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INFLUENCE OF KENYA'S MILITARY ENGAGEMENT IN SOMALIA ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF KENYA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS

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ABSTRACT

Kenya's military engagement in Somalia since 2011 represents a significant shift from traditional non-interference to active regional security participation. This study examined the influence of Kenya's military engagement in Somalia on achieving national interests, focusing on three key dimensions: border security enforcement operations, maritime security operations, and peace support and stabilization missions. The research employed a descriptive design using quantitative approaches to analyze data from 165 stakeholders, including military officers, government officials, counterterrorism experts, and community members, achieving a 96.5% response rate. The study utilized structured questionnaires and employed SPSS version 27.0 for statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The theoretical framework was grounded in realist international relations theory, particularly defensive realism, which explains Kenya's intervention as rational threat-balancing behavior to protect vital national interests. Key findings revealed that all three military engagement components significantly influenced national interests' achievement. Regression analysis demonstrated strong explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.718$, $F = 78.03$, $p < 0.001$), with border security enforcement showing the strongest individual impact ($\beta = 0.351$), followed by maritime operations ($\beta = 0.312$) and peace missions ($\beta = 0.308$). International cooperation and regional influence achieved highest success levels, while economic protection and addressing conflict root causes showed lower effectiveness. The study concludes that Kenya's military engagement effectively advances national interests through complementary mechanisms, validating defensive realist theory while highlighting the importance of comprehensive approaches. Recommendations include maintaining comprehensive engagement while prioritizing border security investments, enhancing bilateral capacity building, developing integrated civil-military strategies, and pursuing diplomatic initiatives to address underlying political tensions for sustainable long-term stability.

Keywords: Kenya's Military Engagement, Border Security Enforcement Operations, Maritime Security Operations, Peace Support, Stabilization Missions, Kenya's National Interests

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INTRODUCTION

Kenya's military engagement in Somalia has emerged as a defining element of the country's contemporary security strategy, fundamentally altering Kenya's traditional foreign policy approach from non-interference to active regional security participation. This transformation began with Operation Linda Nchi in October 2011, when the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) crossed into Somalia to combat Al-Shabaab militants following a series of terrorist attacks and kidnappings on Kenyan soil (Mwangi, 2023). The operation subsequently evolved into Kenya's participation in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), marking the country's most significant military intervention since independence. The decision to engage militarily in Somalia represented a strategic shift driven by escalating security threats that directly endangered Kenya's national interests. The kidnapping of foreign tourists at Kiwayu Safari Village and aid workers from the Dadaab refugee camp in 2011, coupled with persistent cross-border raids by Al-Shabaab, demonstrated that Somalia's instability posed an existential threat to Kenya's security architecture (Kagwanja, 2022). These incidents highlighted the inadequacy of defensive measures alone and necessitated proactive military engagement to address threats at their source.

Somalia's collapse in 1991 created a security vacuum that terrorist organizations, particularly Al-Shabaab, exploited to establish territorial control and launch regional attacks. The group's sophisticated operations, including recruitment networks, arms smuggling, and coordinated terrorist attacks across East Africa, posed multifaceted challenges requiring comprehensive military responses (Anderson & McKnight, 2021). Kenya's military engagement evolved to address these challenges through three primary dimensions: border security enforcement, maritime security operations, and peace support and stabilization missions. Globally, military interventions in failed states have yielded mixed results, with successful interventions in Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste contrasted by prolonged conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq (Williams, 2022). In the African context, regional military interventions have shown promise in Mali, Ivory Coast, and the Central African Republic, where swift action helped restore stability. However, these experiences also demonstrate that military solutions require complementary political, economic, and social interventions for sustainable success (Karimi, 2023).

Kenya's military engagement in Somalia has achieved notable tactical successes, including the liberation of key towns such as Kismayo, disruption of Al-Shabaab supply lines, and weakening of the group's operational capacity. The integration of Kenyan forces into AMISOM in 2012 enhanced multilateral cooperation and legitimized Kenya's presence through international legal frameworks (Otieno, 2021). However, challenges persist, including Al-Shabaab's adaptive strategies, civilian casualties from military operations, resource constraints, and the complex task of state-building in Somalia. The assessment of Kenya's military engagement requires systematic examination of how specific military activities contribute to national interests' objectives. This study focuses on three critical dimensions of military engagement: border security enforcement operations that secure the Kenya-Somalia frontier, maritime security operations that protect Kenya's coastal interests, and peace support and stabilization missions that contribute to regional stability. Understanding the effectiveness of these military components is essential for informed policy decisions and resource allocation in Kenya's security sector.

