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Causes of Intra-Clan Conflicts and Household Livelihoods in Kopsiro Division, Bungoma County, Kenya

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Abstract:

This study examined the extent to which intra-clan conflict among the Mosop and Soy clans of the Sabaot tribe has affected households' socio-economic development in Kopsiro Division. Intra-clan conflict among the Sabaot is scantily documented. Yet, the effect of those conflicts on the people's livelihood seems to be enormous. However, the extent which intra-clan conflicts among the Sabaot has affected households' livelihoods is not known. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the causes of intra-clan conflicts in Kopsiro Division, to examine the effects of intra-clan conflicts on the households' socio-economic status in Kopsiro Division, and to analyze the role of stakeholders in mitigating the intra-clan conflicts in Kopsiro Division. The study was guided by the collective action theory, which argues that when people are confronted with a common problem, they cooperate to pursue a collective action to achieve a solution especially when the solution cannot be gained individually. An exploratory design was used on a target population of 4260 households. A sample size of 351 household heads was selected. Purposive and simple random sampling was employed. An interview schedule, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, and observation were employed for data collection. This employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data analysis. The researcher found that land and land-related issues like boundary disputes were the main cause of the recurrent conflicts in the study area. It was also found that although conflicts in the study area affect both the Soy and Mosop people with both positive and negative effects, they have compromised their sources of livelihood. The study further found that although various stakeholders including the government, NGOs, religious groups and community elders play a major role in mitigating conflicts and managing of post-conflict situations, the government has the ultimate role to provide the long term solution to the conflict situation. It is therefore, the recommendation of the researcher that there is need for the government to extend its political will and commitment in providing a lasting solution to the persistent conflicts in the area; while involving all the stakeholders in the process. The residents of Kopsiro Division should also be educated on the need for cease fire because conflicts have largely affected their livelihood opportunities disregarding whether they are from Mosop or Soy clans.

1. Introduction

Conflicts within and between groups and nations is one of the major global crises that threaten human survival today (Coser, 2007). After the World War II and with the creation of the League of Nations that was then upgraded to United Nations, the assumption by the nations of the world was that countries would not witness another face of conflicts among and within nations. However, conflicts have persisted in various manifestations. Intra-clan conflict is an inevitable feature in plural societies. These conflicts may appear as a dispute on important social, political, economic cultural, religious, territorial, or lingual issues (Javaid and Hashmi, 2010). Conflicts are associated with violence, weakening of state institutions, a parallel economy, and periodic life-threatening situations for some population groups. A review of livelihoods approaches identified a need to better understand the problems faced by populations in conflicts, and the constraints they face in maintaining their livelihoods, and finding ways to support livelihoods (Schafer, 2002).

Some intra conflicts are associated with a continuous risk to lives, for example, those in Democratic Republic Congo and Angola (Le Billon and Bakker, 2002). In Somalia, between the early and late 1990s, political violence, food insecurity and diseases gave way to a situation characterized by depleted household asset bases, lack of social services and poor terms of trade (Le Sage and Majid, 2002).

This study is based on the premise that conflict is not just a sociological problem, but also an unfavorable condition for community development in the society. Consequently, places that experience armed conflicts tend to be destabilized in terms of their level of development to an extent that they become poorer than when there was no conflict. Similarly, analysis indicates that the magnitude and incidences of conflicts in the society is skewed and manifests in various parts of the world differently. Africa with about 11% of the world population represents the greatest burden of conflicts. The United Nations Security Council for instance observed that it spends not less than 75% of its time and money on conflicts and performing humanitarian duties in Africa than other parts of the world (Ashgate, 2008).

In Kenya, there has been various incidences of inter and intra-clan conflicts especially along the North- Eastern, Rift valley and Coastal regions of the country, which also host majority of the pastoralist communities in Kenya (KNHCR, 2012). These are also regions that lie along the polarized international borders through which small arms and light weapons from the warring neighboring nations like Somali, Ethiopia and Sudan find themselves in the hands of the pastoralist residents (Kimenju, 2004). Because of the cattle raids, inter and intra-clan conflicts over the use and access to resources and cross-border attacks, the gun is one of the favorite weapon in these area. Tana Delta killings that left over 200 people dead in 2012 and several villages brought to ashes through inter-ethnic feuds is a typical case of violent conflicts in Kenya (KNHCR, 2012).

