ROLE OF INFORMAL WOMEN GROUPS IN PEACE BUILDING IN

MOYALE SUB-COUNTY, MARSABIT COUNTY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Signature …………………………………Date …………………………………

Dr. Tom Ondicho

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my husband, my children: Jibril and Nabil, my mother and my entire family for their unconditional support that led to the production of this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBO   Community Bases Organization

CDG   Centre for Governance and Development

GoK   Government of Kenya

HODI   Horn of Africa Development Initiative

KNAP   Kenya National Action Plan

KNBS   Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

MPND   Ministry of Planning and National Development

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NSC   National Steering Committee

SGBV   Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SID   Society for International Development

SSR   Security Sector Reform

UN   United Nations

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Fund

UNIFEM   United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNSCR   United Nations Security Council Resolution

ABSTRACT

The overall goal of this study was to investigate the role the informal women groups in peace building within the Moyale sub-county in Marsabit County. The study's specific objectives were to: to document how informal women groups are organized; to explore the levels of their engagement in peace building and to delve into the challenges these groups in peace building. This study was guided by a theory of an American philosopher by the name John Dewey (1922), who played a significant role in the development of the philosophy of pragmatism, but largely referred to it as instrumentalism. The study was descriptive and employed qualitative data collection methods including Focus Group Discussions, case narratives and key informant interviews. Study participants were purposively recruited from women groups within Moyale Sub-County region who have participated in peace building processes for over five (5) years. The findings reveal the vast contributions the informal women groups have brought in peace building processes. They have been organizing themselves and participating in the peace processes at the household level to the sub county level. This is despite the challenges that they have been due to the culture of the communities who are cited as overwhelmingly responsible for relegating women to a lower status to that of men. There is high illiteracy level among women that has led to the informal women groups and its members not to be in peace processes, particularly at the formal and decision making levels, it is of great concern that their contributions are recognized and that they are encouraged to participate in peace processes. It emerges that most women participate in peace building at the informal level where their role as peace builders is being recognized, but they still lacks support. This study provides insight into the role of the informal women groups and their participation in decision-making; peace building or community development in general. In conclusion the study provides insights for future research on the role of informal women group in pastoral communities in all aspects of peace processes and acts as a basis of other researches that entail peace-building processes not only in Kenya but also across the conflicting areas and the world at large. Several recommendations have been provided to recognize and enhance the informal women groups' participation and recognition of their contributions in peace building processes within the Moyale sub-county and the vast county at large. These recommendations encompass: Economic empowerment and support, raising literacy rates amongst women and girls; Encourage men to join as champions of women inclusion in these processes and promote general development of Moyale Sub County. This is through provision of necessary and relevant information on Kenya's adoption of UNSCR, particularly in ensuring an all-inclusive and gendered approach in the establishment, coordination and monitoring of various committees and networks in the security sector at both County and Sub-County levels. Moreover, it provides some measures that are necessary to assist in peace building processes. Finally, it proposes that to prevent negative conflicts arousing, we need to be responsible ourselves in order to create a morally acceptable nation where we live in peace and harmony.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction

Conflicts of various types have afflicted most countries across the continent. For instance, Turkey, Bosnia, Northern Ireland and Serbia, are among the various conflict hotspots in parts of Europe. In Asia, one may point to Burma, Iraq and Cambodia among others as conflict ridden. Latin America is also enmeshed in conflicts as evidenced by countries like Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, and Columbia (Adedeji 1999). African countries have also from time in memorial experienced war and conflicts however in the recent past the conflicts have increased both in intensity and magnitude. This is as a result of political, ethnic, or religious differences. These conflicts generally have an economic and a political basis and they have great impact on women. Gender relations intersect with other social categories such as class, race, ethnicity, age and geographical locations and determine the major actors in a conflict. Odongo (2004) states that all over the world, women's participation in peace building is seen as that of blameless and passive sufferers, while the men-folk are seen as active fighters and protectors of their communities. This perception is informed and characterized by the social construction of what is appropriate for men and women. It conceals the various active roles played by women in inter-ethnic peace building processes. Even in the various contexts where women ability to make substantive contributions to peace-building processes have made manifest, their efforts have at most times been rarely acknowledged and often been under-valued.

While there exist numerous efforts that has been made for gender responsiveness in peace and conflict interventions, women continue to absent from peace processes, with their role and contributions often being overlooked. The under-representation of women in both formal and informal peace negotiations reveals a troubling gap

between the aspirations of numerous global, regional and national legal frameworks and commitments and the reality of peace processes around the world. The equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Most importantly, the United National Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 of the year 2000 (which specifically addresses how women and girls are differentially impacted by conflict and war, and recognizes the critical role that women can and already do play in peace building efforts) was borne out of recognition on the relevance of women's experiences and contributions in all aspects of peace building including at the highest level of decision making. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) marked an important turning point in the country's transformation to democracy. It defines democracy, equity, social justice, inclusiveness and participation of the people as national values and principles of good governance (GoK, 2010). Indeed, this has provided impetus for the Kenya National Action Plan (KNAP) for the application of UNSCR 1325 that calls upon all member states to address the needs of women and girls in armed conflict and support their participation in peace negotiations. By working together in these groups, women are able to send a message to their male counterparts, who are usually in the conflict, that although they have different views and affiliations, they can still live together peacefully. This is usually effective in influencing the people at the local level and gradually works its way up the ladder to the national level (Anderlini, 2007). This can account for the adverse increase in informal women groups' participation in peace building in recent times. It has been found that women's efforts can widen the scope of peace building significantly (Anderlini, 2007).

The state of insecurity in Marsabit has affected women and girls greatly. Although there has been limited systematic documentation of the effects of violence on women and girls in the County, some points can still be made. Seifert (1993) says that conflict in most pastoral communities is often associated with violence meted out upon women and girls. Traditionally, this was not the case as it was taboo to harm women and children during a cattle-raiding episode. However, in recent years and for young girls in particular, conflict is now associated with the risk of being raped, injured, kidnapped or killed which creates a fertile ground for early childhood marriages once a girl is abducted. This means that an abducted girl's pursuit of education or ambition in life is abruptly cut off. This then leads to the loss of their negotiating power or social status that clearly drives them to poverty and miserable lives especially as adults. The current study therefore aims at seeking to get to know the role the informal women groups play in peace building in Moyale Sub County.

1.2   Problem Statement

Moyale sub-county which is part of Marsabit County like other counties in northern Kenya, is one of the most marginalized and underdeveloped regions in Kenya in terms of essential infrastructure such as health, road networks, water, livestock markets and education facilities, which have been grossly inadequate (Mwaniki et al, 2007). The vastness and challenges of the area in terms of poor road networks and scarcity of resources goes hand-in-hand with gaps in security, leading to frequent conflict episodes among pastoral communities in the region. The National Steering Committee on Peace and Conflict Management in 2013 reported the government lacked the capacity to provide security to the residents of Northern Kenya in general, because the conflicts are normally fought using sophisticated arms. Past attempts at disarming the communities have been largely unsuccessful due to poor coordination with

neighbouring communities who fear that once disarmed; they may become vulnerable and open to further attacks (GoK, 2013).

Moyale Sub County over the past decades experienced various types of conflicts, which have escalated over time and become more frequent. Where such conflict affects everybody, women are particularly vulnerable to insecurity and conflict and often bear the brunt of it. For instance, women are responsible for their households including children and therefore cannot flee during cattle raiding sessions, which occur frequently. According to (Eriksen and Lind 2005), raiding and killing have led to women losing their husbands and sons and has further created the phenomenon of households headed by women. Women and children, mostly unprotected are usually targeted by raiders and suffer untold atrocities, including rape and kidnappings during raiding episodes. These violent attacks upon women and children are seen as avenging perceived injustices perpetrated by the enemy.

Several initiatives have been put in place to ensure peace. Such include creation of peace initiatives spearheaded by community members, the non-governmental organizations and the County government. Such initiatives are formal and well structured in their operations. As such, most of them are not proactive and do not address the women issues for they are termed as unimportant. There are women present in these formal structures but mostly their number is so small that they do not have the force or might that pushes women's' agenda in peace building.

However, all women organizations and groups including informal structures also play a role in change formation, (McWilliams et al, 2016). In the context of this study, informal women groups have a role they play in peace building. Women participate in peace building in many fronts whereby they engage the youth in productive initiative

especially linking them to economic empowerment activities, which keeps them away from engaging in conflicts. They also have skits, songs and public meetings with the other women and community at large on importance of a peaceful community. Their roles in the informal groups have not been recognized in as much as they have been playing major roles mostly at the grass root level. Study on the role of women in peace building according to (Paffenholz 2018) indicated that informal women groups confer legitimacy on a peace process, facilitate discussions on complex issues, providing a manageable alternative to official negotiations and thus are important players in peace building. There have a lot of engagement of informal women groups involvement in peace building but their contribution has not been documented and recognized. This study therefore was able to get to know of the organization, the level engagement and the challenges that the informal women groups faced in peace building.