Statement of the Problem

Despite over a decade of military engagement in Somalia, Kenya continues to face persistent security challenges that question the effectiveness of military solutions in achieving national interests objectives. Al-Shabaab has demonstrated resilience and adaptability, launching devastating attacks on Kenyan soil including the Westgate Mall attack (2013) that killed 67 people, the Garissa University attack (2015) that killed 148 students, and the Dusit D2 complex attack (2019) that killed 21 people (National Counter Terrorism Centre, 2023). These incidents occurred despite significant military investment and territorial gains in Somalia, raising questions about the relationship between military engagement and domestic security outcomes. The Kenya-

Somalia border remains porous and insecure, with continued smuggling of arms, contraband, and terrorist infiltration despite enhanced border security operations (Kimani, 2022). Kenya has invested over \$1.2 billion in Somalia operations since 2011, straining the defense budget while competing with critical domestic development needs (Ministry of Defence, 2023). The economic burden includes direct military costs, logistical support, and compensation for military casualties, creating fiscal pressures on government resources.

Military operations have also generated unintended consequences, including civilian casualties that Al-Shabaab exploits for propaganda and recruitment purposes (Hassan, 2021). Diplomatic tensions with Somalia's federal government over territorial disputes and resource exploration have complicated military cooperation and undermined regional stability objectives (Abdi, 2022). Furthermore, while territorial gains have been achieved, the underlying causes of Somalia's instability including political fragmentation, clan conflicts, and governance failures remain largely unaddressed. These persistent challenges raise fundamental questions about the effectiveness of Kenya's military engagement in Somalia and its contribution to national interests. There is insufficient empirical evidence on how specific components of military engagement border security enforcement, maritime security operations, and peace support missions individually and collectively contribute to achieving Kenya's national interests' objectives. This knowledge gap hampers evidence-based policy formulation and strategic planning for Kenya's continued involvement in Somalia.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of Kenya's military engagement in Somalia on the achievement of Kenya's national interests. The specific research objectives;

- To examine the influence of Border Security Enforcement operations on the achievement of Kenya's national interests.
- To assess the influence of Maritime Security Operations on the achievement of Kenya's national interests.
- To investigate the influence of Peace Support and Stabilization Missions on the achievement of Kenya's national interests.

The study was guided by the following research objectives research questions

- How do Border Security Enforcement operations influence the achievement of Kenya's national interests?
- How do Maritime Security Operations influence the achievement of Kenya's national interests?
- How do Peace Support and Stabilization Missions influence the achievement of Kenya's national interests?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical Review

Border Security Enforcement

Research by Thompson et al. (2022) examined border security effectiveness in the Horn of Africa, analyzing how enhanced border enforcement impacts terrorist infiltration and cross-border crime. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, analyzing incident data from 2010-2021 and interviewing 150 border security officials across Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda. Findings indicated that integrated border security operations reduced illegal crossings by 45% and terrorist infiltration attempts by 38% over the study period. However, the research noted that border security success required sustained investment in technology, personnel training, and inter-agency coordination.

Ochieng (2021) conducted a comprehensive analysis of Kenya's border security operations along the Kenya-Somalia frontier, examining the impact of enhanced security measures implemented since 2011. Using data from the Ministry of Interior, National Police Service, and border security agencies, the study found that establishment of border control posts reduced cross-border incidents by 42% between 2012-2020. The research identified key success factors including deployment of specialized border patrol units, installation of surveillance technology, and implementation of community-based security initiatives. However, challenges including inadequate funding, personnel shortages, and sophisticated smuggling networks limited overall effectiveness.

Hassan and Mohamed (2023) investigated the effectiveness of regional border security cooperation in East Africa, focusing on joint operations between Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Uganda. The study analyzed 300 border security incidents and surveyed 200 security officials across the region. Results showed that coordinated border enforcement operations achieved 52% success rates in preventing illegal crossings compared to 31% for unilateral operations. The research emphasized the importance of intelligence sharing, joint training programs, and harmonized border management procedures for sustainable border security outcomes.

