

Exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and, culture
when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya
between 1963 and 2015

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Submitted in fulfilment of the academic requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

(Gender, Conflict & Religion).

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South Africa.

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February 2023

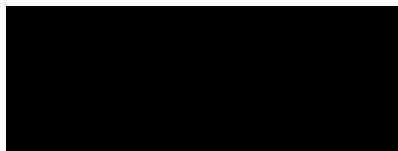
DECLARATION

I, **MUCHUNGU DANIEL NGANGA** declare that:

The research in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work. This thesis has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university. All other scholarly sources from relevant studies have been duly acknowledged.

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Signature

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother, Mama Lucia Veronica Nyambura wa Gachahi for nurturing me and her encouragement throughout my studies that I should “*never settle for nothing less than my dream*”. May perpetual light shine forth before her; Amen.

I also dedicate it to my loving ones, my brother Fr. Njenga John-Vienna, Mama Frank, Nyambura’s the great Family, my dear Terry, Mercy, and Tony for your love, encouragement and support. And my young mom Dates who would wonder why I was always writing and not finishing. To you all, you are my heroes. To my Research Assistants Sarah from Kainuk and Sikamoi from Kacheliba thank you so much- as we always said “tomorrow will be a better day than today”. I also dedicate this work to all the focus groups, and interviewers who were kind enough to share from their fountain of knowledge. And all peace-loving people of West Pokot and Turkana counties. This work is a resource for many because of you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My PhD journey has been challenging and empowering at the same time. This has been a journey of learning, evaluating, critical reading, re-interpreting, analyzing, and re-aligning my way of looking at conflict within ideo-theological lenses and gender critical framework. In all this glory and honor to God.

This project has really reshaped my views on the role of the Catholic Church and religion in their efforts to manage the Pokot-Turkana Conflict. The Catholic Church needs to do more in gender equality in matters peace, justice and conflict management; without which peace will remain elusive in the region. I therefore acknowledge the brave women from the Pokot and Turkana communities for their peace initiatives amidst strong patriarchal systems. They have proved that women must move from the periphery and take their rightful position in the dialogue table where peace issues are discussed and decisions are made.

This thesis is indebted to many people. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Prof Charlene van der Walt who has been my PhD supervisor. I looked forward to your candid guidance. I loved your words “*Daniel you need to re-look your work and see my comments. Daniel you are on the right path, Keep pushing*”. Thank you for shaping my thinking and way of doing research in the right way.

I want to acknowledge Tom and Carol Dillon from San Diego for their moral and financial support during my masters at USD and later journeying with me at American University in Washington DC, and UKZN. You never gave up on me and you always told me you are proud of my work. This kept me going.

ABSTRACT

The Sahel region and East Africa has shown sustained levels of inter-pastoral violent conflicts with associated potential impacts on their livelihoods. One such conflict is the Turkana-Pokot cross-border conflict that has become the norm. Despite disarmament operations initiated by the government of Kenya, peace-building meetings, and workshops led by the Catholic dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar, insecurity in the region continues to prevail. This study explored the intersections of gender, religion, and culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015 and had three objectives: to trace the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana in general; to interrogate how the Catholic Church has been involved in the conflict management process and how it could enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution; and to examine how an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict could contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions. The researcher applied a combination of theoretical frameworks in addressing the research questions. They included: Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) theory by Edward Azar (1990) in analyzing the nature and persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, Pankhurst and Pearce's steps in engendering a disciplined framework to address the gender aspect missing in conflict management theory by Azar's PSC, and Kanyoro's feminists' cultural hermeneutics theoretical framework to address the intersection of gender, culture, and religion. Data was collected through random/probability and non-random/non-probability sampling techniques. Under random/probability sampling, cluster and stratified sampling were used, while under non-random/non-probability, purposive sampling was used. Research instruments used in data collection were questionnaires, interview guides, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Data analysis was done manually and presented in tables. The questionnaires, interview guides, and FGDs were qualitatively analyzed. The findings included the Roman Catholic church's role in managing the conflict, the cultural gender roles sustaining the conflict, and the role of culture as a pawn and a resource in conflict management. The research established that the government interventions failed in mitigation efforts due to poor conflict resolution strategies caused by factors not in tandem with the local perceptions, beliefs, expectations, and needs of the affected communities. This study recommends that the Catholic Church and the council of elders develop a common conflict management framework. Peace in the grassroots model by the late bishop Korir was reviewed, enhanced, and recommended.

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Arum rum: This is a Turkana word used to refer to a group of villagers living together for security reasons.

Church: Christian religious congregations around the world from the countless denominations who follow Christ and embrace four marks of biblical oneness: holiness, apostolicity, evangelization and global orientation.

Ethnic Community: A group of individuals with a shared sense of relationship based on presumed shared socio-cultural experiences, lineage and / or similar physical characteristics.

Karacuna: Refers to adolescent boys, and young men who are primarily responsible for the provision of security and protection for their communities. They are also in charge of securing their communities' livelihood in times of food scarcity, including the herding of livestock.

Kokwo: A Pokot word for council of elders.

