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GENDER DIMENSION OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES AND CONFLICTS IN KENYA:

THE CASE OF BUKUSU AND SABAOT COMMUNITIES

GEOFFREYSON KHAMALA

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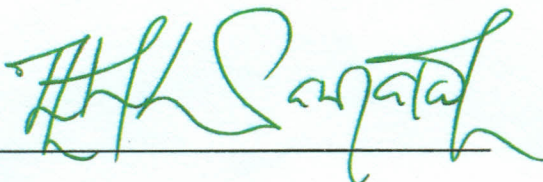
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DECLARATION

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Sign  Date 12/10/2009

NAME: GEOFFREYSON KHAMALA, BA

C50/6076/03

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the university supervisors

Sign  Date 12/10/2009

PROF. ERIC MASINDE ASEKA

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARCHEOLOGY AND POLITICAL STUDIES

Sign  Date 15/10/2009

DR. HASSAN A. JAMA

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARCHEOLOGY AND POLITICAL STUDIES

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my daughter Patience.

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DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Bayobo/Biyobo - Is a Bukusu pejorative reference to the Sabaot implying people who spoke a language that could not be understood by Bukusu.

Barwa – The term implies that the Sabaot are strangers and opponents to the Bukusu.

Clan - A group of related families that are actually or assumed to descend from one common distant ancestor.

Culture – The term is broadly understood to include: (1) ways of life, (2) traditions and beliefs, (3) representations of health and disease, (4) perceptions of life and death, (5) sexual norms and practices, (6) power and gender relations, (7) family structures, (8) languages and means of communication and (9) arts and creativity and material culture.

Elder - Either a man or woman whose age is around 50 years and above.

Ethnic Conflicts – Refers to violent or otherwise encounter among and/or between two or more racial, language, or religious groups.

Ethnic Group – A term referring to primordial affinities based on real or imagined common origins, physical resemblances, shared language and common religion (Mamdani, 2003).

Ethnicity – Depicts the behaviors and feelings that emerge from membership in an ethnic group (Hizkias, 1996). Ethnicity can be determined by a group's or an individual's perception of family ancestry, language, nationality, culture, race, religion, customs, or a combination of these characteristics.

Femininity - A set of social practices and cultural representations associated with being a woman

Gender – Gender refers to roles attributed to men and women through socialization and the relationship that exists between them. While one's sex is biologically determined, one's sexual identity is culturally constructed.

Gender roles - Relate to behavior and attitudes conventionally associated with males and females in any society

Gender Segregation - Occurs when women and men are located separately from one another.

Identity - Refers to the ways we demarcate and differentiate people. The term also refers to the sense of belonging to this or that category or group.

Identity Politics - Refers to political arguments that focus on the interests and perspectives of social minorities or marginalized classes of people defined in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Kinship - A system for reckoning kin relations.

Lemek - Is a Sabaot pejorative reference to the Bukusu implying that they are aliens, 'poor' people and opponents by the Sabaot.

Lineage - A corporate group whose members can demonstrate descent from a supposed common ancestor.

Masculinity - A set of social practices and cultural representations associated with being a man

Matriclan - A member of one's mother's clan.

Myths - Stories that, while they may or may not be strictly factual, may reveal fundamental truths and insights about human nature, often through the use of archetypes.

Patriarchy – Denotes the rulership of the male head of the social unit including but not limited to the family, clan, and tribe, among others. Since the early twentieth century, feminists have used the concept to refer to the social system of male-centered domination, power and authority over women and children, a situation preserved through marriage and the family through the sexual division of labour and society

Patriclan – A member of one’s father’s clan.

Peace – The absence of violence (war).

Prejudice – Negative feelings, stereotypes and tendencies to discriminate on gender, racial, ethnic or other characteristics.

Ritual – A ritual is a symbolic practice that is performed many times in an established manner to enhance certain values in a community. The term also refers to rites of transition.

Seniority - Refers to chronological age difference based on birth order (Bakare-Yusuf, 2004:63)

“Siyanja Barendé” – Bukusu for those who love and assimilate strangers (Kakai, 2000)

Subaltern -Taken from Antonio Gramsci to signify those who are lowly ranked in the political, economic and social strata as opposed to those who command.

Symbol - A person, place, or thing that comes to represent an abstract idea, concept, material object, quantity; it is anything that stands for something beyond itself.

Territory – Boundaries that more or less delineate one community from another

The family - A residential or otherwise kin group composed of at least a woman, her *dependent children and (sometimes with at least one adult male joined through marriage)*.

Tribe – A group of people who trace a blood relation or common ancestry in the distant past.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CBOs – Community-Based Organizations
- D.O. – District Officer
- DC – District Commissioner
- FGDs - Focus Group Discussions
- FGM – Female Genital Mutilation
- FORD - Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
- JKML – Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library
- KADU- Kenya African Democratic Union
- KANU – Kenya African National Union
- MA – Master of Arts
- Mt. – Mount
- NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations
- O.I. – Oral Interview
- ROP – Republic of Kenya
- Sing. – Singular
- SHSS –School of Humanities and Social Sciences
- SPSS – Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

Previous studies on ethnic identities and conflicts have not adequately considered the place of gender in the social stratification of the Bukusu and Sabaot communities and its impact on amity and reciprocated existence. Therefore, this thesis examines how the interaction between gender and ethnicity contribute to the construction of ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts, principally how ethnic identities are constructed; reinforced in symbols, myths and rituals; and the interplay of gender and constructed ethnic identities become evident in the struggle for power, resources and ultimately ethnic conflicts between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities. To achieve this objective, the researcher undertook oral interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGDS) in two divisions, Chwele Division (Bungoma District) and Kopsiro Division (Mt Elgon District). Materials were also sourced from secondary literature besides observations made during the field research. Overall, the study utilized Gayatri Chakrovarty Spivak's subaltern theory. The findings revealed that respondents trace their ethnic identity through men, either the husband or the father, and as such, women do not bestow ethnic identity. Therefore, the construction of ethnic identities is based on the unequal relationships between men and women, and mobilizes men and women to subtly rally against each other. For that reason, identity construction breeds struggles within and between constructed ethnic identities with men projecting the strength of the group through ethnic conflicts. The study further established that constructed ethnic identities are often reinforced through symbols, myths and rituals with noticeable differences being used for purposes of discrimination and stereotypes that in part contribute to tension between identities (intra and inter-ethnic conflicts). Finally, it is evident from the research findings that among the Bukusu and Sabaot communities political power, property ownership, property acquisition, economic roles and external relations with other ethnic identities remain the preserve of men fuelling competition within families, between families, lineages, clans and ethnic groups. With regard to peace building, the exclusion of the female gender is evident in the Bukusu/ Sabaot peace process initiatives. Based on the foregoing findings, a number of recommendations have been made to help peace-building efforts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. They included the need for effective representation and equal participation of both men and women in peace initiatives and the encouragement of both men and women to trade with each other and the establishment of a land commission to look into the issue of land tenure and expedite issuance of title deeds for people who bought or were allocated land. Further, there is need to create public awareness so that members of the public could respect valid documents of land ownership, the need to de-link fraternal groups from inheritance, acquisition and ownership of land and other resources, and the need for members of the two communities to strive to identify with the nation as a whole rather than with their particular ethnic groups. A number of areas for further research were identified: a study on how the rise of ethnically-based parties that accompanied multi-partism in Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts has partly contributed to the presence of very few successful women in elective politics among the Bukusu and the Sabaot; a study on how gender informs trade between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities and thus inter-ethnic relations; and a study on intra-ethnic conflicts among the various Sabaot clans over the distribution of land in the Chebyuk Settlement Scheme.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The world seems to be faced with a growing crisis of identity (Kottak & Kozaitis, 1999: 32-33). Identity is a concept that depicts an individual's sense of who s/he is (Dashefsky & Shapiro, 1974). Some of the important markers of identity include gender, age, religion, race, civilization, class, and ethnicity, among others. These markers of identity constitute critical dimensions of social organization. Historically, ethnicity is one of the major forms of identity. People learn to favour the "in-group" and discriminate against the "out-groups". The significance of ethnic identity, identification and preference for one's own group is best explained by how each of the aforementioned eight fundamental axes of stratifying societies develop with each other and how they affect individuals, groups and the world society at large.

Almost every major region of the world has societies separated along ethnic lines. Intra and inter-ethnic relations involve cooperation, inter-dependence and sometimes conflict in its diverse forms. According to Leone (1998: xi), ethnic conflicts represent 'one of the oldest scourges of humanity' that continue to plague the world even today. Writing on this, Gurr (1993) documents over 300 ethnic conflicts between 1945 and 1994, which were due to mobilized ethno-national movements. In another work, Gurr (1994) sees ethno-national groups as being responsible for the declining ability of various governments to govern effectively, making political and social peace a problematic exercise. Ethnic conflicts refer to violent encounters and rivalry among ethnic communities. Several recent communal

conflicts come to mind particularly the struggles between the Tamil minority and Sinhalese majority in Sri Lanka, the separatist attempts by Sikh minority and the Indian State in India, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and many others.

While ethnic conflict is an age-old problem, Africa is the most war-torn continent in contemporary times with slightly over forty-five percent of all the violent ethnic conflicts witnessed in the world taking place in Africa (Adedeji, 1999: 3). Africa south of the Sahara has since 'earned the reputation of a continent at war with itself' (Ibid.). Academics and scholars interested in the causes and dynamics of ethnic violence have wondered why this form of conflict predominates in Sub-Saharan Africa today.

Yet more and more scholars, activists and decision-makers agree that gender equity is a necessary condition for genuine peace to be achieved. Despite this, as Ahmed (2000) points out, mainstream literature on ethnicity has largely ignored gender. Besides, according to del Alwis (2000:48), the existing analyses of gender do not fully examine the interrelations between gender and ethnicity in relation to identity, culture and politics. She particularly notes the discontinuity between feminist practice and their non-articulation of a feminist perspective in their writings on ethnicity despite it being widely known that ethnic resources such as culture, territory, religion, beliefs about common family ancestry, nationality and language or a combination of these characteristics are gender-specific (See also Pilcher & Whelahan, 2004:134). Likewise, Ferris (2005:25) underscores the fact that existing research has not tackled the most critical question: What roles do men and women play in shaping their families' national, religious and ethnic identities? Therefore, forms of

ethnic mobilizations deserve study to reveal the role of gender in ethnicity and ethnic conflicts.

This study is concerned with the role of gender in the formation, persistence over time, and reinforcement of ethnic identities and inter-ethnic relations between the Bukusu and Sabaot currently inhabiting Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts respectively. The nature of the Bukusu and Sabaot conflicts is herein studied within the context of identity - the nature of ethnicity in the form of *patriarchy* and how it interacts with gender.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study is about the differential roles of men and women in the construction, reinforcement and persistence of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and inter-ethnic relations. Were (1967a; 1967b), Wolfe (1969), Goldschmidt (1976), Makila (1982; 1986), Nasimiya (1984), Aseka (1989), Kiliku (1992), NCKK (1994), Oyugi (1998), Kakai (2000) and Wafula (2000) provide historical and contemporary information on the nature of the relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. They also provide explanations as to why the two communities conflict. These studies attribute the Bukusu- Sabaot struggles to conflicts over power and resources, particularly land and cattle, among other reasons. Though gender aspects are not entirely lacking in these studies, these authors do not give sufficient attention to the gender perspective of intra and inter-ethnic relations in their analysis.

There is, therefore, need to re-examine the nature of the intersection between gender and ethnicity as part of the contribution to a better understanding of Bukusu-Sabaot ethnic conflicts. This study examines the ethnic origins of conflicts and how they acquire a different

texture when one considers the gendered relations between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities of Bungoma and Mt. Elgon Districts.

From available literature, gender and ethnicity are critical markers of identity for many people around the world. Gender and ethnicity are also major issues in politics and conflicts. However, gender and ethnicity are complex phenomena, which interact in ways that call for an engrossing study and analysis in relation to Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts. The most recent major conflict between the two communities was in 1991/92. The role of gender-specific symbols, myths and rituals in reinforcing ethnic identities and conflicts is also tackled.

1.3 Study Objectives

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To investigate the importance of gender in defining ethnic identity among the Bukusu and Sabaot communities.
2. To establish how the codification of experience into symbols, myths, and rituals possibly reinforces the separateness of the Bukusu and Sabaot communities and conflicts among them.
3. To examine how the Bukusu and Sabaot identities interact and mutually condition, augment, or challenge one another in the political-economic and social spheres thereby contributing to ethnic conflicts.

4. To assess how institutions conflated with ‘masculinity’ interlock with ‘femininity’ to mobilize the community towards competition and ethnic strife among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does gender help define the formation/persistence of ethnic identity among the Sabaot and Bukusu communities?
2. How do the Bukusu and Sabaot identities practice and codify their lived experience in gender specific symbols, myths, and rituals?
3. How does gender contribute to the consolidation of Sabaot and Bukusu ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts?
4. How do the Bukusu and Sabaot communities interact and reciprocally condition, reinforce, or undermine one another in the social, political and economic spheres thereby contributing to ethnic conflicts?
5. How do the Bukusu and Sabaot institutions conflated with masculinity interlock with femininity to create a mobilization of the community towards a certain common reaction against another community?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The study assumes that:

1. Gender significantly aids in the construction of Bukusu and Sabaot identities.
2. Gender-specific rituals, celebrations and myths are important in reinforcing the separateness of the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and thus contribute to conflicts between the two communities.
3. Gender-constructed Bukusu and Sabaot identities interact and reciprocally reinforce, or undermine one another in the political, social and economic spheres thus culminating in ethnic conflicts.
4. The interplay between gender and ethnicity among other variables contribute to the emergence, escalation and persistence of ethnic conflicts between the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

Available literature (Were, 1967a; 1967b; Wolfe, 1969; Goldschmidt, 1976; Makila, 1986; Aseka, 1989; Kiliku, 1992; NCKK, 1994; Kakai, 2000; Wafula, 2000) indicates that the relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot are punctuated by incidents of conflict. Gender mindful studies are relevant to any quest for a holistic understanding of the economy, society, politics and conflicts in contemporary Africa – as, indeed, in every other region of the world. Yet the gender dimension of ethnic conflicts among the Sabaot and the Bukusu is under researched. This is because previous researchers do not take into account gender aspects in the relations within and between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities and its impact on peaceful co-existence. That being the case, this study sheds light on

gender issues by analyzing the connection between gender and ethnicity with regard to ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts.

Gender cognizant studies are motivated by a commitment to the construction of 'egalitarian' gender relationships thus foster peace and better relations among members of the two communities. In this regard, the study of gender aspects is critical when trying to understand Bukusu-Sabaot ethnic conflicts and to establish means of peace building and peaceful coexistence. Indeed, the 1991/92 ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot show that the existing mechanisms of conflict resolution are inadequate because women are underrepresented or not represented at all.

This study was also undertaken with the conviction that empirical data acquired from past inter-ethnic relations using gender as an analytical category are useful in contributing to the resolution of present and possibly forecasting future ethnic conflicts.

Moreover, such data may serve as reference materials for policy-makers to safeguard human lives, property and reduce the level of violence generated by such hostility.

Finally, the data obtained could be useful for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Review of Related Literature

The literature related to the study has been reviewed under four broad themes, namely, literature on ethnic conflicts, the role of gender in ethnic identity construction and influencing ethnic conflicts, and history and causes of ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

2.1.1 *Literature on Ethnic Conflicts*

Various authors have discussed the issue of ethnic conflicts in Africa. Some of the authors have explained it in terms of Africa's pre-colonial history. For example, Eboe (1999) observes that violence has been a permanent aspect of African history. He attributes it to compulsory recruitment of labour to help construct great African empires such as Songhai, Ghana, and Mali. The same forced labour method was applied in the construction of the Egyptian pyramids and the structures of Great Zimbabwe. The gender dimension of the modern-day ethnic conflicts among the Sabaot and the Bukusu is a major issue of concern of the proposed study.

For some scholars, ethnicity and ethnic conflicts are due to colonialism. Colonial manipulation led to the re-definition of the boundaries of the inherited pre-colonial ethnic groups thereby polarizing populations along ethnic lines and as a result, arousing ethnic

consciousness with the possibility of ethnic conflicts. Rodney (1989:228), from a Marxist perspective faulted colonialism for activating, heightening and extending ethnic conflicts in Africa. He is indignant about ethnic boundaries that were drawn in Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries purposively to facilitate European control and imperialism with utter disregard of past animosity and hostility within and between different ethnicities. Mugambi (2003: 3-5) underscores the fact that almost all African countries are ethnically pluralistic except a few countries such as Swaziland and Lesotho that are ethnically homogeneous. This is because national borders drawn by colonial regimes were arbitrary, artificial, cut across traditional societies and merged diverse peoples. Consequently, Adedeji, (1999: 320) suggests that the 'vast majority of these states are mere geographical expressions artificially created by the colonialists'. These studies, however, do not incorporate the gender dimension in their findings thereby providing the justification for this study.

Other scholars (Mamdani, 1996; 2002; Bayart, 1993; 1999) have studied the conflicts in the context of the crisis of the post-colonial state in Africa, the logic being that violence in the modern era is a result of the privatization of public authority and the failure to cultivate a sense of patriotism between the state and the population under its rule. Mamdani (2002) in his work *When Victims Become Killers* postulates that power-sharing is central to ethnic conflicts in Africa. Bayart (1993:55) observes that in contemporary African states, ethnicity exists mainly as a mechanism for amassing wealth and political power. Bayart (1999:13) looks at ethnicity and ethnic conflicts as the result of the criminalization of the state. The focus of the present study is on the importance of gender as an analytical category in the understanding of the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic conflicts.

According to Oyugi (1998) and Anyang-Nyongo (1993), ethnic conflicts result from the competition over scarce resources amongst members of unequal ethnic groups. They blame communal conflicts on state actors and policies, which promote or perpetuate economic, social and political inequalities among ethnic groups. According to these authors, the moment each ethnic group mobilizes itself to access state power and resources, they invariably heightens ethnic consciousness and possibilities of ethnic conflicts. These studies, however, do not incorporate the gender dimension in their findings thereby providing the justification for this study.

Ethnic conflicts have also been linked to traditional cultural forms of initiation and rites of passage (Goldschmidt, 1976). Vlassenroot (2006: 64-65) observes that initiation rituals were key to the conversion of *Mayi-Mayi* militias composed of ethnic Tutsi living in South Kivu provinces of Eastern Congo into protectors of their community.

Yet other scholars (Adedeji, 1999:3; Callahan, 1998) have argued that external manipulation and interventions by great powers also contribute to ethnic conflicts in reference to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Yugoslavia, Lesotho, Guinea Bissau, Southern Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi and Iraq. Callahan (1998) explored the history of American involvement in ethnic conflicts of various countries before and after the fall of Communism. Similarly, Adedeji (1999:3) notes the role of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi in the civil war that led to the overthrow of the Mobutu regime by Laurent Kabila forces, while five other countries (Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Central African Republic and Chad) combined forces in a botched attempt to the rebellion against the DRC government.

Adedeji (1999:7-10) further notes that ethnic conflicts “are but violent reactions to the pervasive lack of democracy, the denial of human rights, the complete disregard of the sovereignty of the people, the lack of empowerment and accountability and, generally, bad governance” besides the competition for scarce resources. He disputes the notion that ethnicity and tribalism are responsible for intra-state conflicts by observing that there is a lack of consensus on the exact make-up of ethnic or tribal phenomenon. For him ethnic identity is mere perception objectified in language, culture and religion. He, however, observes that the ethnic factor is often exploited by those interested in starting conflicts especially the political elites. Yengo (2002:49-59) also denies the factual correctness of conflicts that are portrayed in terms of opposition between ethnic groups blaming conflicts on Africa’s imperial domination through financial and monetary hegemony, military supremacy, scientific and technological domination, patenting practices, and monopolization of African natural resources. In this connection, she strongly argues that the talk on factional struggles or ‘politics of the belly’ take no cognizance of the African historical context or are simply ill-adapted to African concerns. This view is shared by Vlassenroot (2006: 50).

Osaghae (1995) notes that ethnicity is not always conflictual and negative in its outcomes. In fact, he believes that it can be harnessed for positive ends. Eboe (1999) concurs citing the case of Nigeria where ethnicity has functioned to preserve democratic space and as a building bloc for civil society. Osaghae (1995) adopts the position that ethnic conflicts results from a multiplicity of factors.

Okoth (2000:2-3) supports this view suggesting that every conflict possesses its own historical character and underlying cause. He notes that it is better to confine any conflict to the underlying issue in dispute between or among parties. He divides causes of conflicts into two: domestic (ideology, personality, internal power struggles and mistreatment of ethnic minorities), and external (decolonization, territorial disputes, external interference and refugee problems). He disagrees with the observation that all internal conflicts in Africa could be labeled ethnic in character citing cases of class conflicts, caste, occupational conflicts, regional antagonisms, just to mention a few. The gist of his argument is that all forms of identity exist ranging from class, nationality, religious, occupational, regional and linguistic groups. Still, he argues that ethnicity is a dynamic concept that may possess both an ethnic and class character. In fact, he postulates on the possibility of class and ethnic conflicts being simultaneously waged. Though these studies (Osaghae, 1995; Okoth, 2000:2-3) are indicative of the multifaceted nature of the causes of ethnic conflicts, they fail to appreciate the gender dimension of ethnic identity and ethnic conflicts a gap this study intends to fill

Aseka (1989) and Gecaga (2001) have documented how colonial manipulation led to ethnic crystallization especially with the establishment of the state system. The basic argument is that the colonial and post-independence systems emphasized exclusion, competition and authoritarianism in mediating and managing inter-ethnic relations. According to Aseka (1989), the colonial state was the mid-wife of the power struggles between various groups, especially between the African peasantry and the settlers and later intra and inter-clan rivalries and factional politics, which gave birth to ethnic interpellations that drew from common historical origins, common dialect and kinship ties.

