Socio-Economic Effects of Land Displacement on Talai Households Living in Kericho Township Location, Kenya

Kathryn Chepkemoi Langat*, Prof. Pontian Godfrey Okoth**, Prof. Crispinus Iteyo ***

* Ph.D Student, Department of Peace and Conflict studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya
** Ph.D, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies
*** Ph.D, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya

DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.8.10.2018.p8222
http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.8.10.2018.p8222

Abstract- Land displacement is a contentious issue affecting many countries in the world. In Africa it has caused numerous land conflicts dating back to colonization by the Europeans where public land was declared crown by the Her Majesty the Queen of England. It was during this period, when Land Tenure was introduced in Kenya, which led to socioeconomic challenges, land conflicts, disposessions, displacement and emergence of squatters. Many communities like the Kikuyus, Maasais and Coastal people in Kenya lost their ancestral land to white settlers. However, this research study focused on Talai clan living in Kericho County because it has suffered one of the longest historical land injustices in Kenya. Therefore, the general objective of the study was to examine socioeconomic effects of land displacement on Talai households living in Majengo-showground in Kericho township location. The study adopted a conceptual framework guided by relative deprivation theory. Literature was reviewed using primary and secondary data from global, regional, and Kenya context. The study employed descriptive research design. The target population was 5000 Talai households and simple random sampling was used to sample 300 respondents using 6% of the target population. The key informants comprised Land officials, County Commissioner, Chief and village elders were selected purposively. Research tools were questionnaires, interview schedules, observation and focus group discussion. The study established that the socioeconomic effects of land displacement on the Talai clan had affected their source of income, number of households, making them vulnerable to land conflicts, environmental waste disposal and cultural erosion. This study established that their source of income was below average earning per day. The study concluded that there was need to address socio economic challenges by resettling the Talai clan permanently. The findings would be useful for policy formulation and adding knowledge to existing gap of victims suffering from historical land injustices and socio economic challenges they face.

Index Terms- Clan, Displacement, Historical land injustices, Resettlement, Squatters.
government declared vast tracks of land in the colony, including land occupied by indigenous Africans, to be crown land. Crown land was the property of her Majesty, the queen of England (Huggins, 2012). It also created “native” reserves in which indigenous Africans were forced to live on. This left the best arable land to be cultivated by white settlers. As European settlers continued to expropriate more and more land during the 2nd half of the nineteenth century, colonialists rapidly displaced the vast majority of Kenyans from their lands. It was this injustice that fueled the Mau Mau struggle in Central Kenya for independence (Anderson, 2011). Unfortunately, the post-colonial government failed to address the land issue and millions of Kenyan who had been kept in the reserves after the lost land to settlers, remained squatters in their own lands. The vicious struggle for land during the colonial period was due to displacements of Africans from their land. Land tenure led to global displacements of various indigenous communities in the world as witnessed (Harvey, 2006). The only difference is that the displacements in Africa in the period before independence involved the use of brutal force on the Africans by the colonialists thus there was hardly any market-oriented forces. It involved the use of dictatorial and draconian laws, which ensured that the best quality land went to the colonial settlers (Zwan, 2011). Massive population displacement and resettlement increases vulnerability to illness and causes serious declines in health levels due to the change in the environment and the unavailability of appropriate health services. Vulnerability to illness also resulted from an unsafe and insufficient water supply and poor sewerage systems that spread epidemic infections such as diarrhea, dysentery and waterborne diseases. Displacements caused social stress and psychological trauma which sometimes was accompanied by the outbreak of Malaria. De wet (2009), argues that emotional attachment that people can feel about their villages and land that their families have lived on for generations cannot be replicated in the resettlement areas because of the social disruptions involved in relocation. Land displacement often involves a change in the pattern of people accesses to resources as well as a change in livelihood strategies.

