CAUSES OF ARMED ETHNIC CONFLICT AND THE IMPLICATION FOR PEACE EDUCATION IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

Ngundo Lucy Wangechi
Email: luwange@gmail.com

Dr. Michael Njenga Njoroge
Email: mcnjoroge@yahoo.com

Dr. Emmanuel Manyasa
Email: emanyasa@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the causes of ethnic armed conflict in Nakuru County and the implication for peace education. The study objectives were to find out peoples’ experiences and constructions of armed ethnic conflict. The study adopted a case study using phenomenology research design based on qualitative procedures. The population of the study was ethnic communities in Nakuru County which included children, teachers, and parents, leaders and other stakeholders. The sample size comprised a total of 18 children, 9 Head teachers, and 18 class teachers for the study. It also comprised 18 parents and guardians for both male and female-headed households. Four instruments were used to collect data: an interview schedule, open-ended questionnaire, Focused Group Discussions and essay writing. Data collected was qualitative and its organization, analysis, and interpretation were guided by Hycer’s Explicitation Method. Findings revealed that land, politicians, and media were causative factors of armed ethnic conflict. The study therefore recommended government to resolve land issues, and that politicians and the media to be an instrument of peace and co-existence.

Keywords: Armed Ethnic Conflict; Ethnic Group; Constructions

Introduction

There has been a significant increase in the number of armed conflicts internationally over the last few decades, ranging from outright warfare to sporadic episodes of unrest and long term unstable post-conflict situations (Narayan, 2002). It is a new type of armed conflict, different from the more traditional wars between nations as these conflicts possess an ethnic dimension. The conflicts are also characterized by the privatization of violence, community self-defence groups, and paramilitary forces and above all, by ethnically based militia-combats who have no
regard for international agreements and protocols (Nathan, 2000). While the exact figures and classification of conflict varies, the developing world especially Africa is home to most armed conflicts occurring today and which take an ethnic dimension (Opongo, 2006). These armed ethnic conflicts can largely be attributed to the geographical distribution of politically active ethnic groups. The ethnic conflicts often involve violence and bloodshed since the groups involved are motivated. They believe that their very existence is at risk involving high perceived threats to basic values and that is highly probable if the political system is organized along ethnic lines and one group is dominant. The divergences of this fundamental identity manifest itself into an “us versus them” syndrome which is the basis of all armed ethnic conflicts. The result is widespread destruction of property, deaths and threats to education systems and lack of peaceful coexistence among different ethnic groups. To be more specific, armed ethnic conflict remains a scourge in African countries such as Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d’Ivore, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea.

Johnstone (2006) observes that different reasons for these conflicts have been postulated by different thinkers. For example, it is common to say that there is ethnic war in countries such as Rwanda or Angola, and that armed conflict occurring in Nigeria is caused by religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians. Even in the case of conflict in South Africa just before the 1994 elections, the factors were said to be political between parties of African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Other authors Collier (2000) and MacDonald (2007) argue that, conflicts in Africa are not ethnic but rather economic. However, Otunnu (2006) goes further to clarify that armed ethnic conflict in Africa is rooted in structural, economic, social, political and religious conditions and it is intimately linked to poverty, inequitable development and discrimination. Many developing countries are therefore locked in a vicious cycle in which, the multiplicity of these factors generate the desperation and fear which in turn lead to armed ethnic conflict. The ethnic armed conflicts are not without consequences as a study by World Bank (2003), on Breaking the Conflict Trap says that, conflict constitutes a major obstacle to the achievement of Education for All (EFA), Dakar Goal of ‘Primary Education for All’ by 2015 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially the sector goals of universal completion of primary education and achievement of gender equality in primary and secondary education.