He explores and analyzes situations in the colonial economy that gave root to the development of ethnic leaning politics by examining the different waves of immigrants into Western province and parts of the interlacustine region and their subsequent interactions with the neighboring peoples. The conclusion is that the advent of colonialism undermined local economies in the course of the interaction of pre-colonial systems of production and capitalist modes of production bringing into being a stunted political economy.

For Gecaga (2001: 159-174), ethnic conflicts are due to disaffection over uneven distribution of resources appropriated in the colonial era among communities inhabiting Central, Rift Valley and Western provinces. These tensions were aggravated during the post-independence period due to politicized ethnicity. For her, ethnic conflicts are also informed by intolerance and pure criminality. Whereas the factors highlighted in this study are relevant, the study's wide scope could not allow the author to address issues specific to Bukusu and Sabaot communities hence prompting this study.

In addition to these positions, this thesis looks at the issue of ethnic conflicts in the context of identity (the nature of ethnicity and how it interacts with gender). In this regard, the emphasis is on the importance of gender as an analytical category in the understanding of the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic conflicts.

2.1.2 The Role of Gender in Ethnic Identity Construction and influencing Ethnic Conflicts

The nature of gender relations and explanation of the differences between the genders is a topic of increasing debate. For Shulamith Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970), crucial

to the relegation into different realms are notions of the inherent characteristics of men and women. Most scholars, for example Connell (1987:50; 83), disagree, oppose the status quo, engage these states of affairs by argument and, where possible and relevant, by political action. They argue that the gender divide is a social construct; one's gender identity and sex role does not always conform to one's morphological sex. Instead, gender identity is formed through a complex interaction of biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: 6-7; 56-59).

In the light of the above, scholars have kept on producing insightful research and debates that challenge conventional wisdom, structures, and ideologies narrowly informed by caricatures of gender realities, and that best capture the shifting roles. Scholars such as Jaggar (1983) and Rosenblum and Travis (2000) observe that in terms of biology, one is either man or woman corresponding to one's sex but a whole set of gender expectations are mapped onto this primary sex distinction. Therefore, gender is an analytical category to draw a line of demarcation between biological sex differences and the way these are used to inform behaviors and competences which are assigned as either masculine or feminine. Even then, critics (Kisiang'ani, 2004:17; 19-21) argue that the sex/gender distinction (stark binary of essentialized/social constructionist perspectives) tends to represent proclivity towards dichotomous models. In addition, Amadiume (1995) and Oyewumi (2004) have highlighted the differences amongst women and offered reasons why it would be unwise to take gender at face value.

Amadiume in her book *Male Daughters, Female Husbands* (1987) demonstrates how misleading biological categories can be in the study of sex and gender after noting that one

can assume socially viable roles either as male or female. Her study reveals that masculine attributes such as strength, courage and character are applicable to individuals by virtue of conduct and character rather than sex. Her emphasis is on the institution of woman marriage in Igbo society thus dislocating sex from gender. She insists on the existence of cross-cutting categories within the family. To her, a strong matriarchal legacy throughout pre-colonial Africa allowed women to acquire unique powers and positions of authority. She shows how change in life cycle alters women's status such that post-menopausal women are able to assume political functions. The same could be said about ancestral women who share equal status with male ancestors (Amadiume, 1995).

The strength of Amadiume's findings was her commitment to better the relations between men and women in Africa rather than adversarial separatism. This is testified by her focus on kinds of relationships marked by fewer conflicts between mothers, sons, sisters and brothers. Critics have, however, pointed out that though powerful monarchs have existed in the Igbo society, the evidence she uses to support her argument simply does not escape scrutiny (Bakare-Yusuf, 2004:61-81). Besides, the experience of post-menopausal women, princesses and other privileged women cannot be used to evaluate the position of all women in a society or to deny the collective subordination of women. Bakare-Yusuf thereby questions Amadiume's principal argument that motherhood (not defined as a sexual relationship but as a relationship to progeny) is the dominant identity for women. Perhaps Amadiume's intention is to shift the focus from the sexual politics of heterosexual relationships, which according to her, undervalue motherhood in favor of the significance of maternal politics. Amadiume's findings are relevant to the current study when attempting to explain why and primarily how ethnic identities persist over time. The most

applicable aspect to this study is the fact that she does not disavow the fact that all children among the Igbo derive lineage affiliation from their fathers. In fact, she attests to the fact that women often act in collaboration with their patrilineage men in the interest of their patrilineage (Amadiume, 1995:16). In addition to these positions, this thesis looks at the issue of ethnic conflicts in the context of identity (the nature of ethnicity and how it interacts with gender).

Oyewumi Oyeronke in her study *The Invention of Women* (1997) based on Yoruba society of Southwestern Nigeria suggests that the separation between gender and sex is superficial and socially constructed. For her, seniority takes precedence over gender and anatomy. Her principal argument is that gender is first a socio-cultural construct and as such, it is not applicable as the model for explaining women subordination and oppression worldwide. She observes that the traditional family is non-gendered because kinship roles and categories are not gender differentiated. Through her mother/wife distinction, she shows that power centers within the family are diffused and not gender-specific. For her, seniority orders and divides Yoruba society, and is the fundamental organizing principle within the family. Seniority is based on relative age and not gender. Unlike gender, which is static, the seniority principle is dynamic and fluid. She points out that the Yoruba kinship structure distinguishes between those who are born members of the family irrespective of gender and those who enter by marriage. Women born into the lineages alongside their brothers belong to the same lineage. An insider is always senior to an outsider who is marrying into the family irrespective of gender. For an outsider, seniority rank depends on how many children including blood relations are already part of the lineage, is always relative and context-dependent (Oyewumi, 2004:4-5).

Further, Oyewumi asserts the centrality of language in the formation of social identity. She avers that the non-existence of gender markers in the Yoruba language unlike seniority, which is linguistically marked, is an essential component of Yoruba identity. She also observes that Yoruba social institutions and practices do not make social distinctions in terms of anatomic differences and there are no gender-specific words denoting son, daughter, brother and sister. She cites other African societies to confirm her thesis that the oppositional male/female, man/woman duality and its attendant male privileging in western gender categories is particularly alien to many African cultures (Oyewumi, 2004:8).

Critics, for example, Bakare-Yusuf (2004:63-81), have questioned Oyewumi's understanding of the nature of power and her assumption about the relation between language and social reality. Bakare-Yusuf correctly observes that Oyewumi did not discuss how other forms of power relations inform the ideology of seniority. For example, Oyewumi's suggestion that the subordination of the wife in patrilineal settings has nothing to do with gender but her position as an outsider to the lineage arguing that in the matrilineal setting, subordinated outsiders are the newly in-married husbands. This is because among the Yoruba like most other societies the world over, it is usually women who are married out to another lineage thereby becoming outsiders and subordinate in their spouse lineage. Bakare-Yusuf also observes that the absence of gender variation in writing and speech does not mean that it is entirely absent in social reality. This is because language and discourse are not synonymous with social reality.

Overall, Oyewumi's study permits a closer focus on the relations between women or men and on the power effects of other configurations of difference within and between sites such as the household. She also rescues from obscurity salient axes of difference such as seniority and wealth. She also raises issues relevant to the exploitative and hierarchical relationships among women. Accordingly, she points out that in many cases women are part and parcel if not the power behind the scattered instances of male dominance. Understanding these dynamics challenges a gender hierarchy that places women at a permanent disadvantage. These findings are critical when trying to understand the role of gender in the construction and persistence of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and ethnic relations.

Sadiqi (2002:35) expounds the meaning of gender in African socio-cultural environment and argues that the perception of gender in Africa is deeply rooted in larger superstructures. Her principal argument is that "African women do not constitute homogenous group. They play off and negotiate gender in various ways according to choices that their respective overall socio-cultural status allows them". She shares the same platform with Lewis (2004:27-42) who challenges essentialist notions of womanhood while insisting on recognizing and interrogating difference. Similarly, Arnfred (2004:70) reveals from her fieldwork in matrilineal northern Mozambique that gender power dynamics work much more in favor of women. In matrilineal descent systems, women get to decide the clan for their children. In addition, Sudarkasa (2004:27) establishes that women playing kinship roles such as mother, grandmother, elder sister, or father's sister are recipients of deference from men as well as women and have considerable power and authority over subordinate kin both male and female which is not the case in Europe and North America

because there is no extended family there. She points out that the term wife refers to either “a female married to a given male (or female), or a female married into a given compound or lineage”.

Some scholars (Amadiume, 1995; Yengo, 2002; Sudarkasa, 2004; Oyewumi, 2004; Kisiang’ani, 2004) have questioned the binary identity of men and women pointing out that men and women play many roles in society depending on the socio-cultural setup and justifications based on biology reinforce patriarchy. They have argued that the colonial encounter profoundly interfered with African men and women identities and identifications through the imposition of a dichotomous model of sexuality, which appears to render women subordinate, residual and inferior to men.

Nevertheless, Bakare-Yusuf (2004: 61-81) argues that these authors deny agency to African men and women in a bid to contest Western schemas. African men and women are not simply subjects created by colonial gender discourses for they are actively engaged in reconfiguring their own identities. To her, if such positions are taken to the extreme, it may result in the denial that power struggles and conflicts exist in Africa. She instead deals with structural inequalities between men and women in post-colonial Africa. Correspondingly, Lewis (2004:31) while attesting to the fact that colonial social policy radically shaped coital and conjugal sites in Africa wonders why one form of oppression needs to be privileged above another: Why not analyze western feminist discursive dominance while simultaneously disavowing patriarchal oppression in Africa. Why privilege the racial while ignoring structural inequalities between men and women in post-colonial Africa? For Mama (2006:11), academic freedom becomes at risk when scholars on the continent

reproduce 'rather than challenge the inequalities based on gender, class, ethnicity and other dimensions of oppression'.

Imam (1997:17) while acknowledging that colonialism intensified the gender gap points out that resorting to versions of traditional culture in defense of an essential Africanity, leaves African men and women without the political resources to combat those very aspects of tradition that damage them. Accordingly, harmful traditional practices that demean or oppress women such as clitoridectomy, infibulations, twin killing and slavery are indefensible based on their being part of African culture. Her basic argument is that customs and culture are dynamic and that not all customs and traditions are of value.

Studies have shown that most forms of oppression, marginalization and violence originate from the way African societies are themselves socially, economically, and politically organized. For example, Marié (1993:47) underscores the fact that the presentation of ethnic homogeneity, and the presupposition that roles ascribed to men and women within ethnic groups is acknowledged and unproblematic may not be the case. Gordon (1996) shows that the domination of women operates through the collusion of ethnic groups and kinships. Ethnic groups evoke customs and traditions in order to preserve the domination of one gender over the other. This study is grounded on categories and approaches that adequately address the realities and experiences of the Bukusu and Sabaot communities.

Oyekanmi (1999) points out that male dominance and patriarchy engenders a culture of violence in which women and children are victims. This is because men exercise some kind of monopoly of the means of violence and are equipped by their physical nature and psychology to be aggressive while women are less prone to violence because they are

inherently prepared for motherhood (reproduction and nurturing roles) thus requiring protection. However, she also notes that scholars have used the Uganda and Ethiopia experiences to debunk the myth that women are by nature incapable for war or less cruel. The emphasis of the present study is on the importance of gender as an analytical category in the understanding of the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic conflicts.

Ferris (2005) argues that men play active role in conflict situations not only because of their greater physical strength but also because culturally it is expected that warfare is a 'decent' male behavior. Tradition traps men into playing certain roles as assailants because of socialization, a process in which women play a decisive role. Through socialization, women transmit differential values to boys and girls from early on that play a significant role in maintaining the warrior mentality system. It is this differential values that manifest in different roles played by men and women in conflict environments. She observes that women can be very violent or support violence through their social roles. Women also implicitly support war-making abilities, prolong conflicts through their silence and are today increasingly participating in conflicts and wars, namely Nicaragua, El Salvador, Angola, Namibia, Eritrea, Somalia, to mention just a few. Yet despite these recent trends, the most prominent form of women participation in war, they remain victims. Women commonly suffer harassment, intimidation and rape. Often, they are killed simply to intimidate their male relatives (Ferris, 2005: xi; 2-27).

Silberschmidt (2004: 242) associates toughness and aggression with the socialization of men (masculinity). She observes that when young men are socialized to believe that they are the superior gender and their identity as men is defined through sexual ability and

accomplishment, masculinity takes the form of toughness and aggression. Poverty and the lack of access to education and employment help reinforce this masculine behavior.

Honwana Alcinda (1999) points out that the involvement of young males in violent conflicts and war is a worldwide phenomenon. Historically, the youth have been at the forefront of political conflicts in many parts of the world. They become vulnerable to recruitment due to lack of opportunities for social advancement and generational crisis of youth signified by the resistance to the gerontocratic oppression. In addition, ethnic alliances and a general disenchantment with the state and the rejection of traditional authority and culture determine the positions of traditional chiefs who take sides and help in recruiting the youth and children. They become killers and commit the most horrific atrocities.

Kanogo (2005) underscores the central role women play to ensure marital, kinship and ethnic cohesiveness among the Kikuyu community, which is patrilineal and patrilocal. She, however, notes that the gender power relations in the conjugal unit and lineage systems are not equal. Marriage, the link between procreation and kinship, makes it possible for children born of mothers gain membership into the father's lineage and clan. These patrilineage groups adjudicate over land cases limiting women's access to and alienation of immovable property, save within a working marriage. In the pre-colonial and colonial period, Kikuyu women councils and age sets exuded limited authority and women had no alternative but to resort to a whole range of informal actions to influence community affairs. The implication is that the disposal of a kinless woman and her female children (pawning) was easy (Kanogo, 2005: 2; 16; 17; 42-50; 52). Kanogo's findings are important

to this study because she notes that in some communities in Western Kenya, women hold marginal positions in the economic, social and political domains. For example, among the Bukusu and the Sabaot women do not inherit immovable property particularly land. Yet ethnic conflicts are most often blamed on the struggle for resources especially land.

The reviewed literature indicates that gender relations and negotiations are undergoing profound changes in Africa. Yet it has emerged that some studies have been done on gender, and on the intersection of gender and ethnicity but apparently no study that the researcher is aware of has tackled how the interplay of gender and ethnicity could lead to ethnic conflicts. This study hopes to fill this gap in scholarship.

2.1.3 History and Causes of Ethnic Conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot

The Bukusu- Sabaot ethnic conflict which broke out in the 1990s and which coincided with the advent of multiparty politics was not the only one of its kind. Previous literature and oral history indicate that there has been a long history of conflict between the Bukusu and the Sabaot on what informants attribute to conflicts over power and resources, particularly land and cattle, among other reasons (Were, 1967a; 1967b; Wolfe, 1969; Goldschmidt, 1976; Makila, 1982; 1986; Aseka, 1989; Kiliku, 1992; NCKK, 1994; Kakai, 2000; Wafula, 2000).

Fortification of villages is important in the understanding of the conflict between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. According to oral accounts, fortification of villages evolved as a military strategy against prospects of war through surprise attack and nocturnal cattle raids. Hopley (1902:13-14) illustrates this when he refers to 'forts' in relation to Bukusu-Sabaot

conflicts. Similarly, Wagner (1949:12) talks of 'walled villages' and Wandibba (1972: 22) 'fortified villages'. Later, Makila (1982) wrote a monograph on the importance of Chetambe fort in Bukusu history. On his part, Aseka (1990:48) dwelt on 'defensive human agglomerations' and Kakai (2000:37-38) made reference to Lumboka and Chetambe forts. Finally, Wafula (2000: 41) also mentions 'Lukoba' (the singular form of fortified villages) a Bukusu military strategy against surprise Sabaot attack.

Were (1967a; 1967b) provides a detailed account on how by the second half of the 19th century Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts were settled. He concludes that the Bukusu and the Sabaot are basically the result of two historical processes, namely, ethnic division and ethnic integration. He hypothesizes that the Bukusu and the Sabaot were the same people and the Bukusu were originally Kalenjin. To support his theory, he uses place name similarities, and certain agricultural practices and pastoralism. His principal argument is that most people in Western Kenya have the blood of other ethnic groups flowing in their veins and no ethnic group or sub-ethnic group is cut off from communication with others because people of different ethnic groups interacted through trade, intermarriage and cultural activities. However, the author fails to explain why the two communities conflicted in the past. In this regard, the present study emphasizes the importance of gender as an analytical category in the understanding of the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic conflicts.

Were (1967a; 1967b) also observes that each clan cluster among either the Bukusu or the Sabaot has its own historical records, tales of wars, adventures, migratory movements, calamities, place names, encounters with alien tribes, assimilation of strangers and customs. This study is relevant because according to Were, the archives provide a

catalogue of events and artifacts by which it may be assumed that a clan, either individually or corporately recapitulates its achievements or failures, its integration or disintegration, and its meaningful past association with alien communities or strangers. The study is also important because the author opined that during the colonial period, conflicts were nurtured by policies and conditions created by British colonial rule. He reveals how the British, by pursuing the policies of divide and rule, were able to consolidate ethnic particularism. He also ascertains that the European powers allied themselves with communities, which appeared accommodative thus engendering an atmosphere of suspicion and animosity among ethnic groups.

Wolfe (1969) establishes from Bukusu and Sabaot oral tradition accounts of several quarrels between the two communities, the most famous being the 'War of Chonge' and the 'War of Kikai'. According to the author, on the eve of British rule, the Bukusu and the Sabaot were composed of several quasi-sovereign clans. The British established a central authority over all these peoples by regrouping various clans and sub-clans into bigger administrative units (sub-locations and locations). Though political authority was now no longer based on the principle of common or mythical origin, the clan was not destroyed. Therefore, related males [families, lineages and clans] continued to work together and felt obliged to protect one another's common interests. These observations are important to this study because the focus is on gender aspects in the Bukusu-Sabaot ethnic conflicts.

Makila (1978) also establishes that during the pre-colonial period historical sources indicate occasional clashes between the Bukusu and Sabaot over cattle along their common borders. He cites the oath of *Khulia embwa* ('eating the dog') between the Sabaot and the

Bukusu to respect the domains of each other as per boundaries established then to curtail frequent conflicts between them. 'Eating a dog' as an amity and reconciliation ritual or ceremony has in the past been used to reconcile the Sabaot and the Bukusu. Such a truce would be concluded in a ceremony where the two or more conflicting parties took oaths against warlike activities. Makila's study is relevant because it details how relationships with neighboring ethnic groups were regulated through ceremonies and rites of conflict resolution.

Makila (1982: 8; 21-22; 33; 190) reveals that the Bukusu started building defensive forts (military fortresses) because of frequent hostilities with immediate neighbors and frontier communities like the Wanga, Nandi, Pokot, Maasai, *Bamia* (Teso) and *Barwa* (Sabaot) during their stay at Silikwa and other habitations. Some of the notable forts include Lumboka, Kibachenje, Namwela, Miendo, Mundoli, Chetambe, Chekulo, Kakichuma, Mabanga, Musiloba, Mubitobo, Makona, Lumbasi, Esibina and Mukhweya. The Bukusu used the fortified villages/homestead enclosures as defensive shields in case of surprise attacks from their enemies and or as retreat centers after fighting. However, because of incessant upheavals, and the feeling of insecurity due to the fear and suspicion of hostile neighbors and frontier communities they had to frequently move from one place to another. This study is important because it provides historical insights on the relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

NCKK (1994) established that post-independent Kenya witnessed occasional border clashes between the Bukusu and the Sabaot particularly in the years 1968, 1977, 1988 and then 1991 to 1992. The study concludes that the early 1990s Bukusu-Sabaot ethnic conflict

attracted a lot of attention because at the time, Kenya was experiencing increased political activity as a result of agitation for political pluralism. These observations are important because they help to avoid the frequent assertion that the Bukusu-Sabaot conflicts in the early 1990s were solely due to the introduction of political pluralism in Kenya.

Oyugi (1998) argues that the 1991/92 ethnic violence was due to manipulation by fractions of the Kenyan leadership as they mobilized support for the competition of power and wealth. He notes that ethnicity in Kenya had its roots in the colonial situation of conquest and rule. The policies pursued by the colonial regime gave expression to group particularization and manipulation, which gave room to development of affinity based on shared primordial characteristics. For instance, white settlement and land alienation led to massive migration of population across the country specifically from fertile land in the present Nakuru, Uasin Gishu, Trans-Nzoia, Laikipia, Nyandarua, Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyeri, Kericho, Nandi, Kisumu, Kakamega and Bungoma districts. This and other policies polarized Kenya along ethnic lines to the extent that Kenya has witnessed various eruptions of ethnic violence particularly in the Rift Valley and Western Kenya before, during and after the 1992 Multi-party elections. The Kalenjin and the Maasai attempted to drive out the Kikuyu, Luo and Luhya political opponents who they blamed for denying them access to power and land resources in their areas.