Kenya attained independence in 1963, and all public land became a commodity used by the different regimes to buy political patronage (Hughes, 2006). Unfortunately, the post-colonial government failed to address the land issue and millions of Kenyan who had been kept in the reserves after they lost land to settlers, remained squatters in their own lands. The struggle for reforms on land has been exacerbated by injustices and maladministration on land matters like conflicting land laws, outdated land laws being practiced, cumbersome process of planning, surveying, adjudication, settlement and land registration among others. Also manual land records accumulated over years, many land disputes and poor service delivery in government institutions (Syagga, 2006). This led to many historical land injustices meted on many communities in Kenya. Historical land injustices refer to wrongs that were committed against people and included forceful evictions from their rightful lands. It is coupled with the acquisition of land after independence and, more particularly, the rights of communities that were displaced by colonialists (Kameri, 2009). A few civil society institutions have been at the forefront in agitating for a relook at the issue as it threatens to disrupt peace and harmony in the country. It has been a cause of many deaths and social tensions as portrayed in post election violence in 2008 which led to many communities being internally displaced from their land. Therefore it was in view of this background that this study sought to examine the socioeconomic effect of land displacement on the Talai community living in township location in Kericho County.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

When Kenya gained independence in 1963, there were hopes that those dispossessed would be resettled on their land or compensated with allocation of land elsewhere. To address the land question, Kenya voted for a change of the constitution in the promulgation of 2010 constitution to address land issues. However, the issue of resettling the squatters in Kenya has not been addressed to the fullest. According to The Truth Justice Reconciliation Commission of (2014) the Talai clan has been classified as minority group which have suffered the longest historical land injustices since the colonial period in East Africa. Talai clan is a minority group among the larger Kalenjin community in Kenya. They are known as orkoik or Laibons by another name. However, the colonial government referred to them as laibons (Orchardson, 1961). The clan was displaced after Nandi resistance that lasted for over 10 years when their chief, Koitalel Samoei was killed in 1905 by British captain Meinertzhagen for resisting the British colonial government. As a result, the family members of Koitalel Arap Samoei were displaced to Baringo, Narok and Kericho according to (Ngasura, 1995). This is how the Talai clan members found themselves in Kericho. Their stay in Kericho was cut short in 1934 when 700 Talai clan members from Nandi, were rounded up and deported to Gwassi Island in Homabay South Nyanza for refusing to hand over their land to British investors to plant tea bushes. The Talai clan remained in Gwassi until 1962 when the departing British colonial government returned them to their old district of Kericho and allowed them to settle down on the outskirts of Kericho town on government land pending possible resettlement by the new government of Jomo Kenyatta. Since then, the Talai clan members are still squatting waiting for the government to resettle them. It was in view of this background that this study sought to assess the socioeconomic effects of land displacement on the Talai households leaving in Kericho Township location in Kericho County.

1.1 Overall Objective

To analyze socio-economic effects of land displacement on Talai households living in Kericho Township Location in Kericho County, Kenya

1.2 Scope of the Study

The study focused on Talai clan living in Majengo, Showground, Township, and prison farm, in Kericho Township and part of kapkugerwet location. The study was limited to socioeconomic effects of land displacement only on resettlement of Talai clan with a possible aim of attaining permanent resettlement. Data collection was done between December 1st, 2017 and January 30th, 2018.
1.4 Justification

In scholarly terms, there is little information pertaining to the displacement and resettlement of the Talai clan living in Kericho since colonial period. The Talai clan is one of the communities in Kenya that have experienced the longest historical land injustices. Most studies that have been done on land displacement has focused on the causes of inter -intra ethnic land conflicts missing out on historical land injustices. Apart from contributing to existing knowledge in land conflicts, this research was deemed to be significant in the formulation of government policies on land conflicts that leads to permanent resettlement of squatters in different parts of the country. It would also reduce land conflicts caused by the landless in Kenya through formulation of land conflict resolutions.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Land conflicts arise from a variety of socio-economic, cultural, environmental, demographic and political processes. Discrimination and marginalization occur when households lose economic power and fall into lower socioeconomic category than that which they occupied in their home areas. According to Cernea (2000), such socioeconomic marginalization eventually results in low self-esteem. It has been a major reason why communities clash especially on the basis of inequitable sharing of resources. Discrimination and marginalization based on ethnic grounds are particularly detrimental for displaced persons as seen in the case of the Balkans. In Croatia, some displaced persons Serb returnees in particular report facing ethnic discrimination, which they feel constraints most of them from finding a stable employment situation and thus limits livelihoods opportunities (Toal & Carl, 2011).