According to a study carried out by Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM), (1999), armed ethnic conflicts in Kenya have a long and complicated history. These conflicts range from internal disputes between and within different groups to cross-border confrontations with groups from neighbouring countries. The armed ethnic conflicts in Kenya are further exacerbated by; the spill-over effects from the wider conflict in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, poor governance, poverty, competition for scarce resources and identity-based rivalries. Land and politics being the core of armed ethnic conflicts in Kenya can be traced to the multi-party politics in the 1990s. The Kenya African National Union (KANU), which ruled Kenya from 1963 to 2002, is widely associated with instigating violence targeting sections of the population affiliated or suspected of supporting opposition parties (Nystrum, 2000). The violent conflicts in Kenya are further complicated by easy access to Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) particularly in pastoral conflicts.
(Wamwere, 2008). According to Mkutu, (2008) more than 220 people were killed in the Rift Valley province since 2008. The violence also prompted almost 170,000 people among them children to flee to make shift camps, to friends and relatives elsewhere in the country, while others had nowhere to go.

Statement of the Problem, Methodology and Analysis

Armed conflict with its assault on people and institutions and its invariably debilitating aftermath, is the epitome of “development in reverse” (World Bank, 2003). Conflict blunts, and subsequently unravels years of hard-worn economic and social development. Armed ethnic conflict has become a problem in Kenya; the conflict has been Persistent in the Rift Valley Province and has become a recurrent feature of life especially during election times. It was noted that most of the studies carried out on causes of armed ethnic conflict have been outside Kenya (Machel, 2001) with little effort being made to specify ethnicity as a root cause of conflict and therefore the need for peace education. Studies have also ignored local constructions and people's experiences of ethnic armed conflict. The purpose of the study was to examine causes of armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County and the implication for peace education. Its main objective was to determine how different ethnic communities in Nakuru County constructed armed ethnic conflict.

The study adopted a case study approach using phenomenology research design based on qualitative procedures. The aim of phenomenology is to return to the concrete, captured by the slogan” back to the things themselves”. “Things” refer to the world of experience as lived by the people (Creswell, 1998). Nakuru County was chosen as a case study. It was assumed that a case study of one county would enhance the understanding and give deep insight into the causes of armed ethnic conflict and the implication for peace education.

The researcher sampled Njoro, Kuresoi and Molo Constituencies. Nakuru County was chosen because it has had a history of aggravated incidences of armed ethnic conflict from 1991 to 2008. It also represents a good ethnic mix of the Kikuyu, the Kalenjin, Kisii, Ogiek, Luo, Luhyia and other ethnic groups. The target population of the study was the total population of about 6836 families in Njoro, Kuresoi and Molo districts in Nakuru County. This included 35 primary schools in Njoro, 33 in Kuresoi and 18 primary schools in Molo. The target population also included 88 head teachers of the primary schools in the three divisions. The target population also comprised 70 teachers of the class eight children in Kuresoi, 68 in Njoro about 65 in Molo. The population also included, 30 church leaders, 20 opinion leaders, and 15 authority figures in the area and about 5000 class eight children in all the primary schools, represented in Molo, Njoro and Kuresoi in Nakuru County. It is from this population that the sample was drawn.

Sampling Techniques

The study purposively selected Nakuru County and Njoro, Kuresoi and Molo as the districts from which to derive the primary participants for the study. The study used simple random sampling through the raffle design method to select 9 primary Schools 3 in every division as
its sample. The researcher purposively selected upper primary class eight and using the raffle design method, a total of 18 children was used for the study. The study also chose by default 9 Head teachers, 18 Class teachers and 18 parents. The study also purposively selected opinion, religious and important community leaders in the area for key informant interviews.

The instruments used for data collection in the study presented qualitative data. Formatting was done and included translations of some transcripts into English. The researcher had then to read and re-read the transcripts in order to uncover and group broad themes that prevailed in the data based on the research questions and objectives of the study. Analysis was done with the aid of a computer and using Theory-building software, ATLAS. The themes that emerged was explained with the use of simple descriptive statistics and the final result was a general description of the phenomenon as seen through the eyes of people who experienced it firsthand. The study also employed some quantitative analysis which was manually done and presented on tables, frequencies and percentages.

