

Ethnic Conflicts Influencing Socio-Economic Development of Border Communities, a case of Abagusii and Kipsigis, Kenya

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Abstract- “Ethnic conflicts are a global menace, with the highest frequency in newly democratic African countries. They are marked with deficiency in communication, or lack of peaceful coexistence that hampers interaction between members of different ethnic groups. They have also caused havoc as loss of human life, poor inter-ethnic relations, forced human displacements, destruction of property, cattle rustling, slowed economic growth and increased cases of sexual and gender-based violence. The recurrence of ethnic conflicts along the border in the study location has been a common phenomenon, it was therefore, imperative that this study sought to assess the ethnic conflicts influencing socio-economic development of border communities between the Kipsigis and Abagusii of Bomet Central Sub-County and Borabu Sub-County respectively. The objective of the study was to: analyze multiparty democracy development influence on ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii and Kipsigis along the border. The study was informed by the Theory of Ethnic Conflict and Identity theory. The researchers used correlation research design adopting both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The study was carried in Borabu and Bomet Central Sub-Counties with a target population of 243,610 individuals from the two Sub-Counties. A sample population of 384 respondents determined by Mugenda and Mugenda formula was used in the study involving; youth leaders, church leaders, community elders, national government administrators and non-governmental organization directors. Data collection instruments included questionnaires, interview guides, observation and document review. The qualitative data collected from the field was coded and edited in conformity with research objective of the study while quantitative data was analyzed thematically. The analyzed data was presented using descriptive statistics in form of figures and tables. The study adhered to ethical standards including anonymity of respondents and voluntary participation. The finding on the objective of the study was that multiparty democracy influenced ethnic conflicts among border communities through ethnic and regional choice, multiparty elections and multiparty disagreements. The study concluded that, besides communities perceiving resource sharing being underlining causes of conflicts, multiparty democracy in Kenya has a place too in influencing ethnic conflicts especially among border communities. The study recommends that sensitization of communities on multiparty democracy and good governance through elected leaders.

Index Terms- Conflict, Cross-border, Ethnicity, Democracy, Socio-economic development

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

In world history, ethnic clashes have been deemed as a part of transnational politics. In contemporary societies, war has turned out as the most well-known type of furnished clashes. The United States of America saw some of the most violent confrontations between the white settlers and indigenous Indians and later the Spanish. The Indian population was considered as subordinate, as belonging to the second type of society (Barber, 1998). Immigrants to America have a degree of ethnic identity as Jamaican, Haitian as well as black. The immigrants faced some of the most chilling aspects of ethnic oppression, as they are immediately assigned to membership of a group identified with minority historical oppression.

Inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa have continued to cause havoc; fueling violence in among other countries such as: Chad, Rwanda, Congo, Nigeria, Central African Republic (CAR), Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan. Most of these conflicts were made more violent by the design in which European colonialists carved Africa, drawing borders according to Europe’s national conflicts and interests, in total disregard of historic territories of African ethnic groupings; therefore forcing traditionally hostile ethnic groups under one flag (Lamphear, 1994).

Ethnic conflicts and violence in Kenya have been characterized by such historic events as the repeal of Article 4(2) of the Kenyan constitution; which cleared path for a multi-party popularity based state established on national qualities and standards of administration. Different ethnic communities aligned themselves to parties led by political leaders of either their ethnic group or region. Such an arrangement led to ethnic antagonism and hatred that was evidenced in the country in the 1992 general elections. Ethnic clashes between the Kipsigis and the Abagusii communities along the borderline were evidenced during this time (Rugege, 1995).

The Kipsigis community belongs to a Nilotic ethnic group with their origin from the Nilo-Saharan language family. The Kipsigis originated from southern Sudan. During pre-colonial era, the Kipsigis community was identified through their “warrior element”, meaning combatants. The common economic activities among the Kipsigis were herding and agriculture (occasionally cash crops like wheat, pyrethrum, tea and coffee). Living on the fertile highlands in Western parts of Kenya, the Kipsigis at present also grow maize among other food crops (Saltman, 1977). On the other side, the Abagusii originated from the Congo basin. They entered Kenya from Uganda through Mount Elgon to Goye Bay near Lake Victoria, and then moved into Kano plains and Kabianga, where they experienced a lot of calamities and therefore went back to their present settlement in Kisii and Nyamira Counties which borders the Kipsigis to the West. The Abagusii are well known in agricultural activities like bananas, maize, pineapples and sugarcane farming (Bosire, 2013).

To the Center for Multi-Party Democracy {CMD} (2015:113) “Kenya experiences frequent ethnic conflicts though 75% of those conflicts are deemed to be minor skirmishes”. Severity of these conflicts between the Kipsigis and Abagusii are witnessed during general election encounters; in 1992 general elections, during the 2007/2008 post-election election crisis and the 2013 general elections. Such encounters have led to mass emigrations of ethnic minority communities to other geographic parts.

The Coalition for Peace in Africa {COPA} (2011) argues that “common factors that have been distinguished as principle wellspring of episodes of shared viciousness incorporate; provincial approaches, political actuation, inaccessibility of land, water and field assets, loss of customary eating land, cows stirring in Kenya, absence of elective wellsprings of job, fears of psychological warfare, badgering , robbery and coercion”. It is evident that common fueling factors behind many ethnic conflicts are resource-based and political influence, where neighboring communities face hostility and disagreements in sharing already meager resources amicably.

The Kipsigis and Abagusii as neighboring ethnic groups have been locked in conflicts sporadically exploding to violence time and again. This occurs mainly within the community borders along the Borabu and Bomet Central Sub Counties. The Bomet Central/Borabu boarder serves as the boundary and administrative boarder between the Bomet and Nyamira counties, as well as the demarcation between the lands of the kipsigis, a Kalenjin sub-ethnic living on the Bomet County, and the Abagusii, a Bantu sub-ethnic, most commonly known as Abagusii of Nyamira County. The study will seek to assess the influence of such ethnic conflict on the socio-economic development between the border communities.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The Kipsigis and Abagusii ethnic communities of Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties borderline have experienced a lot of continuous conflict, insecurity, frequent cattle rustling and periodical cycle of political election conflicts which has caused social disorders at the border region. Although much has been written on inter-ethnic conflicts in the world and Kenya specifically, scanty information related to ethnic conflicts between the Kipsigis and Abagusii of the Bomet Central and Borabu border exist. Scholars like Rutto (2014) and Mwangi and Njuguna (2005) have written much on the history of the Abagusii and Kipsigis respectively, but, they have not cited much on the ethnic conflicts between the two communities. A few of the studies carried out along the border share the idea that, the conflicts between the Kipsigis and Abagusii have much to do with politics of the region. Other studies like the Kiliku Report (1992) points to economic resources especially land. Omwenga (2016)., Chepkemoi *et al* (2017) studied the influence inter-ethnic conflicts along Borabu-Sotik and Chebilat-Borabu borders respectively. This study however, was carried out along the border of Borabu-Bomet Central Sub-Counties, to assess the influence of ethnic conflicts on socio economic development of the border communities.

