

**A STUDY ON SECURITY COMMUNICATION FOR CHILDREN IN
CONFLICT AREAS: THE CASE OF MOTHERS IN ENDOO WARD OF
ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY**

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University. No part of this work may be reproduced without the prior written permission of the author and/or The University of Nairobi.

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Declaration by the Supervisor

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

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Dr. Elias Mokuu

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the brave women of Kerio Valley who brave chilling cold, rains and snake bites at the Kerio Valley escarpment to keep their children safe from invasion. And to my two dear ones Jepkosgei and Kipchirchir you were spectacular in my academic journey.

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on security communication for children in conflict areas: a case of mothers in Endoo ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The communities in Endoo ward have experienced perennial conflicts between them and their neighbours along Kerio River. The objectives of this study are: To assess the extent to which communication to children by mothers during insecurity in Kerio Valley is age-appropriate and child-friendly. To assess the extent to which communication to children by mothers in Endoo Ward during insecurity is positive and strengths-based. To establish children response to security communication by their mothers in Endoo Ward, and to investigate communication challenges mothers experience in security communication in Endoo Ward. The study was anchored on Paul Watzlawick's Interpretative and Interaction Theory of Interpersonal Communication. The research used a case study design, qualitative research approach and the target population for the study were mothers in Endoo ward. The sample was selected using purposive sampling method with a criteria generated by the researcher. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information from the mothers. A focus group discussion was also conducted with the youth to establish response to communication by mothers. The study found out that mothers in Endoo Ward have devised communication strategies unique to their environment to keep their children safe during invasion. The communication is child friendly when mothers are preparing children before invasion. The communication is hasty during invasion owing to the danger that they are facing. The communication to children by mothers in Endoo Ward is positive and strength based especially after the invasion. The children have mastered the communication by the mothers and respond effectively to their mother's communication during invasion. Mothers experience communication challenges while communication to their children during invasion. The mothers need training in communication skills to be better equipped with communication strategies to keep them safe during invasion. The study strongly recommends for the policy makers to develop communication interventions for children during insecurity. Further studies should be conducted on various methods and dimensions of measuring security communication strategies for children.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Overview

This is the introductory part of the study and it includes the following: the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, justification and significance of the study and the scope and the limitations of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Werner, (2012) more than 40% of refugees who flee their countries to enter United States of America are children. Armed conflicts and wars affect children more than anybody else in the population. It is not however guaranteed that the children may get to safety and experience comfort when they reach their destinations. Children may experience trauma and stress that might affect their mental and psychological health (Werner, 2012). The most important part of these childrens' life is their mothers who play a major role in ensuring that they are well by giving them comfort and enable the children to cope with the hard situations. Their fathers in this case would be involved in war or conflict leaving the responsibility of cushioning the conflicts to their mothers.

American Psychological Association (APA) Task Force on Psychological Effects of war on Children and Families who are Refugees from Armed Conflict Residing in the United States, conducted a study on the refugee children. The task force emphasised the role of culture, family and community in the healing process for the children affected by wars and armed conflicts. This also emphasises the role of mothers in the healing process because mothers are considered transmitters of culture and main support for children during conflicts. For this to happen, mothers need to device effective strategies to communicate with their children during these trying moments.

Wars and communal conflicts destroy the family fabric and those who suffer the most are not only the children but also the women as the men take up arms to fight. Normally when the wars occur, it leads to forced immigration where the families have to seek safe places to settle until the wars or conflict subside or end. At an individual level, the conflict impacts negatively on the psychological, social and physical wellbeing of the population (Snoubar & Duman, 2016). Women and children are the most vulnerable to all types of abuse and exploitation whenever war or conflicts occur and since the women and children are the most affected, it is the responsibility of the women to protect the young ones by ensuring that they are psychologically, socially, physically and emotionally well. In the Middle Eastern society, continued conflicts have led to destruction of way of life affecting major services in the community such as health and education. According to Snoubar and Duman (2016) women play a major role in protection of their children even though they occupy the lowest echelons in the society. Women and children need protection against acts of violence and armed conflicts such as exposure to killings, disability, rape, sexual exploitation, malnutrition and deteriorating health conditions.

In the Middle East after the conflicts, mothers were forced to assume the role of family heads, they took up jobs to provide for their families marking the beginning of exploitations of the women and children. Women were forced to work for more hours with less pay, they were also sexually exploited if they were to keep their jobs to feed and educate their children. Children were not spared either; they faced all kinds of abuse that include kidnapping, child trafficking, sexual abuse and forced labour (Snoubar & Duman, 2016). Those children who lived in the refugee camps suffered violence in the hands of

the strangers and those abducted and taken to prison by official authorities suffered sexual violence in the hands of the same authorities.

The case of Middle East is comparable to many other cases in the world where women and children were exposed to extra violence apart from the real conflict and in most cases, they are helpless in the situation. The case in the Middle East becomes even complicated with the absence of proper institutions and laws that protect women, children and the youth. They lack planning in the provision of economic and educational services to these vulnerable groups. Ill health in the Middle East among women and children is blamed on the conflicts. There was a total cut off of these services during conflicts adding to the misery of the children due to health risks especially children below five years (Snoubar & Duman, 2016). The most severe cases of health services that affected women and children physical and mental wellbeing were prenatal and postnatal care of the infants. The armed conflict in the Middle East also affected women and children psychological wellbeing because in many cases they are not in control of what happens to them. Children depend on adults to provide for them, they would suffer the most if they have to confront hostile environments (Snoubar & Duman, 2016) what the adults can provide to the minors is to ensure that they are emotionally protected by constantly communicating to them and putting them at ease.

In Afghanistan, many children were targeted during armed conflicts, approximately 50,000 children from villages and streets were kidnapped by Soviet forces to turn them into communists and use them as militants (Noorzoy, 2012). The forces also dropped toy like bombs to the field to attract the children that later exploded and maimed or killed them while playing. In the civil wars of 1989 and 2001, many children were

recruited as child soldiers, most of them died in the battle field. The lucky ones who survived were exposed to trauma and suffered physically, emotionally and psychologically. Other Afghan children were kidnapped and auctioned to terrorists; reports claim that they had been imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay and in different prisons in Afghanistan and others were forced to join the armed forces (Noorzoy, 2012).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have also reported children between 14-18 years being demobilised, the child soldiers still exist to date. Due to land mines exposed to children, a high percentage of them have been exposed to dangerous radiations through depleted uranium bombs resembling food containers. Children in Afghanistan have gone through numerous heart breaking conditions that include being sold for food by their families who suffered drought effects, died of cold, forced labour and they were also denied schooling (Noorzoy, 2012). They have also suffered neglect because of absence of laws and institutions to protect them. All these conditions that the children have suffered in Afghanistan have contributed to high child mortality rates. Those who have survived the above atrocities are forced to live in adverse conditions such as malnutrition and disability. The malnourished children's life expectancy remained low rendering the population hard to thrive even under normal circumstances (Noorzoy, 2012).

High percentage of children who experienced conflicts and those who were born after conflicts are living with disabilities because of exploding bombs and left-over land mines. Children's right for example right to education was not catered for since the education system was destroyed by armed conflict. After the conflict, the statistics of school going children was low due variety of constraints such as uneven distribution of

schools and children being income earners for their families. Most children roam the streets of big cities looking for work instead of going to school (Noorzoy, 2012).

Nigeria has also experienced armed conflicts such as Boko Haram an Islamic terrorism organisation that has wreaked havoc to the country. The activities of this outlawed organisation has led to disruption of life exposing the children to harm, displacement and traumatising the children because the conflicts commonly last for a long time. The perpetrators from this terrorist organisation abduct children when they are displaced and subject them to physical injuries, dangers associated with landmines as well as illness (Olaitan, 2019). They walk for long distances with limited or no supply of food and water, weakening the children and exposing them to diseases. This environment exposes the children at a tender age when they are vulnerable and require protection. Women and children are exposed to abuse and exploitation because they are unable to protect themselves against these terrorist groups. The abuse to children and women may include sexual abuse, physical abuse and child labour (Olaitan, 2019).

According to Olaitan (2019), the children at the displacement camps in Nigeria do not only suffer abuse but they also miss the basic services such as education. Boko Haram has made it their duty to cripple the education system with the reason that the western education system is forbidden. The terrorist groups have attacked schools destroying the infrastructure and kidnapping children as well as teachers. Boko Haram has often attacked secondary and primary schools. Between 2009 and 2014, they had already attacked over 44 primary and secondary schools in Northern Nigeria (Olaitan, 2019). They coordinated the attacks in schools by burning down the existing school buildings threatening and killing teachers and abducting the students. Universities have

not been spared either, they attacked 45 university lecturers in 2017, where they killed five lecturers in the University of Maiduguri, Borno State and abducted several others (Olaitan, 2019).

During this time, children in Nigeria could not access basic needs such as food water and medicine. Most of the time, mothers and girls were forced to provide sex in order to access basic needs and services within the displacement camps. The girls may further be forced into early marriages by those who have been entrusted to protect them and due to economic pressures, they oblige. After all these, the children suffer depression, nightmares, anxiety, suicidal and aggressive behaviours that affect their entire life (Olaitan, 2019). One of the most urgent interventions that could come in handy apart from the basic needs such as food, medicine and their daily needs are the interventions that would calm the children including communication strategies coming from their mothers. They need to be constantly monitored and provided attention before and after conflicts to try and cushion them from the effects of the armed conflicts. The displaced children in this case belong to special groups who are vulnerable to health hazards and their parents especially mothers should learn how to effectively communicate with them.

Robertson and Duckett (2007) in their journal *Mothering during War and Post War in Bosnia* assert that the women during war referred to the following statements “I have to feed them”, “Living somewhere in between” and “still living the war inside”. The above statements were considered as themes for their research to capture what mothers suffered with their children during and after war. These expressions portray what mothers and their children went through during war and after war in Bosnia. In this study, women narrate the ordeal they went through during war. They were always on the move

protecting their families after being displaced. The women in Bosnia protected their families despite most of them being young mothers. It reached a point that the children understood what was happening and when invasion began, children were thrown out of the window or any opening in the wall to waiting hands outside who would then take them to a safer shelter (Robertson & Duckett, 2007).

The effect of war on children was in such a high magnitude that the minors understood what happened and would normally curl silently on a corner. The duty of a mother then was to make their children understand the value of remaining silent during invasion for their safety. This implies that mothers developed strategies to communicate to their children to understand the safety measures during war. These women had to move from one village to another carrying meager supply of food just to spare for their children and if the supply was not enough, they had to find a way and it went as far as eating grass just to survive. They moved in small groups so as not to attract assailers and the mothers who could not calm their children were left behind for fear of being discovered (Robertson & Duckett, 2007).

Women narrated how they gave birth without the help of a medical practitioner in the forest and with all these, they managed to survive. There were no doctors for the wounded and no medicine for the sick, they had to literally use herbs to ease pain and when all these happened, the men were at war. Apart from the horror that they went through in the forests or the places where they sought shelter after they were displaced, the women had to ensure that their children did not feel the void that was left by their fathers. As fate would have it, those women who lost their husbands during war had to undergo more emotional situations as they were stigmatised, the widows in the

community were further put down by their culture that saw a widow as nothing and a child who had no father as equally nothing (Robertson & Duckett, 2007).

Issifu, (2015) agrees with Snoubar & Duman (2016) that women and children are the most vulnerable members of the society when conflicts erupt. These groups (women and children) are neither the provokers nor inciters of war but at the end of it all they become the most affected. Issifu, (2015) points out that women and children suffer the consequences during and after war. He gives an example of Rwandan genocide where Tutsi women were made the targets of war. The Tutsi women here were sexually abused and killed by Hutu men. Consequently, Hutu women were made objects of revenge by Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) soldiers who also sexually abused and killed the Hutu women. A high number of Rwandese women and girls were sexually abused and most of them were infected with HIV virus by their perpetrators. Similarly, hundreds of women suffered the same fate in Darfur at the Democratic Republic of Congo (Issifu, 2015).

Despite being the victims, these women especially in Africa play a great role in peace building and restoring sanity to the society. Women in Rwanda helped in caring for survivors, provided homes for the orphans and provided psychological support to the victims. Women have participated in the peace campaigns but in Africa they have only been considered victims despite being on the fore front in bringing about peace in the society. Indeed, in Africa peace building is a man's affair as women are considered weak members of the society (Issifu, 2015).

Kenya has been a relatively stable country but it has had its share in conflicts especially during election periods and the conflicts at the pastoralist regions among them Samburu, Turkana, Tana River, Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet. The 2007 election was

the most contested political elections that cannot be easily forgotten by Kenyan people. The country erupted in violence causing the displacement of scores of families and creation of internally displaced persons for the first time in the history of Kenya. During this period, approximately 100,000 children were forced to flee their homes because of armed conflicts (Mwania *et al.*, 2013). The armed conflict was characterised by arson, murder destruction of homes and schools, rape among other vices. Those who were displaced ended up in camps as they were forced to flee their homes following the disputed elections.

According to Mwania *et al.* (2013) Women and children were targets at the slum areas the girls and the women were raped or sexually abused and some men and boys were sodomised. If we follow the violence keenly, children were deeply affected since they flee their homes sometimes with only a pair of clothes they are wearing, they lose their playmates, school mates and sometimes they lose their family members. The children being young in their minds often hear what would remain as a scar in their minds throughout their lives and the impact of violence deeply affect them. Just as Noorzoy, (2012) stipulated in his study *Afghanistan's children: The tragic victims of 30 years of war*, the children suffer psychological trauma but lack resources to deal with this traumatic event. Children experienced flashbacks dreams, nightmares and trauma because of the events that they have gone through during the violence. They also suffer phobia, anxiety, stress disorder especially those who have spent time in the displacement camps. Just like in Nigeria, the school children as well as teachers were displaced. They lost opportunities to attend school like their counter parts across the country (Mwania *et al.*, 2013).