**Theoretical Framework**

Conflict is endemic in society and it is therefore important to learn how to manage it properly since it has been conceptualized by World Bank (2005) as “development in reverse.” The analysis of conflict in this study was done according to local constructions of ethnic conflicts and the implication for peace education in order to reduce or bring to an end the ethnic conflicts investigated. With that perspective in mind, the researcher based the study on conflict theories. Burton (1990) has explored the link between inter group conflict and the realm of basic human needs, identity, recognition, and survival. He argues that conflict is deeply rooted in unmet or inadequately fulfilled basic human needs of the parties and their individual members. According to Azar (1990), protracted social conflicts represents prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for basic needs such as security, recognition, acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation. He stresses that many multi-ethnic society states emerge which are dominated by a single communal group. This group (or a coalition of groups) ignores the needs of other communal groups thereby breeding exasperation and polarization. Lederach (1997) points out that internal conflict build around identity groups living in close proximity. They often erupt as expressions of accumulated pain with marked emotional and psychological patterns of institutionalized hatred and division. The conflicts are characterized by deep-rooted intense animosity, fear and severe stereotyping. Lederach (1997) further states that conflict causes division among groups based on fear of survival, victimization, divisive political rhetoric, myths of differences and boundaries. An “us” versus ‘them’ dichotomy develops along ethnic lines. These dynamics, driven by real-life experiences and subjective perspectives and emotions, render national and mechanical processes and solutions aimed at conflict transformation not only ineffective but also irrelevant and offensive. The theory is relevant to the study because politics, competition for resources, ethnic rivalries and unfulfilled needs are some of the root causes of ethnic conflicts in Kenya.
A Historical Overview of Armed Ethnic Conflict in Kenya

Kenya has emerged as a nation characterized by armed conflict in many of its Provinces. The approach of the national general elections every five years brings back memories of deaths and instability in the Rift Valley Province and in many of Kenya's other provinces. According to a study by Gettleman (2012), before the advent of multiparty in 1991, no clashes had been witnessed between the local communities in the Rift Valley. They co-existed peacefully until the bad seed of hatred was planted among them. Both at national and local level, politicians, MPs and civic leaders used historical land issues and ethnicity to whip up communities against each other and raise more votes and violent clashes between ethnic groups erupted across the country from 1991 to 2008.

Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNHCR) (2012), further established that, conflict started when opponents of ex-president Daniel Arap Moi claimed he exploited factional violence through competition over land and ethnic patronage to bolster his own power and to discredit a multi-party approach to politics that was restored in 1991 and in 1992, an estimated 2000 people died and 20,000 were made homeless in ethnic clashes in Western Kenya. According to Nystrum (2000), violence stemmed from determination on behalf of KANU leaders to maintain one party governance. As several politicians and church leaders called for an end to one party rule, KANU leaders, especially from Kalenjin and Maasai communities responded with calls of majimboism (ethnic regionalism) which among others called for all outsiders in the Rift Valley to return to their “motherland”. This perpetuated a cycle of violence and areas that bore the brunt of the clashes included; Kamwaura, Londiani, Sitoito, Temuyota, Enoosupukia and Tipis in Narok. The clashes continued even after the elections in 1993 in Kondoo Farm, Kiruka and Kaptagat areas in Burnt Forest. In Laikipia, there were mass killings of people, displacement and closure of schools.

In 1993, fighting in the Rift valley between the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu killed 1,500 people, displaced about 300,000, and led to closing of schools which affected the education of children in the Rift Valley province (Kimani, 2009). Foreign observers accused authorities of pursuing a policy of ethnic cleansing in the fighting. Ethnic clashes were especially violent due to the availability and use of small arms, as well as erosion of traditional tribal power structures (Wamwere, 2008). In 1997, Moi was reelected president for a five year term in chaotic and highly contested elections as local communities turned against each other. Hundreds of people were killed and houses torched, schools were closed as clashes erupted in Njoro, Ndeffo, Mau Narok, Tipis and Likia in Molo constituency. Violence then spread to Nakuru municipality just after 1997 general elections, sparked by the government's decision to hive off part of Mau forest into a settlement scheme (Oyugi, 2000).

