ABSTRACT
Violence in Kenya has been a common characteristic of general elections since independence leading to clashes and conflicts in many parts of the country. However, the post-election violence of 2007 to 2008 that rocked the country immediately after the presidential results remains one of the memorable moments in the Kenya’s history. This study set out to achieve three research objectives. These were firstly, to find out why there was peace in Eastleigh, Nairobi during the 2007 to 2008 post-election violence in Kenya, secondly to assess the nature of the security apparatus employed by the communities living in Eastleigh and lastly to examine the existing structures for conflict resolution in Eastleigh.

The study used a qualitative approach. Primary and secondary data was utilized in this study to establish the factors that contributed to calmness in Eastleigh while most parts of Nairobi were engulfed in conflict. The process of data collection involved various types of interviews in which the researcher obtained the primary data. Secondary data were obtained from books, journals, articles, working papers and discussion papers.

The study revealed that, first, Somali people living in Eastleigh did not have strong political alignment, hence did not really matter who won the presidential ticket. Second, land issue that was at the centre of conflict in most areas of Kenya was of little concern to different ethnic groups living in Eastleigh.

Third, the study also showed that post-election violence in Nairobi was due to politics, having been generated by political party alignments or affiliations. The two main rival parties were; Orange Democratic Party (ODM) and Party of National Unity (PNU). Kenya had been divided along ethnic lines on the basis of these two competing parties. As a result, post-election conflicts were characterized by issues such as ethnic identities, land and differences in political alignments in Kenya. Further, it was found that Somali inhabitants in Eastleigh were not concerned with political wars because they believe only in holy war. Their religion strongly played part to influence their non-participation.

Moreover, findings proved that the existence of a well coordinated security system in the area also enhanced peace in the area. There was evidence of organized community groups (NGOs such as Eastleigh Business Community, Muslim Youth Association and FBOs) that kept members from neighbouring estates at bay. At the same time, the perceived fallacy that people in Eastleigh possess guns greatly contributed to peace during post-election violence. The residents in the neighbouring estates feared that they would be shot if they involved in violence. This scared away potential criminals who could take advantage of the election violence to loot property.

The study revealed that other organizations existed in the area. They included United Nations
High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) and some local agencies that were deeply engaged in dispute resolution strategies in the area, hence the existence of peace.