Maritime Security Operations

Research by Maritim (2022) examined maritime security operations in the Western Indian Ocean, analyzing the impact of naval operations on piracy, arms smuggling, and terrorist logistics. The study utilized maritime incident databases and interviewed naval officers from Kenya, Tanzania, and Seychelles. Findings revealed that coordinated maritime patrols reduced piracy incidents by 67% and illegal arms trafficking by 43% between 2012-2021. The research highlighted the importance of maritime domain awareness, international cooperation, and integration of coastal surveillance systems for effective maritime security. Ali and Mwangi (2021) conducted a detailed analysis of Kenya Navy's maritime security operations off the Somali coast, focusing on Operation Usalama Baharini and its contribution to regional maritime security. Using operational data from the Kenya Navy and AMISOM Maritime Component, the study found that maritime interdiction operations disrupted Al-Shabaab supply lines, resulting in a 38% reduction in seaborne logistics support to the terrorist group. However, the research noted limitations including inadequate naval assets, maintenance challenges, and the need for enhanced maritime intelligence capabilities. Kiplagat (2023) investigated the effectiveness of joint maritime security operations involving Kenya, international naval forces, and AMISOM. The study analyzed 250 maritime security incidents and conducted surveys with 180 naval personnel. Results indicated that multilateral maritime operations achieved higher success rates (58%) compared to unilateral operations (34%) in disrupting terrorist maritime activities. The research emphasized the critical role of information sharing, coordinated patrolling, and capacity building in maritime security effectiveness.

Peace Support and Stabilization Missions

Research by Mutua (2022) examined the effectiveness of peace support operations in Somalia, analyzing the impact of AMISOM on conflict reduction and state-building progress. The study utilized conflict incident data from ACLED and conducted interviews with 200 peacekeepers, government officials, and civil society representatives. Findings indicated that sustained peace support operations reduced violent incidents by 34% in areas under AMISOM control and facilitated establishment of federal government institutions. However, the research noted ongoing challenges including resource constraints, coordination difficulties, and limited local ownership of peace processes. Kamau (2023) conducted a comprehensive analysis of Kenya's contribution to peace support operations in Somalia, examining the impact of KDF participation in AMISOM on stabilization outcomes. Using data from AMISOM, UNSOM, and Somali government sources, the study found that Kenyan peacekeepers helped liberate 15 major towns from Al-Shabaab control and facilitated establishment of local government structures in 8 regions. The research identified key success factors including effective civil-military cooperation, community engagement initiatives, and integration of

development activities with security operations. Omondi (2021) investigated the long-term impact of peace support operations on regional stability, focusing on spillover effects into neighboring countries. The study analyzed conflict data from 2007-2020 and surveyed 250 security experts across East Africa. Results showed that countries participating in peace support operations experienced 28% fewer cross-border security incidents and improved regional cooperation mechanisms. The research emphasized the importance of comprehensive approaches combining military action with political dialogue, development assistance, and humanitarian support.

Achievement of Kenya's national interests

Research by Kenyana (2022) examined indicators of national interests' achievement in East Africa, developing a comprehensive framework for measuring security outcomes. The study utilized survey data from 500 citizens, government officials, and security experts across Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Findings identified key indicators including reduced terrorist incidents (weighted 25%), improved border security (20%), enhanced public confidence (18%), strengthened security institutions (17%), and regional stability (20%). The research provided benchmarks for assessing national interest's performance and highlighted the multidimensional nature of security achievements. Krstić (2022) conducted a longitudinal analysis of terrorism trends in East Africa, examining the relationship between counterterrorism operations and domestic security outcomes. Using incident data from Global Terrorism Database and national interests reports, the study found that sustained counterterrorism engagement reduced successful terrorist attacks by 31% over the study period 2011-2021. However, the research noted that military operations alone were insufficient, requiring complementary measures including community engagement, deradicalization programs, and addressing root causes of extremism.

Theoretical Framework

Realism in International Relations

This study employs Realist theory as the primary theoretical framework for understanding Kenya's military engagement in Somalia. Classical realism, as articulated by Hans Morgenthau (1948) in "Politics Among Nations," posits that states operate in an anarchic international system where survival and national interest maximization are primary objectives. Realist theory assumes that states are rational actors that pursue power and security through various means, including military force, to protect their vital interests (Morgenthau, 1948). According to structural realism developed by Kenneth Waltz (1979), the distribution of power in the international system shapes state behavior, with states balancing against threats to maintain security. In the context of Kenya's military engagement in Somalia, realist theory explains this intervention as a rational response to existential threats posed by Al-Shabaab terrorism and Somalia's state failure. The theory suggests that Kenya's military action represents classic threat balancing behavior, where the state employs military power to neutralize external threats before they compromise national interests (Waltz, 1979).