Mt. Elgon district and parts of the North Rift have also been prone to armed conflict during each election year. From 2006 to 2008, Kopsiro division in Mt Elgon remained volatile with the violence threatening to spread to neighboring district. Mt Elgon clashes have been linked with the 3rd phase of Chebyuk settlement scheme land allocations and politics. The future of pupils in 104 primary and 25 secondary schools in the district remained uncertain and more worrying, was the anxiety experienced by the pupils and students with regard to their sitting for
the KCPE, KCSE and end of term exams to promote them to the next class (KNHCR, 2012). Laikipia West, a settlement area where people from various parts of the country bought land through Mitukanio and Laikipia west farmers land buying companies is another area of conflict in Kenya. The cosmopolitan constituency has over the years, witnessed sporadic attacks on people's homes by armed bandits for Livestock theft further aggravating the bad situation. In places like Sipili and Ol Moran, a number of homesteads were deserted as owners fled due to insecurity as violent skirmishes locked the areas for 5 months leading to the closure of 11 primary schools in 2007 (Yamano & Peininge, 2005). Fighting in Liki Nakuru county about 250km northwest of Nairobi erupted in July, 23, 2007 when the Rift Valley Landowners and Protectors Army issued leaflets with warnings that they were ready to fight for their rights till the last drop of blood was shed. In May 2007, 162 people were displaced, five people including two children were killed, 15 houses and schools burnt down in nearby Kuresoi (Kimani, 2009).

The Waki Report (2008) in the Post-Election Violence (PEV) in Kenya reveals that a total of about 1550 people died as a consequence of PEV. The geographical distribution of death was unequal with most of the PEV deaths concentrated in the provinces of Rift Valley (744), Nyanza (134 and Nairobi (125) and counties like Uasin Gishu (230), Nakuru (213) and Transzioia (104). The report further said that a total of 5,561 people suffered injuries resulting from sharp pointed objects, 1229 blunt objects, 604 soft tissue injury, 360 gunshots and 557 arrow shots. There were 2671 burns, 164 assaults and a total of 117216 private properties and 491 government properties destroyed.

Infighting in 2008 can be divided into three categories: first, the post-election violence that involved the Kikuyu tribe, the Luos and the Kalenjins. The Mungiki sect, a group largely eliminated in 2007 was revived to defend the Kikuyu culture. They engaged in violence throughout 2008. Secondly in Laikipia district, fighting between the Turgens who were aligned with the Turkana and the Kikuyu continued. Additional fighting in the district involved other tribes specifically Masaai, Pokot and Samburu (KNHCR, 2012).

Finally in the Mt Elgon region, the government forces continued their crack down on the Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) and both groups have been accused of perpetration of human rights abuses and torturing civilians. The SLDF has also been implicated in forcefully recruiting children to fight (Yamano & Peininge, 2005). However, the research document does not tell us how PE can be used as a remedy for armed ethnic conflict. Following this analysis it is apparent that conflict in Kenya plays out through three spheres of authority: The traditional where authority is exercised through customary or traditional law and therefore, conflict among a pastoralist tend to occur within, and is regulated by this sphere. Similarly conflict in the post election period was partly inspired by, and rationalized through this sphere. Another is the civil sphere where authority is governed by 'civil law'. For the most part, conflict in Kenya avoided this sphere and more so because, within this sphere, violent conflict has attracted international attention following the signing of the Rome treaty establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC) in July 2002 (UNDP, 2009). The predatory sphere which is partly a creation of the proliferation of the small and light weapons, and democratization process of the 1990s is another sphere. Carjacking, SALW--related urban conflicts, and commercialized livestock are some types of the predatory sphere of conflict. As a result of the inter-related nature of the
three spheres of conflict, responses tend to be inadequate. This has allowed the drivers of conflict to overlap the three spheres in order to maximize their opportunities (UNDP, 2009). This study sought to find out the local constructions around armed conflict in Kenya and recognize the positive elements of the traditional sphere, but discourage resort to it as a way of justifying violent conflict.