1.3. Research Objective

The objective was to: Analyze multiparty democracy development influence on ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii and Kipsigis along the border. The objective was supplemented by the following research question: What is the influence of multiparty democracy development on ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii and Kipsigis along the border?

1.4. Justification of the Study

Several scholars have written extensively on ethnicity and intra and inter-ethnic relations. Some of them are: Kakai (2000) on inter and intra-ethnic conflicts., Waller (1985, 1993) on ethnicity and identity in East Africa., Matson (1983) on water resources and conflicts in the Middle-East, Mwanzi (1977) on the history of Kipsigis., Ogot (1976) on ethnicity, nationalism and democracy, Ochieng’ (1974) on pre-colonial history of the Abagusii of Kenya., Muriuki (1974) on ethnicity in Africa, Kipkorir (1973) on agricultural changes in the Kipsigis land., Were (1967) on towards genocide in Kenya and Osogo (1966) on ethnicity and its management in Africa. Different reasons have been give to explain the causes of inter-ethnic conflicts in Kenya. Ethnic conflicts in Kenya are caused by boundary or land disputes, political issues, leadership disputes, problems over livestock and poor communication. Despite all the efforts, ethnic conflicts along the border between the Abagusii and Kipsigis continue affecting the wellbeing of the people.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study was restricted to the period between 1992 and 2017; this is after the re-introduction of the multiparty democracy in 1992 which fueled hostility among border communities especially between the Kipsigis and Abagusii and the recurrence of ethnic conflicts. The study was further restricted to the Borabu-Bomet Central Sub-County cross-border conflicts between the Kipsigis and Abagusii communities. This is because the two communities have been living in tension with and suspicion of one another since the re-introduction of multi-partyism in Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Concept of Ethnic Conflict

Ethnic conflicts do have a political and armed conflict touch; for example there were confrontations between the white settlers, the Spanish and the indigenous red Indians, over which community was supposedly subordinate to the other (Barber, 1998). Smith (2000) observes that real definition of ethnic conflicts is still surrounded with controversies. Ethnic conflicts have their roots based on resource sharing, political and class affiliations. Moreover, some of these conflicts do not explode into violence thus; ethnic conflicts exist as violent and non-violent conflicts, with the latter being inevitable. Violent conflicts can be avoided if right strategies are adopted and applied.

Kipkemoi (2015) in her thesis cites land resource as a core factor in persuading most ethnic conflicts in Kenya. Land is a core factor of production in Kenya and thus groups as well as individuals struggle over it for ownership and production thus, land-based conflicts exist almost everywhere in the country. Since the year 1991, Resource sharing in Kenya after independence has become the key issue in fueling inter-ethnic conflicts whereby, some communities feel they were oppressed and marginalized in resource sharing as compared to other communities. Such cases have existed more specifically along border communities of the Abagusii and Kipsigis.

2.2. Multiparty Democracy and Ethnic Conflicts

On global viewpoint on democracy and conflicts, they argue that during the Cold War period, waves of advocacies and debates around liberal democracy, democratic transitions and violence were ushered in in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. There were also renaissances of intra-state wars and conflicts in various parts of the world which illogically “coincided with the process of transitions to democracy” (Lake and Rothchild, 1998:67). However, this is more of dark democracy which is the dark side of improperly managed democratic transitions.

On African perspective, Walle (2009) argues that the political and liberal movements on the African continent resulted into unrestricted media, formation of democratic opposition political parties, trade unions and mass of civil organizations self-governing from the government. Stewart and O’Sullivan (1998) epitomized that the democratic transition However, divisive politics fuels ethnic conflicts especially along border communities like the Abagusii and Kipsigis. The study analyzed the influence of multiparty democracy on socio-economic development of border communities.

The wave of democratic political changes that started in the early 1990s appears to have led to the establishment of democracy in terms of multiparty politics. The emergence of political pluralism has engendered the polarization of particularistic groupings as political parties crystallize mostly on the basis of ethnic and regional interests rather than common ideology or political principles (Dreyton, 1995., Nsongola and Lee, 1997., Jonyo, 2002). This tendency does not guarantee unity and stability in a country. Moreover, state policies of non-accommodation and recalcitrance provide strong push factors for ethnic conflict (Osamba., 2001; Mwangi, 2002).

Nyukiri (1997) argues that, the re-introduction of multiparty politics in Kenya in 1992 had a number of far-reaching impacts, one of which was the eruption of ethnic clashes in the Rift Valley, Nyanza, Western and the Coast regions. Apollos (2010) argues that, since the emergence of multiparty politics in 1992, successive election years have been routinely characterized by sporadic political violence and ethnic conflicts. Elections have been seen not to be “free and fair” as a result of the need to manipulate and create political dominance in certain parts of the country. These works were of importance to this study as they helped the researchers in finding out the contribution of political pluralism in the conflicts between the Kipsigis and Abagusii border communities.

To Musau (2008), the reintroduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya lied upon pressure and coercion from domestic and international partners compelling the Kenya multiparty democracy, which was highly advocated by among other political parties; Forum for Restoration of Democracy (FORD), Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) and Union for Democratic People (UDP), was deemed to have fueled ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in Kenya. The situation is evident during the general elections and political party nominations.

Elischer (2008), argues that Kenya moved to ‘a democratic camp’ when ethnic violence significantly decreased in 2003 during a peaceful handover of leadership mantle to President Kibaki. Kenya received praises from the global community citing her as an iconic stability in Africa. Unfortunately, all the compliments and hopefulness were dampened with the weaklings of 2007/2008 post-election skirmishes. The violence is believed to be the most vicious and the most horrible ever experienced since Kenya gaining independence. Approximately 1,200 people lost their lives and at least 500,000 families forcefully displaced from their settlements.

Similarly, a report by the Center for Multiparty Democracy {CMD} (2015) alleges that minor clashes are common in Kenya, occurring frequently. However worst ethnic violence were witnessed after the reintroduction of multi-party politics in 1992. The worst ever ethnic division was felt during the 2007/2008 post-election violence. Major conflicts have also led to exoduses of ethnic minority communities with roots in other geographical areas. The study assessed the influence of multiparty democracy on ethnic conflicts among the border communities of the Abagusii and Kipsigis.

Mokua (2013) on multiparty political influence on the wellbeing of communities cites that though Abagusii and the Kipsigis, just like other communities in Kenya, along borders live with different dialects, traditions and cultures, and historical cattle-rustling disputes, many lived in harmony during ‘one-party system’. Harmonious coexistence suddenly “changed after the 1992 general elections in which violence broke up. This pattern was to be repeated again in subsequent general elections. It is clear that multiparty democracy of 1992 influenced negative ethnicity in Kenya with disagreements and tensions between border communities fueling ethnic conflicts. The study analyzed the multiparty political influence in fueling ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii of Borabu and Kipsigis of Bomet Central Sub-Counties.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

Kombo and Tromp (2006:98) define the “conceptual framework as a set of ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of inquiry and used to structure subsequent presentations”. A conceptual framework therefore, shows the Dependent Variable (DV) and the Independent Variable (IV) as shown diagrammatically in Figure 2.1.