This study conceptualizes intra-clan conflicts as those conflicts that arise within and between members of the same ethnic group. It may include factions, feuds and/or sectarian conflicts. This is the type of conflict that has severally and for a long time, been witnessed in Kopsiro Division in Mt. Elgon District. The conflict currently playing out in Mount Elgon District can be traced back to the colonial policy of alienating African land to create room for white settler farms. In the case of the Sabaot community, their ancestral grazing land on the extensive plains of what is now Trans-Nzoia District was taken away from them in the early 1930s without compensation (Simiyu, 2008).

Mount Elgon has a long history of conflict and inter-tribal warfare, manifested mainly as cattle rustling (involving the Sabaot and their Sebei cousins from Uganda, the Pokot, the Karamojong, etc). Indeed, accounts indicate that warfare has historically been imbedded in the landscape and cultural structure of the Sabaot community and that the territorial military organization was just as important an integrating factor of the community as were other sociological features like the tribal age-sets and the clans (Weatherby, 1962).

Before the recent conflict, the escalating violence accompanying the agitation for and re-introduction of multiparty politics in the early 1990s had been a particularly ominous occurrence. Then the conflict was attributed to ethno-nationalism in the context of competition for the control of the state. The Mount Elgon clashes then conformed to a general pattern of ethnic cleansing, or ethnic clashes that occurred throughout the country, in areas such as Molo, Olenguruone, Burnt Forest and Likoni.

The Sabaot of Mt Elgon also wanted to reclaim their land from migrants by evicting them. Many non-Sabaot, in particular Bukusu, had moved into the area in search of fertile agricultural land, which they purchased from the Sabaot, while others came from the neighboring Trans-Nzoia District and purchased land there or settled illegally along forest fringes (Simiyu, 2008). The first clashes between the Bukusu and the Sabaot occurred in November 1991. By early 1993 Sabaot warriors, helped by their Sebei cousins they hired from across the border in Uganda, had carried out several attacks against Bukusu, including torching their houses, taking over their land, killing over 24 people and injuring many more, and displacing over 2 000 people (Human Rights Watch 1993). In areas where the Bukusu dominated they reciprocated with revenge attacks against the Sabaot. By mid-1995, 6 500 families comprising an estimated 40 000 members had been displaced (Kenya Human Rights Commission 1996).

The history of violence has contributed to militarization of the area as local residents buy weapons either for self-defense or for carrying out operations of their own. This has been facilitated by a proliferation of Small Arms and Light weapons (SALWs) along the Kenya-Uganda border following many years of instability and war in Uganda. Such weapons were generally in circulation and because of the porous Kenya-Uganda border find their way into the Mount Elgon region. The implication of this was that any conflict situation in the area potentially escalated because both combatants and the tools of combat were readily available. In a strict sense, the proliferation of SALWs is both a cause and effect of the conflict

Tensions between the two Sabaot clans have revolved around claims that one clan is favored by the government in land allocation, with both clans accusing the other of this. In the mid-1960s the government for the first time established the idea of a resettlement land for the Mosop. The reasons for this were multifold: first, to protect the Mosop from the recurrent attacks by groups living in Uganda, and secondly, to absorb the Mosop better into government services, and thirdly, the Mosop had earlier inhabited a water catchment that the government wanted to preserve and protect. In particular, the Mosop were not happy with government decision to include the Soy in Chepyuk settlement scheme, which the Mosop consider as compensation for their more expansive Chepkitale land and as such have exclusive rights to it. Yet the minority status of the Mosop and their general marginalization means that decisions related to land allocation were often made by Soy leaders (Western Kenya Human Rights Watch 2004). The government allocated land to both groups in the ration of 3:2 for the Mosop and Soy respectively in phase one and two. However, in phase three, the ratio was 2:1. The Soy being the majority in population demanded a bigger share that the government did not honor. This is how the animosity and aggression between the two groups began (Mwasserah, 2008).

The peak of the animosity was between 2005 and 2008 when violent conflict erupted between the Mosop and Soy groups over allegations of unfair land allocation, which had earlier resulted in the formation of the Soy, dominated Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF). The SLDF was accused of killing more than 600 people and committing a variety of atrocities including torture, rape, theft and destruction of property (Makori, 2008). The SLDF's behaviour drew attention from the government that led to the military operation called 'Okoa Maisha' that led to the vaporization of the SLDF in 2008.