Women and girls were sexually abused and exploited by the authorities who were expected to offer them security. Mwanja *et al.* (2013) studied post-election violence traumatic events and the level of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder among Primary School Pupils in Kibera and Kayole Settlements, Nairobi, found out that the children who lived in the camps were afraid to go to school as they continually feared for their lives. Those who went to school in the makeshift camps were unsettled since they were anxious about their future. At this level, the care of a mother to their children is important and communication forms a bigger component for the mothers to instill confidence to their children before, during and after the conflicts.

Women are considered caregivers in the society, they normally struggle to keep their families intact during conflicts, and this being a fact they are still not valued as envoys of peace. Women can play roles to end conflicts but they are still undervalued and underutilised in their contribution to peace building. This fact is highly contributed by socio-cultural setup in African communities that is characterised by patriarchy. In Kenya for example, many communities are characterised by a patriarch community set up and most of those communities that experience perennial conflicts are from pastoral communities. These communities value masculinity of men and often women are confined to house chores and when conflicts erupt, they are left to take care of their homesteads and keep the children safe. Conflicts in these communities have led to collapse of the already straining social amenities such as hospitals and schools. The collapsed social amenities cause immense suffering to women and children increasing high mortality rate among the children and expectant mothers.

Pastoralist communities living at the western Kenya have a long history of conflicts that have persisted to date. Since their livelihood depends on livestock, the conflicts revolve around the culture of cattle rustling. The limited resources like pasture and water have also been tied to conflicts among these communities. The undefined borders in these regions is also been blamed on the conflict that have seen the communities lose life, get displaced and ruined their community. Traditionally, livestock raiding did not lead to loss of life but involved acquiring and replacing of livestock lost during drought. The communities such as the Pokot, the Turkana have used cattle rustling to restock their livestock, expand their territories and enhance their supremacy at the plains for more than 9,000 years (Opiyo et al., 2012). Currently, commercialisation of livestock cattle rustling has taken another turn and involves use of sophisticated weapons which is more violent and destructive (Opiyo et al., 2012). The current cattle rustling or banditry do not occur without disruption of life and the women and children suffer the most because of the fights. The women and children are forced to flee from their home to seek refuge in the bushes, at this point they are cut off from accessing basic needs. They are forced to survive in the caves braving snakes, rains and cold (Opiyo et al., 2012).

1.1.1 Conflicts at the Kerio Valley

Kerio Valley inhabitants are part of the pastoralist communities living along Kerio River, they also depend on livestock for their upkeep. This region has also experienced conflicts since time immemorial, this has been blamed on cultural practices such as cattle rustling and revenge attacks that follows successful cattle rustling (Chelanga *et al.*, 2018). When this happens, families are displaced and forced to find shelter in caves of the Kerio Valley escarpment where it is considered safe. To be

specific, hostile invasions in Kerio Valley have led to poverty, starvation and dependency and by 2003 a total of 164,457 people had been displaced (Kipchumba, 2019). The displaced population comprised of 70 percent of women and children below 14 years. In 2016, over 70 people were killed and 1000 people were displaced in a period of one month (Kipchumba, 2019).

Considering the fact that women and children are the ones who suffer the most, women are naturally bestowed the responsibility of protecting their children physically, mentally and psychologically. In most cases mothers have to communicate to their children to assure them that everything is okay. For this to happen, mothers have to establish the sources of information, find appropriate ways of communicating with their children and come up with communication strategies that better suit the children. The intention of this study therefore is to investigate security communication for children in conflict area: a case of mothers in Endoo ward of Kerio Valley.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Women play a critical role in ensuring the safety of their children during intercommunity conflicts. Few studies have been undertaken to explore the communication strategies mothers use to inform their children that they are under attack and so they need to take cover. A conflict situation put mothers at a critical position where they have to weigh communication options that would best suit their children. It becomes more critical especially when the children are at an age where mothers struggle to communicate and hence, they would not determine whether the message has been decoded correctly. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has come up with four principles of children communication. Communication for children according to UNICEF

should be: age appropriate and child friendly, positive and strength based, also it should address the child holistically and address the needs of all the children (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011). Women and children in Kerio Valley have endured perennial conflicts that have forced them out of their homes a number of times. This means that the mothers have devised communication strategies of getting their children to safety. This study therefore intends to investigate if this information to the children adhere to the principles of children communication. Further, it may be curious to study the response of the children to security communication and communication challenges that mothers experience in security communication.

1.3 Main Objective

To investigate security communication for children in Endoo Ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To assess the extent to which communication to children by mothers during insecurity in Endoo Ward is age-appropriate and child-friendly.
- ii. To assess the extent to which communication to children by mothers in Endoo Ward during insecurity is positive and strengths-based.
- iii. To establish children's' response to security communication by their mothers in Endoo Ward.
- iv. To investigate communication challenges mothers experience in security communication in Endoo ward.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. To what extent does communication to children by mothers during insecurity in Endoo Ward age-appropriate and child-friendly?
- ii. To what extent is communication to children by mothers in Endoo Ward during insecurity positive and strengths-based?
- iii. How is the children's response to security communication by their mothers in Endoo Ward?
- iv. What are the communication challenges that mothers experience in security communication at Kerio Valley?

1.5 Justification and Significance of the Study

As much as communication strategies studies have been undertaken by different scholars, there is a scanty evidence of Mother's communicating to their children during insecurity or during invasion. It is in order to acknowledge that over the decade there has been a remarkable stride made by scholars to contribute to the field of women and children in conflict. Most of these studies have concentrated on the brunt that women and children bear but less has been done on communication to children during conflict. This study therefore may play a major role in filling this gap. Secondly, communication strategies used by mothers to communicate to their children especially during invasion or conflict is unique and complex in its own right. Giving an in-depth study and especially in Endoo Ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County where they have experienced perennial conflicts, the results can serve a purpose of giving mothers an easy time to manage conflict where children are involved. Lastly several studies have clearly put out that the children suffer the most during insecurity therefore the results of this study may provide

some of the communication interventions to build resilience among the children and enable them to cope.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study can contribute immensely to the available literature on communicating to children during conflict or crisis especially from women to children. This study may be able to establish communication strategies used by mothers while communicating to their children during insecurity. The findings of this study can be significant in providing useful information to be used by mothers to communicate to their children during insecurity. This study finds out challenges that mothers experience while communicating to their children on an impending invasion. The results of this study can enable mothers learn to effectively communicate to their children whenever there is an invasion. The findings of this study can be an interesting read to the researchers, communication professionals, academicians and policy makers in the field of communication and conflict. The study can generate awareness on communicating to children during conflict. This study can help to create a framework through which mothers can get access to ways of communicating to their children during insecurity or invasion.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

This study focused on security communication for children in conflict areas: case of mothers in Endoo ward. The geographical scope of this study is Endoo Ward in Marakwet East of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The study was carried out between June-October, 2020. It employed qualitative research approach and case study design. The main topics that were discussed were conflicts and security communication for children. This was faced with the following limitations first, there were few previous studies in the

research area. The researcher's observation was that, scores of studies focused on conflict management and impact of conflict on women and children but very few have focused on children communication and armed conflict. Secondly, considering the sensitivity of the topic, more time was need to carry out the study. Thirdly, the researcher in order to establish response by children to communication by their mothers relied on what their mothers reported and youth. Interviewing children would have been ideal but due to ethical considerations and sensitivity of the subject, the youth were interviewed instead. The youth were asked to remember how they responded to the communication by mothers when they were young. The researcher therefore conducted a focus group discussion comprised of eight youth to get their response when they were young. Finally, research was undertaken during Covid-19 outbreak that ensured strict adherence to Ministry of Health protocols that made the research process very expensive.

1.8 Operational Definitions

Children: Children in this study is a section of population who are 18 years and below.

Communication: Process of conveying meaning from one person to another through the use of mutually understood signs, symbols and semiotic rules.

Conflict: Pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. This can go to an extent of using armed violence which can lead to armed conflicts.

Insecurity Communication: Sharing information on threats consequences of attacks or invasion in conflict zones.

Insecurity: State of being subject to danger or injury.

Invasion: Is unwelcome intrusion in to a people's territory, space, area or family.

Mothers: Women who have raised at least one child.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter contains a literature review of the conflict in Kerio Valley and the conflict cycle. It also contains overview of principles of children communication and mother to child communication. The last section contains the theory that this study is anchored upon.

2.0 Introduction to Conflict

Conflict has existed since the advent of man; the word's history is not complete without citing the conflicts that occurred internationally between nations as well as communities. Conflict can occur in different levels of human interaction, it can occur at an interpersonal level, intra-group level and inter-group level (Tulel, 2013). Scholars have come up with different definitions of conflict and they include: Coser, (1956) sees conflict as a struggle between opponents over values, and claim to scarce status, power and resources. Coser considered fight over values such as identity, ideology and belief that can still happen today. Struggle over resources is considered as tangible or intangible resources. Status can include power, class rank among others.

Kreisberg, (1973) defined conflict as a relationship between two people or more parties who believe they have incompatible goals. This definition portrays a perception of two people or groups who feel they cannot achieve irreconcilable differences.

Wright, (1990) defined conflict as an opposition among social entities directed against one another. This definition stresses on social interaction among people and explains that conflict occur when there is resentment among them.

Ifesinachi, (2009) defines conflict as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. This can go to an extent of using armed violence which can lead to armed conflicts.

Okechukwu (2016) describes conflict situation as a state of struggle, opposition, incompatibility, and interference, divergence of interest, tension, interaction, and interdependence among others. Conflicts occur because of catalysts that have been captured in the above definitions. The factors that have been cited to cause conflicts in Africa and more so Kenya among ethnic groups include land, different political ideologies, and cultural factors. The conflicts may sometimes lead to war consequently causing displacement of people, destruction of property and even loss of life. Destructive conflicts have consequences that are detrimental to human health. It can cause physical and mental effects to the affected people especially children. It can also cause stress, fear, frustration, aggression and guilt among the population. The effect of a community diverting their energy to fight for resources and supremacy may generally lead to economic backwardness. There was also the undermining of social amenities and essential services such as health, security, education and reduction of food production (Okechukwu *et al.*, 2019). As a result, the children are malnourished because of inadequate food supply. The health services deteriorate as service providers get displaced and others scared away by armed the conflicts. The population may not access the health facilities for fear of being attacked in the process. Education services may also be affected since the displacement of people often include the school going children. Teachers also may not be willing to work in the conflict zones as in happened in Nigeria during Boko Haram attack (Okechukwu *et al.*, 2019).

Interstate or inter-communal conflicts that relate to religion and ethnicity have a history of persistence, they sink in to the community and spark violent eruptions from time to time (Okechukwu *et al.*, 2019). Such conflicts have existed with humanity from the beginning, they escalate, they get resolved and they recur forming a never-ending conflict circle. After the World War II many nations' political leaders and scholars thought that ethnic and religious identities that fueled conflicts among nations were a passing history but the cold war gave a new recognition to these conflicts (Okechukwu *et al.*, 2019). These types of communal based conflicts appear to be intractable and the communities should learn to manage them. This is true for those communal conflicts in Kenya that recur from time to time, they persist over years and appear intractable.

Tulel, (2013) studied women and peace-building in pastoral conflict in Kerio Valley, she noted that, the conflict resolution techniques such as mediation and negotiation may not bear fruit in resolving intractable conflicts. This type of conflict is hard to find settlement or deescalate them especially when they are inter-communal and related to ethnicity, religion and fight for resources (Tulel, 2013). History has shown that this type of conflict may only end by the stronger side imposing their will to the other side that may lead to brutality or violence. The brutality and violence of the past becomes a basis for eruption of conflicts in future. Take a case of Murkutwa massacre in 2001 in Marakwet side, this formed a basis for the eruption of conflicts in 2016 as a revenge mission (Tulel, 2013). Other conflicts can end by both sides coming up with mutual agreements forged by both sides to settle the conflicts for example Koloa accord that was signed in 2013 by Leaders from Marakwet and Pokot communities.

2.1 Intractable Conflicts at the Kerio Valley

The pastoral communities depend on their livestock for a living and during the long dry seasons, they experience shortage of pasture especially at the plains of the Pokot communities. The Pokot herdsmen while looking for pasture for their livestock, they force their way into territories of neighbouring communities such as the Luhya on Trans-Nzoia side, Marakwet, Turkana and the Ugandan Karamojong. This has been the beginning of conflicts between the Marakwet and Pokot communities over the years at the Kerio Valley (Tulel, 2013). Traditionally, the Pokot community raided their neighbours to replenish their herd after losing them to the drought and disease. Another intention for raiding was to expand their territories to get more land for grazing and sometimes they raid when they marry (Tulel, 2013). This has led to destruction of property, displacement of people and loss of life. The killings always spark revenge which informs the repeat of conflict, forming unending conflict cycle. Recently, the traditional cattle rustling has shifted to modern warfare where inter-communal cattle rustling tradition has degenerated into militarised activity (Tulel, 2013). The warfare is now motivated by hatred, political instigations, commercialisation of cattle raiding, general crime, and availability of firearms (Tulel, 2013).

2.2 The Conflict Circle

Conflicts all over the world do not just erupt but it develops in to different stages where it escalates and the degree changes from low to high. It can again deescalate when conflict resolution mechanisms employed work and the parties in conflict cease fire. Different scholars have described the stages that the conflict take although they might have different terminologies, the explanation through the stages are the same.

Okechukwu (2019) identified five stages of the conflict circle which they are going to be adopted in this study.