Livestock: Refers to all types of domestic animals kept by pastoralists for their livelihood such as cattle, goats, camel, donkeys, and sheep.

Morani: A Pokot word meaning young men (warriors) who raid cattle.

Ngimurok: Refers to medicine men in Turkana who are believed to have supernatural powers and supervise rituals and sacrificial ceremonies in the Turkana community. Ngimurok are consulted before and after a raid and work closely with kraal leaders.

Ngoroko: A term used by both the Turkana and Pokot communities referring to raiders.

Nomadism: Refers to the extent of spatial movement of pastoralists; therefore, pastoral production is conceptually different from the extent of residential mobility (Markakis, 2004:4).

Pastoralism: Refers to an economy that is based on raising livestock, which could be undertaken by sedentary or nomadic groups. Pastoralists include those who earn part of their living from livestock and livestock products. As pastoralism revolves around livestock, the conflicts are predominantly about livestock and related productive assets namely; water, land

and pasture. These resources closely tie conflicts to the violent and theft of livestock, referred to as raiding, which are both a contributing factor and an articulation of conflict.

Peacebuilding: Interventions that seek to support structures that aim at strengthening harmony through creation and development of norms and establishment of institutional frameworks.

Reconciliation: Restoration of broken relationship. It is also re-establishment of social relations between individuals or group of persons who for some times have been alienated or separated from each other by conflict.

Tree of men: Refers to Turkana Council of Elders.

Werkoyon: Refers to a Pokot/Turkana seer.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASAL:	Arid and Semi-arid Lands
CBO:	Community Based Organization
CBO:	Community Based Organization
CJPC:	Catholic Peace and Justice Commission
FBO:	Faith Based Organization
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FR:	Father
GOK:	Government of Kenya
KANU:	Kenya African Union
KPRs:	Kenya Police Reservists
MP:	Member of Parliament
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
PSC:	Protracted Social Conflict
SALWs:	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SNV:	Netherlands Development Organization
SR:	Sister
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a general introduction to the study. It is an exposition of inter-group conflict in Kenya among the Pokot and Turkana pastoralist communities. The conflict between the two communities can be attributed partially to their location; both groups are at the periphery of the country, which borders some of the often most unstable countries in Africa, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda (briefing paper no 4, 2020). This closeness to their volatile neighboring countries has been the leading cause of the proliferation of small arms in the hands of the two communities, leading to the raiding of pastoral livelihoods and the persistence of the conflict (Schilling & Opiyo, 2012; Devine, 2016). As the researcher, being conscious of the scope and limitation of this study, I focus specifically on the ethnic conflict between the Pokot and Turkana living along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor that falls along the West Pokot and Turkana counties' borders.

The study establishes a link between the lack of gender inclusivity in conflict management institutions such as the indigenous council of elders and the Catholic Church as an intervening party and the persistence of the conflict. The question of gender, or lack thereof, in conflict and peacebuilding frameworks has come to the fore in recent years. Feminist theorists (Tatjana & Solomon, 2001; Johnson, 2014; Pankhurst, 2000) have written widely addressing gender bias in peacebuilding and the need for gender mainstreaming in enhancing peace. In this regard, I put the Catholic Church's role as a party intervening in the conflict into perspective to evaluate and address the gender question in its approach and its effectiveness. I also interrogate the Catholic social teachings on reconciliation (Magesa, 2012; Lederach, 2010) and the various papal encyclicals founded on the scriptures to provide an ideo-theological approach that is unique in peacebuilding. This is in consideration of Siwila's critique that there is a need to interrogate how Christian missionaries, using patriarchal systems, perpetuated the narratives that men are the holders of family structures. At the same time, women are considered subordinate (Siwila, 2016). This study unearths such realities among the Pokot and Turkana communities as a hindrance to peace and reconciliation.

Finally, this chapter provides a general introduction to the study, beginning with the background, statement of the problem, and the location of the study. It further outlines the over-arching research question, sub-questions, and objectives. In addition, the chapter

contains the literature review and theoretical frameworks, which provide lenses for analyzing the data collected from the field. Lastly, the chapter outlines the methodology process and structure used for the study.

1.1 Background to the Research Problem

"Women are an integral part of any society. This points to whether, in political, economic, or social aspects, all gender must be given space to articulate their concerns. The idea that women should be heard in bedrooms and kitchen is a male chauvinist, archaic and overtaken by time, and its main aim is to belittle women's role in any development agenda"
(Madam chief Kainuk 15/10/2021 at 3 pm).¹

This study focuses on the intersections of gender, culture, and religion when engaging the conflict along the West Pokot and Turkana counties' border in Kenya. The violent ethnic conflict between the Pokot and Turkana communities along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor in Kenya has been there for decades. The two communities are pastoralists. According to Bolling (2013) and Azarya (1996), pastoralism refers to an economy based on raising livestock. Tuner (2019) and Adriansen (2008) relate pastoralism to livestock mobility which can be seen as a cumulative measure of livestock movements within a given period across open rangelands.

