

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

**EFFICACY OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN
CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CASE OF THE SABAOT CLANS IN
MT. ELGON REGION, BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA**

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COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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The project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my family, especially my beloved husband Nicholas Chengeh and daughter Roby Cadence for their support in this course. Equally, I dedicate this work to all peace makers who treasure peace.

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I thank the Almighty God for His marvellous grace and faithfulness throughout my study.

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to analyse the efficacy of interpersonal communication with a focus on the Sabaot clans of Mt. Elgon. The study examined the type and level of the Sabaot conflict in Mt. Elgon region, established the conflict resolution methods that have been used since the last major inter-clan conflict in 2008 in Mt. Elgon, assessed the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon, and determined factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon. The study was based on the constructivism theory and the Meta-taxonomy of conflict transformation. The researcher used both theories in the study to explain conflict and the role of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution. The study adopted a phenomenological approach. The qualitative method was used where ten key informants were purposively selected to participate in key informant interviews. Data was collected by interviewing key informants and recorded in a descriptive form by taking notes. Some of the ethical issues considered during data collection include: - confidentiality and consent. The qualitative data collected were coded and thematically. The findings of the study indicate that the conflict in Mt. Elgon is significantly fuelled by the land question and political differences. The findings also show that there have been efforts of conflict resolution through sporting activities, religious group crusades, which entailed the use of interpersonal communication. However, the use of coded language and political differences are factors that contribute to deep-rooted conflict which makes the Sabaot community relapse to conflict time and again which result to creation of distance between people and affects interpersonal communication. Moreover, government intervention through deployment of military officers and legal mechanisms was characterised by harassment of locals and there were reports extra-judicial killings. This resulted to fear and psychological trauma among the locals, thus greatly impacted on interpersonal communication. Therefore, this study concluded that conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon can be attained when the two clans are in constant dialogue, thus the importance of interpersonal communication. Therefore, the study recommends that the government should actively involve locals in key decision-making processes through public participation and another recommendation to peace monitors is that they should strive to collectively promote interpersonal communication among the residents in Mt. Elgon.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Overview.....	1
1.1 Background Information.....	1
1.1.1 Global Discussion.....	1
1.1.2 Regional Discussion.....	2
1.1.3 Local Perspective.....	3
1.1.4 Background on Mt. Elgon Conflict.....	3
1.2 Peace Building Initiatives.....	4
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.4 Objective of the Study.....	6
1.4.1 General Objectives.....	6
1.4.2 Specific Objectives.....	6
1.5 Research Questions.....	7
1.6 Justification of the Study.....	7
1.7 Significance of Study.....	8
1.8 Scope and Limitation of the Study.....	8
1.9 Definition of Terms.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.0. Overview.....	10
2.1 Conflict.....	10
2.2 The Concept of Conflict Resolution.....	10
2.3 Types and Level of Sabaoth Conflict.....	14
2.3.1 Levels of Conflict.....	14

2.3.2 Types of Conflict	15
2.4 Approaches to Conflict Resolution	16
2.4.1 Analysis of Conflict Resolution Methods Used in Mt. Elgon	18
2.5 Interpersonal Communication	20
2.5.1 Strengths and Limitations of Interpersonal Communication.....	21
2.5.2 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Communication	24
2.6 Group Conflict	26
2.6.1 Group Communication	27
2.7 Dialogue as Communication Tool	28
2.8 Pyramid of Conflict Resolution	29
2.9 Theoretical Framework	30
2.9.1 DeChurch and Marks' Meta-Taxonomy.....	30
2.9.2 Constructivism Theory	31
2.10 Conceptual Framework	33
2.11 Research Gap	34
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
3.0 Overview	35
3.1 Research Design.....	35
3.2 Research Approach	36
3.3 Study Area.....	36
3.4 Target Population.....	37
3.5 Sampling Procedure	37
3.5.1 Characteristics of KII.....	38
3.6 Data Collection Methods	38
3.7 Data Analysis	38
3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument.....	40
3.8.1 Validity of the Instrument.....	40
3.8.2 Reliability of the Instrument.....	40
3.9 Ethical Considerations	40

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATATION ...	42
4.1 Overview	42
4.2 Findings.....	42
4.2.1 Objective 1: To investigate the type and level of the Sabaot clans’ conflict in Mt. Elgon region	44
4.2.1.1 Type of Conflict	44
4.2.1.2 Level of Conflict	46
4.2.2 Objective 2: To establish the conflict resolution methods that have been used since the last major inter clan conflict in 2008 in Mt. Elgon region.....	47
4.2.2.1 Conflict Resolution Methods	48
4.2.3 Objective 3: To assess the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region.....	54
4.2.3.1 Strengths and Limitations of Interpersonal Communication	55
4.2.4 Objective 4: To determine factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region.....	57
4.2.4.1 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Communication.....	58
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	62
5.1 Overview	62
5.2 Conclusions	66
5.3 Recommendations	71
REFERENCES.....	73
APPENDICES	79
Appendix 1: Consent Form	79
Appendix 2: Key Informants Interview Guide for Peace Monitors.....	80
Appendix 3: Key Informants Interview Guide for Policy Makers (Politicians, Administrative leaders, Religious Leaders, Clan Leaders).....	82
Appendix 4: Certificate of Fieldwork	84
Appendix 5: Certificate of Originality	85
Appendix 6: Certificate of Corrections	86

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Pyramid showing stakeholder involvement in conflict resolution	29
Figure 2.2: Conceptual model showing an understanding of interpersonal communication in Conflict resolution.....	34

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Representation of the Sampled Participants	42
Table 4.2: The efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County	43

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CR	Conflict Resolution
FPFK	Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya
IC	Interpersonal Communication
KDF	Kenya Defense Forces
KII	Key Informant Interviews
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Peace Council
PRC	People's Republic of China
SLDF	Sabaot Land Defense Force
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN	United Nations

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

In this Chapter, the researcher presents the background information, Statement of the problem, Objective of the Study, Research Questions, Justification of the Study, Significance of the Study and the Scope and Limitation of the study.

1.1 Background Information

The term “conflict” can be defined as a “social situation in which at least two parties are striving simultaneously to acquire the same set of scarce assets” (Wallensteen, 1994, n.p). Conflict can result in fiery arguments and physical abuses, thereby leading to loss of peace and harmony. Moreover, conflicts not only arise between individuals but also among countries, political parties, and states. Accordingly, conflicts often change relationships. Therefore, this ‘background information’ section of the paper will discuss global, regional, and local contexts of conflicts to establish the different nature and design of disputes.

1.1.1 Global Discussion

According to Ramet (2018), the former Yugoslavia was a “Socialist state created after the German occupation in World War II and intense civil war. A federation of six republics, it brought together Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, Albanians, Slovenes, and others under a comparatively relaxed communist regime” (171). President Tito successfully contained tensions which emerged between these different groups (Ramet, 2018). However, tensions re-emerged following the death of Tito in 1980. Consequently, the “Serb-dominated Yugoslavia army

lashed out, first in Slovenia and then in Croatia, killing thousands of people before the latter conflict was paused in 1992 under UN-monitored ceasefire” (Ramet, 2018).

Similarly, China’s conflicts with Taiwan are based on differences over the status of the latter. This issue has been fuelling tensions between “mainland China and island Taiwan.” Specifically, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) views Taiwan as one of its provinces, whereas leading political voices in Taiwan (an island with a democratically, independent elected government), express divergent opinions regarding the status of their region as well as its relation with the mainland. Surprisingly, economic ties between these two territories continue to expand.

1.1.2 Regional Discussion

In Rwanda, the conflict between Tutsi and Hutus dominated the 20th century. The conflict which began by a slaughter of between 80,000 and 200,000 Hutus by the Tutsi soldiers culminated in the 1972 genocide in Rwanda (Harff, 2018). The gravity of this conflict is best captured by Harff (2018), who notes that within a span of 100 days during which time the Hutu militias aimed at the Tutsis, between 800,000 and 1 million human beings were murdered.” However, the surprising element of this dispute (to many scholars and observers) relates to the fact that the conflict between the Tutsi and the Hutu communities had nothing linked to religion or language because they both speak the same Bantu tongues as well as French, and generally practice Christianity.” Overall, Harff (2018) asserts that “the Hutu-Tutsi animosity stems from class warfare, with the Tutsis perceived to have greater wealth and social status, as well as to favour cattle ranching over the lower-class farming of the

Hutus.” This aspect of class segregation begun in the 19th century, intensified by colonisation, and exploded in late 20th century.

1.1.3 Local Perspective

The larger dynamic of Kenya’s political competitions usually involves at least one of the following three major communities: The Kikuyu, the Luo, and the Kalenjin (Steeves, 2017). Over the decades, the Luo-Kikuyu rivalry has come to define Kenyan politics. In the recent discussions on secession (which followed the aftermath of the repeat presidential election in October 2017), draft maps carved out perceived spheres of influence for either side. While Raila Odinga and Uhuru Kenyatta embody the Luo-Kikuyu rivalry, they are, however, mere representatives of a deeply-rooted conflict.

1.1.4 Background on Mt. Elgon Conflict

Like most conflicts in Kenya, the 2006-2008 intra-ethnic conflict between the *Mosop* and *Soy* clans of the Sabaot community in Mt. Elgon has impacted the region severely. This dispute dates back to the colonial historical land injustices experienced by the Sabaot community from Trans-Nzoia. According to Simiyu (2008) and Kamoet (2007), the government created the Chepyuk Settlement Scheme in the 1970s to resettle the Ndorobo people who had initially occupied the Mt. Elgon moorland that was considered a water-catchment area. In this context, the government created the Chepyuk Phase I (1971-1974). However, the resettlement exercise was never completed in time, leading to the creation of Chepyuk Phase II (1989-1992) and Chepyuk Phase III (1993-2006). According to Simiyu (2008); “Human Rights Watch (HRW)” (2011); and the “Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNHCR)” (2008), the failure by the government to finalise the resettlement

exercise contributed to the frequent conflicts between the two Sabaot clans with each claiming Chepyuk land. In 2006, the government attempted to complete the Chepyuk Phase III, which was “intended for 1,732 Soy families whereby each family was to obtain a 2-hectare plot” (Simiyu, 2008).

But, Simiyu (2008) notes that in 2005 when the process was reviewed, about 7,000 claimants applied for land allocation.” Since only 1,732 beneficiaries had been earmarked by the government, members of the *Soy* clan, especially those who faced imminent relocation from the Chepyuk Settlement Scheme, formed a “ragtag” militia group known as the “Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF)” in 2006. Consequently, this militia group committed several atrocities, including human rights violations against Mt. Elgon residents. Others include deliberate killing of civilians, abduction, displacement, torture and inhuman treatment, forceful disappearance of residents, rape, and forceful recruitment of young men into the militia group (HRW, 2008; HRW, 2011; KNCHR, 2008; Simiyu, 2008).

1.2 Peace Building Initiatives

According to Call and Cousens (2008), in the recent past, new attention has questioned the possibility of building peace beyond the abrupt termination of conflict, fundamentally propelled by the experience of civil wars that occurred during the 1990s along with the mixed records of international involvement.” These mixed outcomes range— “from relative successes such as Namibia, Mozambique, and El Salvador— through partial successes such as Cambodia, Bosnia, and East Timor— to abysmal failures, including Angola and Rwanda” (Call & Cousens, 2008). Therefore, failure to build sufficient peace often leads to a relapse to war.

Ghana, for example, is ranked as the 5th most peaceful nation in Sub-Saharan Africa. The formation of the National Peace Council (NPC) and seven (7) Regional Peace Advisory Councils (RPACs) made them gain that status as they promoted the dialogue process between the community and traditional leaders whenever internal conflicts occurred (UNDP, 2013). Moreover, the Acholi of Northern Uganda practice “*mato oput* as an instrument of conflict resolution, reconciliation, as well as restoration of communal harmony” (Wasonga, 2009). In the Acholi language, “*mato* means ‘drinking,’ while *oput* is a type of tree with bitter herbs.” Thus, drinking bitter herbs is a symbolic act, implying that the parties to a dispute embrace the bitterness, which have marred their past, and vow never to associate themselves with bitterness in future.

In the Kenyan context, both the “Gikuyu, Embu, Meru, Association (GEMA)” and the Kalenjin, Masai, Turkana, and Samburu (KAMATUSA)” were formed in 1995 to promote unity between Rift Valley and Central Kenya communities (Juma, 2000). However, this unity was short-lived as the communities resorted to war following the aftermath of the disputed general election of 2007.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Many efforts have aimed at restoring interpersonal communication and reconciliation at the grassroots level. For instance, Gacaca Courts in Rwanda were instituted in 2001 to resolve disputes through dialogue among those involved in the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Mutisi, 2009). A study by Sentama (2009) further reveals that cooperative societies were instrumental in re-establishing interpersonal connections during the post-genocide in Rwanda.” Similarly, in South Africa, the concept of *ubuntu* encouraged peace-making through public participation.

Specifically, it emphasised the principle of empathy, embracing shared resources, and co-operation towards resolving typical community-based challenges.

In Mt. Elgon, unlike the use of dialogue in Rwanda and Participatory communication in South Africa, military interventions and legal mechanisms were employed, by the government, as the conflict resolution efforts. These efforts exacerbated the conflict since the interventions were marred with several cases of human rights abuses. This undesirable outcome created fear and hatred towards the security forces by the residents, thus significantly impacted on interpersonal communication. Furthermore, the recurrent conflicts in the region is an indication that the previous peace-building initiatives were not successful. Hence, it is critical to practice continued peace-building efforts. Therefore, there is a need to investigate whether interpersonal communication can be mechanism in conflict resolution in the case of Mt. Elgon region.