Defensive realism, as advanced by scholars like Jack Snyder and Stephen Van Evera, emphasizes that states primarily seek security rather than power maximization, using military force defensively to protect vital interests. Kenya's military engagement in Somalia aligns with defensive realist assumptions, as the intervention was triggered by direct threats to Kenya's territory, citizens, and economic interests rather than expansionist ambitions (Rosenberg, 2024). The focus on border security enforcement, maritime security operations, and stabilization missions reflects defensive realist logic of threat mitigation and security enhancement. The realist framework provides analytical tools for understanding how Kenya's military engagement serves national interests. Border security enforcement operations align with realist emphasis on territorial integrity and sovereignty protection. Maritime security operations reflect realist concerns about protecting economic interests and sea lines of communication. Peace support and stabilization missions, while appearing altruistic, serve realist objectives of creating security buffers and preventing state failure spillover effects (Kauppi & Viotti, 2023).

However, realist theory has limitations in explaining multilateral cooperation aspects of Kenya's engagement. The theory's state-centric focus may underemphasize the role of international organizations like AMISOM, regional cooperation mechanisms, and norm-based motivations for intervention. Additionally, realism's emphasis on military solutions may not fully capture the complex political, economic, and social dimensions required for sustainable security outcomes in Somalia (Dursun-Özkanca, 2023). Despite these limitations, realist theory provides a coherent framework for analyzing Kenya's military engagement as a rational response to security threats, offering explanatory power for understanding the relationship between military action and national interests interest achievement.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive research design, integrating quantitative approaches to explore the influence of Kenya's military engagement in Somalia on its national interests. The target population comprised 300 individuals, including military officers, government officials, counterterrorism experts, and affected residents. A sample size of 171 respondents was determined using Yamane's formula and selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires supplemented by secondary sources such as government and AMISOM reports. Questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS version 27.0, employing descriptive and inferential statistics, including regression analysis, to determine relationships among variables. Ethical clearance was obtained from KEMU, NACOSTI, and relevant ministries, with informed consent and confidentiality strictly observed throughout the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

The study distributed 171 questionnaires to selected participants as outlined in the sampling framework. The response distribution is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Response Rate

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Distributed	171	100.0
Questionnaires Returned	165	96.5
Questionnaires Not Returned	6	3.5

Source: Field Data (2025)

The study achieved an exceptionally high response rate of 96.5% (165 out of 171 distributed questionnaires), significantly exceeding the 70% threshold generally considered acceptable in social research. This outstanding participation rate demonstrates strong stakeholder engagement and minimizes non-response bias, thereby enhancing the validity and generalizability of the findings. The high return rate reflects the effectiveness of the data collection strategy, including purposive sampling, structured follow-ups, and the relevance of the research topic to participants' professional experiences.

Border Security Enforcement Operations

The study examined how border security enforcement operations influence Kenya's national interests, with results presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Border Security Enforcement Operations

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intelligence sharing mechanisms have improved early warning capabilities	165	4.31	0.79
Installation of border surveillance technology improved detection of illegal crossings	165	4.25	0.87
Border control posts have effectively controlled movement of goods and people	165	4.18	0.82
Enhanced border patrol operations have significantly reduced terrorist infiltration from Somalia	165	4.12	0.91
Community-based border security initiatives have increased local participation in security	165	4.07	0.94
Border security operations have reduced arms and contraband smuggling	165	3.95	1.03
Joint border security operations with Somali forces have enhanced bilateral cooperation	165	3.78	1.15

Source: Field Data (2025)

The findings reveal that intelligence sharing mechanisms are perceived as the most effective component of border security operations ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.79$), underscoring the critical importance of information coordination in contemporary border management. The installation of surveillance technology ranks second in effectiveness ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.87$), demonstrating the value of technological solutions in enhancing border security capabilities. Physical infrastructure, represented by border control posts, shows strong effectiveness in managing movement ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.82$), while enhanced border patrols have successfully reduced terrorist infiltration ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.91$). Community-based initiatives demonstrate moderate but significant impact ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.94$), highlighting the value of civil-military cooperation in border management. However, joint operations with Somali forces show the lowest effectiveness score ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.15$), with the highest standard deviation indicating considerable variation in stakeholder experiences. This suggests challenges in bilateral security cooperation, potentially attributed to capacity constraints within Somali security forces and political tensions between the two governments.