1.3   Research questions

i.   How are the informal women groups organized in peace building in Moyale Sub County?

ii.   What are the levels of engagement of the informal women groups in peace building in Moyale Sub County?

iii.   What challenges do informal women groups faces in peace building initiatives in Moyale Sub County?

1.3   Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the role of informal women groups in peace building in Moyale Sub-county.

1.3.1   Specific Objectives

i. To find out how the informal women groups in Moyale sub-county were organized in peace building.

ii. To explore the level of engagement of the informal women groups in peace building in Moyale sub-county.

iii. To find out the challenges that informal women groups in Moyale sub-county face in peace building initiatives.

1.4   Justification of the study

The study will be significant to international, national organizations and other stakeholders to develop appropriate programmes to respond to the identified needs for peace building strategies. The study would inform the agencies of existing gaps and challenges that face women at the cultural, social and economic level hindering their effective participation in peace processes. In assessing informal women groups experiences and challenges in peace building, the study will endeavour to bring out some of the emerging issues and opportunities for this group of women to participate in peace building processes, thereby making a positive contribution to programming efforts geared towards establishing sustainable peace both at the community and the broader county levels, through an all-inclusive approach.

The present study was an attempt to unearth the role the informal women groups play in peace building in Moyale Sub County. The findings will hopefully shade more light on their exact organization, levels of engagement and the challenges they encounter. Such information is deemed to provide a useful basis for designing appropriate and suitable peace building intervention to mainstream the role of the women as key

players. Increased participation by informal women groups will hopefully help reduce conflicts and challenges women face especially arising from peace building.

1.5   Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to informal women groups in Moyale Sub-County with regards to their participation in peace building. They have been in existence temporarily for over a period of time and directly involved in peace building actively. The study delved into the initiatives and roles of informal women groups in peace building. The study also delved into challenges facing such groups in peace building with an aim of making recommendations on prospects of such groups in enhancing peace-building initiatives, which might be replicated in areas with similarities. They informal women group members who are interviewed might leave some information due to lack them being informal in nature so there are no documented information. The group of people living in this part of the country are practicing pastoralist and might move from time to time and it might be a challenge for this study.

1.6   Operational Definition of Terms

Peace: Absence of organized collective violence or conflict between people of different classes, racial and ethnical groups. It also implies the presence of conditions that facilitate positive relations, presence of cooperation, freedom from fear and want, economic growth and development, equality, justice, freedom of action, cooperation and integration. In this study, peace is freedom from fear, equality, justice, cooperation and integration.

Peace building: This includes all processes and activities that occur before, during and after violent conflict that are geared towards sustainable peace. In this study,

peace building includes strategies, and activities, geared towards cessation of hostilities and the restoration of peace; preventing the re-occurrence of conflict; and rebuilding post-conflict communities to secure sustainable peace and development. Peace building is not a specific one-time event and involves the following: contribution, presence, liberation, teamwork, and enablement of all participants to advance capacity for maintainable conflict resolution.

Informal Women Groups: Groups that are not officially recognized comprising entirely of women who have been directly affected by interethnic conflict and are actively involved in peace building. They appear to be which emerge naturally due to the response and common interests of the members who can easily identify with the goals or independent activities of the group. They do not have official memberships or constitution that govern them.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a review of the relevant literature of peace building and its rationale as well as the role of women in formal and informal involvement in peace building processes. In addition, it presented the theoretical framework and assumptions that guided the study.

2.2 Women and Peace Building

Conflict is often driven by intensely ingrained separations, suspicions and exclusionary politics. Women efforts in peace building are often geared towards finding common ground between warring parties rather than recrimination (ACORD, 2013). The concept Peace building emanated from John Galtung a prominent scholar in the year 1975. Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined peace building process as a multi-faceted process which spans through several stages namely: the pre-conflict, during and post conflict period (Boutros-Boutros-Ghali 1992). In addition, he asserted that peace building is a long-term process which is aimed at building resilient societies that can find their own solutions towards the achievement of sustainable peace and development while reducing the likelihood of the re-occurrence of conflict. Peace building can also be defined as technics and approaches employed to undo the damaging and negative actions and events that lead to conflict thereby positively transforming communities to realize sustainable peace and development (Juma 2000).

Women groups in the developing countries including those in sub-Saharan Africa play an important role in peace building by broadening the range of issues on the negotiating or mediation table such as the promotion of social justice particularly for marginalized groups. In this regard, women groups gain legitimacy and support by appealing to a wider range of stakeholders. For example, during the conflict period in Cambodia and Sierra Leone, women groups reached out to all people beyond the urban setting (ACORD, 2013). In Cambodia, women groups engaged in advocacy and promotion of peace by calling for a broad social development agenda, focusing on the neglected and socially excluded rural majority. In Sierra Leone in 1995 the women's peace movement advanced the issue of a negotiated peace settlement in a non-confrontational and non-partisan fashion through events such as prayer meetings (ACORD, 2013). The women's movement opened branches in all accessible parts of the country that strengthened its support base and helped share information and coordinate peace marches (ACORD, 2013). Their action helped in raising awareness on the need to stop the fighting and embrace peace for the betterment of all the citizens of Sierra Leone. Indeed, women have the capacity to complement and provide invaluable contributions to official peace building efforts by building a formidable platform for negotiations and mediation.

In Northern Ireland, for example, women's groups spent over ten years cultivating trust between Protestants and Roman Catholics creating the ground upon which a settlement was ultimately reached (UN Women, 2012:). This brought into the limelight the extent to which Women can build ties among opposing factions (UN Women, 2012). In Somalia, women presented themselves as the "sixth clan" at the National Reconciliation Conference in Arta, Djibouti, helped to send the message that the need for peace transcended beyond clan divisions.

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In the Kenyan context, following the December 2007 General Elections, the country experienced unprecedented levels of violence leading to the death of approximately 1300 people and displacement of over 600,000 persons (Wamai, 2013). The severity of the conflict unfolded within a period of almost two months and ended when a political compromise was reached. Women were represented within the formal mediation process compared to previous team. One in four of the members of each negotiating team were women. Women were also seconded to support the process in various capacities. At national level, women civil society activists presented a memorandum to the former UN Secretary General Koffi Annan, which highlighted the gender, dimension of the conflict and cited discriminatory laws that sanction marginalization and exclusion of women. Women's participation was also felt at grass-root level, in places like Kibra in Nairobi, where they organized themselves to provide humanitarian assistance to victims of violence as well as providing early warning information to their communities on impending attacks (Mcghie & Wamai, 2011).

However, it is noteworthy that in developing countries women live with numerous challenges despite their visibility in the peace building process. In many countries, there is scarcity of resources and the womenfolk are the most penurious of all groups (Banerjee, et al. 2010). To add to their susceptibilities, women also have to operate under patriarchal system of organization, which institutionalizes male dominance, thereby denying them their political and social rights. For example, according to a study commissioned by UN Women, the current peace process in Mali has not placed the participation of women as a priority regardless of their visibility in the society as well as their ability to mobilize support from different groups towards achievement of lasting peace. Women's exclusion from the peace process in Mali has been supported

by cultural arguments that their involvement could delay or derail the mediation process (UN, Women, 2015).

2.3   Roles of Formal Women Groups in Peace Building

Women's voices are the first to be heard in the support of peace work and its dissemination to the general public at most times, but women hardly are able to gain a place at discussion boards once these peace talks begin. This has been partly attributed to the limited number of women in government, patriarchal systems of governance, women's unwillingness to participate in political activities and the poor nature of organizing peace negotiations (Accord, 2013). Some of the role of women recognized in the resolution 1325 includes peace building and full participation in peace building process. It was adopted by the UN, is aimed at addressing these issues in order to further empower women in peace work. With this provision, women continue to make great and significant contributions to peace building procedures although they are underrepresented (Anderlini, 2007).

In Northern Ireland, women were able to achieve strength through unity and consensus building by developing forums and networks. In Sierra Leone also, women peace campaigns used nonpartisan and non- violent ways like prayer meetings, to help bring an end to a protracted civil war (Accord, 2013). In Bougainville, individual women used their position in the family to negotiate peace in their communities and managed to use their influence to act as middlemen with the opposing groups to maintain positive dialogue (Accord, 2013). In northern Uganda also, women worked together to recover cultural institutions and prepare the community for reunion ad reintegration of armed groups through prayer meetings, educating people in peace and songs and storytelling (Accord, 2013). In Kenya, while mostly women and children

were the victims during the post-election violence, their roles and agitation for peace were notable through women legislators, women groups and religious bodies (Adano, *et al* 2012).

As such, many women have taken up this responsibility by working together through their formal women groups to advocate for peace and peace processes. These women through their women groups that was already functional in different areas especially economic empowerment. They have joined hand in carrying out different peace initiatives that they think will be appropriate for their area. Some of these women groups share their experiences in peace building and how they can replicate the same in other areas of the sub county. This has been witnessed in other parts of the country. Women peace efforts are also becoming increasingly visible, as they have been doing a lot to help reduce political tensions and bring warring factions to negotiation tables (Anderlini, 2007). In advocating for peace, women groups especially both formal and informal have been well-known to take a non- partisan, unified and consensus- based approach at most times. This ensures that their composition is varied and represents all groups in the society as much as possible (Accord, 2013).