Kiliku (1992) probed the genesis and causes of ethnic and territorial conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot and noted that these conflicts were politically motivated. The report of the Parliamentary Select Committee under Kiliku's chairmanship emphasized the issues of power, and resources. The report points out that the government appears to have been

reduced to a contributor, rather than, the manager of the conflicts due to its acts of omission or commission. It emerged that the government wanted to gain political mileage out of the clashes by using violence as a political tool. Thus, ethnic polarization and violence were used to destabilize areas from which the opposition parties were expected to garner massive support during the 1992 general elections. Before taking this particular stand, the committee had considered other equally possible motives for the ethnic violence. They included the perceived domination of the Sabaot by the Bukusu in Bungoma and Mt Elgon districts, state-armed local guards who used the guns on unarmed ethnic groups, unresolved boundaries issues, the partisan roles played by the provincial administration and the state's security agents.

The Kiliku report also cites the presence of organized groups of fighters/warriors formed ostensibly to protect their communities, and religious leaders who played an ambivalent role with some clergy championing multi-party democracy and minimizing the pain of the displaced victims by providing relief services to the clash victims, while others issuing inflammatory statements besides other divisive practices. Besides, the report cites accusations that the circumcision traditions of either community are incompatible with their own and the influx into Kenya by armed Sebei from across Uganda, who would then engage in cattle rustling with the support of some of their Sabaot relatives, making it assume an ethnic dimension. The other reasons included the nature of the terrain as Mt. Elgon is on the boundary between Kenya and Uganda and some parts are completely inaccessible by the security forces, the rivalry over the distribution of administrative posts, resources such as the rural enterprise fund, rural development funds and the quota system and the issue of land. The Kiliku report also notes that the perennial demand by the Sabaot

community to have their own district comprising parts of Kwanza and Saboti divisions of Trans-Nzoia District, and Mt. Elgon sub-district of Bungoma District is partly responsible for the ethnic strife.

Kakai (2000:32) reveals that the Bukusu, the Sabaot and the Tachoni have lived side-by-side and interacted through trade, intermarriage and cultural activities. He emphasizes the importance of peaceful relations among different ethnic identities while observing that the Bukusu and the Sabaot share clans and linguistic aspects, history of origin, cultural and economic ties. However, as the author notes, the interaction has not always been peaceful. He makes two important observations as to the cause of this. First, land ownership, land use and livestock ownership were major contributing factors to the occasional ethnic suspicions. Second, he notes the fact that the expropriation of land by the colonialists, in order to administer the Bukusu/Sabaot as a cultural group, dispossessed some ethnic groups of their ancestral land and encouraged territorial divisions and the polarization of people into culturally distinct groupings. He, however, adds that conflict within and between communities was not the preserve of the colonial and post-independence period. He observes that conflicts did not involve the entire ethnic group (or sub-ethnic group) against another (or other) ethnic group (or sub-ethnic group). These observations provide pointers to the need for field research.

Kakai (2000) further notes that in the nineteenth century (during the colonial period) sections of the Sabaot harassed and even killed some prominent Bukusu who crossed to Cheptais (Mungachi) into Bukusu and back. The Sabaot also acquired many cattle from the Bukusu through raids. These losses brought about the 'War of Chonge'" in which the

Bukusu were routed. Chonge was a prophet from the Mamarat clan, Bok (Sabaot). He also indicates that the 'War of Kikai' pitted some Bukusu warriors against the Kony (a subgroup of the Sabaot) and the Pokot warriors (Kakai, 2000:74). Other conflicts occurred in 1946, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1975 and 1991/92. The 1963 Bukusu-Sabaot conflict had political and economic overtones and resulted in the evacuation of the Bukusu then considered aliens for not supporting Daniel Moss, the choice of the Sabaot in that year's General Election (Ibid., 149). The 1968 conflict had to do with cattle rustling insinuations against the Sabaot while Daniel Moss was accused of having incited the Sabaot in 1975 (Ibid., 172). Like Makila (1986), Kakai (Ibid., 78) pointed out that conflict resolution among the Tachoni, Bukusu and Sabaot involved or included interdependence, traditional prophecy and the traditional ritual of 'khulia embwa'.

Wafula (2000: 38; 51; 53; 59-62) deals with the history of origin, migration and settlement and the place of the Bukusu in Kenya's politics of decolonization particularly their contribution to the emergence and development of nationalism. He observes that the Bukusu were variously involved in conflicts and wars and had to migrate from Eastern Uganda to avoid persistent external threats and attacks from the Karamajong, Uasin Gishu Maasai, and later the Teso (*Bamia*) and Sabaot (*Barwa*). The Bukusu dealt with constant surprise enemy attacks by constructing defensive forts and enclosures surrounded by a moat. They also made tools, implements (hoes), weapons (arrows and spears) and ornamental artifacts besides building military alliances. Military alliances were delicate but important because in the pre-colonial times, the Bukusu did not have a single military organization under one community. Each clan conducted its war and raids separately except in rare occasions when the survival of the entire community was threatened.

He points out that the basis of Bukusu nationalism, to be correct, Bukusu sub-nationalism, was manifold. The issue of land alienation and Wanga domination over the Bukusu, quarrels over cattle raids and the desire for the Teso community to demonstrate their military superiority. According to him, the Bukusu and some clans among the Sabaot seems to have had a fairly long interaction characterized by frequent cattle raids and jealous over the Bukusu community relative wealth and success in agriculture. The Bukusu seem to have acquired more sophisticated weaponry (spears, shields and the building of forts) from the Sabaot. He attributes the Bukusu migration from Sirikwa/Embayi to constant raids and hostility from the Sabaot. This study is important because it provides historical insights on the interaction of the two communities. The present study's focus is on the gender dimension of the modern-day ethnic conflicts involving the Sabaot and the Bukusu.

Gender aspects are not entirely lacking in the foregoing literature. For instance, Makila, (1982: 30; 36) observe that circumcised men particularly youths were eligible for membership to organized standing military arrangements for the defense of their overall communal interests and were informally trained for the purpose. Concealed gates were constructed to provide escape routes for women, children and animals. In addition, Makila (1982:200) and Kakai (2000:89; 92) observe that men were prepared for battle by the songs sang by women to encourage them to fight bravely during the Lumboka-Chetambe war. These authors also point out how Tachoni women refused to go along with the decision by some of their men to flee from the battlefield during the same war. The women instead threatened to replace their men and fight together with the Bukusu warriors who to them showed courage and fearlessness. These findings indicate that in times of war or

conflicts the women's major role is to support male warriors to fight. Indeed, they fight along in different ways.

Wafula (2000: 51-53) concurs with Makila (Ibid. 1982) observing that every able-bodied young man who had undergone circumcision among the Bukusu was expected to fight offensive or defensive wars on behalf of the community. He also notes that Omung'osi (dream prophet) was almost always consulted before waging any war. Still, medicinemen gave protective charms to the warriors. Therefore, warfare, war prophecy and the associated ritualistic powers were a male affair. This study examines how the demarcation of gender roles among the Bukusu and Sabaot affect the way they relate.

Nasimiyu (1984: 33) emphasizes the centrality of land in the kinship (social) relations in the Bukusu community. She observes that the clan exercised some kind of monopoly in the control, allocation and disposal of landed property for groups and individuals among the Bukusu. For her, the Bukusu rights of inheritance and ownership of property made it virtually impossible for women to inherit land. Similarly, Kassily (1999: 9) observes that in the Bukusu society only male children were allowed to inherit land for it was expected that female children might marry elsewhere. These findings are relevant to this study because the moment inheritance, acquisition and ownership of land is tied to patrilineal and patrilocal relationships, only male members of the lineage system will "own" land within familial, clan-based or ethnic boundaries. Observably, women have for many years adapted themselves to living with 'strangers' when they marry.

This study is about the differential roles of men and women in the construction, reinforcement and persistence of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and inter-ethnic relations. Were

(1967a; 1967b), Wolfe (1969), Goldschmidt (1976); Makila (1982; 1986), Aseka (1989), Kiliku (1992), NCCK (1994), Oyugi (1998), and Kakai (2000) have provided historical and contemporary information on the nature of the relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. They have also provided explanations as to why the two communities conflict. However, these authors do not give sufficient attention to the gender aspects in their analysis. There is, therefore, need to re-examine the nature of the intersection between gender and ethnicity as part of the contribution to a better understanding of Bukusu-Sabaot ethnic conflicts. The study examines the ethnic origins of conflicts and how they acquire a different texture when one considers the gendered relations between people. The study is about the construction, reinforcement and persistence of ethnic identities and relations.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In this section of the chapter, several theories ^{are} advanced to explain how ethnicities bind fellow human beings and delineate them from others and the recurrent ethnic conflicts in Africa and elsewhere are reviewed and commented on. Finally, the chapter outlines the theoretical model guiding the study.

2.2.1 Feminist Theoretical Perspectives

This study adopts a position that favors Feminist theory and cultural studies, which encompasses a range of traditions, and perspectives including gender studies, liberal, Marxist, radical, postmodernist, postcolonial perspectives, anarchist, and black feminisms, among others. The various variants of feminism differ on the nature of domination, power and authority and on the way we might achieve an equitable society.

Radical feminist analysis recognized patriarchy as the fundamental social cleavage in society. Millet (1977) holds that all relations between men and women are political relations of power thereby introducing the concept of patriarchy into scholarship. She argues that patriarchy is achieved and sustained through sex role socialization, which takes place in the male-headed family. In patriarchal systems, ancestry is traced through the male line and women assume first their father's then their husband's name. In such systems, women are denied legal rights of property inheritance and other privileges which pass from father to son and they are also denied rights in marriage, divorce and so on. Firestone (1971) suggested that inequalities between men and woman are biologically based. To her, men's domination over women is often achieved through men's control over women's sexuality and fertility (reproductive capacities). Other feminist accounts of patriarchy suggest that masculine control over women's bodies is often achieved through sexuality especially male violence in the form of rape (Kramarae & Treichler, 1985; 202-208; Cashmore, 1996 267-272; Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: 93-96; Crossley, 2006: 144-147).

The concept of patriarchy cannot be used as a theory, it can only be used as an adjective to explain power relations that favour one gender (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: 93-96; Crossley, 2006: 144-147). Critics have associated the term with reductionism, ahistoricism, universalism, and the tendency to ignore agency in social and historical processes (Rowbotham, 1982:2). The concept, it is argued, also encourages a limited conceptualization of gender relations as occurring only between men and women and ignores relationships between men and men, women and women and between men and women (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: 93-96; Crossley, 2006: 144-147). However, when used as an adjective the term could be helpful in describing inter-ethnic relations. For

example, Levi-Strauss (1969) notes that patriarchal systems facilitated the exchange of women between kinship groups by men thereby serving as a means of stabilizing relations between themselves and beyond the immediate domestic group. Even then critics have emphasized the need to go beyond the description of the institutional structure of male domination that is reproduced throughout the society in gender relations to explain why such a system exists and how it is perpetuated (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: 63; Crossley, 2006: 144-147).

In retrospect, gender analysis emerged in the 1960s during and after the Civil Rights Movement in the USA as a critique to research methodology, which did not include the status and roles of men and women in social stratification. The dominant argument was that the state, its institutions and other structures in the society exclude women and most men from positions of influence. The approach advocated for a gendered social structure. Margaret Mead's (1950) theory of sexual development that resulted from her fieldwork among the New Guinea societies suggested that the ideology about sex roles were quite different across societies. Her description of the Arapesh, Mundugumor, and Tschambuli societies make it clear that masculine and feminine roles are highly variable and determined by culture rather than by any absolute dictates of biology. For example, whereas Arapesh men and women act in a mild parental responsive way, the Mundugumor men act in a fierce and violent fashion. On the other hand, among the Tschambuli whereas women appear energetic, managerial, and sexually aggressive, men act according to the stereotype currently attached to women. She concludes that culturally acquired sexual roles and traits have a political origin.

Post-colonialist theoretical frameworks borrow heavily from the Foucauldian analysis of power and the construction of the subject through discourse. Post-colonial theorists often discount the static impression of identity and instead in the process celebrate the relational or interactive character of ethnicity. For them, ethnicity is situational and context-based so that people might regard themselves and be regarded by others as belonging to one or more ethnic groups in one setting but in another ethnic group or groups in a different setting. Ethnicity is then a matter of the processes by which boundaries are created and maintained between ethnic groups than it is of the internal content of the ethnic categories (Loomba, 1998; Thieme, 2003). For example, Mbembe (1999) reveals that multiple and changing identities are being negotiated daily through war, migration, intellectual enterprise, and globalization. Post-colonial theorists have also contested the notion of polarized firm distinctions between men and women as fixed, discrete and unitary categories and the universalist prescriptions in European forms of knowledge. They privilege the idea that gender identities are achieved through discourse, performance and repetition (or discursive production of difference) rather than being real entities. These frameworks read inequalities and differences not just between and but within class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, dis/ability, and nationality, religion and citizenship status (Rosenblum Karen & Travis Toni-Michelle (2000); Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: X-Xii; 56-59; Kisiang'ani, 2004:9-26).

2.2.2 Theories of Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts

The primordialist account of ethnicity postulates that ethnicity “exists in nature, outside of time” (Smith, 1991:20). Keyes (1981) argues that ethnicity is a primordial innate

phenomenon that obtains in underdeveloped formations. Van de Berghe (1992) puts forward the cultural and socio-biological explanation of ethnic identity as an extension of biological kinship (Quoted from Hutchinson & Smith, 1994:48; 96-103). Overall, the primordialist theoretical framework holds that given the exclusivist and discriminatory claims, ethnicity tends to be conflictual. According to Smith, existing historical memories, beliefs, heroic myths, traditions and symbols are simply a reconstruction of an ethnic past (Ibid., 21-46). However, historical experience and available empirical research (Osaghae, 1995; Mamdani, 1996; 2002) indicate that ethnicity has been there from the time humans entered society rendering the primordialist account of ethnicity as something peculiar to underdeveloped societies indefensible. The other weakness of this theoretical framework is the assumption that ethnicity is natural rather than a social construct. Finally, the theory does not illustrate why ethnicity must always be conflict-ridden.

The instrumentalist approach to ethnic identity and ethnic conflicts incorporates modernization school of thought and elite instrumentalist theory. For the modernization theoretical framework, the continuing reality of ethnicity as a focus of people's social identity and people's participation in politics poses an anomaly. There are two competing explanations for the nature of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts. The first modernization approach argues that ethnicity is destined to weaken or disappear once people are increasingly exposed to the benefits of modernization. Hechter and Levi (1994:185-195), for example, argue that expanded spatial mobility of labor, capital, goods, and services would discourage the geographic concentration of any ethnic group and thereby facilitate assimilation into a modern and universal social order.

Besides, Erickson (1964) envisaged a transcendence of social identities into a universal human identity: "The utopia of our era predicts that man will be one aspect in one world, with a universal identity to replace the illusory super identities which have divided him ..." (Erickson, 1964:230). Yet many years later, the erosion of ethnic attachment and its displacement by economic rationality as the motivational basis of peoples' behavior has not come to pass. Hyden (1986) attributes ethnicity in Africa to the prevalence of pre-capitalist modes of production. For him, the uncaptured peasantry constitutes the vast majority of the population in most countries. This majority continues to be bound by the 'economy of affection'.

The second modernization approach opines that what triggers off ethnic conflict is the competition for scarce public goods such as education, jobs, and promotion.

The other persuasive instrumentalist theoretical perspective on ethnicity treats it as a tool for the elites. Elite instrumentalist theorists attribute the prevalence of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts to the work of elites. Elites constitute a small, cohesive and privileged minority within ethnic groups and classes who play active roles in socio-economic formation and mobilization. The framework emphasizes the power efficacy of the ethnic weapon. Scholars who subscribe to this framework such as Rothchild (1997) suggest that the central motive behind most conflicts in Africa is the struggle for state power and the associated benefits. Ethnicities are often manipulated and mobilized to serve the class and political interests of the elites who tend to exaggerate ethnic differences and inequalities as a legitimizing tool for struggle over power and resources. Depending on the location of a group in the power grid, ethnic entrepreneurs and/or self-seeking politicians often exploit

and manipulate ethnic sentiments and solidarity in a way that increase the chances of manifest ethnic conflict. This theory is quite informative but it fails to show why people tend to be mobilized and are easily made to unleash violence on others who they deem not to be in their group.

Constructivist theory argues that ethnicity is a recent invention in Africa, an invention. The constructivists (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983; Anderson, 1983; Horowitz, 1985) argue that the colonial state structured patterns of identity formation in society. Colonizers often invented ethnic traditions for their natives in order to control them and to simply think negatively about them or rather in order to divide and conquer them. Terence (1993:82) moves away from the notion that ethnicity is an invention to suggest that in fact it is merely imagination. He points out that Africa's ethnicity is the product of colonial fantasy motivated by the desire on the part of the colonialists for manageable units. Prior to colonialism, African polities were characterized by flexible and multiple systems of identity (Ibid., 62). Vail (1989) argues that ethnic consciousness is an ideology like all ideologies created over time. In South Africa, it was a response to the disruption of African societal fabric (Cited in Ranger, 1993:70). Most of those who subscribe to the constructivist framework blame ethnic conflicts on colonialism. The constructivists approach is quite insightful especially on the role of colonialism in widening the divide between different ethnicities but the framework seems to lack the requisite data on pre-colonial ethnic formation and ethnic relations in Africa from a gendered perspective.

Classical Marxism regards ethnicity as subordinate to the class struggle between the bourgeois and the proletariat but the national movements in Central, Eastern and Southern

Europe (German and Italian Unity, the collapse of Austro-Hungarian empires, etc.) have compelled Marxists to pay more attention to the national question (Marx, 1977; Burns, 1978). Marxists have contributed immensely to the 'National Question'. Neo-Marxists have also highlighted the relevance of modes of articulation in the understanding of the African condition particularly the interpellation of state power and ethnicity. Aseka (1989) observes that the stunted nature of capitalism in Africa affects the nature of interaction between the state and its citizens. He argues that political struggles and conflicts in Western Kenya and elsewhere were fashioned by 'colonial capitalism'. Accordingly, he argues that social conflicts within the pre-colonial Luhya societies were minimal and they, therefore, occurred on a small scale. However, colonial economic and political policies influenced the Luhya political behavior. His study demonstrates that because colonial capitalism was inhibited, Luhya politics became stunted characterized by parochialism, ethnocentrism, regional sub-ethnic rivalries and jealousies.

The reviewed studies and theoretical frameworks indicate that ethnic identity and ethnic conflicts are problems requiring explanation and urgent attention. Yet, previous studies have mostly looked at ethnic conflicts as being the consequence of the dynamics of colonialism and possibly the struggle for scarce resources and power, among other explanations. However, evidence shows that there is more to conflict than the struggle over resources and power.

2.2.3 Spivak's Subaltern Theory

This study is guided by Gayatri Chakrovarty Spivak's subaltern theory. Spivak (1988), based on post-colonialism, argues for the usefulness of a strategic essentialism when embraced from the position of an oppressed group, who may seek a more positive and challenging identity from such a stance when dealing with cultural explanations of practices like sati and dowry murders in India. She best demonstrates the utility of her subaltern theory to tackle themes of power and power relations by analyzing how subjects are colonized by modes of address, how they are enlisted within discourses of identity and excluded from the discourses of power. She suggests that the location of individuals within the schema of power relations means that the voices of the 'powerful' are made audible by blocking out the voice of the 'weaker' subjects who are sometimes do not allowed to speak. She is critical of the *suttee* custom practiced in the nineteenth century where Hindu widows were expected to express their fidelity and love for deceased husbands by joining them on their funeral pyre. Those women who did not follow the customs of suttee were sometimes forced into the pyre by their relatives.

Spivak further observes that the culture and customs of a patriarchal society assumed that male privilege is normal, and both men and women in such societies may oppose the challenges to patriarchal institutions. In fact, she reasons that the structures of patriarchy could make it exceedingly hard for members to notice or concede that some of their customs function in ways that discriminate against men and women. In her theory, she takes an ambivalent position on the capacity of men and women victims to articulate their experiences. In the main, her position appears to have been that the project of recovering

the 'subaltern' is best served by locating her separateness from the dominant processes. According to Spivak's theory even within the powerful cadres, we also have the voiceless just like we also have the powerful within the powerless. There are hierarchies in each cadre. That being the case, Spivak's subaltern theory could aid in the engagement against the status quo in the face of despair and discursive frameworks.

Spivak underscores the ability of the suppressed subjects, subalterns to voice their experiences because subalterns speak. She recognizes that, subalterns cannot help but narrate their condition and that this calls for the need to privilege their voices. The writing of their experience amounts to a privileging of the suppressed voices to let such oppressed and marginalized subjects speak. The dialectic of oppressor versus the oppressed must be related to identity politics in a critical exercise of theorization of men and women's social roles and activities. Such theorization of gender and ethnic defined politics must bear in mind the importance of reconstructing a language, which befittingly expresses men and women's experiences in these two communities as a critical counterpoise to the dominant man's story with the woman's story. It is important to examine how the man/ woman binary are constructed in these communities given their cultural histories and social dynamics of power.