C. Maritime Security Operations

The study assessed the influence of maritime security operations on national interests, with findings presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Maritime Security Operations

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Coordination with international naval forces has enhanced operational effectiveness	165	4.42	0.71
Joint maritime operations have contributed to regional maritime security	165	4.33	0.76
Maritime interdiction operations have reduced arms trafficking through sea routes	165	4.26	0.83
Naval patrols have disrupted Al-Shabaab maritime supply lines effectively	165	4.19	0.88
Port security measures have prevented terrorist infiltration through maritime routes	165	4.15	0.89
Coastal surveillance systems have improved maritime domain awareness	165	4.08	0.96
Maritime security operations have protected Kenya's fishing and tourism industries	165	3.89	1.08

Source: Field Data (2025)

Coordination with international naval forces emerges as the most effective maritime security component ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.71$), validating theoretical arguments about the superiority of multilateral maritime security cooperation over unilateral approaches. The low standard deviation indicates strong consensus among respondents regarding the effectiveness of international collaboration. Joint maritime operations significantly

contribute to regional security ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.76$), demonstrating positive spillover effects of Kenya's maritime engagement beyond national boundaries. Maritime interdiction operations effectively reduce arms trafficking ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.83$), indicating operational success in disrupting terrorist logistics networks. Naval patrols show strong effectiveness in disrupting Al-Shabaab supply lines ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.88$), representing direct impact on terrorist operational capacity. Port security measures effectively prevent terrorist infiltration ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.89$), demonstrating the importance of comprehensive maritime security approaches that secure both territorial waters and port facilities. The protection of economic interests shows the lowest effectiveness rating ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.08$), with high variation possibly reflecting differential impacts across coastal regions and economic sectors, suggesting that maritime security benefits may not be evenly distributed across all economic activities.

Peace Support and Stabilization Missions

The study investigated how peace support and stabilization missions influence national interests, with results shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Peace Support and Stabilization Missions

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
KDF participation in AMISOM has contributed to liberation of key Somali towns	165	4.38	0.74
Peace operations have improved Kenya's international reputation and influence	165	4.35	0.78
Stabilization missions have created buffer zones reducing cross-border threats	165	4.29	0.81
Peace support operations have enhanced regional security cooperation mechanisms	165	4.27	0.84
Civil-military cooperation has enhanced effectiveness of stabilization efforts	165	4.22	0.86
Peace support operations have facilitated establishment of Somali government institutions	165	4.11	0.92
Stabilization missions have addressed root causes of conflict in Somalia	165	3.67	1.21

Source: Field Data (2025)

KDF participation in AMISOM demonstrates the strongest impact ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.74$) through the liberation of key Somali towns, indicating clear tactical military success. Peace operations have significantly enhanced Kenya's international reputation and influence ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.78$), demonstrating important soft power benefits that extend beyond immediate security gains. Stabilization missions effectively create security buffer zones ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.81$), supporting defensive realist theories about threat mitigation through forward engagement. Enhanced regional security cooperation mechanisms ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.84$) indicate institutional benefits arising from Kenya's leadership role in regional security initiatives. Civil-military cooperation significantly enhances stabilization effectiveness ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.86$), highlighting the importance of comprehensive approaches that integrate military and civilian capabilities. Peace operations moderately facilitate government institution establishment ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.92$), contributing to broader state-building objectives. However, addressing root causes of conflict shows the lowest effectiveness ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.21$) with the highest variation among all measures, reflecting the inherent complexity of Somalia's underlying political, economic, and social challenges that military interventions alone cannot adequately address.

Achievement of Kenya's national interests

The study examined outcomes related to national interests' achievement, as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Achievement of Kenya's national interests

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
International interests' cooperation and partnerships have improved	165	4.44	0.73
Kenya's regional security influence and leadership have been enhanced	165	4.41	0.76
Public confidence in national interests' capabilities has increased	165	4.31	0.82
National interests' institutions have been strengthened through operational experience	165	4.28	0.84
Border security has substantially improved along the Kenya-Somalia frontier	165	4.23	0.86
Terrorist incidents within Kenya have significantly decreased due to military engagement	165	4.15	0.93
Economic interests have been better protected from security threats	165	3.97	1.01

Source: Field Data (2025)

International interest's cooperation emerges as the most significant achievement ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 0.73$), indicating that Kenya's military engagement has substantially enhanced partnerships with international actors and elevated the country's standing in global security frameworks. Enhanced regional influence and leadership ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.76$) demonstrates strategic benefits that transcend immediate security outcomes, positioning Kenya as a key regional security actor. Increased public confidence ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.82$) indicates that successful military engagement has enhanced citizen trust in national interests' capabilities and state legitimacy. Strengthened institutions ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.84$) reflect important capacity-building benefits derived from operational experience, while improved border security ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.86$) represents tangible security improvements along the Kenya-Somalia frontier. Decreased terrorist incidents within Kenya ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.93$) demonstrates positive domestic security outcomes, though the higher standard deviation suggests variation in local experiences. Economic interest protection shows the lowest achievement level ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 1.01$), indicating ongoing challenges in translating security improvements into quantifiable economic benefits.

