

NATURAL RESOURCE BASED CONFLICTS IN TANA RIVER COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The overall objective of this study was to analyze the causes and impacts of conflicts on the social and economic development in Tana River County. Specific objectives are: (1) to determine the impact of conflict on education and health service provision; (2) determine the impact of the conflicts on food security. In this study the conceptual framework of interaction is applied to explain the various relationships. The framework shows that there are many

factors that lead to conflicts and the factors can be classified as immediate intermediate and structural. The framework also recognizes that there are various actors in the conflict and this include: pastoralists, farmers, fisher folk, leaders, administrators, CSOs, NGOs, Government, Women and children.

Key Words: *pastoralism, marginalization, alienation, economic development, natural resource, conflicts, Tana River County, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

"I believe that to meet the challenge of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. We must all learn to work not just for our own self, family, or nation but for the benefit of all humankind. Universal responsibility is the key to human survival. It is the best foundation for world peace, the equitable use of natural resources, and through concern for future generations, the proper care of the environment." The Dalai Lama

The management of land and natural resources is one of the most critical challenges facing developing countries today. The exploitation of high-value natural resources, including oil, gas, minerals and timber has often been cited as a key factor in triggering, escalating or sustaining violent conflicts around the globe. Furthermore, increasing competition over diminishing renewable resources, such as land and water, are on the rise (FT, 2012).

The prospect of financial gain is seldom the primary motivation for rebellion, but for some it can become a satisfactory way of life. This is a further reason why the participants in a civil war should not be left to fight it out among themselves. Some evidence suggests that decade by decade, civil wars have been getting longer. While this may be due to circumstances in individual countries, it more likely reflects global changes that have made civil wars easier to sustain by allowing rebel groups to raise finance and acquire armaments more easily.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of this study is to analyze the causes and impacts of conflicts on the social and economic development in Tana River County

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to achieve the purpose of the study of establishing the cause and effects of conflicts in Tana River County, the following research questions will be examined.

1. Is Seasonal scarcity of resources the cause of conflict among pastoralists and agro pastoralists in Tana River County?
2. Is Poor service delivery in education, health together with food insecurity the effects of the conflict in Tana River County?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Major stakeholders in Tana River will be analyzed to elucidate their roles in the conflicts and conflict resolution. Pastoralists reside in over 21 countries across the African continent. Many of these communities are affected by conflicts; while the Sahel region and East Africa show sustained levels of inter pastoral violent conflicts with associated potential impacts on their livelihoods (Bevan 2007)

Pastoralism is a major economic production strategy in which people raise herds of animals, mostly in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALS). ASALS cover about 80% of Kenya's land mass and support about a third of the country's human population and 70% of the national livestock herd.

Water makes or breaks relationships. The linkages between water scarcity, peace and development are exceptionally obvious in the countries of the Nile River Basin. (Erick2011). This is also applicable to the case study because the Tana River is a source of water for the communities and hence sporadic skirmishes may be witnessed especially during drought.

Theoretical Framework

Conflict theories are perspectives in sociology that emphasize the social, political, or material inequality of a social group, that critique the broad socio-political system, or that otherwise detract from structural functionalism and ideological conservatism. Conflict theories draw attention to power differentials, such as class conflict, and generally contrast historically dominant ideologies. It is therefore a macro level analysis of society. Karl Marx is the father of the social conflict theory, which is a component of the 4 paradigms of sociology. Certain conflict theories set out to highlight the ideological aspects inherent in traditional thought. Of the classical founders of social science, conflict theory is most commonly associated with Karl Marx (1818–1883). Based on a dialectical materialist account of history, Marxism posited that capitalism, like previous socioeconomic systems, would inevitably produce internal tensions leading to its own destruction.