The study was guided by the following conceptual framework. This study was anchored on the theory of ethnic conflict by Caselli and Coleman (2012) and identity theory by Eidelson *et al* (2003).

2.4. Theory of Ethnic Conflict

The theory highlights the role of ethnic distance in leading to ethnic conflict; it states that; “ethnic groups are more likely to crash the more pronounced the differences between the groups that mark the ethnic cleavage. Supposing ethnic communities are grouped with letter A and B. According to the theory, dominant group A is the dominant group, we are more likely to observe exploration of group B by group A if (i) the ethnic distance between A and B is large; (ii) the country’s endowment of appropriate resources is neither too small nor too large; (iii) group B has high per-capita income; (iv) group A has low per-capita income; (v) group A is small; and (vi) the efficiency costs of exploitation are modest.” This theory is relevant to the study as both the Kipsigis and Abagusii may perceive that they have mutual suffering resulting in negative attitude to each other. However, it is not empirically established whether the case is as such in realism. The group conflicts arise on suspicion of political favoritism or command of the resources to one another’s disadvantage.

A conflict may be limited to one individual, who is conflicted within himself (the intrapersonal conflict). Team-conflicts are sometimes unavoidable and predictable, conflict is defined as “an activity which takes when conscious beings (individuals or groups) wish to carry out mutually inconsistent acts concerning their wants, needs or obligations”. The inconsistent concerns escalate thus creating a conflict environment which eventually may lead into a fight between the opposing parties. However, processes of conflict management should be encompassed with the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved, but learning how to manage conflicts can decrease the odds of non-productive escalation. The theory does not address such factors (Nnoli, 1998).

2.4.1. Identity Theory in Ethnic Conflict

Robert (1990) cites identity theory in ethnic conflicts by arguing out that human senses of belonging to a given community can have enormous contribution to an individual’s relation with others i.e. that sense can give him/her the “warmth and strength” of belonging here thus, fighting the outside community becomes inevitable. Identity is often evocative which is mythical or imagined i.e. ethnicity.

2.5: Conceptual Model

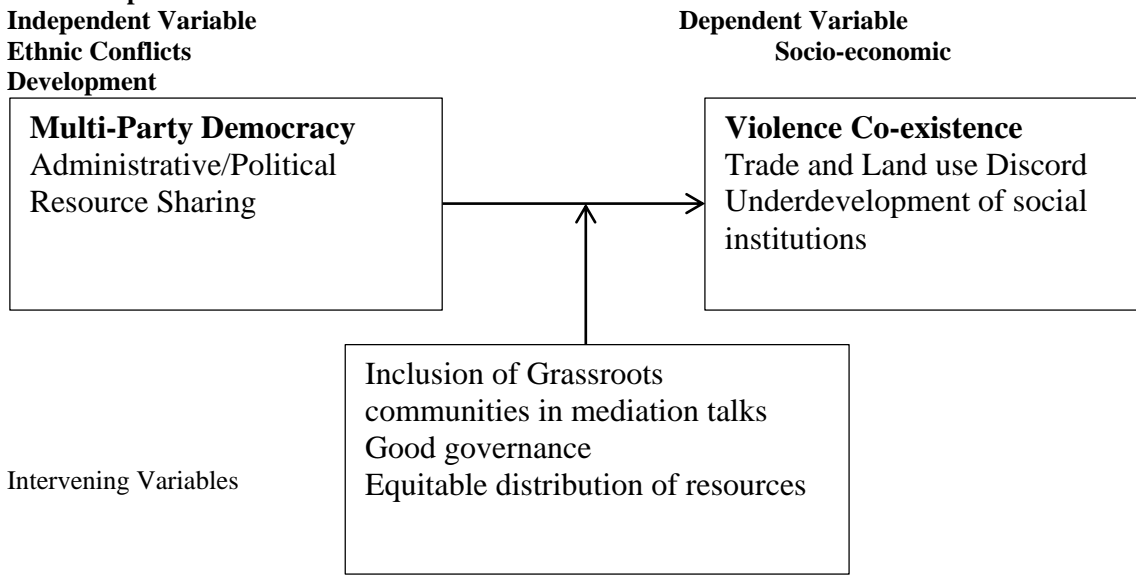


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model
 Source: Researchers, 2020

The study was conceptualized by the influence of ethnic conflicts as the independent variable operationalized through the influence multiparty democracy, political and administrative representation has in fueling ethnic conflicts along the border. Socio-economic development is theorized as the dependent variable measured through violence levels, trade and land use disagreements as well as the general development of the area along the border between the Kipsigis and Abagusii. An increase or decrease in the dependent

factors will be determined by the intervening variable through factors such as; inclusion in mediation talks, good governance and equitable resource sharing.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Nachmias (2005) defines a research design as a well-laid down plan of procedures used in guiding a given research investigation in data collection, analysis and interpretation of observable phenomenon made. The study adopted a correlation research design; correlation research is descriptive in that it cannot presume a cause-and-effect relationship. It can only establish that there is an association between two or more traits or performance. This involves collecting data on two or more finite variables to determine whether a relationship exists or not. Correlation research further described the nature of the relationship between ethnic conflicts and socio-economic development of conflict affected ethnic groups”. Correlation research helped in identifying the magnitude of relationships that existed between the variables (Kothari, 2011).

This design gave a critical description of the status of ethnic conflict between the Abagusii and Kipsigis communities in relationship to the socio-economic development of the communities and the moderating influence of governance efforts of affected communities. The information gathered through correlation design was used to answer question that had been asked and used. When examining social issues that exist in a community. Hence, this design was adopted to describe and justify the findings related to the socio-economic development of the neighboring communities as a result of conflicts in this study.

3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in Borabu and Bomet Central Sub-counties of the Abagusii and kipsigis ethnic groups respectively. These sub-counties are housed within Nyamira and Bomet counties respectively. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2012) notes that “Bomet County lies between latitudes 0° 29⁰ and 1° 03⁰ south and between longitudes 35° 05⁰ and 35° 35⁰ east. It is bordered by four counties namely; Nakuru to the East, Kericho to the North East, Nyamira to the South and Narok to the West. It has atotal land area of 2037.4km². Bomet East, Bomet Central, Chapalungu, Konoin and sotik. According to the Kenya Population and Housing Census report (2009), Bomet County had a population of 782,531 people. This population is expected to grow to 991,968 by 2020.