Opiyo and Scheffran (2012) argue that pastoralism and nomadism have been described as the primary cause of the conflict between the Turkana and the Pokot communities. As pastoralism revolves around livestock, the conflicts are predominantly about livestock and livestock-related productive assets, namely water, land, and pasture. These resources (Mwangi, 2006) closely tie conflict to the violent theft of livestock, referred to as raiding, which is both a contributing factor and an articulation of the Pokot and the Turkana conflict. A claim supported by Eaton (2005) and Schilling et al. (2012) is that the complexity and persistence of the pastoral border conflict between the Turkana and the Pokot result from competition over limited national resources and ethnic hatred. In addition, livestock possession plays multiple social, economic, and religious roles in pastoral livelihoods, such as providing a regular source of food in the form of milk, meat, and blood for household members, cash income to pay for cereals, education, health care, and other services (Behnke,

¹ These opening remarks were given by the Kainuk Area Senior Chief emphasizing on the need to involve women in peacebuilding frameworks.

2008). Livestock is also a symbol of prosperity and prestige and, as such, a basic form of pastoral capital.

Another factor that sustains the conflict is culture. Alie (2008) argues that certain cultural practices in the two communities have sustained the conflict for decades. Mkutu (2008) has recommended that the solution to such cultural causes needs cultural solutions. This study assumes that the cultural practices of the two communities supersede their religious affiliations/or that there is no distinction between their cultural practices and their traditional African religion. As Kanyoro (2002, p.14) rightly puts it, "there is no distinction between culture and religion; they are the same". For Beyers (2017), religion and culture are firmly related, as religion is a cultural expression. As noted, religious complexity implies that religion is not unitary but that multiple forms of religion are present simultaneously. This would mean that both religion and culture influence morals and values through various pathways. This influence shapes how people think about and respond to the world, fosters habits and provides a web of social interactions.

Building on this idea, Harrison (2013) claims that evidence suggests that religion positively correlates with identity formation. Pokot and Turkana identity is culturally defined through rituals therein. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, their culture is intertwined with religion which implies that religiosity is relevant in explaining commitment and purposefulness in terms of identity formation. Beyers (2017) argues that religion provides an orientating function in society by providing guidelines in search of self and community identity. He thus points to their reciprocal nature: religion is influenced by culture, and culture influences religion.

Dawson (n.d) defines the intertwined relationship between religion and culture as a two-sided one, where "the way of life influences the approach to religion, and the religious attitudes influence the way of life". Thus, when people in a society are firmly embedded in a given culture, it could significantly impact their religion. Equating this with the two communities under study, the different elements in their cultures, such as songs, rituals, and dance, define their identity and influence their way of thinking, behaviors, and actions even when it conflicts with other societies. These elements form the worldview of a given community (Caprioli, 2005). A claim supported by Simone and Kurimoto (1998) is that the underlying cause of persistent conflict between the Pokot and Turkana is primarily located in the cultural domain of each group - cattle raid was mainly about the preservation of the

internal identity of each ethnic group. Hence, violence was seen as a characteristic of culture, notably when the worldview defined by cultures differ. They further consider that warfare or violent relations resulting from antagonism in some cultures is an abnormal and vicious situation that needs to be extinguished. An excellent example of such cultural practices includes but is not limited to raiding for heroism, where young men raid for recognition in the community. Thus, men are defined by their actions, even when conflict perpetuates. After the raids (Nganga, 2012), women praise the young men as community warriors.

In the same vein of cultural practices, the substantial 'dowry tag' (payment) for marriage in both communities has been linked to the increased raids and counter-raids. This has had a far-reaching negative impact on the two communities. This includes killings, increased internally displaced persons, the burning of homes, and the closure of schools. The idea of dowry as a cultural practice defines "women as objects of trade," where women are exchanged with cattle. This falls under what Marion Young (1980, pp.137-156) calls 'feminine existence.' She uses this coinage to refer to a set of structures and conditions which de-limit the typical situation of being a woman in society and the distinctive way women live in this situation. A case in point is how unmarried women are treated in the two communities under study by men and their fellow women and vis-a-vis married women for whom heavy dowry was paid, indicating how gender complexities play out in the conflict.

Many scholars have advocated for indigenous conflict management processes to mitigate this conflict. According to Holsti (1996), with the end of the cold war, there has been a rise in indigenous conflict management that came in as a way to mitigate the intra-state conflicts in many African countries. These include, among others, the *bashingatahe* in Burundi and Gacaca courts in Rwanda that were revived after the genocide to deal with restorative justice and reconciliation. Referring to Pkalya et al. (2004) and Nganga (2012), among the Pokot and Turkana communities, their indigenous justice systems revolve around the council of elders (*Kokwo* and Tree of men), respectively. However, the emphasis on indigenous conflict management approaches is anchored on people's cultures that fall squarely on the council of elders who are men. This has predominantly left women as passive observers of the processes rather than active participants in managing and mitigating the conflicts. Such an approach has left a gap in conflict management because of gender bias or lack of gender consideration. The lack of incorporation of gender in mainstream conflict management complicates the whole field of peacebuilding. Beyond these simplified binary constructions,

reality seems more complex and dynamic. This claim calls for a new approach to conflict management that is all-inclusive.