Proponents of the positive conflicts theory including (Cosser and Dahrendorf, 2003) postulated that conflicts can have both negative and positive effects on the society. They argued that although conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in human interaction, the negative elements of conflicts are not morally and socially approved because of their implications on the parties concerned.

As a social issue, conflicts in Kopsiro Division seem to have negatively affected development in the area. In terms of the settlement patterns, marriage patterns, occupation and the livelihoods of the residents. It is within this background, that this study sought to examine the extent to which a persistent intra-clan conflicts among the Sabaot influence livelihoods opportunities of the residents in the Division.

2. Statement of the Problem

Intra-clan conflict among the Sabaot is scantily documented. Yet, the effect of those conflicts on the people's livelihood seems to be enormous. However, the extent which intra-clan conflicts among the Sabaot has affected households' livelihoods is not known. Thus, the need for this study.

3. Objectives of the study

3.1. Broad Objective

The broad objective of the study was to investigate how intra-clan conflicts influence household livelihoods among residents of Kopsiro Division.

3.2. Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives

- To establish the causes of intra-clan conflicts in the Kopsiro Division.

4. Justification of the Study

The study was carried in Kopsiro division because there have been persistence conflicts among clans of the tribe (Sabaot as sub tribe of Kalenjins). In addition, literature on the causes and effect of conflicts in household livelihood in the areas is limited. The intra-clan conflict is one of the major social challenges facing development in Mt Elgon District. The study will be important in the sense that it will come up with recommendations aimed at addressing the problem of insecurity affecting the study area, which has also been attributed to the low level of harnessing the area's social and economic potential for development.

Many people have been reported injured during the ferocious attacks. Destruction and loss of properties have also been reported in the area involving burning of houses, looting, stealing and killing of livestock, raping of women and children, chopping of people's ears and lips. This has led to feudal animosities between groups living in the study area and thus, a threat to the general security since people do not live in trust with each other. Therefore, the study will provide information critical in understanding the effects of intra-clan conflicts on people's livelihoods and how these can best be addressed in the spirit of reconciliation and nationhood. The achievement of the Millennium Development Goal number two on the attainment of universal primary education by 2015 has also been made unrealistic; as a result of occasional, fears and tensions in the area due to insecurity.

All the above effects are likely to affect the socio-economic status of the communities in the area. Hence, given that the households are always forced to go back to the drawing board and start again to gather their livelihoods every time they experience intra- ethnic conflict, the findings of this research are expected to contribute knowledge on the latent causes of collective action and behavior that triggers intra-clan conflicts.

These may be used to harness manifest factors, which promote projects and programs that seek to resolve conflicts in the study area and beyond. Thus, beneficial to various community leaders, policy makers and organizations working in conflict management and sustainable peaceful co-existence of the communities in Kopsiro Division.

The study is important from a theoretical perspective because it will help fill a knowledge gap. The study will also provide empirical data-base for future study on intra-clan conflicts in Kenya.

5. Literature Review

5.1. Causes of Ethnic Conflicts (Inter and Intra-Ethnic)

There is no single cause for ethnic conflict. It is rather the result of interplay of a number of factors. Alemayehu (2009), Asebe (2007), Varshney (2002) and Wolff (2006) found that intra-clan conflicts are multidimensional and thus, caused by political, economic and cultural / historical factors.

5.2. Political Dimension to Conflicts

It is believed by many that political power can be considered as a vital factor for generating ethnic conflict. According to Wolff (2006), though one of the major causes of ethnic conflict in the Horn of Africa is competition over resources or the motive to secure access to resources, the struggle for power is the most important cause of ethnic conflicts when government policies and institutions, which distribute resources, are based on ethnicity.

Similarly, Medhine (2003) argues that government policies play a significant role in aggravating ethnic conflicts. There is a close interconnection between the politics of exclusion and violent ethnic conflicts. The direct reason for this is the exclusion from political power and rights. It is likely for ethnic conflict to arise whenever there is conducive condition for it. In connection with this, Vanhanen (1999) stresses that ethnic nepotism, measured by ethnic division, is a common causal factor behind ethnic conflict. Such a policy on ethnic nepotism leads to the development of the feelings of being excluded, ignored, and discriminated against by the effected group. African experience in the post-independence period is a case in point (Hussien, 2004).