By working together in these groups, women are able to send a message to their male counterparts, who are usually in the conflict, that although they have different views and affiliations, they can still live together peacefully. This is usually effective in influencing the people at the local level and gradually works its way up the ladder to the national level (Anderlini, 2007). This can account for the adverse increase in informal women groups' participation in peace building in recent times. It has been found that women's efforts can widen the scope of peace building significantly (Anderlini, 2007). First, women promote agreement and inclusion as an important

policy. Secondly, they are able to achieve peace beyond the negotiating table. This is through their "Triple Roles" in the home and community as mothers, a wives and elderly woman, as they work to further promote peace (Anderlini, 2007). This is very useful to the international community at large as it means peace is achieved and continually worked at to make it sustainable. Informal women groups have helped in ending violence, and lessening its consequences in a variety of ways by providing humanitarian relief, generating and facilitating the space for negotiations through advocacy, and employing influence through cultural or social means by building on generally accepted norms and beliefs about peace and unity. They have also been able to lead civil society and resolution activities.

2.4.   Roles of Informal Women Groups in Peace Building

Women engage in peace building at different levels. A study in Latin America by Stephen (2010) found that women can participated in peace building in many levels including peace negotiations and conflict resolution. The author however highlights the fact that participation of women was informal and in most cases they went unrecognized. Towards this end, Stephen proposed various levels through which women can participate in peace building. Such include, participation at the negotiation table, being consulted, being included in the commissions, in all decision making forum and public participation through mass actions. In most cases women are very vocal and play a great role at the grass root level where the informal women groups are the biggest contributor to peace building.

A study conducted by Imongan and Ikelegbe (2016) revealed various levels of participation of women in peace building. Women in his study prevailed upon their husbands for cessation and participated in mass actions against war. On the other

front, (Imongan and Ikelegbe 2016) study revealed that women's participation was often downplayed and even blamed for escalation of war. A study in Kenya (Kioko, 2017) on conflict resolution and crime surveillance revealed silent participation of women in peace building at the household level. These is by giving advise and furnishing their husband, fathers and sons so that they can rely their ideas through them to the council of elders meetings or their male family members who are part of peace committees.

According to Tongeren, 2013, planning peace is very possible and in most instances where violent conflict has erupted, prevention was possible. When it comes to societies where there is the possibility of conflict and instability, there is the need for cooperation between all stakeholders in peace building. There is also the need for mechanisms and structures that can promote this cooperation. These mechanisms have the ability of providing a platform for all peace actors to engage in dialogue. They also engage the actors to adopt a system of conflict prevention that is based on mediation and non-violence. These mechanisms and structures are what are referred to as infrastructure for peace (Tongeren, 2013).

Institutional mechanisms that are applicable to the society are set up at the local, regional and national levels. The mechanisms are usually founded on Peace Councils at the various levels, which is composed of individuals, who are well respected and knowledgeable, in handling political differences and conflict transformation. At all levels, peace infrastructures are deemed very necessary, but some governments are too weak or may not be interested in putting them in place (Tongeren, 2013).

The costs of armed conflicts are high, including the imposition of economic burdens on governments that can hardly cope with, and continues to raise the poverty margins

in these countries. In preventing violence, not only lives are preserved but also other unnecessary costs are eliminated. It is far less expensive to prevent conflicts than it is to recover after an armed conflict (UNDP, 2013). In order for societies to be well insulated from violent conflicts, there should be different groups of actors who interact positively together to tackle potential sources of conflict and tension. This could be religious, economic, political, ethnic or even about the unequal distribution of wealth. It is thus important to have an effective state, with functioning institutions at the local and national levels that are able to work together to curtail challenges in a peaceful way (UNDP, 2013).

Components of infrastructure for peace infrastructure consist of peace councils working at the national, district and local or community levels, with main stakeholders like leaders of civil society groups. Leaders of civil society organization' are seen to be respectable and able to bridge political divides, as they are non-partisan organisations (Tongeren, 2013). They are thus an important component of peace infrastructure at all three levels.

Another component of peace infrastructure are national peace platforms. A peace-building unit with the government is another important component of peace infrastructure it can be a government bureau, a ministry or a department for peace building (Tongeren, 2013). This is where relevant actors and stakeholders can partake in consultations, collaborations and management of peace issues (Tongeren, 2013). The informal women groups have been part of the peace building processes especially at the grassroot level. They also have representation at different levels though the number of women members reduces with levels. There are challenges that they face when participating in these processes.

2.4.1 Participation in Protection of Their Social Status

Women also participate in safeguarding of their social status including implementation of projects that prevent violence based on their Sexual orientation and local gender based issues/trainings. Women achieve this through participation in groups (both formal and informal), Public benefit organizations and assistance of donors. To this level, the assumption is that, the extensive advocacy and publicity given to such issues mean that women groups are very active in this area. These women groups are usually informal in nature.

As precursors of conflict, informal women groups can form networks to ensure proper reporting systems for SGBV. Additionally, through creation or improvement of the necessary gender sensitive structures will help to deal with prosecution and reporting of SGBV and preventing such practices. Such efforts are however limited by the male dominated structures of the society. According to Picart (2013) a male dominated police service has been a big hindrance to the women who attempt to address issue against their social status.

2.4.2 Participation in Conflict Resolution and Prevention

Research that has been conducted in the area of women participation in conflicts resolution and prevention show that women participation levels are very low (Young & Goldman, 2015). The area where women participation is high includes peace and security civic education. Del Castillo, (2017) attributes this low level of women participation in conflicts resolution to household and communities duties and systematic marginalization by national processes and lack of incorporation by agencies mandated with these responsibilities.

According to Jeong (2017) the approaches used in conflict resolution mainly take the form of top down which significant eliminates the parties at the grassroots levels where majority of the women are. Other approaches focus on clan elders majorly male and war loads hence excluding women and denying the chance to have an all-inclusive process of peace building. One of the reasons why these approaches are prioritized is to ensure cessation of the hostilities and in most cases the hostilities is usually between men. Women groups in the developing countries including those in sub-Saharan Africa play an important role in peace building by broadening the range of issues on the negotiating or mediation table such as the promotion of social justice particularly for marginalized groups. Gichuru (2014) argues that because of the exclusion of women who are a large percentage of the society the processes of conflict resolution become skewed and are seen as aimed towards benefiting men other than women who are the major victims in these conflicts. The role of women participation in conflict resolution is becoming increasing recognizable at both the international, national and regional regions as their contributions continues to be significant.

2.4.3   Participation in Post Conflict Peace Building

Another area where women participation is needed is in the post conflict peace building process. Young and Goldman (2015) argue that women participation in post conflict peace building must start form integrating them in the crucial functions such DDR, judicial reforms development, election and governance during post conflicts, SSR and small arms control discourses. The author further argue that in regions where women have been involved in DDR and SSR, they have contributed significantly in disarming youths especially at the community level. Women have also played a key role in ensuring youth secures alternative jobs in the private sectors through

fundraising and trainings of youths in more competitive skills. This approach has however been limited due to lack of adequate resources of absorbing as many youths as possible.

The limitation on women participation in the DDR and SSR has been a major obstacle in women participation in post conflict peace building process. Lack of inclusion of women in key process of ensuring peace post conflict is founded on assumptions that women aren't active combatants hence only play peripheral responsibilities such as household duties. In many countries, there is scarcity of resources and the womenfolk are the most penurious of all groups (Banerjee, et al. 2010). To add to their susceptibilities, women also have to operate under patriarchal system of organization, which institutionalizes male dominance, thereby denying them their political and social rights. For example, according to a study commissioned by UN Women, the current peace process in Mali has not placed the participation of women as a priority regardless of their visibility in the society as well as their ability to mobilize support from different groups towards achievement of lasting peace.

Del Castillo (2017) argued that such assumptions ignored the role women play in conflicts and lack of their inclusion in the peace building can be viewed as retrospective. Besides, the active roles, women also can be allocated subsidiary roles such as police custodians, secretaries, communication assistants through which they can participate indirectly in peace building process. Most importantly peace building initiative can be done through women groups both informal and formal to realize better outcome. Cultural and religious norms determine the behaviour of women officers starting from dressing and somehow become hindrance to women police in

terms of conducting patrol and making arrests of the war perpetrators (Del Castillo, 2017).

2.5   Barriers to Women's Participation in Peace Building

A number of factors have been identified by different writers as barriers to women groups' participation in peace building and peace processes. In his study of Kibra, Kenya, Muema (2014) submits that there is a strong relationship between culture and women's involvement in peace processes. It is normal in many societies to consider conflict and peace processes as men's issues. Scholars such as Selimovic et al (2012) state that patriarchy has relegated women to the private sphere of their homes thereby effectively curtail their movement or their ability to engage in public forums.