Bomet County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), (2013) confirms that “Bomet Central has the highest population density of 494 people/km², this is due to attractive economic opportunities in the constituency which include the rich agricultural land, commercial activities and the largest urban center Bomet town which also is the administrative center in the country hence large concentration of settlements within this particular area”. The area of study was chosen because of the recurrence of ethnic conflicts and it also borders the Abagusii community in Borabu Sub-County.

Majority of the farmers in the county do practice mixed farming ranging from tea, maize and dairy as the climate is conducive for agricultural production as witnessed by the large tea plantations in the area. The county has no known mineral or precious stones but has a number of rocks which are of economic value to the community (Bomet CIDP, 2013). The study focus was Bomet Central Sub-County which has a population of 126,520 and an approximate area of 261.50 km². The sub-county has the following Wards as shown in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Bomet Central Sub-County Assembly Wards

Ward	Sub-Locations	Population
Silibwet Township	Kapsimotwo, Silibwet, Chepngaina and Motigo	27,500
Ndarawetta	Teganda, Nyongores, Kabusare and Ngainet	22,069
Singorwet	Singorwet, Aisaik, Kabungut, Mugango and Kitoben	21,796
Chesoan	Kamogoso, Chesoan, Sibaiyan, Kiplelji and Kapkoros	34,476
Mutarakwa	Solyot, Kapsangaru, Kanusin, Leldatet and Tarakwa	20,679
TOTAL		126,520

Source: Bomet County Integrated Development Plan, (2013)

The study area for Abagusii ethnic community constituted Nyamira County “situated in the Western highlands of Kenya, it covers an area of 894 km² with a total population of 750,000. The population growth rate stands at 2.4%. it borders the counties of Kericho to the East, Bomet to the South East, Kisii to the south, Homabay to the west and Kisumu to the Northwest.

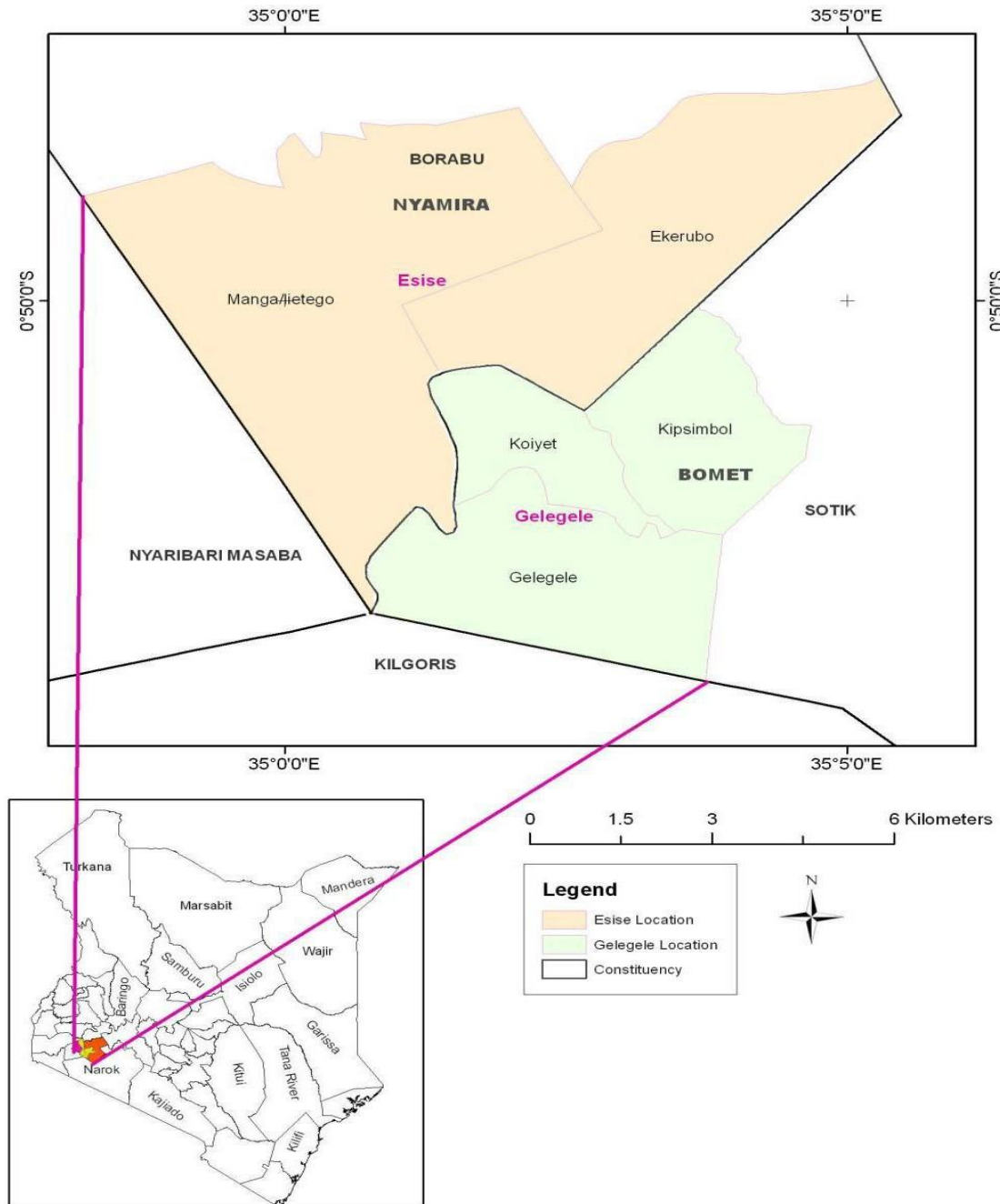
The Borabu Sub-County was the study area of focus due to the recurrence of ethnic conflicts and is populated by both the Abagusii and Kipsigis ethnic communities. The Borabu Sub-County population is 117,090 (Kenya Population and Housing Census, 2009) with an area of 297.70 km². The sub-county has the following Wards as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Borabu Sub-County Assembly Wards

Ward	Sub-Locations	Population
Mekenene	Mwongori, Mogusii, Kitaru and Nyankononi/Kerumbe	18,976
Kiabonyoru	Omonono, Mokomoni, Nyangoge and Nyaramba	43,664
Nyansiongo	Nyansiongo and Matutu	27,496
Esise	Manga/Raitigo, Ekerubo and Isoge/Kineni	26,965
TOTAL		117,090

Source: Nyamira County Integrated Development Plan, (2013)

Figure 3.1: Map of Borabu and Bomet



Source: Researchers, 2020

3.3 Target Population

Kombo and Tromp (2006) define a population as “a complete set of individual, cases or objects with some common observable characteristics”. The target population for both sub-counties was 243,610. Bomet Central Sub-County had 126,520 people while Borabu Sub-County population is 117,090 (KNBS, 2012). But in this study the target groups were the youth leaders, Church leaders, community elders, National government administrators and Non-governmental Organizations.

