

Citation: Mukoshi, L & Hamasi, L. (2022). Women, Patriarchy and Conflict Resolution in Turkana County, in Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 6(6), 18 – 33.

Women, Patriarchy and Conflict Resolution in Turkana County, in Kenya

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Abstract

Women have been socialized for peace building at the informal level where their role as peace builders is being recognized, most of their activities took place through grassroots organizations due to their lack of access to formal participation since they still lack support. This marginalization hinders efforts to build sustainable peace and achieving stability for communities in the country. The study focused on women from Nawuiyapong in West Pokot and Turkana Lorengippi in Turkana County communities on the migration corridor in North West part of Kenya. The objectives of this study were to: assess the contribution of the women in conflict resolution in Turkana County, examine the strategies women used in peace building initiatives and identify the various ways to curb the challenges faced by women in peace building in Turkana County. The study utilized the Feminist Standpoint theory. The study employed qualitative research technique. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the study sample. The target population included 122 people of various levels. The analysis of data was using basic descriptive narrative. The data collected was analyzed and processed using various statistical tools like the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to generate descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages as well as inferential statistics such as one sample t-test and linear regression to test for the relationship between the dependent and independent variables at 95% confidence level. Thematic analysis was however used to analyse the gathered qualitative data. The study established that women in Turkana County contributed to conflict resolution through numerous ways like educating for peace at the grassroots as well as lobbying and advocacy for the equitable distribution of resources. The study also showed that women had specific strategies like mobilization, lobbying and gender sensitization for engaging in peace-building within the County. However, it also showed that there were largely excluded from peace and security processes in Kenya and the world at large despite their efforts in preserving social order. The study lastly established that women in Turkana County used numerous ways to curb the challenges they faced. The study concludes that even though women contribute to conflict resolution, this contribution is however dismal. It is therefore, the recommendations of this study that the government and other stakeholders find ways of helping women from Turkana County in their efforts to engage in peace-building initiatives.

Key words: conflict, peace process, gender, participation, Turkana

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Introduction

Women represent an untapped resource in conflict resolution all over the world. Biased perception of women as ultimate targets of war bypasses their major contributions to conflict resolution and misrepresent the complex reality experiences of women in conflict situations. Women are victims, as well as fighters. Women's participation, victimization and plight during and after conflicts have been a cause of major concern worldwide (ACORD, 2013). During the second Bonn summit on Afghanistan in December 2011 there was a solitary female on the public society representative and an amazing 33 percent of the administration designations were ladies. Subsequently, ladies were frequently at the focal point of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), well known challenges, democratic referendums and other national engaging developments whose impact developed with the worldwide spread of democratic system globally today.

Peacebuilding conferences in Somaliland, in Borama and Sanaag (1993) and Hargeisa (1996), would not have taken place without the collective lobbying of women pressurizing the elders to intervene to end the conflicts. But despite their efforts, and confirmation from religious leaders the Islam offered no grounds to include them, women did not participate in the talks themselves, they acted as helpers in fundraising and cooking. After exerting pressure on their clansmen, only ten women were allowed to observe the peace talks in Boroma in 1993 and eleven were allowed to observe the 1996 Hargeisa Conference, but had no voting rights.

Women also utilized principal mediators help to gain and play a role in Kenya's 2007/2008 post-election skirmished. For instance, the principal mediator United Nations representative Kofi Annan who was by then the Chairperson of the Panel of Well-known African Personalities, together with Graça Machel, oversaw the inclusion of womenfolk's in PEV negotiations (PPGEWR, 2014). These principal negotiators were instrumental in invigorating womenfolk to formulate commendations for the amity management in the County which they did and handed to the dialogue and conciliation board responsible for conferring the conditions of amity settlement in the aftermath of PEV in Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of including women and women's voices in peace negotiations and in long-term political processes is increasingly accepted. Research shows that women are deeply committed to peace building and have a unique perspective and a solid understanding of the needs of their communities. Women tend to have more inclusive leadership styles which promote consensus in negotiations. Women are adept at working across divides whether they be religious, ethnic, political or cultural. Women have access that men don't, for example, to other women, and are seen to be less threatening and tend to be influential within their families and their communities. The state of insecurity in Turkana has affected women and girls greatly as victims. Seifert (1993) says that conflict in most pastoral communities is associated with violence meted out upon women and girls. Turkana County conflicts are the resource-based mainly over grazing areas, water points, boundaries, urban expansion, and the fencing of livestock passage routes, conservancies and refugee camps. Individuals who are mostly affected by clashes in Turkana constitute mostly of family members not directly

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involved in the conflicts, who are trying to make ends meet in their less developed County, as opposed to the culprits involved in the conflicts. As the conflicts rapture, mothers and kids run away from households to avoid being killed, violated or abused by the assailants. Religious houses, police stations and tiny dwellings of their distant families and friends in the safer regions yet nothing has been done to give solution to the often occurring conflicts.