According to a study commissioned by ACORD on, Women Building Peace: An International Review of Peace Initiatives, the study highlights other causes for the failure to include women in peace processes. They include their lack of capacity or political-know how of engaging in such processes as negotiations or mediations and publics perceptions of women and their groups as passive victims of conflict. This is perception is fueled by the widely held notion that it is men who wage war and as such it is them who should determine the peace processes. For instance, in South Sudan, thousands of women were engaged as combatants in the battlefield, while others were actively engaged in providing support to fighters. This notwithstanding, women were absent from the peace negotiations (ACORD, 2013).

Sriram (2013) also identifies women's lack of confidence in them as an impediment to taking up political positions that would then accord them the space to engage in formal peace building processes. She further cites the advancement of customs and traditions that marginalize women as contributing to their limited participation in

peace building processes. Additionally, she cites the lack of commitment to implement local and international instruments that call for gender responsiveness in all matters of peace building as limiting the participation of women. She attributes the lack of commitment to inclusive peace processes to the widely held view that peace building should consider political and regional interest at the expense of other issues, including gender concerns. Other barriers that informal women groups face include lack of capacity to engage effectively in peace processes (Rielly *et al.,* 2015).

2.6   Theoretical framework

2.6.1   Instrumentalist Theory

This study was directed by the instrumental theory, which is attributed to American John Dewey (1922), who played a significant role in the development of the philosophy of pragmatism, but largely referred to it as instrumentalism. The basis of the theory is that knowledge results from the judgement of correlations between events, or processes of change. Dewey posited that ideas and experiences are instruments or tools that are used by people to make sense of the world. Specifically, individuals set the plan of action and predict future events. He argued that experience comes from connection physically to the environment, thoughts respond to experience and gives rise to action. Action then alters the environment that will shape the next round of experience (Smith, 2013). In a nutshell, the world as we experience it, both individually and collectively, gives rise to action and allows for prediction and human intervention. As an ardent advocate of this theory, Dewey addressed an array of issues including education, peace studies and was also actively involved in such social movements as the promotion of world peace and women's suffrage among others (Totten and Pedersen, 2012).

One major contribution of peace studies was his argument that in order to achieve harmony, both nationally and internationally, some changes in domestic institutional thinking would have to occur first. He viewed democracy as a 'social process,' one in which all members of the society not only needed to be well informed but actively engaged in order to come to decisions that would, ideally, contribute to the welfare of the individuals involved and the larger society as a whole. It is thus understandable why he believed that what was essential to the development of a peaceful society was the combined and collaborative efforts of all members of the society. Dewey considered participation, not representation, as the essence of democracy (Dewey, 1922; Eldridge, 1998). Other advocates of this theory such as Strickland and Duvvury (2003), argued that women's enhanced participation in governance structures is critical for peace building initiatives and sustainable development and have suggested several mechanisms for increasing women's political participation, including, gender quotas, gender mainstreaming, affirmative action, among others (Strickland & Duvvury, 2003).

The instrumentalist theory is therefore concerned with what informal women groups can do for peace building and not the reverse. This argument is based on essentialist grounds, which posit that women have different visions and concepts of politics that are essential for sustainable peace and development. Women's contributions to sustainable peace have been highlighted and even declared invaluable to transforming societies (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011:490). However, formal peace building and conflict resolution initiatives continue to ignore or marginalize issues of gender concerns. Further, those which do take into account gender concerns, fail to address structural barriers and power dynamics which are the foundation of gender inequalities (Strickland & Duvvury, 2003).

Many peace building champions have put arguments forward calling for a gendered approach to peace building and conflict resolution. Many of these arguments, instrumentalist in their approach, see women as instrumental in bringing about sustainable peace, focusing more on "what women can do for peace", and less on "what peace can do for women" (Puechguirbal, 2010). The logic behind the call for a gendered approach to peace building is that it promotes efficiency and effectiveness in peace processes and further allows all stakeholders to participate, which in turn creates commitment, a sense of responsibility and ownership by all parties to realize sustainable peace (Onslow & Schoofs, 2010).

The proponents of this theory assert that women's contribution is important and critical for peace to be achieved and sustained. In recent years, some attention has been paid to the different roles that women can play in armed conflicts. This has also changed the traditional view that portrayed men as fighters and defenders of their communities and women as passive actors in conflict. Women around the world are now organizing themselves in groups (both formal and informal) around peace issues including reporting human rights violations, demonstrating against war, conducting peace talks, peace marches and other awareness rising initiatives. It is well known that around the world, women have been able to build bridges of reconciliation and dialogue in polarized societies. This theory was critical in bringing forth the contributions made by informal women groups and gives them recognition that they deserve. Further, it unpacked its formation, engagement and challenges faced by these groups in peace building in Moyale sub-county. This study was based on the proposition that informal women group's contribution in peace building is fundamental for sustainable peace, hence, this theory was pertinent.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This section situates the context within which the study was conducted. It gives a description of the research site, the study design, study population, sampling size and procedure, data collection methods, data analysis, interpretation and presentation. The section finally presents ethical considerations to be observed in the course of the filed work.

3.2   Study Area

The study was carried out in Moyale Sub-county in Marsabit County, Kenya. The Sub-county is situated in the arid rangelands of upper eastern Kenya about 1200 kilometres North East of Nairobi city (Appendix V). It covers an area of 9,600 Km². The Sub-county poverty levels are estimated at 66.8 per adult equivalent, and 63.6 per cent of households are estimated to be poor the main economic activity being livestock keeping.

The Sub County lies within the arid zone of Kenya and is generally hot, with temperatures varying from 20ºC to 36ºC. Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists whose population is about 103,799 people where women are 49,510 inhabit it. The people who live in this sub county are the Boranas (who are the dominant) tribe, the Gabbras, Sakuye, Garres and Burjis. The Sub-county has poor road network and none of the roads in the area are asphalted and ranges from good murram to very poor dusty roads (KNBS, 2013).

Moyale sub County has perennially been in a state of conflict (Scott-Villiers et al., 2014). The sub County has been characterized by inter-ethnic conflicts between the

Borana, Gabra, Garre, Burji and sometimes the Rendille and Somalis (from Mandera) communities, as well as the cross-border conflicts between them and Ethiopia. Specifically, they have been fighting over ethnicity and livestock and pasture. Conflicts over pasture and cattle rustling occur frequently, creating a cycle of attacks and counter-attacks within the region.

3.3   Research Design

The study utilized descriptive research design in which qualitative method was employed. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), case narratives and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were used as the main data collection methods. Study participants were recruited from the informal women groups within Moyale Sub-county region who have participated in peace building for over five (5) years. A young woman was recruited as a note taker to help in each group discussion. Similarly, key informants and study participants for case narratives were purposively selected by virtue of their participation in peace building initiatives at both community and county levels.

3.4   Study Population

The study population consisted of all women who are members of informal groups within Moyale sub-county. A sample frame was obtained from NGOs working with local women groups. The study targeted fifteen (15) people in Key informant interview and a total of five (5) informal women groups in this region who are in one way or another involved in peace building efforts within their communities. The women within these informal women groups formed the primary unit of analysis for this study.

3.5   Sampling Procedures

In this study, five (5) women groups were conveniently sampled from Moyale sub-

county. A sample frame was from NGOs working with women groups. These women groups are representatives of each area and seven (7) women were selected for each area. Chief Officers of Marsabit County Government were also approached and they were of help in identification of the informal women groups that have been working with them in peace processes and initiatives in Moyale sub county. Key informants and respondents for case narratives were also purposely selected as a result of their involvement in peace processes within the sub-county.

3.6   Methods of Data Collection

3.6.1   Focus Group Discussions

The study conducted five (5) focus groups discussions. The groups consisted of seven (7) participants who were known to have participated previously on peace building in the area. These areas have people from different tribes meaning the research had an all-inclusive view of the people. All the discussions were conducted in the available public facilities including churches and schools. The discussions provided rich qualitative data on levels of engagement and roles of informal women groups in peace building. The discussions also generated challenges faced by these women groups in peace building. A discussion guide developed to guide group discussions with set of instructions (Appendix 1). All discussions were audio recorded and accompanying field notes taken. A lady was recruited as a note taker while I facilitated the discussion.

3.6.2   Key Informant Interviews

These were conducted with eighteen (18) experts selected on the basis of their work within the peace and security sector in the sub County. The respondents were drawn from the County Government of Marsabit; a local chief in Somare; an aid worker with

a NGO; a donor/Development Partner with Field Presence in Moyale; members of peace Committees; local CBOs; Women leaders of formal women groups and men. The key informants provided information on women's nature and scope of participation in peace building processes in the County, challenges that informal women groups experience as peace builders as well as emerging opportunities for their increased participation in peace processes. A key informant interview guide was used (Appendix 1).

3.6.3   Secondary Data Sources

The study also utilized secondary data sources. Documentary materials such as journals, books, articles and the Internet were explored for information with regard to participating of women groups in peace building in Kenya, their levels of engagement, roles and challenges with regard to peace building.