In Russia, discrimination against ethnic Chechens in particular and people from the Caucasus, in general, is long-standing. Ethnic Chechens have met discrimination with respect to access to employment and to housing opportunities in the private sector, thus reducing their livelihood opportunities. Reportedly, instances in which Chechens have been denied a job based on ethnic grounds are common. According to a recent study, displaced Chechens living in other parts of the Russian Federation mainly find an employment in the informal sector, which prevents them from enjoying equal rights, access to benefits and a sustainable source of income (IDMC, 2008). According to De wet (2009), the challenge surrounding resettlement includes physically displaced people which he argues that emotional attachment that people can feel. He argues that emotional attachment that people can feel. If people perceive that there is a gap between what they are currently getting and what they deserve to get, it creates discontentment or a conflict. There is a general feeling that the society owes them what they have been deprived. This theory was used by Atuahene, (2009) and Appendini, (2001) to explain that, if the gap is too big for a reasonable group of people within a specific population, there is a likelihood that the people will rebel especially if they have been marginalized and then acquire resources especially land. According to Li, (2009) relative deprivation theory is assumed gaps between individuals’ value expectations and how they anticipate the value of their capabilities. The origin of the relative deprivation theory stresses the degree of the economic inequality in a community where the squatters feel they have been deprived land that belongs to them by the government or the land grabbers (Levien, 2013). In the case of Talai clan, they allude that they have been deprived land since colonial period and unfair displacement from their ancestral land. The variable economic inequality may not necessarily comprise the poor on one side and the rich on the other. It includes those who are rich on one side and those who are extremely rich on the other. Chakravorty, (2013) emphasizes that, the element of poverty and the degree of poverty is not directly linked to an occurrence of violence in communities. A conceptional framework guided by relative theory that has been analyzed whereby the independent variable which is socioeconomic effect. The dependent variable in this study is resettlement of the Talai households. However, the independent variable cannot be achieved because there intervening variables which affect permanent resettlement of the Talai clan such as corruption, various land polices and land grabbing among others. However, this paper would not dwell on intervening variables.
IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive research design was appropriate for it was a fact finding. According to Rea & Parker, (2012), descriptive research has the capacity to describe the present status of a phenomenon, determining the nature of prevailing circumstances, practices and institutions and seeking an accurate description of activities.

3.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in Kericho County in Majengo in Kericho Township location. The County covers an area of 3,224.9km. The study population as per KNBS (2009) was 5,525. The study focused on Talai clan found in Kericho County.

3.2 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Different research instruments were used for the complementary purpose. This ensured a triangulation approach to data collection. Primary data were collected through the use of semi-structured, self-administered standard questionnaires which were used to elicit both qualitative and quantitative data. An interview guide was used during the unstructured in-depth interviews between the researcher and key informants.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Fraenkel & Wallen, (2006) point out that the term “ethics” in research refers to questions of what is right and wrong in relation to conducting a particular study or carrying out certain procedures so that the researcher is clear on whether there is some kind of studies that should not be conducted. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2005), most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty with professional colleagues. The researcher safeguarded against these ethical issues by putting a number of relevant measures in place.

V. FINDINGS

4.1 Household Size of Talai clan

In order to determine how many Talai members exist in every household, the respondents were asked to indicate in the questionnaires how many family members lived in one house. Results are summarized in Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Talai Households</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher, 2018

Table 4.1 indicated that 45 (15%) had between 0-3 people while 154 (51%) had between 4-6 occupants. Another 75 (25%) had between 7-10 members while a paltry of 26 (9%) had more than 10 occupants. These results indicate that there were high numbers of people in Talai households. The results are in tandem with KISIP programme impact assessment report which puts an average household size at 4-6 persons per house in Talai settlement area. The many members in a household can also be attributed to cultural practices where relatives are accorded hospitality in form of extended family. A family that comprised of many individuals is vulnerable to displacement and suffered a higher level during resettlement than that of fewer individuals. Findings by Kasanga & Kwapong, (2011) concur with this, that the higher the households size, the lower the social status and the higher the number of people affected by displacement or resettlement. On the contrary, this may not be necessarily the case as the study established that households with many more members would easily cope with the provision of labour and manpower as casual labourers in multi-national tea plantations and construction sites. This study found out those with many members benefited conspicuously when the squatter settlement area was subdivided into plots. The many the family members, the many the plots allocated to the Talai households.

The FGDs revealed that many households stayed with relatives and many of these children are orphaned and vulnerable...
to any displacement. Having a large family could also imply that family planning had not been fully embraced in this informal settlement. It can be concluded that Talai household size can affect permanent resettlement of the Talai clan. It implies that the government has to look for a big piece of land to resettle the growing Talai population once and for all.