Few specifically documented women's experiences in conflict and peace processes, emerging issues and opportunities for their participation in the building and maintenance of peace (UN Women, 2015; Chopra, 2008). As such, the current study wishes to explore women experiences in the process of conflict resolutions within the County of Turkana. According to Siebert, (2009), many of these peace-building initiatives, focus mainly on men leaving out women. This is because village elders, peace committee members and opinion leaders are the ones who make decisions about war and peace.

The massiveness and detachment of the area, poor road networks and scarcity of resources goes hand-in-hand with gaps in security, leading to frequent conflict episodes among pastoral communities in the Turkana region affecting both men and women differently and seen as marginalized and underdeveloped. Often, male delegates dictate the shape and form of negotiations while women remain in the conference venue as observers and as pressure groups ensuring that any challenges that would cause a break-up are promptly dealt with.

The study therefore focused on whether or not women in Turkana County were involved conflict resolution at both County and Sub-County levels and how or why they were involved.

General Objective

To assess the extent of women's contribution in conflict resolution in Turkana County, Kenya

Research Hypothesis

H₁: There is no relationship between women's contributions and conflict resolution in Turkana County

H₂: There is no relationship between strategies women use and peace building in Turkana County

H₃: There is no relationship between ways women use to curb challenges and peace building in Turkana County

Review of Related Literature

Women have a long history of establishing out universally to accomplish harmony and security around the world. Their endeavors to advance harmony regularly occur separate from prescribed frameworks of army basic leadership with universal resolution of dispute. Women have never been essentially visitors at the negotiation table since they assume noteworthy roles like soldiers, followers of battling powers and mediators which guarantees them a position at the negotiation forum including a functioning job in execution and strategists.

In 1952 the Iraqi Women's League (IWL) founded literacy hubs centering on education of women and fortified their participation in the political arena via public societies and in 1958 the Kurdish Women's Federation (KWF) that concentrated on countrywide freedom and Kurdish self-sufficiency was established. The two organisations reinvigorated

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involvement of women in policymaking and advocated for women's socio-economic entitlements. IWL successfully crusaded for bylaws that empowered women, academic and employment rights as well as rights to inheritance after the 1958 revolt. Henrizi (2015) observed that after the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States of America, it was possible for women to use the created hybrid opportunities to tackle safety matters, endeavor to overwhelm intolerable philosophies and include long-lasting standpoint of change process.

The Mass action organized by Liberian women for peace in Africa indicated, this as the most profound way that women could use the informal process to inspire change. More than 150,000 people in Liberia lost their lives as a result of the first and second civil fight. At least 40% of those engaged in the combat constituted children with sexual violence being used as weapon against women as has been witnessed in many conflict situations. Women led movements were established in most of the regions in the Country that reinforced its support base and facilitated sharing of information and organizing peaceful rallies.

UN Women, (2014) noted that Zimbabwean womenfolk came up with a decree demanding for not less than 30% membership in governments decision-making, lawmaking and legal divisions at the April 2011 International Conference on Women's political and Economic Empowerment and Peacebuilding before signing of the amity accord. At both national and local levels women engage in peace initiatives, for instance, at communal levels, they partake in village-committees, women's groups and religions that enhanced more customary amity resolution. Zimbabwean womenfolk always partake in events that enhanced communal healing and appeasement, they advocated and pushed for individuals' entitlements and matters of gender disparities (UN Women, 2014; Rukuni, Shanyisa, Madhuku & Maxwell, 2016).

In Sierra Leone, Florence (2011) examined the role of women in conflict management and observed that most of their contributions and roles were to a large extent overlooked or unappreciated by the patriarchal society they lived in despite DDR being amongst the most fruitful disarmament endeavors ever recorded, women's participation in the exercise was dismal as they were viewed as victims than active participants in the skirmishes. At the beginning of 1995, The Women's Movement for Peace (WMP) established with the sole task of settling skirmishes via non-violent arbitrations. The group conducted mobilization of women across the nation to partner in order to make an impact by agitating for amity with the NPRC administration and others. They did everything by making sure their involvement drew global and national attention.