2.2.1 Development Stage

Conflict develop in to different stages, before it erupts there must have been disagreements and differences. The factors that cause conflicts start from this stage, it could be resources that are tangible of intangible or ideologies that causes differences and conflict starts from here. Okechukwu (2019) explains that at this stage, the conflict is not prominent and it can be resolved amicably by the two parties coming together to bury the hatchet to avoid the conflict from escalating. Take an example of a fight between two members of different communities because of resources. A normal thing to do by the other members is to solve the conflict before it develops in to the next stage. At this point the two parties may settle their differences but if they do not, the members of the two communities may spread the issues to other members of the community to spark even more conflict. If it escalates in to the communal level, the kinsmen or the communal leaders may take the responsibility of solving the conflicts before it spills over to the community level. The two parties who were involved in the conflict may be reprimanded and settle the conflict. If the conflict is not solved and the community members take sides to protect their own, the conflict may degenerate to a more serious level. In an occasion where the community leaders fail to resolve the conflict, then it moves to the enemy formation stage (Okechukwu, 2019). Tulel (2013) explains that, the advent of fights between Elgeyo and Pokot started way back when the Pokot community was migrating frm Kapenguria to Tiaty hills. The Elgeyo Marakwet community ambushed the Pokot community and killed one Pokot while crossing their territory.

2.2.2 *Enemy Formation Stage*

At this stage, the two parties or communities as described earlier at the development stage see each other as enemies because they failed to resolve the conflict. This is the stage where basis of conflict is made. There is spread of propaganda, distortion of facts and remembrance of history if there is a history of conflict then it fast escalates the conflict if nothing is done about it. To avoid the conflict from escalating, both parties should be engaged exhaustively because at this stage each party muzzle support from their side. The behavior of both parties changes they begin identifying themselves as “we” and the others as “them”. To resolve the conflict, a charismatic leader who is trusted and believed by the two parties to prevent the conflict from degenerating. If the conflict is not resolved then it may develop to a preparation or mobilisation stage (Okechukwu, 2016).

2.2.3 *Preparation Stage.*

This stage is also known as the gathering storm stage, it determines whether the parties involved with the conflict may pursue their interests or not. At this stage the parties mobilise their groups and resources that are available to pursue their interests and maintain their position. At the communal level, the two parties in conflict evaluate their resources and readiness to fight for what they stand for. The same thing would be observed at an international level where a country would evaluate their soldiers and take account of their arsenal and evaluate their strength comparing with the other party. It involves spying at each other to learn more about the enemy and ways that would be used to counter their attack. At an interpersonal level, before they fight each person would want to drum up support and convince other members of the community to be on their

side. At the communal level also, the youth are mobilised, trained and if they subscribe to their gods they might perform rituals and perform series of rituals that would enable warriors to fight without fear. If the conflict is not resolved at this stage then it escalates to another level which is pre-emption stage (Okechukwu, 2019).

2.2.4 Pre-emption Stage

This stage the conflict advances and may entail the parties launching an attack against the other party, the party that believes in violence may attack or confront the other party to spark reaction. The most inter-communal fights or conflict involves land and the other party may invade and take over the land. This may create tension among the community members and may retaliate creating conflicts and fight that lasts for a long period of time. This creates hostility among the two communities and may lead to protracted conflicts in future. The other party may also take another step by involving another party such as the law courts of a third party arbitrator to solve the conflict. At interpersonal level, conflict can be solved by respected family members, community leaders trusted by both parties and even the religious leaders to avoid escalation of the conflict. In the case of an international conflict at the preemptive attack is launched may take the complain to another body such as International Court of Justice for adjudication (Okechukwu, 2016).

2.2.5 Hostility Stage

Just as the name suggests this is the stage where violence is at the peak if the conflict is not released. The parties in dispute at this stage engage in actual violence, at the communal level the two parties may result to armed attack and at national level it may lead to a civil war. The parties involved in the dispute brings out the mobilised resources

to attack. This may lead to destruction of resources and loss of life. The destructive nature at this stage may lead to intractable wars because the parties may develop intensive warfare. If the conflict or dispute takes a non-violent move, the parties here engage in cold war where the relationships are completely broken and communication comes to a halt. The parties willing to solve the conflict here should exploit diplomatic strategies to end the feud. If the conflict is communal, the government may come in with the armed forces to contain the fights and forge for peace. This could involve bringing in the police, introduction of curfews, and disarmament of the fighting communities among other interventions. This helps in suppressing the conflict but might not solve the root cause of the conflicts as it has been witnessed in communal conflicts across the world. This solution to communal conflict may not be sustainable leading to protracted conflicts like the case of Kerio Valley. At this stage, any form of mediation may be an exercise in futility (Okechukwu, 2016).

2.2.6 Cessation stage

At this stage the fights or hostilities end owing to factors that can be employed to end the conflicts. The factors may be adopted by the Government or the communities involved interests in solving the dispute or conflicts. The ceasefire may also occur if a third party broker peace and the two agree to stop the fights. If one party suffers defeat and retreat or surrender like the case of Iraq where Kuwait withdrew from their territory after suffering defeat during the Gulf War, this move ended the war. Exhaustion of armaments is also another factor that would lead to ceasefire, this happens when a party exhausts their resources and cannot acquire more due to blockage or lack of supply. These factors that are cited here may halt the fights temporarily or the teams may

use this stage as a strategy to regroup and increase their strength. To solve the conflicts at this stage the peacekeepers come in as an observer mission for example the case of Rwanda, Mozambique and Democratic Republic of Congo. The peacekeepers at this stage stays at the conflict zone until the resolutions are put in place (Okechukwu, 2016).

2.2.7 Resolution Stage

This is agreement to end conflicts is prepared and then the parties embark on peace building. This is a stage where the parties involved in conflict and have tasted the experiences on war come to the negotiation table, they allow the third party to be the mediator. This stage may lead to a lasting conflict transformation but the parties may go back to hostility stage if the root cause of the conflict is not resolved. This stage if successfully handled may lead to two parties coming together and building a peaceful relationship whether it conflict was interpersonal, inter-communal, inter-state or international (Okechukwu, 2019).

2.2.8 Reconstruction Stage

This is a stage where the parties struggle to reconstruct what was destroyed during conflict this may include properties as well as damaged relationships. In a nonviolent conflict, the parties work on reconstructing their emotions, relationships and resources. At the inter-communal level fights who were involved in the fights use this stage as rehabilitate families and victims of violence. At the national level conflict, this is the stage where government implements total disarmament and reintegration of victims to the society. At the international level, this is a stage where international donors and organisations such as World Bank come in to assist to rebuild the country (Okechukwu, 2016).

2.3 Children Communication

Children at early stages of life have a way of communicating for example smiling and crying that is used by a child to communicate. Communication ability however develops and becomes more sophisticated with the development on of verbal and non-verbal cues. Tabak *et al.*, (2012) has defined communication as process through which information is shared through words, gestures and nonverbal expressions. Communication include both verbal and nonverbal signs, it is also a way in which humans as well as animals-built relations. At a family setting, communication enables the members to share their feelings, desires, opinions and ideas and also a way in which members feel cared for, valued, appreciated and supported. Communication is the most influential pillar in a family setting it provides a way in which a family culture is passed from one generation from another in also informs the quality of the family relationship. Communication between a parent and a child is an important part in child's development. The children acquire language from the environment therefore communication between a parent and child plays a big role in the social development of a child and building of relationships. Mothers are the first people in the family who interact with the children and therefore they learn the first ways of socialisation from their mothers.

2.4 Principles of Children Communication

The principles of communicating with the children help in giving guideline for effective communication with children. The guidelines play a role of nurturing, inspiring, exiting, educating and healing the intended audience who are the children. Kolucki & Lemish, (2011) developed four principles that would help in guiding children communication. The principles include the following:

2.4.1 Principle one: communicating with should be age appropriate and Children friendly

Children at different stages of their lives have different needs, a child is interested at different things at every different stage and learn in different ways. Accordingly, children need different content at different stages in terms of communication. The communication apart from being age friendly, it has to be appropriate for the child, it doesn't mean that childlike characters and animations passes as appropriate for every child. Every child communicator should ensure to produce appropriate communication for every targeted child for effective communication. The communication for the child should be better tailored to a particular child at a particular age for example taking in to consideration the language. Additionally, when communicating with the child one should consider using stories, characters, music, as well as humour. First step of communicating with a child is to understand the basics of the child development and learning stages and how to best ways to communicate with them. Every age group has a particular strength and interests that informs the choice of a communication pattern (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011). In every stage, the communicator should apply an interactive model of communication which upscale the child's attention and participation in the conversation. Participatory communication according to Kolucki & Lemish, (2011), is more child-friendly and provides them an opportunity to express themselves. Participatory communication with the children involves self-expression, use of body movement, critical thinking and feedback. Communication for the children should use special effects judiciously and wisely. The special effects capture the attention of the child and develop

a lasting impression to the child but one should also be careful not to overburden the mind of the child (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

2.4.2 Principle Two: Communication for Children Should Address the Child

Holistically

According to Kolucki and Lemish, (2011) the physical, cognitive and emotional development of a child is interconnected. They further note that a child can be provided with enough food but still lacks love and protection, a child can also be loved but still emotionally and physically fragile. Communication therefore comes in to balance the needs of a child by giving a complementary attention to all developmental needs from infancy to adolescence (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011). They also provided guidelines for this principle that include using an integrated issue approach as opposed to single issue approach. As much as a communicator would like to focus on one single message Kolucki and Lemish, (2011) posit that there is a way of integrating communication while focusing on one issue. This is possible because children are able to process learning in integrated ways. A communicator in this case therefore should develop messaging that meets the physical, social, emotional and cognitive needs of a child. Children also learn from an unintended element in communication and as a result, a communicator should pay attention to all aspects of communication both obvious and hidden. In the communities where children are facing difficult times, parents, adults and caregivers are advised offer positive models in their relationship with adults. The targeted audience to provide positive models in a community would include: parents, teachers, health care workers, child protection officers among others. Communication should also prove safe havens where vulnerable children can feel safe physically, mentally and emotionally.

This is where these children feel that they are listened to and protected by people who care about them. The need for safe haven includes children living in conflict areas, those who experience physical and emotional abuse, ethnicity, disability, gender, race, discrimination, castes among other factors. Children need a safe haven to develop and achieve their potential in future and communication is one of the factors that can provide this. Although communication cannot replace other necessary factors for a child to thrive for example therapy, a safe haven for children can help them understand that someone cares for them even for a short time (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

2.4.3 Principle Three: Communication for Children Should Be Positive and Strength Based

This third principle according to Kolucki and Lemish, (2011).is based developing a positive mindset, resilience and ability to cope for the children by focusing on nurturing their strengths and potentials. Irrespective of the location or what the children have gone through, the children should be nurtured in such a way that they see the potentials of what they can achieve in future. The children here offered transformative communication that would channel their energy into a positive mind and actions. This principle also has guidelines to follow; first a communicator should build self-confidence and competence. The most important thing that a child can is what they can become in future, building confidence in a child enables the child not only to learn better but also to learn more. A communicator should develop an environment where the child may hear that they are important and valued that may in turn help them to build foundation of critical thinking. Self-confidence can be nurtured through constant communication with the child to build optimism, perseverance, resourcefulness and creativity. Secondly, for this principle to be

achieved, the communicator must offer positive modelling rationale by providing a model that the children should emulate. The communicator should avoid models such as violence, stereotypes, name calling, unhealthy behaviors and focus on portraying positive models to reinforce positive action (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

Thirdly, communicator should include children as active citizens who model social justice and mobilisation rationale. How we incorporate children to participate in different programmes in terms of communication makes a difference in their growth. Here, children should be encouraged to share their strengths and come up with solutions to day to day problems. Through communication, children are nurtured to develop morals, values and principles of equity fairness and respect for others (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011). Lastly, the communicator should utilise “do no harm” rationale this applies especially when communicating during conflict situations. This guide lines explains a thin line between explaining to the child on reality to inform or to protecting them and giving them information that would later traumatise them. Communication to the children in this situation should be in such a way that helps them know how to be safe in the environment and not that which may harm them in the future (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

2.4.4 Principle Four: Communication for Children Should Address the Needs and Abilities of All Children

According to Kolucki and Lemish, (2011), this principle stresses on communication that reflects on the children positively contrary to the communication that would focus on negatives and marginalisation. Communicator here should focus on positive communication in the context of different cultures, ethnic groups and children

living with disabilities as well as children who are living through trauma. Communication solutions here should come from those people or communities or authorities who have gone through the same experiences. All types of communication here includes all the vulnerable groups for example the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. This principle has guiding principles too. To begin with, the communication should reflect on the dignity of every child that include focusing on positive interaction and showing the importance of every special group for example use of sign language to show the deaf children that they are important (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

Another guideline to follow is to be inclusive, children become aware of their differences at an early age therefore communication should include all the special groups and avoid stereotyping. As a result of this communication, children may have an easier time discussing those sensitive topics that include: disability, ethnicity, racial issues as well as gender issues. The children who have gone through this type of communication may not have problems in building relationships with other special groups. A communicator should also ensure that the communication is free of stereotypes. Most of the traditional stories across the globe are characterised by stereotyping that unconsciously reinforce the beliefs of a child. These stereotypes are changed by effectively creating good practices that break stereotypes through communication. Communication for children should also nurture positive aspects of indigenous cultures and traditions (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

2.5 Mother to Child Communication and Response

In every society, children occupy the most treasured position in the human cycle for the fact that they are the future and therefore they deserve our attention, protection

and investment. The educated children have a greater chance of improving the country's economy and social conditions that include positive socialisation to manage social clashes and conflict resolutions. The parents have a role of ensuring that their children develop to a quality life and work hard to give them the best in life at every stage of their life by constantly interacting with them at every stage of their life. This however not be an ideal situation all over the world, scores of children live in an environment where they are not protected and may not access their rights that include going to school. Some children have been displaced by conflicts and grow up facing challenges and sometimes watch helplessly as their dreams and aspirations for their future is crushed. These children experience trauma, suffer atrocities and abuse and others shoulder responsibilities that are way beyond their years. Despite going through all these, most of the respond to positive communication especially from their mothers and achieve their full potential (Levin & Currie, 2010).