1.4 Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General Objectives

The general objective of the study is to analyse the efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in the case of the Sabaot clans in Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Investigate the type and level of the Sabaot clans' conflict in Mt. Elgon region.
- ii. Establish the conflict resolution methods that have been used since the last major inter clan conflict in 2008 in Mt. Elgon region.

- iii. Assess the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region.
- iv. Determine factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region.

1.5 Research Questions

The questions that this study sought to answer include:

- i. What are the type and levels of the Sabaot clan conflict in Mt. Elgon region?
- ii. What are the conflict resolution methods that have been used since the last major inter-clan conflict in 2008 in Mt. Elgon region?
- iii. What are the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region?
- iv. What are the factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region?

1.6 Justification of the Study

The restoration of interpersonal communication between opposing parties after violence is a significant challenge. The 2006-2008 intra-ethnic conflict tore apart a homogenous community (community speaking the same language and practicing the same culture). In recent times, disputes have re-emerged, the intra-ethnic conflict. This conflict is mainly attributed to cases of group identity and resource distribution. Indeed, these factors could exacerbate a conflict. Hence, it becomes essential to conduct a study exploring the factors sustaining the conflict among this homogenous community and how interpersonal communication can be restored and used to establish long-lasting peace.

Why does the study focus on interpersonal communication? Essentially, interpersonal communication is required in peace-building as it forms a comprehension channel amongst two or more people. Moreover, the use of dialogue in interpersonal communication enables an individual to conceptualise the viewpoints of others without subjecting themselves against different perspectives. Therefore, honest and candid interpersonal communication can help in resolving Mt. Elgon conflict since it neither encourages defending opinions nor opts for counterpoints. Instead, people allow others to talk and present their viewpoint freely.

1.7 Significance of Study

Results from this study can be used in various spheres. Firstly, they can benefit organisations and groups involved in managing conflicts, resolving disputes and promoting peace-building initiatives. Secondly, this research can provide vital insights necessary in the formulation of government policy on conflict resolution and management in Mt. Elgon and Kenya at large. Moreover, the findings of this study can benefit conflict managers, policymakers, security managers, academicians, and all other stakeholders aiming at replacing the atrocities of violence with the realisation of sustainable peace. Finally, the recommendations of this study can give insights to future researchers to conduct further research on the application of interpersonal communication in conflict management in different settings.

1.8 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The prevalence of intra-ethnic conflicts in Kenya is on the rise. They typically range from issues of land boundaries, land ownership, and politics. The study focused on peace monitors and policy makers in Mt. Elgon. These groups provided the researcher with Key Informants. This study would have been better if it was triangulated and focus group discussions involved but due to the deep-rooted conflict between the two Sabaot clans provided a major limitation.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Clan: A clan refers to a group of people descendent from the same ancestor. In this study, the term clan refers to the two sub-groups of the Sabaot community occupying the moorland is the Mosop/Ndorobo while the one on the lowland is the Soy.

Communication: The act of exchanging information through writing, speaking, or using some other medium.

Conflict Resolution: this refers to the process of at least two people trying to amicably arrive at an agreement over an issue. In this case the *Soy* and *Ndorobo* clans are the two parties.

Conflict: In this study it refers to a social situation wherein people are trying to obtain certain scarce resources at the same time.

Dialogue: refers to a communication tool that allows people to understand others perspectives regarding various subject matters without necessarily putting themselves in conflicting situations or allowing conflicting ideologies to arise between them

Group communication: The extension of interpersonal communication whereby at least three people are involved in the exchange of skills, interests, and ideas.

Interpersonal communication (IC): Use of interpersonal skills when communicating and interacting with other people, both individually and in groups. This study understands Interpersonal Communication as a process of exchange of information, ideas, feelings and meanings between two people (*Soy* and *Ndorobo*) through verbal and Non-verbal methods.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Overview

This chapter evaluates the theoretical review, conceptual framework, review of literature on conflict resolution, factors affecting interpersonal communication, and identifies research gaps.

2.1 Conflict

Conflicts are inevitable components of different societies across the world. Although conflicts may cause severe destructions, including death, they can also improve effectiveness, promote relationships, and enhance goal attainment. Accordingly, in human terms, conflict is among the 'engines of human evolution' which allows individuals to learn, grow, and progress (Wallenstein, 2018). Hence, the goal of humans is not to merely eliminate conflict, but also to skilfully manage disputes so as to enhance its constructive potential of conflicts. Managing conflicts would lead to development (Deutsch, Coleman, & Marcus, 2011). This outcome arises from the fact that resources consumed by conflicts would otherwise assist the community to develop its economy and move ahead instead of the lagging caused by unnecessary competition and subsequent destruction of the limited resources.

2.2 The Concept of Conflict Resolution

According to Udezo (2009), conflict resolution is theorised as the processes and methods involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of a dispute." The term "conflict resolution" and "dispute resolution" can be used interchangeably, especially where detailed processes are critically involved in litigation and arbitration (Udezo, 2009). A conflict resolution approach

based on interpersonal communication is a “veritable strategy for peace initiative because it focuses on sharing experiences rather than merely debating or exchanging views about the conflict” (Udezo, 2009). Conflicts typically arise from the competition of limited resources which exist either naturally or artificially. Therefore, interpersonal communication becomes one of the best ways of resolving disputes.

Based on August (2005), “Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop emeritus of South Africa, is reported to have commented from within the situation of social revolution in South Africa that without reconciliation, there is no future” (August, 2005). The cleric informs about the universal desire for peace and conflict decision in all nations. Societies living around the world today are resorting to the peaceful strategies of settling disputes. Accordingly, different peaceful and non-violent approaches to dispute settlements occur at various local levels and within many communities across the world, and mainly within Africa. Moreover, the need for a peaceful conflict resolution in contemporary societies is crucial because two people will always perceive an issue differently. Accordingly, Udezo (2009) argues that “efforts to curb conflicts and crisis-situations are often unsuccessful and occasioned not only by the complex nature of humanity but also by the methods and means employed by those mediating.” Conflicting activities are considered meaningless in today’s society. In this context, individuals competing for resources are considered inept because they do not contribute to either economic or social growth in their communities (Leach & Scoones, 2015). Hence, the shift of their economies from the growth phase to a stagnating stage.

Best (2005) concluded that “From needs, a conflict is resolved when the basic needs of parties involved have been met with necessary “satisfiers,” and their fears have been allayed.” No

specific individual or group wins in case of a conflict due to different elements of conflict resolution, such as avoiding, accommodating, or competing (Evans, 2013). However, for this study, it was suitable to use interpersonal communication mediation techniques.

On the flip side, without an effective conflict resolution approach, harmony within the group erodes, thereby creating a favourable environment in which both interpersonal and group bitterness emerge. According to Frost (2019), this outcome is particularly accurate “when conflicts become personal, and people see disagreements as attacks rather than potentially productive.” Over time, the approach of conflict resolution becomes both a group skill and an individualised specialty. Usually, groups begin to become more stable after developing their own mechanisms for conflict resolution techniques. For example, team members use interpersonal communication efficaciously to resolve their conflicts through adequate collaboration and discussion of various ideas that enable them to grow their personal knowledge base. Similarly, since community members interact on daily, they only require guidance on the best conflict resolution model that can be applied to resolve conflicts in society effectively (Evans, 2013).

Furthermore, Evans (2013) asserts that “adopting a proper conflict resolution can sometimes mean that one person wins and gets his or her way, leaving the other defeated.” The “loser” in a workplace situation, for example, can sometimes feel that he or she was defeated because the competitor was favoured, especially if the mediator was directed to choose one viewpoint over the other. Consequently, “the defeated employee may harbour resentments against the winner, the mediator, or even the company, that may never go away.” Nevertheless, according

to Evans (2013), no one wins when the appropriate conflict resolution mechanism is deployed since it usually yields a win-win situation or both parties.

Moreover, McCann and Higgins (2015) opine that in case a chosen conflict resolution method entails extensive questioning by a mediator, parties involved may have a feeling that they are being cross-examined and that the mediator is assaulting their privacy. However, “if the information is used to provide an unfavourable resolution, he or she might feel manipulated by the mediator, resulting in a permanent mistrust” (McCann & Higgins, 2015). Therefore, during inter-group conflicts, team members should be adequately informed about their anonymity and confidentiality.

Some conflict resolutions may only offer temporary solutions, thereby allowing conflicts to re-emerge in future. Such a scenario is common if a compromise technique is used, in which case, each party benefits. However, according to Barash (2017), “the problem with a compromise approach is that none of the parties become delighted with the results, as they probably do not gain what they really anticipated.” Hence, despite the outcome indicating a temporary truce, the pending dissatisfaction may reignite a conflict at the slightest provocation. Understandably, the human mind is designed such that some acts are hard to forget. For example, some of the heinous acts meted on members will forever form a part of them, and both they and their families may not be able to forget such acts. Therefore, practical conflict resolution approaches should consider peaceful and respectful ways of overcoming such obstacles when resolving reoccurring disputes, characterised by historical hostilities.

2.3 Types and Level of Sabao Conflict

2.3.1 Levels of Conflict

According to Reilly and Harris (1998), conflicts are divided into four phases, including “the discussion stage, the polarisation stage, the segregation stage, and the destruction stage.”

2.3.1.1 Discussion Stage

Parties disagree but still close enough to work together. Issues addressed in the conflict are substantive and objective. At this stage, the possible outcome is a win-win as stakeholders involved can discuss and debate (Deutsch et al., 2011). Still, effective communication is crucial during this stage since it offers the first step towards understanding one another from time to time. Moreover, the parties in a conflict are aware of the troubles they are facing from time to time.

2.3.1.2. Polarisation Stage

In this phase, parties start distancing themselves by withdrawing or turning away from each other. Communication becomes indirect and relies on interpretation. Moreover, this stage is characterised by increasing stereotyping and psychological concern on relationships. To a greater extent, the intra-ethnic conflict between the soy and ndorobo clans of the Sabao community reflected an intense escalation of conflict up to the polarisation stage. The dispute intensified to violence witnessed during the 2006-2008 conflict. Consequently, aspects of guilty conscious and distrust amongst the community members always arise (Evans, 2011). This situation is perceived as normal owing to the mindset and culture of a people.

2.3.1.3. Segregation Stage

This stage is characterised by the fact that “parties have moved away from each other, thereby making communication to be restricted to the use of threats” (Evans, 2011). Emphasis is on the core needs of each group, and the relationship is characterised by mistrust and disrespect. The community members are of the view that hostility can arise from group formations (Evans, 2011). Thus, they try to avoid the conflicts that are prone to arise from time to time.

2.3.1.4. Destruction Stage

In this phase, communication consists of direct violence or complete silence. Relationships are seen as being in a hopeless state. Emphasis is on the survival of oneself. The possible outcomes are loss-loss and thus manifests a state of war. Here, the conflict has already escalated and is likely to bring about loss of lives, property, or other readily available resources (Evans, 2011). Nevertheless, the desired influence would be caused by the community members themselves.

2.3.2 Types of Conflict

Based on Evans (2011), conflicts are categorised into four types: interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intergroup conflicts. Interpersonal conflict, in basic terms, refers to a dispute between two people. It occurs typically because of the differences between people. On the other hand, intrapersonal conflict happens within an individual and takes place in a persons’ mind, thus becoming a psychological type of conflict (Evans, 2011). On its part, Evans (2011) observes that “intragroup conflict is a conflict that happens within individuals in a group or team.” It might result from misunderstandings and incompatibility among individuals in the group. Finally, intergroup conflict occurs as a result of disagreement among different

individuals in a group or team (Evans, 2011). The competition for resources brings about the pertinent issues in society.

The Sabaot conflict is intra-ethnic, “fuelled by the competition over commonly shared natural resources such as land.” Being a dominant and motive factor in most Kenyan communities, land has emerged as a “flashpoint in areas with worthy resources.” For instance, Mwaserah (2008) argues that the management of issues related to land shows indications of vested political interests, with local communities hardly engaged in the decision-making process regarding how allocation of land happens (for example, for re-settling landless communities, resource exploitation, or humanitarian emergencies).” In most local communities, land allocation is often perceived as unjust and a way of depriving the locals of ancestral lands (Mwaserah, 2008). In part, this war has been “fuelled by the cultural practice of livestock raiding and the associated desire for revenge” (Mwaserah, 2008). Furthermore, some of the valued economic activities and resources, such as forest share, water catchment, and other forest-related minerals, including stones, continue driving the conflict. Land is an emotive issue in Kenya (Evans, 2013). This outcome emerges due to the unjust allocation of land resources because some people are segregated when it comes to the distribution of resources.

2.4. Approaches to Conflict Resolution

Leiner and Schliesser (2017) indicates that there are various approaches to techniques of resolving conflicts, like avoiding, competing, collaborating, accommodating, and compromising. The competing approach is based on the principle that encourages people to power their ways to a win or defending their position. Here, people pursue their concerns at the expense of the other party. Accordingly, it is a power-oriented approach (Leiner &

Schliesser, 2017). The advantage of this approach is that someone who uses it “stands for his or her rights,” defends a position he or she believes is correct or tries to win. Nevertheless, when it comes to acts of conflict resolution. There is no winner or loser because all parties are treated equally (Rodsky, 2019). Accordingly, they learn to foster a platform in which they coexist owing to their new founded unity.

The second approach is accommodating. It implies subordinating one’s own interests to the benefit of others. In this case, a person neglects his or her own concerns to satisfy the interests of another person. Accordingly, “accommodating may assume the form of charity or selfless generosity, and obeying with other people’s instructions or yielding to their point of view despite preferring not to do so” (Leiner & Schliesser, 2017). This strategy results to win/loss strategy. However, when it comes to solving issues of conflict, the escalation of one group being superior to the other results in more problems (Rodsky, 2019).