Wangari Maathai was active in the National Council of Women of Kenya in 1976 to 1987 and was its chairman in 1981 to 1987. It was while she served in the National Council of Women that she introduced the idea of planting trees with the people in 1976 and continued to develop it into a broad-based, grassroots organization whose main focus was the planting of trees with women groups in order to conserve the environment and improve their quality of life. However, through the Green Belt Movement she assisted women in planting more than 20 million trees on their farms and on schools and church compounds. In 1986, the Movement established a Pan African Green Belt Network and exposed over 40 individuals from other African countries to the approach. Some of these individuals established similar tree planting initiatives in their own countries while others used some of the Green Belt Movement methods to improve their efforts. So far some countries successfully launched such initiatives in Africa such as Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Lesotho, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. In September 1998, Wangari Maathai launched a campaign of the Jubilee 2000 Coalition. She embarked on new challenges, playing a leading global role as a co-chair of the Jubilee 2000 Africa Campaign, which sought cancellation of the unpayable backlog debts of

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the poor countries in Africa by the year 2000. Her campaign against land grabbing and rapacious allocation of forests land caught the limelight in the recent past.

In North Rift, North East Africa region, Kennedy (2016) studied pastoralist skirmishes, leadership and illegal guns and observed that escalating violent animal thefts caused security problems resulting from large number of fire arms in animal dependent societies of Karamoja, West Pokot, Baragoi, and Dol Dol Mukogodo. Escalation of pastoralist related violence and skirmishes have been as a result of drought and lack of drinking water for pastoralists and their livestock. Poor leadership has been the main cause of conflicts between farmers and herders whenever drought occurs in the region as there close to no government security centres in the communities which has given rise to illegal outfits of armed individuals comprising of youngsters controlled by warlords and state actors. Guns and other modern weapons only make the conflict worse but are not the cause of these pastoral conflicts causing injuries to 5000 individuals in a span of one and a half year in Nakapiripirit

In the County of Turkana, commonly known as women advocates, have played a significant role in lobbying men (both young and elderly) into making a commitment to determinations made in the course of peace negotiations. To show how serious they were, women initiated a resolve to be attending assemblies by the elders in the community, in order to put more pressure on the leaders to commit themselves to peace resolutions. Unlike other women born from pastoralist regions, who are not known for being negotiators in the peace process, Abdia, 30, endeavors to keep on preaching for various groups in Northern Kenya to have peace due to the non-stop inter-ethnic fights between the Somalis, Samburu and sparring Turkana as well as conflicts about water and pasture. Abdia constitutes some of the women that have established women peace discussions which tried to intervene between the conflicting groups to enhance empowerment of womenfolk in Turkana Region.

Theoretical Framework

This research was guided by the theory of Feminist Perspective which as advanced by Nancy Hartsock 1983 who utilized Hegel's philosophies of rulers and servants and Marx's views of social standing and capitalism for motivation to study issues related to coitus and sex category. Feminist standpoint theorists observed that specific social as well as political ranks held by womenfolk can be used as avenues of wisdom and therefore fruitful beginning positions for query into inquiries concerning both those who are socially and politically underrepresented, as well as those who play the role of persecutors.

In the continent of Africa, the adopted supposition has fueled a social faction where womenfolk are familiarized to broadcasting media to expedite intellect so as to enhance understanding of their encounters and struggles and aid more womenfolk recover and gain closure. This theory was relevant to my research topic as it explained how women face serious constrains resulting from existing social structures and relationships but at the same time women always have some room for choice and negotiation. Naila, (2005) established that empowerment of womenfolk definitely poses the ability to cause constructive variation in womenfolk's livelihoods, however, social associations manage retrieval of resource in contention capable of influencing the rate at which women's capacities are attained in the case of Turkana women. Women around the world are now organizing around peace issues including reporting human rights violations, demonstrating against war, conducting peace talks, peace marches and other awareness rising initiatives. Studies have shown that around the world, women have been able to build bridges of reconciliation and dialogue in polarized societies.