Befikadu (2005) in his study was of the opinion that nation-states normally have an ultimate goal to be achieved explicitly or implicitly to form and preserve a single nation under one political structure or a country. Basically, they aim at bringing all the members of a state into a single national or ethnic origin or into one political structure. To this effect, they aim at merging those who are different but live in the area by assimilation into one nation (Befikadu and Diribssa, 2005). However, it is extremely difficult to assimilate everyone who is different from the dominant ethnic group.

Atware (2012) on his paper addresses the root causes of the Rwandan ethnic conflict from a historical point of view. This study was significant because it contributed to the understanding of the real causes of conflicts in order to effectively find a durable solution where he insinuates that there can be no durable solution unless the root causes of the conflicts are addressed. The conclusion brought out in the study was that the underlying factors of the ethnic conflict in Rwanda are basically related to inequality of access to natural resources that was inherent in a skewed control of power. Ethnicity in this case was a symptom of unresolved problems, inequitable access to natural resources, and appalling rural poverty. This was the same situation in the 2007/08, post-election violence in Kenya (Kriegler and Waki Reports, 2009), where historical injustices to communities manifested in inter-ethnic conflicts that almost brought down the country.

Earlier in 1997, Barasa in his study on the impact of past and potential ethnic conflicts on Kenya's stability and development attributed that recent and potential ethnic conflict in Kenya to leadership recognition that fueled inter-ethnic clashes. A recent study by Pkalya *et al.*, (2010) on conflict in Northern Kenya identified competition over the use, access to and control of water points and pastures as the main cause of conflict in the north eastern region. Nevertheless his study did not address issues of intra-clan conflicts.

5.3. *Economical Dimension to Conflicts*

Although political power is central, it alone cannot explain the root causes of ethnic conflict. Political exclusion should be combined with discriminatory economic policies and exploitation to produce ethnic tension. Tafesse (2011), in the same way, underlines the role of economic resources in producing ethnic conflict in the Horn of Africa. As to him, regardless of the form it may take, the real cause of ethnic clash in this part of Africa is the desire to secure access to resources in the country concerned. This is similar to the argument of Dereje (2010) that portrays economic insecurity leads to ethnic conflict where political power holders discriminate against some ethnic groups in resource distribution.

However, scarcity of resources may contribute to, but cannot be a decisive factor for, the emergence of ethnic conflict since various groups live together without falling into a violent clash even where there are no adequate resources. For instance, Flintan and Tamrat (2002) argued that many areas of Ethiopia are highly vulnerable to extreme ecological stress brought about by scarcity of resources. A study by Marie Besançon (2005) showed that economic equality and not inequality actually precedes the escalation of ethnic violence. This suggests that it is not necessarily resources or economic inequality that causes ethnic conflict. These mixed results are consistent with Nagel (2004), who finds that the inequality-discontent relation applied cross-nationally is inconclusive. Furthermore, the natural resources ethnic conflict connection is undermined as many nation-states both resource-poor and resource-rich have experienced ethnic conflict. However, this mixed result does provide enough evidence on economical dimension that cause conflicts.

5.4. *Cultural and Historical Dimension to Conflicts*

Cultural domination, together with political suppression, is considered as another source of conflicts. Weyessa (2011) observed that the development of ethnicity and ethnic conflict could not be examined narrowly from the economic or materialistic perspective alone. One should also consider the fact that differences in traditions, values, and the possible fear of suppression can lead to ethnic strife. In most cases, the objectives of the neighboring states, as Jeong (2000) argue, are more fanatic than just protecting the rights and interests of the minority. Its objective is rather to redeem or to liberate that minority group and the territory in which it lives possibly to annex it into its own territory. Such a goal and the setting of politics to achieve this invariably have an aggravating effect on minority-majority conflicts. By enhancing mutual suspicion and enmity, such an event often results in violence and sometimes even war (Jeong, 2000).

According to Befikadu and Diribssa (2005) Conflicts can breed more conflict. Particularly if groups have history of conflict or that they have experienced conflict among each other, it has an impact upon the current relations. In this regard Megera (2011) argues that conflicts can be instigated by the past history of conflicts between particular groups. Such history of the past may make it difficult to integrate different ethnic and religious groups successfully because of their past experiences.

Mazrui (2004) further asserts that most African conflicts are partly caused by borders, those conflicts are not themselves about borders, but political boundaries created by colonial powers enclosed groups with no traditions of shared authority or shared systems of settling conflicts. In utilizing the Minorities at Risk and State Failure datasets, Fox (2004), found that religion can be an important influence on conflict, has had an increasingly consequential impact on ethnic violence since the early 1980's, and religion based conflict tends to be more violent than other conflicts. Other studies by Fox (2004) show that religious grievances, religious institutions, religious legitimacy, and religious discrimination, among other factors contribute a great influence in ethnic conflict.