This study underscores the reality that gender like ethnicity and class belongs to the whole social field of social relations in which hegemony is played out. Therefore, it has become necessary to inquire into possible dimensions of gendered ethnicity and interrogate the nature of the production of cultural differences between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities as well as gender differences within each of them. Politico-economic

representations of these identities in various arenas and media are a critical subject that calls for special social inquiry. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation and that is why our study is interested in exploring the ethnic construction of not just cultural difference but also gender difference and their repercussions on men and women within the Bukusu and Sabaot communities in Bungoma and Mt Elgon districts respectively. The concepts of culture and cultural difference are appropriated and employed in the study and defined in relation to ethnicity.

Ethnicity is gendered and negotiated through gender inequalities. Gender is a social factor of immense variability, but does not constitute a pure field in its own right given the complex manner in which it interacts with ethnicity and class. It is easily constituted as a fundamental social category that structures all other fields. We have to articulate the view that men and women who are able to express their situations of being and belonging generate a type of politics that need to be grasped. We need to demonstrate how men and women in fact, manage to amass symbolic capital of gender distinctiveness to overcome their dominated subjectivities. This study therefore not only internalizes but also identifies dominant social structures prevailing within our social field of study, which undermine gender equity and social justice.

Spivak's Subaltern theory aides in unraveling and explaining four critical questions: First, the theory explains how ethnic identities are constructed and how gender contributes to the construction of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities. Second, the theory explains how the constructed gender specific ethnic identities are reinforced through symbols, myths and rituals. Third, the theory helps to explain how the competition between the constructed and

reinforced gendered ethnic identities manifest in politics and the struggle for economic and other resources. Finally, the theory explains why ethnic conflicts occur.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the research design, research site, study population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures, procedures for data analysis, and the logistical and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

This study was conducted using exploratory research design. According to McNabb (2005:105-106), explanatory research design is a type of qualitative research conducted to develop a casual explanation of some social phenomenon, interpret a cause and effect relationship between two or more variables and explain differences in two or more group's response.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted among the Bukusu and Sabaot communities who occupy Bungoma North and Mt. Elgon districts of Western Province of Kenya. Bungoma District is divided into seven administrative divisions namely, Kanduyi, Webuye, Sirisia, Kimilili, Tongaren, Chwele and Bumula. The district is further sub-divided into 39 locations with 93 sub-locations. There are five constituencies in the district namely, Kanduyi, Sirisia, Webuye, Kimilili and Bumula (ROK, 2007). In recent years, the larger Bungoma District has been subdivided into four Districts, Bungoma East (with headquarters at Webuye), Bungoma North (Mukuyuni), Bungoma West (Chwele) and Bungoma South (Bungoma town) (<http://www.provincialadministration.go.ke/detail.php?op=9232>). Mt Elgon District

on the hand is divided into four divisions namely, Kapsokwony, Kaptama, Kopsiro, and Cheptais; eight locations; and twenty-four sub-locations. The district has only one constituency whose boundaries are the same as those of the district boundary (ROP, 2002; 2007).

3.3 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This research was anchored on and basically involved interviews in two divisions, Chwele (Bungoma District) and Kopsiro (Mt Elgon District). Kopsiro division has four locations namely, Emia, Chepyuk, Chongeywo, and Kapkateny and twelve sub-locations, namely, Korng'otuny, Chepkurkur, Kubura, Emia, Chepyuk, Kaimugul, Kapkurongo, Chongeywo, Masaek, Teremi, Toywondet, and Cheptonon (Rop, 1997; 2002).

The two divisions, Chwele and Kopsiro, were purposively sampled out for the research because they are the epicenter of contact and hostility. First, Chwele and Kopsiro divisions are near each other in terms of geographical location thus allowing intermingling among the two communities. Second, Chwele market in Chwele Division is the focal point for the contact between the Bukusu and the Sabaot in terms of trade, communication and human interaction. Moreover, some geographical locations in Kopsiro Division, namely Gituamba, Kiborwa Forest, Chepkurkur, Chepyuk, Amaya and Kipsigon were used as training camps for 'warriors'. Chwele market in Chwele Division acted as camp for displaced persons during the ethnic strife. Finally, each division was not only sizeable enough to raise the required proportionate size of the sample but had largely similar population structure in terms of gender, ages, marital status, religion, ethnic group, and levels of education

The study was limited in terms of scope and covered only two ethnic groups in Kenya and their interaction may not be generalized to other communities outside Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts. The findings should be viewed as being specific to the Bukusu and the Sabaot with generalizations being treated as loose patterns that might not apply to other communities outside the researcher's scope.

3.4 Sampling Strategies and Procedure

The researcher sampled and held interviews with a total of 60 respondents categorized as follows: Gender (66.7% male and 33.3% female) and ethnicity (41.7% Sabaot, 53.3% Bukusu, 1.7% Munyala, 1.7% Kabras, and 1.7% Kamba). Interview schedules were administered to the 60 respondents sampled as illustrated below.

Table 3.1: Sample of Respondents

Ethnicity	Gender		Total
	M	F	
Bukusu	22 (36.7%)	10 (16.7%)	32 (53.3%)
Sabaot	16 (26.7%)	9 (15%)	25 (41.7%)
No comment	2 (3.4%)	1 (1.7%)	3 (5.1%)
Total	40 (66.7%)	20 (33.3%)	60 (100%)

The study employed different sampling techniques. The selection of the study sample was done as follows. From two selected divisions, a temporary list of prospective informants from eight categories: religious leaders, government officials and political leaders, victims of the ethnic strife, women group leaders, officials of CBOs/NGOs, officials of clan welfare groups, officials of gender equity initiatives, clan heads, traders and elders.

The sampling frame had eight categories of respondents. Eight out of over two hundred religious leaders in charge of religious organizations were purposively sampled out for interview with the criteria being their previous involvement in the relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. The Coordinator, Sabaot Bible Translation & Literacy introduced to the first respondent, the medical officer of Kopsiro Health Center who happened to be a Reverend. Through him, using a snowball/mudball sampling method, other religious leaders were identified as key informants.

Key informants who included six government officials and workers were purposively sampled for interview the criterion being their knowledge of the Bukusu-Sabaot relations. Those sampled included, among others, the District Officer- Chwele Division, the Chief-Mukuyuni Location, the Assistant Chief – Toyowondet, the Adult Education Supervisor-Chwele Division, Assistant Registration/Returning Officer Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK), and the Medical Officer- Kopsiro Health Centre.

Eight political and social leaders, the intelligentsia and the elderly were sampled and interviewed. This category had parliamentary aspirants, gender equality activists, retired civil servants, village elders and teachers. Elders provided information on the gender power relationships overtime and the history and causes of ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

Nine women group leaders, officials of CBOs/NGOs and officials of gender equality initiatives were also purposively identified and interviewed. The criterion used was their awareness of gender issues and the Bukusu-Sabaot relations.

Nine clan heads and members were purposively sampled and interviewed on the composition, structure, functions and gender power relationships in the building blocks of ethnicity (the family, lineage, clan and ethnic groups). They also provided pertinent information on how ethnic identities are reinforced through symbols, myths and rituals.

Six respondents were purposively sampled one person per category from among the farmers, livestock herders, traders, transporters and business-persons and interviewed on the role of trade and exchange in the Bukusu-Sabaot relations and conflicts.

Six youths (aged between 12 and 30 years) were purposively sampled and interviewed on the dynamics of ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

Finally, a semi-snowball approach and random sampling was used to identify 4 participants and 4 victims of ethnic clashes (both male and female). A total of 8 respondents (participants and clash victims) were purposively sampled and interviewed for information on the motives for the clashes and their own experiences. Probability sampling enabled each respondent (participant/clash victim) to have an equal chance of being sampled and interviewed.

While the researcher had planned to sample and interview children of ages between 13 and 15 from each of the family of the ethnic clash victims visited on the challenges they faced during the clashes, most of the young people were away at school and occupied in different activities making it impossible to interview them.

The researcher had two Focus Group Discussions (FGDS). The first FGD was held in Kopsiro Division (Mt Elgon District) with three respondents, two of them female and one

male and ethnicity (1 Sabaot, 1 Kabras and 1 Bukusu). The second FGD was held in Chwele Division (Bungoma District) with seven respondents categorized as follows: Gender (5 Female and 2 Male) and Ethnicity (5 Bukusu and 2 Sabaot). The first FGD brought together a locational Maendeleo ya Wanawake representative/gender activist, the secretary of a women group/gender activist and a primary school teacher. The second FGD brought together officials of women groups, CBOs/NGOs-Amkeni, adult literary programmes, clan women welfare associations, Roman Catholic Church, gender equality initiatives, HIV/AIDS initiatives, Old Kibichori Water Supply, and clans.

3.5 Research Instruments

Data for this study were basically gathered using two instruments for data collection, namely, an interview schedule and focus group discussion guide.

3.5.1 Interview Guide

An interview guide (a written list of questions) consisting of both open and closed-ended questions allowed the researcher to get a complete and detailed understanding of the issues under research from the 60 respondents. The interview schedule was designed according to the main themes of the study reflected in the objectives. The interview schedule is provided in the appendix II.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

The study benefited from FGDs administered on two separate groups of consisting of 3 (1 Sabaot, 1 Kabras and 1 Bukusu) and 7 (5 Bukusu and 2 Sabaot) people respectively. The

information gathered related to gender issues and the dynamics of ethnic identities and ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. The items in the discussion consisted of open-ended questions. FGDS were used to crosscheck some information obtained through interviews.

3.6 Data Collection

This was an empirical study based on both written and oral sources of information. Sources of data generally were differentiated into three categories: library search, observation and interview. Primary data were obtained through conducting oral interviews using interview schedules and then recording and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Second, secondary data were obtained from documents such as theses, dissertations, books, newspapers and periodicals.

3.6.1 Library search

This research benefited from several libraries including Moi Library at Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library at the University of Nairobi, British Council, United States International University library, Catholic University and Kenya National Library services. Further review focused on scholarly books, theses, dissertations, journals, periodicals, seminar and conference papers, public documents and official records, private documents, local dailies, magazines, NGO reports and the internet.

3.6.2 Interviews

Oral interviews based on interview schedules were held to unravel the dynamics of dominated gender experiences and to demonstrate how this social domination is legitimized and constituted in the experience of the Bukusu and Sabaot men and women and how this domination is given public utterance in the very being of ethnic but gendered subjects. Recording of the interviews was through taking notes and tape-recording where convenient. The oral interviews were conducted on an individual basis except in a few cases, which required interpretation thus necessitating the presence of an interpreter.

Both interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in English and Kiswahili (where applicable). However, vernacular languages were used where the respondents were not conversant with Kiswahili and English.

3.7 Data Processing, Analysis and Interpretation

The primary data obtained using interview schedules recorded on the tapes were transcribed and those in vernacular were translated into English. The cumulative data from the primary and secondary sources was synthesized, critically examined to remove any inconsistencies and then, the resultant data were subjected to content and statistical analysis.

Content analysis was used to pinpoint key words or phrases to identify similarities and differences through pattern matching to establish prepositions and themes.

Simple descriptive statistics was obtained using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data presentation was in the form of frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts. Finally, conclusions were then drawn and appropriate recommendations made for further research.

3.8 Problems Encountered

In both communities, the researcher was treated with unfailing kindness from the moment of arrival but cautioned not to follow in the footsteps of a previous researcher whose copious works were seen as biased in favor of the Bukusu. Even then, the researcher encountered several problems in the course of the research. First, a difficult terrain and also a poor road infrastructure that characterize the study area fortunately the Institute for Research and Development (IRD-France) provided the means of transport to and from the field. Second, the study area is also characteristically cold being mountainous and this posed a challenge to the researcher. This challenge was overcome by wearing heavy clothing and taking hot beverages. Third, collecting data from the women proved difficult because they preferred that I interview the men whenever I found them in the company of men. Thus, the women I sampled and interviewed were not proportional to the size of women in each of the two divisions. I tried hard, however, to get as much information as I could from the few women I succeeded in interviewing. Finally, some of the interviewees requested anonymity and they were not included on the list of the interviewees.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES AMONG THE BUKUSU AND SABAOT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities are constructed and the place of gender in these social constructs. The guiding assumption is that the unequal relationships based on gender inform the construction of the separate ethnic identities (ethnicities). The chapter begins with a brief look at the characteristics of the selected sample.

4.2 Respondent's Profile

Table 4.1 summarizes the respondents grouped according to both gender and ethnicity. The table shows that in terms of gender, the respondents were categorized as follows: 20 Female (33.3%) and 40 Male (66.7%). In terms of ethnicity, the respondents were grouped as follows: 25 Sabaot (41.7%), 32 Bukusu (53.3%), 1 Munyala (1.7%), 1 Kabras (1.7%), and 1 Kamba (1.7%).

Table 4.1: Gender by Ethnic Group of Respondents

Gender	Ethnic Group of Respondents					Total
	Bukusu	Sabaot	Kamba	Kabras	Munyala	
Male	23	15	1	0	1	40 (66.7%)
Female	9	10	0	1	0	20 (33.3%)
Total	32 (53.3%)	25 (41.7%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	60 (100%)

Source: Field data

Table 4.2 captures occupation and highest level of education of the respondents. The majority of the respondents 24 (40%) had attained secondary level of education and were preoccupied in different activities such as farming, business, or salaried employment as teachers and in other professions.

Table 4.2: Occupation by Level of Education of Respondents

Occupation	Highest Level of Education						Total
	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	A' Level	College	University	
Salaried	0	0	8	2	5	3	18 (30%)
Business	1	1	4	0	0	0	6 (10%)
Farmer/Herder	1	5	5	0	0	0	11 (18.7%)
Housewife	1	3	2	0	0	0	6 (10%)
Retired	0	2	1	1	0	2	6 (10%)
Village Elder	2	1	2	0	0	0	5 (8.5%)

Student	0	0	0	1	0	4	5 (8.5%)
Other	1	0	2	0	0	0	3 (5%)
Total	6 (10%)	12 (20%)	24 (40%)	4 (6.7%)	5 (8.3%)	9 (15%)	60 (100%)

Source: Field Data

Table 4.3 gives the age characteristics of the 60 respondents including the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, minimum and maximum age. The mean age of the respondents was 46 years. The youngest respondent was 21 years old and the oldest was 85 years old.

Table 4.3: Age Characteristics of the Respondents

Age Characteristics	Value	%
21 – 30	9	15
31 – 40	19	31.67
41 – 50	8	13.33
51 - 60	7	11.67
61+	17	28.33
Mean	46.38	
Median	41.50	
Mode	31	

Source: Field data

4.3 Gender in the Construction of Bukusu and Sabaot Identities: *The Question of Socialization*

The study established that gender is relevant in the construction and manifestation of ethnicity because the parameters that explain ethnicity among the Bukusu and the Sabaot are evidently gender specific. Kinship groups such as the family, lineages, and clans that together constitute either the Sabaot or the Bukusu are characterized by power differentials

in favour of men and this is one of the factor that inform and contribute to the construction of ethnic identities.

During the fieldwork, it emerged that the basic structures of kinship and descent systems are twofold: common ancestry, and the associated genealogies. Kanogo (2005) also confirms this. Oral tradition has it that the two communities descended from some mythical ancestor. The founding ancestors of both the Bukusu and the Sabaot are men. Bukusu and Sabaot genealogies are basically those of men and the different categories of genealogical information such as place names, occupations, family names (the surname), first names, and dates often refer or have to do with men. The Bukusu clan genealogies have the founding father of the Bukusu as Mubukusu son of Masaba. Similarly, the Sabaot have mythical belief that they are descendants of Mosop, the mountain personified as the son of the first being - the original prophet, Kingo (Kimasai, Kirui; Mobutu, 2005; O.I.).

The respondents were asked: What does your surname mean? Where does it come from? Does your surname come from your mother's side or your father's? It emerged that children of the same family are known by the name of their father (the surname) while a married woman is known by the name of the husband. Therefore, an unmarried daughter goes by the name of her father and on marriage, she adopts her husband's surname.

The study's findings demonstrates that patrilineality and patrilocality are the consequence of the interaction between ethnicity and gender, which is characteristic of both the Bukusu and the Sabaot communities. Agnatic kinship is a system in which one belongs to one's father's lineage, and it generally involves the inheritance of property, names or titles through the male line as well among the two communities.

Majority of the respondents said that the surname significantly aids in the assignation of family, lineage and ethnic identity that is attained through the father or the husband. It was further established that women do not bestow family, lineage and ethnic identity. All the male respondents said they play a kinship role while all the female respondents said they do not.

It is apparent that such a system favors men. It is this unequal relationship between men and women that informs the construction of ethnic identities and manifest in the constructed identities.

4.4 Gender Structured Power Units among the Sabaot and the Bukusu

From the oral interviews it emerged that gender plays a decisive role in the construction of the family, lineages, clans, tribes, and ethnic groups. Bukusu and Sabaot kinship system of classification reckons kin relations based on the idea that children are descended from the father. As such, the family and kinship groups at a broader level of understanding constitute an ethnic group. Kakai (2000:49) uses the terms 'ethnicity' and 'ethnic group' interchangeably which seems agreeable.

When groups of individuals are labeled as either Bukusu or Sabaot, structures of divisions and disunity are created in the society where gender is the organizing concept in each of the ingredients that together constitute ethnic groups. Were it that the genders are equal, it would not be possible for gendered power units (the family, lineage, clan and larger ethnic group) to be reproduced. Therefore, it will not make much difference if the respondents' response was vice versa, i.e. men say they do not and the women say do. The first is

patrilineal, the second is matrilineal, and in either case, distinct categories persist over time based on gender. For example, Aseka (2001) notes that among the Yao and Mukua of Tanzania husbands move to live with their wives' parents giving women enormous powers (Cited in Kisiang'ani, 2004:21).

Kanogo (2005) notes that an unmarried girl in the Kikuyu community derives lineage affiliation from the father while women become members of their husband's clans upon marriage. Children born of mothers married to the father gain membership into the father's lineage and clan. In recent years, however, this pattern seems to be changing with single women combining masculine and feminine roles and giving forth their own identity to their children. What partly informs this change is the fact that most Kikuyu women seldom leave behind their children giving children a strong allegiance to their mothers rather than to their fathers.

Below is a brief discussion of the gendered power units (the family, lineage, clan and ethnic group) that together constitute Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic groups.

4.4.1 The Family

The family is the basic institution in the construction, reinforcement, crystallization, legitimation of identities. Two adults or more and several children make up a family. Members of the family are often related through ties of kinship and marriage. Ferris (2005:3) underscores the fact that the family is crucial for it is within the family that values are transmitted to boys and girls about the roles they are expected to play in society.

The nuclear family consists of father, mother and their children only. The African family mostly is an extended family. According to respondents (Mutaki; Wamalabe, Wamunyokoli, Munyole, Simiyu, 2005; O.I.), among the Bukusu, the basic social unit is the household that could consist of a man and a wife (or several wives) with several children and extended family members joined through marriage or blood relationship. The father is the head of a single household and often has one or several wives. The man being the head of the family is responsible for carrying out religious rituals on behalf of the entire family.

Similarly, respondents (Kimasai, Mobutu, Kirong', Takur, 2005; O.I.) said that a household is constituted by all persons sharing a home, and sometimes consists of one or several separate dwelling units. The father is the recognized head of any social unit; he also often owns the basic resources. A polygamous man is expected to build a separate house for each wife and he almost always builds another house if he has a daughter above the age of twelve, for he should not sleep in the same house with such a girl (the same was and still is the case with the Bukusu). After puberty rituals, boys as a rule do not sleep in the same house with their parents, sisters or female relatives. A widowed mother who lives with her son (more rarely her daughter) will always have a separate house, for a man cannot sleep in the same house with either his mother or his mother-in-law. In such scenarios young girls share the house with her.

Among both the Bukusu and the Sabaot, polygamy and the extended families seem to be giving way to monogamous marriage and nuclear families respectively in cities and towns. Informants (Wasai, Ndiwa, Naibei, 2005) cite the influence of religion, the cost of living,

children's education and the cost of maintaining more than one wife as some of the major reasons for the apparent change. In oral interviews, it emerged that most of the educated live in town although some still maintain residential houses in rural areas.

The standard expectation among the Bukusu and the Sabaot is that the man is dominant in the marital relationship and the woman subservient. This order is maintained through institutional regulations i.e. socialization, and through myths, symbols, and rituals, among others. Violations, though not absent, normally could lead to sanctions. Nevertheless, Bukusu and Sabaot women negotiate power by either perpetuating or subverting gender roles in the family and as such, women are not powerless given their roles in the running the household. Women as mothers also possess symbolic power over their children and husbands. Most importantly, it emerged that the family through its socialization function serves to moderate the relations between the genders and generations. In the process, the family acts as the building block of lineages.