4.2 Source of Income

A strong relationship has been observed to exist between the educational attainments of the participants and the kind of employment and occupations they were engaged in. Occupational characteristics served as the basis for assessment of income and earnings of the participants. The prospect of acquiring employment in the formal sector in Kericho town or outside is becoming increasingly remote for this group, especially for those with low levels of education. The Talai households were asked to indicate their main source of income so as to determine how being displaced has imparted on their socioeconomic life for the last over 50 years. The findings are recorded in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Talai Source of Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodaboda</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea plucker</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual jobs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher, 2018

Table 4.2 indicated that 72(24%) said they practiced farming in small scale, while 82(27%) said they earned income through driving motorcycles better referred to as Bodaboda, 44(15%) said they were tea puckers’ in the neighborhood of Talai settlement area. Another 12(4%) were employed either by private companies in town or government civil servants, 34(11%) claimed they earned their income through manual jobs in town such as loading cement, timber among others. Another 35(12%) said they were domestic workers while 21(7%) were running their small business like kiosks and canteen. Despite, the generally low profits, the participants intimated that their trading activities allowed them to meet the everyday expenditures of the household and to fulfill their responsibilities as breadwinners of the family. This study found out that the motorcycle better known as bodaboda was a booming business among the youths. This study found out that the main source of income which the respondents were shy to comment on during focus group discussion was brewing and selling the local illicit brew known as “busaa”. According to focus group discussion, the main source of income in Talai squatter settlement was sale of illicit brew which was carried out in secrecy because it is illegal according to Penal Code. The finding of this study is similar to that of Oyo, (2014) who found out that squatters living in Zimbabwe earned their living through brewing the local brew. Similarly Doshi (2010) found out that people informal areas consume too much alcohol compare to those leaving in rural base. It can be concluded that the source of income among the Talai was below poverty line and that gave the reason why they engaged in illegal brewing as a source of income.

4.3 Type of Housing and Vulnerability to Diseases

Baarta (2007) asserts that housing condition reflects the socio-economic condition of people. He also emphasizes that the housing quality is an indicator of poverty vulnerability. Respondents were asked to indicate the type of housing they lived in the results are recorded and summarized in Figure 4.1

Figure 4.1 Type of Talai Housing

Source: Researcher, 2018

Results in Figure 4.1 indicates that 112(38%) of the Talai family were living in corrugated iron sheets (mabati) houses, while 88(29%) lived in permanent houses. Another 90(30%) lived in mud houses while 10(3%) lived in makeshifts. This finding implies that the housing condition of the population of the Talai clan is not up to standard. The types of dwellings are good indicators of the socio-economic status of the respondents indicating that majority were resource poor. Kasanga & Kwapong, (2009) alludes to the fact that households leaving in mud houses or makeshifts are vulnerable to diseases, displacement and eviction in the event of a land conflict while
those with permanent housing are more resilient to any eviction. This study established that majority of the housing occupied by Talai clan were either living in mabati house or mud house or makeshifts.

4.4 Psychosocial Effect on Cultural Values

Talai community, the displaced households by the colonial government in 1934 had developed a set of feelings and networks about among the Kipsigis as a geographic and cultural location that emotionally bounded them as one community. Displacement interrupted the feelings of security, belonging and esteem associated with Nandi Kipsigis as their ancestral home. While Doshi (2012), observed that the aim of resettlement is to minimize the disturbance of community’s routine culture, evidence from this study has shown that forced removal always shattered community cultural practices and assets in a study he carried out in the informal sector in Mumbai-India. For example, the cultural relationship between Talai Kipsigis was bounded on mutual help mechanisms under the trusteeship of (Orkoiyot) system. Their exited cultural mobilization of labour through various forms of “morik” (work parties) fastened the families together in their former origin in Nandi County according to (Toweett, 2009). This was partly because social connections and mutual help largely depended on mutual trust developed over staying together as a community for a long time.

This study found out that the Talai suffered from trauma which this study observed emotions during interviews and FGDs through emotional comments and expression by shedding tears. This study found out that their culture has been violated in cases where sons and daughters, including wives in a polygamous family, were forced to share bedrooms in their current squatter settlement because the sizes of their house comprised of one or two bedrooms. According to Denninger, (2012), in his book “Attachment to Place and the Representation of the Life Course by the Elderly” he alludes that the displaced are normally attached to their original home to an extent of willing to die than be taken to a new area. Globally, according to Koen (2012) in a study, he carried out in Eastern Congo on displaced families. Koen found out that Psychosocial cultural disruption of involuntary displacement always inflicts psychological mental torture on the displaced. Even more damaging is the case of forced displacement dispossession and resettlement according to (Oliver, 2009). It can be concluded that Talai has suffered cultural erosion since displacement and squating is not part of the Kalenjin culture (Toweett, 1979).