The third approach is avoiding. It denies the “existence of the conflict or withdrawing from it.” In this case, one neither pursues his or her own concerns nor those of the other party. In other words, no attempt is made at handling the conflict (Leiner & Schliesser, 2017). Accordingly, “avoiding may assume the form of discreetly and tactfully side-stepping an issue, deferring a problem until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation” (Leiner & Schliesser, 2017). The disadvantage of this approach is that it results in abandoning the outcomes that are desired in the resolution of a conflict.

The fourth approach is collaborating. It is “the opposite of avoiding and involves engaging and working together toward a solution.” According to Barash (2017), “people use this approach to work with others to find a solution that fully satisfies both their interests and

those of their opponents.” Moreover, collaborating means “delving into a conflict/issue to highlight the underlying wants and needs of all parties involved in a conflict” (Barash, 2017). The advantage of this approach is that parties explore a “difference to learn one another’s perceptions or trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem” (Leiner & Schliesser, 2017). Moreover, it focuses on a win while preserving the interpersonal or intergroup relationships. At times, especially when the issue is overboard, it becomes essential to let the more antagonistic party have its way (Rodsky, 2019). Therefore, in this approach, the other party that is avoiding the conflict does not end up in problems.

Lastly, the approach of compromising seeks to establish “the middle ground between competing and avoiding as it entails agreeing on a partially acceptable solution” (Leiner & Schliesser, 2017). Here, parties examine “a convenient, reciprocally acceptable solution that partly satisfies both parties. It falls midway between competing and accommodating” (Leiner & Schliesser, 2017). Moreover, Rodsky (2019) opines that “compromising may connote splitting a difference between the two standpoints/viewpoints, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground solution.” Compromising is one of the best solutions that a community can establish for their local disputes (Rodsky, 2019). This assertion considers the differences between the two or more conflicting groups.

2.4.1 Analysis of Conflict Resolution Methods Used in Mt. Elgon

Conflict resolution approaches that have been used following the last major inter-clan conflict in 2008 have not yielded significant outcomes. In particular, the initial government response to the Mt. Elgon conflict presumed that the conflict was as a result of “incitement by irresponsible leaders and that the militia was a bunch of criminals who should be dealt with

firmly” (Simiyu, 2008). Since the issue looked more localised, the government charged the local chiefs with the “responsibility of ensuring peace in their areas of jurisdiction.” For example, curfews were instituted, and implementers were to be the local chiefs and administration police. This approach of dominance yielded no fruits as the SLDF continued to unleash terror on the purported subjects. Moreover, since the government viewed this as a security issue, more security personnel were deployed in the region that included “Rapid Deployment Unit, Anti- Stock Theft Unit and the Paramilitary General Service Unit” (Simiyu, 2008). This approach of dominance yielded no fruits as the SLDF continued to unleash terror on the purported subjects. According to the author, the use of conflict resolution works in the society because it is a tool for promoting efficiency.

Whereas some results were achieved based on the major operation to flush out those with illegal arms, such action led to several criminals being apprehended, a reaction which further triggered security beef up in many police patrol bases and posts due to fear of militia response. However, according to Mwaserah (2008), the militia employed several tactics and practices that outwitted the security agents. For instance, the security personnel were unable to gather intelligence on SLDF operational strategies. It is possible that such tactfulness by the SLDF frustrated the security forces since they had been defeated to protect innocent civilians (Oloo, Wafula, & Ikelegbe, 2010). Security is essential in the growth and development of any community. Therefore, societies need to invest on security matters in order to take care of resources that are available now and in future.

Consequently, most of the young men became militia suspects, and parents had to account for their sons’ whereabouts. According to Oloo et al. (2010), “the police killed and tortured

innocent suspects, burned houses they suspected belonged to militiamen or their hideouts, looted property, extorted money from the residents and raped women.” On the other hand, since little efforts were being achieved in terms of the government response to the conflict, the government had to engage supplementary ways of ending the conflict and mounted a search for the local leaders purported to be supporting and sympathising with SLDF. Therefore, based on the fact that harmonious ways of ending the Sabaoit conflicts have not been achieved, it is imperative that a collaborative approach is considered in conflict resolution. Community policing is gaining ground in most societies. It is the modern approach to ensuring optimum security. Through accountability, the civilians have a role to play as opposed to relying on police as they use conflict resolution to resolve disputes. In other words, community policing acts as a tool for promoting efficiency.

2.5 Interpersonal Communication

According to DeVito (2012), “interpersonal skills refer to skills that people employ daily when communicating/interacting with others, both separately and in groups.” In this regard, DeVito (2012) affirms that “those with robust interpersonal skills are in most case extra successful both in their individual and professional lives because interpersonal skills entail a wide array of skills, despite the fact that many are centred upon communication, like listening, understanding body language, and questioning.” Furthermore, interpersonal skills also include “the attributes and skills associated with emotional intelligence or having the capability of understanding and managing their individual and other people’s emotions.”

Moreover, DeVito (2012) asserts that “interpersonal relationships are among of the most essential elements to have, and people’s abilities to form substantial relations rest primarily on

their interpersonal communication capabilities.” Even though the advantages of relationships often outweigh the disadvantages, Hamlett and Cobb (2006), however, notes that “to build more meaningful relations, to keep them, or even to dissolve them as well as maintain emotional health by the time a relationship ends; one should be able to assess the stages of associations along with their importance.” It is a means of creating meaningful connections in institutional setups. Through communication, people can understand one another. Hence, being able to tolerate one another and resolve conflicts.

2.5.1 Strengths and Limitations of Interpersonal Communication

It has been established by DeVito (2012) in the preceding paragraphs that “individuals with robust interpersonal skills are usually more successful both in their individual and professional lives.” Whereas interpersonal communication majorly entails face-to-face conversation, Hamlett and Cobb (2006) outline that “it can as well include other kinds of communication such as exchanging email messages, instant messaging, and ‘talking’ through online chat rooms.” Nevertheless, the crucial aspects are that each communicator reacts to the other as a “you,” and not as an “it.” Communication is key to defining who an individual is in society. They can relate with one another hence, showing a sense of resolving any arising issue owing to a means of social understanding.

2.5.1.1 Advantages of Interpersonal Communication

According to Hamlett and Cobb (2006), “interpersonal communication can serve many advantageous purposes.” Firstly, it allows individuals to influence the behaviours, attitudes, as well as the opinions of others. Secondly, it fosters and ensures a more effective, efficient cooperation, thereby helping people to forge or maintain strong social bonds. Moreover, it can

help individuals not only to learn but to also relate to the challenges facing others. Furthermore, interpersonal communication assists people “to negotiate, ask for help, offer aid, ask for forgiveness, apologise, or achieve reconciliation” (Hamlett & Cobb, 2006) Interpersonal communication is an approach that is used in managing issues that arise at the community level. This practice is achieved through persistence and ensuring that adequate measures are considered.

Additionally, DeVito (2012) holds that “interpersonal communication is advantageous in building strong relationships with others as it allows others to feel close and connected.” Besides, when speaking face-to-face, an individual gets the opportunity to observe the body language and tonal voice of the other party, both aspects which are valuable clues to the true meaning of the message. When people communicate, they vent out the issues in place. The lack of communication serves as a fertile ground for conflicts in society.

Furthermore, DeVito (2012) argues that “interpersonal communication is the desired method to discuss highly sensitive issues because healthy interpersonal relationships help in enhancing self-esteem and self-worth.” For example, according to DeVito (2012), without interpersonal relationships, a person is more likely to become depressed, thus increasing his or her chances of becoming physically ill (p. 197). Besides depression, undesirable interpersonal associations can as well “contribute to high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, lack of physical exercise, or smoking” (DeVito, 2012). However, by having those “good friends,” people can maximise their pleasure, which, in turn, assists them to reduce their pain. Therefore, interpersonal communication enables people to develop friendships which later help them to feel better both in good times and in challenging situations. Individuals should

strive to maintain communication because it is an instrument for change and society has a great impact on how things are done. The whole essence relates to the need to maintain the social fabric.

2.5.1.2 Disadvantages of Interpersonal Communication

Despite the many benefits of interpersonal communication, it also yields certain undesirable effects. Firstly, some people often “conclude that close relationships put pressure on them to reveal more details about themselves, thereby exposing their vulnerabilities” (DeVito, 2012). This claim is valid to a significant extent, “particularly with friendships since one can know as well as find out a lot about an individual and then as soon as the relationship worsens, he or she may blackmail his or her ‘former’ friend.” Nevertheless, there are types of communication that would not be conducive. This situation arises due to dislike by a particular group. At times, however, it results from stereotypes formed over time.

Secondly, close relationships may “increase an individual’s obligations towards others.” This ‘added responsibility’ means that one’s own time becomes the time of his or her friends as well. Moreover, people are often ‘forced’ to dedicate both their time and financial obligations to their friends in the spirit of proper interpersonal relations, something that they may not be too excited about. The responsibilities that arise from relationships lead to individuals abstaining from social gatherings. It is perceived as an expensive system that has been established.

Similarly, “while building close relationships, other relationships may start to feel abandoned.” It is usual for a person to abandon his or her friendships since relationships take a lot of both time and energy, thereby forcing people to demonstrate the willingness to

sacrifice and choose those relationships they deem more important. It is rare for everyone to balance multiple relationships effectively to ensure that everyone within their circles is happy. The closer one's relationships get, the more emotionally they become, hence making such relationships challenging to dissolve (DeVito, 2012). Usually, it becomes unrealistic for people to abolish relationships that they have invested their time, emotional strength, and finances. Contemplating on the opposite can cause depression or distress that some people are unwilling to face. The formation of one section of one's activities at times would not affect the latter. This outcome relates to the arrangement mechanisms that are observed.

Interpersonal communication takes time, an aspect that is not demonstrated by most people today. For example, "it is quicker to send a text or email, particularly if people only need to share impersonal, necessary information." Moreover, "interpersonal communication is also limited by geography." For example, it is not always feasible for a person to speak face-to-face with everyone he or she need to dialogue with during the day. Nevertheless, DeVito (2012) notes that "despite being the most desired method of communication, interpersonal communication is currently being used less frequently because technology is presently available to a large section of the population." This aspect of communication has led to a diverse mechanism regarding how people and societies relate. In other words, technology has changed the outlook of people on issues.

2.5.2 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Communication

Several factors influence interpersonal communication. Key among them relate to an individual's culture, situation, power, and use of technology.

2.5.2. 1 Cultural Factors

Cultural factors typically include “belief systems, language, morality, customs, and perspective.” Firstly, language “affects our communication because of the differences in translations and colloquialisms.” Moreover, “language barriers may also emerge in a group’s own style because of jargon or slang.” Similarly, “belief systems and morality have a tremendous impact on how we communicate and who we communicate with.” Therefore, interpersonal communication is widely affected by people’s perspectives and attitudes. Culture affects how people talk in terms of what they perceive as the norms in society. Culture being relative can influence, how communities’ function in terms of communication.

2.5.2. 2 Situational Factors

Situational factors that influence interpersonal communication relating to both social and environmental elements. Specifically, they may include interaction venues such as public places which include parks, bars, food joints, offices, living rooms as well as various incidents such as bank robberies, traffic offences, and political fights among others. Moreover, situational factors require communicators to consider the context under which they relate explicitly. For example, missing critical information due to a physical communication barrier or misinterpreting the accurate position may create a barrier which would likely affect the meaning under which a particular matter is addressed. Some aspects that people engage in can lead to positive or negative output. For instance, a conversation between members of a community would influence the outlook of the society.

2.5.2. 3 Power

Power plays a significant role in influencing how people relate with others. In particular, it allows an individual to influence others as well as take control over whatever happens to him or her. All types of interactions reflect a certain degree of power, thereby making power to become a dimension of all interpersonal communications (McCann & Higgins, 2015). For instance, communication between an employer and the employee does not reflect an interaction among equals. Therefore, dominant power means one gains it over the other, while empowerment ensures power is shared with others. Politicians influence how people communicate. For example, they can control the masses by feeding them with propaganda or using their position to gain support.

2.5.2.4 Technology

People in contemporary society live in the electronic age. Innovations in the telecommunication sector, particularly with the introduction of computers and telephones, have transformed how people live and communicate. Moreover, smartphones promote the creation of one “global village” where each person is connected (either directly or indirectly) with everyone else. The consequence of such an arrangement is the non-existence of human systems which are crucial in enhancing interpersonal communication. Technology is an element that is perceived to be improving a society. Conversations have been made easier and manageable across the digital divide.

2.6 Group Conflict

Group conflicts can be widely categorised into two: inter-group and intra-group conflicts. The former is a situation in which a dispute takes place between two or more groups, while the

latter refers to a difference between two or among some members of the same group. There are many different causes of conflicts for each type of group wrangle. For example, scarcity of resources, conflicting interests, and exercise of power are common issues in inter-group disputes, while ideological differences, denial of responsibilities, and ineffective control of the group are mostly common in intra-group conflicts. However, communication gaps can potentially cause disputes across both group types. Communication can result in disputes arising amongst community members. This aspect is one sure way of managing oneself.

2.6.1 Group Communication

In simple terms, group communication refers to “the extension of interpersonal communication whereby at least two people are involved in the exchange of skills, ideas, and interests” (Griffin, 2012). A group refers to “many people with a shared objective who interact with one another with the aim of accomplishing their goals, recognising one another’s existence, and seeing themselves as part of the group.” Accordingly, “groups offer opportunities for people to come together so that they can discuss as well as exchange views and ideas of common interest.”