Conceptual Framework

In this study the conceptual framework of interaction is applied to explain the various relationships. The frame work shows that there are many factors that lead to conflicts and the factors can be classified as immediate Intermediate and Structural. The frame work also recognizes that there are various actors in the conflict and this include Pastoralists, farmers, fisherfolk, leaders, administrators, CSOs, NGOs, Government, Women and children. The effects of the conflict are many and lack of development, Gender based violence, poor road networks (infrastructure), lack of portable water, high incidences of poverty, high cost of living, poor education, and poor health

Conceptual Frame Work

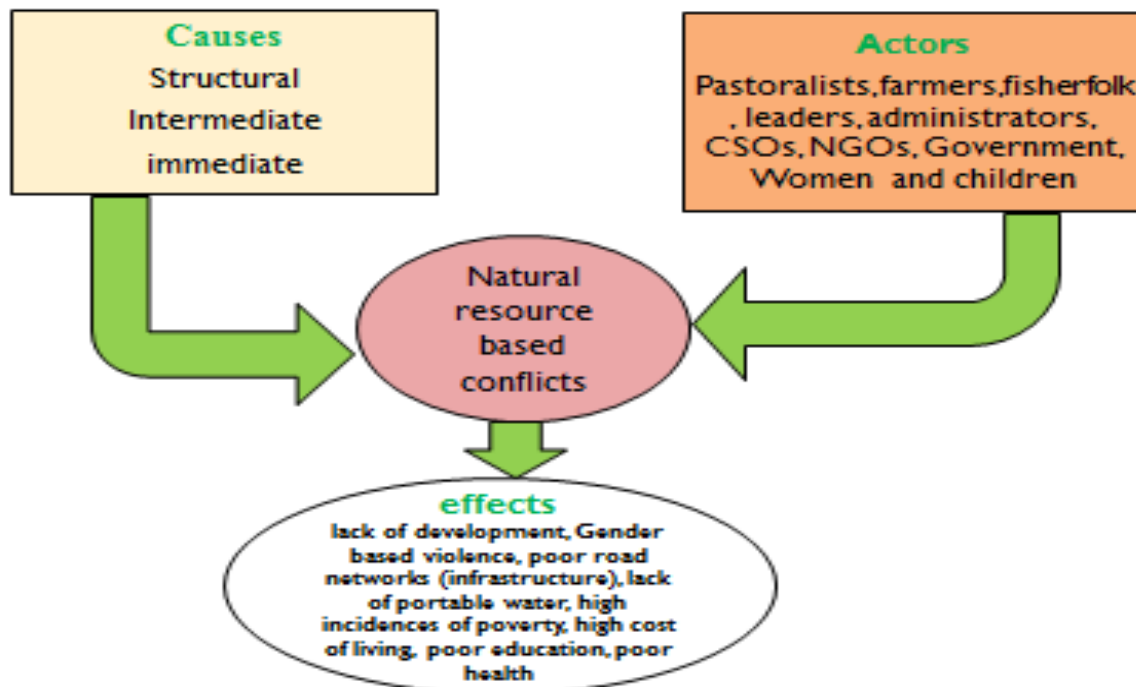


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Philosophical Orientation

There are three main epistemological research philosophies. These are positivism, interpretivism and realism. Hussey and Hussey (1997) states that positivism is founded on the belief that the study of human behaviors should be conducted in the same way as studies conducted in the natural sciences. They further argue that positivists' law provides the basis of explanation, permit the anticipation of phenomena, predict their occurrence and therefore allow them to be controlled. They argue that explanation consists of establishing causal relationship between the

variables by establishing causal laws and linking them to a deductive or integrated theory. The positivism seeks the fact or causes of social phenomena.

This study is approached from a positivism philosophy point of view. The positivism school of thought is based on the philosophy that only one reality exists though it can only be known imperfectly due to human limitations and researchers can only discover this reality within the realm of probability (Richardt and Rallis, 1994). This school also holds that the researcher and the subjects were independent; didn't influence each other or outcome. This study is anchored in the positivism paradigm because it seeks to objectively establish facts by empirically establishing relationships among variables. Also, it is based on the theory from which hypothesis are drawn. The hypotheses will be tested, accepted or rejected leading to what could lead to further research.

Type and Sources of Data

The study will use both primary and secondary data which will be largely quantitative and descriptive in nature. Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) points out that, questionnaires are appropriate for studies since they collect information that is not directly observable as they inquire about feelings, motivations, attitudes, accomplishments as well as experiences of individuals. Secondary data will on the other hand be acquired from the inspectorate of Kenyan Owned State Corporations and Public Procurement Oversight Authority.