Communication is an essential tool in developing relationships as it is a means through which ideas is passed from one person to another (Levin & Currie, 2010). According to social learning theorists, children learn from observation. They hold that they observe their parents as they develop and learn from them. The transactional theorists however hold a different view, they postulate that development of a child's relationship is shaped by multiple people and the environment. The multiple people for example may be the mother and the child and the environment may a peaceful one or with family stress or one characterised by conflicts. This means that the parents, children and the environment that they live in play a major role in informing how they communicate with one another. Taking a look at the communication between mothers

and their children, it is important to look at the environment and the way the mother communicates with the children. Take an example of an aggressive mother who attempts to communicate with her children. Communication here may not be successful as the child withdraw from the mother making engagement futile and in turn it may limit the communication skills of the child. The opposite is also the same, a calm mother communicating with the children achieves successful communication with the children. The parent child behaviour points out to transactional nature of parent and child relationship (Levin & Currie, 2010). Mother to child relationship especially in communication changes and shifts with time and age of the child. A mother adopts different communication strategies to communicate with their children as they grow up this shows that communicating with a toddler is different from communicating with a teenager for example.

The child's cognitive ability cognitive competence, maturity and social responsibility occur over time. This help in understanding the changes that occur in mother-child communication over time for example children at preschool age years, the communication may be vertical and as they advance or develop to school age years and beyond, they develop a vertical communication. Children at middle age start to determine their experience in communication at a higher degree as compared to when they are at infancy. The middle age development period serves as at a transition period from childhood to adolescence. At these ages, the content for communication changes therefore the interaction between the child and the mother changes. The mother here should learn to shift the communication strategies to effectively communicate with their children to develop their potentials (Levin & Currie, 2010).

The chance that the communication between mother and child being stable over time has been investigated by different scholars for example (Loeber *et al.*, 2000), but the question is, will the communication remain stable across the contexts? Conflict that this research study is interested in is a context that could bring in changes or disparities in communication. Little knowledge is known on the changes of communication between a mother and a child or a parent and a child during conflicts more so armed conflicts. Positive and honest communication between parent and child during difficult situation have led to positive emotional outcomes (Gumina, 2009). Conflict has a negative connotation and therefore it is important to study the nature of conflict and its effect in communication and responsiveness of the child. The responsiveness of the child to the parent communication during difficult times depends on child's ability to adjust to the situation and his/her emotional security.

In a situation where the parent's communication is characterised by negative talk and criticism, the outcomes would be a risky behavior such as early sexual behavior, drug and alcohol abuse. Similarly, negative expressions and during interactions with the child has been shown to yield to lack of concern for other people's feelings guilt and remorse (Pasalich, Dadds, Vincent, Cooper, & Brennan, 2012). Children who experience quality communication from their parents have a better appraisal of the difficult situations such as conflicts and easily develop a sense of security. As we acknowledge quality communication, it is important to note that there is no consensus in communication literature on what is classified as good quality communication and poor quality communication. To solve this, some of the scholars have come up with guidelines that would be open interactions and conformity orientation. The open interactions include

open expression of ideas, beliefs and values on the other hand, conformity orientation represents more restrained interaction that portray uniformity of ideas, beliefs and values not based on individual interaction. Conformity type of communication sets to avoid conflicts and develops a character of non-assertiveness in relationships and conversation takes a form of adaptive interpersonal skills for example conflict management and self-disclosure (Koesten & Anderson, 2004). Here communication has been evaluated as a small set of variables only positive and negative communication, but argumentatively, communication serves several functions simultaneously for example providing advice, comfort and influencing behaviour (Caughlin, 2010). To gain a better understanding of communication, it is important to study its functions and its relationships with the outcomes. Therefore, examining communication between mothers and children in conflict areas is important for communication outcomes and response from the children.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Interpretative and Interaction Theory of Interpersonal Communication

Paul Watzlawick studied widely on interpretative and interaction theory of communication this includes how communication is stimulated during interpersonal communication. This theory uses axioms that provide a framework on how communication takes place. It also has implications in our day to day communication and life in general. This theory for example explains why things such as how miscommunication in families take place and how interpersonal communication between parents and children can be understood (Watzlawick et al., 1967). The theorist came up with five axioms that include: One cannot not communicate, communication equals content plus relationship, the nature of the relationship depends on the punctuation of

communication sequence, digital and analogic and all communication is symmetrical or complementary. This study was anchored on this theory that enabled mothers to stimulate communication between them and their children and ensuring that the intended message is correctly decoded.

2.6.1 One Cannot Not Communicate

This axiom explains communication in situations where one does not want to talk but their silence communicates a lot (Griffin, 2012). Take an example of aftermath of an Invasion and a mother is got up with her children, the children may be inquisitive about many painful issues of insecurity. A mother at this situation might explain a few issues on insecurity and dismiss the children. The children read the facial expressions and body language from the mother and read her pain. Therefore, the mother may have communicated even without uttering a word.

2.6.2 Communication Equals to Content Plus Relationship

This axiom maintains that every communication has a content and a relationship aspect whereby the relationship classifies content (Griffin, 2012). The content provides information on what the message is about and the relationship level provide information on how the message is interpreted. Griffin (2012) gives an example of a phrase “you are late” the content here refers to time but the interpretation may mean on relationship level may be a criticism of the other person being irresponsible (Griffin, 2012). Griffin further explains that in written communication, punctuation directs how the message should be interpreted while in oral communication, tone of voice, emphasis on certain words, facial cues, and so forth direct how the message was meant to be interpreted. In Endoo Ward of Kerio valley, relationship messages form a major component in communication. Mothers

communicate with their children by varying tones, laying emphasis on some words by repeating them to ensure that their children interpret the messages correctly.

2.6.3 The Nature of a Relationship Is Dependent on the Punctuation Communication Sequence.

Every item in a communication sequence can be a stimulus, a response and reinforcement. The way the communication has been presented can either be a response or a stimulus depending on the interpreter. This axiom holds that punctuations make a difference in the sequence of events (Griffin, 2012). Communication here is sending messages from many directions especially non-verbal messages. Punctuation plays a role of organising the groups of messages to achieve meaning. Punctuation does not only apply to the written word but also in the verbal communication. Mothers in Kerio Valley while communicating to their children during insecurity can use punctuation sequence to stimulate communication.

2.6.4 Human Communication Involves both Digital and Analogic Modalities.

The discrete elements of communication which is the words forms the digital part of communication while analogy refers to a correspondence between things which are otherwise different. For example, shaking a fist in front of a person's face would evoke the idea of violence. Words normally are accompanied by nonverbal cues and someone may communicate two opposing messages at once. Mothers while facing dangerous enemies with their children can learn to communicate with their children without the enemy noticing by use digital and analogic modalities.

2.6.5 Inter-human Communication Procedures are either Symmetric or Complementary

This axiom defines relationship in terms of power whereby in a symmetric relationship both parties have equal power and complementary relationship involves unequal power. In this study the mother and the child form a complementary relationship. The child here has little power and therefore should listen and heed to what the mother has said who has more power.

2.7 Research Gap

The literature that has been reviewed in this study show that several scholars have focused of conflict and challenges that Women and children go through during conflict. Werner, (2012) state that children may experience trauma and stress that might affect their Mental, physical and psychological health. Werner, (2012) adds that mothers are important at this time to keep children safe. According to Mwanja *et al.*, (2013) women and children are targets where girls and women are sexually abused. Levin and Currie, (2010) make it clear that mothers should learn to shift communication strategies to effectively communicate with their children to develop their potentials. In this light therefore, is set to investigate security communication for children in conflict areas with focus on Endoo Ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Introduction

This is the third part of this research study, it explains the research design, the research approach, the target population, the sample population, the sampling techniques, data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen and used by a researcher to undertake a study (Bhat, 2019). This study took an insightful look on Security Communication for Children in Conflict Areas: The Case of Mothers in Endoo Ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The research design that was used to adequately conduct the study was a case study research design. This design was relevant in this study as it is used to generate an in-depth understanding of complex issues in real life context (Yin, 2017). The case study provides a basis at which a researcher explores an event or a phenomenon in its natural context. Yin (2017) further explains that, case study design aides the researcher in capturing the information on ‘how’, ‘what’, and ‘why’ in the research study. It is also useful when researcher requires an intensive and in-depth description of a phenomenon. This study took an in-depth description of how mothers communicate with their children during invasion or insecurity. It also explored what, how and why they communicate to their children and communication challenges that mothers face while communicating to children in Kerio Valley.

3.2 Research Approach

This research study took a qualitative research approach that allowed the researcher to explore meanings that the target population attribute their actions, behaviour and response to situations (Yin, 2017). The researcher selected the qualitative research approach for the following reasons: firstly, qualitative research approach yields to detailed description of the respondents' experiences, feelings, and opinions also explain what informs their action. Secondly, it led to achieving understanding of human experience in specific settings in this case, insecurity in Kerio Valley (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002). Thirdly, qualitative research approach allows the researcher to discover their inner experiences by probing more and finding out how meanings are shaped in their context (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Fourthly, this approach has a flexible structure as it can be constructed and reconstructed throughout the research process (Maxwell, 2012). Generally, qualitative research approach highly contributes to understanding of complex features such as conflict, children communication and insecurity. In addition to the above reasons, qualitative data collection tools allow further probing; if the response given by a participant is not adequate, the researcher can further probe for more information through in-depth interviews.

3.3 Target Population

Since this is a qualitative study, the target population was Mothers of Endoo ward, Marakwet East in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The study targeted mothers who have been affected by insecurity and have had to leave their home several times to seek shelter elsewhere because of insecurity.

3.4 Population sample

The researcher used purposive sampling method to sample seven mothers who have been affected by insecurity in Endoo ward. The researcher further sampled and interviewed the mothers. The researcher followed the criteria below to sample the participants. They were mothers who have:

- i. Been affected by insecurity.
- ii. Are bringing up children
- iii. forced to run away from their homes to seek shelter elsewhere during insecurity
- iv. Prepared children to flee from their homes because of insecurity
- v. Consented to the interview

To establish response of children to security communication, the researcher sampled eight youth who are above eighteen years of age to participate in a focus group discussion.

3.5 Sampling methods

The sampling methods that were used to obtain the desired sample from the target population was purposive sampling and snowball sampling:

3.5.1 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling method was used in this research study to select mothers who provided information that other persons in the target population cannot provide. The strength of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied Kombo and Tromp (2011). The researcher used purposive sampling to select seven mothers from the target population who have experienced insecurity.

3.5.2 *Snow Ball Sampling*

Snowball sampling was used in the study to sample the eight youth who participated in the Focus Group Dissuasion (FGD). The mothers who were interviewed were asked to identify the youth who were communicated to when they were children. The eight youth were asked to remember how they responded to communication by their mothers during invasion.

3.6 *Data Collection*

The researcher after obtaining the desired sample, prepared the interview guide for the mothers. The researcher also prepared a Focus Group Discussion guide for the youth. Data collection took one week. The researcher interviewed the participants noting with the researcher's notebook, and a recorder for easy reference.

3.7 *Data Collection Methods*

The data collection method used to collect data in this research study was:

3.7.1 *Key Informant Interviews*

The researcher interviewed key informants who were selected using purposive sampling. This included: mothers from Endoo ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The researcher listed the topics or issues to be covered and frame actual questions that guided the interview. The interviewer also probed the informants for more information while taking notes that were later developed.

3.7.2 *Focus Group Discussion*

Focus group discussion in this study comprised of eight youth sampled from the target population using snowball sampling. The youth had common experiences and characteristics being investigated in this study. The researcher coordinated one focus

group discussion in the research area. The focus group guide was developed by the researcher and administered during focus group discussions. The researcher moderated the FGD and was assisted by a research assistant who was in charge of recording the responses and note taking. The researcher ensured to maintain social distancing and regulations stipulated by Ministry of Health to curb the spread of COVID-19.

3.8 Data Collection Tools

3.8.1 Interview Guide

The interview guide contained open-ended questions that allowed probing for more information. The interview guide content were topics on areas to be covered by the research study. The study contained topics on conflicts in Kerio Valley and how mothers communicate insecurity to their children. The questions were also structured in such a way that it covered all the objectives of the study.

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussion Guide

The focus discussion guide contained open-ended questions that were administered and discussed during the focus group. The focus group discussion guide contained questions that introduced the topics for the discussion. These are the type of questions that may put the participants at ease and comfortable during the discussion. Another set of questions were the follow-up questions and probe questions that yielded to participants' opinions. The last set were exit questions that ensured that the researcher obtained everything required from the focus group discussion.

3.9 Data Analysis

The data collected from the field was transcribed, prepared and organised. This included organising the notes collected from the field, making sure all the data to be

analysed is available. After the data was organised, the researcher coded the data, established the themes and classified them into different categories. Finally, the data was presented in narrative forms based on the objectives.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher before data collection for this study was undertaken obtained an introductory letter from the School of Journalism and Communication, The University of Nairobi. The researcher also sought for a research permit from the National Commission of Science and Technology (NACOSTI). Permission from the County Commissioner Elgeyo Marakwet County was also sought. Finally, the researcher ensured to obtain consent from every participant who was interviewed reassuring them of the confidentiality of the research process.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study by the researcher. The findings were generated from the analysis of the data from the interviews and a focus group discussion. The researcher interviewed seven women from Endoo ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County and conducted one focus group discussion comprised of eight youth. The focus group discussions involved eight youth who were sampled from Endoo ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The analysis was done based on the themes relevant to the research objectives. This chapter also comprises of a detailed discussion of the results of the data analysis and interpretation process.