Besides advocacy for indigenous approaches, the Roman Catholic Church in the region has been involved in the search for a permanent solution to the conflict. In 2012, the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar celebrated its golden jubilee of evangelization. They invited all the neighboring Catholic dioceses that cover the pastoral communities within the Kenyan northern conflict corridor. The idea was to have a common approach toward peaceful co-existence among the pastoralist communities. However, it was not until 2015 that the Catholic dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar came out strongly with intervention strategies that targeted the youths who were used as raiders (CJPC Plan, 2015). In 2017, the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar convened another conference. Its theme was "peaceful disarmament for evangelization." The opening statement by Right Rev. Bishop Kimengich of Lodwar was: "The church has a moral obligation in the reconciliation of the two communities and the transformation of the hearts and minds." The Catholic leadership in the region paid much emphasis on reconciliation. The Church teaches that it is impossible to reconcile with God before people are reconciled with one another. This is because reconciliation must be among people before going to God (Matthew 5:23-25; 18:23-35; 1 John 4:20). In this way, the Church acts as a bridging gap and a reconciliation agent between God and human and human beings with fellow beings. Galtung (2001) avers that the Church uses theological/penitence approach to reconciliation.

The theological/penitence approach is perpetrator-oriented in general and guilt-oriented in particular. Galtung (2001) further contends that the four dimensions of guilt are: towards others, towards the victim, towards self, and towards God. The approach then proceeds in a well-described chain: submission-confession-penitence-absolution. The Sacrament of penance, interpreted to include other faith-based believers and religious affiliations, can be viewed from the perspective of acceptance/submission of guilt and asking for forgiveness from the community make meaning to the reconciliation process of the two warring communities. However, this approach only works for Christian believers. Thus, it is not fully applicable and practical in ethnic conflicts, which cut across other faiths. Nevertheless, this explores how submission and confession are helpful in their complementary approach to other peacebuilding frameworks.

The practical part of Catholic leadership intervention in the conflict came through Bishop Korir. As the lead mediator entrusted the role by the Catholic bishops in Kenya, Korir came up with an elaborate mechanism for managing the conflict - the bottom-up approach. This was characterized by a series of meetings with the council of elders from both communities, state agents working in the region, and other faith-based organizations (Korir, 2009). The bishop would personally visit parishes within the conflict corridor and address the congregation on his crucial theme, "peace for development." He would besides reach out to his priests and other religious leaders and urge them to preach peace messages in all places of worship. His efforts were not in vain, as relative peace and calm prevailed before his sudden demise in 2018. It was evident from documented sources that Korir (2009) was deeply concerned with finding cultural solutions to the conflict.

One cultural practice the bishop evoked was the revered Pokot –Turkana cursing rites that targeted those who did not heed elders' call to desist from the killings. This rite was anchored in the religious Pokot and Turkana rituals (Oranga, 2007). However, these 'cursing' ceremonies and other rituals were men's affairs. Although these rituals stopped the endless killings that had become the norm, they had minimal consideration of gender as the bishop majorly concentrated on the Pokot and Turkana councils of elders, which are patriarchal in their composition. This indicates how masculinity is articulated within the indigenous institutions aimed at speaking on behalf of all in the community. Such an approach could have worked for decades when women were dominantly considered caretakers and homemakers. The fact that this approach seemed to be "men" affairs and "men speaking among men" provoked the researcher to think about the gendered dimension of the conflict and the role of gender in the peacebuilding framework. There is a need for a sustainable peacebuilding framework consistent with gender inclusivity for all intervening parties. Besides, conflict management frameworks acknowledge that they cannot achieve long-term solutions without gender consideration.

Regarding gender consideration by religious leaders, this work concurs with Dube (2017) that gender is a crucial social category that organizes relationships and distributes power among individuals, within institutions, and in all social relationships. She contends that unless African Christianity (mainly the Catholic Church) thoroughly investigates how gender affects its members and the structures of the African Church, then it will not realize its core business of salvation, redemption, healing, and deliverance from negative and hostile powers. Dube (2017) further claims that gender justice must be central to the message,

programs, and institutions of African churches for African Christianity to deliver liberating salvation to its members and the communities they serve. "African Christianity, a vibrant institution that houses millions of men and women, should preach salvation, redemption, healing, deliverance, and empowerment to its members without gender discrimination" (Dube, 2017, p.18). Unfortunately, this is not the case as observed by Siwila and Sietisho (2017) that religion, one of the dominant voices in society, has created and maintained social hierarchies by discriminating against equal identities, interests, and experiences of women. This has entrenched the patriarchal systems perpetuating the narrative that men are holders of the family structure while portraying women as subordinate to men. This is the basis of inequality even in indigenous justice systems that this study is focused on addressing.

Based on Sietisho and Siwila's (2017) argument on the Church creating social hierarchies that discriminate against equal identities, it will be necessary to look at the Catholic Church structures that are questionable in their gender inclusivity. Since the positions of power are men-dominated, right from the top, the Pope to the last in that hierarchy, the deacons. The Catholic Church is a conflict-intervening institution where women are given more subordinate roles as nuns; the study interrogates how the bishops from the two dioceses dealt with gender balance in their approach to the conflict. Did the Church give women a peripheral role just as the council of elders has done? Furthermore, if that is the case, how were they different from the Pokot and Turkana institutions of conflict management that already perpetuate the same? The Catholic Church, in her effort to reconcile the two communities, needs to be guided by the words of Becker (1999). In her article, *Patriarchy and Inequality: Towards a Substantive Feminism*, she argues that research suggests that cultures that limit women's access to decision-making and power, and which characterize women as inferior to men, treat women as property, and accept domestic violence as a norm, are more prone to repression and violent conflict. Becker (1999) calls all interested in peacebuilding work to be gender sensitive in their approach.

Karla and Bhugra (2013) concur with this argument in different words. They postulate that cultures described as feminists provide equal power to men and women. Sexual violence is likely to occur more commonly in cultures that foster beliefs of perceived men's superiority and social and cultural inferiority to women. Although culture is essential in understanding sexual violence, we must look at and beyond cultural structures, their strengths, and their weaknesses.

Tatjana and Solomon (2001) claim that to devise gender-sensitive conflict prevention policies and strategies, we first need to understand or profile the particular conflict under examination from a gender perspective. This dictates that one explores the question of power in the decision-making process in socially-assigned gender roles. This is in particular reference to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, which called for increased access of women to conflict prevention and resolution and raised the consciousness of the international academic and policy-making community about women's role in peace activism and in creating conditions of trust and confidence among conflicting parties.

Divine (2012) provides some insights into the reasons behind the persistence of the conflict from the Catholic Church's perspective. He contends that "there is a critical absence of methods and approaches that can bring key Pokot and Turkana actors together to mutually discuss ways and means of peaceful co-existence, and methods that can reduce deeply ingrained misperceptions and misjudgments between the communities. However, some of the activities of the Catholic Church intended to generate trust across space and time between the communities are undermined by the lack of trust between the Pokot and Turkana. For decades, Church activities have been ineffective through being driven more by the goal to increase quantitative institutional membership of Pokot/Turkana within the Catholic Church at the expense of the qualitative imperative to ensure that the communities internalize the virtues that can assure peaceful co-existence between them" (Divine, 2012, p. 8). Divine calls for change from struggling to increase the numbers of those to be "saved" to dealing with the realities of what qualifies salvation 'Love of God and neighbor'. Based on the initial assertion, this study interrogates how the Catholic Church has used its rich ideo-theological resources in its Catholic social thought and scriptures to enhance trust networks among the warring communities as a strategy in peacebuilding.

The core arguments in this introduction can be summarized as follows: First, the reality of the conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana ethnic communities along their county borders is based on various underlying causes which need to be addressed. Moreover, one cannot fully understand the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana border and the reasons for its persistence without interrogating the intersection of gender, culture, and religion.

Second, there is a need to deeply interrogate masculinity formations in the two communities under study and establish whether there are linkages to the persistence of the conflict. Since masculinity formations lead to patriarchy and male privilege that is oppressive to women who are an integral part of peacebuilding, as acknowledged by resolution 1325 (2000) of the United Nations, it is my argument that this will show how an intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict can contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions. Thus, realizing the aspiration of a safer world as enshrined in the preamble of the UN charter. The charter states that; one of the objectives is to save successive generations from the scourge of war. When this is interpreted broadly, it implies consideration of all stakeholders in peacebuilding, including but not limited to the state and non-state agencies. This cannot be done without interrogating the links between gender, culture, and religion in the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

Third, since the Catholic Church has been engaged in managing the conflict for an extended period, though with little success, there is a need to interrogate if they applied any gender-sensitive ideo-theological resources. I argue that there is a need to examine how the Catholic Church has used its ideo-theological resources in its catholic social thought and scriptures to enhance trust networks among the warring communities as a strategy in peacebuilding. Lack of utilization of the already available resources could have led to the failure to manage the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The above background to the study has indicated how masculinity is articulated within the indigenous institutions that are aimed at speaking on behalf of all in the community. This approach, seemingly a "men" affairs and "men speaking among men" provoked me to think about the gendered dimension of the conflict. Gender dimensions are articulated on two levels - first, masculinity and femininity formations; and second, gender socialization. How the Pokot and Turkana children are socialized informs their way of life as men or women based on their gender-assigned roles. Boys are taught to be tough as warriors and protectors of the community, and girls are taught to be subordinate to their husbands. This is reflected in the way they approach the conflict as adults, men as decision-makers, and women as passive listeners. This is how the Pokot and Turkana conflict management institutions have muted the voices of women-through socialization. Thus, this study aims to make women's voices heard in this engagement but must be concerning the expectation of a fixed understanding of gender. There is a need for a holistic approach that deals with the ingrained

aspects of socialization that speaks at par with other peacebuilding frameworks that discuss gender equality.

The Catholic Church existed in the region before independent Kenya in 1963. At the same time, the Church has been one of the intervening institutions in the conflict for decades with little to show in terms of ending the conflict. This could be attributed to its focus on increasing the numerical attendees instead of the actual conversion of the souls. To understand why the Catholic Church has not fully succeeded in managing the conflict, there is a need to have a postmortem on the approaches the Church has used in the past. This calls for a focus on how the Church has used its ideo-theological resources to manage the conflict, and how much it has been inclusive of gender in its strategies.

The following objectives guided the study to address this research problem.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. To trace the nature and persistence of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana in general.
- ii. To interrogate how the Catholic Church has been involved in the conflict management process and how it could enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution.
- iii. To examine how an intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict could contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions.

This study was guided by the following key research question and sub-research questions to achieve the above objectives.

1.4 Key Research Question

What gender-sensitive ideo-theological resources (social/biblical teachings, structures) could be offered by the Catholic Church in the region in the process of conflict engagement in the Pokot-Turkana conflict?

1.4.1 Research Sub-Questions

- i. What is the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana border, and why has the conflict persisted?
- ii. How has the Catholic Church been involved in the conflict management process, and how could it enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution?
- iii. How could an intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions?

1.5 Justification and Significance of the Study

This study brings to the fore the multi-level dimension of gender in conflict from the indigenous-cultural perspectives of the communities under investigation and from the catholic church's perspectives in addressing the conflict. This will be an intersection point where gender and religion meet and offer to mean to Pokot-Turkana conflict analysis and management strategies. As such, this study is significant as it will shed more light on the importance of consideration of gender in mainstream peacebuilding analysis. Besides, the findings will enrich practitioners on the existing links between masculinity formations among the Pokot and Turkana communities and how this is linked to the persistence of the conflict. The findings will add to the existing pool of knowledge on conflict management. Since theory informs practice, the results will be a resource to various stakeholders in peacebuilding, including the Catholic Church and state and non-state actors in the region.

1.6 Problems/Limitations and Scope of the Study

This study focuses specifically on the intersectionality of gender, religion, and culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015. I acknowledge conflict along the Turkana-Pokot border with their international neighbors of Ethiopia, Uganda, South Sudan, and Baringo and Samburu Counties in Kenya. However, this study is limited to the inter-community county border conflict, expressly along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor, which has been persistent for decades.

The study used qualitative methods in data collection and the Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) theory by Edward Azar, gender perspective framework by Pankhurst and Pearce theoretical framework by Eisenberg, and Kanyoro's feminists' hermeneutic interpretation of

cultures. However, the study recognizes other theoretical frameworks, such as Denis Sandole's three good pillar approaches, that are good in analyzing the causes, parties, and recommendations for the resolutions, although they were not be used in this study. The ones chosen helped situate and analyze the conflict within the intersection of gender, culture, and religion.

Other limitations encountered when collecting data included but are not limited to;

Personal biases which may be seen as a potential limitation. There are key areas that may lead to personal biases and requires me to state my position clearly. Qin (2016) describes positionality as the practice of a researcher delineating their position within the study, with the implication that this position may influence aspects of the study, such as the data collected or how it is interpreted. In this regard, being clergy and considering myself an insider could lead to data collection and interpretation bias. Kirk and Miller (1986) call on the researcher to control biases and personal viewpoints to remain objective. For Miller et al, (2012), objectivity can be broadly described as the extent to which research projects are undistorted by the biases of researchers. The view of objectivity is a necessary characteristic of research projects. This paradigm suggests a single, identifiable truth that can be learned through rigorous scientific research. To this end, "biases and personal viewpoints should be controlled for and, as a result, irrelevant to the findings" (Miller et al., 2012, p.573). Following Miller et al.'s argument, and being a man doing research on gender, I could easily fall into the same trap the Catholic Church leadership in the region fell into, where gender consideration was blurred by the very nature of its hierarchical structures on gender inclusion in its strategies. To ensure this does not affect the findings, I stated my position clearly within my introduction when conducting interviews, clearly outlining the reasons for conducting this research. This helped ensure that the reader understands that the findings are an interpretation of participants' understanding of the phenomena and a reflection of their lived experiences.

Maturation bias was a potential bias due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a possibility that context or people's attitudes may change. To ensure this does not affect my research schedule, I emailed the questionnaires to participants and prepared zoom interview meetings and phone call interviews to keep my schedule on course.

The covid-19 pandemic was another potential bias. There was a limitation regarding the participants that would engage in the study should data be collected online. This included a limitation in movement and restriction in gatherings (chief's briefings) where I would collect data through participant observation, which meant I would only be able to engage with participants online as a safety regulation. This led to participant selection being limited to individuals with access to smartphones or laptops with knowledge of using Zoom. To delimit this and remain on schedule, I emailed some of the questionnaires and even sent hard copies to those that were not accessible on the Internet.

1.7 Location of the Study: Turkana and West Pokot Counties in Kenya

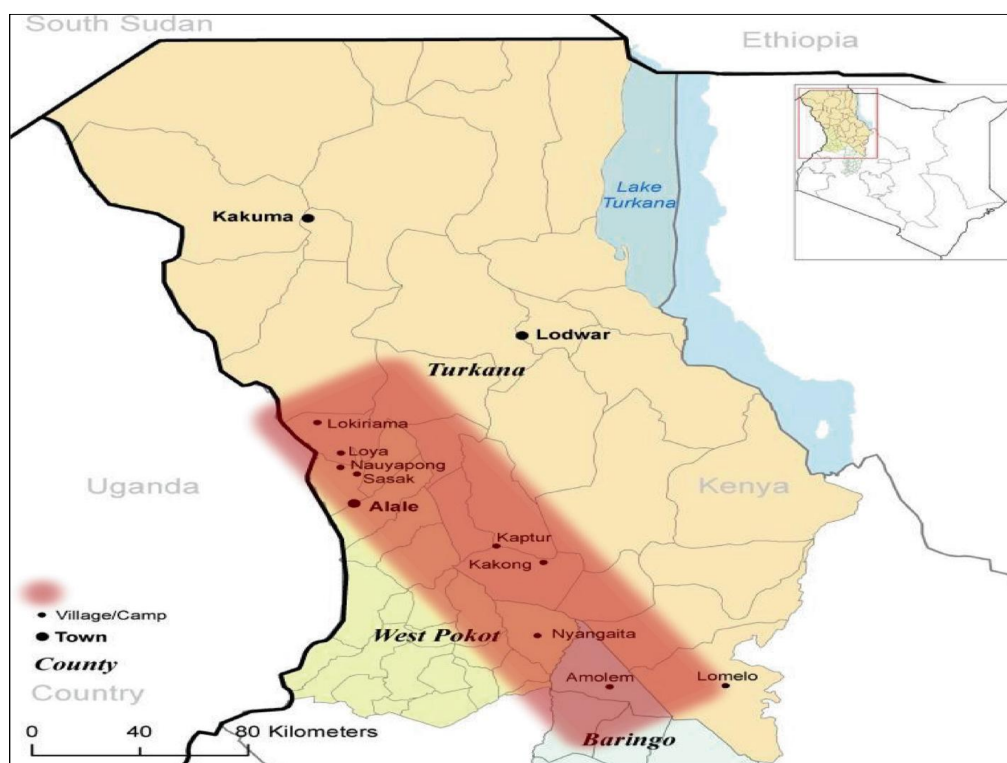
As mentioned in the background above, the conflict between the two communities can be partially attributed to their location; both groups are at the periphery of the country, a place that borders on some of the most unstable and violent countries in Africa - South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda (briefing paper no 4, 2020).

1.7.1 Turkana County

Turkana County in Kenya is occupied by majorly the Turkana-speaking community. Referring to Goldsmith et al. (2007), Turkana County is predominantly arid and semi-arid. It receives deficient and variable rainfall ranging from 150mm to 200mm in the central areas to over 400mm in the south. The county occupies most of the northwestern part of Kenya. The topography consists of low-lying central plains, which are 600m on average, and close to hills and mountains of 1800 to 3100m high.

There are numerous ephemeral streams in the region. Still, Turkwel and Kerio are the two main rivers on which the two communities depend, especially during the dry season. (Edmund, 1991). Goldsmith et al. (2007, p.35) state that the Turkana community primarily occupies the area, which is the largest county in Kenya. It covers approximately 77,000 sq. km and is bordered by the countries of South Sudan and Ethiopia to the North, Uganda to the West, and the south by West Pokot and Baringo counties of Kenya. In Turkana County, there is approximately a total population of 926,976, according to the 2019 Population and Housing Census (KNBS, 2019). Turkana County is one of the hardship areas within the larger pastoral region of northern Kenya. It is a hardship area due to its lack of infrastructure, harsh climatic conditions, and unpredictable rainfall.

According to Mkutu (2008), the pastoral areas of South Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya are characterized by cross-border cattle rustling, banditry, and ethnic rivalry. The porous and inadequately policed borders facilitate cross-border disputes. Most conflicts are related to the inability to access livestock, pasture, and water. The search for these resources necessitates movements, which bring the different communities into contact with each other. Such encounters could become conflicts as each group guards its territory and seeks supremacy over others (Schilling et al., 2012).



N
↑

Source: Schilling et al 2012

Key: The area shaded with pink color covers Kasei, Kainuk, and Sigor Divisions, which are within the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor. However, some of the critical areas under study are not indicated on the map.