According to Griffin (2012), “communication in a group, whether big or small, serves a number of goals: collective self-expression, decision-making, increasing one’s effect, elevating one’s status, and relaxation ” Usually, “group communication is considered valid if it provides an opportunity for direct interaction among the members of the group; it helps in bringing about changes in attitudes and beliefs.” However, group communication is limited, especially as “group interaction is time-consuming and often inefficient, especially in an emergency.” Besides, the “imbalances in status, skills, and goals, may distort the process and

the outcome sharply” (Griffin, 2012). Nevertheless, it is from the different groups that differences occur. They lack a common ground to air out their issues. This situation leads them to be more antagonistic. Thus, conflict resolution mechanisms need to be devised.

Communication in groups has two main functions: “task function and relationship function.” The task-oriented dialogue ensures the group is effectively driven towards its goals. Relationship communication, on the other hand, ensures that the group is held together (Griffin, 2012). Usually, some people within the group concentrate on getting the job done, while others focus on ensuring that the relationship with the group remains intact. Therefore, for groups to be valid request and responses (as forms of communication directions) should be largely equal. Cohesion is vital for the success of any grouping in society.

2.7 Dialogue as Communication Tool

Dialogue refers to a “communication tool that permits individuals to understand other people’s viewpoints without placing themselves against conflicting ideologies.” In conversations, “there is no defending of opinions and no counterpoints.” Instead, people allow others to talk and present their viewpoints. In other words, they are allowed to express their ideas without being interrupted or questioned. One listens to understand, not to defend his or her own point of view. An individual’s goal is to get in the head of the other person, and understand his or her perspective, not to prove who is wrong and right. Based on this understanding, “dialogue is not a back and forth discussion, not a debate or rebuttal.” However, it is “a chance to frame a problem collectively by both parties independently voicing their perspectives on an issue.” Dialogue brings about aspects of conflict resolution.

2.8 Pyramid of Conflict Resolution

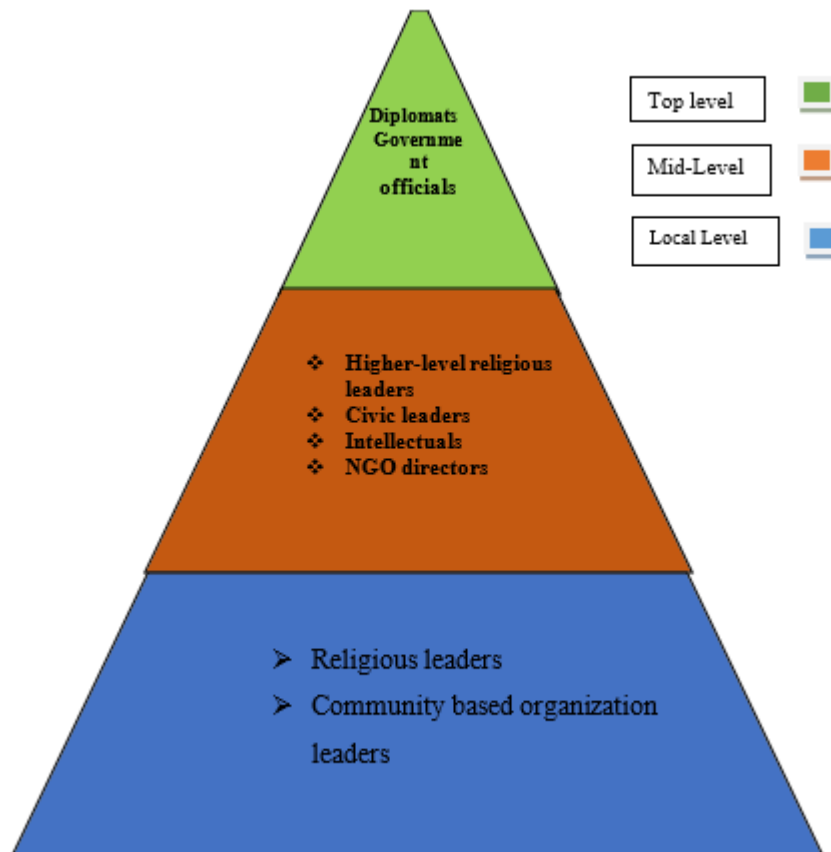


Figure 2.1: Pyramid showing stakeholder involvement in conflict resolution
(Source: Lederach, 2012, p. 23).

The pyramid shows various levels of intervention and response capacity toward violence prevention. At the top-level, focus is on high-level negotiations, emphasises cease-fire and is led by the highly visible single mediator. At the mid-level, on the other hand, the focus is on problem-solving workshops, training in conflict resolution, peace commissions and insider-partial teams. Finally, at the local level, the emphasis is on local peace commissions, grassroots training, prejudice reduction, psychosocial talk in post-war trauma (Lederach,

2012). The primary level is essential in resolving conflicts. They understand the community members well as opposed to the high-ranking officials.

In Mt. Elgon, the top-down approach to conflict resolution has been used to resolve conflict. It was characterised by military interventions and the use of legal mechanisms. These methods, however, did not yield sustainable peace as the conflict between *soy* and *ndorobo* clans relapsed. Therefore, a bottom-up approach would be essential. It shows the community members that they are part and parcel of the process. It is through this approach that they can note the need to resolve issues arising in the society.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of research typically relates to the philosophical basis on which the study forms the link between the theoretical aspects and components being undertaken in the investigating.

2.9.1 DeChurch and Marks' Meta-Taxonomy

“Meta-taxonomy” was established by DeChurch and Marks in 2001 after reviewing the available literature on conflict management. The authors argued that their framework encompasses all other conflict management models. For example, all the different models entail two crucial dimensions: activeness and agreeableness. According to DeChurch and Marks (2001), the former refers to “the degree to which conflicting behaviours make a direct and responsive impression rather than yielding inert and direct impression” while the latter refers to “the extent to which conflict behaviour make a pleasant and relaxed impression rather than an unpleasant and strainful impression” (p. 19-21). The aspect of communication

is inherent in solving any dispute that arises amongst people or institutions (Strawinska-Zanko & Liebovitch, 2018). To a great extent, the model assists in shaping both the activeness and agreeableness.

In meta-taxonomy, high activeness ensures active and open discussion regarding the divergent opinions and perspectives while at the same time trying to maximise their own interests. High agreeableness, on the other hand, is characterised by attempts at satisfying all players involved in a conflict. Interestingly, DeChurch and Marks (2001) conducted a study to validate this difference. Their findings showed that activeness does not significantly impact the effectiveness or efficacy of resolving conflicts. However, regardless of the nature of the conflict, the agreeableness of its management style was indeed found to have a positive impact on how different groups felt about how the conflict was managed, in spite of its outcome.

The meta-taxonomy is relevant to this study since most of conflict resolution approaches will involve activeness of the parties involved in the efforts of addressing the conflict and also it is vital for the parties involved in the conflict to agree on the best mechanism for resolution of the conflict in Mt. Elgon. Therefore, the competition amongst people on whom is right or wrong is what escalates the conflict (Strawinska-Zanko & Liebovitch, 2018). Nevertheless, the communication of people based on groupings enables solving of issues amongst community members.

2.9.2 Constructivism Theory

According to Griffin (2012), constructivism theory developed by Jesse Delia seeks to explain personal differences in people's capability to skilfully communicate in social situations" (p.

98). This theory acknowledges some of the communication goals to include attracting, understanding, performing, persuading, conforming, informing, or entertaining others. While most people view communication success as being about becoming assertive or outgoing, this theory, however, acknowledges that there is always a crucial behind-the-scenes difference in people who are interpersonally effective (Griffin, 2012). On the positive side, constructivists are capable of spearheading reform movements that can shape public policy. The constructive theory provides people with a cognitive explanation for communication competence. Through learning certain aspects in the dialogue process enables the solving of particular issues. Thus, shared knowledge amongst the community members (Fosnot, 2013). However, people who might not be involved in the process would still bring about conflict.

According to the theory, individuals who are cognitively intricate in their intuitions about other people have a communication advantage above individuals with less-developed psychological structures. Thus, the theory presumes that people make sense about the universe and world through systems of individual constructs. This theory is relevant in analysing the importance of constructs that people create and its effect on relationships. Person-centred messages, both non-verbal and verbal, are vital in maintaining relationships and social support and especially in the case of Mt. Elgon conflict. Nevertheless, for people with undeveloped mindsets of which stand out as primeval aspects. People in the community might not be able to apply the context (Fosnot, 2013). However, the community members can be coached at a local level by communicating in local dialects thus creating a level of understanding.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

This section describes the conceptual model of interpersonal communication and conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region. The concepts depicted in the model are drawn from the objectives of the research, as discussed in chapter two. The model is particularly applicable to this research because of its broad nature. Firstly, it integrates all the five approaches to conflict resolution (i.e., competing, accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, and compromising). More so, it describes the variables in this research as well as the types and level of conflict. Secondly, this approach is best when solving intergroup conflicts, such as the case of the Sabaot group. It is also indicative that there is a relationship between interpersonal communication and intervening variables, as shown in Figure 2. Through interaction in the community, members can efficiently work and resolve conflicts through the model.

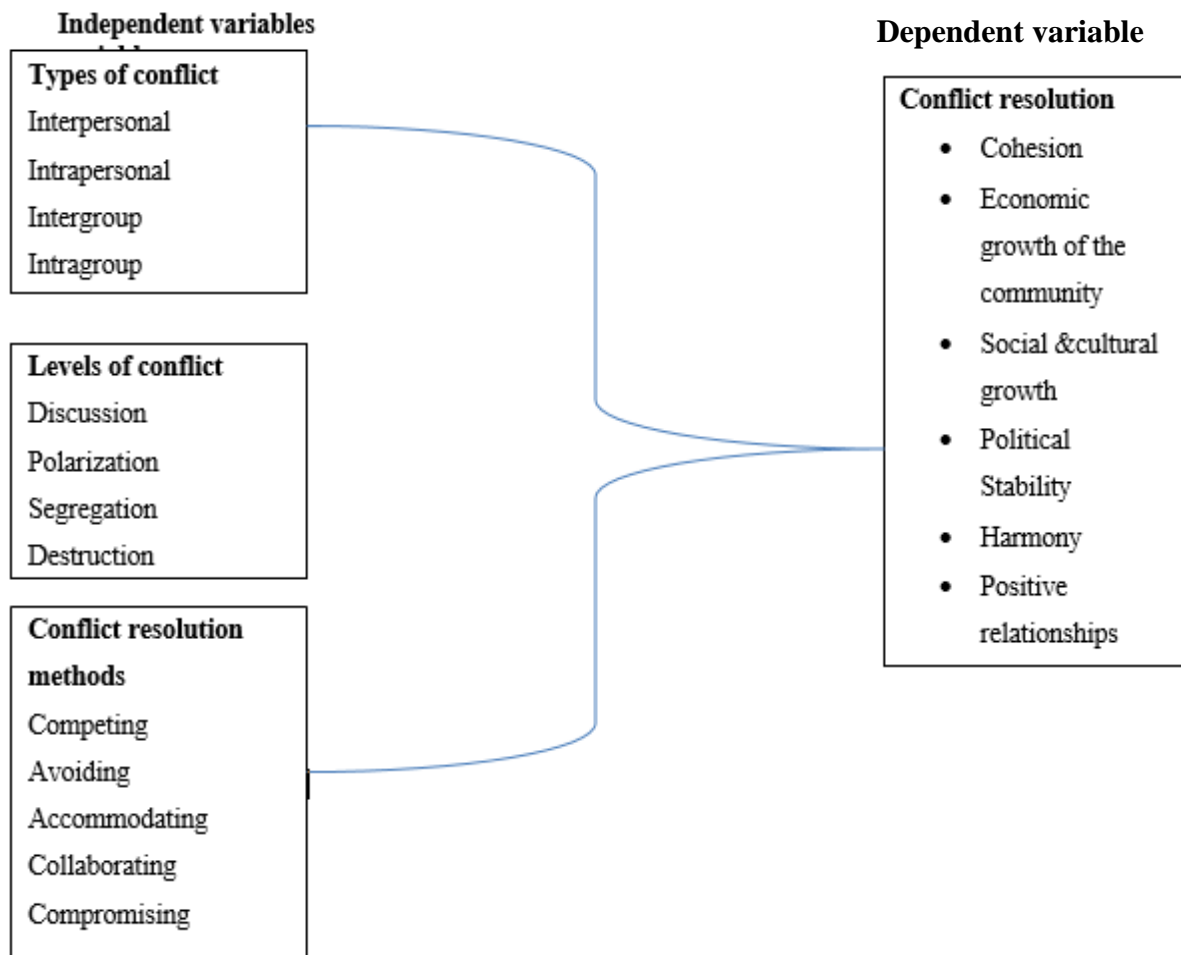


Figure 2.2: Conceptual model showing an understanding of interpersonal communication in Conflict resolution

2.11 Research Gap

Relationships thrive where people share mutual interests. Communication is important in the maintenance of relationships because the absence of it results in conflicts like the case of the Sabot Community. Thus, the need to look at the importance of interpersonal communication in Conflict resolution.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher presents the research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis and validity and reliability of research instruments. This will be followed by ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

Hart (2005) defines research design as “a structure that holds together research and enables a researcher to address their research questions in ways that are appropriate, efficient and effective.” It is, therefore, a researchers’ plan. This study adopted a phenomenological approach since the aim of the study was to describe the “meanings for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon.” Specifically, this approach requires “carefully, thoroughly, and methodologically, capturing and describing how human beings experience certain occurrence/phenomenon-how they see it feel about it, describe it, remember it, judge it, make sense of it as well as talk concerning it with other people” (Patton, 2002, 104). Moreover, Manen (1990) says that “phenomenological reflection is a recollective experience on an experience that is already passed or lived through.” Mugenda (2012) adds that “phenomenological studies involve the investigation of the structure of different kinds of experiences, varying from thought, imagination, perception, memory, desire, emotion, and decision to physical awareness.”