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The proponents of this theory assert that Turkana women’s contribution is important and critical for peace to be achieved and sustained. Further, they submit that in most societies around the world, women represent an important bridge between peace and conflict. For instance, as the first teachers of children, they can instill peace values in them, which will in turn benefit the entire community. This study was grounded on the assumption that women’s participation in conflict resolution is vital for sustainable peace, hence, this theory was pertinent.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework highlights relationship between variables in the study

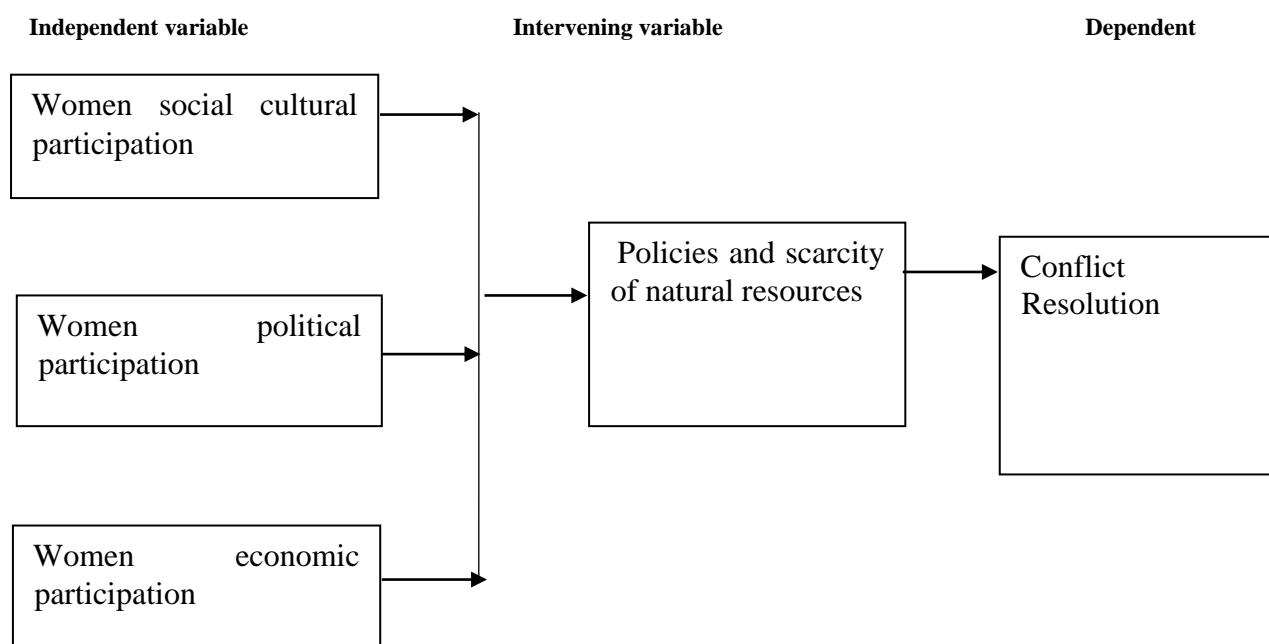


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher 2019

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design whose major aim was to describe in detail how women were involved in the resolution of conflicts in Turkana County including the conflicts encountered. The data collected and methods used were largely qualitative in nature in order to focus on personal experiences. The target population was women’s group leaders, Women Group Chairpersons, Local chiefs and their assistants, members of Kraal peace committee, women and youths.

The study required the researcher to sample a small number of participants, gathered from their natural setting and a comprehensive study conducted (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, Purposive sampling was adopted for the study. Purposive sampling was utilized to find cases that enhanced learning about the involvement of Turkana women in the conflict resolution in Turkana County Turkana Central Constituency. In this case, women who were involved directly or indirectly and who witnessed the process of conflict resolution were contacted.

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The study specifically comprised of 122 members as the representation of 60% of the Turkana County population. This was necessary because the technique gave all people a chance of being selected into the sample. The respondents include local chiefs in Turkana Central; members of Kraal Peace Committees; as well as members of the public both men, women and youths.

Primary data was collected using interview schedules and questionnaire. The questionnaire tool had both structured and semi-structured questions. The interview guide consisted of open ended questions in order to obtain desired results regarding how women had been involved in resolution of conflicts from data that was obtained in Turkana County. Narratives data were collected using interview schedules. The above design was preferred since it enabled the researcher to interact with the affected groups of people and thus get deeper insights of the women participation in conflicts resolution.

The questionnaire utilized in this research was structured to have questions with choices provided for the respondents only. Participants were expected to pick from a list of offered responses in each question. The instrument had queries that exhaustively covered all the stated research objectives on this study. This tool was used to aid in collecting data from those participants who were learned and had adequate time to fill in questionnaire.