Smith (2005) argues that as society becomes divided into socially and politically significant corporate units, such as religion, and the distribution of power depends on the unit to which one belongs, the likelihood of collective violence increases. Furthermore, Rummel (2007) notes that when political power is centralized and highly dependent upon one's social group membership, such as religion, then collective violence is also highly likely in terms of guerilla or revolutionary warfare

6. Research Design

This study adopted an exploratory design, which focused on a single social phenomenon of intra-clan conflict within Kopsiro Division. The design allowed the use of qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection. The qualitative methods include historical approaches incorporating extensive use of written documents, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The quantitative method involved the use of questionnaires.

6.1. Population

The target population of the study was all households of Kopsiro Division who had lived in the study area for at least five years. This is because residents who had lived for at least five years would be in a better position to provide an evaluation about their experiences during the conflicts and how the conflicts would have affected their lives. Five years is the minimum standard time when assessing livelihood events (Neuman, 2000). The target population was drawn from four locations in Kopsiro Division namely, Chepyuk, Kapkateny, Emia and Changeiywo. This is because they were the victims of conflicts on one hand, and the aggressors on the other hand. Therefore, they were assumed to hold critical information on issues of interest to the study. However, the researcher also engaged key informants to collaborate information gathered, but they were not part of the target population. The total number of households in Kopsiro Division was provided in Table 1 below.

Location	Number of households
Chepyuk	1023
Kapkateny	1215
Emia	1006
Changeiywo	1016
Total	4260

*Table 1: Population Distribution in Kopsiro Division
Source: Kopsiro Division administrative office, (2013)*

6.2. Unit of Analysis

The units of analysis for this study were household heads. The focus on household's heads allowed the study to measure livelihood indicators based on the households' individual and collective life experiences. These included loss of property and members, living conditions, household structures/houses, number of people, roles, patterns of settlements, ethnic/clan representation, marriage, among other variables.

6.3. Sample Size

There are various methods and principle that guide the determination of a sample size in a research process. However, given the fact that the researcher had the number of the target study population, the study was guided by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to arrive at the sample size. According to the table, one uses the total population (N) in the current study to determine the corresponding sample size (n) that is already predetermined. In this study, the total population for households in Kopsiro Division was 4260.

The study further used proportionately sampling to calculate the sample size for each of the location illustrated in the Table 2 below.

Location	Number of households	Sample size
Chepyuk	1023	84
Kapkateny	1215	100
Emia	1006	83
Changeiywo	1016	84
Total	4260	351

Table 2: Household distribution per location

6.4. Sampling Procedure

In this study two sampling procedures were used. First, purposive sampling was used to select the key informants. It involved the researcher using her experience and the purpose of the study in mind to select the most desirable and knowledgeable members of the target population to participate in the study. This method was easy to employ, saved time and it allowed the researcher to concentrate on only those informants with appropriate information. Secondly, the study used simple random sampling to select household heads from which information was collected. This was specific for selecting respondents that would provide responses to the interview schedule. The method was useful because it allowed equal chances of participation by all household heads.

7. Data Collection Methods

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative procedures of data collection. The study used an interview schedule, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observation to collect data.

7.1. Focus Group Discussion

This method involved the researcher engaging in a face-to-face interface with a selected group of members of the study target population. The study had two focus group discussions - one with members of the Mosop community and the other with those of Soy community. The focus group discussion revolved around the various issues raised in the specific objectives of the study: causes of conflicts, effects of conflicts on the people's livelihood and the role of stakeholders in mitigating the conflicts; new questions were added to the interview where it was seemed necessary depending on the contribution of the respondents. This was mainly to generate qualitative data that was recorded through note taking.

7.2. Direct Observation

This method involves careful watching and recording of phenomena in the study area as guided by research objectives. During visits to the various households in the Division, the researcher observed their settlement patterns, educational facilities, activities they engaged in, living arrangements, economic activities, use of resources like land, type of houses and other conspicuous development assets. Detailed observation was important because it was used to verify some of the information produced during interview sessions. Observation was employed throughout during data collection and mainly produced qualitative data.