3.2 Research Approach

This study used a qualitative approach. Qualitative approach is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Qualitative researchers assert that human beings construct their own reality. (Mugenda, 2012). It involves data collection in the participant's setting, data analysis from particulars to general themes and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009).

This approach was essential because it gave a fuller and precise description through language of the lived experience of the people of Mt. Elgon. The only way for us to really know what another person experience is to experience the phenomenon as directly as possible for ourselves, thus in-depth interviewing (Patton, 2002).

3.3 Research Method

According to Holloway & Daymoon (2002), research methodology is a general approach to studying research topics. It allows a researcher to critically evaluate a study. This study involved instrumental case study where a case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to revise a generalisation. (Silkverman & Marvasti, 2008). The researcher chose Mt. Elgon region in Bungoma County and conducted a research that involved an analysis of the Sabaot community from 2016-2019. Mt. Elgon region was chosen because it is an area known to the researcher and is documented as an area that has experienced conflicts from as early as 1960s. Moreover, despite peace interventions, conflicts are still being experienced in the region. (Maina & Mukoya, 2011) Mt. Elgon constituency is divided into: Kopsiro sub-county, Cheptais sub-county and Mt. Elgon sub-county. These sub-counties are divided into six wards that is Cheptais, Chesikaki, Chepyuk, Kapkateny, Kaptama and Elgon.

3.4 Target Population

According to Mugenda (2012), “a population refers to the entire group of individuals, objects, items, cases, articles or things with some common attributes or characteristics.” Thus, a target population is a group of people from whom a researcher wants to draw conclusions. The target population for this study will be ten key informants. The key informants were drawn from Political class, Administrative leaders, Religious Leaders, Clan elders and Peace monitor groups in Mt. Elgon region.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

“Sampling refers to the procedure for generalising regarding a population without researching every single unit in that population” (Hart, 2005). Qualitative inquiry “naturally concentrates into details upon comparatively small samples, even single cases, purposefully selected” (Patton, 2002).

The Key Informants (KI) drawn from Political class, administrative leaders, religious leaders, and clan elders in Mt. Elgon region were targeted because they have a formal role which exposes them to information of peace and conflict resolution. Secondly, Key informants drawn from peace monitor organisations that have worked in the area, were targeted by the researcher because they have been in the region articulating for peace and they have good insight on the land question and efforts of peace building that have previously been used in Mt. Elgon in region. The sample size for the interviews was ten (10) Key informants: The Politicians (2), Administrative leaders (2), Clan elders (2), Religious leaders (2) and Peace monitor groups (2).

3.5.1 Characteristics of KII

Firstly, informants are selected because they possess information or ideas that can be solicited by the investigator. The number of key informants usually ranges from 10 to 15.

Secondly, crucial informant interviews are basically qualitative interviews. They are carried out by the use of interview guides that enlist the issues and topics to be covered in a session. The interviewer frames the real questions during the course of interviews. It is the unstructured nature of the interviews that capitalises them with special relevance and meaning in the present discussion (Kumar, 2005).

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Data collection refers to “gathering information about a situation, person, problem or phenomenon” (Kumar, 2005). It involved interviews with key informants. Moreover, “in-depth interviewing entails face to face encounters between the researcher and informants directed to understanding informants’ perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations as expressed in their own words” (Kumar, 2005). Data was collected through an interview guide, which “contains a set of questions that the interviewer asks when interviewing” (Mugenda, 2003). The data obtained from the key informants was recorded in a descriptive form through taking notes according to the description that was being said by the people being interviewed. According to Mugenda (2003), “note taking refers to the method of recording in which the interviewer records the respondent’s responses during the interview.”

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis can be described as “the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass information collected” (Mugenda, 2003). The researcher analysed the data through

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) text editor computer software. The software is important in “locating coded themes, grouping data together in categories, comparing passages in transcripts or field notes” (Patton, 2002).

Typically, “qualitative studies share the capacity to open up a world the reader through rich, detailed and concrete descriptions of people and places” (Patton, 2002). Qualitative raw data was organised, edited, coded and analysed in a way that phenomenon under study can be understood. Data generated will be organised according to the variables under study. A detailed description of the data collected was the first part of data analysis. It involved transcribing interviews, typing up field notes, sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sprucest of information (Creswell, 2009).

Coding refers to the technical procedure by which data are categorised (Creswell, 2009). The data was cross-case analysed by grouping the different answers from the different key informants to common questions asked and coded into themes. The themes were essential to display the multiple perspectives from the respondents.

Thus, “phenomenological analysis seeks to grasp and elucidate the meaning, structure and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people” (Patton, 2002). A narrative passage was used to convey the findings of the analysis (Creswell, 2009). The researcher evaluated the usefulness of the information in answering the research questions. Analysis of the findings was presented through narration.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

3.8.1 Validity of the Instrument

According to Mugenda (2012), “validity refers to the degree to which the data collected in a study accurately represents the variable being measured.” In addition, Chadha and Gagandeep (2013) assert that validity boils down to whether the researcher is really measuring what it claims to be measuring.

Pilot study is usually done in order to ascertain validity and reliability of the research instruments (Oballah *et al.*, 2015). A pilot study was conducted on 4 residents of Mt. Elgon. It entailed a pre-test on the structured interviews on the key informants who were purposively sampled.

3.8.2 Reliability of the Instrument

By definition, reliability is “the extent to which a measurement of an instrument as procedure yields the same results on repeated trials” (Garanina, 2014). Moreover, Mugenda, (2012) states that “reliability is the consistency and dependability of the data collected through repeated use of a scientific instrument or data collection procedure under the same conditions.” Data collected from the pilot study was analysed to measure the dependability of the tools.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study from the relevant authorities. It involved writing a letter from the school of Journalism that allowed the researcher to conduct research. This letter is referred to as the Certificate of Field Work (**See appendix 4**) Other considerations such as respect of the informants’ rights to confidentiality and anonymity

(Creswell, 2009). Informed consent was considered in the research, the respondents were allowed to voluntarily participate in the research (Mugenda, 2003). The respondents were informed about the purpose of the research so that they can make their choice whether to participate or not in the research. A consent form was provided. **(See appendix 1)**.

Further, the researcher ensured attribution of all sources of information used in this study. This was confirmed by the plagiarism test run by the University of Nairobi as shown in the Originality report **(See appendix 5)**. Moreover, the researcher also conformed to the University's requirements by working on the corrections as advised by the lecturers during the defences hence a certificate of Corrections **(See appendix 6)**.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter highlights the results obtained from the field. This study focused on the analysis of the efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in the case of the Sabao clans in the Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County. Accordingly, interviews with key informants were conducted to understand the perceptions of various peace actors regarding the applicability and possible success of using interpersonal communication as a method of conflict resolution. Data from the sampled participants were transcribed, organised, coded, and analysed to test the specific research questions that guided this study. The ten (10) key informants (KIs) were interviewed between August and September 2019. This sample constituted representatives from policymakers and peace monitors, such as legislators, religious leaders, clan elders, youth and women leaders, administrative officers, and ward administrators.

Table 4.1: Representation of the Sampled Participants

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Policy Makers	Legislators	2	20.0	20.00
	Religious Leaders	2	20.0	40.00
	Clan Leaders	2	20.0	60.00
Peace Monitors	Administrative Officers	2	20.0	80.00
	NGO's	2	20.0	100.00

4.2 Findings

Table 4.2 shows a summary of the transcribed, organised, coded, and validated qualitative data collected from one-to-one interviews with ten key informants who were purposively selected for this study. The detailed discussion of the findings of the study have been presented according to the respective objectives. Therefore, the organisation of this section is such that each objective has been restated and then the applicable findings discussed.

Table 4.2: The efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County

Themes	Categories	Codes
Types and Levels of Conflict	Type of conflict	Intra-ethnic conflicts occurring between clans of the same ethnicity based on identities and propelled further land.
	Level of conflicts	The aftermath of the conflicts is characterised by deaths, displacements, Psychological trauma, rape, arrests and loss of properties.
	Fuelling factors	Land allocation between the Soy and Ndorobo has been heavily politicised; Government inaction at the start of these conflicts; Unfair distribution of resources; Unemployment; and Historical injustices.
	Impacts of the conflict	Repeated conflicts have caused mass displacement, loss of life and property; and disruption of social services.
	Conflict concentration area	Kopsiro/Chepyuk ward is considered the epicentre of major conflicts in the recent past.
Conflict Resolution (CR) Methods	CR methods used previously (e.g., sporting, religious, and governance initiatives)	Sporting events provide reconciliation platforms by bringing different regions and clans together to improve interactions. Religious events are excellent examples of peace-modelling that have assisted in resolving conflicts. Government has been encouraged to involve locals in key decision making through public participation. The government's initial response at the onset of the conflicts was not effective because it was based on forcefully clamping down the militia; disarming, arresting, and prosecuting criminals without gathering sufficient intelligence.
	Stakeholder involvement in conflict resolution process is key	The government's engagement of the community in conflict resolution was selective. Public awareness is the first step towards ensuring that various stakeholder is involved. Equitable distribution of actors among the conflicting groups makes stakeholder involvement more credible.
	Mixed outcomes by previous government efforts.	Currently, most of the landless individuals have been resettled and are enjoying relative peace. However, there have also been several cases on extrajudicial and related unresolved killings.
	Negative politics and resource constraints are significant challenges faced in CR	Some political leaders express vested interests in these conflicts as they practice politics of hate to cause divisions. The scarcity of resources makes it challenging to mount strong conflict resolution campaigns. The porous border with Uganda enables perpetrators to easily escape the area and avoid taking part in the entire conflict resolution process, including facing the full extent of the law.
Strengths and Limitations of Interpersonal Communication (IC)	CR efforts through IC	IC is seen as one of the greatest tools for ensuring lasting peaceful coexistence as it occurs daily among the locals.
	Role of interpersonal communication	Interpersonal communication can be used as part of conflict resolution mechanism, especially in creating a favourable environment or dialogue, but not as the main approach in the case of Mt. Elgon.
	Challenges of IC in Mt. Elgon	Lack of trust among the actors; Use of coded language; Illiteracy Inability to solve the deep-rooted conflicts; and Being time-consuming.
	Recommendations on the best way to incorporate IC	Since interpersonal communication happens at personal level, increasing people's interactions through sporting activities, religious functions, and cultural events will improve how people relate to one another. IC thrives where there is a win-win situation, so actors should create such a scenario for all parties involved.
Factors Affecting Interpersonal Communication (IC)	Resources, religion, and politics	Issues of mutual concern such as land, beliefs, and political affiliation often influence the efficacy of IC
	The effect of politics on IC	Politicians have greatly exploited IC to antagonise locals as their ideologies cause divisions among the electorates
	All stakeholders have roles to play in neutralising the negative effects of politics in Mt. Elgon.	Government should intervene by charging those who jeopardise peace in a court of law. Emphasis should be placed on educating the locals to eradicate illiteracy. Electorates should choose issue-based politics as opposed to politics of hatred and propaganda.
	Limitations of using IC in resolving Mt. Elgon conflicts	It relies on the mood or attitude of the actors resulting from the non-commonality of issues being contested; it takes time to achieve its objective; it is only applicable when people are not at war; content covered is always limited; and the use of coded language can be a hindrance to the intended outcome.

4.2.1 Objective 1: To investigate the type and level of the Sabaot clans' conflict in Mt. Elgon region

The purpose of this objective was to investigate different types and levels of conflict among the Soy and Mosop clans of Mt. Elgon region so as to have a deeper understanding of the disputes, thereby making it possible to explore how interpersonal communication can be used to resolve them. In order to gain a broader context regarding this objective, participants were asked questions that assess their knowledge and perception of the types, levels, causes, impact, and the concentration area of the conflicts. Generally, data analysis revealed that conflicts in Mt. Elgon region predominantly occur between the clans who occupy the Chepyuk ward. Further analysis shows that these conflicts are fuelled by negative politics, competition for limited resources such as land, as well as the cultural practice of livestock raiding and the associated desire for revenge.

4.2.1.1 Type of Conflict

Regarding the type of disputes, some of the terminologies and phrases used by the respondents from the policy-makers category in this regard included “gun violence, the inter-clan conflict caused by the land question, inter-family conflicts, land conflicts, identity-based conflicts, and conflicts based on other resources.” Similarly, respondents from the peace-monitors category used related terms and phrases such as “resource-based conflicts characterised by competition for land and theft of cattle, land conflict, and inter-clan conflict.” Furthermore, the participants understood well the root causes of these conflicts. They listed issues such as the land question, politics/ politics of identity, unemployment, stock theft, and the competition for other limited resources as the major causes of the conflicts in the study area. For example, two of the respondents noted that:

Fuelling factors for the intra-ethnic conflicts in Mt. Elgon include politicisation of land allocation between the Soy and Mosop clans. The other simply stated that Land conflict and political interference are the root causes of all the conflicts happening in Mt. Elgon region.

Moreover, when the participants were asked to give their opinion regarding whether politics influence land issues in Mt. Elgon, they gave affirmative responses. The two outstanding ones include:

Politics is a greater obstacle when it comes to solving the land question in Mt. Elgon region. Politicians have exploited the land question by causing divisions and disharmony amongst the locals. Another key informant simply stated that Politics is the main cause and driver of Mt. Elgon conflicts and it will remain so at the moment.