The study utilized this tool to gather responses from participants who were too busy to fill in questionnaire in the study area. It was mainly through face to face where the researcher sat down with the interviewee, asked questions and interviewees answers noted down in a piece of paper. The instrument was designed to and collected only open ended data. This process only took place on the days and time the respondents felt they had time to sit down and talk. The tool collected information that addressed the research questions.

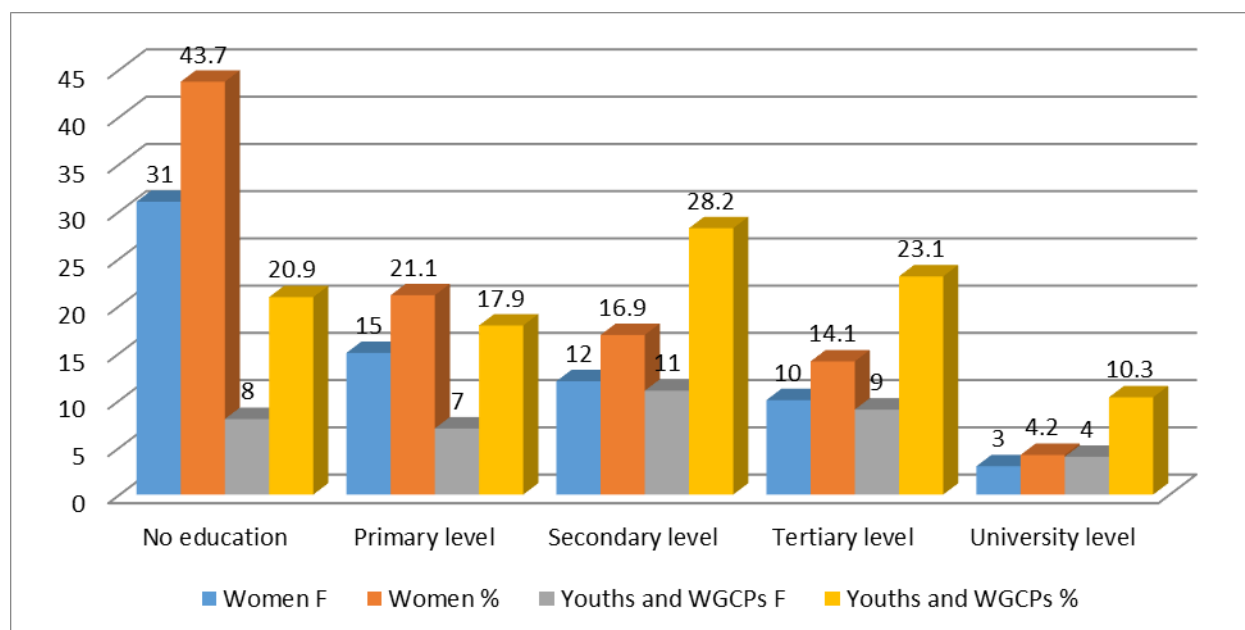
Study Findings

In this section the analyzed data is presented as demographic characteristics of participants, contribution of the women in conflict resolution in Turkana County, the strategies women use in peace building initiatives and ends with ways to curb the challenges faced by women in peace building in Turkana County.

Distribution of Participants by Highest Level of Education Attained

Information was also gathered from Turkana women, youths and Women Groups Chairpersons on their highest level of education and results presented in table 1.1 below;

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Source: Field data 2019

The figures above imply that majority of the respondents were literate and thus they were in a position to respond to research questions comfortably.

Most of these women have hardly gone beyond primary education and have very limited or no training at all. Some women activists however, have completed secondary school and they have received training to improve their knowledge and skills of peace related issues through seminars. Lack of education prevents women’s organizations from engaging on constructive development. It also limits women’s access to established NGOs in terms of attracting resources.

Contribution of the Women in Conflict Resolution in Turkana County

When mobilized, women play an important influencing role in local peace processes, especially if they have wealth, are related to clan elders or come from a respected family. In response to one conflict, elderly women from several clans approached the leaders and demanded a cessation of hostilities. Their message was simple: “We have had enough displacement in our lifetime and at this age we can’t tolerate it anymore” Women’s contributions in peace building was however found to be low due to gender roles.