**Local Constructions of Armed Ethnic Conflict**

The nature of armed conflict dictates that, fighting takes place where people live, rather than on a battle ground. If the roots of a conflict lie in ethnic hatred or resentment, all members of the ‘despised’ group including children become vulnerable, not just the combatants representing them (Mani, 2002). According to Narayan (2002), armed conflict is a mechanism of social transformation that may originate either in competing claims over resources, power, or in conflicting cultural or social values, and is often aggravated by low levels of human security. Sommers (2002) also said that ethnic, religious or other group differences often characterize current conflicts, but this is only part of the picture. In fact, the root causes are usually found in the competition for resources and often in the struggle for power and influence.

Certain characteristics are common to many or most of the armed conflict regions in Africa, Kenya included. These regions experience multiple forms and levels of conflict concurrently where armed conflict begins at the local level with a minor dispute that spirals out of control. In most of these affected areas, it is not continuous but sporadic, and shifts from one area and one community to another leaving behind a devastating negative impact on social, economic and political structures (Sommers, 2002). The proliferation of small arms, which is fuelled by illicit trade, intensifies the violence where groups and individuals operating outside the reach of government make intensive use of unsophisticated weaponry, small arms and explosives that are often homemade. Their availability contributes towards exacerbating conflicts by increasing the lethality and duration of violence (Cohen & Deng, 2002).

The shrinking natural resources; pastures and water, triggered by environmental degradation and erratic precipitation patterns in the pastoral areas of Kenya over the last few decades has also led to a competition over these resources causing armed ethnic conflicts. Again, the marginalization and neglect of pastoralists' communities by the regional governments, poor infrastructure, and lack of social services like education and health care, the resultant poverty and ignorance among the communities also make them more vulnerable to misuse by politicians who would want to make use of them to gain political mileage out of conflicts (Fisher, 2002). These forms of conflicts are relatively persistent and may continue for many years and yet they are believed to produce comparatively few casualties which is not so. Levels of violence especially police, criminal, inter-personal and domestic are also extremely high in many parts of Kenya. In Kenya, the year 2008 saw an estimated 1800 killed in violence and an additional 600,000-700,000 who were displaced as a result of the election violence but also as a result of the tribal violence (UNDP, 2009). The present study sought to determine the constructions around armed ethnic conflict and the effects on education in Kenya as it is an area greatly ignored.
Consistent with thematic analysis of data, all ideas discussed in this chapter emerged from the data obtained through interviews, open ended questionnaires, FGDs and essay writing. Data collected was qualitative in nature and the analysis of data presented in this study involved reducing accumulated data to a manageable size, developing summaries, and looking for patterns and discovering what is important and what is to be learned.

