual and experiential perspectives. Security officers, tourism stakeholders, and members of the local community are among the participants who frequently highlight how media coverage frequently exaggerates instances of terrorism and political violence, sometimes without providing enough context. For example, depicting some communities as marginalized or as security risks can exacerbate emotions of injustice and exclusion, which are major causes of political violence. As a result, media dependence has the potential to turn pre-existing structural problems—such as political marginalization, unemployment, and inequality—into catalysts for unrest and violence that impact Mombasa and Nairobi's tourism security.

Furthermore, in the context of terrorism and organized violence, Media Dependency Theory clarifies how the media functions as a tool for both offenders and viewers. Media outlets are frequently used by violent actors to increase the psychological effects of their crimes. High-profile terrorist incidents in Nairobi have been widely covered by the media, which both informs and instills fear and anxiety in the populace. The goals of terrorist organizations, protest groups, and riot groups—whose success mostly relies on publicity and psychological disruption—align with this pervasive spread of fear. Even in cases where occurrences are confined, regular exposure to such content can foster a sense of widespread insecurity since viewers rely on the media for updates and interpretation.

This dynamic illustrates how reliance on the media can obliquely maintain cycles of factors that lead to political violence because of instability and anxiety. Respondents in Nairobi might draw attention to how ongoing media coverage of terrorist attacks prolongs feelings of unease even after the situation has been handled. In a similar vein, residents of Mombasa can voice worries that media portrayals of the area unfairly link it to radicalization and extremism, stigmatizing locals and deterring tourists. By showing how people perceive and absorb mediated information to create their social reality, these stories are consistent with media dependency theory.

A third layer of triangulation is provided by secondary data and documentary analysis, which offer impartial proof to support both quantitative and qualitative conclusions. Reports on previous instances, like the DusitD2 complex attack and the Westgate Mall attack, show how widespread media coverage prompted instant worldwide attention and subsequent travel recommendations against Kenya.

A distinct pattern appears when these three lines of data are combined. Qualitative research explains how and why people interpret media messages in ways that reinforce insecurity; quantitative data establishes the prevalence of media reliance and its correlation with fear and behavioral change; and documentary evidence validates the real-world effects of media-driven perceptions on causes of political violence on tourism and

In conclusion, Media Dependency Theory lends credence to the idea that the media environment has a major impact on political violence and tourism insecurity in Nairobi and Mombasa, in addition to structural and socioeconomic issues. The media is crucial to the rise in political violence as well as the vulnerability of the tourism industry because it shapes perceptions, amplifies fear, and frames narratives surrounding identity and security. As a result, any thorough examination of political violence and travel safety in Kenya must take into account the significant and frequently intricate impact of media dependence on fact and perception.

In conclusion, by basing Media Dependency Theory on empirical data from several sources, triangulation enhances its capacity to explain phenomena. The convergence of quantitative, qualitative, and documentary results indicates that the dynamics of political violence and tourism security in Kenya are significantly shaped by the media. It creates realities that impact behavior, legislation, and economic results in addition to educating the audience. Thus, MDT offers a thorough framework for comprehending how media dependency interacts with underlying structural elements to promote both political violence and tourism insecurity in Nairobi and Mombasa City counties. This approach is supported by the results of triangulated studies.

Therefore, the researcher concludes the discussion by stating that through a complex interplay of direct violent episodes, structural inequities, media narratives, and tourists' perceptions of risk, the triangulated data show how political violence impacts tourism security in Nairobi and Mombasa Counties. The way that direct, structural, and cultural forms of violence interact to undermine tourist destinations is explained by the Triangle of Violence Theory, and the Media Dependency Theory emphasizes the crucial role that the media plays in influencing worldwide perceptions of security.

The study offers a thorough understanding of how political violence affects tourism security in Kenya's main tourist locations by combining primary data, historical trends, and existing literature. Therefore, inadequate and politicized institutions—such as those that manipulate people and neglect basic human needs—can foster an atmosphere that encourages political violence in tourist-dependent areas. Through psychological, communicative, and structural pathways, the integration of different theoretical views offers a thorough explanation of how the theories employed in this study foster political violence, which translates into decreased tourism security.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study findings were based on examining the underlying causes of political violence that influence tourism security in Mombasa and Nairobi City counties, Kenya. The study established that the major causes of political violence in the two countries include political goals, corruption, economic inequality and poverty, and electoral injustices. However, globalization was identified as the least significant cause of political violence in the two countries. Similarly, land grievances were also identified as a cause of political violence, but they were found not to have a significant influence on the tourism industry.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is a dynamic mass social phenomenon that brings together people from diverse racial, religious, and social backgrounds and evolves in response to socio-economic and political changes. As a major source of employment and a key contributor to national development, tourism is closely linked to other productive sectors. Achieving sustainable tourism, therefore, requires adequate security for tourists, tourism facilities, and host communities. However, tourism destinations have increasingly become soft targets for political violence and related criminal activities, threatening the stability and growth of the industry. The unpredictable nature of such violence highlights the need for preparedness through strong coordination between tourism stakeholders and security agencies. Establishing specialized and well-structured tourism security units is essential to prevent, manage, and respond to security threats effectively. The study concludes that residents and stakeholders in Nairobi and Mombasa counties have been significantly affected by political violence, with demonstrations and corruption emerging as the most prevalent forms impacting the tourism industry. Corruption was identified as the leading cause of political violence in both countries, followed by economic inequality and political grievances, while globalization and religion were found to be the least influential factors. The effects of political violence are evident in declining international tourist arrivals and reduced tourism revenues in both destinations, underscoring its negative implications for economic development. To mitigate these impacts, the study highlights the importance of strengthening existing security strategies, particularly the role of specialized tourist police and the integration of technology such as CCTV and drones to enhance surveillance and early detection. Ultimately, tourism security is a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration among security agencies, tourism workers, communities, and tourists to foster a collective sense of safety and resilience in key tourism destinations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are made: Corruption is one of the major causes of political violence in the two countries, according to the study's findings. Therefore, the government must enact laws that protect the tourism industry from all forms of corruption and implement strict laws to prosecute individuals involved in this practice.

The government should implement emergency measures to prevent factors that may cause a violent revolution, which can capitalize on factors such as unemployment and inadequate infrastructure development in a tourist destination. This will ensure that every Kenyan citizen is busy building the nation, hence there is no time to think about organizing acts of political violence.

The stakeholders' engagement through community policing should be encouraged to help protect the tourism industry from acts of political violence. Government leaders should educate the community on the danger of engaging in acts of political violence, such as corrupt practices. Youths should be empowered through the provision of free or affordable education to reduce their chances of engaging in acts of political violence, which should not be directed at tourism facilities, as they exercise their democratic rights.

The National Crime Research Centre and law enforcement offices should collect various freely available reports from online data set records to assist in identifying major causes of political violence that may affect the tourism industry.

Suggestions For Further Research

The first limitation pertains to the research setting, specifically that the study focuses on political violence in one country over 32 years. More countries or bigger cities within regions, and at the same time, lag could improve the in-depth analysis. It could also provide analysis on the price level of politically violent-related crimes, crime rates, accommodation profits, and the general implications for the tourism industry. Further mixed-methods analysis should investigate in depth how crimes associated with political violence affect tourism security. This includes addressing corruption among employees and security officers to protect the tourism industry.

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