4.1 Description of Cases

The study used multiple case studies of seven women from Endoo ward in Elgeyo Marakwet County, the women have children and have experienced conflict at least once and had to leave their homes to take cover. These women have also taken to cover their children and managed to get them to safety by communicating to them before, during and after invasion. The women responded well to the questions and cooperated when they were called upon to clarify what was not clear during the interview.

4.1.1 Case 1

The first case is a house wife married with seven children; four boys and three girls, and they all live in Endoo Ward. They have experienced conflict year in year out and they have taken cover to the Kerio escarpments severally. In fact, they are used to it and when the violence erupts, the children are prepared to take cover anytime their

mother signals them. Their communication always included ways of staying safe when violence erupts. She was X1.

4.1.2 Case 2

The second case is a widow with three children, she is 37 years; she has a boy and two girls, similarly, the family lives in Endoo Ward. They have experienced violence more than once. They take cover with the rest of the community when there is an invasion in their area. She says the children belong to the community and whenever violence erupts, they have prepared the members of the community to take care of all the children when the parents are not around. She was X2.

4.1.3 Case 3

The third case involves a woman who was married at the valley, she has been living there for over 20 years, she experienced 2001 Murkutwo massacre that claimed the lives of more than 50 people, and unknown number of livestock driven away. She tells her story on how she manages to take her children to safety using both verbal and non-verbal communication. She was X3

4.1.4 Case 4

The fourth case is a woman with five children, two boys and three girls; she has lived in Kerio valley for the last 15 years. She has relatives at the hanging valley and whenever fights erupt at her home, she would gather the children and take cover at the relative's place which is safer than home. She was X4.

4.1.5 Case 5

Case five is a woman who lives close the border of Marakwet East and Baringo, they farm at the border taking advantage of River Kerio. She says they have not been able

to farm comfortably for the past four years because of invasion. She says every time the fights broke out, she would take cover at the escarpments for a few days and when it calms, they go back home. She was X5.

4.1.6 Case 6

Case six is a trader, she owns a shop at one of the centers in the ward, she fears for her business every time invasion occurs. She has children (did not disclose the number) she says they are all grown up now but she is taking care of her grandchildren, she says she had her share of experience including when the fights erupt in 2001. She was X6.

4.1.7 Case 7

Case seven is a mother of four sons who have grown up in Kerio Valley. She says the children belong to the community and they deserve their protection and care; she mentions how her children have survived the invasions.

4.1.8 Focus Group Discussion

The focus group comprised of eight youth from Endoo of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The youth were sampled by the researcher using snowball sampling; all of them have experienced invasion at least once when they were young and were prepared by their mothers to take cover. The youth were asked to remember how they were prepared and how they responded when there was an invasion. It could have been ideal to interview the children to establish their respond to communication by their mothers. Due to ethical considerations and the sensitivity of the study, the youth were asked to remember how they responded to the communication by their mothers when they were young.

4.2 Description of Findings

4.2.1 *Age-appropriate and Child Friendly Communication*

Data from the mothers who were interviewed from the study used verbal and non-verbal communication to prepare their children before, during and after invasion. The mothers referred to invasions that had occurred in the past to explain to the children the dangers of invasion and prepare them to be safe whenever an invasion occurs. The mothers bring up children of different ages and therefore they ensure the information given to the children is packaged in such a way that children of different age categories understand what the mother is putting forward. Furthermore, the mothers have learned to be tactical and friendly to the children so that the children can understand what the mothers say without causing panic. As the mothers prepare the children, this is what they tell them.

Before Invasion

Look here, my children, this area is our home, but sometimes we experience challenges that may not be good. Our community practiced cattle rustling to restock their animals it used to happen long time back but today it is a dangerous game. We have enemies also and sometimes, they invade our land and steal livestock, these enemies are dangerous (X1)

The statements used by the mother X1 to prepare their children before invasion included the use of ‘not good’, ‘enemy’ and ‘dangerous’ to explain the situation that they could face during invasion. The mother also uses challenges to explain to the children about what could happen from time to time as opposed to using words such as ‘there were killings. She also introduces the topic friendly by saying the words ‘our area’ for the children to identify with their place of residence. The mothers also use the phrase, ‘not good’, to describe the situation. In this case, the child is able to understand that the

situation at the Kerio Valley is not good and they should be alert; this communication alerts the child without causing panic.

During invasion

When the actual fights occur, the mothers are able to communicate to their children based on the information that she had given them earlier. The mother shouts the following: “The enemies have come run! run! run!” (X1). The mothers here say that the children quickly remember the conversations they had before invasion. During invasion, this mother X1 shouts to the children to run and take cover. At this point the mother shouts that word ‘enemy’ she tells the children the enemy she had told them about before invasion has now come and they should take cover. The children are able to relate the word ‘enemy’ and phrase ‘the dangerous situation’ that the mother had earlier explained. This enables the children to run and take cover.

After Invasion

The conversation that the mother and the children have during the invasion largely depends on the response of the children. Mothers explain that if the children stray, meaning they did get to safety, they normally give them a stern warning so that they do not stray again.

Here is what they say to the children who went astray.

If you go astray again you might get killed. The older ones get a slap on the face or a pinch so that they can understand the seriousness of the matter. (X1).

X2

This mother describes to her children what happens during invasion. The mother X2 says that she describes what happens during invasion to her children before the invasion occur to avoid being caught off guard. The mother says that when her children

see what she had described to them, the children learn to take cover immediately. This mother tactfully describes what happens during invasion. She still uses the word enemy to describe the invaders. She lets her children know the danger signals that they need to watch out for before they take cover. She explains to the children about dangers of stray bullets, and how to avoid falling victims. She also demonstrates to them the safe formula of running towards the escarpment for safety. This is what this mother tells her children before, during and after invasion.

Before Invasion

My children when you hear gunshots, people shouting and running, when you see smoke coming from burnt houses, know that the enemy has come. Make sure that all of you are together and take cover at the escarpment. A stray bullet may get you, so you should walk in a bended posture to avoid stray bullets. All of you should not go in one direction and as you run, make sure you are heading to the escarpments. (X2).

During Invasion

They are here run! Run! Run! Houses are burning get your siblings and run! There are gunshots at the border quick! Get running as fast as you can!. (X2).

During invasion, the women explain that there is no time to be because it is a matter of life and death. Safety is determined on how quick they respond to the signal of taking cover.

After invasion

After invasion, mother X3 says it depends on how the children behaved during invasion. She says if they get to safety well, then they know that the children have understood the information that they were told before invasion happens. Mother X2 narrates how her children got lost one day when invasion happened. Mother X2 was terrified that she might never see her child again but when she spotted him with other

children, she knew that she had to repeat what she had earlier told all her children but with high intonation this time.

One day one of my children got lost when we ran to the escarpment and because the children belong to the community, my child was saved. I was terrified that something bad had happened to him so when I saw him, I was relieved that he was okay. (X2).

The mother here tells the child to be cautious during invasion, the warning is different when the child was lost or did not get to the destination with the mother. The mother varies the intonation of the sounds to ensure that the child has adequately understood the dangers associated with invasion. The mother also uses the word kill, which may not be child friendly but it plays a role of warning the child not to get astray anymore.

This is how she warned her child that time.

Next time! (With high pitch and waving her finger in the air) do not make an attempt of getting lost. Always make sure you are with us all the time. Do not try to be smart here!" the enemy will kill you (raises her tone). (X2).

X3

Before invasion, mother X3 trains her children on how to get to safety by showing them the danger signs that they should follow. She explains to them to be watchful on the signs that she shows them. She also warns them by shouting words that her children may understand and take cover. This mother is keen on using nonverbal language to ensure that her children get to safety. She says this only apply when the invasion happens when she is near the children. When she is away, she tells the children to be watchful of series of events that lead to an invasion. This is how she prepares them when she is not with the children.

This is how she prepares her children before, during and after invasion.

When I prepare my children during invasion, I show them a danger sign (her hand crossing her neck) to show that there is danger.

I tell them when you see me cross my hands on the neck know that there is danger. I will also show them the running sign (hands crossing each other in a vertical motion). I will also tell them to be watchful when I shout 'kimeumana' then they should run towards the escarpment.

Sometimes I might not be around when invasion happens abruptly so I describe the situation that may lead to invasion and tell them to take cover.

When I am not around, I tell my children to be watchful for the gunshots and take cover when they hear gunshots. When you hear people shouting enemy has come, just run for safety. When you hear gunshots, don't wait for me just run with your siblings with other members of the community to safety. (X3).

During Invasion

During invasion, this mother says that he just show them the signs that he had prepared them on and the children responded by getting to safety. This mother says she ensured that the children saw the signs that may alert them when there is danger. This is how she said.

I will show them the danger sign and they will be alerted.

I will shout words like 'Kimeumana' (Swahili word meaning danger) and they will know that they are in danger. (X3).

After Invasion

After invasion, this mother assesses the situation if the children responded well to the information that she had passed to them before invasion. She says if they respond perfectly, then she would praise the children just to appreciate them by getting to safety well. If they do not get to safety, which she says has happened severally, she would make sure to repeat the drill. The mother X3 is friendly with the children and ensures to appreciate their efforts when children get to safety without problems. She uses the words 'good job' to appreciate the children for getting to safety. She also uses other words like be 'careful', 'please' to put the children at ease. For those who did not get to

escarpments, the mother would repeat the drill. The mother repeats what she had instructed the children before.

This is what she would tell the children.

You did a good job by getting to safety without problems,”
My children always be careful and please take care of yourselves especially when I am not around. (X3).

X4

Mother X4 explains how she prepares her children to be safe especially during the night. She says the fights mostly occur during the night and the children should be prepared at all times. Here is how she prepares her children to be ready to take cover when invasions occur.

Before Invasion

When I pinch you twice, you should understand that the enemy has come, wake up slowly and follow me. For those who are heavily asleep, I will slap them to snap out of their sleep. Slowly but quietly follow me. Do not shout or make unnecessary noise as we rush to take cover. Follow my lead always and do not try to run away on your own because it is dangerous out there. The young ones I just hold them close and tightly and move. (X4).

During Invasion

Mother X4 explains that invasions sometimes happen at night and the children should be adequately guided on how to get to safety at that time. She says children are different, others sleep heavily and when they are raised at night, they tend to cry; therefore, when the invasion occurs at night, she speaks in hush tones and quietly wake the children up as they go to safety. Mother X4 explains the importance of preparing the children adequately before invasion happens so that it becomes easier to get them to safety. Since she does not want to speak loudly, she pinches them twice, if they do not

wake up, she slaps them. She would also ensure that she sleeps at the strategic position where she can reach the children without difficulty.

This is how this mother explains how she gets her children to safety at night.

Shhhh, wake up, we have to take off.

I pinch them one by one and tell them that we have to move out quietly.

Slap the ones who have not woken up when I pinch them.

I will ensure speak to them in low tones so that they can sense that there is danger.

Hold the small child tightly to for the child to sense that there is danger.

I will also use a rope to guide the children, where I hold the rope and the children hold to it and follow me quietly. (X4).

After Invasion

After invasion, Mother X4 would assess the response of the children if they got to safety without facing problems or delay. She explains that if the children get to safety successfully, then she knows that the children understood what they were taught. If they do not get to safety, then she would repeat what she had trained them on before invasion. She would also ask each child if they understood what she said. She says the point of asking each of the children if they perfectly understood what he was saying was partly to make each one of them take a personal responsibility to be safe. She says this helps every child to be safe when invasion happens. This is how she would retrain them:

My children your lives are very important therefore to be safe please heed to what I am telling you (she says this bending on one side and holding her ear).

My children please listen to me (slightly high pitch) if I pinch you twice you should wake up and follow me okay! (Also, vary the tone of her voice and a bit of silence follows to ensure they take heed).

Child1 have you understood? Child 2 have you understood? Child 3 have you understood? Child 4 have you understood? Child 5 have you understood? (Varying her tone and slower while communicating to the younger ones). (X4).

X5:

Mother X5 puts emphasis on the communities' coded language. She says the community uses coded language to communicate when invasion occurs. She says the communication from the members of the community is important for the children to learn

so that they stay alert every time the invasion happens. The mother, aside from regularly preparing her children at home, she says the communities' coded language should be able to alerts the children especially when she is away. She tells the children to pay attention to the sounds of the coded language that gives them direction. This is how she prepares the children before invasion and how the coded language goes:

Before Invasion

My children please when you hear these calls from the community, you should hurry and do what the calls are saying.
uuuuuuuuuuuuuu! Uuuuuuu! The enemy has come! The enemy has come!
They are moving from our border! They are heading to the villages.
Gather, the children! Gather the livestock! And move!
Take the left-hand side of the road! Move quickly!
Uuuui! Uuuuuuuuu! They have guns! Uuuuuuu! Uuuuuuu!
uuuuuu! uuuuuuuuu! Get to safety! (X5).

This is the translated version of the cries that the community use to alert every one of the enemy who is about to strike. This mother X5 ensures that her children understand this language so that they can get to safety.

During invasion

During invasion, this mother X5 says she gathers her children and since she lives near the border, she gathers her children and listen to the calls from the community for direction. She says the enemy always starts attacking after crossing the border and they sometimes get caught up in the cross fire. In the process of moving to safety, this mother ensures that the children are alert to all the dangers that they may face as they hurry to safety.

This is what she does during invasion.

We listen to what the community cries is directing and if there are no alerts from the community, then I will gather them and alert everyone in my neighborhood.
Move quickly we need to get to the escarpment, hurry up.
Be watchful of the enemy, follow my steps and be quiet.

If you get lost you may get killed or bitten by snakes. (X5).