Another aspect which provides a better understanding of the nature and type of the conflicts in Mt. Elgon region relates to the conflict concentration area. Interestingly, all of the respondents concurred that these conflicts are localised and restricted to Chepyuk area. Specifically, when peace monitors were asked about part of the region where they have concentrated conflicts resolution efforts, they all mentioned Chepyuk in their feedbacks. For instance, one of the peace monitors stated that:

Kopsiro/Chepyuk ward has been his focus area because it happened to be the epicentre of the latest major clashes.

The above statement was similar to that of another key informant who remarked that:

Chepyuk ward has been the epicentre of major conflicts that have taken place in Mt. Elgon in the recent past.

While conducting the study, the researcher established various features that characterise intergroup conflicts. For example, Mwaserah (2008) as discussed in chapter two of the study,

contextualises intergroup conflict by arguing that it occurs as a result of misunderstanding among different individuals in a group or team. Further, he notes the competition for resources is all that brings about the issues that are present in the society. For example, scarcity of resources, conflicting interests, and exercise of power are common issues in inter-clan disputes in Mt. Elgon. Based on this revelation, it is evident that the Sabaot conflict is intra-ethnic in nature (pitting members of the same ethnic group but different clans (inter-clan): The Soy and Mosop clans). This conflict is fuelled by the competition over commonly shared natural resources such as land, which is a dominant and motive factor in most Kenyan communities (Mwaserah, 2008). The theory of intra-group conflicts applies to this finding, implying that communication gaps exists, hence enabling escalation of the disputes. Accordingly, interpersonal communication becomes critical in the processes of restoring peace among these conflicting groups.

4.2.1.2 Level of Conflict

Even though the respondents did not clearly comprehend what was meant by the phrase “level of conflict,” they were; however, guided further by questions relating the impacts and consequences that they have felt as a result of these disputes. Accordingly, they used descriptive terminologies such as “manifest stage, where the aftermath is so severe, as well as severe level of conflict.” In this regard, some of the impacts of the conflicts witnessed in Mt. Elgon region include “putting a strain on the inter-clan relations, which accelerate violence further, dividing and setting apart members of the same clan.”

The nature of these conflicts imply that they have had adverse impacts on Sabaot community. Observable effects include displacement of people, destruction of property, loss of life, and

the disruption of access to social amenities and services such as schools and healthcare. To collaborate these findings, one of the key informants stated that:

The conflict has adversely affected the Sabaot community because repeated conflicts have caused mass displacement, loss of life and property. He further quoted a song by Kissinger one of the locals in Kopsiro Ward, Mt. Elgon who through his song narrates of the adverse effects of the conflict in Mt. Elgon.

The researcher related the data collected in terms of impacts of the relations between various factions and impacts of these conflicts on the community to the literature covered in chapter two in order to understand the level of Sabaot conflicts. For example, according to Reilly and Harris (1998), conflict is divided into four phases: the discussion stage, the polarisation stage, the segregation stage, and the destruction stage. To a great extent, the intra-ethnic conflict between the *Soy* and *Mosop* clans of the Sabaot community reflected an intense escalation of conflict up to polarisation stage as it intensified to the violence witnessed in the 2006-2008. Based on the theoretical information on various levels of conflict, the Sabaot community should apply interpersonal communication to avoid, at all cost, conflicts reaching the segregation and destruction stages, which are characterised by restricting communication to the use of threats and escalation of conflicts leading to continued loss of lives, property or other readily available resources respectively (Evans, 2011).

4.2.2 Objective 2: To establish the conflict resolution methods that have been used since the last major inter clan conflict in 2008 in Mt. Elgon region.

The aim of this objective was to find out conflict resolution approaches that have deployed in Mt. Elgon region since the last major inter-clan conflicts which occurred between 2006 and 2008. It entails mechanisms used by all peace actors such as the government, locals, NGOs such as the Kenya Red Cross and Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK), and

individual peace ambassadors. To gain thoughtful insights in this matter, key informants were asked questions that assess their opinions on the government's effectiveness in addressing the root-causes of the conflicts in Mt. Elgon region, the outcomes of the conflict resolution methods used by the government, community involvement in conflict resolution processes by the government and how stakeholder engagement can be ensured, and their own peace initiatives or roles in contributing to the conflict resolution approaches that can be used in the case of Mt. Elgon conflicts, the effectiveness of such initiatives or contributions, and challenges that they face in the process of building peace.

In summary, analysis of the data collected indicate that the government has been selective in its engagement of the community in conflict resolution due to lack of proper public awareness. Moreover, whereas some encouraging outcomes have been witnessed including resettlement of some of the landless individuals there are still several cases of extrajudicial and related unresolved killings. Nevertheless, negative politics and resources constraints remain the major stumbling block in ensuring adequate campaigns towards strong conflict resolution campaigns.

4.2.2.1 Conflict Resolution Methods

Various conflict resolution methods generate varied outcomes. However, in the context of Mt. Elgon conflicts, according to the peace monitor groups interviewed, locals are not pleased with the approaches used by the government in resolving the last conflicts experienced in 2008. For example, most of the respondents felt that the response from the government was very slow during the conflict period, thereby prolonging the conflict and causing enormous loss of life and property. Furthermore, locals feel that the government has not particularly

addressed the root-causes of the conflicts experienced in Mt. Elgon effectively. One of the key informants elaborated that:

The government was so much ineffective in handling both the root-causes of the conflict and the aftermath. The root causes of the conflict have not been addressed adequately.

Another key informant who was dissatisfied with the government's approach to conflict resolution explained that:

The government did not respond immediately when the violent conflicts commenced notwithstanding peace-building efforts. They later used force to counter the militia groups. Disarmament, arrest, and prosecution of criminals were the only strategies adopted by the government without gathering intelligence first.

The statements above show that the conflict resolution approaches that have been used following the last major inter-clan conflict in 2008 have not yielded significant outcomes. In particular, the initial government response to the Mt. Elgon conflict, as shown by Simiyu (2008), presumed that the conflict was as a result of incitement by irresponsible leaders and that the militia was a bunch of criminals who should be firmly dealt with. Moreover, since the issue looked more localised, the government charged the local chiefs with the responsibility of ensuring peace in their areas of jurisdiction; thus, resulting the slow reaction. The curfews which were instituted never yielded any significant fruits as the SLDF continued to destabilise security in the region by unleashing terror on the purported subjects. Furthermore, Simiyu (2008) established that the government continued to deploy more security personnel in the region that included Rapid Deployment Unit, Anti- Stock Theft Unit, and the Paramilitary General Service Unit, since it viewed the conflict as a security concern without focusing on the root-causes.

The actions above led to the undesirable outcomes, which were outlined by Oloo et al. (2010) in the literature review section of this study. For example, the police killed and tortured innocent suspects, burned houses they suspected belonged to militiamen or their hideouts, looted property, extorted money from the residents and raped women (Oloo et al., 2010). Therefore, based on the fact that harmonious ways of ending the Sabao conflicts have not been achieved, it is imperative that a collaborative approach that applies interpersonal communication be considered in conflict resolution. Community policing, dubbed *Nyumba Kumi* initiative, is seen to gain ground in our societies. It is the modern approach of doing things and through accountability, the civilians have a role to play as opposed to relying solely on the government.

Nevertheless, some of the positive outcomes of conflict resolution mechanisms used by the government have been observed and residents are pleased with them. For example, one of the respondents noted that:

Some of the noticeable outcomes of the conflict resolution approaches used by the government so far relates to the fact that people are presently enjoying relative peace and that the resettlement of some of the victims in Phase II and III of the Chepyuk settlement scheme has been appreciated.

In this context, it is important to appreciate some of the government programs which have been particularly important in helping avert continued conflicts. For example, considering the fact that, so far, the majority of landless individuals have been resettled where they currently enjoy relative peace, such initiatives come with added advantages which include improved infrastructural development both in terms of roads and telecommunication. On the other hand, extrajudicial and related unresolved killings remain one of the most worrying consequence of the approaches deployed by the state.

However, regarding community involvement, peace actors in Mt. Elgon are concerned with the manner in which the government conducted public participation because locals feel that most of the decisions were made by the government without properly engaging them. For instance, one of the respondents simply stated that:

The government selectively involved the community in most of their decisions regarding the best approach to resolving the recurring conflicts.

Based on this finding, it can be concluded that adequate public awareness and stakeholder involvement were not done. Going forward, the government should actively involve locals in key decision-making through public participation and community awareness are key and can be achieved through broadcast in both social and mainstream media.

Interestingly, members of the local community feel that they have roles to play in conflict resolution as elders assert that they are responsible for being role models to the upcoming generation. Moreover, when one of the youth leaders noted that:

Yes, as a local and a major stakeholder in the region, I have a role to play in conflict resolution. In particular, the crucial decisions that affect our livelihoods should be made through proper public engagement.

Impressively, in addition to the government's conflict resolution mechanisms, several other peace initiatives have been initiated and carried out by various peace actors in Mt. Elgon. For example, when asked about conflicts resolution approaches that they have initiated, one of the women group leaders stated "implementation of cooperative projects and initiating reconciliation actions" as some of the contributions she has made. Additionally, another key informant responded to this aspect by explaining that:

Conflict resolution approaches that I have employed, directly or through collaborations with other stakeholders, in Mt. Elgon in the recent past include initiating sporting events between different regions occupied by diverse clans,

something which has improved interactions greatly. Church events in the umbrella of FPFK have also contributed to peaceful coexistence in the region. I have also encouraged the government to involve people through sufficient public participation, especially in key decision-making.

Regardless of the conflict resolution method adopted or who spearheads the conflict resolution process, critical factors to be considered include the effectiveness of these mechanisms, how to ensure all stakeholders are involved, and effective ways of overcoming the possible challenges throughout the process of resolving the conflicts. In this regard, one of the respondents noted that:

One of the ways to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in conflict resolution process is by ensuring equitable distribution of actors between the conflict groups or affected ethnic dialects.

Regarding the effectiveness of various conflict resolution mechanisms from different stakeholders, the findings show that various programs which have been initiated have helped minimise conflicts among the groups, thereby creating a favourable environment to dialogue. However, some challenges still exist which hinder conflict resolution efforts by individual groups. The common ones which were listed by the majority of the respondents include “politics of hate, financial constraints, existence of small militia groups, and the porous border with Uganda.” These factors were put into better context by one of the key informants who explained that:

The major challenge in conflict resolution relates to bad politics, especially from leaders with vested interests in the conflict. Another challenge is the scarcity of resources which make it challenging to conduct strong, educational campaigns against continued conflicts propelled by land and political issues.

In general, analysis of the data collected shows that in order to effectively resolve a clan-based conflict, a deep understanding of the root causes must be achieved first. This concept

can be obtained easily if the affected persons are adequately engaged and encouraged to contribute their ideas in conflict resolution.

From chapter two of this study, the Meta-taxonomy theory by DeChurch and Marks (2001) dictates that regardless of the nature of the conflict, the agreeableness of its management style was indeed found to have a positive impact on how different groups felt about the manner in which the conflict was managed, in spite of its outcome. In this regard, effective conflict resolution approaches should not only involve activeness of the parties involved in the efforts of addressing the conflict but also ensuring that the parties involved in the conflict agree on the best mechanism for resolution of the conflict in Mt. Elgon.

One such area where community involvement is key relates to land allocation. For example, the study by Mwaserah (2008), as shown in the literature review section of this study, found that land has emerged as a flashpoint in localities with valued resources, thereby making the management of land issues to show signs of vested political interests, with local communities rarely involved in the decision-making process about how land is allocated (for instance, for re-settling landless communities, humanitarian emergencies, or resource exploitation). Consequently, local communities often see allocations as unjust and a means of depriving them of their ancestral lands. Even though power is a dimension of all interpersonal communications, in the context of the Sabaot conflicts, however, the government can assume all the power and subsequently offer neutral mediation through interpersonal communication for a lasting peace to be achieved in Mt. Elgon.

4.2.3 Objective 3: To assess the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region.

The purpose of this objective is to evaluate the possible strengths and weaknesses of interpersonal communication in the context of conflict resolution process in Mt. Elgon region. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to understand the opinions of peace actors from the study area regarding several related factors. They include whether it is important to resolve Mt. Elgon conflicts through community involvement, locals' take on using interpersonal communication in resolving the typical conflicts in Mt. Elgon, the outstanding advantages and challenges of adopting interpersonal communication in conflict resolution, as well as recommendations on the best way to incorporate interpersonal communication in conflict resolution.

In summary, analysis of the data shows that whereas interpersonal communication appears to be one of the greatest tools for ensuring lasting peaceful coexistence among the locals, it be used only as part of conflict resolution mechanism but not as the main approach in the case of Mt. Elgon. Moreover, since interpersonal communication happens at personal level, it is essential in any effort directed at increasing people's interactions such sporting activities, religious functions, and cultural events, thereby improving how the people of Mt. Elgon relate amongst themselves. However, interpersonal conflict thrives where there is a win-win situation; thus, requiring actors to create such scenarios for all parties involved in order to adopt it effectively and reap maximum benefits.

4.2.3.1 Strengths and Limitations of Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication exists where different parties are involved in communicating their views. In the case of Mt. Elgon conflicts, data collected from the respondents indicate an overwhelming approval of the essentiality of involving the community in conflict resolution.

For instance, one of the ward administrators outlined that:

Interpersonal communication happens day-to-day among the locals and I believe that it is one of the greatest avenues for bringing lasting peace among the locals of Mt. Elgon.