4.4.2 The Lineage

Several closely related families constitute a lineage. Bukusu and Sabaot lineages trace their descent from known common ancestors through the line of the father. Strictly speaking, a lineage is basically composed of family heads that are principally men. The Bukusu are a patrilineal society. Likewise, the Sabaot are a patrilineal group. In both communities, the father is the head of the family and the children take their father's line of descent. An unmarried girl belongs to the clan of her father. Once a woman is married she functionally identifies with the clan of her husband, but does not lose her membership in her father's

clan (Kiboi; Takur; Mobutu, Munialo; Kirong', 2005; O.I). For Kimalewa (2005: O.I) 'Even after her death her spirit belongs to her husband's line of descent'.

Among the Bukusu, one may only marry or get married outside their lineage for those within the same lineage are regarded as brothers and sisters. Children of siblings of the same sex, and children of siblings of the opposite sex, are distinguished by different terms. Non-relatives of the father's generation are normally distinguished in recognition of the differences in power and honor, as a sign of respect. Referring to each relative by a separate term suggests that the distinctions are relevant for a person's sexual behavior. Sexual relations between relatives (parents, siblings, aunts, cousins, uncles, etc.) or between adults and children are prohibited (Wasai; Kimalewa; Mulongo; 2005; O.I).

The Sabaot distinguish between maternal and paternal kin on the basis of gender of the link regardless of generation. The father is merged with father's brother, the mother with the mother's sister. The amalgamation of terms for parents and their same-sex siblings has the effect of highlighting lineage solidarity. Among the Bukusu and the Sabaot, the mother's lineage (or rather her father's lineage) is relatively unimportant relative to the father's lineage (Kirui; Bera; Wepukhulu; Mulongo; 2005; O.I).

Informants (Bera; Kirui; Wasai; Munialo; Kimalewa; 2005; O.I) from the Bukusu and the Sabaot communities intimated that children take on the name of the father as the family name (patronymics) that allows identification of an individual based on the father's name. Children may sometimes take or be given stepparent, foster parent, or adoptive parent names. Women in the two communities have routinely used their spouse's surnames. Their birth ("maiden") name may be reflected in their middle name; or dropped entirely. While

Christianity and Western education have made women in the two communities to adopt their husbands' names hence further subordinating them, it is clear that even before colonialism, women and children belonged to the husband's lineage and were so identified. For example, one Bukusu informant (Simiyu, 2005; O.I) in reference to her female child said: '*Omwana wase wesikhana katekha Mubalonja*' (my daughter is married among Balonja). All the respondents cited in this work have used their surnames and it is not possible to know their sex unless you come across their first names (sometimes baptismal names).

In the lineages, men still hold dominant positions in political and administrative structures. Despite this reality, women's roles are changing with some attempting to become chiefs. One respondent (Kaberio, 2005, O.I) informed the researcher that she was unfairly denied the position of chief just a few weeks before the interview for the research took place, and this is a significant development in the empowerment of women.

4.4.3 *The Clan*

Several lineages among the Bukusu or the Sabaot constitute a local group or a sub-clan. Sub-clans are named social entities that bring together lineages that have the same ancestor. A group of sub-clans constitute a clan such as Bamwaya. Historically, the clan in the Bukusu and Sabaot communities was the most important political and military organization. Each clan was autonomous in terms of leadership and determined all aspects of political, economic, social and religious life of its members. Makila (1978: 66) provide the clans and sub-clans that constitute the Bukusu.

Respondents (Wamalabe, Tenderesi; Mobutu, 2005: O.I.) intimated that clans among the Bukusu and the Sabaot play a major role in regulating marriage by prohibiting marriage to any member from own matrilineal or patrilineal. Clans tend to exclude, discriminate and restrict membership to only those born of their blood. This sentiment is important when considering illegitimacy. Clan survival is deemed to be in danger when a man of a different clan fathers a boy. If the child is a girl, clan continuity is not jeopardized since she will never pass on her identity to her offspring. The implication of this is that women never bestow identity, each clan is composed of the descendants of a single male founder, and clan names are derived from mythical accounts or some habit or practice attributed to the founder. The natal clan of the individual's mother is of little relevance.

As a rule, women among the Bukusu and the Sabaot do not originate clans as such their names are merely used for convention. For instance, legends have it that the different mothers married to the same father determined the identity of Bakitwika clusters or branches. The clans in question are Bakwanga, Bakitang'a, Basaliha, Baluleti, Banabobi. This naming which incorporates mothers does not affect the power matrix and only serves to distinguish children born of different mothers. This example demonstrates the gender bias among the Bukusu in originating clans. Women take the clan affiliation of their fathers from birth, but upon marriage, she is incorporated into her husband's family and takes his clan identity. The children's only legitimate right is to affiliate with the father's family. If a woman commits a murder, vengeance or compensation is claimed from her father's clan, not her husband's. Yet a woman is subject to revenge for a crime committed by a member of her natal clan. If a woman has difficulties with her husband, she seeks

support from her natal clansmen. For the main part, a woman's clan affiliation seems relatively insignificant.

Historically, the two communities did little to empower their women. As such, women were rated lowly and played minimal role in societal leadership. For example, among the Bukusu, women could at most act as witnesses but could not deliver judgment (Kimasai, Mobutu, Kirong', Takur, 2005; O.I.). The parameters that were used to measure social standing and leadership qualities favoured the male gender. Outstanding prestige and status was based on age, economic wealth (cattle, sheep and goats), granaries filled with produce, reputation gained as a warrior (number of people killed in the battlefield and the number of animals brought home and the number of marriage partners (Kaberio, 2005, O.I). However, the most pervasive control over women now is accomplished through the control over land - patrilineality and patrilocality.

In the two communities, women are not members of clan councils and as such do not formally participate in the decision-making process. During the fieldwork, the researcher observed that women have formed clan-based welfare groups. These groups are tied to the clan of the husband or the father. Even then, they only have nominal membership to the clan, and cannot in their own capacity participate in decision-making. One Sabaot female informant (Kirong', 2005; O.I.) said that she asked her father (a clan head) why she could not gain membership in her patriclan and was rebuked and told to mind her own business. On further probing, the respondent admitted that she did not give this reaction much thought at the time, other than mentioning it from time to time to people. Among the Bukusu, women are not allowed to attend leadership councils. One informant (Machani,

2005; O.I.) vowed that if his sister insisted on attending he would beat her up. He could not imagine women listening on men matters. This view was supported by nearly all informants and is evidenced by membership to leadership or clan councils where only men are represented. Among the Sabaot, leadership was mostly confined to mature men (Kiboi; Wamunyokoli; Wepukhulu; Naibei; Kirong', Takur, 2005; O.I.).

The composition of clan leadership councils is important in ethnic relations. Indeed, scholars have noted that traditional institutions such as clan councils helped in the maintenance of peace and social cohesion. For example, Mbennah (2002) underscores the crucial role of clan elders and clan-based eldership system that functioned to reconcile people in conflict and settled disputes. Yet only adult married men had access to this institution among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Age and gender determined if one could gain membership of these institutions.

4.4.4 Ethnic Groups

The Bukusu and the Sabaot ethnic groups are heterogeneous having incorporated in their fold aliens who drifted into the tribal orbit during either peaceful times or following periods of social upheavals, such as war, famine and epidemic. Respondents detailed how war captives have contributed to the formation of sub-clans as their descendants become commonly referred to as children of such and such ancestry. Often they first assume the host's clan's name and they append their own maternal or paternal origins to make a clear distinction of their background. Male captives were given brides by foster parents, evolve into complete clans within the ethnic community. Refugee clans unlike individual aliens tend to inherit original clan names and only changed their ethnic affiliation by adopting

either Bukusu or Sabaot language, basic traditions such as circumcision adhered to basic tenets of the Bukusu culture. The respondents mentioned several prominent and wealthy individuals (men) among the Bukusu and the Sabaot who it was believed were not originally either Bukusu or Sabaot but who are now assimilated. This informs the popular phrase among the Bukusu “*lirango lye njofu*’ (thigh of the elephant) and because some of those adopted came from unknown paternal or maternal backgrounds, the Bukusu commonly refer to themselves as ‘*Siyanja barende*’ (the people who are welcoming to strangers). This was a means of increasing clan size for purposes of defense in times of external threat.

From the fieldwork, it emerged that the privileging of the male gender and assimilation are critical aspects for the continuity of an ethnic identity (Kiboi; Wamunyokoli; Wepukhulu; Naibei; Kirong’, Takur, 2005; O.I.). Even in the face of massive assimilation of aliens or through intermarriage, the ethnic identity is secured on a solid rock because assimilated immigrants and women do not bestow their own ethnic identity. When a Sabaot woman (identity of the father) marries a Bukusu man, her children usually become Bukusu. Similarly, when a Sabaot man marries a Bukusu woman, her children as a rule assume the identity of the father. However, when a Bukusu man goes to war, he invokes the name of the mother and maternal uncles rather than the name of the father or the paternal uncles. These findings also apply among the Sabaot. This is a significant factor, which may be interpreted as the celebration of motherhood and the motherland.

Marié (1993: 47), Gordon (1996), and Kanogo (2005) observe that the power relations in marital, kinship and ethnic cohesiveness in patrilineal and patrilocal communities favors the

male gender. It has emerged that the family is partly meant to provide emotional ties but at the core of marriage and the family is sex, and that is why, variations in marriages are normally considered to be mating systems (i.e. nuclear, polygamy, polyandry etc.). The most conspicuous aspect of the family is the restrictions on who can have sex with whom (e.g. the incest taboo and the consequent identification of family members and relatives (father, mother, cousin, aunt, uncle etc.)). The French theoretician Michel Foucault in *History of Sexuality* extensively discussed the problematic of sex and power relations within the human family. He points out that sex is a form of control to define or enhance certain power relations of domination and oppression (Foucault, 1979:43).

Spivak (1988), on her part, critiques Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari in her 'Writing Ethnicity' for confusing two distinct senses of representation. She does not disavow the reality of ethnic entrepreneurs. She, however, argues that the notion of subaltern could be applied to the study of gender and ethnicity. The concept of subaltern provides the basis for a general theory of consciousness by emphasizing the negative, repressive aspects of ethnicity and nationalism. In this way, it is possible to retrieve subaltern experience. As such, the findings of this study illustrates how this domination is given public utterance in the very being of ethnic but gendered subjects, the majority of whom may justifiably bear the subaltern label.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how given the unequal power relations between men and women among the Bukusu and the Sabaot, gender informs the construction of separate ethnic identities and also engenders unequal access to social, economic and political power

between men and women. It emerged that women tend to be excluded from political authority and of recent to land. The research findings also show that the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities subtly tell us who can or cannot carry on sexual relations smoothly. The persistence of the family is assured by the incest taboo that limits friction within the family and thus pre-empting competition among closely related people. Exogamy is the extension of the incest taboo to the lineage and sometimes (sub-clans). Endogamy, on the other hand, aims to encourage solidarity within a clan relative to the external 'other'. Accordingly, Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities discourage sex relations with non-members.

Therefore, the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities are structured in such a way as to externalize conflict through regulations of sexual relationships through socialization (taboos, sanctions, etc.). In the process of externalizing conflicts, ethnic identities (whose parameters are the family, lineages, clans, tribes, ethnic groups) are constructed. In times of perceived threats, members of specific gender-based ethnic groups gang up against members of other similarly constructed ethnic identities to ensure the survival and continuity of the individual members within the specific ethnic identities.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ROLE OF GENDER-SPECIFIC SYMBOLS, MYTHS AND RITUALS IN REINFORCING CONSTRUCTED ETHNIC IDENTITIES

This chapter demonstrates how the Bukusu and Sabaot constructed identities are reinforced through symbols, myths and rituals as informed by gender. It is an interrogation and exploration of these two communities' cultural practices that effectively distinguish ethnic groups as having separate identities, and that help rationalize or mobilize Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities to experience conflict.

Aseka (2006) points out that on the basis of the Mexico Declaration of 1982, culture is broadly understood to include: (1) ways of life, (2) traditions and beliefs, (3) representations of health and disease, (4) perceptions of life and death, (5) sexual norms and practices, (6) power and gender relations, (7) family structures, (8) languages and means of communication and (9) arts and creativity and material culture. Mamdani (2002:1-50) distinguishes between ethnicity as a cultural identity (an identity based on a shared culture) from ethnicity as a political identity (an identity enforced by the coercive legal and administrative machinery of the state). He suggested that ethnicity as a cultural identity is consensual, voluntary and is characterized by multiple identities but as a political identity, it helps fragment and discriminate various ethnicities.

For Aseka (2006) and Mamdani (2002), culture is an asset, the collective pattern of living and conveying the norms and values handed from generation to generation in any society. This study agrees with them, but will highlight aspects of the culture of the two

communities that legitimize the dominant role of men. The best example is the requirement (ritual) among the Bukusu and the Sabaot that a recently widowed woman had to dance on her husband's grave to prove her fidelity during her marriage to the deceased. This study following Spivak, argues that sexual and gender divisions are reproduced in some cultural activities. Spivak's Subaltern theory used gender as an analytical category to evaluate the prevailing cultural explanations of practices like sati and dowry murders in India in her attempts to retrieve subaltern voices. She observes that culture is a site of localized struggles and transformations.

Symbols, myths and rituals are an integral dimension of human life. The human experience in social, economic, psychological, political and religious spheres is actualized in terms of symbolic constructions, myths, celebrations and rituals. Symbolic forms and the processes of their appropriation in songs, dances, totems, initiation rites, manner of dressing, greetings, language, to mention a few, in turn help to reinforce the separateness of the constructed Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic and other identities and influence how they perceive each other.

5.2 Symbols, Myths and Rituals among the Bukusu and the Sabaot

The study's findings indicate that the respondents belonging to either the Bukusu or the Sabaot ethnic identity consider symbols, myths and rituals to be crucial to their identity as an ethnic identity.

5.2.1 Symbols

The Bukusu and the Sabaot communities have different symbols. Some of these include plants, artifacts, animals (and animal products), language, land, and geographical boundary, among others. For example, dogs are normally sacrificed for peacemaking between enemy communities and/ or clans within them. Still, the leopard and lion are important elements in circumcision. The leopard and lion are symbolic representations of the struggle between women and men. This struggle is ideologically relevant given the contest or exertion of power between men and women within the Sabaot community. The secret ritual that marks the emergence from initiate's status is separate for the boys and the girls; indeed, this separateness is its major import. The boys are introduced to the "lion" while the girls are introduced to the "leopard" (*melilo*). The males meet in the bush away from houses, the females in a tightly closed house. The gender significance of dogs, leopards and lions comes from the association of these animals with human males and females. The researcher established that these create the impression that a lion is superior to the inferior leopard. Overall, symbols play a significant role in the relations among the two communities (Maiba; Naibei; Kirong'; Ndiwa; 2005, O.I).

Language is symbolic, as it constitutes the substitution of words for objects and incorporates audible symbols that people use to communicate and organize their experience. Language is central to the formation of social identity. At its most basic level, words in a language distinguish the various identifies such as man/woman; girl/boy; and Bukusu/Sabaot, etc. Names, status, and so on are marked linguistically by gender. For

example, there are gender-specific words denoting father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, son, daughter, brother and sister.

Language scholars emphasized the role of language in the construction of identities, and traced the histories of communities. Linguists (for example, Joseph Greenberg, Malcom Guthre and Christopher Ehret) used language as the basis of explaining identities and processes of identity construction. For example, Ehret (1971:119-133) used loan-words, loan sounds and archeological research to re-construct language groups in Africa thereby ushering in several identities including but not limited to twelve ethno linguistic communities or linguistic families such as Bantu, Cushites, and Nilotes; supra-language entities such as Kalenjin and Luhya; ethnic groups such as Bukusu and Sabaot; and dialects such as Koony, Book, Sabiiny, Bong'om, Mosop and Someek, among others (See Sabaot Dictionary, 1996).

The main languages spoken between the two ethnic identities are Sabaot (variants), Bukusu and Swahili. Table 5.1 shows that only 6.7% of the respondents know both Bukusu and Sabaot languages. Majority of the respondents know either the Bukusu language 51.7% or the Sabaot language 40%.

Table 5.1: Familiarity with Language

Familiarity with Language	Frequency	%
Bukusu	31	51.7
Sabaot	24	40.0
Both	4	6.7
None	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Respondents (Machani; Mukenya; Wamunyokoli; Naibei; Kirong; Ndiwa; Kirui; Kimai; Sitati; Kimalewa; 2005, K.I) point out that language is often a factor in the conflicts between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. The Bukusu have nicknamed the Sabaot Omuyobo or *Bayobo / Biyobo*, singular and plural respectively, to describe the unintelligible way they speak. The term *Bayobo* is mostly viewed as a derogatory categorization while the term *Biyobo* is a derogatory abuse. Of course, the Sabaot hate it and in turn tend to view the Bukusu as '*lemek*' meaning enemies, 'poor' people or aliens. Kakai (2000:69) notes that language as a cultural facet can either unite or divide speakers who speak the same or different languages.

The Bukusu and the Sabaot attach a lot of value to land because of its symbolic nature. Land is a symbol of family roots and their rootedness in a particular territory. Land is thus more than just mere material possession, for land confers to the owner both economic and social status. More often than not one's land is where one's ancestors died and are buried. In patrilineal communities, descent coincides with patrilocal settlement. The expectation according to respondents (Chepkondol; Kitur; Mobutu; Wamalabe; Wamunyokoli; 2005: O.I) is that all inhabitants of the particular territory share a common ancestry. Members of many ethnic identities do not like 'foreigners' to inhabit their land whether on lease, rent, or purchase terms. The Bukusu and the Sabaot ethnic identities conflict over who first inhabited and therefore is entitled to occupy particular territories or own land in specific geographical locations. Research findings show that of late land is owned, inherited and fought over by men in the two communities. This applies to most ethnic groups in Kenya.

Skulls and other human skeletons are humanity's foremost symbol of death. Settlement of dead bodies is a symbolic exercise that has been with human beings for all time perhaps as an indication of the fear of demise. Burial grounds are accordingly revered. In most places, before the onset of significant decay, the body undergoes some type of ritual disposal, usually either cremation or deposition in a tomb or grave. Some writers (Huntingford, 1953; Were, 1967a; 1967b; Makila, 1986) have highlighted the fact that among the Sabaot when a person died there was no burial. Some have even gone ahead to conclude that Sabaot could be a weird species of humankind for showing disrespect to the deceased and to individuals, who were grossly ill, close to death. In fact, linguistic historians such as Ehret (1971: 119-133) in order to distinguish between the Bukusu and the Sabaot used this idea. The same issue has been a ground for conflicts between the two communities with the Sabaot claiming that the Bukusu despise them for untoward behaviour. Nowadays, the Sabaot mourn and bury their dead. Nonetheless, according to respondents (Simotwo; Kimalewa; Takur; Kirui; Wamalabe; Mukenya; Kapareti; 2005; O.I) burial arrangements for the two communities differ. For example, the Bukusu mourn their dead loudly and stay at the bereaved family's home. On the contrary, the Sabaot mourn their dead in silence. Besides, the Bukusu have elaborate funeral and post-burial rites. These differences tend to reinforce the separateness of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and act as catalysts during times of tensions and conflicts. Stereotypes associated with burial rites have contributed to tense relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot communities. This also applies to most ethnic groups in Kenya.

Group names and totem symbolize the identifiability of specific groups in relation to other groups. It emerged from the interviews and FGDs (Takur; Simotwo; Tenderesi; Wambete;

2005, O.I) that the Sabaot clans are totemic but the Bukusu clans are not. Informants among the Sabaot showed particular plants, insects and animals that are deemed by their clans to symbolize and identify the particular clan from other clans. This partially, perhaps, explains why the various Sabaot clans are more likely to conflict than is the case with the Bukusu.

The boy-child among the Bukusu and the Sabaot was a symbol of manliness and was cherished because he could defend the community and served to preserve the ancestor's existence in the spirit world by keeping alive his memory. The spear, a phallic symbolism, features in some rituals like oathing and circumcision among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. The spear is often given to male initiates to mark the end of puberty ritual for boys. The symbolic value of the spear according to Kimalewa (2005: O.I) is to express the notion that boys and men are expected to defend their communities from external aggression and to protect women and children. The implication is that boys in the two communities are socialized from early age to be defenders of the community or even initiate and conduct wars in the name of the community. Women on the other hand symbolized peace (Kimalewa; Simotwo; Takur; Kirui; Kirong; Naibei; Takur; 2005: O.I).

The Sabaot conferred to women the status of peacemakers. Women wore a belt, *legaret* that was a symbol of peace and reconciliation. In situations of extreme violent conflict, the woman would remove her belt and place it down. With this action, the warring groups or individuals were expected to make peace and stop fighting each other. Some important functions and rituals required the sacrifice or the participation of a virgin girl. Virgins were also used as rewards to achievers in the community especially distinguished warriors.

Toweet (1979) and Mwanzi (1976:5) established that the same happens among the Kipsigis.