In regard to data collected by the researcher on respondents' constructions of armed ethnic conflict and the implication for peace education, responses from the participating teachers' open ended questionnaires', FGDs from parents, and interviews from important community, opinion and religious leaders from the different ethnic communities were summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Land as a Local Construction of Armed Ethnic Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>HT N=9</th>
<th>T N=18</th>
<th>FGDs N=3</th>
<th>OL N=9</th>
<th>CL N=9</th>
<th>RL N=9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kuresoi</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>4 22.2</td>
<td>1 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molo</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>5 27.7</td>
<td>1 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td>2 22.2</td>
<td>6 33.3</td>
<td>1 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>2 22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1 11.2</td>
<td>3 16.8</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9 100</td>
<td>18 100</td>
<td>3 100</td>
<td>9 100</td>
<td>9 100</td>
<td>9 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 revealed that, from the 9 Head Teachers (HT) sampled, in the three Divisions, 3 (33.3%) from Kuresoi, 3 (33.3%) Molo and 2 (22.2%) from Njoro responded that land disputes was the main cause of armed ethnic conflict between the different ethnic groups in Nakuru County. However, there was no response from 1 (11.2%) of the Head teacher from Njoro. Of the 18 Teachers (T) sampled from the 3 divisions, 4 (22.2%) from Kuresoi, 5 (27.7%) from Molo and 6 (33.3%) from Njoro also pointed out disputes over land ownership as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. Two (11.2%) teachers from Kuresoi and 1 (5.6%) from Molo had no response. From the 3 (100%) Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) in the 3 divisions, the researcher gathered wrangles over land ownership as respondents' construction of armed ethnic conflict. The above views by the respondents were supported by 3 (33.3%) opinion leaders (OP) from Molo, 3 (33.3%) from Njoro and 3 (33.3%) from Kuresoi who pointed out that historical disputes over land ownership caused armed ethnic conflict amongst the different ethnic groups in Nakuru County. The Nine (100%) community leaders (CL) from the three divisions also revealed that land was a cause of armed ethnic conflict. Three (33.4%) religious leaders (RL) from Kuresoi, 2 (22.1%) from Njoro and 3 (33.4%) from Molo constructed land disputes as a cause of armed ethnic conflict between the different ethnic communities living in Nakuru County. There was no response from 1 (11.1%) religious leader in Njoro. Further discussions
with respondents revealed that, those purported not to be originally from Rift Valley Province were regarded as visitors and were expected to return back to their “motherland”. An opinion they greatly opposed since they believed that the land they occupied was legally theirs as they or their parents had bought it. According to John, a community leader from Molo, the main cause of armed ethnic conflict was and had always been land. He said:

*Some of those who originated from Nakuru told us to go back to our motherland where we came from.*

Joseph, a religious leader from Kuresoi supported that belief as he said:

*They said historically, they were the rightful owners of the land and we came to steal their resources, the elections were only used as a pretext for ethnic tension.*

Annabell, an opinion leader from Elburgon said the conflicts of 2007 and 2008 were pre-arranged even before the election results were announced. She revealed:

*This was hard because I was born in Elburgon. My parents bought this land, therefore, this land is legally mine. I cannot go anywhere else, I will also defend my land I will fight back with everything I have.*

The excerpts suggested that members from the different ethnic communities in Nakuru County constructed historical disputes over land ownership as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. This could be an indication that due to the conflicts over land ownership, peaceful co-existence among the different ethnic groups had been affected over the past years. That finding agreed with Wamwere (2008) who said that aspirants to political office harp on the high value attached to land to woo a support base, often deliberately or craftily inciting communities against each other over land ownership. For instance the 1992 and 1997 conflicts in Kenya were motivated by the ruling party Kenya Africa National Union (KANU) to remain in power following incitement by politicians and political parties formed along tribal lines with great devastation on the country’s resources (Wamwere, 2008). However, the World Bank (2005) supported the researcher’s assumption that PE can have a key role in conflict prevention especially if it is taught to the young people in schools. World Bank (2005) further said that it is the young generation who have room for attitudinal change and are more accommodative to change. The researcher delved more to find out from the respondents if there were other local constructions of armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County and the implication for peace education. The responses are summarized in Table 2 below:

*Table 2: Politicians Influence and Armed Ethnic Conflict*
Division HT T FGDs OL CL RL
N=9 N=18 N=3 N=9 N=9 N=9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>HT %</th>
<th>T %</th>
<th>FGDs %</th>
<th>OL %</th>
<th>CL %</th>
<th>RL %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kuresoi</td>
<td>2 22.2</td>
<td>5 28</td>
<td>1 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molo</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>5 28</td>
<td>1 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>6 33</td>
<td>1 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>3 33.3</td>
<td>2 22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1 11.2</td>
<td>2 11</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>2 11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9 100</td>
<td>18 100</td>
<td>3 100</td>
<td>9 100</td>
<td>9 100</td>
<td>9 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 2, 2 (22.2%) Head teachers from Kuresoi said that tribal leaders and politicians were behind the armed ethnic conflict. Three (33.3%) Head teachers from Njoro, 3 (33.3%) from Molo also echoed incitement by politicians as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. One (11.1%) Head teacher from Kuresoi had no response. Five (28%) teachers from Kuresoi, 5 (28%) from Molo and 6 (33%) from Njoro also concurred with the responses given as they said that tribal leaders and politicians instigated the armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County. The teachers said that it was carried out through hate speeches directed towards a certain ethnic group. One (5.5) teacher in Kuresoi and 1 (5.5%) in Molo did not give a response.