3.7   Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected from FGDs, KIIs and case narratives was translated from Borana to English (where responses were provided in Borana language). Analysis of the translations and transcriptions was done based on the study objectives. Additionally, data analysis was carried out in line with the objectives of the study, while selected quotes were used alongside presentation of findings to amplify the voices of informants.

3.8   Ethical Considerations

A research permit was sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. During field work, the researcher provided an explanation to all respondents on the voluntary nature of their participation and their freedom to withdraw at will. In all cases, a consent form was used to obtain the approval of the

respondents' participation in the study. The participants were assured that all information provided would be held in strict confidentiality and used only for purposes of this study. Additionally, the study ensured anonymity and privacy of the respondents. The community members were also assured of receiving the study outcomes through the local administration. Moreover, the study results will be availed to the scientific community for review through publication to be made in a refereed journals and gray literature at the Africana section of the University of Nairobi library.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

This section presents the data that was obtained from the key participants of this study during data collection. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Case Narratives and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were some of the methodologies applied during data collection. The details of the information gathered are included as well as obtained analysis of the data to support the research findings in line with the study objectives. The results were presented using charts and tables for socio-demographic characteristics while narration, content analysis and direct quotation were adopted in presenting the findings of qualitative data obtained from interviews and Focus group discussions.

4.2   Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the findings of socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. These include age bracket of the respondents, highest level of education, marital status and religion of the respondents.

4.2.1   Age Bracket of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the age bracket of the women in informal groups who participated in the peace building initiative in Moyale Sub-County. The results obtained are presented in Figure 4.1.
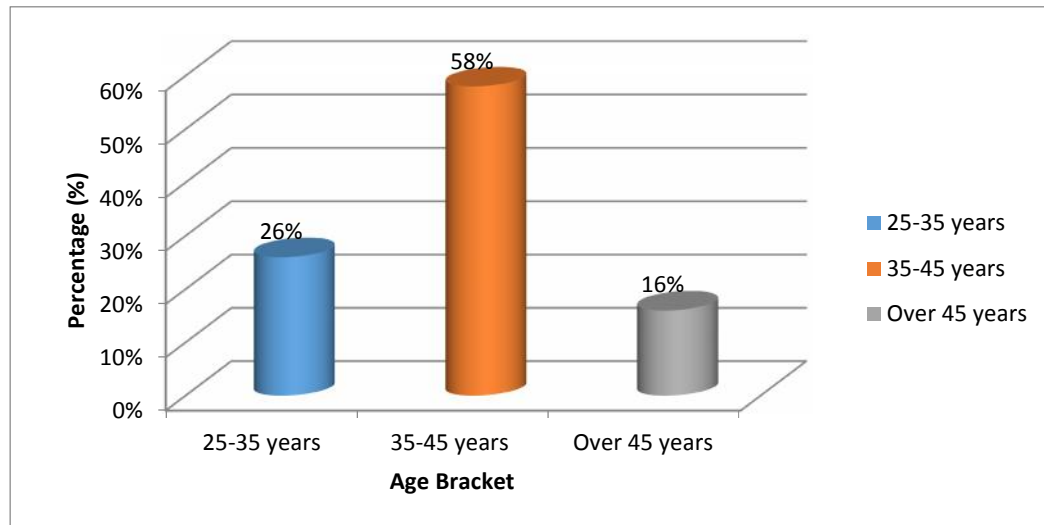
Figure 4.1 Age Bracket of the Respondents

The results in Table 4.1 show the respondents' age bracket. Most (58%) of the participants in this study were women between the ages of 35-45 years. those between 25 and 35 years were 26% while 16% were over 45 years as shown in figure 4.1. this suggested that most women who are directly involved in peace building are women in stable marriages and are therefore better placed to feel the pain that comes with losing a child or husband in conflicts. The finding further implied there shift from less empowered women to more empowered women who can fight for social justice and rights.

4.2.2 Highest Level of Education of the Respondents

This study further sought to found out the highest level of the education of women in informal groups in Moyale Sub-county. Education exposes people to different perspective about how thing and done differently and the need to change their environment to suit the modern. Therefore it is assumed that more educated women are empowered to challenge social injustices in the societies they live in.
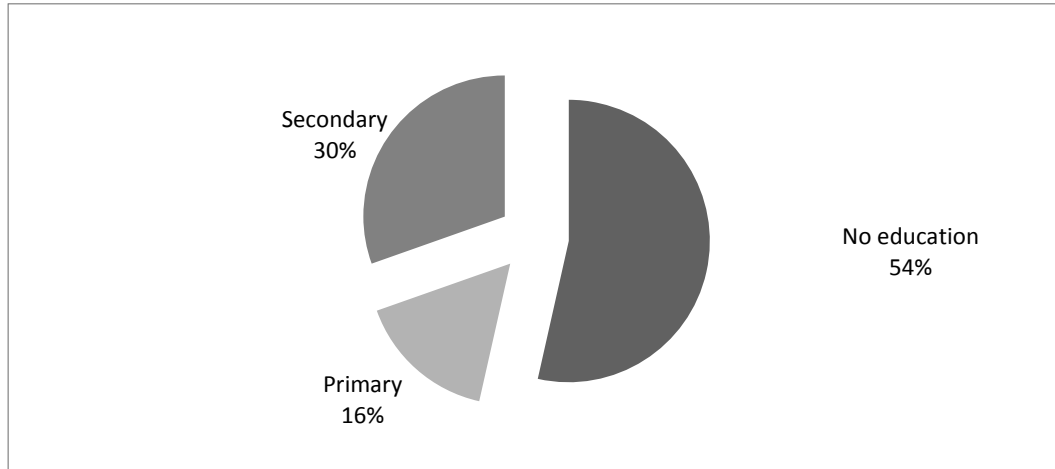
Figure 4.2 Highest Level of the Respondents

From the findings, 54% indicated that they had not attained formal education, 16% had attained primary education while 30% had attained secondary education as their highest level of education. This implies that a significant number of women in the study region have no formal education. This is a more probable explanation of their limited representation in peace-building especially at the decision-making level. the findings further implied that women who belong in informal groups in Moyale Sub-county were not highly educated.

4.2.3   Marital Status of the Respondents

The study further sought to determine the marital status of the respondents. The findings are presented in figure 4.3.
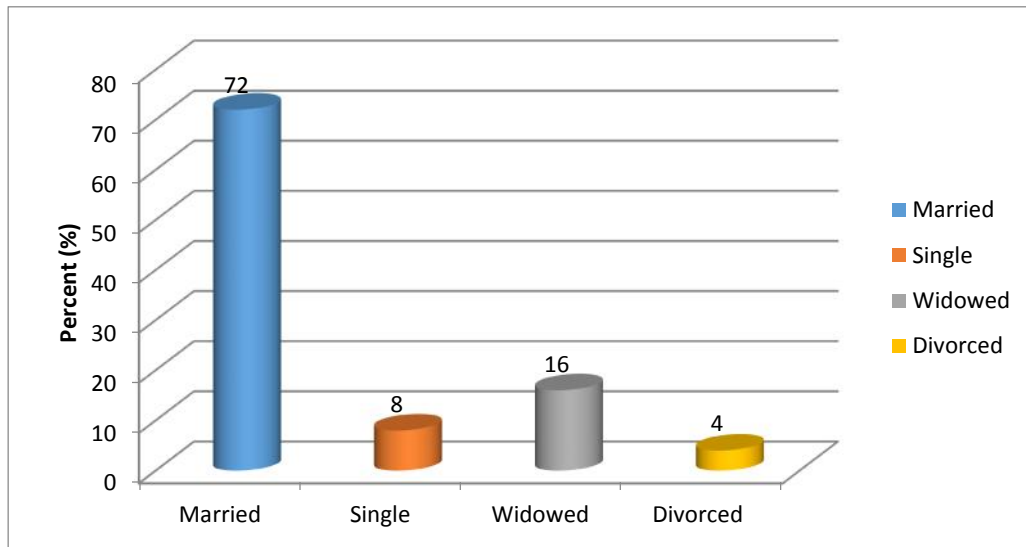
Figure 4.3 Marital Status of the Respondents

The findings shows 72% of the respondents indicated that they were married while 16% were widowed, 8% single while 4% were divorced This points out that women in Moyale sub-county who are mainly from pastoralists communities still value families and, therefore, peace-building initiatives was a priority to them to ensure families ties are maintained and harmony in the community is also achieved.

4.3   Organization of Informal Women Groups in Peace Building

The first objective of the study was to find out how the informal women groups in Moyale sub-county were organized in peace building. The findings are presented in the following subsections.

4.3.1   Situation of Peace Building in this Community

The respondents were asked to indicate the situation of peace building in their community. Majority of the respondent indicated that the study areas experienced frequent conflicts which escalated during the electioneering period. One of the key informant interviewed mentioned that;

"The year 2013 to 2014 Moyale sub county experienced the worst conflict within the communities living in the area. The communities that live in the area Borana's (who are the majority),Gabra, Burji, Garre Rendiles and other tribes who are few and usually clustered together. This was during the Electioneering period and post-election too. Other tribes isolated the Borana's where they formed 'REGABU' which was basically Rendille, Gabra and Burji and were joined by the other tribes. It was so bad that they were fleeing to the neighbouring Country of Ethiopia".