Political functions are often symbolized by customs such as wearing of elder's ornaments and robes especially when assuming special powers during public gatherings. The Bukusu have special regalia that are worn by their leaders who in most cases are men. The elders' regalia include the royal copper bracelet (*kumukasa*), the royal robe (*ekutusi*), the royal hat (*ekutwa*), and the royal ivory bracelet (*lichabe*). Leadership symbolism also incorporated various insignia such as the rhino's horn club (*Sicholong'o*), cowrie shell (*esimbi*), and the covered royal robe (*ekutusi*). The highest prestige was conferred on the wearer of *ekutusi*, *ekhwere* and *epokoto* emblems. Only men were authorized to access and use these symbols (Makila, 1982:44; Wafula, 2000: 47). However, the confinement of power in the hands of men in either identity perpetuates the competition between such men against other men in other equally constructed identities then and now.

5.2.2 Myths

The Bukusu and Sabaot have myths that explain their origin and how the two communities came to be where they are today. The two communities also have migration and other myths. On the whole, there are similarities and dissimilarities between the origin, migration and other myths within and between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. The most striking similarity is the fact that both communities originated from the place vaguely referred to as 'Misri' (Wafula, 2000:31). However, the migratory details somehow differ based on the differences in terms of founding fathers. For instance, according to Makila

(1982:5), the earliest known ancestor of the Bukusu was Mundu who lived at Esibakala. No myths of origin are associated with the female gender.

According to this study's findings, the origin, migration and other myths among the Bukusu and the Sabaot are traced from the ancestry of the founding ancestors following patrilineality and the genealogies that they provide are those of men. The importance of this is to perpetuate separate identities in society and to legitimize prior rights to some resources by people thus categorized. That being the case, origin, migration and other myths have played a significant role in distinguishing the Sabaot from the Bukusu and they remain sources of contestation and conflict. Non-gendered myths have been used to justify or deny prior rights to land ownership among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Because inheritance is usually the preserve of men, these myths privilege property acquisition through men.

5.2.3 Rituals

The significant phases of life include birth, initiation, marriage, old age, and death. These life stages are associated with particular rituals. The rituals celebrated among the Sabaot and the Bukusu to mark transition from one life stage to the next are childbirth (birthdays), naming celebrations, puberty celebrations (initiation), marriage rituals (courtship and weddings), parenthood, eldership, kinship relationships (identity rituals) and funeral rites. Rituals are important in building group cohesion and solidarity in the face of internal or external threat.

Childbirth among the Bukusu and the Sabaot marks the commencement of a person's life, and hence the reverse of death. Childbirth rituals are by and large followed by rites for newborns, such as naming ceremonies in the two communities. Naming ceremonies confer a human status on the child as a new member of society and say publicly the paternity of its custodians. The guardians as a rule have two sets of names in mind to be proclaimed dependent on the gender of the newborn. The newly born children are named after their relatives or to remember the circumstance of birth like wars, epidemics, eclipses, drought, birth of twins, hunts, famine, locusts, forays, or time of birth (Kirui; Musia; Kiyen; Takur; Kitelo; Juma; Simotwo, 2005; O.I). They are expected to inherit mannerisms of those after whom they were named.

The complexity and fascination with the selection of names for newborns (birth names) appears to be a worldwide phenomenon. Yet gender-specific names play a major role in the relations between the Bukusu and the Sabaot communities and it is through names, among others, that one can differentiate a Sabaot from a Bukusu. Children within the two communities are socialized to play gender roles that are associated with gender-specific names, which also distinguish members of either community. This is the practice in all communities worldwide.

Puberty celebrations formalize the change from childhood to adulthood. Puberty rites among the Bukusu and the Sabaot for males involve ceremonies such as circumcision. Puberty rituals for women among the Sabaot involve a variety of procedures on the female genitalia (See WHO, 1998). For the Sabaot and the Bukusu, circumcision is a rite of passage observed by the whole community. Boys are circumcised (and girls among the

Sabaot undergo clitoridectomy) at the same time and are taken to be members of the same age set. The age-set system was a male bonding pattern designed to create attitudes of hostility that would have the secondary effect of reinforcing his ties with his age-mates. The Sabaot women are often inducted into the same age-sets as their male counterparts. However, their membership does not appear to be important either in the organization of the society or in ordinary social intercourse. In fact, some women profess not to know the age-set to which they belong. Women are mostly identified with the *pinta* of their husbands (Kirui; Kiboi; Toskin; Kimungui; Kirui; Kimalewa, 2005; O.I).

Research findings (Table 5.3) show that the circumcision among the Sabaot and the Bukusu and clitoridectomy among the Sabaot women is the most conspicuous and critical ritual. The most common reason to explain and justify circumcision is that circumcision prepares one for adulthood. At circumcision, the initiates are given instructions on how to live as mature people. Circumcision is also thought to help instill bravery and courage among men who could then be relied on to protect their community. The Bukusu through songs normally chastise cowardly men who fear the knife to immigrate to the Luo country where circumcision is never practiced. The Sabaot, on their part, normally call upon cowardly men and women to immigrate and live among the Teso who do not practice male and female initiation rituals. After circumcision, the boys among the Sabaot are referred to as warrior (*Moran*) and the young woman (*Koket*). Among the Bukusu, after circumcision, the boy is referred to as *Omusani*. Circumcision is thus often associated with manliness and bravery in both communities (Kimalewa; Kirong'; Naibei; Wamalabe; Mukenya; Sitati; Waswa; 2005; O.I).

Female circumcision is believed to annul or moderate sexual desires in women. Some women informants (Naibei, Kirong', 2005; O.I.) suggested that there is no difference between a circumcised woman and an uncircumcised one in terms of pleasure, frequency of sexual activity and the number of partners. The informants further suggested that in fact circumcised women are more promiscuous than the uncircumcised ones. Majority of women and men disagreed arguing that the opposite was the case. Aseka (2006) observes that husbands whose wives are circumcised prefer to have sex with uncircumcised women. This is because circumcision impacts sexuality because it undermines one's feelings and experience of pleasure. Circumcision also reduces penile sensitivity in men. Weakened or scarred vulva of the female sex organ can tear easily during sexual intercourse and the circumcised women may suffer from urinary tract infections, reproductive tract infections and painful intercourse. Finally, circumcision is physically related to the risk of HIV infection especially given the danger posed by unsterilised instruments. Indeed, oral interviewees (Naibei, Kirong', 2005; O.I.) suggested that after three or so deliveries, most circumcised women stop conceiving for fear of complications during delivery.

The study established that if a Sabaot male married a Bukusu female (the Bukusu never circumcise women), Sabaot women will make sure she undergoes the exercise. The defenders of the custom are actually not the men but the older women for experience indicates that majority of men find circumcised women "uninterested" in sex with advance of years. Some informants (Kirong', Simotwo, 2005; O.I) have attributed the practice to a deep-rooted fear of elder women that the more attractive younger women might seduce away their husbands and thus leave them without support. The research established that this practice is normally a source of conflict between the Sabaot and Bukusu with the latter

accusing their Sabaot counterparts of 'forcibly' circumcising their women. The stereotypes that accompany the practice help inform the tensions among the Bukusu and the Sabaot and helps explain why more Sabaot are marrying the Bukusu rather than the other way round.

Most respondents (Sitati; Naibei; Kirong; Ndiwa; Toskin; Kimalewa; Kirui, Takur, Chepkondol, Kimasaai, Mobutu; Waswa; Kimungui; Wamalabe; 2005; O.I) intimated that the variation in initiation rituals between the Sabaot and the Bukusu is a significant feature that is often used to reinforce and cement their differences as separate ethnic identities and contribute to conflicts between them. One variation is that the Bukusu circumcise their boys every other harvesting season in the month of August while the Sabaot circumcise their boys and girls twice every year August and December. But perhaps the most obvious difference is that the Sabaot circumcise their women while the Bukusu do not. This has sometimes been a factor in the conflicts between the two communities.

The informants further indicated that puberty rituals are also normally occasions for socialization into the societal secrets and traditions where in most neighboring communities attempt to express their superiority over their neighbors. Puberty rituals often involve mocking songs, stereotypes and insults targeting the 'enemy'. The study established that what the initiates learn during these rituals greatly influence their perception of other communities. The Bukusu and the Sabaot tend to view each other with disdain, suspicion and resentment. Nonetheless, their relationship is characterized by interdependence.

Initiation rituals have been undergoing changes over time. Kakai (1992) in his study with reference to the Tachoni observed that the changing times, human agency and factors related to the natural environment had contributed to changes in age-set systems, post-initiation nomenclature, among others.

Marriage has a special place and plays an important role among both the Bukusu and Sabaot communities. Procreation and kinship are central to marriage. Through marriage, the father's lineage is enriched by children born of mothers. Besides, marriage is a mark of maturity. Marriage choice is normally constrained by the rules that influence the choice of partners. Some of these rules restrict the choice that may be made by proscribing certain persons as possible partners; some require marriage within defined social category, kind of persons who are preferred as partners. The rules help narrow the range of appropriate mates from which the selection is made. Exogamy rule forbids individuals from marrying a member of their kinship. Marriage guidelines also exclude from consideration for marriage a broad circle of persons with whom sex is not necessarily forbidden.

Bukusu-Sabaot ethnic identities greatly influence the patterns of marriage choices. The Bukusu and the Sabaot marry from either community with more Sabaot marrying among the Bukusu than the other way round. The FGD revealed that there are various reasons as to why this is the case. First, most Bukusu inhabit Bungoma and Trans Nzoia districts which have better infrastructure and more developed as compared to Mt Elgon district. Second, Bungoma and Trans Nzoia districts have better and more opportunities and learning facilities thus facilitate interaction and relationships. Third, the poor road and other infrastructure make Mt Elgon District hard to access. Fourth, the prevalence of insecurity

because a good part of Mt Elgon District is a forest or uninhabited exposing visitors and residents to attack. Fifth, women among the Bukusu do not wish to be 'forcibly' circumcised and as such they refuse to marry Sabaot men. Finally, the clashes affected the trust the two communities had in each other. Some women from the Bukusu community tell of harrowing experiences during the clashes and readily advise anybody to marry anywhere else but not among the Sabaot.

Findings in Tables 5.2 indicate that few respondents 16 (26.7%) readily admitted that they were opposed to Bukusu-Sabaot intermarriage with 42 (70%) saying they were not opposed to intermarriage.

Table 5.2: If Respondent Objects to Bukusu-Sabaot Intermarriage

Respondent - Objection to Intermarriage	Frequency	%
Yes	16	26.7
No	42	70.0
No Opinion	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Ironically, most of the respondents intimated that other people other than the respondent would object to such a marriage. Even then, as indicated in Table 5.3, 76.7 % of the informants attest to the prevalence of Bukusu-Sabaot intermarriage while only 20% denied its prevalence.

Table 5.3: Is Bukusu-Sabaot Intermarriage Prevalent?

Prevalence of Sabaot-Bukusu Intermarriage	Frequency	%
Yes	46	76.7
No	12	20.0
No Opinion	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Kakai (2000) intimates that inter-marriage facilitates the cross-fertilization of cultural values. He also observes that in the past, clitoridectomy practiced by the Sabaot when introduced in non-practicing communities such as the Bukusu did not elicit much opposition. Sabaot women folk would tease, deride and persuade brides from non-Sabaot communities to undergo the ritual. However, from the 1990s, the practice has been the source of conflicts between the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

5.3 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to examine how gender-specific ethnic identities are reinforced through symbols, myths, and rituals. It emerged that the constructed identities tend to conflict over what they perceive as differences in the codification of experiences and the meanings attached to life experiences. The codification of experience and the meaning attached thereto is invariably called 'culture'. It also emerged that gender specific-symbols, myths and rituals are an integral dimension of human life and help shape how Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities perceive each other. They also influence the index of intermarriage, self-categorization, social stereotyping and the relation between the two communities.

CHAPTER SIX

THE INTERPLAY OF GENDER AND ETHNICITY IN THE BUKUSU-SABAOT CONFLICTS

This chapter presents and discusses research findings based on data collected from the field to assess ways in which Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities interact and mutually condition, augment, and challenge one another as manifested in Kenyan politics and economic situations. The chapter also examines how institutions conflated with notions and practices of masculinity interlock with femininity to mobilize the communities towards ethnic strife. The focus is on how the interplay between gender and ethnicity largely contributes to the emergence, escalation and persistence of ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Bukusu and Sabaot identities assign each gender dissimilar degrees of social influence and status and when there are significant differences, the man's roles are on average accorded greater standing in comparison to that of the woman.

The construction of ethnic identities also manifests unequal relationships between men and woman but it usually unites one group in relation to all others. Usually, identity construction brings about struggles and cooperation within and between ethnic groups. These struggles between ethnic identifies are most often rationalized as the competition for power, resources and recognition.

6.2 Political-Economic Representation of Gender Specific Ethnic Identities among the Bukusu and Sabaot

Bukusu and Sabaot struggles in the political and economic spheres often revolve around three issues. First, there are conflicts between Bukusu and Sabaot communities over which of the two communities first inhabited the present Bungoma and Mt Elgon districts. Second, there exist conflicting accounts of the role of the Bukusu and the Sabaot in the establishment and perpetuation of colonialism and in the fight for independence in Kenya. Finally, there exist conflicting accounts on the role of the Bukusu and the Sabaot in the establishment of political pluralism in the early 1990s.

Gender, Land and Territorial Conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot

Oral and written sources seem to contradict on whom between the Bukusu and the Sabaot were the first to inhabit the present Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts. Some elderly respondents (Simotwo; Takur; Wambete; Kimasai; Kaberio; Wamunyokoli; Kiboi; 2005; O.I) and (KNA/PC/NZA/2/10/7:1931-51; Kakai (2000:35) suggest that during the pre-colonial period, pastoral communities particularly the Sabaot were the principal inhabitants of Trans Nzoia District and by extension the current Mt Elgon District but colonial policies dislocated and encouraged the Bukusu and other communities to settle in these areas in later years. But according to Makila (1982:7), ‘the Bukusu were the original inhabitants of Trans Nzoia District particularly in Uasin Gishu (Sirikwa highlands) with their Highland-Nilote neighbors’ [the Sabaot]. Other sources (Were, 1967a:49; 1967b:15-19; Wandibba, 1972; 1985; Simiyu, 1972:127) indicate the Bukusu and the Sabaot have lived side by side,

interacted and even intermarried and there was no clear demarcation between the two communities.

Ethnic groups everywhere often claim to have rights to territory and territorial possessions because they were the first to inhabit a specific location and some piece of land. According to respondents (Tenderesi; Wambete; Sitati; Kiboi; Kirui, 2005; O.I), it is in this context the contemporary debates among Bukusu and Sabaot Communities over which of the two communities first inhabited their present habitations needs to be understood. Analysis of available evidence suggest four reasons may help explain the Bukusu-Sabaot struggles in the post-independence period.

First, there is agreement (Were, 1967b; Wolfe, 1969; Rothchild, 1973; Makila, 1986, Aseka 1989; Wafula, 2000; Kakai, 2000:98-100), that the onset of the settler community and the alienation of land tremendously affected the Bukusu-Sabaot relations in later years. The Sabaot were confined to the upper moorlands of Mt. Elgon, where the Carter Land Commission of 1932 recommended that an area of 40,000 acres on the moorland be alienated as a "Native Reserve" for them. This area was subsequently expanded to 42,500 acres. The confinement of the Sabaot to the upper moorlands of Mt. Elgon has not been without complaint especially given the knowledge that the Sabaot were the original inhabitants of the present Trans-Nzoia District, the most fertile part of the current Rift Valley Province. In 1946, the Bukusu and the Sabaot clashed over Kimilili-Kamukuywa boundary with the Sabaot accusing the Bukusu for encroaching on their land (KNA/PC/NZA/3/14/23:1944-49; Kakai, 2000:146-147). Later during the 1962 Boundaries Commission, the Sabaot leadership under Daniel Moss expressed their wish to

be administered from Trans Nzoia District and to be included in Rift valley Province together with their fellow Kalenjins. The Bukusu under the leadership of Masinde Muliro prevailed with the suggestion that the Sabaot should be retained in Western Province. Subsequently, Mt Elgon was retained as a sub-district of Bungoma District until 1993. The result was violence, cattle banditry, damage to property and the abandonment of KADU (Kiliku, 1992:22; Wandibba, 1996:19; Kakai, 2000; 148; KNA.PC/NZA/4/14-15 Provincial and District Boundaries: 1962).

Second, land alienation was compounded with the change in land tenure from traditional ownership of land to individual ownership; raising issues of land allocation, its scarcity and determination of ownership. Nowadays according to respondents (Naibei; Kirong; Kirui; Simotwo; Takur; Wambete; Kimasai; Kaberio; Wamunyokoli; Kiboi; 2005; O.I) land tenure depends on having the proper claim to use the land continuously. Food production for the Sabaot and the Bukusu is by various economic activities including but not restricted to cultivation (crop growing), stock keeping (animal husbandry), and bee keeping. In pastoral societies, land, grazing fields, salt licks, public watering points, and hunting grounds were freely available to all members of the group. Crop farming unlike pastoralism changes the relation between people and land because the expectation is that one has the right to use the land continuously and to exclude others from its use. Even the Bukusu were affected particularly the change from collective pre-colonial land tenure system to individual rights of access and control over land.

Third, when Kenya attained internal self-rule from the British, the government declared certain frontier European farms in Trans Nzoia as settlement schemes for settling the

landless. The settlement schemes created included Kamukuywa, Kibisi, Naitiri, Tongaren, and Ndal, Chereng'ani and Kwanza. Except for Cherang'ani and Kwanza schemes that still remain in Trans-Nzoia District in Rift Valley Province, the other schemes that formed a substantial proportion of land within Trans-Nzoia District were ceded to Western Province (Kakai, 2000:147). Thereafter, with government support, other communities managed to appropriate, either individually or through land-buying companies, nearly all the former white settler-owned plantations in the Rift Valley (Leys, 1975: 57; 66; 73-84; Ndegwa, 1998: 351-68). But the Sabaot community does not appear to have considered it necessary to buy some of the land in the settlement schemes. By historical accident, they became disadvantaged while other communities were able to acquire permanent residence and secure titles to land ownership.

Fourth, ethnicity provides frameworks in which property ownership, property acquisition, economic roles and external relations with other ethnic identities are determined. In the traditional African society, the community owned resources, particularly land. Land constituted an integral part of the political, economic and social life of the society. The communal land tenure system among the Bukusu ensured that sections were open for use by the entire community for instance grazing fields (*chikewa*), uncleared forests and those yet cultivated salt licks (*bilongo*) and streams of water for animals. Individual members of the community had exclusive rights over portions allocated to them but these rights were restricted. Though farming was largely a woman's preoccupation, ownership and inheritance of immovable property was restricted to males by virtue of traditional land tenure laws. Women could only acquire the right to access the right to use land, livestock and other forms of property within the confines of a working marriage. At the clan level, a

clan elder (*Omukasa*) determined the clan's access to the land. Each man had a plot to cultivate in the communal land and he got his share according to the number of women he had. In times of famine, clan men could clear uncultivated land and work jointly to ensure the survival of its membership (KNA/DC/NN/10/1/1940; Nasimiyu, 1984: 33; Kassily, 1999: 9; Wafula, 2000: 67).

This pattern is now changing and it is possible for women to own land among the Bukusu and the Sabaot but only if they purchase it. Women were and are still involved in local and external trade and could acquire livestock in their own right as gifts from a father or batter surplus produce for cattle.

Today, land inheritance is still almost the preserve of men. The respondents were unanimous that women do not own or inherit clan land. So, these struggles and the desire by the Bukusu and the Sabaot to demarcate and even differentiate themselves from each other is informed by notions of exclusive rights to territory and material aspects of human survival only holds true until you realize women only cultivate land but ownership is the preserve of men. As a family head, the man owns the land that is cultivated by the family members. However, most times, it is women who work on the farms and the benefits accrue actually to the owner of the land. Being patrilineal and patrilocal societies, both the Bukusu and Sabaot inheritance rules only allow male children to inherit family property. Female offsprings are not entitled to any family inheritance because the standard expectation is that they (females) would get married elsewhere (Takur; Kirui; Kimalewa; Wepukhulu; Kimasai; Mobutu; Wamalabe, 2005, O.I).

Land ownership and inheritance that privilege the male gender reflects and reinforces the social inequalities among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. It also informs the conflicts between the two communities. This is not to imply that if women owned land, there would be no conflicts. For instance, Aseka (2001) observes that the fact that men among the Yao and Mukua of Tanzania move to live with their wives parents only contributes to the domination of women over their husbands (Cited in Kisiang'ani, 2004).

Access and control over land is often associated with boundaries. Simiyu (1972:127) disputes the idea that there exists a boundary separating the Bukusu and Sabaot communities. Kakai (2000:69) suggests that given the seemingly available pieces of unoccupied land neighboring clans and ethnic communities were not barred in areas that were not associated with their clans or ethnic communities. Nevertheless, evidence (KNA/DC/NZA/4/14/23) indicates that the Bukusu and Sabaot conflicted after the Sabaot accused the Bukusu for encroaching on their land.

Research findings (Table 6.1) indicate that people from either community easily cross the symbolic boundaries. Respondents (Naibei; Kirong'; 2005; Ndiwa; Simotwo; Simiyu; 2005; O.I) mention trade as playing a major role to bring together the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Traders at Chwele market, the meeting ground for the Bukusu and the Sabaot communities, indicate that trade in farm produce, domesticated animals and manufactured products acts as a check on previous aggressive tendencies.