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Level that Women Mainly Engage in Peace and Conflict Resolution in Turkana County table 1.2 below

	Women		Youths and WGCPs	
	F	%	F	%
Local level	48	67.6	23	59.0
County level	13	18.3	10	25.6
National level	10	14.1	6	15.4
Total	71	100.0	39	100.0

Source: Field data 2019

These findings implied that in Turkana County, women generally had the chance to contribute to conflict resolution at the local level followed by the County level. Women have for decades participated in peace building at different levels and not just community levels and this include as peace builders in international scenes through the United Nations and at national levels as well which supports the current study findings as well.

The findings implied that women in Turkana County contributed to conflict resolution through numerous ways hence were active in conflict resolution exercises. On the other hand, Lisa and Women perform key responsibilities in peace building processes, for instance, as peace advocates as well as activists, they engage in non-violent confrontations by fighting for human rights and democratic space. Further, in this capacity as well as aid personnel, they contribute to lessening direct physical aggression. As mediators, distress alleviation therapists and policy formulators, they toil to alter relations and tackle the stem of conflicts. According to Akinyi (2017), womenfolk's from the tribes of Kipsigis and Luo were willing to face consequences for opposing their husbands in order to prevent war, they were highly vigorous in operative deterrence, short period, directed approaches to restrain or overturn intensification during conflict and chiefly in prompt alerts and response endeavors. In some instances, the women denied their husbands sex to force them to keep away from the battle fields and because of this, majority of men from Luo and Kipsigis stepped away from the battle fields. Women together with religious organization started sports in order to create more avenues for bonding and unity. Grassroots women peacemakers embraced a 'merry-go-round' tactic to help casualties of ethnic conflicts by having Harambee every week or month to donate money or food items. The women exploited these meeting by further praying for amity and counseled their fellow women who have suffered from skirmishes by helping them move on from the past negative outcomes of skirmishes.

In her study, Akinyi (2017) found that between the two communities, in the 1992 ethnic conflicts, a number of womenfolk led organization were established to nurture amity, these groups conducted unity outings pre and post ethnic skirmishes. The Rural Women Peace Link established in 1992 participated in assimilation conflicting clans via customary conflict resolution approaches; they also visited conflict affected areas and gave meals to casualties of skirmishes as well as share amity messages with them. Women monitored the progress in cases they placed at the hands of government officials and demanded for progress updates. Kipsigis and Luo Ladies founded alliances and arranged a meeting festivity at Sondu Market, they cooked and ate from the same plate and made it clear that after sharing meals from the same plate they should not fight one another as the deities would curse them with ailments and even death.

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The study gathered data from the interviewees on ways in which women contribute to conflict resolution in Turkana County and established that women participate in conflict resolution through public sensitization on dangers of violent conflicts, backing indigenous procedures for resolution of conflicts, advocating for compromise, advocating for peace through inter-communal marriages, finding homes for the orphaned and bringing up their children as responsible members of the community.

From the qualitative data, women from Turkana County generally contribute to peace building through inter-communal marriages, giving shelter to war orphans, and bringing up morally upright children, the study also showed that they contribute through public sensitization, supporting indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms, advocating for compromise and finding a solution to conflict acceptable by all and lastly they also contribute to peace building by participating in disarmament. The results therefore showed that women contribute to peace building in Turkana County using numerous means hence their contribution is significant.

Strategies Women Use in Peace Building Initiatives in Turkana County

The specific strategies employed by women in peace-building involved holding meetings and choosing the prettiest girl of marriageable age to give to the opposing clan as a token of peace and using older women who can no longer conceive as peace envoys to scout conflict affected areas and bring reports. Women generally facilitate contact and communication between the two warring parties in order to help them find amicable solutions and also monitor conflict on a daily basis in order to stop more violence.

Women from Turkana County participate in formal peace building processes by giving their opinions and suggestions on the best solutions to conflicts, protest against the harm that war caused to the entire community and also stop their sons from being recruited or involved in the conflicts.

Therefore, based on the qualitative data gathered from the interviewees, women centered strategies adopted by Turkana County women in peace building are intermarriage, employing older women as peace envoys, facilitate contact and communication between warring parties and monitor conflict daily and lastly, they gave views on best solutions in conflict, held protest against effects of war and ensured their sons were not recruited into participating in conflicts. Hence, women in Turkana County have numerous strategies they adopt and employ in peace building within the community.