The respondents indicated that due to presence of conflict communities and women have formed groups to be involved in peace building to prevent future conflicts. During the interview another key informant mentioned that:

'This led to the women from these areas are part of their small formal women groups that they use to source for funding from NGO's and banks as loans to build their economic wellbeing. During this period the women came together in their different villages that they call 'ola' or Manyatta and formed informal women groups. Those who did not have and those who had groups had to use their existing informal groups that operated for their different social gatherings like weddings, burials and other special gatherings into a peace building groups"

Another respondent interviewed mentioned that;

"we could not comfortably have growth in families, businesses and overall development when there is absence of peace as a results of women groups".

The women indicated that they wanted to bring their efforts together and help since they are many in numbers and they are known to be homemakers. Bringing a whole group of homemakers will bring about stability and peace on a larger scale thus an eventual peaceful community regardless of their tribes or clan. Anderlini (2007) also noted that women continue to make great and significant contributions to peace building procedures although they are underrepresented.

4.3.2   How Women Participate in Peace Building of this Community

The study further sought to establish how women in informal groups in Moyale sub-county participate in peace building in their communities. The study findings showed that most women's contribution to peace building efforts was not only through formal organizations but also through their roles in their small economic and social initiatives in their different areas that they live in. These initiatives include merry go-rounds, funerals, weddings, and the biggest contributor is the women groups that mostly are informal and others formal in nature. It was also discovered that in these communities, women are often tasked with the preparation of meals and venues during peace meetings and usually often use their nurturing skills to ensure that the men/elders are well taken care of and capable of spending long hours in negotiations and dialogue sessions in the search for peace. Their contributions are usually channelled through their husbands who then conveyed the messages as their own to the elders or the elders themselves share with the rest.

One of the women stated that;

> *"Our cultural beliefs hinder women from participating in the peace meetings or negotiations. They are not allowed to be within the compound but on the fence as they listen to the proceedings of the meetings. Sometimes the meetings touch on them directly but they are discussed and concluded without their inputs. Women are regarded as children of the man of the house who is their husband so the wife is counted as the child of the man literary".*

During the Focus Group discussions, it emerged that the informal women groups have been in existence from a long time ago and organized themselves according to their different tribes and clans. The communities that live in Moyale sub-county are pastoralists in nature and have been moving from one area to another in search of water and pasture.

Another respondent noted that;

"*The people who suffer a lot during conflict and war are women and children so women decided to be part of peace building in the community*"

The study found out that these informal women groups which advocate for peace often target women members, women from other groups which are sometimes of different ethnicities, water points, communal meetings and fundraising meetings as venues for their "peace talks." One of the participants in the FGD mentioned that;

"*Women groups not only engage other women groups but they also have forums and exchange ideas with women from across the border. The women across the border may not have the same tribes as the ones from Kenya but when conflict breaks out the movements of especially women and children in and out of either the two countries necessitate the engagements between them*".

The study findings concurs with Mcghie and Wamai, (2011) who highlighted the gender, dimension of the conflict and cited discriminatory laws that sanction marginalization and exclusion of women in conflict resolution.

4.4   Levels of Engagement of the Informal Women Groups in Peace Building

The study second objective required to determine the level of engagement of informal women groups in peace building in Moyale Sub-County. Data obtained from FGD's and the in-depth interviews indicated that women were more engaged in informal peace initiatives within their localities as compared to men who mostly are engaged during peace meetings that are planned by the elders or the peace committees at the all levels in Moyale subcounty. It was reported that women inadequately represented in formal peace processes due to minimal participation. Imongan and Ikelegbe 2016)

study also revealed that women's participation was often downplayed and even blamed for escalation of war. One of the respondents in the interview mentioned that;

"Majority of women involved in formal peace processes have their contributions confined to administrative or logistical matters such as organizing meetings, cleaning of venues and the preparation of food, as opposed to being at the decision making table that determines the presence or lack of peace".

The study also found that women have been part of the formal mechanisms to bring peace among warring communities, for instance the Borana and Gabra and have been bringing forth their voices and recommendations. One of the women interviewed through the case narratives was an active member of the District Peace Committee, which was in existence before the devolved system of governance came into effect. She mentioned that;

"Minimal presence of women in key decision making platforms in the search for peace is attributed to the social and cultural barriers, which place women at a lower position and social status to that of men"

The study findings also revealed that informal women groups have participated in the peace building initiatives at the village level, sub-location level and they have been having their selected women representatives to represent them at the location, division and sub county level. A key informant noted that;

"Women groups often at the manyatta or ola level meet up with other women, youth and villagers in discussions on bringing peace and tranquillity in their area. They usually organize these events mostly in the afternoon before the sunset in the days that they have informed the villagers".

The study also brought forth the engagement of the informal women group at the sub location level where they organize meetings with other informal women groups and

they give their views at that level. The stakeholders are usually on a higher level compared to the previous level. The representation comprises of the peace committee representatives at the sub location level. The informal women groups are also engaged at the location level where not all of them are present but they send representatives who give out the women views and recommendations at the village and sub location levels. The same happens at the location ad at the sub county level. The number of each village's representations from the informal women group reduces and very few are then chosen to represent them. One of the key informants mentioned that;

"women from the informal women groups are happy with the choices of representatives because their views reach the district peace committee or sub county peace committees because initially the women who represent the women have no clue of what women's view are since they are chosen according to the their clan/tribe/political affiliation".

4.4.2 Women Ways of Peace Building

The informal women groups are usually engaged during the conflict in order to ensure that the women who are the mothers of the warriors in the conflict do not go for the raids. They also intervene in ensuring the youths are not used by the politicians to engage in spreading hate and starting the war in the communities living in that area. One of the Key informants mentioned that;

"During the war the women engage their husbands, fathers and their sons and ensure that they get to have meetings with each other (the warring communities). This enables them to have negotiation meetings that then lead to peace in the communities."

While women push the men in their communities to reconcile, women from both warring communities usually have their own meetings that later give pointers or recommendations are given to the male family members who then give as view to the

elders and peace committee members. The women groups also engage the peace committees post conflict, to ensure that the communities do not get to a point of war again. Some of the initiatives that have helped in bringing peace in their areas are engaging the youths in the initiatives that includes them in the peace building in the area. This is through skits, songs, dances and tournaments, which sometimes are done with the warring communities. Such initiatives are the football tournaments that are played by warring communities funded by HODI an organization that works with youth and women where the informal women groups are engaged. ACORD, (2013) found that women have the capacity to complement and provide invaluable contributions to official peace building efforts by building a formidable platform for negotiations and mediation.

4.4.6 Women's Contribution in Conflict Prevention

The study found women were targeted peace committees because of the role some of them play in fuelling conflict within the Sub County. It was reported that although they are the minority, women fuel conflict through taunting of young men and urging them to engage in cattle rustling and ethnic fights. Women also are used to cook secretly or transport weapons to the warriors. This was one of the major reasons that led to women forming the informal women groups that will help in catering for issues from ground up. These women groups came up with peace advocacy initiatives involved visiting these women within their homes or locating them in common places such as water points and markets for "peace talks." Stephen (2010) also found that women can participate in peace building in many levels including peace negotiations and conflict resolution.

4.5   Challenges that Informal Women Groups Face in Peace Building Initiatives

4.5.1   Lack of Resources

The study sought to determine the challenges faced by informal women groups in peace building within the Sub County of Moyale. During the FGDs and the KIIs, it emerged that the informal women groups are not able to solve issues of peace or even engage other women due to lack of transportation and mostly lack of finances to enable then to move from one point to another. The communities that live in Moyale Sub County are pastoralist communities that culturally women are not allowed to inherit or own businesses or properties. A key informant mentioned that;

"In this region women depend fully on their husbands for everything in the house. Even though there has been economic empowerment of women in the country in Moyale it has not been there other than the small ways of getting money that is not enough in their own homes"

Marsabit County is vast and the infrastructure is not reliable and so is the security situation of the area. The informal women group members sometimes are supposed to cross the border and share ideas on the initiatives that they are already taking on their side but financial constraint hinder them. International or national NGO's most of the time like working with groups that are formally registered. The informal women groups miss out from getting financial support from these organizations because they are not registered. The women have little and do not have much to register their groups, pay for an office or build and paying a person who has experience to run a formal women group.

Banerjee, et al. (2010) also found that in many countries, there is scarcity of resources and the womenfolk are the most penurious of all groups. To add to their

susceptibilities, women also have to operate under patriarchal system of organization, which institutionalizes male dominance, thereby denying them their political and social rights. Rielly *et al.,* (2015) also found that informal women groups face include lack of capacity to engage effectively in peace processes.

4.5.2 Informal Women Groups are Also Faced by the Patriarchy

The study findings showed that informal women groups are also faced by the patriarchy where women are seen as the weaker gender and should be treated as the inferior in society compared men. For example, typically, women are not allowed to voice their views and concerns on conflict and peace issues, particularly in the presence of their male counterparts. One of the key informants mentioned that;

"women views and recommendations are not taken seriously and most of the time never adopted. Those women groups are seen as inciters whose main work should be domestic chores".

