ENHANCING SOCIAL AND PERSONALITY ADJUSTMENT FOR TRAUMA VICTIMS:
A Case of Kenya’s 2007 Post election Violence
INTRODUCTION

- trauma has four common traits: it is unexpected, it is psychologically overwhelming,
- the victim is unable to cope with it, and the victim feels there is nothing they could do to prevent or mitigate its effects.
- trauma’ refers to “any injury, whether physically or emotionally inflicted”
- It results from extreme tension or stress factors in an individual’s life, thus overwhelming their coping skills.
INTRODUCTION

• individuals, who have experienced trauma from whatever cause, exhibit a range of different cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioural effects.
• In many circumstances, cognitive responses include memory difficulties, lack of concentration, poor judgment, inability to discriminate, and inability to make choices.
• emotional responses include depression, withdrawal, excitability, flashbacks, intense fear, feelings of helplessness, loss of control, loss of connection and meaning, generalized anxiety, and specific fears.
• Physical responses include stomach pains, tightness of the chest, headaches, perspiration and psychosomatic complaints.
• behavioural responses include irritability, easily startled, hyper-alertness, insomnia, communication difficulties, and drug use
OBJECTIVE

• Thus, the main objective of this paper is to examine the extent to which, psychotherapeutic support can be employed as a strategy to enhance social and personality adjustment for trauma victims based on evidence from Kenya’s 2007 post election violence.
INTERVENTION

• intervention is to harness naturally occurring, adaptive, discontinuous affective change processes, to help victims access resilience and the capacity to function normally.

• trauma healing therefore, aims at helping victims acknowledge the experience and integrate it into a sort of personal or collective rebirth.

• *trauma intervention*’ is the art of interrupting the downward spiral of ineffective coping skills as skilfully and as quickly as possible to return the victim to normalcy.

• humanitarian agencies employed psychotherapeutic support as an interventional strategy to relieve pain and suffering extensively.
METHODOLOGY

• causal comparative design to explore relationships between victims who received psychotherapeutic support and those who did not.

• a sample consisting of a total of 627 respondents drawn from 2,040 IDPs or approximately 31%, selected through stratified random sampling method from 12 geographical localities across two provinces in seven districts of Kenya to participate in the study.

• The sample was made up of 371 or 59% females and 354 or 41% males and maintained a balance between adults and youth. In addition, the study interviewed 20 professionals who intervened in trauma cases from 10 humanitarian agencies.
RESULTS

• In relation to social and personality adjustment, the study found that victims who received psychological support (i.e. 84% of the respondents) had a better social and personality adjustment than those who did not.

• Improved trust among communities and now could associate and deal with each other better; including those from communities that attacked them after undergoing counselling.

• Respondents felt much better, made social and personality adjustments and once more felt in control of their lives again.

• Untreated persons often improve, but those receiving psychotherapy tend to improve somewhat more.