Expected Outcome

It is expected that the results will show the relationships in stakeholders' relationships and ethical procurement and how they improve the performance in supply chain management. The results will show that proper management of stakeholders' relationship brings about a better ethical procurement. However, divergent stakeholders' interest leads to complexity in conflicts. The study expects to establish the extent of moderation of institutional efficiency on stakeholder relationships and ethical procurement behaviour. Institutional efficiency, nevertheless, serves to negate the effects of stakeholders' vested interests and powers.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Land Owned

As per the findings, majority (92%) of the respondents had less than an acre piece of land while the remaining 8% owned between 1-3 acres of land in Tana River County. This implies that there is farming land scarcity in Tana River County.

Household Characteristics

As per the findings, most (25.6%) of the respondents had two members in their households, 13.7% had 4 members, 12.0% had 6 members while 11 members, 9members, 3 members represented 3.4% of the respondents each. Further the study required the respondents to indicate the number of grown-ups in their households

Source of Income

As per the findings, majority (75.2%) of the respondents indicated that they had domesticated animals and 24.8% indicated otherwise.

Respondents Experience

According to the findings, most of the respondents had lived in the area for 15-20 years, 20% for 10-15 years, 18% for over 20 years, 17% for 5-10 years and only 3% of the respondents had lived in the area for less than one year. This implies that the respondents had lived in the area for long enough to have experienced the different heights of violence in the area.

Last Conflict Encountered

As per the findings, majority (55.6%) of the respondents indicated that the last time they experienced conflict was 3-5 years ago, 21.4% this year, 13.4% last year and 9.4% 5-10 years ago.

Conflict Factors

As per the findings, 81.2% and 73.5% of the respondents indicated that land tenure and Minimum Security Presence respectively did not act as a conflict factor while 65.8% of the respondents indicated that Divergent land needs as conflict factor.

Cope with Conflicts

Results show 86.3% of the respondents indicated that relief food was not a method of coping with conflicts in Tana River County, 96.6% indicated that peace talks was a method of coping with conflicts, 88.9% of the respondents indicated that Alternative Livelihood was not a way of coping with conflicts while 88% indicated that relocation was not a way of dealing with conflicts.

Socio Economic impacts of the natural resource based conflicts in Tana River County

According to the findings majority (77.8%) of the respondents indicated that natural resource based conflicts in Tana River county, 53% indicated that there was crop theft, 12% indicated that there was Lack of Access to Markets, 50.45% indicated that there was Rotting of Produce in the Farms while 96.6% of the respondents indicated that crop land was abandoned.

Livestock Farming

According to the findings, majority (88%) of the respondents indicated that there was no Collapse of livestock marketing, 94% indicated that Grazing Land was Abandoned, 93.2% indicated that Small arms trade did not increase, 80.3% indicated that there was overgrazing in safer grounds while 94% of the respondents indicated that there was destruction of biodiversity.

Education

100% of the respondents indicated that there was closure of Schools and low Enrolment in the Existing Schools and 71.8% of the respondents indicated that Teachers Relocated to Safer Places

Health

According to the findings, 92.3% of the respondents indicated that there was no Increased Human and Livestock Diseases, 93.2% indicated there was no Closure of Health Facilities and Flight of health Personnel each, 97.4% indicated that there was Increased reports of injured people in the local health centres while 75.2% of the respondents indicated that there was no Withdrawals of health Personnel.

Opponent Aims of Involvement in the Last Conflict

From the findings, it was rated Displacing them from the delta (Mean=2.4017), Gain of political power (Mean=2.2564), protecting their livelihood (Mean=1.8718) and showing the community their strength (Mean=1.7521) were rated as aims of little importance of the others involvement in the last conflict while Intimidation of the other group (Mean=1.3333) and Unification of our community (Mean=1.1709) were rated as aims of no importance of others involvement in latest conflict. Using an open ended question the study sought to investigate whether clashes were started by a community or an individual. Most of the respondents indicated that the clashes were started by communities while others indicated that clashes were started by individuals.

Politics and Conflicts

According to the findings, majority (72.6%) of the respondents indicated that clashes could not allow people vote, 99.1% indicated that conflicts led to stronger group coherence for community members and would vote for their own while 100% of the respondents indicated that People could not vote for any leader regardless of ethnicity.

Government involvement in Solving Conflict

From the findings, respondents rated holding peace meetings (Mean=4.1453), as an important role played by the government in solving conflicts while Disarmament (Mean=2.9402), Sending government officials (Mean=2.7607), Curfew (Mean=2.6496), Arrested some community members (Mean=2.6496) were rated as roles of moderate importance in the involvement of government in solving conflicts. Further the respondents indicated that Establishment of new police posts (Mean=2.2991), Deployment general service unit (GSU) (Mean=2.2735), Set a commission of inquiry (Mean=2.1197) and Sending food aid (Mean=1.5470) were rated as of little importance in solving conflicts by the government in Tana River County.

Conflict Resolution

According to the findings, majority (63.2%) of the respondents indicated that Land allocation could not be to solve the problem of natural resource based conflicts in Tana River country to enhance peace, 41% indicated that Intercommunity sports activities could be used, 88.9% indicated that Regular peace meetings could be used, 44.4% indicated that Develop more water points could be used, 47% Creation of more grazing corridors could be used, 76.9% indicated that Enacting appropriate by laws could be used, 100% indicated that Encourage intermarriage could not be used. 86.3% indicated that Encourage religious tolerance could not be used while 88.9% indicated that Inter-ethnic schools could be established to solve the problem of natural resource based conflicts in Tana River County to enhance peace.

Role of Devolution in Conflict Management in Tana River County

The study used an open ended question to investigate role of devolution in conflict management in Tana River County. Most of the respondents indicated that the devolution of powers to the county had helped the residents in dealing with conflicts in the manner that fits them most without using the central government. Different counties deal with conflicts in different means and this was given an upper hand by devolution. Some indicated that devolution brought *majimbo* system which helps the residents concentrate on their issues without central government interference. Others indicated that devolution granted significant autonomy to the counties in terms of executive power, especially on functions that often cause inter-group conflict such as cultural preservation and local development planning.

Benefited from Devolution

As per the findings, majority (70.9%) of the respondents indicated that Schools, Hospitals, roads and transport were the infrastructures that were available to enhance resilience, 28.2% indicated Safe and clean water while 0.9% of the respondents indicated markets as their infrastructure that was available to enhance resilience.

Adequacy of Socio Economic Infrastructure

According to findings, majority (55.6%) of the respondents indicated that socio-economic infrastructure not was adequate for the needs of the community while 44.4% indicated that the socio-economic infrastructure was adequate for the needs of the community in Tana River County.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that the main causes conflicts in Tana River County was the natural resources and these conflicts had massive the social and economic development of Tana River County. The study also concludes that farming was the main economic activity in Tana River County although farming land scarce. Further the study concludes that Access to grazing and

Presence of war were in most cases causes of conflicts. Divergent land needs, Negative Ethnicity and water resources were Proximate Conflict Factors. The study there was historical agreement on using the resources in the Tana River County. Further the study concludes that peace talks were a method of coping with conflicts. The study concludes that conflicts affected farming to a great extent such that led reduced farming activities, crop theft, rotting of produce in the farms, crop land was abandoned. Livestock farming was also affected in that grazing land was abandoned, overgrazing in safer grounds leading to destruction of biodiversity. Further the study concludes that education was also affected in that there was closure of schools and low enrolment in the existing schools. Further the study concludes that stopping opponents from destroying their livelihood was a main aim of involvement in the last conflict. The conflicts prohibited people from voting and that they led to stronger group coherence for community members and they could not vote for a person from another ethnic group. Government involvement in solving Conflict is mainly in leading the peace meetings by sending government officials into the affected areas. Finally the study concludes that Schools, Hospitals, roads and transport were the infrastructures that were available to enhance resilience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tana River County's economic activity being farming the study recommends that the county government in collaboration with the central government set up irrigation schemes in the dry sections of the county which would be managed by the government but the outputs are put aside to feed the residents during the dry spells. Further the study recommends that the county government of Tana River County restrict/control the migration of people in and out of the county from Somalia and this would reduce the number of youth crossing the border to join the Al-shabaab. Also this would help in controlling the entry of arms from outside.

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