In Bomet Central sub-county there were: 3900 Youth Leaders, 1020 Community Elders, 600 Church Leaders, 180 National government administrators and 21 Non-governmental Organizations while in Borabu sub-county there were: 3780 Youth Leaders, 870 Community Elders, 510 Church Leaders, 120 National government administrators and 17 Non-governmental Organizations. Apart from Non-governmental Organizations which were few in both sub-counties, to get the sample size the researchers used Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) formular who suggests that 30% is appropriate while for Non-Governmental Organizations since they were few, we sampled half of them.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The target population of the study was 243,610 for the two Sub-Counties. This is more than 10,000 hence the on this basis, 384 respondents were sampled. Due to variations in number of household units in Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties, a simple random sampling technique was adopted to determine the number of youth leaders, community elders and church leaders.

Purposive sampling identified key informants for the study; National Government Administrators and Non-Governmental Organizations Directors. Key informants are considered as respondents rich with in-depth information related on subject under study. Furthermore, interviews with key informants ensure that gaps left out in other tools like questionnaires (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Based on this, the study drew 200 respondents from Bomet Central Sub-County and 184 from Borabu Sub-County as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Sample Size for Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties

	Bomet Central		Borabu		Sampling Technique
	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	
Youth Leaders	3900	130	3780	126	Simple Random
Community Elders	1020	34	870	29	Simple Random
Church Leaders	600	20	510	17	Simple Random
National government administrators	180	06	120	04	Purposive
Non-governmental Organization Directors	21	10	17	08	Purposive
TOTAL		200		184	

Source: Researchers, 2020

3.4.1 Sampling Strategy

In determination of sample size, the researchers used the formula provided by Mugendas' (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). While in determination of sample size of sub-groups. Borg and Gall (1989) formula was used. The formula is presented hereunder;

$$N = Z^2 pq / d^2$$

N=desired minimum sample size

Z=the standard normal deviate at confidence interval of 99% (1.96)

P=proportion in the target population estimated to have the characteristic of population under study (0.8)

Q=1-p(0.2) and

d=level of statistical significance of estimates (0.05) for desired precision thus derivation of multi-stage random sample size was;

$$N = 1.962 * 0.8 * 0.2 / (0.05)^2 = 384$$

3.5. Data Collection Instrument

Kothari (2008) reports that the common tools used to collect data include questionnaires, interview guides, observation and document analysis. Oso and Onen (2009) support the use of questionnaires as the instrument of data collection for a rigorous research design. This study employed the use of questionnaires, interview schedules, observation and document analysis.

Revilla (2015) defined a questionnaire as "a research instrument, consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from the respondents in which questions should flow logically from one to the next". This study used both closed and open-ended questionnaires for respondents' varied opinion on the constructs. This instrument targeted the youth leaders, church leaders and community elders. **Interview guides** targeted views from the Sub-County administrators and elders as they are custodians of policy implementation and logically play the role of key informants on administrative strategies. Interviews were audio-taped by the researchers to confirm what might not be captured while taking notes during the interviews (Orodho, 2005). The questions were designed to appear exactly as the questions were asked. All respondents were given complete attention (Freeman and Matherson, 2009). An **observation checklist** was developed to aid the researchers to note observable features such as destroyed property and trade activities. **Document analysis** checklist was developed to help in identifying relevant documents related to ethnic conflicts and management

3.6. Data Analysis Techniques and Presentation

The collected data from the field was first categorized into quantitative and qualitative data: the categorized data was then checked for completeness, usefulness and accuracy. Qualitative data was coded into themes and sub-themes related to the objectives of the study. Quantitative data was subjected to data coding and entry into the statistical computer program, SPSS v23, to check for accuracy and reliability. Descriptive analysis was then conducted on both categories of data to describe the effects of conflict in Borabu and Bomet Central. Analyzed data was presented in form of descriptive statistics i.e. frequency tables and figures. Quantitative analysis further involved the use of inferential statistics; Pearson Correlation Moment and simple regression analysis to explore the relationship between ethnic conflict and socio-economic development of the Abagusii and Kipsigis along the border.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents an analysis of the findings and discussions on demographic characteristics of respondents as well as objective of the study which was to: analyze multiparty democracy development influence on ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii and Kipsigis along the border.

4.1 Response Rate

Table 4.1: Respondents' Response Rate

	Targeted Rate	Response Rate	Percentage
Bomet Central Sub-County	200	120	60%
Borabu Sub-County	184	110	60%
TOTAL	384	230	60%

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study gained 60% (230) response rate from a target of 384 respondents. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) recommends that, where a response rate of 50%, it is deemed adequate for analysis and reporting; 60% is good, 70% and over is excellent. The study therefore, attained a good response rate for analysis and reporting. This clearly shows that the response rate in this study was good.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study analyzed the demographics of respondents based on the following characteristics; gender, age, education and the main economic activities in the study areas.