Moreover, analysis of the findings implies that there exist several efforts of conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon. Specifically, when one of the key informants was asked about any peace-building efforts so far, he responded by highlighting that:

The first phase of peace-building efforts was championed by NGOs such as FPFK and PACT- Kenya who were embraced very well by the locals. Whereas, the only way through which the government has tried to create peace is by trying to resolve Phase II and III of the Chepyuk land question. Both of these efforts must have incorporated the use of interpersonal communication.

Based on the revelations by the key informant shown above, it is worth noting that interpersonal communication is just a part of the many mechanisms of conflict resolution, and in the case of Mt. Elgon crisis, it cannot not be used exclusively as the main method of resolving conflicts.

Further, the feedback of one key informant reveal critical factors that pose to be a challenge in the use of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution, particularly in the case of Mt. Elgon. One of the challenges of adopting interpersonal communication in conflict resolution is that locals do not perceive it as being capable of resolving the deep-rooted issues which

they believe require advanced government intervention. For example, one of the key informants recorded that:

The greatest challenge in using interpersonal communication to resolve conflicts arises from non-commonality of issues under contest which then yields varying attitudes from the actors in a conflict. In this regard, it is not as effective as other government intervention mechanisms because it may not solve the deep-rooted conflicts and takes a longer time to achieve long-term peace strategies.

Even though respondents listed “lack of trust among the actors, the use of coded language, which hinders interpersonal communication in some cases, illiteracy, and lack of clear communication as some of the common demerits of interpersonal communication, they; however, recommended that win-win situations be created as one of the best ways of incorporating interpersonal communication in the case of Mt. Elgon. However, despite possessing all the limitations listed above, interpersonal communication is particularly useful in increasing people’s interactions because it happens at a personal level. Such interactions can be promoted through activities such as sporting tournaments, religious functions, and cultural events, which would, in turn, improve how locals relate among themselves.

Hence, results of the study show that whereas interpersonal communication has partly contributed to peace-building by improving personal relationships, it; however, has some structural constraints that does not allow it to be the sole mechanism for conflict resolution in the case of Mt. Elgon disputes. Thus, interpersonal communication can be effectively used, along other methods, to effectively assist in resolving conflicts in Mt Elgon by improving people’s interactions and willingness to dialogue.

Discussing about power relations as seen in chapter two of the study, Rodsky (2019) affirms that when it comes to solving issues of conflict, the escalation of one group being more superior to the other results in more issues. Accordingly, interpersonal communication enables a compromising approach which seeks to establish the middle ground between competing and avoiding. It would enable both parties to agree on a partially acceptable solution. Specifically, representatives from both clans would examine an expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies them both. Thus, in light of the recent Sabao conflicts, compromising appears to be one of the best solutions that the community can come up with owing to the existing differences amongst them.

4.2.4 Objective 4: To determine factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region.

This objective aimed at determining factors which affect the use and effectiveness of interpersonal communication in resolving Mt. Elgon conflicts. In order gain a thoughtful understanding of these factors and subsequently put them into the context of Mt. Elgon conflicts, the opinion of the respondents was sought on several related concepts. They involve questions about the factors which they believe to be influencing interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon (e.g., technology, power relations), whether political ideologies affect the use and effectiveness of interpersonal communication, how to address challenges arising from political ideologies in during conflict resolution processes, as well as recommendations on how to incorporate interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon.

In general, some of the common factors which were found to influence interpersonal communication relate to resources, power, religion, technology, and politics. These factors often yield issues of mutual concern such as land, beliefs, and political affiliation which consequently affect the efficacy of interpersonal communication, with powerful politicians greatly exploiting their positions to antagonise the locals. Nevertheless, the findings show that the government, political leaders, and electorates all have roles to play in effectively addressing political issues which derail various efforts realised through interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon. The government should intervene by charging those who jeopardise peace in a court of law and emphasising on educating the locals to eradicate illiteracy, while electorates should learn to choose issue-based politics as opposed to politics of hatred and propaganda.

4.2.4.1 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Communication

For conflicts to occur repeatedly, there has to be deep-rooted causes or reasons that “justify” them. In the case of Mt. Elgon, for example, some of the factors that respondents mentioned as the contributors for the escalated conflicts include “bad politics/ political affiliations, competition for scarce resources, poverty, immoral behaviours, government inaction, porous border, unresolved historical injustices, and unfair distribution of resources.” Several other issues intertwine to cause these factors, and each one of them is manifested in a specific context or circumstance.

Analysis of the data shows that both technology and power relations influence how people relate, thereby impacting how interpersonal communication is used in resolving Mt. Elgon conflicts. While trying to make a related comment, one of the key informants noted that:

Technology significantly influences how people relate. For instance, the use of social media, such as Facebook which connects many people, can change how a community conducts its conversations either positively or negatively.

Similarly, power balance affects how individuals and groups relate to each other by dictating the attitudes of actors in a conflict. In this regard, one of the clan elders explained that:

“Power relations impact the use of interpersonal communication. In the case of Mt. Elgon, power influences how clans relate, with one clan that sees itself resourceful and powerful showing lack of adequate respect to the other clan.”

Politics and religion are the other factors which greatly influence interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon. One of the policy makers argued that:

Politics affect people’s interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon in the sense that existing political ideologies cause division among the electorate who often immerse themselves in political contests blindly.

Moreover, another key informant indicated that:

Politics greatly affects interpersonal communication because it gives politicians the platform to use pertinent issues affecting residents to divide them and spread hate. He states that the division in politics is so strong to the extent that they use coded language as “*Farasi ni Wawili*” to imply that there are two horses in the political race in Mt. Elgon.

Based on these findings, it becomes critical for various peace actors in Mt. Elgon to address challenges emerging from diverse political ideologies which affect interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon and its possible use in advancing conflict resolution efforts. In this context, one of the youth leaders argued that:

One of the best ways of addressing challenges that arise from diverse political ideologies which affect interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon involves encouraging ideologies and politics which are based on real issues and are outlined in clear manifestos as opposed to politics which focus on political party affiliations, charisma, or propaganda.

Additionally, on the same issue, one of the administrative officers recorded that:

The first line of intervention should be the government. Specifically, people who jeopardise peace should be charged in a court of law. Secondly, emphasis should be placed on education, with the objective of eradicating illiteracy.

Finally, considering various limitations of incorporating interpersonal communication in conflict resolution, such as “time-consuming, coverage of limited content, easily affected by the mood or subjectivity of the participants, use of coded language which hinder the intended outcomes, and the fact that it is only applicable when people are not at war,” the study further revealed certain recommendations on the incorporation of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon, including peaceful coexistence being easily realised through people’s shared experiences and by talking out issues together in round tables. One of the women groups’ leaders noted that:

There should be more interpersonal communication because through such incorporations, people share experiences; hence, formulating peaceful coexistence.

Similarly, another key informant recommended the use of interpersonal communication in resolving Mt. Elgon conflicts by stating that:

Interpersonal communication is the nerve centre of conflict resolution since at any point, the actors to a conflict must talk to each other. It is, therefore, highly recommendation for situations of conflict such as the one being witnessed in Mt. Elgon.

From the literature section of this study, McCann and Higgins (2015) argue that dominant power means one gains the benefits over the other party, while empowerment ensures power is shared with others. Accordingly, peace actors in Sabaot should take note of the influence by politicians who are able of controlling the masses through feeding them with propaganda or using their position to gain support. Similarly, they should consider the technological advancements, which promote the creation of one “global village” where each person is connected (either directly or indirectly) with everyone else. These factors create the non-existence of ‘honest’ human systems which are crucial in enhancing interpersonal communication. Thus, whereas analysis of the data collected reveal several factors which influence interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon, such as politics, power relations, and technology, the study established that the ability to highlight peoples’ shared experiences and create favourable environments for dialogues makes interpersonal communication one of the best tools for improving the interactions among locals of Mt. Elgon, thereby making it possible to initiate and conduct peace initiatives.

Moreover, to constructivism theory applies to the above findings as it “to explain individual differences in people’s ability to communicate skilfully in social situations” (Griffin, 2012, p. 98). Specifically, some of the communication goals acknowledged by constructivists such as understanding, attracting, persuading, informing, comforting, or entertaining, can be used as the target of intervention approaches deployed in Mt. Elgon. For instance, whereas one faction might view their success in negotiations in terms of their assertiveness or outgoing, this theory, however, positively focuses on spearheading reform movements that can shape public policy. Consequently, members of the larger Sabaot clans can learn certain aspects in the dialogue process to enable them to effectively solving the root-causes of their conflicts.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This study sought to investigate the efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in the cases of the Sabaot clans in Mt. Elgon region. In order to achieve the overall aim of the study, several objectives were examined. They include investigating the type and level of the Sabaot conflict in Mt. Elgon region, establishing the conflict resolution methods that have been used since the last major inter-clan conflict in 2008 in Mt. Elgon, accessing the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution, and determining the factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon.

In summary, the study established that interpersonal communication can be used alongside other interventions to end the long-standing conflicts between the Sabaot clans. The conflicts in Mt. Elgon region are intra-group conflicts. These conflicts are concentrated in Chepyuk ward and are often fuelled by issues such as the land question, politics/ politics of identity, unemployment, stock theft, gun violence, and the competition for other limited resources. To this extent, it was established that politics is a greater obstacle when it comes to solving the land question in Mt. Elgon region because politicians often exploit this matter by causing divisions and disharmony amongst the locals.

The study further revealed that the level of Mt. Elgon conflicts has reached advanced/manifest stage, where their aftermath is so severe. Specifically, the study showed that these conflicts

have put serious strain on the inter-clan relations, thereby increasing the possibility of further violence by dividing and setting apart members of the same Ndorobo clan. Moreover, these conflicts have had adverse impacts on Sabaot community, including displacement of people, destruction of property, loss of life, and the disruption of access to social amenities and services such as schools and healthcare. Accordingly, “soft” approaches, such as dialogue appears as the best mechanisms for resolving them.

Further, the study established that various conflict resolution approaches have been deployed in Mt. Elgon region since the last major inter-clan conflicts experienced between 2006 and 2008. However, these mechanisms produced mixed outcomes. In, general, the study found that the government has been selective in its engagement of the community in conflict resolution because it did not use a participatory approach to resolution of the conflict. This significantly impacts on interpersonal communication among the Sabaot clan members. Additionally, although some positive outcomes have been witnessed, including resettlement of some of the landless individuals, negative politics and resources constraints remain the major stumbling blocks in ensuring adequate campaigns towards strong conflict resolution campaigns. In this regard, the government can abolish legal and forceful interventions used previously and instead, become a neutral mediator through group communication.

Moreover, the study found that besides involving locals for considerable acceptance of the government initiatives, better outcomes can be achieved through sufficient stakeholder engagement. Community-based peace actors felt that they have roles to play in conflict resolution, including elders who would be tasked by acting as role models to the upcoming generation, as well as youths who would give insightful ideas on how to end violence.

Moreover, the study showed that sporting events between different regions occupied by diverse clans and church events have immensely contributed to peaceful coexistence in the region. However, regarding the effectiveness of various conflict resolution mechanisms from different stakeholders, the study showed that various programs which have been initiated have helped minimise conflicts among the groups, thereby creating a favourable environment to dialogue although politics of hate, existence of small militia groups, and the porous border with Uganda still remain a challenge to these efforts.

The study assessed various strengths and weaknesses of interpersonal communication in the context of conflict resolution process in Mt. Elgon region also established a number of useful insights. Firstly, the study showed that whereas interpersonal communication appears to be one of the greatest tools for ensuring lasting peaceful coexistence among the locals, it cannot be used as the only form of conflict resolution mechanism in Mt. Elgon, but as a subsidiary approach.

Additionally, the study established that interpersonal communication is essential in any effort directed at increasing people's interactions because it happens at personal level. Moreover, the study showed that involving the community in conflict resolution is critical in the realisation of a lasting peaceful coexistence. Importantly, the study revealed that locals do not perceive interpersonal communication as being capable of resolving the deep-rooted issues, thereby minimising its effectiveness in Mt. Elgon. Perhaps, this concept arises from the idea that issues such as lack of trust among the actors, the use of coded language, illiteracy, and lack of clear communication hinder the effectiveness of interpersonal communication.

Furthermore, the study established resources, power, religion, technology, and politics as some of the factors, which affect the use and effectiveness of interpersonal communication in resolving Mt. Elgon conflicts. Moreover, the study revealed that these factors often yield issues of mutual concern such as land, beliefs, and political affiliation which consequently affect the efficacy of interpersonal communication. Nevertheless, the study concluded that the government, political leaders, and electorates all have roles to play in effectively addressing political issues which derail various efforts realised through interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon. Accordingly, the study established that government should intervene by charging those who jeopardise peace in a court of law and emphasise on educating the locals to eradicate illiteracy, while electorates should learn to choose issue-based politics as opposed to politics of hatred and propaganda.

The study established that technology and power relations, in particular, often influence how people relate, thereby impacting how interpersonal communication is used in resolving Mt. Elgon conflicts. While the use of technology, through social media, can change how a community conducts its conversations either positively or negatively, power balance, on the other hand, affects how individuals and groups relate to each other by dictating the attitudes of actors in a conflict.

Finally, the study determined some of the factors that hinder the incorporation of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution. They include time-consuming, coverage of limited content, easily affected by the mood or subjectivity of the participants, use of coded language which alter the intended outcomes, and that it is only applicable when people are not at war. Nonetheless, the study further revealed ways through which interpersonal

communication can be incorporated in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon to yield peaceful coexistence among the locals. Key among them include the need to cover people's shared experiences and to have organised conversations on issues affecting all the parties involved.