After Invasion

After invasion, this mother assesses how her children behaved during invasion and how they responded. If they responded well meaning that they got to safety, then she decides what to tell them depending on how they behave. Mother X5 urges her children to be alert all the time, to be keen on the communication from her and other members of the community. She says the coded language is important to the community and the children must learn it.

This is what she tells them.

My children you should be alert at all time (vary the tone of the voice) the enemy is not someone to joke with. Listen to what I tell you my children (she bends to ensure to be at the level of the young ones) our enemies can kill,)
Make sure and I repeat make sure (loud voice) to follow me when I give you directions. Be very keen and alert when the invasion occurs. (X5).

X6

Mother X6 uses facial expression to alert her small children on the invasion, she therefore teaches them what different facial expression mean. She says the small children are able to read the facial expressions because they might not understand the words. This is how she prepares them before invasion.

Before Invasion

When you see me frown, you know that danger is here.
When I motion my hands to the escarpment, know that I am giving you directions to take while running.
When I motion the running motion, you should take cover.
When you hear a sustained sequence of gunshots, then you should run for your dear lives. (X6).

During invasion

She says during invasion everything happens in a flash and because she is always at her business premises, she would make sure that her children are within reach. She says when there is tension in the area, her children spend the day at the business premise, and in the evening, they go home together. When invasion happens, this is how she would communicate to her children.

I will face my children frowning that signals them to be alert.
I show them a running sign and point at the escarpment.
...for the young ones, I just pick them and run away. (X6).

After Invasion

After invasion, she explains that she saw how the children responded to the communication and bridge the gaps to ensure that the children are safe the next time.

I will show them the signs once again to ensure that the children understand fully what I tell them.
I will reinforce these signs until it is part of the lives.
I may also be forced to repeat the sounds in a stern voice so that they understand the danger that comes with the invasion (X6).

X7

Mother X7 explains that children belong to the community and the responsibility of preparing them squarely lies on the community. She says she does not use a lot of effort to prepare the children because they always get to safety. This is what she does before, during and after invasion.

Before Invasion

Before invasion, this is how she prepares her children:

My children be ready to take cover when there is tension.
When you are not at home during invasion, you should make sure to get to safety.
You are all grown up and you know what to do. (X7).

During Invasion

During invasion, she says she would just make sure that no one is left at the compound hoping that her children get to safety. She says if her children are with other members of the community, then those mothers may get the children to safety. This is how she communicates to them when invasion occur when children are at home. “Run! run! run! the enemy is here. Please get to safety. Let’s follow the other people to the escarpment.” (X7).

After Invasion

After invasion, she says she would thank God that her children made it to safety and make them understand that it is important to stick to the community. This is what she tells her children;

You should not walk alone (talks while maintaining eye contact) always ensure that you are with other members of the community.
To be safe, make sure you stick together and be your brother’s keeper.
Always be alert and keenly when there is tension. (X7).

Mother X7 says she has to train her children to be keen when there is tension in the community. She says she is always away working in other people’s farms while her children are at home. She says she is lucky that all of them are boys and they stick together and always get to safety. She says perhaps her children have gotten used to invasions and use the tactics learned through experience to get to safety.

4.2.2 Positive and Strength-based Communication during Invasion in Endoo Ward

The communication that is positive and strength based helps to develop a positive mind set for the children even after experiencing scars of invasion and conflicts. The

women who were interviewed in the study revealed that despite cattle rustling being associated with their culture, they communicate to the children against it. They say their children deserve a better future and therefore they prepare them in such a way that guarantees them better lives although the environment may not be favorable. This is what the women who were interviewed said concerning communicating to create a positive mind set for their children.

X1

The mother X1 makes sure to stress to her children that do not degenerate to cattle rustling. She says she desires that her children lead good and respectable lives in future. Mother X1 says that she struggles to develop a positive mind set for her children by constantly reminding them to move away from cattle rustling. She says if the children are reminded from their childhood it stuck in their minds and they remember not to indulge. This she says is working towards ending violence by changing the minds of the children.

This is what she tells them.

Revenge is not good my children you may be killed.
Some of the men have been killed while they were at war and you should not be one of the.
Remember you can work hard for your own wealth and be successful without taking up arms. (X1).

X2

Mother X2 also disclosed that they ensure that their children go to school because they belief that school is where they are taught to be self-conscious and enable them to develop different skills to earn a living. To this mother, school helps the children get a bright future. This move, Mother X2 says enabled them to create a positive mind and live a better life with the coming generation. This means that communication to the children

is important in bringing up a generation that may not degenerate to being bandits and therefore end violence.

This is what she tells her children;

My child you should go to school and ensure that you get out of this place. School will help you learn different things and it will enable you to develop yourself.”

School will earn you a bright future.

Listen to your teachers and follow what they say and you will be okay. (X2).

X3

Mothers also use the church to ensure that their children live a positive life. This mother narrates how they managed to calm an 11-year-old boy who had lost his father during invasion. The mothers tried to calm the child by speaking about the word of God; what the bible says about revenge and killing people. Mother X3, although she was not the mother of the boy, she steps in to the shoes of the mother to calm the boy by using the bible and invoking the powers of God. The conversation shows a concerned mother helping the boy to cope up with what has happened to the father as well as changing his mind on the revenge issues. This is how of the mother X3 calmed the child.

This is what she says,

One day, one of the children lost his father during invasion and the child said that he is going to kill at least two people from the enemy community.

The child said that when he grows up, he is going to avenge his father’s death.

He said they cannot suffer without their father and live without revenge. (X3).

Mother **X3** Said,

My boy please understand that killing is not good and God does not allow people to be killed (she spoke at a low tone while maintain eye contact with the child).

The bible says (lowers the tone) revenge belongs to God and we should belief it.

You might be angry today but you do not want to do what our enemies are doing.

My son, (pauses) even if you kill today, you will not bring your father back

(holding the shoulders of the boy) just calm down God is going to punish them

If you depend on God, you will get more blessings. (X3).

X4

Mother X4 would always tell her children the truth about what is happening at their region. She says this happens once they lose one of the family members. This mother narrates how her children asked them about their uncle who had his leg amputated because he suffered a gunshot during invasion. The mother decided to tell her children the truth and explained the vices of invasion urging the children not to engage in raids. This was her narration.

One day, one of my children asked me what happened to their uncle who had his leg amputated. I told them that one day the enemies came and after stealing our livestock, they shot your uncle in the leg. (X4).

This she raised curiosity of her child, and the child asked more of what had happened, why it happens and why particularly their area. At this point, the mother decided to tell the child the truth about what happens during invasion. This is what she explained to the child: “My child, one day, (she pauses) the enemy invaded our land and they stole our livestock. They had guns and when your uncle tried to stop them, he was shot on the leg and that is what happened to your uncle.” (X4).

Mother X4 acknowledges that talking about issues surrounding invasion is sensitive especially to the children. She decides to tell the children truth that they can handle believing that the truth may help them cope with whatever has happened and prevents them from engaging on invasion. This mother stresses the point of not engaging in the fights or invading other communities for livestock. The mother further explains the disadvantages of invasion warning the children that they may get killed. To this mother, this is important especially for the boys who go through initiation to be warriors in future.

This is what this mother told the children after telling the truth.

Engaging in raids and stealing livestock has no advantage at all,”

Look at what happened to your uncle, would you want something like this to happen to anyone or you? If you go for raids you may be successful to steal livestock or you may get killed, so what is the point of going to fight? (X4).

X5

Mother X5 makes sure to narrate to her children what happens during invasion; and because she lives next to the border, she experiences invasion first hand owing to her proximity to the border. She advises her children not to engage in fights because she wants a bright future for her children. This is what she says about leading her children to the right path. “Nobody wants their children to be a cattle raider or engage in invasions so I remind them often about what happens during the raids and ask them if they want that kind of life.” (X5).

After reminding them of what they see during the invasion, these are the questions that mother X5 asks her children. The questions help the child to reflect about what happens during invasion and helps them to choose the right path. “My children, do you want this kind of life? Would you engage in invasions and risk your life. Would you want to carry a gun and start killing people?” (X5).

X6

Mother X6 uses role models to guide their children that they can have a bright future despite the environment that they live in; this mother refers to role models from the community to show their children that they can lead a good life without invading other communities. Mother X6 explains the importance of role models in the life of their children. The children must have someone to look up to and to strive to do the same. She has realised that the children should have options of people to look up to and she provides

role models from their community. These role models are the members of the community who did not engage in invasions, they went to school, worked hard and now they are doing well. This helps the children to set their standards and follow and eventually achieve their goals and end violence in the region.

This is what the mother tells the children.

Some members of this community have developed without stealing livestock from other communities.

Look at Kibet (abstract name) he went to school and now he is the richest person in Eldoret town.

Look at Kiptoo (abstract name) he did not engage in invasion, he farmed the lands and now he has relocated and she is happily living with his children away from here. (X6).

X7

Mother X7 brings out the importance of the children being in school where they learn how to be good citizens. She emphasises in children going to school because this is where they learnt the laws of the land. She trusts the expertise of the teacher to guide the children to the right path. This is what this mother says:

I will take my children to school and ensure that they follow what the teacher tells them. The teachers are best suited to teach the children the good and the bad and I trust them. The law is also taught in school and therefore school will train them to be good citizens. (X7).

Bearing in mind that the children belong to the community, mother X7 trusts players in the society like teachers to show the right path to her children. Her role ends at taking them to school and paying fees, the role of the teachers then starts here.

4.2.3 *Response to Security Communication by Mothers in Endoo Ward*

Communication achievement is weighed by the mother based on the response of the children to the information given to them. Communication is achieved if the children internalise what the mothers have told them and respond effectively. When invasion

occur, the mothers should be able to communicate to the children according to how they were prepared before invasion. The children at this point should be able to respond by reacting to the signal given by the mother. Mothers in Endoo ward of Kerio Valley use verbal and non-verbal communication to train their children in responding to situations at the Ward and especially during invasion. The mothers here describe how they evaluate if the children understood and responded effectively to the communication or instruction given to them. This is what the mothers assessed:

When the children run to safety when I shout the enemy has come! Then I know that they understood what I told them. (X1).

When my children respond by running to safety when they hear gunshots, then I know that they have responded well to what I have taught them. (X2).

My children responded well to the danger signs, that is an indication that they I communicated effectively. (X3).

To evaluate the response to my instructions, the children will be able to wake up quietly when I pinch them. (X4).

If my children decode the messages contained in the community's coded language, then communications will have been achieved. (X5).

I show my children facial expression and explain what it means, if they respond and get to safety when I communicate, then I will say that they responded well. (X6).

When the children get to safety and lead a good life when they are grown up, then I know the teachings worked. (X7).

The mothers evaluate the response by the children by observing the how they respond to the instructions given to them before invasion. If they respond positively meaning that they follow what they were told earlier, then the mothers say that communication has been achieved.

The study also took in to consideration the respond of the youth who have experienced invasion and responded to the communication by their mothers. The youth who were selected comprised of those who have experienced invasion as children and have taken cover with their mothers at least once. The youth were asked to remember what they experienced and hoe they responded when they were young.

The youth who responded to the focus group discussion confirmed it was their mothers who were always with them during attacks. They said that most of the communication about attacks came from their mothers as their fathers took arms to protect them. The mothers always prepared them before invasion, gathered them during invasion and after invasion, the mothers would still caution them. Before invasion, their mothers had couples of sessions with them before they go to bed, when they go about their duties during the day and especially when they are farming or preparing meals. This is how they were prepared and cautioned and how they responded. They are referred to as Youth 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. “Our mother always told us stories about the enemy community who invade our land to steal livestock and sometimes they would kill.” (Youth 1).

This happens especially with the girl child and their mothers, the mothers while they prepare meals for the family. The mother would also train the boys especially when they are at the farms. When there is tension, the mother would take time to train all their children. Youth1 also explains how her mother would use facial expressions to alert her children about the danger. Here is what the mothers told the youth when they prepared them to get ready when the invasion occurs.

When there is tension, our mothers will train us how we should get to safety when the enemy strikes. My mother told me and my siblings that when I mention the enemy, they should be ready to take off. Our mother told us to watch out when people scream during the day and when we are out herding livestock, we should keep our young brothers and sisters close so that they do not get lost. My mother would speak to us with a serious face when there is tension that is why we know everything was not okay. When my mother was not smiling and talks while frowning his face and getting closer to us than usual, then we know that there is danger and we could be ready to take cover. (Youth 1).

Youth 2

The mothers used the word enemy repeatedly so that the youth can understand that the invaders can never be friends. This youth describe the communication by their mothers as the one that could enable them to understand the invasion at the Valley and dangers associated with it. The youth in turn would follow the instructions from their mothers to the later to get to safety. This is what youth 2 is saying about how they responded to their mother's communication.

My mother would say we have enemies and we should be careful therefore, by the time we experience invasion, we knew what to do.

During invasion, my mother would again shout the enemy has come run!

When we hear our mother say the enemy and run, then those two words were enough to make us take off to the escarpment.

One day, I did not get to the escarpment with my siblings my mother was furious she canned me and called me 'wewe ni mjinga sana. After that I learned not to get lost again in when invasion occur. (Youth 2).

Youth 3

Youth 3 described how they responded to the coded language that the community members used during invasion. The youth said their mother literally taught them what each word meant and what they should follow. The youth described how they learned and responded to every sound that they heard from the screams and the coded language. The coded language alerted the members of the community and showed them directions to follow to be safe. *The cries went like this, uuuuu!uuuuu! The enemy is here, let your legs guide you, follow the right hand side of the roads and escape to the escarpments. The screaming continued until the message sender felt that the message has been passed (Youth 3).*

Youth 4

Youth 4 during the focus group confirmed that, their mother trained them on how to get to safety during the night. She said during the day, they would watch out for smoke from torched houses and screams but during the night, they depended on the alert by the parents. By slapping them, they would respond swiftly and enable the mothers to get them to safety. Sometimes when it is very dark, the mother would make them hold a rope to lead the children to safety. This youth describes how they were alerted by their mothers and how they responded.