4.2.1 Gender

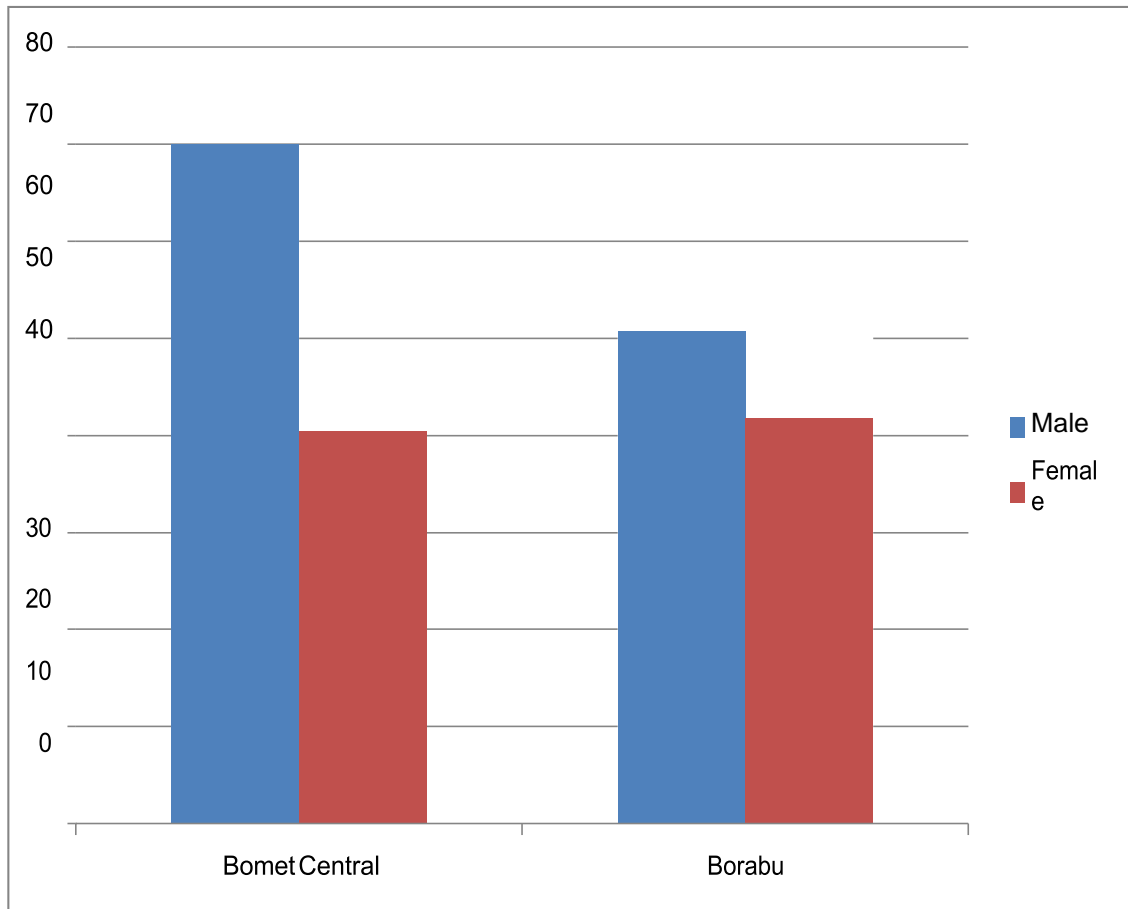


Figure 4.1: Gender Representation for Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties
 Source: Field Data (2020)

The study sought to establish the gender of 120 respondents from the Bomet Central and 110 respondents from Borabu Sub-Counties. Respondents were thus asked to indicate their gender.

The results in Figure 4.1 indicate that 58% (70) were male while 42% (50) were female for Bomet Central Sub-County. The results also indicate that 52% (57) were male while 48% (53) were female for Borabu Sub-County. The study established that most households are headed by male as opposed to their female counterparts. The results skewed against female gender in both Sub-Counties, indicating the persistent disparities that exist due to cultural issues which remain a potential source of conflict within the study areas. Yohannes *et al* (2005), in agreement to the study findings assert that socially, women are marginalized and oppressed through different mechanisms. For example, they are given to their husband (and his family) in rejecting (or killing) of baby girls and whipping women during cattle jumping ceremonies.

4.2: Age of Respondents

Table 4.2: Age of Distribution for Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties

	Bomet Central		Borabu	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 years	22	18%	14	13%
31-40 years	55	46%	52	47%
41-50 years	34	28%	31	28%
50 years and above	09	08%	13	12%
TOTAL	120	100%	110	100%

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study sought to establish age distribution of respondents from Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties. Respondents were thus asked to indicate their age as shown in Table 4.2. The results indicate that those in the age bracket of 20-30 years were 18% (22), 31-40 years were 46% (55), 41-50 years were 28% (34) and those above 50 years were 08% (9) for Bomet Central Sub-County. While those in the age bracket of 20-30 years were 13% (14), 31-40 years were 47% (52), 41-50 years were 28% (31) and those above 50 years were 12% (13) for Borabu Sub-County. The analysis indicates that respondents in the age bracket of 31-40 years were majority in both Sub-Counties at 47% representation.

This age bracket represents young population and according to Mokuia (2013) on ethnic conflicts, young persons are the weakest to be incited to trigger mayhem and instability due to their low levels of economic stability and experience in conflict resolution. Additionally, Mworira and Ndiku (2012) cite ethnic conflicts are attributed to political incitement of young people; who are resource-poor and easy to lure to create tribal tensions.

4.2.3 Education Background

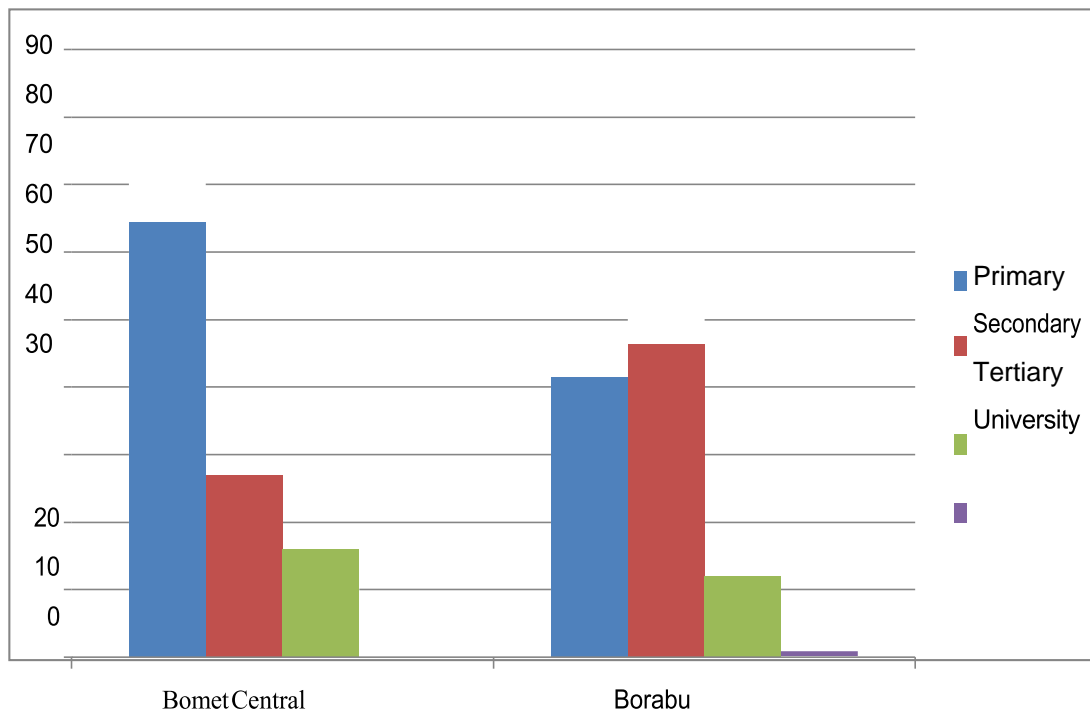


Figure 4.2: Education Background for Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study sought to determine the educational level of respondents. The results are given in Figure 4.2. The results indicate that out of the total 120 respondents from Bomet Central Sub-County, 64% (77) of respondents had primary education, 23% (27) had secondary education, and 13% (16) had tertiary education while none had university level of education. The results indicate that out of the total 110 respondents from Borabu Sub-County, 42% (46) of respondents had primary education, 48% (53) had secondary education, 9% (10) had tertiary education while 1% (1) had university education.

The low education levels are indicative of the fact that majority of the respondents are affected by, low enrollment due to school inaccessibility, displacement and tensions which exist between the two groups. The low education levels can be used to aptly explain the frequent occurrence of ethnic conflicts which remain predominant. The results are in agreement with a report from KNBS (2012) which indicates that less than 15% of Bomet County residents have a tertiary level of education or above while a total of 35% of Nyamira County residents have a university level of education only.