7.3. Validity and Reliability

The validity of instruments refers to whether the instruments measured the variable that is to be measured. On the other hand reliability means the instruments are in a position to be able to produce consistent results each time it's administered Mutai (1998). The study used the following procedure in assessing Content Validity. The researcher engaged supervisors to verify the content of the interview schedule by assessing the concept the instrument was to measure and to determine whether the set of items or checklist accurately represented the problem under study.

The study adopted the test – retest technique of assessing reliability of data as indicated by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). This involved administering the same instruments twice to the same group of subjects. There was a time lapse of two weeks between the first test and the second test. The variations were observed and corrections done appropriately.

8. Data Analysis

Once the questionnaires were collected by the researchers, they were coded and fed into the SPSS computer software Version 20 and analyzed. Initially data was checked for completeness, appropriateness, accuracy and relevance. Data were based on the objectives and research question of the study.

The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The two methods complemented each other in that, whereas quantitative provided the hard data need to meet the required objective of the study, the qualitative data provided an in-depth explanation on the discrete data. In qualitative analysis, the information collected through observations, focus group discussions and key informant interviews was summarized into descriptive narratives. The analysis was presented by use of quotes/excerpts and narrative descriptions. The researcher used themes to guide the descriptions. For instance social and economic effects have been clustered as themes of discussion in chapter four. This study was largely qualitative in approach.

Quantitative analysis involved derivation of statistical descriptions and interpretation of data by use of descriptive statistics that mainly relied on numerical values. Quantitative data was summarized and presented in the form of frequency tables, percentages, and means. The researcher relied mainly of descriptive statistics since much of the data was qualitative in nature. For instance percentages, frequency tables, and means have been used to summarize demographic data. The SPSS computer program was used to aid in summarizing the numerical data into frequencies and percentage values. The results from the two methods were later synchronized, interpreted and discussed.

9. Ethical Considerations

The process of carrying out this kind of study involved a lot of public interest especially for all the stakeholders concerned. It also touched on a sensitive matter of security and life experiences of the residents of Kopsiro Division. Therefore, various ethical considerations were factored in before and during the research process. The researcher sought a research authorization letter from the University. This was presented to the district commissioner Mt. Elgon District, who also gave another letter of authority for the study to commence.

10. Results

10.1. Causes of Intra-clan Conflicts on Household Social Economic Status

The first objective of this study was to establish causes of intra-clan conflicts in Kopsiro Division. During data collection, all the 351 respondents said that they had experienced conflicts.

After all the respondents saying that they had experienced conflicts in their area, the researcher was interested in finding out what were the specific causes of the same conflicts? The respondents were asked in an open ended question to name as many as possible causes as they could remember. Out of the 351 respondents, those who mentioned land as the main cause were 326(92%), politics were 262(74.6%), and boundary disputes 267 (76.1%) and land distribution were 302 (86%). This is summarized in Table 3 below.

Cause of conflicts	Frequency (n=351)	Percent
Land	326	35.9
Politics	262	31.6
Boundary disputes	267	23.1
Distribution of land	302	5.4

Table 3: Causes of Intra-clan Conflicts
Source: Field Data, 2014

Results in Table 3 show that land was mentioned the most, followed by distribution of land, boundary disputes and eventually politics. My analysis would simply cluster the responses into two main themes, land related issues and politics as the main causes of conflicts in the study area.

The theme of land has several explanations as to why it was mentioned the most. From the conflict background, it was evident that during the 1st resettlement of the Mosop Phase I, the exercise was faced with a lot of challenges. These included poor preparations, lack of title deeds as evidence of ownership and corruption that resulted in dissatisfaction among the Mosop and envy from the Soy.

The same problem remained unsolved in phase II and III. In addition, the long duration of those resettlement phases led to new problems mainly that the residents on the ground could not continue farming on the land because of the dispute and thus, had to seek other means to survive including business. This has been a major source of anger and discomfort especially among the residents who have been rendered jobless with no other stable sources of livelihood. According to a key informant, "...hii vita ilianza na mambo ya mashamba" (16th April, 2104)

Meaning, these conflicts started with land issues. The land issues included boundary allocation and distribution of title deeds to the new owners. Originally, the Mossop occupied a water catchment area, which the government wanted to preserve and protect thus, the reason for moving them to the settlement scheme in Chepyuk. During the allocation of Allotment letters in the latest resettlement, some people who had originally settled on the land missed out on the government list of the new land owners. This then prompted violent reaction from the aggrieved group. From that initial incidence, the recurrent conflicts have been a reflection of the 'original unfair distribution of land' that was instigated by the government of the time. Boundaries that emerged were also disputed and the whole process of land distribution appeared to favour one group at the expense of the other. Land was therefore, at the core – especially as a resource that the two clans have been fighting over.