When invasion happened during the night, my mother would pinch us twice and we would wake up to go to the escarpment for safety
Those who did not wake up in time would get a slap on their faces and their mouths covered so that they do not scream. (Youth 4).
My mother would hold a rope to lead us to safety if it was too dark. She would hold the rope and line us up from the youngest to the eldest so that we don't get lost along the way. (Youth 4).

Youth 5

This youth describes how their mothers communicated to them before, during and after invasion. He describes the communication before and after invasion as gentle but during the invasion it was a matter of life and death and there is no time to be gentle as they took cover.

During invasion, our mothers told us that the enemy strike, we should learn to get to safety quickly. She would tell us how she would communicate before invasion and during invasion; she would rush us to safety without many words.
At this point, we understood and took cover without asking many questions.
(Youth 5).

Youth 6

Youth 6 explains how their mother used non-verbal communication to alert them that it is time to go. At this point, the children would be watching out for these signs to

ensure that they get communication from their parents. This is how they were prepared and how they responded.

Before invasion, my mother showed a danger sign and I would understand that it was time to take cover. We would watch for these signs whenever there is tension so that we can take cover. Whenever our mother crossed her hand over her neck, then we would just understand that the enemy is within. (Youth 6).

Youth 7

Youth 7 explains how nonverbal communication worked as they prepared to take cover. The facial expressions were used by mothers to ensure that the children understand that they are in danger. This happened especially during the day and the children were within reach. The children responded to these facial expressions without asking more questions because they understood the meaning. For this youth, the nonverbal communication played a major role in getting them to safety. They responded swiftly because they understood that there is no time to negotiate what the mother is saying. This is what he said.

One look at my mother's eyes was enough to tell me what is happening and I would take cover. The expression that showed danger was disturbing sharp look. My mother would show a danger sign and we responded by gathering what we could and head to the escarpment. Mostly food and warm clothing. (Youth 7).

4.2.4 Communication Challenges Mothers Experience in Security Communication in

Endoo Ward

The mothers revealed that they experienced communication challenges while communicating to their children during invasion. This happens especially when there is an abrupt invasion and are not able to reach their children in time to take them to a safe place. These are the challenges that the mothers experienced. "Sometimes, we may not be able to communicate to our children effectively during invasion because of the panic that occurs when invasion happens." (X1).

Mother X2 discloses that there are high chances that the panic caused by invasion may distort the communication between the mother and the child.

When we have communicated to your child effectively, everything that I had thought them may fall apart at that time that will lead to the children going astray and not getting to safety. (X2).

X3

Mother X3 explains how invasion may take place during the day as they go about their chores and due to the distance between the mother and the child, the children may not decode the signs effectively. This is what she says:

The signs that I show the children may not be decoded well, I may show my child a sign of danger but due to distance that separates us, then they may not get the message. (X3).

X4

Mother X4 explains the challenges they face that comes with the age of their children. Mother

X4 explain how mothers with younger children especially those who cry at night go an extra mile to take cover because the rest of the mothers feared of being found by the enemy.

This is what she said:

Sometimes our children are younger and do not understand the spoken word, in this case we are not able to effectively communicate to them.

The small ones may not understand and cry all the way which makes it easier for the enemy to find them.

Because my child may cry during the night no one would want me with them that is why I would go further than the rest of the mothers.

I would make sure that we are at a safe distance so that the enemy may not find us when the child cried. (X4).

X5

Mother X5 explains the challenge that the mothers face especially when communicating with their children when death of a family member occurs. “If something tragic occurs, we lack words to explain to the children what has happened especially when a family member is killed during invasion.” (X5).

This mother says that the children may not be able to understand what they are told during the sad times. The young ones may not understand and the mothers may not be able to adequately answer their questions. The children who are able to get the message may understand what they are told by their mothers but if they are not handled well, they may end up having different perception that may lead to revenge missions later in life. The children who understand that invasion caused the death of their parents or family member may later retreat to banditry seeking revenge. If the mother is not keen to communicate regularly with their children in creating a positive mindset, this may lead to a creation of another generation of cattle rustlers who may kill for revenge. This is what she says:

If we do not handle the communication to the children after invasion and make them understand that there are no gains to killings and revenge, they may continue with the circle of revenge and fights will never stop. (X5).

X6

Another challenge that they have is that some children are naturally defiant, they may understand well what they were told but they chose to just be defiant. This is an indication that some children may think differently and not heed what their mothers say and decide to do something different. These children always find themselves in trouble and may end up costing their lives. The mothers say that these children do not listen to

what they are told and may not get to safety, these children may stray and get caught in exchange of fire that may kill or maim them.

This is what this mother says

Some children are just hard headed and they do not understand what we tell them, they may choose to take another during invasion and whatever you communicate earlier may mean nothing to them. (X6).

X7

Mother X7 emphasises on the defiant children stand that may eventually kill them, this is what she says; “If you follow closely, those children who have problems during invasion, most of them are naturally defiant of what they are told by their mothers.” (X7).

In this case, we say that mothers take time to communicate to their children but their children chose not to listen to what they are told. This explains the different paths that children other children take when they grow up, they embrace the modern culture while others degenerate to banditry causing invasion and wreaking havoc in the community.

4.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter comprises of detailed discussion of the results of the data analysis process and interpretation in relation to the theory that the study is anchored on, literature review of the previous studies and axioms of Paul Watzlawick’s theory of Interactional View. The five axioms put forward by Watzlawick, were employed to in this study. The axioms are: One cannot not communicate, every communication has a content and relationship aspect, Human communication involves both digital and analogic modalities,

the nature of the relationship depends on the punctuation of communication sequence, and all communication is symmetrical or complementary.

4.3.1 Age-appropriate and Child Friendly Communication

The results indicate that mothers have developed communication strategies unique to their environment to communicate to their children before during and after invasion. The communication to children especially the young could pose challenges to the mothers when they are confronted with danger. The mothers choose to clutch their small children tightly as explained by Mother X4 in (4.2.1). The mother holds the child tightly and close so that the touch can make the child sense that there is danger and keeps quiet. The mothers use verbal and non-verbal communication to communicate to their children. The non-verbal communication plays a major role in communicating with the children when invasion occurs at night. Holding young children tight and close is friendly to the child because when the young ones are cuddled close to the mother, they feel safe even if danger lurks around. For the children who are a little bit older, their mothers simply pinch them twice and they may be alert and ready to take cover. Mother X4 explains that non-verbal communication is used by mothers to alert their children at night when there is danger. The mothers ensure that the children learn these signs before invasion so that it may be easy to take off at night. This communication to the children is age appropriate and child friendly since it is not complex for the young children to understand the meaning of pinching.

The nonverbal communication agrees with Paul Watzlawick's first axiom that states that One Cannot Not Communicate. This axiom explains communication situations when one does not utter a word. Findings from mothers at (4.2.1) shows mothers

sometimes do not utter a word but their children would understand what they are communicating. Holding the young children tightly and pinching the others without saying a word still communicates to the children without a mother uttering a word. The findings at (4.2.3), the responds by the youth on the facial expressions of the mother is another example where the mother communicates without uttering a word. The facial expressions displayed by mothers during invasion are enough to communicate to the children that nothing is okay at home. The youth explain that the facial expression of the mother was enough to know that there was danger. Youth 7 at 4.2.3 explains that one look at his mother's eyes was enough to tell him that there was danger. Sometimes mothers face very difficult situations that keep them mum, the mothers in this situation may be silent but the children understood the situation that the mothers are going through.

The second axiom of Paul Watzlawick is that communication is content and relationship this axiom maintains that, every communication has content and a relationship aspect whereby the relationship classifies content (Griffin, 2012). The content provides information on what the message is about and the relationship level provide information on how the message is interpreted. Griffin, (2012) gives an example of a phrase "you are late" the content here refers to time but the interpretation may mean on relationship level may be a criticism of the other person being irresponsible (Griffin, 2012). This axiom relates to coded communication that the 'enemy' in Endoo Ward may not interpret but the children can. In 4.2.1 the mothers scream and give directions that are safe for the children to take. These directions are explained according to how the children were trained by their mothers but the invaders may not understand.

Griffin (2012) further explains that in written communication, punctuation directs how the message should be interpreted while in oral communication, tone of voice, emphasis on certain words, and facial cues, direct how the message was meant to be interpreted. In Endoo Ward, mothers communicate with their children by varying tones, laying emphasis on some words by repeating them to ensure that their children interpret the messages correctly. This is evident in (4.2.1) where mothers vary tones to ensure that the children pick what they are being communicated to by their mothers. Mothers vary their tones to ensure that the children understood what they are told. Punctuation plays a role of organising the groups of messages to achieve meaning (Griffin, 2012).

The fifth axiom states that Inter-Human Communication Procedures are either Symmetric or Complementary. This axiom defines relationship in terms of power whereby in a symmetric relationship both parties have equal power and complementary relationship involves unequal power (Griffin, 2012). This study found that the mother and a child relationship in Endoo ward forms a complementary relationship. The children have little power and therefore listen to communication from their mothers on how to be safe during an invasion and follow guidance that their mothers communicate to them.

4.3.2 Positive and Strength-based Communication During Invasion

Every mother desire that their children live a positive and a successful life therefore they endeavor to make it a reality. Communication to the children from the time they are young contributes to children developing positive and strength-based character. According to Kolucki and Lemish, (2011) Positive and strength-based communication is aimed at developing a positive mindset, resilience and ability to cope for the children by focusing on nurturing their strengths and potentials. The study reveals as cited in (4.2.3)

that the mothers in Endoo ward strive to build a positive mind for their children and building resilience that enable them to cope in their troubled environment. The environment that the children live in Kerio valley is not an ideal for the children to develop a positive mindset because of invasions and counter invasions by the warring communities. He findings in (4.2) show that mothers train their children that there are enemies on invade their community steal livestock and kill people. The conversations by mothers and children in 4.2 shows that they live in a volatile environment and therefore, the children are taught by their mother how to detect danger and how they should take cover.

The hope for the children is in the mothers who offer transformative communication that enable the children to channel their energy in to positive actions despite what they face in their environment. The mothers in Endoo ward of Kerio Valley communicate to the children by teaching them values that enhance self-confidence in the children and enable them exploit their potential. As the mothers disclosed in 4.2.2, they ensure that the children go to school and attend church Sunday school, this offer the children the environment to learn positive values and in turn build optimism, perseverance, resourcefulness and creativity. The mothers here believe their children may get positive communication from their teachers at school and religious teachers at Sunday school.

For positive and strength-based communication to be achieved, the communicator should provide models that children should emulate (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011). The study agrees with (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011) principle since the mothers while communicating to their children introduce models that their children should emulate. This

is evident in (4.2.3) where mothers in Endoo ward tell their children to emulate people who are successful in the society the children are also involved in ensuring the safety of their siblings and are prepared to participate in case of invasions. This gives the children a sense of responsibility and helps them build the ability to solve problems that they face in their daily life. Through communication, children are nurtured to develop morals, values and respect for other peoples' feelings (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011). Mothers in Endoo Ward communicate with their children with themes that allow them to develop good morals and values that build them and create a positive life in future. This is evident as cited in (4.2.3).

Paul Watzlawick in interactive view theory maintains that Communication equals to content plus relationship (Griffin, 2012). The way mothers relate with their children in Endoo ward Kerio Valley achieve their communication based on the relationship that exist between them. The ability of the children to decode the information given by the mothers depends on the relationship that they have. Mothers in Kerio Valley describe the invading community as the enemy within that they live with and never to be entertained as cited in (4.2.1) Example is the mothers refer to the enemy community as 'Konkono' this means something that moves slowly but the children understood that there is danger when the mothers mention that. Watzlawick further explains that, Inter-Human Communication Procedures are either Symmetric or Complementary (Griffin, 2012). This explains the relationship between the mother and the child and in Endoo ward of Kerio Valley. The mother and the children form a complementary relationship where the child has little power and listen to their mother. This works for them to instill positive

and strength-based communication since the relationship facilitates for the child to listen to the mothers and heed what they say.

4.3.3 Response to Security Communication by their Mothers in Endoo Ward

The success of communication depends on how the receiver decodes the message from the sender. When the mothers communicate with their children, the children are expected to correctly decode the message and respond by their actions. The mothers communicate through verbal and non-verbal communication and the children respond by reacting to what their mothers tell them. In the case of Endoo ward as cited in (4.2) mothers use verbal and nonverbal communication to alert the children and the children respond by either running, keeping quiet, hiding or even moving away from the risky areas during invasion. The study reveals that the children recall responding to their mother's communication that saved their lives both during the day and at night. A perfect example is how the children were pinched twice and were able to wake up quietly and get to safety as cited in (4.2.1). They would also respond to danger signs that their mothers showed them and that would enable them understand that they are in danger and therefore they should take cover. The mothers communicated before, during and after invasion, communication is different in the three stages but the children were able to decode and respond effectively.

According to Levin & Candice, (2010), Children experience trauma, suffer atrocities and abuse; others shoulder responsibilities during and after invasion. Despite going through all these, most of them respond to positive communication especially from their mothers and achieve their full potential (Levin & Candice, 2010). The findings of this study agree with (Levin & Candice,2010) that Children at Endoo Ward in Kerio

Valley have had traumatic experiences and have managed to respond to positive communication from their mothers. Mothers in (4.2) explain how they calmed a boy who had just lost his father during invasion (4.2.2). The boy calmed down after the listening to what one of the mothers communicated to calm him; his urge for revenge was changed by the mothers', by communicating teachings from the bible. The mother also as cited in (4.2.2) tactfully communicated to the boy by varying the tone of her voice.