Despite the easy mobility across the symbolic boundary that separates the Bukusu and the Sabaot communities as Table 6.1 shows, 31 (51.7%) of the respondents said there exists

subtle discrimination across ethnic boundaries while 16 (26.7%) said there exists outright discrimination.

Table 6.1: Existence of Ethnic Discrimination across Symbolic Boundaries

Experience of Discrimination across Ethnic Boundaries	Frequency	%
Yes	16	26.7
No	11	18.3
Somewhat	31	51.7
Don't Know	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

In the course of the research, it emerged (Table 6.2) that only 27 (45%) of the respondents still reside at the places where they were born while the rest 31 (51.7%) had moved and settled in new locations which show high mobility.

Table 6.2: If Respondent was Born at place of Current Residence

Born at Current Residence	Frequency	%
Yes	27	45.0
No	31	51.7
No Opinion	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Research findings (Table 6.3) also indicate that 32 (53.3%) of those who had moved and settled in new areas did so as adults. Only 6 (6.6%) were children and teenagers.

Table 6.3: Age of Entry if not Born Here

Age at Entry in New Area	Frequency	%
0-12	2	3.3
13-19	2	3.3
19+	32	53.3
Born here	4	6.7
Don't know	20	33.3
Total	60	100.0

Research shows (Table 6.4) that resettlement occurred more among the Sabaot (68%) than the Bukusu (37.5%). The implication is that more Sabaot respondents have settled in new areas as compared to the Bukusu.

Table 6.4: Entry in terms of Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group of Respondents	If Respondent was Born at Place of Current Residence			
	Yes	No	No opinion	Total
Bukusu	20 (62.5%)	12 (37.5%)	1 (3.1%)	32
Sabaot	7 (28%)	17 (68%)	2 (8%)	25
Total	27 (45%)	31 (51.7%)	2 (3.3%)	60

Table 6.5 shows that both male and female moved from the original birthplace but the reasons for movement were different. Most men are born and allocated land in the neighborhood. The study's findings indicate that some male respondents still reside at the places where they were born but some of them had moved and settled in new locations. Most men moved in search of better opportunities and resources while most women moved after they got married. Wives come to live in the husband's village not the other way round. Accordingly, the men of the village are blood relatives of one another in most cases. As such, it is not surprising that there is disproportionate access to political and administrative positions, land and other socio-economic benefits for men and women among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

Table 6.5: Entry in terms of Gender

Gender	If Respondent was Born at Place of Current Residence			Total
	Yes	No	No response	
Male	23 (57.5%)	16 (40%)	1 (2.5%)	40
Female	4 (20%)	15 (75%)	1 (5%)	20
Total	27 (45%)	31 (51.7%)	2 (3.3%)	60

The reality of movement (Table 6.2) and resettlement (Tables 6.3 - 6.5) has not diminished struggles for power and resources based on ethnicity among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. During fieldwork, it emerged that 42 (70%) of the respondents (Table 6.6) in either community have had problems leasing or purchasing land.

Table 6.6: If Respondent has experienced Problems in Leasing or Purchasing Land

Problems Experienced Leasing Land	Frequency	%
Yes	42	70.0
No	12	20.0
N/A	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

One informant (Tobokwo, 2005; O.I) was bitter after losing property worth millions of shillings to raiders. While his father is a Bukusu, his mother is a Sabaot and he had relatives among both Bukusu and the Sabaot. However, during the clashes, he alleges that his mother abandoned him and sided with her 'fellow' Sabaots. Further, his 'relatives from the Sabaot community are the ones who directed raiders to steal, destroy and burn his property.

Because descent coincides with patrilocal settlement, land inheritance, acquisition and ownership among the Bukusu and the Sabaot remain the preserve of men thus fuelling competition between lineages, clans and ethnic groups. Related males work together and feel obliged to protect one another's common interests irrespective of how genuinely the other party came into possession of the land. During the research, it emerged that the interaction between the clans that constitute the Sabaot particularly Soi and *Masopesiyek* (Masop/Dorobo) is not amicable. The source of frequent tensions between the two or more clans was the 1965 government initiated Chebyuk settlement scheme that was meant to benefit the 600 male-headed households among the Sabaot, particularly the *Masopesiyek*.

Prior to the 1970s, the *Masopesiyek* (Masop, or Dorobo) used to inhabit the uppermost moorland (grassy highland) area above the forest belt. From 1971, the government implemented a land resettlement scheme and moved the entire group of highlanders to lower regions, which initially supported a wide range of wildlife such as elephants, buffaloes and monkeys. The area was cleared for farming purposes with the exception of a narrow upper band of the forest. The cleared forest belt now hosts several villages that include Kopsiro, Emia, Kipsirok, and Kaptama. As recent as this year (2007), the clans that constitute the Sabaot ethnic group perpetually conflict allegedly over land. The Bok, Kony and Sabiiny feel that the *Masopesiyek* (Masop/Dorobo) people are the cause of conflicts in the Mt Elgon area. They argue that "they were brought in the area recently and they now claim that other clans have invaded the land given to them" (Kirui; Juma; Naibei; Kimai; 2005; O.I). The *Masopesiyek* (Masop/Dorobo), on their part, feel that their cousins despise and want to dominate them. They argue that administrative positions and resources reserved for them should not be appropriated by others feigning common ancestry

(Tenderesi; Takur; Juma; Wambete; Simotwo; Kitelo; Kaberio; Musia; Kiyen; Chenjeni; Moli; 2005; O.I).

Bukusu-Sabaot Identity Struggles in the Wake of Political Pluralism in Kenya

The struggle for plural democracy was characterized by ethnic polarization, the formation of ethno-regional parties and the creation of ethnic districts (Kakai, 2000:195-196; Cowen & Kanyinga, 2002; Maupeu, 2005:1). Most Bukusu were in the opposition while the Sabaot remained steadfast in KANU. The prevailing perception was that if Masinde Muliro, a Bukusu leader, ascended to power, the Sabaot would be driven to Uganda and they would lose all their land. The fears of the Sabaot were immediately aroused. The normal politics that people meet and exchange became a source of conflict. Most Bukusu were optimistic that if FORD-K came to power, they stood to benefit while the Sabaot were pessimistic about a FORD win arguing that it could dim their hopes and dreams. With these conflicting perceptions, the seeds of conflicts and clashes were sown.

Many of the interviewees (Table 6.7) contended that the 1991/92 ethnic clashes between the Bukusu and the Sabaot had less to do with land but more with politics. The issue of land and resources was used to cloud the real issue so that people could be mobilized. Political entrepreneurs claimed that all non-indigenous ethnic groups who allegedly supported the opposition had to be driven away from the Mt Elgon area to influence voting patterns in the presidential, parliamentary and civic elections. The violence, therefore, could be seen as strong-arm tactics used by the government to intimidate recalcitrant opposition supporters. Only 6 (10%) said the clashes were about land against an overwhelming 50 (83.3%) who said that the acts of violence were political.

Table 6.7: Causes of Ethnic Conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot

Causes of Ethnic Conflicts	Frequency	%
Tribalism	1	1.7
Land	6	10.0
Politics	50	83.3
Don't Know	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

Probably the interaction of youth (the participation of young men) and ethnicity (related males/fraternal groups) were fertile grounds for the 1991/92 mayhem among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Evidence from the field (Kiboi; Takur; Mobutu, Munialo; Kimalewa; Kirong', 2005; O.I) indicates that the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic conflict of 1991/92 had an explicit gender dimension given the involvement of related young males between 14 and 35 years who played a major role in co-ordination and conduct of the mayhem. The participation of young people in wars seems to be a worldwide phenomenon and has persisted across the ages (See Honwana, 1999).

The respondents (Kiboi; Takur; Mobutu, Munialo; Kimalewa; Kirong', 2005; O.I) indicated that ethnic sentiments were manipulated for political ends. Aseka (1989) and Gecaga (2001: 159-174) point out that colonial and post-independent Kenya's socio-economic policies caused considerable rivalry between the various communities living in the Rift Valley, Central and Western provinces. Land that was appropriated during the colonial period led to the displacement of some ethnic groups. These tensions were aggravated during the post-independence period due to politicized ethnicity and uneven distribution of socio-economic benefits. Nzongola-Ntalaja (1997) also points out that the condition for ethnic conflicts in Africa was created historically through colonial and post-

colonial government policies (See also Berman & Lonsdale, 1992; Lonsdale, 1994; Cowen & Kanyinga, 2002, Kaarsholm , 2006: 1-2).

The Effects of Bukusu-Sabaot Struggles on Daily Life and the Democratic Process

The Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities as manifested in Kenyan politics and economic situations tend to have adverse consequences on positive communication, mutual understanding and co-operation within society. The FGD conducted with the Sabaot raised the fact that “there is no inch of tarmac, electricity and other essential infrastructures” and they blame this state of affairs on the Bukusu. On their part, the Bukusu blame the Kalenjin (read the Sabaot) for their political marginalization during the reign of former president Moi (Machani; Sitati; 2005; O.I).

The grievances among the Sabaot are factual. The infrastructure in Mt Elgon District is in a very sorry state. According to RoP (2002), there was a total of 345.5 kilometers of earth and murrum road in Mt Elgon District. The district has no railway line, no airport, no airstrip, no waterway, and no bank facility. There are only 27 public service vehicles plying the district. Only 55 households have electricity. To the Sabaot, the donkey has been the main means of transport in the interior of the country where roads are too poor for motor vehicles. The Bukusu are also justified in their claim of marginalization. Nevertheless, both communities are wrong to blame each other for the grievances they have against the state.

Mt Elgon District has many springs such as Kamukuywa, Sosio, Kimilili, Kibisi, Kuywa (Terem), Kapkateny, Malakisi, Siti and Lwakhakha that collect water from district and

then drain into neighbouring Bungoma District (RoP, 2002). The Bukusu depend on rivers originating from sources located within Sabaot territory for drinking water. The water falls under the Old Kibichori Community Water Supply whose officials are elected at intervals. The Bukusu (Machani; Sitati; Kimalewa; Kimungui; 2005; O.I) believe that the Sabaot would deliberately contaminate the water at the source by dumping dead donkeys in it causing the community to be afflicted by typhoid. The Sabaot (Ng'ania; Kirui; Sitati; Machani; Wamunyokoli; Baraza; Kiboi; Wanjala; Bwobi; Maiba; 2005; O.I) deny these accusations arguing that in fact the water only benefits their enemies. They cite the fact that the water originates from their region yet they are not allowed to use it for irrigation purposes. The Bukusu allege that the Sabaot normally sabotage the chlorination of the water so that they can use it for irrigation purposes (It has been observed that chlorinated water spoils crops). The result is typhoid and other stomach ailments reported among the Bukusu. In extreme cases, people die because of drinking contaminated water. The Sabaot feel justified using what is theirs by right to irrigate their crops. Such exchanges among the Bukusu and the Sabaot indicate that the tension that exists between them extends to their daily interactions, infrastructure, water and the political sphere.

Ethnicities play a central role in political mobilization and competitive politics among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Each ethnic group hopes to assume state power and access state resources. Yet it is also possible that ethnicity privileges men's chances relative to those of women in ascending to power. Women are not constitutionally barred from participating in elective politics but they are socialized from early through myths, symbols and rituals to leave politics and property acquisition to men (father, brother, uncle, among others). Men, on the other hand, are encouraged to jostle for power and acquire property. The study

sought to establish from the respondents who best represent either the Bukusu or Sabaot ethnic group. Most respondents 39 (65%) said both men and women while a paltry 19 (31.7%) who said men (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8: Who Best Represents Your Ethnic Group in terms of Gender

Ethnic Representation - Gender	Frequency	%
Men	19	31.7
Women	1	1.7
Both	39	65.0
N/A	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Nevertheless, the views made by the respondents in Table 6.11 are far from the reality on the ground. Respondents (Takur, Wepukhulu; Kimungui; Kiboi; Naibei; Kirong', Toskin; Munyole; Mutiso; Telewa; Waswa; Walubuka; Machani, 2005: O.I) were unanimous that men exclusively hold positions of leadership in Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts. None of the chiefs or their assistants in either Chwele or Kopsiro divisions is a woman. In fact, the two communities have never had a woman chief or any other higher office in the provincial administration. Not even a single woman has ever been elected to parliament among the Bukusu. The same applies to the Sabaot.

6.3 Gender in the Bukusu-Sabaot Ethnic Conflicts

It emerged that young men are easy to mobilize and arm to fight individually or as part of a unit to defend their community since they were socialized during puberty rituals. In the traditional society, warriors took along women and young girls who they married or raised as potential brides. However, this trend seems to have been tamed with the rise of state institutions such as the army, the police, the judiciary, the legislature, among others.

What kind of conditions makes this massive participation possible? How and why are men recruited? Probably this is because the construction of gender specific Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities is often marked by the preparation of males to defend the community (masculinity) that is often encouraged by femininity, especially the popular notion that women are innocent, fragile and in need of male protection. The respondents (Ng'ania; Kirui; Sitati; Machani; Wamunyokoli; Baraza; Kiboi; Wanjala; Bwobi; Maiba; 2005; O.I) were unanimous that the Bukusu and the Sabaot encourage their men to be brave and to defend the community while at the same time encouraging the opposite behavior among women. The notion that the man is the defender and protector of his community (masculinity) is often inculcated in young people at an early age through role-playing, initiation rites and other socialization practices. Similarly, young girls from early are socialized to be subservient and to seek security and protection from men. This encourages boys and men to seek to show their masculinity through boasting, fist fights and ultimately ethnic conflicts.

During the research it emerged that the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic groups are stereotyped. One Sabaot respondent (Kirui, 2005:O.I) intimated that, "The Bukusu wish to dominate us...finish us...annihilate us", while one Bukusu (Wamunyokoli, 2005:O.I) said that, "These people are secretive... they can't be trusted...they can slaughter at the slightest provocation". The Sabaot also say that men born of uncircumcised women in reference to Bukusu men cannot defeat them. Respondents (Kiboi; Kirui; Machani; Wamunyokoli, 2005; O.I) were unanimous that stereotypes negatively affect the relation between the Bukusu and the Sabaot by discouraging intermarriage and generally social mingling. Respondents also attribute the prevalence of conflicts to stereotypes.

Stereotypes are not the preserve of the relations between ethnic groups but also among clans that together constitute an ethnic group. For example, among the Sabaot, the *Masopesiyek* allege that their cousins (Bok and Soi/Someek) despise them. Most respondents from the *Masopesiyek* clan (Tenderesi; Takur; Juma; Wambete; Simotwo; Kitelo; Kaberio; Musia; Kiyen; Chenjeni; Moli; 2005; O.I) dislike the prevailing perception that they are still backward: “*Wanasema tunanuka punda*” (Trans. “They say we smell like donkeys”). From the researcher’s observation, men are the ones who use donkeys for transportation though women may use it for doing simple domestic chores like fetching water. The researcher also noted that men were the source and target of these provocative utterances. However, both men and women helped in the spread of such statements to a larger audience. These stereotypes help to explain the current intra-ethnic clashes at Chebyuk settlement scheme among the Sabaot.

Though women and children constitute the bulk of the victims of ethnic strife, this study established (Table 6.9) that both men and women play significant roles in the perpetuation of acts of violence. The respondents’ testimonies (Naibei; Kirong’; Kiyen; Simotwo; Kirui; 2005; O. I.) indicate that in the past, women sometimes accompanied men to battle and often shouted to urge the warriors on. During such occasions sometimes, women went out in front, and then the men had to go forward, or they would be shamed before their wives and girlfriends. Some female interviewees suggested that they would feel ashamed for the failure of their men to defend their community against external attack or showed any signs of cowardice. They also suggested that they would counsel their children not to marry poor prospective suitors. In the past, poverty was associated with cowardice because property acquisition was mostly through raids and wars. Both the Bukusu and the Sabaot sing songs

mocking young suitors by calling them cowards unless they proved their courage by defending their communities or raiding other communities to raise dowry. Indeed, women refuse to be married to 'cowards' and only want to be associated with 'heroes'. Of course, 'heroes' are people who have successfully looted cattle, sheep, or goats from the nearby 'enemy' communities.

Table 6.9: Women play a Role in Ethnic Conflicts

If Women Contribute to Conflicts	Frequency	%
Yes	47	78.3
No	11	18.3
No Opinion	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Respondents' (Simiyu; Mulongo; Munialo; Mukanda; Walubuka; Kimalewa; 2005; O.I) pointed out that outstanding prestige and reputation gained as a warrior among the Bukusu and the Sabaot was measured by the number of people one kills in the battlefields and/or the number of cattle/animals brought home after raids. Those who died in war were also often remembered and esteemed. Women within the Bukusu community testify to the fact that they have named their children after famous Bukusu warriors who died in battle defending the community or those who led the community into victory against neighboring communities. The story of chivalry and valor is not unique to the Bukusu for the Sabaot also admire their brave and great men whose names are handed down through generations. The women usually welcome warriors back from battle and ask them to relate their fighting and plundering experiences. Mothers, sisters, and even lovers of such brave men compose songs of praise for them. The women who have just given birth go to these warriors and ask them to allow them to name their children after them. Ironically, there is

considerable evidence that men who return from conflict situations are more likely to be violent towards their wives.

Times have changed, but the expectation that men have to defend their community against external attacks is still prevalent and children accordingly socialized to reinforce masculine and feminine values. Women implicitly support and prolong communal conflicts given the role that they play in socialization and transmission of cultural values. There are of course cases where women have used violence in defense of their goals. It is, therefore, apparent that both men and women share blame for the prevalence of communal conflicts.

In the contemporary society, it is often common to term cattle rustling as motivated by the desire to acquire wealth. However, more often people forget that the motivation for possessing such wealth is to use it to acquire a bride or marry another wife. This is because in economic terms, wealth creation takes different forms for the two genders. Girls brought wealth home through marriage while for boys it was until recently by hunting, raiding, or through war. Boys and men participated in hunting expeditions in search for bridewealth. Boys could also acquire wealth from their sister's brideprice or through inheritance from their father. Okot p'Bitek (1989) dramatizes the differential ways of wealth creation between men and women in the pre-colonial period thus:

At the time Ocol was still wooing me
 My breasts stood at ninety degrees;
 I walked like the crane: neck up in the air
 My brothers were full of praise, calling me Bringer-of-Cows
 For, the rhythm of my breasts beckoned bride-wealth:

Prepare the kraal

Prepare the kraal

The cows are coming.

From these accounts, one can see that the unconscious desire to acquire or capture women for marriage has played a much bigger role in traditional society conflicts (besides competition over pasture, cattle, water, trading rights or revenge) than previously admitted. Despite the changes ushered in by contemporary trends, young men are still pressured to acquire wealth through whatever means to found families and provide necessities of life.

The study established that most youths among the Bukusu and the Sabaot do not have a stable source of income. While some engage in petty trade, farming, transport sector as *matatu* crews and others are in college apparently they have more time on their hands. This may partly explain why young men have thus been the most active in direct violent encounters between the two communities. Silberschmidt (2004: 242) underscores the link between sexual potency with masculinities of toughness and aggression as mediated by poverty and blocked avenues for educational and career advancement. While sexual might gives social value to men, sexual modesty gives social esteem to women.

The predictable image of women and children as the first victims of communal violence is not supported by data. Interviews with men revealed that there are circumstances when during conflicts between the Bukusu and the Sabaot men were in most cases killed while women were raped or tortured. Elsewhere, documentary evidence (Gecaga, 2003:20-21) indicates that Kikuyu raiders (mostly young men) would capture Maasai girls for marriage.

Similarly, women especially young ones of marriageable age or younger were taken as brides or potential brides for those still young or as a source of bride wealth in the conflicts between the Nuer and the Dinka of Sudan, and the Kikuyu and the Kamba (or Embu and Mbeere).

According to Table 6.10, during the 1991/92 ethnic clashes between the Bukusu and the Sabaot 32 (53.3%) respondents said that women were likely to be raped while 14 (16.7%) and 6 (10%) said they were likely to be killed and tortured respectively. Some respondents 16.6% said that they were likely to be forgiven. Yet when it comes to men, the verdict was almost unanimous with 96.7% saying they were likely to be killed. These findings concur with trends elsewhere. For example, research shows that several years preceding the Burundi massacres and the Rwanda genocide tension between the Tutsi and the Hutu had risen to alarming levels. Educated Hutu males were especially targeted by the Tutsi dominated army in Burundi in early 1972 after an uprising by Hutu extremists. During the Rwanda genocide in 1994, Tutsi and Hutu moderate males were also the target of Hutu extremists (Callahan, 1998; Kaarsholm, 2006: 2).

Table 6.10: What happens to Women in Conflicts?

Experiences of Women in Conflicts	Frequency	%
Forgiven	10	16.6
Raped	32	53.3
Killed	14	16.7
Tortured	6	10.0
No Opinion	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Rape and sexual intimidation are common features in communal conflicts. Ferris (2005) attributes the state of affairs to the breakdown of social norms and mores. Respondents

said that rape is a deliberate policy to injure the ego of the males of the enemy community. Even when women are tortured or killed, the aim is simply to intimidate and demoralize their male relatives.