5.2 Conclusions

In Mt. Elgon region, military interventions and crack down on “perceived” criminals have been used as the primary method of conflict resolution. Such actions have not yielded absolute peace as compared to the successful use of interpersonal communication in peace-building efforts in Rwanda and South Africa (Mutisi, 2009; Sentama, 2009). These efforts by the state exacerbated the conflict and led to issues such as extrajudicial killings, thereby raising concerns for human rights abuses. Hence, interpersonal communication has been conceptualised as one of the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of a conflict.

In his words of “without reconciliation, there is no future,” Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop emeritus of South Africa, informs about fact that the need for conflict resolution in our societies is crucial given that no two people perceive a particular concept precisely in the same way (Udezo, 2009). Moreover, according to Frost (2019), without conflict resolution, group harmony can erode, and both interpersonal and group bitterness can develop, an outcome, which is particularly true when conflicts become personal, and people see disagreements as attacks rather than potentially productive. Furthermore, according to Evans (2013), no one wins over the other, but all win when it comes to conflict resolution mechanisms being based on a win-win situation. Leach and Scoones (2015) argue that

individuals who are competing for resources are seen to be inept since they do not contribute to growth; thus, the shift from the growth phase to a stagnating phase. Therefore, effective management of conflicts is required in Mt. Elgon region so that increased development can be achieved because the resources used in conflict would result in the community members moving ahead than the lag brought about by competing over the available resources.

According to Udezo (2009), interpersonal communication offers a veritable strategy for peace initiative as it tends to focus on sharing experiences rather than merely debating or exchanging views about the conflict. The conflicts in Mt. Elgon have been fuelled majorly by politics of identity, competition for land and resources - predominantly between the *Soy* and *Mosop* clans. The tensions between these two ethnic conflicts are constantly fuelled by the never-ending of politicisation of land allocation between them. Therefore, the signifiers of differences between the *Soy* and *Mosop* clans have been created by political actors who have used name-calling, stereotyping, and provocative statements to cause divisions among the electorates.

Chepyuk ward should be the focus area where interpersonal communication should be applied to solve inter-clan conflicts that have rocked Mt. Elgon since it the epicentre of the major conflicts that have rocked Mt. Elgon in the recent past. Firstly, interpersonal communication will allow individuals of this area to influence the behaviours, attitudes, and opinions of their colleagues from the other side. Secondly, it will foster a more effective, efficient cooperation thereby helping people to forge or maintain strong social bonds. Furthermore, interpersonal

communication will assist members of this community to negotiate and achieve reconciliation by effectively managing issues that arise at the community level.

This form of communication is advantageous in building strong relationships with others. Specifically, interpersonal communication allows others to feel close and connected. When speaking face-to-face, an individual gets the opportunity to observe the body language and tonal voice of the other party, both aspects which are valuable clues to the true meaning of the message. When people communicate, they vent out the issues in place. The lack of communication serves as a fertile ground for conflicts in the society. Moreover, interpersonal communication is the desired method to discuss highly sensitive issues.

Regarding the strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region, interpersonal communication generally fosters more effective cooperation among people, thereby helping them to forge and maintain strong social bonds. Accordingly, there should be more incorporation of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon because, through such incorporations, people share their lived experiences, thereby promoting peaceful coexistence. Moreover, even though interpersonal communication is one of the most excellent tools for ensuring lasting peaceful coexistence because it occurs daily among the locals, it should, however, be noted that it can only be used as part of conflict resolution mechanism but not as the primary approach in the case of Mt. Elgon. This caution was based on certain limitations of interpersonal communication, which include lack of trust among the actors, the use of coded language which hinders its effectiveness in some cases, existing high illiteracy in the region, and time-consuming.

Nonetheless, since interpersonal communication happens at the personal level, it can be applied to increase people's interactions through sporting activities, religious functions, and cultural events in Mt. Elgon, thereby enhancing how people relate.

Concerning the factors that affect interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region, several factors were found to influence interpersonal communication. While the general factors include culture, situation, power, and technology; however, in the case of Mt. Elgon, resources, religion, and politics are the major factors that influence interpersonal communication. These factors generate issues of mutual concern such as land, beliefs, and political affiliation, which often influence the efficacy on interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in the region. Consequently, government, political leaders, and electorates all have roles to play in effectively addressing political issues derailing the efforts of interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon. On its part, the government should intervene by charging those who jeopardise peace in a court of law, politicians should practice progressive politics, while electorates should be sensitised to choose issue-based politics as opposed to politics of hatred and propaganda.

Regarding the conditions under which interpersonal communication is efficacious in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region, typical factors which usually influence the efficacy of interpersonal communication include respect for divergent opinions, openness, and cultural inclusivity. As shown in the case of Mt. Elgon, most of these factors are not inherent and; therefore, should be created and nurtured. For example, the interactions between locals should be promoted through such activities as sports and cultural events, which will improve how

people relate to one another. Additionally, given that interpersonal conflict thrives where there is a win-win situation, actors must first create such a scenario for all the parties involved in any attempt at resolving disputes. Hence, the efficacy of interpersonal communication can be promoted through various activities that bring community members together as equals.

The latest conflicts in the region (between 2006 and 2008) served as a clear indication of the failure by previous peace-building initiatives. Even though interpersonal communication is regarded as time-consuming, it is the preferable method at this time when there is relative peace in the region with a focus on improving the interactions between locals instead of waiting to use when conflicts erupt. However, to ensure the effectiveness of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon region, all the actors such as administrators, clan elders, religious group leaders, need to be actively involved through public participation. The scope of this study was limited to the efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon area and; therefore, further investigations can be done to assess the impact that other forms of people's interactions, such as sporting activities, religious functions, and cultural events, may have on building peace within the region.

In general, in order to effectively resolve a clan-based conflict, a deep understanding of the root causes must be obtained first. This concept can be obtained easily if the affected persons are adequately engaged and encouraged to contribute their ideas in conflict resolution. Thus, whereas several factors such as politics, power relations, and technology, influence interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon, the ability to highlight peoples' shared

experiences and create favourable environments for dialogues makes interpersonal communication one of the best tools for improving the interactions among locals of Mt. Elgon, thereby making it possible to initiate and conduct peace initiatives. However, some structural constraints exist which do not allow interpersonal communication to be the sole mechanism for conflict resolution in the case of Mt. Elgon disputes. Nevertheless, interpersonal communication can be effectively used, along other methods, to adequately assist in resolving conflicts in Mt Elgon by improving people's interactions and willingness to dialogue.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the data, findings, analyses, conclusions, and interpretations, the study would like to make the following recommendations:

- i. The government should actively involve locals in key decision-making through public participation and community awareness, both of which are key in realising lasting peaceful coexistence between the Soy and Mosop clans of Mt. Elgon. The awareness programs can be achieved through broadcast in both social and mainstream media.
- ii. All peace actors in Mt. Elgon region should strive to collectively promote interpersonal communication among the residents of the area. Some of the ways through which this exercise can be advanced include initiating and conducting many social activities, such as sports, religious functions, and cultural events. These events and functions have proven to be effective in improving how the people of Mt. Elgon relate amongst themselves.

- iii. The study recommends further recommends that only the political ideologies and politics which are based on real issues and are outlined in clear manifestos should be encouraged as opposed to politics which focus on political party affiliations, charisma, or propaganda.
- iv. The government, through its various agencies and bodies, should always act as the first line of intervention because locals, in their individual capacities or small groupings, may neither have the power and resources to adequately charge all the people who jeopardise peace in a court of law nor emphasise on the need for education, with the objective of eradicating illiteracy.
- v. The government should promote community policing (the *Nyumba Kumi* initiative) in Mt. Elgon since it is not only gaining ground in most areas in the country but it is also providing accountability of people's whereabouts, which enables civilians to take part in peace-keeping.
- vi. The study recommends further research on how to counter the challenges that hinder use of interpersonal communication (e.g., time-consuming, coverage of limited content, easily affected by the mood or subjectivity of the participants, use of coded language) so as to diffuse their negative impacts on inter-clan conflict resolution approaches being carried out in Mt. Elgon region.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consent Form

Dear Respondent,

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is, Esther Cheruto Kamoet, a Master of Arts student from the University of Nairobi. I would like to talk to you about interpersonal communication in conflict resolution. The purpose of this interview is to collect data for an academic research project titled: **The efficacy of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution: a case of the Sabaot clans in Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County, Kenya** as part of the requirements for the award of a Master of Arts Degree in Communication Studies at the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be shared in school for the sole purpose of academic study and I will ensure that any information included in my report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview at any time.

Please sign below in acceptance of my request and to authorise me to use part of this interview for my school work. Are you willing to participate in this interview?

Interviewee Sign:.....

Date:

Interviewer Sign:.....

Date:

Appendix 2: Key Informants Interview Guide for Peace Monitors

The efficacy of interpersonal communication in Conflict resolution among Sabaot Clans in Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County.

This research is for academic purpose only, the information you give will be treated with confidentiality.

Respondent Position: _____

Interview Date: _____

Interviewed by: _____

A Type and level of Conflicts

- i. What type of conflict exists in Mt. Elgon?
- ii. What is the level of Conflict in Mt. Elgon?
- iii. What do you think fuelled the intra-ethnic conflict in Mt. Elgon?
- iv. Has the conflict affected the Sabaot community? How?
- v. What part of Mt. Elgon have you concentrated your conflict resolution efforts? Why?

B Conflict resolution methods

- i. Which conflict resolution approaches have you initiated in Mt. Elgon?
- ii. How do you ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the conflict resolution process?
- iii. Do you think the programs are effective in resolving the conflict in Mt. Elgon?
- iv. What challenges do you face in conflict resolution efforts?

C Strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication

- i. Are there efforts of conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon through interpersonal communication?
- ii. Do you think interpersonal communication can be used as a method of conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon?
- iii. What are the challenges of incorporating interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon?

- iv. What is your recommendation on the best way of incorporating interpersonal communication in conflict resolution?

D Factors affecting interpersonal communication

- i. What factor do you think has influence interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon?
- ii. Do political ideologies affect interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon?
- iii. How do you address the political ideologies challenges in conflict resolution efforts in Mt. Elgon?
- iv. What are the limitations of incorporating interpersonal communication in conflict resolution?

Appendix 3: Key Informants Interview Guide for Policy Makers (Politicians, Administrative leaders, Religious Leaders, Clan Leaders)

The efficacy of interpersonal communication in Conflict resolution among Sabaot Clans in Mt. Elgon region, Bungoma County.

This research is for academic purpose only, the information you give will be treated with confidentiality.

Respondent Position: _____

Interview Date: _____

Interviewed by: _____

A Type and level of Conflicts

- i. Where were you during the 2006-2008 conflict in Mt. Elgon?
- ii. What are some of the causes of conflict in Mt. Elgon?
- iii. What are the types of conflicts that exist in Mt. Elgon and how does these conflicts influence relationships among clan members?
- iv. During the conflict period, how did the authorities and government of the day respond?
- v. In your opinion, do you think politics influence land issues in Mt. Elgon?

B Conflict resolution methods

- i. In your opinion, was the government effective in addressing the root cause of the conflict?
- ii. What are some of the outcomes of the conflict resolution methods by the government?
- iii. In your opinion, did the government involve the community in the resolution of the conflict?
- iv. Do you think you have a role to play in the conflict resolution methods in Mt. Elgon?

C Strengths and limitations of interpersonal communication

- i. Do you think it is important to resolve conflict through the involvement of the community?
- ii. Have there been any peace building efforts in Mt. Elgon hat have been of significance in resolution of conflict?
- iii. What is your take on the use of interpersonal communication to resolve the typical conflicts in Mt. Elgon?

- iv. What would be the main challenge in adopting interpersonal communication in conflict resolution?

D Factors affecting interpersonal communication

- i. In your opinion what factors contribute to escalation of conflict?
- ii. Do you think technology influences how people relate?
- iii. Does power relations impact of interpersonal communication in Mt. Elgon?
- iv. What is your recommendation on the incorporation of interpersonal communication in conflict resolution in Mt. Elgon?

Appendix 4: Certificate of Fieldwork



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This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on 19/07/2019 in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project can be allowed to proceed for fieldwork.

Reg. No: K50/87013/2016

Name: ESTHER CHERUTO KAMDET

Title: THE EFFICACY OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CASE OF THE WABAO CLANS IN MT. ELGON, BUNGOMA COUNTY

Dr. Philip Mwangi
SUPERVISOR

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24/9/2019
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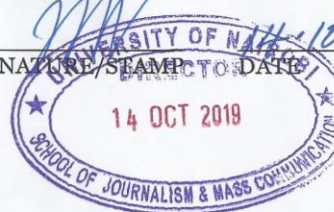
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Appendix 5: Certificate of Originality

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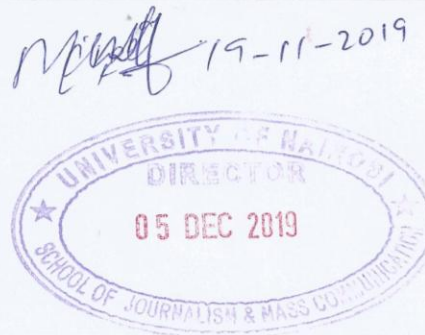
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Appendix 6: Certificate of Corrections



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Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTIONS

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on 30/10/2019 in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project/thesis can be allowed to proceed for binding.

Reg. No: K50/87013/2016

Name: ESTHER CHERUTO KAMDET.

Title: THE EFFICACY OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CASE OF THE SABADOT CLANG IN NOT-ELGON,
BUNGOMA COUNTY.

Dr Elias Mokiwa
SUPERVISOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

13/11/2019
DATE

Dr Samuel Siringi
PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

05/12/2019
DATE

Dr Samuel Siringi
DIRECTOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE/STAMP

06/12/2019
DATE