4.5 Access to Credit for Development

Credit is borrowed funds with special repayment terms regarding interest rates, installment sizes, and repayment frequency. Individual credits may be provided to individuals on their ability to provide evidence of their capacity to repay such strong cash flows or collateral. This study sought to establish if Talai households had the economic power to access loans for development. The results are recorded in Figure. 4.2

The results in Figure. 4.2 revealed that 72(24%) of the respondent were able to access credit from banks, SACCOs and other government funding, 143(48%) said no while 85(28%) said they access to credit through their own personal arrangements such as “chamas”. The respondents claimed that it was difficult for them to access bank credit because the plots the government allocated did not have titles. Even those with titles they have a challenge of getting loan guarantors. When asked whether they benefited from government funding such as Youth Fund and Uwezo fund, the youth in focus group discussion said they were discriminated when it comes to funding. In corroborating the findings, focus group discussion, had this to say

“We have formed our own association of the Talai community where we loan ourselves up to hundred thousand Kenya shillings. We noticed we were discriminated in government funding like Uwezo and Youth Fund. No bank can give us loan for development because we do not have land security title deeds to our plots (FGD held on 17th January, 2018 at study site)

VI. SUMMARY

It was also established that socioeconomic effect of land displacement on Talai households was immense. The plot sizes allocated to the Talai clan are too small for a household of more than six children who are married with families. This study found out that 85% of the Talai households were affected by socioeconomic challenges making them vulnerable to diseases, discrimination, among others. This study established that Psychosocial trauma had affected the Talai clan since they were unable to practise their cultural factors such as burial rites, intermarriages, and initiation rites for men due to socio economic challenges. This study established they did not have where to bury their people, or where they carry out initiation rites of their young boys due to the urbanization and upgrading projects aimed at improving the informal settlement area. The effect of trauma could be expressed by shedding of tears during focus group discussion. This study established that the plot sizes allocated by the government did not have security titles exposing Talai clan to become vulnerable to plot buyers who pay fewer amounts and resell it for higher prices. Because of their level of education, accessing to employment in Kericho town requiring technocrats posed a challenge since this is a community. The size of
households was more than 5-6 members, meaning that there was a high population of families living together in small plots.

VII. CONCLUSION

The socioeconomic effects of land displacement on Talai households in squatter settlement have made the Talai become vulnerable to socioeconomic challenges ranging from source of income, titles security, and rise in the land rates, and psychosocial trauma. The current settlement has been subdivided to small plots with no tenure security. Plots sold by some Talai have led to infiltration of non Talai clan due to plots which are up for sale. Source of income is a challenge as a result they are forced to seek casual jobs in Kericho town such as loading works in constructions building and plucking tea to fend for their families while, others have turned into brewing illicit brew as a source of income.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Socio-economic effects of land displacement on the Talai households in squatter settlement, based on this there is a need for improvements in the socio-economic conditions which have multiple consequences on the livelihoods, well-being and housing conditions which were in a dilapidated state. The implications were manifested in the social and economic conditions of the affected people by their source of income, number of the households, and access to credit, waste disposal and house structures. There is need to improve housing in Talai squatter settlement area through giving them loans to construct better housing. This will empower them when they earn income from rental houses. The government should fast track and waive charges for title processing for this community since they cannot afford the fee. If they are issued with titles they are able to access financial assistance from the bank which many do not have the capacity and possession. The landless people are the poor and there is a need for the establishment of the subsidized loan-scheme to advance credit to enable them to purchase land elsewhere. The government should provide counseling services to this community because they have suffered the longest historical injustices. Counseling would promote cohesion and acceptance to move to alternative resettlement.

REFERENCES


AUTHORS

First Author – Kathryn Chepkemoi Langat (Ph.D Student), Email: kathylangat@gmail.com tel: +254722705481, Department of Peace and Conflict studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya

Second Author – Prof. Pontian Godfrey Okoth (Ph.D) Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies

Third Author – Prof. Crispinuos Iteyo (Ph.D) Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya