



Research Paper

Impact of Alternative Economic Livelihoods in Managing Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in West Pokot County, Kenya (2013-2020)

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ABSTRACT

West Pokot County is categorized among the most hostile Counties in Kenya owing to the Inter-Ethnic Conflicts which have been recurring over the years. It is bordered by Elgeyo - Marakwet County to the South East, Baringo County to the East, Turkana County to the North, Republic of Uganda to the West and Trans - Nzoia County to the South. The problem of Inter-Ethnic Conflict in West Pokot County has been severe over the years posing poor relationship with the residents of the neighboring counties due to various reasons associated with pastoral nomadism, which attracts commercialization of cattle rustling and increased use of firearms. Alternative livelihoods according to the study presents the most appropriate measures which helps to manage inter-ethnic conflict in that, people would be able to have multiplier sources of living away from the traditionally known source of livelihood in the County-nomadic pastoralism. The purpose of this research is therefore to ascertain how the alternative livelihoods introduced in West Pokot County could or could not be the inter-ethnic management tools in the county. The objective of the study is to examine the impact of alternative livelihoods in managing Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in West Pokot County. The study was informed by the Protracted Social Conflict Theory by Edward Azar, which attempted to analyze what aspects contributes to a persistent conflict in a community with intention to solving them. The study adopted a Descriptive Survey Research Design because it gave accurate observation on how things are rather than why they are the way, they are. The target populations for this study were Pastoralist youth in West Pokot County, National and County Government administrators and women of West Pokot County. This study employed convenience and purposive sampling techniques. The data collection instruments were self-administered questionnaires and interview schedules for key informants. Qualitative and quantitative data were both obtained from the data that was collected. The study found that Inter-Ethnic Conflict affects livelihood to a very high extent and the Impact of Inter- Ethnic Conflict affects the socio-economic livelihood to a very high extent. The study established that the dominant economic activity in West Pokot County is nomadic pastoralism. Though livestock keeping is a prevalent economic activity, there are increased rate of crop farming and mining. The study revealed that 30.9% of participants noted that crop farming is the most preferred alternative economic activity in West Pokot County. The study established that more than 40% of sampled residents believed that Wei-Wei Irrigation Project, Table Banking Micro-finance and Boda boda" business support to youth, has helped manage conflicts in West Pokot to a very high extent. Lastly, the study recommends that the National Government should develop and support community development schemes such as alternative economic livelihoods and practices such as support to Boda boda business and crop farming that are clearly tailored to assist the youths, who appear to be the majority.

Key Words: Inter-Ethnic Conflicts, commercialization of cattle rustling, Alternative livelihoods, Protracted Social Conflict, Table Banking, Micro-finance, Boda boda.

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I. Introduction

Conflict as an inseparable part of human life according to Omire, (2014), is a true reflection of how conflict is inevitable in human life. This argument could be supported and opposed in equal measure based on the various theories fronted by scholars on the subject of human conflict. Conflict theory for example as postulated by Wright Mills and analyzed by Omire, (2014), clearly demonstrates how social structures are created through conflicts manifested by different interest groups each championing for a course particularly on how utilization of scarce resources are done among many interest groups. These two authors seem to agree that scarcity of resources coupled with the dynamics of how they are utilized among the interest groups may eventually determine the chemistry of co-existence among them. The problem of conflict even though it is regarded to yield positive outcome in most cases, is that it leads to massive losses of lives, destruction of capital infrastructure, results in poor relationships between protagonists and may pose challenges of whether benefits from conflicts is worth the impacts suffered from it. According to Ruey (2017), conflicts are source of evil and societal destruction, both morally and materially. With the loss of life and destruction of capital infrastructure, a people will lose its moral fabric as well as economic benefits from its capital assets. These are indeed the effects of conflicts and war to a society.

The concept of conflict management in the context of either intra-state or inter-state conflicts begun in the theoretical literature in early 1990s, led by the Secretary General to the United Nations then Mr. Boutros-Boutros Ghali in the Agenda for peace document, Hopkins (2012). Management of conflict is primarily aimed at stopping escalation of existing conflict or even better still, reducing its occurrence if not eliminating it entirely. Structural prevention of conflict according to Galtung's "Warm Peace", Galtung, (2009), lays its conceptual roots in the concept of security community. The structures of these communities consist not of elements of power but rather of norms, values and shared interests. In the same measure, the peaceful interaction among different groups inside a State can be fore-stored through structural initiatives of constitutional engineering as well as economic development, institutional building and research & development in education, Hopkins (2012). Fundamental elements of structural peace according to Galtung and the concepts of Michael Lund of structural factors and management of dynamics, Hopkins, (2012), are very important strategy of prevention of conflict in any society today.

Ethnic conflict in the society today is noted in almost every continent. It is this eminent existence of intra-state conflict, which includes ethnic conflicts, that United Nations, and other continental and regional multilateral organizational bodies are established to help detect, monitor and solve to avoid realization of a full blown conflict. Within European Union (EU) on its part, it has been building on various policy fronts that it has achieved on conflict related Agenda since the year 2000. According to Alexander, Higazi, Mackie and Andrew (2003), EU is no stranger to the idea of regionalizing approaches to conflict management and improving structural stability of regional bodies as a decentralized ways of managing conflicts.

According to Hopkins (2012), conflicts in African are largely caused by situations of unequal distribution of resources among parties meant to benefit from it, underlying structural socio-economic and cultural conditions, institutions and political related influence actions of protagonists and proximate courses to the protagonists. West Pokot just like her neighbours is a pastoral community that is underdeveloped. As a result, it suffers from scarcities of livelihood and this could be attributed to conflict as indicated by Graham and Frances (2015). The economic causes of contemporary civil wars are undisputedly revolving around underdevelopment and competition for scarce resource tied to political derivatives as postulated by Graham and Frances (2015).

A clear indication of how provision of reliable non-cultural practice tied to economic livelihoods leads to a sustainable peace and friendly living conditions among communities is reflected from the Karamojong of Uganda as argued by Brigitte (2015). The Karamojong community of Uganda has been experiencing conflict with the neighbouring communities of Turkana and Pokot both from the Republic of Kenya due to Nomadic Pastoralism and competition over scarce pasture and Water resources, which are very crucial for the animals. This had been worsened by the availability of firearms in the hands of the locals, which proved to be disastrous in the conflicts between the mentioned communities. According to the arguments by Brigitte (2015), the Ugandan authorities developed ways targeting how best to entice the Karamojong community to move away from depending on livelihoods from traditional practices of nomadic pastoralism to a more sustainable way of mixed farming and trade. This has since promoted a peaceful co-existence in entire Karamojong region and the bordering ethnic communities, particularly the Pokot and Turkana ethnic communities of Kenya.

According to Brigitte (2015), youth are key ingredients of ethnic conflict because of their energy and numbers. These are further aggravated by the rampant unemployment and poor economic prospects, which points a bleak future for them. This situation however, could easily be brought under management if the youth are empowered through quick economic gains projects such as *boda boda* operations. Youth in West Pokot County and other North Rift Counties according to Brigitte (2015), are quickly embracing this economic activity. *Boda Boda* operators are taking up stake as the most popular means of public transport. There are two

analyzed causes of this trend: First is to augment on their economic prospects and secondly because of poor road infrastructure in these counties. The question here is; does embracement of this alternative livelihoods contribute to management of inter-ethnic conflicts in West Pokot County?

According to the National Irrigation Board (2018), the Perkera Irrigation Scheme attracts direct beneficiaries of at least thirteen thousand people (13,000) translating to support for at least 670 household farmlands. This is a large number of people that could be summed to have positively been impacted on by the project by way of provision of livelihoods. It is a massive economic support to the people of these communities particularly the Njemps and the Tugen Communities. This kind of impact to the residents of West Pokot County is invaluable and could help leverage on livelihoods. Evaluation to determine impacts based on the implementation of the project and receptiveness by the people is equally important. It is this concept that if replicated in sustainable proportion, there could be discernible difference in determining how alternative livelihoods could help manage inter-ethnic strife in West Pokot County.

The Kenya's Vision 2030 Flagship blue print and economic roadmap for the country targeting middle income economic status by the year 2030 as captured by the Government of Kenya (2007), doesn't give much economic impetus to the Northern Kenya. The blue print is a summary of long-term national planning strategy. This strategy focuses placing more resources in the central and southern part of the country with little to show for the Northern part of the country. The Vision is meant to transform the country to improve lives and prosperity of all Kenyans using Economic Pillar. Although this sounds fancy, the actual implementation of the flagship projects in the North Rift, Kenya, where West Pokot is located as well as the entire Northern part of the Country remains uncommitted economically. The Vision envisaged constructing 22 medium sized multipurpose dams to supply water for irrigation and domestic use in the Northern Kenya by the year 2012, but none has been constructed to date according to the Government of Kenya publication (2007).

According to Kvitashvil, (2005), scarcity of livelihood resources breeds conflict of competition and the best strategy to solve such resources-based conflict is to increase alternative livelihoods. A narrowed choice of dependence for survival or livelihoods is a closed circuit for conflict. However, this may not be entirely true given that culture and other factors may determine change of attitudes and perceptiveness of projects particularly when it affects dynamic ethnic groups.

The Counties to the South of the Country rarely experiences these challenges tied to conflict over scarce resources such as the ones experienced by pastoralists. This therefore, points strongly to engagements in economic empowerment initiatives that could offer the residents alternative livelihoods away from this traditional practice of nomadic pastoralism which has over time been hijacked by selfish motives of commercialization of cattle rustling. This is what informs this study which seeks to establish possibility of alternative livelihoods introduced to the residents of West Pokot County which are: Wei-Wei Irrigation scheme, "Boda boda" transport support for youth groups; Women Table Banking Project and the apprenticeships initiatives, has or has not helped to manage the recurring Inter-Ethnic Conflicts between the ethnic communities as posited by Pkalya, Adan, & Masinde, (2003)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

West Pokot County has remained one of the poorest counties in Kenya recording high levels of poverty index at 57.3 % according to the estimates of KNBS, (2016). The County experiences frequent Inter-Ethnic Conflicts with her neighbouring ethnic communities at an average of 18 incidences of conflict in a year as posited by Rohwerder, (2015). This has been caused by systematic marginalization thereby subjecting the County to economic hardships and therefore competing over scarce resources related to the nomadic pastoralism, such as competition for water and grazing areas for the animals. The Pokot ethnic community still practice cultural nomadic pastoralism which encourages cattle rustling practices; acquiring cattle through raids into the neighboring communities, Pkalya, Adan, & Masinde, (2003). The problem with this model of economic activity is that it has brought in cattle rustling commercialization, which again has led to increased availability of firearms hence complicating the situation even further.

The cattle raids are used to cover for economic gaps that otherwise supposed to be provided by formal economic ventures to support the people's economic needs such as food, pride price and creation of wealth. According to Rohwerder, (2015), the people who suffer most during these conflicts are particularly school going children and the elderly who are dragged into the illicit act without an option. Effects of the incidents of inter-ethnic conflict in West Pokot is synonymous with the effects meted to internally displaced people following a conflict.

According to Kaprom (2013), suffering by women in the occasion of cattle rustling and banditry which precipitates inter-ethnic conflicts have led to the loss of lives and caused displacement of various population groups. When school sessions are disrupted and the young generation is made to live in a state of hostility, the status quo remains and the fortunes of the community is doomed unless bold steps are made to change this position. Efforts by the local administration and the law enforcements agencies such as conducting security operations and disarmament in the County from 1984 up to today have not achieved much in light of Inter-

Ethnic conflict in West Pokot County and its effects. According to Rohwerder, (2015), the frequent Inter-Ethnic Conflict between the Pokot ethnic community and their neighbouring ethnic communities namely: Turkana, Samburu, Tugen and Marakwet is a clear magnitude of the basis of this problem. Despite all Government security machinery and policies towards the fight to address the Inter - Ethnic community conflicts in West Pokot County, we still experience the vice occasionally.

There have been various initiatives meant to offer alternative economic livelihoods since the year 2013 that support efforts to manage Inter-Ethnic Conflicts by both National and County Governments. These initiatives are: supporting youth “*Boda Boda*” groups, empowering women informal table banking initiatives, Apprenticeships and supporting crop agriculture at Wei-Wei irrigation scheme, which forms the basis of this research to find out whether these initiatives could be the Inter-Ethnic Conflict management tools in West Pokot County.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to examine the impact of alternative economic livelihoods in managing Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in West Pokot County.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This Chapter described the research design, target population, sampling procedures and samples sizes, data collection methods, validity and reliability of research instruments, data analysis techniques and the ethical considerations.

2.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The emphasis is on describing what is already there rather than on judging or interpreting what is not. The descriptive approach is quick and practical in terms of the financial aspect with advantage of depicting accurately on the research questions. The descriptive research design provides an opportunity for the researcher to describe things as they are in a population as described by Kothari & Garg, (2014) . The design was appropriate for the study because the researcher seeks to assess the perception of West Pokot Resident’s on alternative economic livelihoods in managing Inter-Ethnic Conflict in West Pokot County, Kenya. Descriptive studies are not only restricted to facts finding about the issues but may often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and provision of localized solutions to significant problems in the study. The design therefore was the most effective and efficient in analyzing West Pokot residents’ Inter-Ethnic Conflicts challenges.

2.2 The Study Area

The study was conducted in Pokot Central Sub-County of West Pokot County, Kenya. Particularly, the study focused on Pastoralist areas of the Sub-County: Masool and Sigor Locations of Pokot Central Sub-County, bordering Turkana County to the North, Baringo County to the East and Elgeiyo - Marakwet County to the South and Tot Location bordering Baringo County to the South and Elgeiyo - Marakwet County to the West. These are the areas where most of the conflicts are reported in larger magnitudes, Pkalya, Adan, & Masinde, (2003). The same is corroborated by (Bollig, 1990). Bollig further, argues that the most dangerous areas where ethnic conflicts are reported frequently in the region are the Pokot - Turkana and Pokot - Marakwet borders.

2.3 Target Population

The target populations for this study was Pastoralist youth, National and County Government Administrators and women of West Pokot. Non-indigenous communities living in the study area was not be discriminated as the target respondents for this study. According to the Kenya National bureau of Statistics, the 2015 National population census projections of the study areas mentioned earlier are as tabulated below; KNBS, (2015). The table below shows the numbers of target population for the study.

2.4 Sample Size

According to Kothari & Garg, (2014), sample is the smaller population systematically chosen from the total population for a study. The sampling procedure utilized 30 % of the target population for both women and youth/worriers as argued by Mugenda & Mugenda, (2003) that at least 30% of the target population was sufficient representation of the total accessible population. This formula is suitable for this study area because the population settlement patterns portrays sparse distribution and would be difficult to achieve larger population samples than 30% within a reasonable timeframe. The following table shows the target population and the sample sizes for the three categories of the study. This formula is simple and captures figures accurately in a homogeneous society. The total sample of the target population was 506 samples.

2.5. Sampling Technique

This study adopted non-probability sampling design. The research used Convenience Sampling to sample pastoralist youth and the women. This is the most suited sampling design for the target population because of the difficulty to obtain the list of the target population. The population in the study area is sparsely populated which is difficult to obtain a predictable group of people in one geographical area. The key informants comprising of the County Commissioner, Sub-County Commissioner, Chiefs, the County Ward administrators, was all be purposive interviewed because of their crucial role in the administration and government policy dissemination. They are holders of crucial information which the researcher requires to capture in the research hence they should be purposively sampled.

2.6 Data Collection Methods

The researcher used self-administered questionnaire for the youth and women with closed and open-ended questions to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The questionnaire also included structured and unstructured questions, which the researcher used, drop and pick method to respondents particularly targeting the youth and women of the target study area. The closed ended questions enabled the researcher to collect quantitative data while the open-ended questions would enable the researcher to obtain qualitative data. The researcher also used interviews for the key informants comprising of the County Commissioner, Sub-County Commissioner, Chiefs and Ward Administrators. The questions are structured in a way that would obtain both quantitative and qualitative data through structured open ended and closed ended questions. To achieve maximum data of value to the study out if the interview with the key informants, the researcher sought official appointments in order to set conducive environment for the interviews.

2.7 Data Sources

Both and secondary data was used to inference the study. Primary data was collected by use of self-administered questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from analysis of information from government records provided by the County Administrators as well as information obtained through literature review.

2.8 Instrument for Data Collection

The study used interview schedules to obtain data from key informants comprising of the County administrators, ward administrators and the chiefs of the study area. The data collection techniques consisted of administering questionnaires focused on the Inter-Ethnic Conflict affecting local youths and women in research study areas and how this has transformed by the economic empowerment programmes initiated between the years 2013 - 2020. The questionnaires were translated through cognitive interviewing and administered in understandable language. It also looks into the alternative economic livelihoods in managing Inter-Ethnic Conflict ravaging the County. The data obtained from the three techniques gave a clear image of the impact of the alternative economic livelihoods on the socio-economic and security aspect in West Pokot County.

2.9 Reliability Test

Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), posits: “whenever a test or other measuring device is used as part of the data collection process, the validity and reliability of that test is important”. This is to ensure that the instrument was eventually measure what it is intended to measure consistently and can be proved if the same is repeated. Reliability refers to the extent to which the research instrument gives consistent data after a number of trials on the same set up. According to Kothari & Garg (2014), reliability of data collection instruments can be guaranteed by conducting test and retest. In order to further ensure that reliability will be promoted, the study will ensure that the interview schedule questions are drawn from the three specific study objectives.

Validity Tests

To ensure that the research gives valid results, peer review was also being used to ensure that the questionnaire was sound in content and structure. Analysis was done in light of the objectives of the study and in totality with intention to compile a wholesome picture of the study eventually. Validity is the accuracy of conclusion and deduction, which are based on the research results, as posited by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003). In other words, validity is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the data do indeed represents the issue under study. To evaluate the validity of the research, the study determined if results obtained from the analysis of the collected data is accurate and relevant to the phenomena under study.

Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data was both be obtained from the data collection. The quantitative data obtained was organized, coded and organized using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and organized in Excel sheets in line with the objectives of the study.

The qualitative data obtained using the interview schedule on key informants and administered questionnaires on youth worriers and women, was analyzed using thematic analysis by putting into various categories in accordance with the objectives of the study. Presentation of the results was in the form of tables, frequency distribution, bar graphs and pie charts.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This Chapter contains the result of the data collected and interpreted as well as the discussions.

3.1 Causes of Inter-ethnic conflicts

The research findings provides the following as the causes of the Inter-Ethnic conflict which are basically the root cause of the ending conflicts. Table 4.10 below provides this pertinent data.

Table 4.1: Causes of Inter-ethnic conflicts

	<i>Very Extent</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High Extent</i>	<i>Medium Extent</i>	<i>Low Extent</i>	<i>Very Extent</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>Lack of easy access to school education to all the children of West Pokot County</i>	40%		30%	20%	4%	6%	
<i>Lack of business ventures</i>	55%		23%	7%	3%	12%	
<i>Business opportunities</i>	0%		3%	7%	23%	67%	
<i>Lack of modern farming technologies</i>	54%		34%	8%	4%	0%	
<i>Lack of communication and infrastructural Development</i>	44%		37%	8%	5%	6%	
<i>Lack of agricultural Extension services</i>	64%		25%	11%	0%	0%	

Source: Researcher’s Findings (2021)

Table 4.10 above shows that majority (40%, 55%, 44% and 64%) of participants indicated that Lack of easy access to school education to all the children of West Pokot County, business ventures, modern farming technologies, communication and infrastructural development and agricultural extension services lead to inter-ethnic conflicts at a very high extent respectively. The findings also demonstrated that 67% business opportunities have a very low extent impact on inter-ethnic conflicts. The researchers’ opinion in this response is that the community is not business oriented. With fewer people who accessed formal education, people do not value business as a source of livelihood. The 33% assumption on this response were of the contrary opinion in favour of lack of business opportunities contributing to occurrence of conflict. It could also be true that business opportunities are linked to lack of access roads in the community to spur business.

The researcher also engaged key informants with a view to establish opinion of this leaders in place of influence within the Pokot community. They were asked to indicate and explain the Alternative Economic Livelihoods introduced by County Government for the residents of West Pokot County, Kenya, between the years 2013 to 2020.

Most interviewees noted that crop farming and *Boda boda* business are the most common form of alternative economic livelihood in West Pokot County. These findings are in line with responses from the questionnaires whereby participants believe that crop farming is one of the major alternative economic empowerment.

Constant inter-ethnic conflicts, depletion of farmland and agriculture lands, especially in arid areas, and the resulting disparity in supply and demand benefits and ecological resources have all combined to threaten those habitats, livelihood opportunities, and local people’s incomes. Desertification’s effects on dry land on communities was compounded more by political alienation of the vulnerable dry land and sluggish development of health and education facilities, which are key socio-economic pillars. The introduction of crop farming and *Boda Boda* business for youth, are some of the conflicts mitigation measures. The opportunities to empower the majority youth and women proved to be sensitive pillars capable of managing inter-ethnic conflicts.

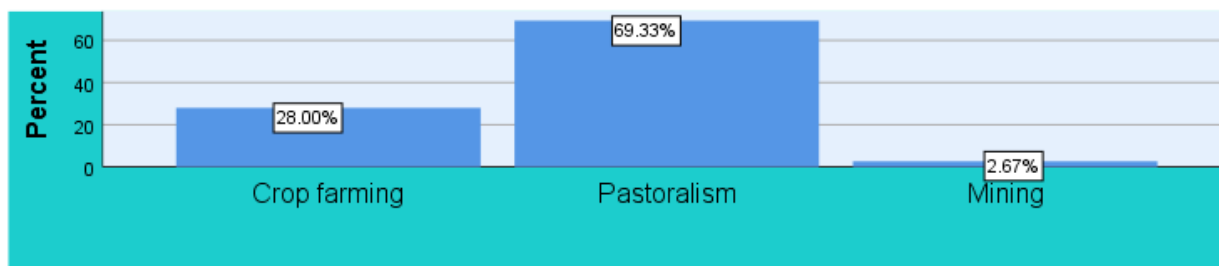
3.2 Alternative Livelihood and Economic Livelihood in managing inter-ethnic conflicts in West Pokot County

The study sought to determine the effects of alternative livelihood and economic livelihood in managing inter-ethnic conflicts in West Pokot County. This section presents the study findings that aims at answering the second research question.

3.2.1 Dominant Source of Livelihoods

The participants were asked to indicate the dominant economic activity in West Pokot County, the findings were as shown below;

Figure 4.1: Dominant Source of Livelihoods



Source: Researcher’s Findings (2021)

Majority (69.33%) of participants noted that the dominant economic activity in West Pokot County is livestock keeping or pastoralism, 28% said crop farming while 2.67% mining as presented in Figure 4.6. According to Beth (2019), the Turkana and Pokot's key economic livelihood is pastoralism because they are primarily pastoralists who depend on cattle (subsistence and economic). As a result, an economic operation that entails increasing opportunities for the Pokot and Turkana to trade in cattle (and other agricultural commodities) aligns with their cultural traditions and way of life; thus, a cultural value sharing action is necessary.

3.2. 2 Alternative Economic Activity

The researcher sought to determine the alternative economic activities in west Pokot County, the sampled residents’ responses were as shown below;

Table 4.2: Alternative economic activity

	Frequency	Percent
Crop Farming	139	30.9%
<i>Boda boda</i> Business	71	15.8%
Livestock keeping and selling	118	26.2%
Migration Farming	53	11.8%
Women Silk	69	15.3%
Total	450	100.0%

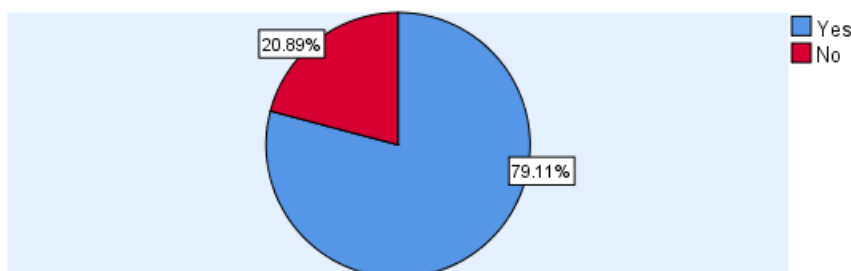
Source: Researcher’s Findings (2021)

From the above table, 30.9% of participants noted that crop farming is the alternative economic activity in West Pokot, 26.2% indicated Livestock keeping and selling, 15.8% *Boda boda* Business, 15.3% Women Silk and 11.8% Migration Farming. West Pokot County is one of the marginalized places in which the state has failed to provide protection. This weakness has led to widespread instability, as shown by livestock rustling, thievery, and economic lack of development Mbugua (2016). Farming, pastoralism, logging, wholesale and retail trade, and service companies are the primary economic interests of the majority of SMEs owners. West Pokot County has low levels of export growth and production.

3.2.3 Importance of Alternative Economic Activities in ending inter-ethnic conflicts

The participants were asked if they believed the empowerment have an impact in inter-ethnic conflict, the findings were as shown below;

Figure 4.2: Importance of Alternative Economic Activities in managing inter-ethnic conflicts



Source: Researcher’s Findings (2021)

Majority (79.11%) of participants believe that alternative sources of income have helped in eradicating conflicts in West Pokot while 20.89% stated No as indicated in Figure 4.7. Some participants noted that conflicts in region is caused by idleness, and engaging youths in agricultural activities will make them engaged and busy. On the other hand, those who said No stated that not everyone is supplied with the planting seeds or has interest in engaging in crop farming. The government awareness on the importance of crop farming has not reached all the residents, hence they become unable to engage in other source of income.

3.2.4 Level of Agreement on the Role of Alternative Economic Activities in ending inter-ethnic conflicts

The study aimed at assessing the respondent’s level of agreement on the role of alternative Economic Activities in ending inter-ethnic conflicts, 1 represented strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. The findings were as presented in the Table below;

Table 4.3: Level of agreement

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Strongly disagreed	37	8.2%
Disagree	69	15.3%
Undecided	54	12.0%
Agree	178	39.6%
Strongly agree	112	24.9%
Total	450	100.0%

Source: Researcher’s Findings (2021)

Table 4.8 demonstrated that majority (39.6%) of respondents agreed that alternative economic activities in ending inter-ethnic conflicts in the county, 24.9% strongly agreed, 15.3% disagreed while 8.2% strongly disagreed. The findings imply that most respondents agreed that Alternative Economic Activities introduced in the county, have played an essential role in managing inter-ethnic conflicts. Most of these activities have helped in keeping youths busy or engaged in important activities and avoiding ethnic political rallies.

3.2.5 General Significance of Alternative Economic Activities

The respondents were asked to rate general significance of Alternative Economic Activities on the scale of 1 to 5; 1 standing for very insignificant while 5 for very significant. The findings were as presented below;

Table 4.4: General Significance Level of Alternative Economic Activities

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Very insignificant	39	8.7%
Insignificant	56	12.4%
Neither significant nor insignificant	50	11.1%
Significant	249	55.3%
Very significant	56	12.4%
Total	450	100.0%

Source: Researcher’s Findings (2021)

The findings from the table 4.9 shows that majority (55.3%) stated that alternative economic activities is significant, 12.4% very significant and 12.4% insignificant while 11.1% said that the benefits were neither nor insignificant. The findings indicate that that most residents believe that alternative economic activities are significant, as these activities have helped in empowering the youths and other marginalized individuals in the

community. Nyang'au (2019), noted that alternative economic activities such as farming is essential in ending conflicts in most affected areas particularly among pastoral communities. Most youths have engaged in *Boda boda* business, which has in turn played a critical role in ending unnecessary conflicts by default. These conflict management initiatives are practically possible with citations from areas that have worked Pkalya, Adan and Masinde (2003). Provision of alternative source of livelihoods particularly away from the traditional pastoralism is one of them and which forms the basis of this research.

This question received a strong response from one of the Key Informants. It was apparent that alternative economic livelihoods indeed empower the people economically where, scarcity is reduced and the people do not have to compete for one source of livelihood; nomadic pastoralism. As such, it was clear that alternative economic livelihoods do manage occurrence of conflicts. This outcome is in line with arguments of Adan & Pkalya, (2006).

Economic empowerment is conceptualized to enable poor people to take care of their immediate everyday survival needs and to have more say of their wealth and life choices. For example, it empowers households to make their own choices about investing in health and education, as well as taking chances to improve their profits. There is also some indication that capacity building will increase the involvement of disadvantaged people in decision-making. This is in line with the sentiments of Adan and Masinde (2003) where they posit that alternative livelihoods presents pure opportunity for economic empowerment to the target group.

Crop farming, women financial empowerment and the *Boda boda* business, as conflict management tools, are thought to provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and accessible structures to maintain ethnic unity and stability. A qualitative analysis in Nigeria and South Africa focuses on defining ethno-political issue areas and evaluating the similarities and gaps in approaches to dispute resolution and success in ensuring ethnic coexistence. Over the last few decades, there has been a substantial rise in knowledge of the pervasiveness of ethnic tensions and cultural disparity. However, there has been an unwillingness to predict, properly clarify, and settle ethnic tensions. This deficiency is due to the preconceptions structures and philosophies that have been used to understand the ethnic phenomena.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents conclusions and recommendations of the study. It also presents the summary of findings. The objective of this study was to establish the impact of alternative economic livelihoods in managing inter-ethnic conflicts in West Pokot County, Kenya (2013-2020). The summary of the findings is captured in this subsection.

4.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that a range of action programs have been implemented by stakeholders such as the national government and county governments in West Pokot in order to mitigate the negative impact of inter-ethnic tensions in the county. Livestock holding and sale, *Boda Boda* Industry support, Women table banking initiatives, and Migration Farming are among the initiatives. All of these steps, though, are insufficient for resolving these disputes as long-term strategies in managing conflicts in West Pokot County and other similar counties of the Republic of Kenya. Expansion of these programs and supporting them to cover all the conflict prone areas.

4.2 Recommendations

The National Government should partner more with West Pokot County Government and other peace institution and organization to enhance alternative economic initiatives in support of residents of West Pokot County. This will help to empower the residents economically therefore creating economic comfort and reduce economic fragilities associated with nomadic pastoralism as their main source of livelihoods. Some of the main economic initiatives recommended by the study for collaborations and enhancement between the two levels of government and which had already been introduced in West Pokot County include: Improved agribusiness farming particularly through irrigation; Youth enterprises empowerment particularly *Boda boda* industry and other economic activities that are pro-youth; Women related economic activities such as table banking among other alternative economic initiatives. These broad areas according to the study has a huge potential to eliminate inter-ethnic conflicts in West Pokot county and other inter-ethnic conflict prone Counties within the Republic of Kenya.

Empowering women groups is a single most master stroke in managing community socio-economic pillar. Women are known peacemakers in the society whose empowerment opportunity permeates through the societal hierarchy therefore improving economic prosperity. Women empowerment through table banking financial initiatives, posts better prospects in their economic standing and has proved to be an effective financial initiative for women.

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