An elder from Silibwet village, Bomet Central Sub-County in response to education levels asserted that:
...during ethnic violence, education system is negatively affected due to destruction and displacement of people. Furthermore, here as parents don't send their children to school but rather use boys as herders to their livestock while girls are married off for livestock or land. However, things are changing slowly since the inception of Free Primary Education (FPE) system to cater for the need of the children as well as the peace we have today... (Field Interview at Silibwet village, 23rd November, 2019).

Furthermore, Ombati (2012) in a survey along Abagusii/Kipsigis border revealed that schools in Borabu, Nyamira County, are still affected by the effects of ethnic violence. Some schools have never recovered while others are still feeling the effects for example; Manga Girls High School whose population reduced to 80 from 800 students.

Both communities are affected by high level of illiteracy and school dropout owing to ethnic conflicts which render many families destitute. Additionally, small and light arms held by the locals including machetes, bows and arrows have fuelled tension, which is opined to remain the biggest security challenge in the region.

4.2.4 Main Economic Activities

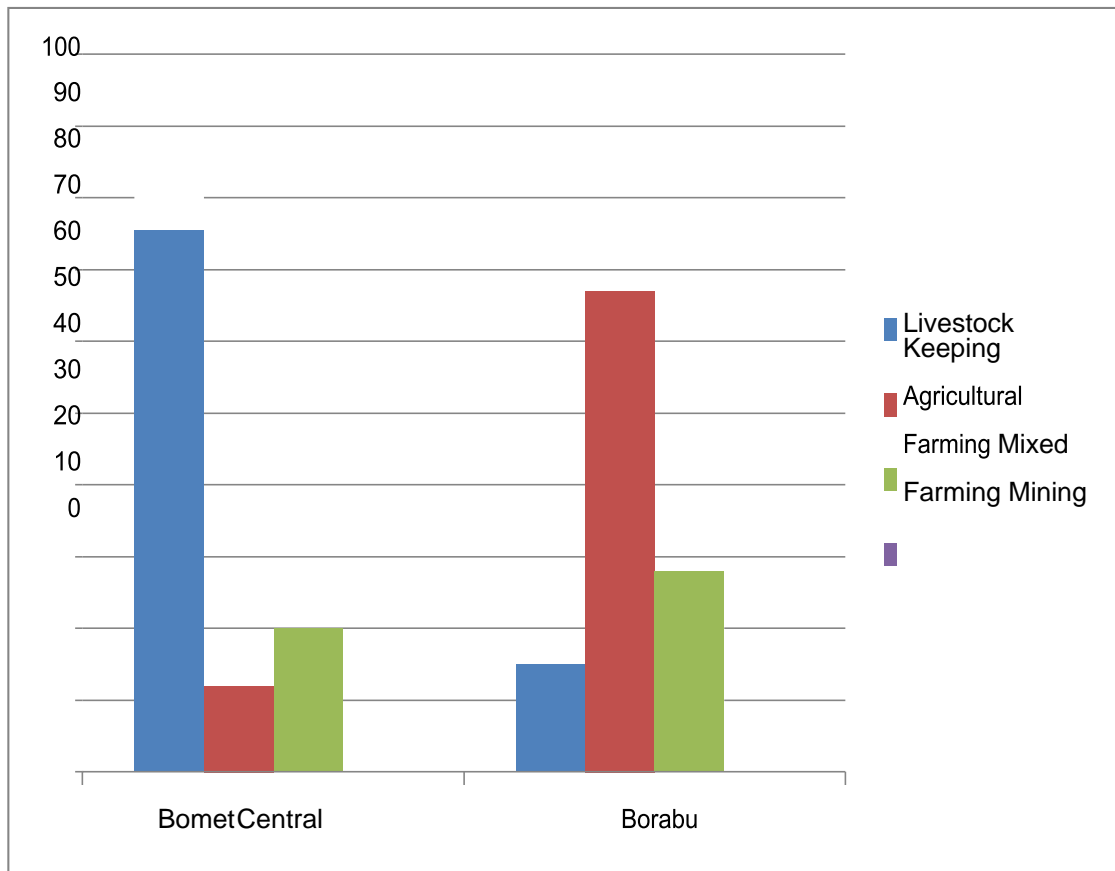


Figure 4.3: Main Economic Activities for Bomet Central and Borabu Sub-Counties

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study sought to determine the main economic activities of respondents. The results are given in Figure 4.3. The results indicate that out of the total 120 respondents from Bomet Central Sub-County, 73% (88) reared livestock, 10% (12) were agricultural farmers and 17% (20) carried out mixed farming. None of the respondents were involved in mining activities.

The results also indicate that out of the total 110 respondents from Borabu Sub-County, 14% (15) kept livestock, 61% (67) were agricultural farmers and 25% (28) were mixed farmers while none was involved in mining. Farming and livestock rearing are the main economic activities in the Borabu and Bomet Central Sub-County respectively. It is imperative that economic activities like livestock keeping and land for agricultural activities could be one of the major reasons of repeated ethnic conflicts among the border communities of the Abagusii and Kipsigis.

4.3 The Influence of Multiparty Democracy Development on Ethnic Conflicts

In answering specific objective one of the study, the researchers pursued facts on the influence of multiparty democracy in fueling ethnic conflicts among border communities. The parameters for measuring multiparty democracy were; multiparty disagreements, multiparty elections, ethnicity, regional choice and political confrontations. The findings are as shown in Figure 4.4:

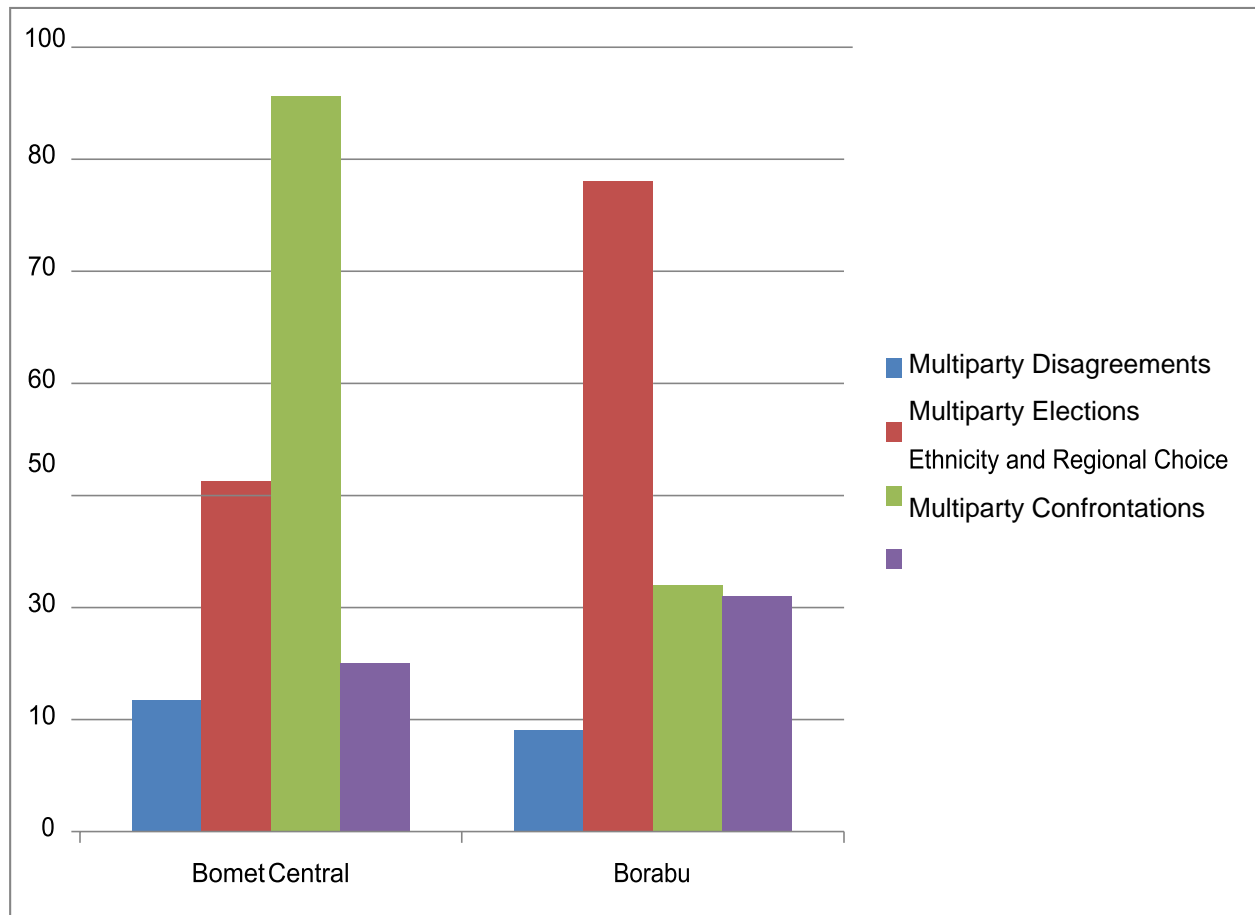


Figure 4.4: Influence of Multiparty Democracy on ethnic conflicts
 Source: Field Data (2020)

Figure 4.4 presents findings on the influence of multiparty democracy on ethnic conflicts. The results indicate that out of the total 120 respondents from Bomet Central Sub-County, 13% (16) agreed that multiparty disagreements influenced ethnic conflicts while 87% (104) disagreeing, 23% (28) agreed that multiparty elections influenced ethnic conflicts while 77% (92) disagreeing, 51% (61) agreed that ethnicity and regional choice of leaders influenced ethnic conflicts while 49% (59) disagreeing and 13% (15) agreed that multiparty confrontations led to ethnic conflicts while 87% (105) disagreeing.

The results also indicate that out of the total 110 respondents from Borabu Sub-County, 08% (9) agreed that multiparty disagreements influenced ethnic conflicts while 92% (101) disagreeing, 53% (58) agreed that multiparty elections influenced ethnic conflicts while 47% (52) disagreeing, 20% (22) agreed that ethnicity and regional choice of leaders influenced ethnic conflicts while 80% (88) and 19% (21) agreed that multiparty confrontations led to ethnic conflicts while 81% (89) disagreeing. From the findings, multiparty democracy influenced ethnic conflicts among the Abagusii and Kipsigis border communities through ethnicity and regional choice as well as multi-party elections.

Duffield (2012) on elections cite that presidential candidates and their political parties have always got huge following and support from geographical zones dominated by groups whose ethnicity is the same as that for the presidential candidates. Ethnic groups whose presidential candidates win in elections are viewed by the rest of the ethnic groups as being favoured by the ruling government in terms of public appointments. This tendency draws a wedge in the nature of relations and coexistence among the various ethnic groups in the country.

The findings are in tandem with those findings of Mokuia (2013) on multiparty political influence on the wellbeing of communities. Harmonious coexistence suddenly It is clear that multiparty democracy of 1992 influenced negative ethnicity in Kenya with disagreements and tensions between border communities fueling ethnic conflicts. Furthermore, a report by CMD (2015) acknowledges that ethnic conflicts in Kenya occur frequently, since the reintroduction of multi-party democracy in 1992. Worst ethnic violence was witnessed during the 2007/08 post-election.

An administrator from Nyansiongo Ward asserted that:

...during general elections, confrontations and disagreements are witnessed among the Abagusii and Kipsigis communities bordering each other due to choice of their leaders especially at the presidential level. It has never happened where the two communities supported same presidential aspirant. This is where ethnicity rises to violence and conflicts... (Field interview with an administrator at Nyansiongo, 19th December, 2019)

Contrary to the findings that multiparty democracy influences ethnic violence, Butterfield (2005) argued that conflicts at times accelerate development in various spheres. Conflicts can be about heightened security, institutional development, economic boost, cultural significance, networks and representation. Additionally, peace-building is part of the security dimension focusing on human rights, conflict resolution and social cohesion.

A respondent from Esise argued that:

...the ethnic violence has led to improved security organs in the area for example; we have a new police post mandated with enhancing security in the area. Other government institutions National Cohesion and Integration Commission have had communal meetings in the area. Development projects have also been initiated in both regions.... (Respondent from Esise Ward, Borabu Sub-County, 27th November, 2019).

It is imperative that multiparty democracy influenced ethnic conflicts among the Abagusii and Kipsigis border communities through elections which are marred with disagreements and confrontations due to ethnicity and choice of leaders to represent them. However, ethnic conflicts also accelerated development in various spheres like heightened security measures, development of various projects, economic boost through trade, cultural significance, networks and Representation through governance.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

The study analyzed multiparty development and its influence on ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii and Kipasigis border communities. It was found out that multiparty democracy influenced ethnic conflicts among border communities through; ethnic and regional choice, multiparty elections and multiparty disagreements. However, it was argued that conflicts at times accelerated development in various spheres including security, institutional development, economic boost, cultural significance, networks and representation.

5.2 Conclusion

The study analyzed multiparty development and its influence on ethnic conflicts between the Abagusii and Kipasigis border communities. It was concluded that multiparty democracy influenced ethnic conflicts especially among border communities. However, the ethnic conflicts also brought development in the region be it security or networks.

5.3 Recommendation

It was found that multiparty democracy has a role in the repeated ethnic conflicts along the border line of the Abagusii and Kipsigis communities. The study therefore recommends that sensitization and awareness programs if put in place to educate the communities on the importance of multiparty democracy in our society. Such an initiative can be championed by the County Governments of Nyamira and Bomet, the non-state actors and the national government through National Cohesion and Integration Commission and CMD.

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