Politics and politicians were also blamed as major causes of the conflicts. In fact, one of the discussants in key informants asserted that

"...wanasiasa watatumaliza. Wakati wa Ndizi na Na Chugwa ndio hii vita ilianza. Wenye hawakupiga yes walibaguliwa na wanasiasa wakati wa kupewa shamba. Ndio ukaona baadaye mwaka wa 2007 mapema Matakwei na wengine wakaenda mustuni kama kundi haramu kudai haki." (26th April, 2014)

The informant asserts here that politicians will finish the community. During the Banana and Orange campaigns for the new constitution, those who voted for Banana were discriminated upon by the local politicians who were for the Orange. The politicians reacted by now allocating land to only those that voted for the Orange. This is how youths led by Mr. Matakwei and Jason Kipsangeiywo (Laibon) went into the forest to fight for their rights as a terror group. Accordingly, politicians played two main roles: first, they funded youths that caused the violent conflicts and secondly, they openly discriminated upon those that did not walk their way. During interview sessions, one of the respondents said that

"...walikuwa wanapeana pesa kwanzia shilingi mia hadi mia tano kwa vijana ili wawashabikie." (26th April, 2014)

Meaning that politicians gave between one and five hundred shillings to the youths so that the youths would support them.

The researcher was also interested in knowing who the aggressor was during the violent conflicts. It emerged from the findings that up to the time of the study, there was still tension between the two Sabao clans. For the Soy clan, they blamed the Mosop, while the Mosop claimed that it was the Soy that aggressed against them. Thus, biased responses from the respondents and key informants were evident. During data collection, this was evident in their settlement patterns Phase one and two majority were Mosop while Phase three is divided equally. The researcher observed that most of the residents of Kopsiro Division were still displaced and did not have stable abode. What happened was that since 2008 when the government of Kenya had the military operation in the area, most of those residents that were displaced during that period have not been fully resettled. They therefore, reside in market centers in concentrated settlements mainly of people from the same clan.

When I asked why, one of the key informants said that

"...hapa tunakaa kama ndege. Wakati wowote kitu kinaweza tokea. Momi chomiet. Makeshindos pikap Mossop ak Soy wanakaa peke yao." (26th April, 2014)

Meaning that they stay like birds of the air. Anytime anything [insecure] can happen because the area is not safe. People don't trust each other and that is why the Mosop and Soy clan members displaced live in their respective groups and location without mixing freely.

When further asked to rank the specific causes of the recurrent conflicts, various despondences were recorded. Tension due to feeling of insecurity was ranked first, followed by unequal distribution of land resources, then land ownership and use, then political influence, boundary disputes, availability of arms, and poor governance.

Although the land and political issues have been discussed earlier, poor governance has not. Respondents asserted that the government through the local administration has not been fair to the two clans. Instead, they have been biased whenever they intervened and only involved in crisis management when the situation is out of hand. The government was also blamed for mismanaging the initial land allocation that has created the recurrent conflicts over time. In fact, one of the discussants observed that

"...ni serikali tu ndio itamaliza vita ikitaka." (26th April, 2014)

Meaning, it is only the government that can end the conflicts if it wishes. Thus, question the role of the government as we shall see in the subsequent section on the role of stakeholders. When further asked to rank the causes of conflicts, the following results were recorded as summarized in Table 4 below.

Cause of Conflicts (n=351)	Minimum (Strongly Disagree)	Maximum (Strongly Agree)	Mean	Rank
General insecurity	1	5	4.3	1
Unequal distribution of land resources	1	5	4.2	2
Land ownership and use	1	5	4	3
Influence from politicians	1	5	3.9	4
Boundary disputes	1	5	3.8	5
Availability of arms	1	5	3.7	6
Poor governance	1	5	3.2	7

Table 4: Ranking Causes of Conflicts

Source: Field Data, 2014

By interpretation of the findings in Table 4, the nearer the mean mark is closer to maximum (5) then it implies affirmative response. The *vice-versa* is true. According to the table, the general insecurity situation is the highest threat to peace. This was also confirmed during visits in many parts of the Division where, the researcher had to be escorted by some community leaders for security purposes. Similarly, the presence of military trucks was also eminent in patrolling the area. Insecurity was mainly exacerbated by unclear procedures of land allocation, land use and ownership, boundary disputes, influence from politicians and poor governance.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that land and politics dominate the underlying causes of conflicts in the study area. However, it is also clear that lack of proper management of the conflict has also made the conflict incidences to persist. In the following section, the researcher will now present the consequences of intra-clan conflicts on households in Kopsiro Division.