Based on responses from the interviews 3 (33.3%) opinion leaders from Kuresoi, 3 (33.3%) from Njoro and 3 (33.3%) from Molo said politicians and tribal leaders caused armed ethnic conflict. Three (33.4%) religious leaders from Kuresoi, 2 (22.1%) from Njoro and 3 (33.4%) from Molo also constructed politicians and tribal leaders incitements as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. One (11.1%) religious leader in Njoro had no response. The 3 (100%) FGD's from the 3 divisions also brought out politicians utterances as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. Further discussions with respondents revealed that politicians were believed to fuel conflicts as they turned community members against each other in order to garner more votes during government transitions. The respondents said that, during government transitions the politicians engaged in name calling. They condemned other tribes and engaged in war cries and community members responded and hit back at one another. During the interview, John a religious leader from Kuresoi said:

*There was political poisoning of the minds of communities through hate speeches by politicians so that they could take advantage of the conflict to acquire more votes.*

To further support the findings, Mary an opinion leader from Kuresoi also said that politicians were the main tools in planning and carrying out decisions related to conflicts. Extracts from the teachers questionnaires' also revealed that politicians were behind the armed ethnic conflicts. The following is an example of a report from the writings of James, a teacher from Mawingu primary school who wrote that some politicians refused to agree with the presidential results of 2007, and they formed ethnic based groups to fight others and refuse the outcome of the elections. He also wrote that politicians always came every election year to stir trouble among the different ethnic groups. From the three FGDs in the three divisions, parents also revealed that politicians influenced people to fight. Jane, a parent from Elburgon in FGDs revealed:
Before elections, we are all friends but when the elections are on the way we start fighting. We are told the other group is our enemy. Then they leave. We should stop the fighting because we are the ones who suffer as our children do not attend schools.

From the above results, there was an indication that, community members constructed incitement by politicians and tribal leaders for political and retrospect economic gain as cause of armed ethnic conflict. Due to the armed ethnic conflict, there was lack of a peaceful coexistence among the different ethnic community members in Nakuru County. According to Blumar & Buttlan (2008) from literature reviewed, Peace education would help instill a culture of peaceful resolutions to conflicts that might help prevent armed ethnic conflicts occurrences in the future.

The researcher probed more from the respondents as to whether there were other local constructions of armed ethnic conflict Nakuru County. The various respondents were; 3 (33.3%) Head teachers from Kuresoi, 3 (33.3%) from Molo and 3 (33.3%) from Njoro brought out the theme of deep rooted jealousy that ran over decades over economic empowerment of one community over others as another local construction of armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County. Six (33.3%) Teachers from Kuresoi, 6 (33.3%) from Molo and 6 (33.3%) from Njoro in the open ended questionnaires' also brought out the theme of deep rooted jealousy as a cause of armed ethnic conflict among different ethnic groups living in Nakuru County. The 3 (100%) FGD's of parents from the divisions of Kuresoi, Molo, and Njoro also had the construction that deep rooted jealousy that ran over decades among different ethnic groups living in Nakuru County was a cause of armed ethnic conflict. Three (33.3%) opinion leaders from Kuresoi, 3 (33.3%) form Molo and 3 (33.3%) from Njoro also brought out deep rooted jealousy as a cause of armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County. The nine (100%) important community leaders and 9 (100%) religious leaders also revealed that deep rooted jealousy among different ethnic groups in Nakuru County caused armed ethnic conflict. As further probing by the researcher revealed, some ethnic communities' members were believed to be doing better than others economically and this lead to suppression of ethnic identity leading to retaliation.