The study also revealed that in almost all cases, women are usually absent from the decision-making table, particularly in peace negotiations. The women who are mostly from the informal women groups pass their views through meetings with the village peace committees that they sometimes are not members. Another key informant mentioned that;

"Peace committees are chosen according to the agreement with the village elders who are biased and choose a woman that they know will be meek and accept their recommendations without questions, women do not see themselves as being capable of challenging the status quo, which gives men power and authority".

The study findings concur with Mcghie and Wamai, (2011) who highlighted the gender dimension of conflict and cited discriminatory laws that sanction marginalization and exclusion of women in conflict resolution. Banerjee, et al. (2010)

also found that women also have to operate under patriarchal system of organization, which institutionalizes male dominance, thereby denying them their political and social rights. Muema (2014) also submits that there is a strong correlation between culture and women's involvement in peace processes. Societies consider that conflict and peace processes as masculine issues, which are the preserve of the male-folk. Other scholars such as Selimovic et al (2012) state that patriarchy has relegated women to the private sphere of their homes thereby effectively curtail their movement or their ability to engage in public forums.

4.5.3   Illiteracy

The study also revealed that illiteracy in women in these communities has been one of the challenges that the informal women groups have faced in peace building in Moyale Sub County. The communities in this area believe in educating their male children as compared to their female ones. Very few parents that take their girl children to school are usually the educated parents but some who are educated do not see the need of taking them saying that they are following the culture. One of the respondents mentioned that;

"Our community perceived that educating a girl is useless because the wealth they will get will go to her matrimonial home and not her paternal home. The other reason mentioned was that they believe that an educated girl will turn into an independent, stubborn and a know it all in the society leading to disrespectful women and girls in their homes"

These illiterate women are later married and run their families. The unfortunately due to the conflicts in the area the husbands who went to war either die, come home injured or even get home with a lot of animals marry a new wife and abandon older woman. This has led to many households to be run by women who then join these

informal women groups and due to their in-born leadership qualities they are fronted to represent the women in their communities. A key informant also mentioned that

"Level of education hinders women from communicating with the right people and women who are part of the community but live in the city like Nairobi often replace them, this leads to the recommendations or issues that the informal women groups wanted to be addressed to be left out and sometimes handled with minimal care"

4.5.4 Training in Peace Building and Conflict Resolution

There is also the issue of training in peace building and conflict resolution that is usually done by the government and other stakeholders that women are left out. During the study it was noted that due to the lack of education by the women in the informal women groups it was an uphill task for the organizations willing to train them. This was because they had to incur cost of translating the materials into audio and hire facilitators' in order to train them.

4.5.5 Domestic Chores

During the study we also found out that the women in the informal women groups are unable to fully take part in peace building due to the time. These women are mothers, wives and champions of peace building in their communities and villages. This they voiced as one of the challenges they face in their peace building work.

One of the key informant mentioned that;

"women have to ensure that they have taken care of the husband and children before they leave for the day, take care of the household chores, some live with their elderly families whom they take care of leaving very little time for peace building. They might squeeze in time but each household is different leaving them with different times that lead to minimal meeting days in a month".

4.5.6   Lack of Representation in Political and Tribal Affiliation

The other challenge that the study found was the representations of the women from the informal women groups and their political and tribal affiliation. Moyale Sub County being an area that has experienced a conflict due to tribal clashes where each tribe shows its might through violence. Political positions depend on alignment of the people from different tribes. The year 2013-2014 was hard for them due to the politicians inciting the different tribes against each other, which was seen as a show of might. This has been challenge where by the representative from the informal women groups at the sub county and county level might be left out or judged according to the politician they supported or the tribe that they are born in or married to. This brings about the informal women groups being left out or a weaker representative is then sent to represent them and might not articulate issues as expected.

This has been challenge where by the representative from the informal women groups at the sub county and county level might be left out or judged according to the politician they supported or the tribe that they are born in or married to. This brings about the informal women groups being left out or a weaker representative is then sent to represent them and might not articulate issues as expected. One of the key informants who is a member of the informal women group remarked:

> *"I have been vocal in peace building in the area and have participated almost all meetings on peace building. I do not expect to be part of the informal women groups' representation since I did not vote for the current regime and worse of am married to the rival tribe"*

According to Anne Itto (2013) women's lack of confidence in them as an impediment to taking up political positions that would then accord them the space to engage in formal peace building processes.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

This section discusses the summary of the study and presents the conclusions and recommendations. Summary, conclusions and recommendations were made based on the specific objectives of the study

5.2   Summary

There are indications that in many conflicting societies around the world, women are engaging in peace initiatives but often operate from the grass-root level and at the peripheries from where they are hardly been seen or heard. Peace building initiatives are often perceived as the reserve of community elders who are mostly men in these societies. Despite this, there is evidence that women's work in peace building has resulted in real impact that has led to sustainable peace in previously fragmented communities. The overall goal of this study was to investigate the role the informal women groups have in peace building within the Moyale sub-county in Marsabit County. The study's specific objectives were to; to find out how the informal women groups in Moyale sub-county are organized in peace building, to explore the level of engagement of the informal women groups in peace building in Moyale sub-county and to find out the challenges that informal women groups in Moyale sub-county face in peace building initiatives.

The study was descriptive and employed qualitative data collection methods. Focus Group Discussions, case narratives and key informant interviews formed the core data collection methodologies. Study participants were purposively recruited from women groups within Moyale Sub-County region who have participated in peace building

processes for over five (5) years. Similarly, key informants and study participants for case narratives were purposively selected by virtue of their contribution in peace building initiatives.

5.2.1 Informal Women Groups in Peace Building

The study found out that most women's contribution to peace building efforts was not only through formal organizations but also through their roles in their small economic and social initiatives in their different areas that they live in. Even though women are often tasked with the preparation of meals and venues during peace meetings and usually often use their nurturing skills to ensure that the men/elders are well taken care of and capable of spending long hours in negotiations and dialogue sessions in the search for peace. Part of their contributions to peace building is most often channelled through their husbands who then conveyed the messages as their own to the elders or the elders themselves share with the rest. The cultural beliefs hinder women from participating in the peace meetings or negotiations. They are not allowed to be within the compound but on the fence as they listen to the proceedings of the meetings.

The study found women were targeted because of the role some of them play in fuelling conflict within the Sub County. It was reported that although they are in the formal peace processes, women fuel conflict through taunting of young men urging them to engage in cattle rustling and ethnic fights. Women also are used to cook secretly or transport weapons to the warriors. This was one of the major reason that led to women forming the informal women groups that will help in tackling issues from ground up. These women groups came up with peace advocacy initiatives involved visiting these women within their homes or locating them in common places

such as water points and markets for 'peace talks' that helped in negotiating with the mothers and wives of the warriors.

5.2.2 Levels of engagement of the Informal Women Groups in Peace Building

The study established that the informal women groups have participated in the peace building initiatives at the village level, sub-location level and they are increasingly giving recognition and have been having their selected women representatives to represent them at the location, division and sub county level. The study also brought forth the engagement of the informal women group at the sub location level where they have meetings with other informal women groups and they give their views at that level. The stakeholders are usually on a higher level compared to the previous level. The representation comprises of the peace committee representatives at the sub location level. The informal women groups are also engaged at the location level where not all of them are present but they send representatives who give out the women views and recommendations at the village and sub location levels. The same happens at the location ad at the sub county level.

5.2.3 Challenges Faced by Women in Peace Building

The study found out informal women groups are also faced by the patriarchy where women are seen as the weaker gender and should be treated as the inferior in society than men. For example, typically, women will fear to voice their views and concerns on conflict and peace issues, particularly in the presence of their male counterparts. Their views and recommendations are not taken seriously and most of the time never adopted. Those women groups are seen as inciters whose main work should be domestic chores. The study revealed that in almost all cases, women are usually absent from the decision-making table, particularly in peace negotiations. The women

who are mostly from the informal women groups pass their views through meetings with the village peace committees that they sometimes are not members. The peace committees are chosen according to the agreement with the village elders who are biased and choose a woman that they know will be meek and accept their recommendations without questions

During the study it was established that informal women groups are not able to solve issues of peace or even engage other women due to lack of transportation and mostly lack of finances to enable then to move from one point to another. The communities that live in Moyale Sub County are pastoralist communities that culturally women are not allowed to inherit or own businesses or properties. The women depend fully on their husbands for everything in the house. The informal women group members sometimes are supposed to cross the border and share ideas on the initiatives that they have already taking place in either side but the financial constraint hinders them. International and national NGO's most of the time like working with groups that are formally registered. The informal women groups miss out from getting financial support from these organizations because they are not registered. The women have little and do not have much to register their groups, pay for an office or build and paying a person who has experience to run a formal women group.