11. Summary of the Findings

This study was to establish causes of intra-clan conflicts in Kopsiro Division. It was found that conflict between the Soy and Mossop clans is feudal in nature, complex and has a long history. It was observed that each side of the two clans acknowledged the existence of conflicts that is widespread to the whole community. It was observed that land and land-related issues like land distribution and boundary disputes were the main causes of conflicts in Kopsiro Division. Politics and more specifically, politicians who take advantage of the existing land problems were the second major cause of the persistent conflicts in the study area. In fact, politicians fuel or ignite the conflicts for their own interests. Consequently, these have brought about a general feeling of mistrust and insecurity among the members of the two clans.

12. Conclusion

12.1. Theoretical Conclusions

In attempt to understanding the inter-clan conflicts and household livelihoods in Kopsiro division collective action theory was used. According to the collective action theory historical information and present day society reveal occasional, intermitted or incessant, spontaneous and fluid actions by different groups, for example, there have been riots, mass demonstrations and pressure for social change. This was a typical example of what the researcher found out in the study area. That, members of the two clans act in solidarity. For instance, for the Mosop blame the Soy and the *vice versa*, as the aggressors in the persistent conflicts. They also demonstrated solidarity in their settlement patterns and the way they accommodate those displaced by conflicts.

Marx was a proponent of conflict theory focusing on class struggle. As such, the proposition of the theory in this study is that collective action originates from mal-distribution of resources. Hence, collective actions is relatively fluid, unstructured, unpredictable and sometimes violent. This was also observed in the study. While addressing the first objective of the study, the

researcher found that land and land-related issues were the main causes of the conflicts. In fact, findings highlight boundary disputes in particular and irregular allocation of land to people that were not supposed to get, as the main causes of violent conflicts in the study area.

However, the researcher observed that given the mitigation effort that the researcher highlighted, not all the members of the two clans were acting in solidarity with their clansmen/women. For instances, religious organizations brought together pastors and elders from both clans to preach peace and reconciliation for the two clans. Therefore, the act of being neutral actors was vital in mitigating violence and managing post-conflict situation. This means that the theory then is limited depending on the individual roles of the members of the clans.

12.2. Empirical Conclusions

Basing on the findings in objective one, the researcher concludes that the persistent conflicts in Kopsiro Division are triggered mainly by factors from within the clans – particularly land-related issues, and partly, by factors beyond control of those clans, especially when the whole land issues is politicized and sides are taken.

13. Recommendations

This study has two sets of recommendations: the practical recommendations to address the practical and policy issues in Kopsiro Division, and the academic recommendations to address recommendations on further research to fill the missing links. This is handled under the following subsections:

13.1. Policy Recommendations

With regard to objective one of the study, the researcher recommends that:

- The government of Kenya should extent its political will to the people of Kopsiro Division by being committed to resolve the pending land-related issues in the study area and finalize the resettlement process. This with be important because:
 - It is mainly the government that has the absolute mandate, obligation and all that it takes to make the final decision on how to resolve the persistent intra-clan conflicts in the study area.
 - Those households that were displaced or are still unsettled will be settled
- Politicians should stop using the sensitive issues of land and land-related matters in pursuing their own political interests. This is because political interference has been cited as one of the main triggers of violent conflicts and corruption in Land allocation process.

14. Areas for Further Research

From the foregoing discussion, the researcher has established various research gaps that may be pursued by future researchers to create more knowledge and fill the existing gaps left by the present study.

- A similar study should be carried out in other communities that have experienced intra-clan conflicts and compare the experiences so as to gauge if the current recommendations can be replicated for adoption at the national level.
- There is need for an objective study to be carried out on the effectiveness of the mitigation strategies that were employed to end previous incidences of conflicts in the study area. This is because there were various outcries over the way the military and government treated the local residents in the process of mitigating conflicts.

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