The attacks were barbaric, callous and calculated to drive out the targeted groups from their farms, to cripple them economically and to psychologically traumatize them as reported by Jonathan a religious leader from Njoro.

Nine (100%) Head teachers from the three divisions, all 18 (100%) teachers, and all the 9 (100) opinion leaders construction past unequal treatment by the justice system and impunity against those who committed atrocities against a particular ethnic group as another cause of armed ethnic conflict. The 3 (100%) FGDs also concurred with the respondents by pointing out that impunity on the side of the government had fueled the conflicts. Eight religious leaders and 9 (100%) community leaders echoed the other respondents opinion that impunity on the side of the government had caused people to fight as they felt justice had not been carried out in regard to the earlier atrocities committed by perpetrators of violence.
The researcher sought further from the respondents the relationship between armed ethnic conflict and the media in Nakuru County. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

### Table 3: Armed Ethnic Conflict and the Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>HT N=9</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>T N=18</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>FGDs N=3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>OL N=9</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>CL N=9</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>RL N=9</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kuresoi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.4</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 showed responses of 3 (33.3%) Head teachers from Kuresoi, 3 (33.3%) from Molo, and 3 (33.3%) from Njoro who said that the media fuelled and further aggravated armed ethnic conflict. Six (33.3%) teachers from Kuresoi, 6 (33.3%) from Molo and 6 (33.3%) from Njoro also believed that the media aggravated conflicts between the different ethnic groups. Three (33.3%) opinion leaders from Kuresoi, 3 (33.3%) from Molo and 3 (33.3%) from Njoro also constructed the Media as a cause of armed ethnic conflict between the different ethnic groups living in Nakuru County. Two (22.2%) community leaders from Kuresoi, 2 (22.2%) from Molo and 2 (22.2%), from Njoro also accused the media of causing conflict. However, 3 (33.4%) community leaders from the three divisions' one from each had no response. However that did not affect the findings since majority 6 (66.6%) of the community leaders had the same opinion of the media as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. All the religious leaders from the 3 divisions also constructed the media as a cause of armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County. John, a sub-chief from Molo recollected:

"We woke up the following day after elections to find leaflets strewn all over and written in our mother tongue telling us to fight for our rights."

From the above analysis of finding of the first objective of the study, there was a conclusion that different ethnic groups constructed historical disputes over land ownership, incitement by politicians and tribal leaders through hate speeches and negative media influence as a cause of armed ethnic conflict. The respondents also said deep rooted jealousy stemming from economic empowerment of some groups over others and impunity by the justice system as causes of armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County. Due to those factors constructed as causes of armed ethnic conflict, there might have been lack of peace education taught among the community members to counter armed ethnic conflict in Nakuru County. That conclusion of finding concurred with World Bank (2003) which pointed out that peace education can help to reduce economic, social, and ethnic polarization, promote equitable growth and development, and build a culture of dialogue rather than violence among different communities.
Conclusion

From the foregoing findings of the study, the following conclusions were made: Disputes over land ownership, politicians’ incitement, media influence and deep rooted jealousy among the different ethnic groups had caused armed ethnic conflict and threatened peace in Nakuru County.

Recommendations

The Kenyan Government, through NGOs, CBOs, Religious Organizations and other Civil Society Groups provide civic education to different ethnic communities living in Kenya on Article 61 of the Kenyan Constitution which specifically states that all land in Kenya belongs to the people of Kenya collectively as a nation, as communities and as individuals. Therefore a Kenyan citizen can legally own land anywhere in Kenya. That knowledge can help prevent recurrent historical land disputes which have led to armed ethnic conflicts. The study recommended that the government through the judiciary prosecute and bring to justice politicians, tribal leaders or other persons found to be inciting different ethnic community members over others for leadership and political gains. That is in line with the Bill of Rights which says that the right to freedom of expression does not give anyone the right to use hate speech. The media should be responsible and act as guardians of democracy as well as defender of public interest, revealing abuses of state authority and defending the democratic rights of citizens.

References