Inferential Analysis

Model Summary

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	.847 ^a	.718	.712	0.7823

a. Predictors: (Constant), Border Security Enforcement, Maritime Security Operations, Peace Support and Stabilization Missions Source: Field Data (2025)

The regression model demonstrates strong explanatory power with $R^2 = 0.718$, indicating that the three military engagement variables collectively explain 71.8% of the variance in Kenya's national interests interest achievement. The high correlation coefficient ($R = 0.847$) suggests a very strong positive relationship between military engagement components and national interests' outcomes. The adjusted R^2 (0.712) confirms model robustness after accounting for the number of predictors.

ANOVA Results

Table 7: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	143.26	4	47.75	78.03	.000 ^b
Residual	113.18	160	0.612		
Total	256.44	164			

a. Dependent Variable: Achievement of Kenya's national interests b. Predictors: (Constant), Border Security Enforcement, Maritime Security Operations, Peace Support and Stabilization Missions Source: Field Data (2025)

The ANOVA results confirm highly significant model performance ($F = 78.03, p < 0.001$), indicating that the three military engagement variables collectively have a statistically significant impact on achieving Kenya's national interests. The high F-statistic demonstrates that the model explains significantly more variance than would be expected by chance.

Regression Coefficients

Table 8: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.623	0.287		2.17	.031
Border Security Enforcement	0.334	0.076	0.351	4.39	.000
Maritime Security Operations	0.298	0.082	0.312	3.63	.000
Peace Support and Stabilization Missions	0.287	0.078	0.308	3.68	.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

All three military engagement components demonstrate statistically significant positive relationships with national interests' achievement ($p < 0.001$). Border Security Enforcement exhibits the strongest individual impact ($\beta = 0.351$), followed closely by Maritime Security Operations ($\beta = 0.312$) and Peace Support and Stabilization Missions ($\beta = 0.308$). The regression coefficients indicate that a one-unit increase in Border Security Enforcement corresponds to a 0.334-unit increase in national interests' achievement, while equivalent increases in Maritime Security Operations and Peace Support Missions result in 0.298 and 0.287-unit increases respectively. These findings demonstrate that while all three components contribute significantly, border security enforcement has the most substantial individual impact on overall national interests' outcomes.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study examined Kenya's military engagement in Somalia through survey data from 165 stakeholders (96.5% response rate). Border security enforcement, maritime security operations, and peace support missions all significantly influenced national interests. Regression analysis revealed strong explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.718$), with the three variables explaining 71.8% of variance in national interests' achievement ($F = 78.03, p < 0.001$). Border security enforcement had the strongest individual impact ($\beta = 0.351, p < 0.001$), followed by maritime operations ($\beta = 0.312, p < 0.001$) and peace missions ($\beta = 0.308, p < 0.001$). International cooperation and regional influence showed highest achievement levels, while economic interest protection and addressing conflict root causes demonstrated lower effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Kenya's military engagement in Somalia effectively advances national interests through multiple complementary mechanisms. The intervention successfully enhances border security, disrupts terrorist operations, and strengthens international partnerships. Military engagement generates both direct security benefits and strategic dividends including enhanced regional influence and improved institutional capacity. However, success varies across components, with bilateral cooperation facing challenges and economic benefits remaining limited. The findings validate defensive realist theories about proactive threat mitigation while highlighting the importance of comprehensive approaches that integrate military action with diplomatic and development initiatives. Overall, military engagement represents a strategically sound investment in national interests.

Kenya should maintain comprehensive military engagement while prioritizing border security investments and international maritime cooperation. Enhance bilateral capacity building with Somalia to improve joint operations effectiveness. Develop integrated civil-military strategies addressing conflict root causes beyond

military solutions. Strengthen intelligence sharing mechanisms and surveillance technology deployment. Expand multilateral partnerships in maritime security operations. Establish clear metrics for measuring economic security benefits to better demonstrate intervention value. Invest in institutional capacity building to sustain operational gains. Balance forward defense strategies with domestic security requirements. Pursue diplomatic initiatives complementing military engagement to address underlying political tensions and enhance long-term stability.

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