Levin & Candice, (2010) further state that communication is an essential tool in developing relationship as it is a means through which ideas is passed from one person to another. Children who have lost their loved ones during invasion are able to live a normal life after they respond to communication by their mothers. This means that mothers, children and the environment play a major role in informing how they communicate with one another. Endoo Ward presents a hostile environment where the children and the mothers have to devise ways to communicate with one another. The mothers here have to be cautious in communicating with the children to enable success of communication and response. Some mothers may be aggressive while communication to their children and may lead to the children withdrawing and end up facing danger when invasion occur. This is cited this study (4.2.3) where one of the youth said that their mother called him "Mjinga" (Swahili word meaning a fool) after failing to get to the destination where the mother and his siblings were taking cover. Calm mothers easily achieve effective communication to their children and this applies especially when the mothers are preparing their children before invasion. Before invasion, mothers prepare their children to be safe during invasion and they do this calmly as seen in (4.2.1).

Additionally, mother-child communication changes and shifts with time and age of the child. A mother adopts different communication strategies to communicate with their children as they grow up; this shows that communicating with a toddler may be different from communicating with a teenager. Mothers in Kerio Valley have devised ways to communicate to their children and to do so effectively, they communicate differently to different age sets of the children. As cited in (4.2.1), mothers communicate to the young ones by simply holding them close and tight, the age that had understood the spoken word were pinched and those teenagers were communicated to with hush tones during invasion. The mothers in Endoo Ward have learned to shift the communication strategies to communicate effectively with their children to develop their potentials.

4.3.4 Communication Challenges Mothers Experience in Security Communication in Kerio Valley

Mothers experience communication challenges while passing information to their children especially during and after invasion. The study found out that mothers have children of different ages and often experience challenges while communicating to them at one go. Generally, the mothers disclosed as cited at (4.2.4) that they experience challenges while explaining to their young children why they need to take cover. The mothers revealed using repetition to communicate to their children especially the young ones to ensure that the information sinks. In (4.2.1) the mothers repeated the word ‘enemy’ to the children to ensure that it sticks in their minds that the enemy exists and dangerous. Younger children sometimes forget the nonverbal communication taught by the mother but a repeat may always bring them up to speed with the events of invasion.

The mothers have to communicate irrespective of the time of the day, whether it is day or night. Mothers disclosed that they experience challenges at night while communicating to their children but they have devised strategies that enable them to communicate for example pinching them twice.

Other challenges are from the children who are naturally defiant and do not listen to the communication from their mothers. Mothers say those children are taken to school hoping that the teachers would get to tame their behavior as cited in (4.2.4). Others chose to pray for them and take them to church so that the religious leaders can guide them. According to Coughlin (2010), communication serves several functions simultaneously for example providing advice, comfort and influencing behavior; if the functions fail, then the communicator faces challenges. In this case, mothers face challenges while communicating with the children if the intention of communication fails. This study agrees with Coughlin (2010) that, to gain a better understanding of communication, it is important to study its functions and its relationships with the outcomes. Mothers in Endoo Ward as found out in this study take time to relate with their children and learn through experience on how to communicate better with them. This helps mitigate the challenges that the mothers face while communicating to their children.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings and how the result relates to existing literature. It also covers the conclusion, policy implications and suggestion for further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to study the security communication for children in conflict areas and was undertaken at Endoo ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County where mothers have experience in preparing their children to be safe during invasion and to cope up with life after invasion. This study had four research objectives. The Study sought to assess the extent to which communication to children by mothers during insecurity in Endoo Ward is appropriate and child friendly, assess the extent to which communication to children by mothers during insecurity is positive and strength-based. In addition, it sought to establish the children's response to security communication by their mothers in Endoo Ward, and to investigate the communication challenges mothers experience in communicating to their children when there is insecurity at the Kerio Valley. The results revealed that mothers in Endoo Ward take time to prepare their children to be safe during insecurity or during invasion by constantly communicating to them how to get to safety and how to be alert at all times. The communication to the children before invasion is child friendly and age appropriate as mothers describe to the children what happens during invasion. The mothers find friendly terms and intonations while preparing the children in case of invasion, this however changes when invasion

occurs and there is no time to be friendly. The mothers have however developed verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to alert their children that there is an invasion and therefore they should take cover. The study found out that mothers mold their children to develop a positive mindset that enable the children to build resilience and cope up with effects of insecurity as cited in (4.2.2). The mothers also use role models to guide their children's character that would enable them to move away from banditry and create a peaceful generation. The study also found out that the children respond to the communication by parents that enable them to get to safety (4.2.3). Finally, the study also found out that mothers experience communication challenges while communicating to their children before, during, and after invasion as cited in (4.2.4). They need training in sign language, use of gestures and the use of visual aids. The results based on research questions formulated are discussed in detail below.

5.2.1 Age Appropriate and Child Friendly Communication

The mothers attributed insecurity to the culture of cattle rustling, revenge mission and parents molding their children to embrace the retrogressive culture. The study results revealed that mothers devised ways of communicating with their children that would get them to safety. The communication by mothers is age appropriate and child friendly while preparing them when there is no tension. However, when tension sets in, the communication may change the intonation that the mother uses also change to show the agency and enable children to take cover. The mothers use phrases that ensure that they do not scare their children as they go by their duties every day but also enable them understand that there is danger and therefore, they should be careful.

5.2.2 *Positive and Strength-Based Communication*

The findings of the study indicated that mothers developed ways of communicating with their children in a way that enhance positive behavior. Generally, a hostile environment may affect the children; physically and emotionally therefore, mothers have taken time to cushion their children from degenerating and developing unwanted behavior by constantly communicating to them. Communication based on role modeling and instilling positive values enable the children develop a positive behavior.

5.2.3 *Response of Communication by Children to Communication by Mothers*

The study results stated that mothers communicate with their children and ensure that they understand so that they can respond effectively. The children respond by heeding what their mothers say by taking cover and ensure that they are safe. The mothers evaluate the understanding of their children by observing the response that the children display during invasion. The findings are in line with Watzlawick's second axiom that communication is equal to content plus relationship (Griffin, 2012). Here the mothers communicate the content and the children decode based on the relationship they have with their mothers. The mothers also stated that the children respond to signs and facial expression displayed by the mother when there is no time for the spoken word.

5.2.4 *Communication Challenges Faced by Mothers While Communicating with Their Children During Insecurity*

It was established that mothers experience challenges while communicating to their children before, during and after invasion. Mothers play a key role in ensuring that their children are safe during invasion. The mothers need assistance in various communication skills in order to effectively communicate with their children and improve their

communication abilities. The mothers need training in use of gestures and intonation of speech especially when they are communicating to toddlers. After learning, the mothers can implement these skills and find what is good for their children or what their children understand better. The mothers can also form a support group that they can use to help each other to learn new ways of communicating to their children. The invasion may not be new to the mothers but it could pose a critical environment to their children, which is why the mothers living in this environment should support each other to ensure effective communication to their children.

5.2 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to take an in-depth look at security communication to children in conflict areas. The study took a case of Endoo Ward of Elgeyo Marakwet County that had experienced perennial invasions over a long period. For this purpose, the study sought to establish the extent to which communication to children is age appropriate and child friendly, positive and strength based. Besides, it sought to analyse response by the children to the security communication and communication challenges experienced by mothers while communicating to their children. The results of this data analysis showed that mothers have devised best communication strategies unique to their environment to communicate to their children on the dangers surrounding invasions. The techniques entail use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.

The verbal communication strategies include the use of coded language, terms and phrases that refer to danger. The nonverbal communication include pitching, slapping, winking, holding tight and holding ropes to lead the children to safety. The children also have learned to respond effectively to the security communication. Mothers

experience challenges that leave them frustrated especially after experiencing loss of life and explaining to their children why invasions take place at their environs. From the study findings, it is conclusive that effective communication between a mother and a child plays a key role in saving their lives during invasion. This study provided a glimpse into the lives of mothers in Endoo ward of Kerio valley where they deal with insecurity day in day out. This study has revealed that indeed mothers keep constant communication to their children as their fathers take arms to protect the community.

These mothers have ensured to prepare their children by teaching them signs that signify danger and when the mothers display them to their children, the children respond by taking cover. The mothers have to consider communication for different ages of the children while communicating to ensure that every child understood what the mother said. Building a positive mind set is also important for a child living in a troubled environment like Endoo Ward in Kerio Valley. It is the duty of the mother to ensure that the children are not affected physically and emotionally and to bring up responsible citizens despite the environment that they live in. The other important factor in children communication is for the mother to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication by examining how their children respond when an invasion occurs.

The study found out that the children responded to the mother's communication and those who did not get to safety, forced mothers to go back to the drawing board. The young children who are not able to speak responded to facial expression and physical touch by their mothers and responded by being quiet. Lastly, mothers experienced challenges in communicating with their children but no mother would wish for their child

to be caught up in a cross fire so the mothers ensured to devise strategies of solving communication challenges they face.

5.3 Recommendations of the Study

This section covers practical as well as policy implications together with limitations and recommendations for further research.

The study has practical implications emanating from the findings of the study and can be resourceful to those communities that experience insecurity each day. The findings of this study contribute to the body of knowledge on security communication and specifically in communicating with children. It also fills the research gap on security communication for children, which few researchers have explored in the developing world.

Based on the study findings, the researcher gives the following recommendations;

- i. Mothers should devise more ways of communicating to their children to ensure that their children are safe during invasion. The communication should be categorised to cater for children of all ages.
- ii. Mothers should ensure to develop child friendly communication and maintain it before, during and after invasion to take care of the emotional being of the children. This avoids trauma that the children might experience due to effects of invasion.
- iii. Mothers should seek assistance from communication professionals who can advise them on how their devised strategies of communication with their children during invasion. The professionals also advises them on the appropriate communication intervention to use in security communication.

- iv. Mothers to should read widely on communication intervention for children during insecurity and educate their family members for effective communication at times when invasions erupt.

It is prudent for mothers to adopt communication strategies that enhance successful communication with their children during invasion. Mothers should also embrace training to improve their communication skills that enables them to communicate effectively not only to save their lives but also to ensure they lead a better life. They should also take steps to adaptations in communication style that can help facilitate a successful communication to children of all ages.

Policy makers can use this information to develop adaptive communicative programs to assist mothers who have to grapple with security communication for children in conflict areas. Communities with experience in communication challenges in conflict areas develops a seamless structure in communicating to their children.

5.3.1 Recommendation for Further Research

This study focused on security communication for children in conflict areas, a case of mothers of Endoo Ward in Kerio Valley of Elgeyo Marakwet County. This research study had limitations that other researchers can exploit and come up with another related study. Secondly, the research focused on mothers of Endoo ward in Elgeyo Marakwet County. Further research can be conducted on security communication for children in others counties that have experienced conflicts. Thirdly, future studies may examine various methods and dimensions of measuring communication strategies. Finally, since this research adopted a case study approach, future scholars may use other research designs and approaches to study security communication in conflict area.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: University of Nairobi Introductory Letter



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
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P.O. Box
Nairobi.
Kenya

OUR REF:
YOUR REF:

DATE: July

23, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: ANNE JELAGAT CHERUIYOT - K50/11567/2018

This is to confirm that the above named is a bonafide student at the University of Nairobi, School of Journalism and Mass Communication pursuing Master of Arts degree in Communication Studies.

Ms Cheruiyot has completed her course work and is currently going to collect data for her research project leading to a Master of Arts Degree in Communication Studies.

Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.

Wendy Cheron
Senior Administrative Assistant
School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Appendix 2: Mother's Interview Guide

A STUDY ON SECURITY COMMUNICATION FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT AREAS: THE CASE OF MOTHERS IN ENDOO WARD OF ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY

Interview Guide

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Details (age, level of education, marital status, religion)
2. where do you get insecurity information that invasion is are about to erupt?
3. Why is Kerio Valley susceptible to insecurity?

Section B: Extent to which communication to children by mothers during insecurity in Kerio Valley is age-appropriate and child-friendly.

1. How do you communicate with your children at a time when you experience insecurity and ensure that they understand the message you are passing to them?
2. Explain the ways of have a way of telling if your children have understood what you have passed to them?

Section C: To establish children response to security communication in Kerio Valley.

1. What are the communication options you consider before communicating to your children during insecurity?
2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the communication options you chose?
3. How do your children respond to this information?

Section D: The extent to which communication to children by mothers in Kerio Valley during insecurity is positive and strengths-based.

1. How does communication to your children during insecurity help them to develop a positive mind set?
2. How do you ensure that sensitive communication to children do no harm?

Section E: To investigate communication challenges mothers experience in security communication in Kerio Valley.

1. What are the communication challenges that you face while communicating with your children during insecurity?

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide for the Youth

A STUDY ON SECURITY COMMUNICATION CHILDREN IN CONFLICT

AREAS: THE CASE OF MOTHERS IN ENDOO WARD OF ELGEYO

MARAKWET COUNTY

1. What are your experiences of insecurity in this area?
2. How did you get to safety when there was an attack?
3. How did your mothers communicate to you during invasion?
4. To what extent did this communication help you understand what was going on?
5. What was reaction to the messages that your mothers passed to you?
6. Why did you react in that way to the messages that your mother passed to you?
7. Why is communication important especially for children during insecurity?
8. What are the communication challenges that you experienced during insecurity?

Appendix 4: Certificate of Field Work

Appendix 5: Certificate of Corrections

Appendix 6: Research License

Appendix 7: Photos of Kerio Valley Residents

Plate 1: Kerio Valley Residents during peace meetings (Photo courtesy of Kenya News Agency)



Plate 2: Women and Children at the Kerio Valley Running away from their homes after an Attack (Photo Courtesy of Standard Digital)



Plate 3: Photo Showing Aftermath of Invasion

Aftermath of an Attack at the Kerio Valley (Photo Courtesy of People Daily)