The study also revealed that illiteracy in women in these communities has been one of the challenges that the informal women groups have faced in peace building in Moyale Sub County. The level of education hinders them from communicating with the right people and women who are part of the community but live in the city like Nairobi often replace them. This leads to the recommendations or issues that the informal women groups wanted to be addressed to be left out and sometimes handled

with minimal care. There is also the issue of training in peace building and conflict resolution that is usually done by the government and other stakeholders that women are left out. During the study it was noted that due to low levels of education among women in the informal women groups it was an uphill task for the organizations willing to train them. This was because they had to incur cost of translating the materials into audio and hire facilitators' in order to train them.

The study found out that women are also time poor in Moyale Sub County. With various roles to play in ensuring their families survivals, majority of them do not have ample time to engage effectively and substantively in peace building processes. The labour-intensive and time-consuming nature of women's work (such as walking long distances in search for water for their livestock and families) leaves them with little or no time to engage in peace building activities. They might squeeze in time but each household is different leaving them with different times that lead to minimal meeting days in a month. This they voiced as one of the challenges they face in their peace building work. The other challenge that the study found was the representations of the women from the informal women groups and their political and tribal affiliation. Moyale Sub-county is an area that has experienced conflicts due to tribal clashes where each tribe shows its might through violence. Political positions depend on alignment of the people from different tribes.

5.3   Conclusion

For years peace building meant mainly the silencing of guns while ceasefires and demobilization were the main focus of peace processes. Peace building is now increasingly being seen as an inclusive political process, a commitment to human rights in the post-conflict period and an attempt to deal with issues of justice and

reconciliation. Research has shown that sustainable peace is only possible if there is inclusive peace building that incorporates the views of all members of the society.

The Constitution and other frameworks on peace building recognizes the centrality of gender in approaches to matters of peace and security and further addresses the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. The UNSCR 1325 in particular brings to the world's attention the under-representation of women in conflict resolution and peace building activities and the importance of promoting women's participation in all processes related to peace and security. It also highlights the need to mainstream a gender perspective in all aspects of peace building and in the peace and security architecture adopted by both the national and county governments.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study. First, informal women groups play a critical role in peace building in the Moyale sub county and they should be recognized. They play different roles including: as humanitarians, advocates, facilitators, informants, etc. although their participation is mostly at the informal levels and minimal in numbers, their roles are nevertheless significant in sustainable peace building. In future, it is hoped that their contribution will be recognized and their participation will be more substantively in decision making processes (e.g. mediations and negotiations); peace forums, while covering a wider area in their peace efforts.

5.4   Recommendations

In order to increase participation and recognition of informal women group's in peace building efforts in the sub County, the following recommendations are made. This will not only help in the growth of the number of women participating as well

and will see the importance of being part of the Informal women groups for their efforts are not in vain:

The study found out that informal women group's participation is hindered by their economic status. These women group members do not have jobs or a business that generates income. They have been participating in income generating initiatives at small scale levels where whatever they get out of it is not enough to contribute to the peace building initiatives in the communities. The members of these groups wish to be able to start a project and get to see its outcome be it short or long term. For this to take palace is need to empower them economically so that when there are no funding to take care of their project then they can have a sustainable way of ensuring that their initiatives are not left unfinished. The informal women groups may not have been formally registered but they have the communities trust and are able to use the little they have to carry out project so there is need for NGO's, CBO's and government agency to fund their initiatives which will enable then to cover bigger areas as well as build a peaceful communities that start from the households to the county level.

One of the challenges that the informal women groups are facing in their peace-building journey is illiteracy. To reverse the low literacy rates amongst women and girls in the county, there is an urgent need to invest in education of women and girls. Initiatives towards this end can include the design of school programmes that enable pastoralist children to go to school such as mobile schools and early childhood centers particular in areas where migration is high due to conflict. The mentorship of girls is also critical in helping them tackle issues associated with marginalization. An introduction of many more female teachers into the education system can also help

in eventual elimination of the negative aspects of customs that deny girls the right to go to school. The provision and education (basic level) and bursaries is a devolved function. The local authorities and the County Government can ensure that the above suggested initiatives are undertaken to ensure that more women and girls access education within the sub County. This will enable the literacy level to grow and in the long term there will be more women participating in the peace building from the informal women groups on a higher platform in the county.

CBOs and NGOs working in the security sector can develop training programmes specifically geared towards building the capacity of informal women groups in peace building. Stakeholders in the security sector should design programmes on five main areas, namely: importance of peace building and its approaches; conflict mapping and analysis, key actors and institutions in peace building, as well as national laws and policies relating to peace and security matters. These women also require training on lobbying and advocacy skills. While designing these training programmes, it is important to bear in mind the capacity needs of the women, language of instruction to use and the time and venue for training.

Activities organized by both state and non-state actors can contribute to the dissemination of information on gender responsive peace processes. The inclusion of the informal women groups and formal women groups in this campaign is vital. Activities can include workshops, meetings or other public forms. Media campaigns and discussion groups can also increase the level of awareness and support for gender equality in peace processes.

It is important to involve the male members of the community in addressing gender bias and stereotypical tendencies. They can be trained in gender responsive laws and

made active participants in advocacy and lobbying initiatives geared towards the promotion of gender equality. They should be invited in meetings that the informal women groups so that they can champion for their inclusion in the 'men only' meetings. Messages can also be provided through the lens of local systems and personalities such as chiefs, MPs or Council of Elders. Such methods can encourage debate in the community with the aim of allowing change from within.

Finally, in recognition of informal women groups as an untapped resource for peace, all peace building organizations, the national and county governments, NGOs and CBOs should make every effort to include women and women organizations in negotiating and implementing peace building initiatives from grass-root to policy-making levels. It is imperative for women to play an equal part in security and the building and maintenance of peace. To do so, they must be empowered socially, economically and politically for the realization of sustainable peace in Moyale sub County.

5.5   Areas for Further Research

The study recommends that further studies should be more specific and focus on the role of cultural practices, level of education and economic empowerment on women participation in peace building.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter

Bilach Jimale
P.O Box 104248-00101
NAIROBI.

The respondent
Moyale Sub-County,
MARSABIT

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR COLLECTION OF RESERCH DATA

I am a postgraduate student taking Gender and Development studies at the Institute of anthropology. As part of my course I am required to write and collect data on a research project of "***Role of Informal Women Groups in Peace Building in Moyale Sub-County, Marsabit County***". I write this letter to request for your assistant in data collection for the study. The information that you will give will not be used for any other purpose other than the intended research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Yours Sincerely

Bilach Jimale

N69/84133/2015

Appendix II: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Kindly indicate the following as they apply to you

1. Age Bracket

      a   18 to 20 years   (   )
      b   21 to 25 years   (   )
      c   26-30 years   (   )
      c   31 to 35 years   (   )
      d   36 to 40 years   (   )
      e   over 40 years   (   )

2. Highest Level of Education

Responses
No education   (   )
Primary   (   )
Secondary   (   )
Tertiary Level of Education   (   )

3. Marital Status

Responses
Married   (   )
Single   (   )
Widowed   (   )
Divorced   (   )

4. Religion

Responses
Christian   (   )
Muslim   (   )

Appendix III: Key Informant Interview Guide

Level of informal women groups protective and preventive contribution to peace building

    i.   Describe the situation of peace building in this community?

    ii. What are some of the women socio demographic factors that promote/ hinder informal women groups' level of contribution in Peace building in this community?

    iii. Describe level of engagement of informal women groups in peace building in this community?

    iv. How do informal women groups participate in peace building of this community?

Challenges facing informal women groups in Peace building

    i.   What are some of the factors that are promoting/hindering peace building in this community?

    ii. Do informal women groups have their own ways of peace building and what are these ways that they use?

    iii. What is your hope for building Peace building in this community?

    iv. What characteristics do informal women groups portray in peace building?

    v.   What are the institutions involved in Peace building activities in this community?

    vi. What is the level of informal women groups contribution in Conflict prevention (dialogue, negotiation, mediation?)

    vii. What is the level of informal women groups contribution in Post conflict peace building?

    viii.   What is the level of support given to informal women groups by the institutions involved?

Appendix IV: FGD Guide

Level of informal women groups protective and preventive contribution to peace building

    i.   How would you define peace and security in this area?

    ii.   What are some of the women socio demographic factors that promote/ hinder informal women groups level of contribution in Peace building in this community?

    iii.   Describe the situation of peace building in this community?

    iv.   How do informal women groups participate in peace building of this community?

Challenges Facing Women in Peace building

    i.   What are some of the factors that are promoting/ hindering peace building in this community?

    ii.   Do informal women groups have their own ways of peace building and what are these ways that they use?

    iii.   What is your hope for building Peace building in this community?

    iv.   What characteristics do informal women groups portray in peace building?

    v.   What are the institutions involved in Peace building activities in this community?

    vi.   What is the level of informal women groups contribution in Conflict prevention (dialogue, negotiation, mediation?)

    vii. What is the level of informal women groups contribution in Post conflict peace building?

    viii.   What is the level of support given to informal women groups by the institutions involved?

Appendix V: Map and Study Site