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Women’s Responses on the Specific Strategies that were being use in Peace Building Initiatives, table 1.3 below

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Holding meetings and intermarriage for peace	26	36.6	22	31.0	6	8.5	9	12.7	8	11.3
Older women are used as peace envoys	27	38.0	28	39.4	4	5.6	7	9.9	5	7.0
Facilitating contact and communication between opponents	27	38.0	15	21.1	12	16.9	8	11.3	9	12.7
Monitoring conflict on a daily basis	40	56.3	13	18.3	4	5.6	4	5.6	10	14.1
Participating in formal peace building processes	35	49.3	7	9.9	8	11.3	8	11.3	13	18.3
Protesting against harmful war effects	25	35.2	21	29.6	8	11.3	8	11.3	9	12.7
Stop their sons from being involved in conflicts	28	39.4	30	42.3	3	4.2	10	14.1	0	0.0
Creating non-violent strategies	24	33.8	15	21.1	6	8.5	26	36.6	0	0.0
Establishing women peace committees	20	28.2	26	36.6	11	15.5	14	19.7	0	0.0

Source: Field data 2019

According to Roslyn, et al. (2017), Women in Myanmar have used back-channel discussions and personal relationships to elevate the voices of other women in the formal peace process. Though still underrepresented, they have made substantial gains in the Civil Society Forum and in social sector discussions of the Panglong Peace Conference, and some women play key advising roles to the ethnic armed organizations that are negotiating peace. Women who are engaged in the formal peace process share information to women in CSOs, enabling them to stay abreast of peace dynamics and to effectively mobilize for women’s participation.

Crusades that garner extensive backing and unite womenfolk from several tribal, academic and spiritual settings have also been widely used by womenfolk in Burundi to add more influence to womenfolk’s opinions in amity process (PPGEWR, 2014). Events could involve countrywide amity processions and writing civic mails to the leadership of the County as in the case of Burundi or nationwide mass media and unofficial advocacies where women protested that they do not give birth to male children to join or start conflicts in Colombia and the Philippines.

Ways of Curbing Challenges Faced by Women in Peace Building in Turkana County

The study revealed that lack of resources among women seriously undermines their peace efforts. Women’s desire to participate in peace building is bedecked by slow entrenchment and lack of full implementation due to partly discriminatory practices in traditions, cultures and policies. Lack of education and access to information negatively affected women participation in sustainable peace building. Cultural practices such as women’s role of

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bearing children; gender insensitive approaches to peace building, association of women with domestic spheres among others negated women involvement in sustainable peace building.

However, based on the gathered qualitative data, ways women in Turkana County used to increase their participation in peace building included gender empowerment and sensitizing the community on importance of women in peace building in barazas and community gatherings, inclusion of women in peace and conflict management and educating the girl child and lastly, working together with law enforcement and using local media houses to advocate for women's roles in peace-building. It is therefore clear that women in Turkana County are resourceful and have come up with ways of dealing with challenges they face in their efforts to participate and contribute to peace building in their communities and have come up with various ways of increasing their participation in peace building initiatives within the community.

Youths and Women's Groups Chairpersons Responses on Ways Women use to Curb Challenges they face in Peace-Building Processes, table 1.4 below.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gender empowerment	21	53.8	11	28.2	7	17.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sensitizing the community on importance of women in peace building	21	53.8	12	30.8	6	15.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Inclusion of women in peace and conflict management	23	59.0	11	28.2	0	0.0	5	12.8	0	0.0
Educating the girl child	29	74.4	10	25.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Working together with law enforcement	24	61.5	12	30.8	0	0.0	3	7.7	0	0.0
Registering peace committees	18	46.2	5	12.8	5	12.8	7	17.9	4	10.3
Using local media houses to advocate for women's roles in peace-building	29	74.4	10	25.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source: Field data 2019

Damilola (2010) further established that women groups organized a wide range of activities, including workshops on non-violent conflict resolution, a forum gathering women from different ethnic backgrounds, uniting women from the Diaspora and women living in the country to discuss strategies for national reconstruction. The Dushirahamwe [Let us reconcile] network succeeded in bringing together displaced and refugee women, with the aim of identifying obstacles to peaceful cohabitation within the country.