6.4 Gender and Conflict Resolution among the Bukusu and the Sabaot

The traditional way of handling ethnic conflicts can be faulted, especially the fact that both men and women are not effectively represented in efforts to build peace. Male elders are the ones most likely to represent their communities in peace and reconciliatory forums and missions (though elderly women occasionally given token representation). For example, when in 1992 elders met the then ruling president Moi in the wake of the ethnic clashes, the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic communities were represented as follows: John Wamalabe (Bukusu; one of the respondents), Enos Kiberenge (Sabaot); Zablun (Sabaot; deceased 1999); Wilberforce Kisiero (Sabaot); Jonathan Bomuji (Sabaot); Peter Kukuni (Sabaot; current assistant chief, then Kanu youth); Karatasi Chepkorir (Sabaot); Brahim Odera (Teso); and Phillip Masanga (Bukusu) (Wamalabe, 2005: O.I). Elders are die-hard protectors of the past way of living that emphasized on masculinity, valor and chivalry in war. Respondents confirmed that permission to engage in intra or extra ethnic conflicts is often sanctioned by elders. Evans Pritchard in his study of the Nuer of Southern Sudan noted that Nuer (male) elders gave permission to Nuer young men to raid their traditional neighbor enemies, the Dinka (Evans-Pritchard, 1961).

This evidence contradicts the findings drawn from numerous research initiatives undertaken in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and Somaliland). The studies

observed that colonial rule and various postcolonial governments have either suppressed or distorted traditional institutions hence rendering them ineffective in the consolidation of peace and social harmony in today's society. Before colonial rule, peaceful settlement of conflicts that arose between individuals, families and various groups was encouraged and implemented through traditional social institutions often clan-based and composed of elders (Mbennah, 2001: ix-x).

Ethnic conflict prevention strategies can be either operational (aimed to resolve an immediate crisis) or structural (addressing the root causes of the conflict). Kisiang'ani (2002:13) vouches for the dismantling of identities that are also the root cause of human suffering. For him, human beings coalesce around identities that are not only irrelevant but also iconoclastic to the existence of humanity. This study dealt with structural roots to ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and Sabaot communities. It emerged from the research that as long as inheritance, acquisition and ownership of land and other resources remain the preserve of related males' competition between lineages, clans and ethnic groups will never cease to occur. I, therefore, concluded the fieldwork by asking the respondents if they ever envisioned a post ethnic society. The responses (Table 6.11) were diverse with 31 (51.7%) saying 'Yes' while 26 (43%) said 'No' and the rest 3 (5%) said "Don't Know".

Table 6.11: Respondents Envision a Post Ethnic Society

Envisioning Post Ethnic Society	Frequency	%
Yes	31	51.7
No	26	43.3
Don't Know	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

In the past geography, other natural factors, sparse population and the lack of a common system of communication could not allow humans to interact as closely as we do today. Therefore, society was adapted in such a way to externalize conflict and solidify the group ranging from the family to face off external aggression. Yet exploration, missionary activity, curiosity, trade, colonialism, and the global civil movement have opened humanity from diverse regions that were initially isolated from each other.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the constructed Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and the accompanied gender imbalances interact and mutually condition, augment, challenge one another in Kenyan politics and economic situations; and second, the construction of ethnicities is a means of adaptation to externalize conflict and solidify human groups ranging from the family, lineages, clans and ethnic groups to face off external aggression. The taboo on incest, which is almost universal and characteristic of the Bukusu and Sabaot communities, helps to avoid competition and conflict within the family. The survival of the family rests on the restriction of sex among its members and the consequent need for other family units as sources of spouses. The taboo normally extends to close (and sometimes distant) relatives for the same purpose thus bringing into its fold lineages and clans (especially the clans that ascribe to exogamy). Thus faced with possible external threats and competition for mating partners, structures such as the family, lineages, clans, tribes, ethnic groups, etc. are constructed in such a way that they ensure the survival of humans. The construction of identities targets to externalize conflict but not solving or eradicating

conflict *per se*. Therefore, despite the externalization of enmity, people conflict within and between the various constructed identities.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings, provides conclusions and offers recommendations based on the findings of this study. The study was a qualitative research in which the researcher has used an inductive approach to explore the experiences of the participants.

The findings of this study indicate that the participants have experienced a range of emotions and feelings towards the various constructed identities. The study also indicates that the participants have experienced a range of behaviours and actions towards the various constructed identities. The study also indicates that the participants have experienced a range of attitudes and beliefs towards the various constructed identities. The study also indicates that the participants have experienced a range of cognitions and perceptions towards the various constructed identities.

5.2 Summary of Findings

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CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings, presents conclusions and offers recommendations based on the findings of the research. This study about how gender is relevant in the construction and manifestation of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts: how ethnic identities are constructed, reinforced in symbols, myths and rituals, and how constructed identities manifest in the struggle for power, resources and ultimately as ethnic conflicts. The main research objective was to investigate how the interplay between gender and ethnicity, contribute to the emergence, escalation and persistence of ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

7.2 Summary of Findings

Ethnic conflicts, when studied from an ethno-nationalism perspective, are rarely studied through gender lens. This is exactly what this work tried to correct. This study introduced and analyzed the interplay of gender and ethnicity utilizing feminist modes of analysis by posing the paucity of gender as an analytical category in a comparative approach of two Kenyan communities. The study highlighted cross-culturally defined ethnic and gender phenomena based on Spivak's Subaltern theory. Ethnic and other social divisions and identities that generate politics of inclusion, exclusion or difference in construction of hegemonies of dominance and subordination may infect both masculinity and femininity. These politics affect not only the gender hierarchy but also the hierarchical relationships

among various social groups within the ethnic communities. Through field research, Focused Group Discussions (FGDS), field observations and secondary sources, we were interested in unraveling dynamics of dominated gender experiences and have attempted to demonstrate how this social domination is legitimated and constituted in the experience of the Bukusu and Sabaot men and women. As such, the study illustrates how this domination is given public utterance in the very being of ethnic but gendered subjects, the majority of whom may justifiably bear the subaltern label.

The research established that the unequal relations between men and women (gender) inform the construction of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities. It emerged that women do not in most cases play a significant kinship role and they do not bestow ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is attained through men (the father or husband) with the individual belonging to the father's lineage. Therefore, gender contributes to the construction of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities and facilitates men to deviously mobilize against each other in similarly constructed ethnic identities. Consequently, men project the strength of the group through ethnic conflicts because the construction of gender-specific Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities is often marked by the preparation of males to defend the community (masculinity) that is often encouraged by femininity.

Most of the respondents indicated that the Bukusu and Sabaot iconography (Symbols), myths and rituals play a significant role in the relations between the two communities. The importance is to perpetuate separate identities in society and also to legitimize prior rights to some resources by people who are thus categorized. Indeed, origin, migration and other myths have played a role in distinguishing the Sabaot from the Bukusu and thus remain

sources of contestation and conflict. Indeed, whereas women and children constitute the bulk of the victims of ethnic strife, the research showed that both men and women play significant roles in the perpetuation of acts of violence. Both the Bukusu and the Sabaot during initiation sing songs mocking young suitors by calling them cowards unless they prove their courage by defending their communities or raiding other communities to acquire or protect prior rights of resource ownership.

From the findings, most of the respondents indicated that Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities restrict property ownership, property acquisition, economic roles and external relations with other ethnic identities in the hands of men thus promoting intense competition between lineages, clans and often ethnic groups. Land among the Bukusu and the Sabaot is more than just economic possession for land conveys to its owner both economic and social (patriarchal) status.

As was evident from the research, most respondents do not reside where they were born. Nevertheless, most of those who have moved and settled in new locations did so as adults due to resettlement (for the Sabaot) but also due to marriage (both Sabaot and Bukusu). It emerged that most men are born and allocated land in the neighborhood. Wives come to live in the husband's village not the other way round. Accordingly, the men of the village are blood relatives of one another in most cases. As such, there is disproportionate access to political and administrative positions, land and other socio-economic benefits for men than women among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

The construction of ethnic identity is a means of adaptation to externalize conflict and to solidify human groups ranging from the family to face off external aggression often

through stereotypes. Indeed, it emerged that the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic groups are stereotyped and most respondents attributed the prevalence of ethnic conflicts to stereotypes. Stereotypes greatly influence the patterns of marriage choices and social interactions. Even then, research findings indicate that people from either community easily cross the symbolic boundaries separating them. Respondents mentioned trade and marriage as playing a major role to bring together the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Traders at Chwele market, the meeting ground for the two communities, indicate that trade in farm produce, domestic animals and manufactured products acts as a check on aggressive tendencies. However, most of the respondents said there exists subtle discrimination across ethnic boundaries while some said there exists outright discrimination.

Research findings show that men and women in a way help provoke ethnic conflicts. Research also indicates that there is inequitable gender participation in the peace process among the Bukusu and the Sabaot. This has had a decisive impact in situations of Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic conflicts and their resolution.

This study used Spivak's subaltern theory to analyze and interpret the findings of the Bukusu-Sabaot conflict. Spivak best demonstrated the utility of her Subaltern theory to tackle themes of power and power relations by analyzing how subjects are colonized by modes of address, how they are enlisted within discourses of identity and excluded from the discourses of power. For Spivak, the project of recovering the 'subaltern' is best served by locating her separateness from the dominant processes (lineage systems). This study used Spivak's Subaltern theory to grasp the location of men and women in the political and socio-economic stratification of the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic communities in order to

explain why they conflict. It emerged that the control over women is often mediated through the control of land. Spivak's theory appreciates the reality that men too are gendered beings and women are not an undifferentiated group. Men and women in the biological sense are at peace with each other and the environment but as gendered beings (embedded in ethnicities) conflicts are bound to occur.

7.3 Conclusion

The study's conclusion is that inequality between men and women manifest in the Bukusu and Sabaot ethnic identities, therefore, gender as an analytical category is useful when trying to understand the Bukusu-Sabaot relations.

7.4 Recommendations Emanating From the Study

Based on the foregoing findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. The exclusion of the female gender is evident in the Bukusu/ Sabaot peace process initiatives but a tailored peace process is only possible when both men and women are effectively represented and both equally participate. The state of affairs needs to be remedied by the state and members of the two communities in the spirit of promoting dialogue and equal participation.
2. Trade plays a major role in bringing together the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Trading communities it appears with time tend to forget their differences in favor of the benefits that accrue to them from trade. Despite the latent and sometimes manifest climate of hostility, most of those interviewed agreed that trade has contributed a

lot to the good relations between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities. However, trade among and between the Bukusu and the Sabaot is mostly the preserve of women except for relatively larger business enterprises. For trade to serve its role, both men and women in the two districts should be encouraged to trade with each other.

3. The state should come up with a land policy or establish a land commission to look into the issue of land tenure and expedite issuance of title deeds for people who bought or were allocated land to curb the resurgence of the clashes.
4. The state and civil society organizations should create public awareness so that members of the public can respect valid documents of land ownership. Unlike in the past where no one owned land, today an individual believes in the possession of exclusive rights to some piece of land. The treatment of land as property has ushered in an era of individual ownership of property.

7.5. Areas for Further Research

1. The study found that inequalities in power-structured ethnic units inform the existing under-representation of women in positions of power and influence. So, it would be worthwhile for another study to be done to examine how the rise of ethnically-based parties that accompanied multi-partism in Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts has partly contributed to the presence of very few successful women in elective politics among the Bukusu and the Sabaot.

2. It emerged from the study that trade brings together communities that are perceived to be different. A study should also be done on how gender informs trade between the Bukusu and Sabaot communities and thus inter-ethnic relations.
3. The study established that there exist intra-ethnic conflicts among the various Sabaot clans over the distribution of land in the Chebyuk Settlement Scheme. A study on this issue is necessary to establish the causes and dynamics of these conflicts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1- Map of Kenya Showing the Location of the Study Districts



APPENDIX II: Interview/FGD Guide For the Respondents

A. Interview

I. Place

2. Date

3. Time

B. Respondent's profile

4. Name

5. Age (optional)

6. Occupation () Salaried () Business () Farmer/Herder () Housewife () Unemployed

7. Gender () Male () Female

8. Highest level of education () None () Primary () Secondary () College () University

9. Were you born here? () Yes () No () N/A

If No, briefly explain

.....
.....

10. If you were not born here, how old were you when you came here? () 1-12 () 13-19
(2) 19+ () Born Here () N/A

11. Ethnic Group () Bukusu () Sabaot () Other

12. Clan

13. Do you have any Kinship role? () Yes () No (2) No response)

14. Familiarity with the language () Yes () No () Both () No response

15. How do you get your identity? () Through Men (Father/Husband) () Through Women (Mother/Wife) () Through Both (Men/Women) () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

16. Does the surname play in the assignation of identity i.e. self and group identity? If yes, what symbols, myths and rituals are valued by your community as a sign of identity? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

17. Do women play any important role in giving you an identity? If yes, in what ways? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

18. If someone said something bad about the Sabaot or Bukusu ethnic group, would you feel almost as if they had said something bad about you? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

19. Do you attach any stereotypes to the Sabaot or Bukusu? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

20. Do these stereotypes play a role in the constrained relations between the two communities? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

21. Have you personally experienced prejudice and discriminatory behavior in the hands of a Bukusu or Sabaot? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

22. Do you know of anyone who has experienced prejudice and discrimination in the hands of a Sabaot or Bukusu? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

23. Have you encountered any problems in your attempt to lease or purchase land?
() Yes () No () No response

If your answer is Yes describe briefly the nature of the problem(s) you encountered

.....
.....

24. Are Symbols, Myths and Rituals important in reinforcing your ethnic identity? () Yes () No () No response

If Yes, briefly explain

.....
.....

25. Do you freely cross the symbolic boundaries that divide the communities? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

26. When people from either the Bukusu or Sabaot cross the symbolic boundaries are they discriminated against? () Yes () No () Somewhat () Don't Know

Briefly explain

.....
.....

27. Do the Bukusu/Sabaot attach much value to circumcision? () Yes () No () No response

If Yes, briefly explain

.....
.....

28. How do you view uncircumcised men or women?

.....
.....

29. How do you regard a person born of uncircumcised woman?

.....
.....

30. Based on you views on circumcision how do you view the Sabaot or Bukusu?

.....
.....

31. Would you object if a close relative married a Sabaot or Bukusu? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

32. Would other(s) object if a close relative married a Sabaot or Bukusu? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

33. Do you know of any relation of yours who is married to a Sabaot or Bukusu? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

34. Who in terms of gender owns land in your community? () Men () Women () Both

() No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

35. Do women own land in your community? If yes, under what circumstances? () Inheritance () Purchase () Government Allocation () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

36. Do women inherit clan land? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

37. Who fights over land in your community? () Men () Women () Both () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

38. Is trade important in the shaping of the inter-ethnic relations between the two communities? () Yes () No () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

39. In terms of gender who mostly participate in trade? () Men () Women () Both () No response

Briefly explain

.....
.....

40. In your opinion, who best represents your ethnic group? () Male () Female () Both () N/A

Why?

.....
.....

41. Why do ethnic differences often lead to conflict or violence?

.....
.....

42. Are their behaviors in your community that is considered brave or cowardly in your community? () Yes () No () N/A

Briefly explain

.....
.....

43. Who constitutes a warrior in Sabaot or Bukusu community? () Young Men () Young Women () Mature Men () Mature Women () Old Men () No comment

Briefly explain

.....
.....

44. Are warriors related to each other? () Yes () No () No comment

Briefly explain

.....
.....

45. Do women play any role in ethnic conflicts? () Yes () No () N/A

Briefly explain

.....
.....

46. What happens to men in combat? () Killed () Raped () Forgiven () Nothing ()
Taken as Husbands () Tortured () No Opinion

Briefly explain

.....
.....

47. What happens to women and children in combat? () Killed () Raped () Forgiven ()
Nothing () Taken as War Captives () Tortured () No Opinion

Briefly explain

.....
.....

48. What motivated the 1991/1992 clashes? () Land () Politics () Water () Cultural
Differences () Don't Know

Briefly explain

.....
.....

50. Were there other clashes after 1992? If yes what caused the clashes? () Yes () No ()
N/A

Briefly explain

.....
.....

51. Do you envision a society without ethnic conflicts? () Yes () No () N

Briefly explain

.....
.....

Names of Respondents	Gender	Ethnic Group	Clan	Age	Highest Level of Education
Ng'ania Geoffrey Sabila	M	Sabaot	Kapchana	32	University
Kimasai Ibrahim Kengere	M	Sabaot	Kapchesekwo	79	Illiterate
Wasai Peter	M	Bukusu	Bayundo	49	Professional Medical Training
Kirui Benson Chemiat	M	Sabaot (Bok)	Kapmukeek	61	A' Level
Bera Julius Teek	M	Sabaot (Bok)	Kamrunik	63	O' Level
Ndiwa Japheth Masache	M	Bukusu	Banamulingi	34	O' Level
Ndiwa Robai	F	Sabaot (Masop)	Kapchesongor	30	Illiterate
Simotwo	F	Sabaot (Masop)	Kapchesongor	85	Grade 6, CEE, KPE
Wambete Francis	M	Luhya (Kabras)	Kapchesongor	65	O' Level
Wambete Jane	F	Sabaot (Masop)	Bashikhwi	55	Form Two
Takur Johnson	M	Sabaot (Bok)	Kapchesongor	55	Standard Eight
Naibei Joina	F	Luhya	Bashikhwi	41	O' Level
Kirong' Lydia	F	Sabaot (Masop)	Kapchemony	32	Not Educated
Naibei Titus	M	Sabaot (Bok)	Kaptomet	21	No data
Mobutu Gatherewa	M	Sabaot (Koony)	Kapjenwach	76	Standard Eight
Juma Judith	F	Sabaot	Kakumniek	62	Illiterate
Kitelo Andrew	M	Sabaot (Bok)		36	O' Level
Kitelo Eunice	F	Sabaot (Masop)	Chepsengor	72	Not gone to school
Moli Josephat	M	Bukusu	Bafumbula	39	O' Level
Chenjeni Dina	F	Bukusu	Basakha	47	Std. 4
Kaberio Phillis	F	Sabaot (Masop)	Kapter	35	Std. 8
Chepkondol Masai	M	Sabaot (Masop)	Kapter	66	Form 1
Tenderesi Kileshi	M	Sabaot (Masop)	Kapptommet	79	O' Level
Kimai Godfrey	M	Sabaot (Koony)		33	O' Level
Musia Anne	F	Sabaot (Koony)	Kabyakan	28	Masters Degree
Kiyen Phanice	F	Sabaot (Koony)	Kaptamachick	33	Higher National Diploma
Wamunyokoli Timeteo	M	Bukusu	Bakhasame	65	O' Level
Machani Kennedy	M	Bukusu	Bakibeti	38	O' Level
Wanjala Alex	M	Bukusu	Babulo	33	Form 1
Bwobi Sammy	M	Sabaot	Kapnaqknakk	33	University
Baraza Bridged Maiba	F	Sabaot	Kapkunek-SEARO	31	University
Sitati Timona	M	Bukusu	Baliuli	61	Form Two
Mutiso D.N.	M	Kamba	No data	30	University
Walubuka Elizabeth	F	Bukusu	Babuya	32	Standard Eight
Mukanda Diprose	F	Bukusu	Balako	31	Literacy class
Simiyu Fridah	F	Bukusu	Bamula	53	Form Two
Munialo Margaret	F	Bukusu	Bamula	32	Form 2 (KAPE)
Masinde Joseph	M	Bukusu	Batecho	39	Std six
Munialo Bonfice	M	Bukusu	Omukwangwa, Om	64	Form one
Mulongo Doris	F	Bukusu	Omukwangwa, Om	48	O' Level
Wandati Joash	M	Bukusu	Basibembe	54	O' Level
Wepukhulu Japheth	M	Bukusu	Omuechalo	61	Class three
Kimungui Michael	M	Sabaot (Koony)	Kitiemek	48	A' Level
Wanamaiabe John	M	Bukusu	Babuta Baolo	76	O' Level
Kiboi Peter Keen	M	Bukusu	Omumwaya	49	Std seven
Simiyu Fred	M	Bukusu	Babuya	63	O' Level
Simiyu Beatrice	F	Bukusu	Babambo Bawania	55	O' Level

Wabuke Samuel	M	Bukusu	Babuya Banawam	55	University
Tobokwo Moses	M	Luhya (Omuniya)	Omurende	61	College level
Waswa Joseph	M	Bukusu	Omuala	39	A' Level
Machio Shila	M	Bukusu	Batukwika	30	Diploma
Munyole Henry	M	Bukusu	Batilu	42	Audit Education P1
Wesuswa Hassan	M	Bukusu	Omukiyabi	36	O' Level
Mutaki Scolastica	F	Bukusu	Omukitwika Omuk	29	Std 8 ekhale Mechanics
Wanjala Collins	M	Bukusu	Omulako Omusiam	21	University student
Kimalewa Moses	M	Bukusu	Omualo	58	University student
Mukenya Isaac	M	Bukusu	Omumwaya	31	University student
Telewa Kennedy	M	Sabaot (Sabiiny)	No data	23	Graduate student/teacher
Kapareti Wekesa	F	Bukusu	Omumwaya	23	University Student
Toskin Robin	M	Sabaot (Sabiiny)	No data	31	Graduate Student/Teacher