Conclusion

The results of the study showed that women in Turkana County generally contribute to conflict resolution to a moderate extent, this contribution include sensitizing the public on the dangers of conflicts, backing indigenous approaches to resolution of conflicts, advocating for compromise, working together endeavoring to discover an answer that fulfills the two parties' worries, advocating for peace through inter-communal marriages, burying the dead, finding homes for the orphans, bringing up their children as responsible members of the community,

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spiritual healing rituals are done by women to purify and cleanse the war returnees of blood guilt and also through peace committees that were active in disarmament processes. The roles of women have evolved throughout the decades of conflict while women were once considered inviolable, the advent of war eroded norms of protection as women came to be seen as legitimate targets in protracted cycles of tribal attacks and retaliation. Today, there are signs that women are viewed as legitimate, even preferred targets. While many act as conscious or unwitting provocateurs to inter-tribal violence, others act as peace advocates, primarily women roles in times of conflict are those of family protector, victim, and survivor. Women acquired new status, skills and power through taking new responsibilities that challenged existing norms as they engaged in income generating activities, conflict resolution and literacy campaigns initiatives.

In Turkana County, women had specific strategies used in peace-building initiatives. These strategies were however found to be mainly moderately effective in peace-building initiatives. The results also showed that women held meetings and chose the prettiest girl of marriageable age to give to the opposing clan as a token of peace, used older women who can no longer conceive as peace envoys, facilitated contact and communication between the two warring parties, monitored conflict on a daily basis in order to stop more violence, participated in formal peace building processes, protested against the harm that war has caused on the entire population, stopped their sons from being recruited or involved in the conflicts, created non-violent strategies, such as dismantling fighting group bases without the use of force in order to get armed groups out of their areas and also established women peace committees.

Women activities range from public forgiveness, trauma healing, reconciliation and peace through sports among other activities. Although women are actively involved in post-conflict peace building their participation in the formal peace process is wanting because women are still marginalized by traditions and other challenges.

When it comes to challenges, women faced numerous challenges while engaging in peace-building exercises, for instance, they were faced by animosity between peace committees, limited rich of women's peace committees, non-recognition of women based peace committees by men and community elders, gender biased conflict management processes, women's voices being ignored in peace making processes, gender roles, lack of government support, traditions and culture of the community and lack of resources by women were all challenges found to be facing women's contributions in peace building in Turkana County Kenya.

Various ways were also found to be used to curb challenges women face in their peace-building efforts and these included the fact that they faced in peace-building through gender empowerment, sensitizing the community on importance of women in peace building in barazas and community gatherings, curbed the challenges through inclusion of women in peace and conflict management, educating the girl child, working together with law enforcement, registering peace committees and also used the local media houses to advocate for women's roles in peace-building. Participation of women in the community activities has greatly increased as well as their role in decision making at the family and community levels. This has brought an enhancement of women's self-esteem and confidence as they feel part and parcel of the community.

It is the conclusion of this study that women have contributed to conflict resolution to a moderate and low extents, when mobilized, women play an important role in influencing local peace processes by collectively lobbying to pressurize the elders to intervene to end the conflicts. A number of women's organizations, as well as individuals also initiated

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reconciliation in their communities. The traditional African culture does not place much importance on to the female child. No matter how intelligent, how resourceful, how creative, or even vocal, the female child is still regarded as subordinate to the male child. This culture has inadvertently brought the female child under her male counterpart's domination.

The study observed that the biggest challenge that women faced while engaging in peace building is a lack of knowledge, skills, training and experience in gender and peace building related issues. As a result, most women do not know how to demand for their rights. Only few enlightened women are dominating in all fronts. This has made peace building to seem like a reserve for a few women thus impacting negatively on promotion of gender awareness whose success is dependent on grass root women support.

Recommendations

The study recommends that appropriate strategies are to be put in place by the community and the government to improve women's contributions to conflict resolution as the findings mainly showed that women contributed to conflict resolution at a moderate and low. There is a need to find out why women centered strategies for engaging in peace-building were only moderately effective in aiding women in engaging in peace-building strategies.

Poverty is one of major causes of conflict as where there is scarcity of resources there is always competition which leads to conflicts. That means women are, therefore, the primary victims of poverty and conflict. The inclusion of gender perspectives into conflict analyses can be beneficial not only to ensure better understanding of conflict dynamics, but also to highlight the linkages with development and poverty issues (Naraghi-Anderlini 2006). In order to enhance women's participation in peace building and conflict resolution, there should be a focus on the eradication of poverty. In order to encourage women to participate fully in decision-making events, different programs like the training of women in income-generating activities and micro-credit undertakings should be designed and implemented.

Women must also form a network with other peace-building groups started and run by women in other communities experiencing conflicts in order to learn from them and also improve the effectiveness of their peace building strategies. Lastly, the study recommends that the community needs to work together with women to address the challenges they face while engaging in peace-building efforts. Women must also register their peace-building groups in order to strengthen them and give them more legitimacy.

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