Figure 1-1: Map Indicating the Area of my Study

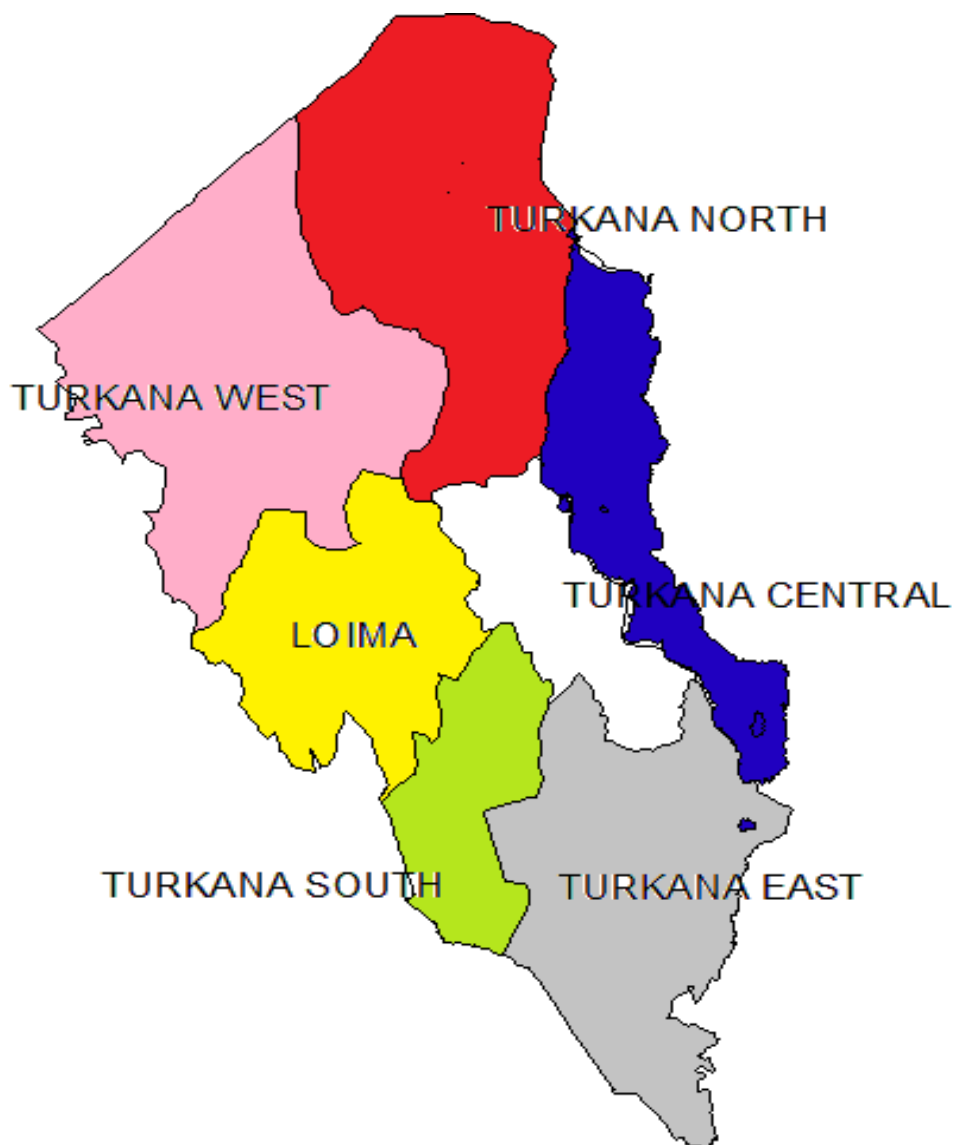


Figure 1-2: Map of Turkana County Indicating the Area of Study in Turkana South Sub-County - Turkana South Areas of Kakong, Kainuk and Loikapel

1.7.2 West Pokot County

According to the 2019 census, West Pokot County has a population of 621,241. It inhabits the semi-arid plains north of Lake Baringo (East Pokot), West Pokot, Pokot North, South, and Central Pokot (Districts) that makeup West Pokot County (KNBS, 2019). The Pokot are found in the western North Rift region of Kenya (Mwaniki et al., 2007), but of interest to this study are those living along the conflict corridor that is; Kainuk, Masol, Ombolion, Kasei, Alale, and Kacheliba (see Figure 1-1). For purposes of the Kenyan census, the Pokot are placed in the Kalenjin group, which consists of nine ethnic groups of people who share ancestry and history (KNBS, 2010).

According to Oranga (2007), the actual land inhabited by the Pokot can be classified into three major regions - the Proper Western part, the Central region, and the East Pokot region. Oranga describes the right western part of Pokot land as the region to the North and West of River Suam, which until 1970 was being administered from Uganda (Oranga, 2007) thus, earning the name 'Kenya *mpya*,' meaning new Kenya. Others called it Kara-Pokot, depicting the 'hybrid' of the Pokot, Turkana, and the Karamojong, who intermarried and acquired new traditions. This region extends to the Karamoja District, in Uganda. This partly explains why the inhabitants of these regions have double nationality in Kenya and Uganda and why the conflict was described as an international conflict. However, the cross-border conflict was managed by putting the Army along the border with the Ugandan government.

Oranga (2007) further describes the Central Region as the area that extends from Kapenguria town to Sigor, Lomut, Chepareria, and Kabichbich shopping centers, currently referred to as Central Pokot. Lastly, East Pokot is the Eastern part of the Pokot land, which extends to the western part of the Baringo District and is not part of this study.

The two regions mentioned above (west and Central areas), with the addition of North Pokot that was later created, are essential in this study as it provides an overview of the community under study. The North, central, and west Pokot cover the main areas of interest in this research on the Pokot County side, and many of the hotspots in the conflict corridor fall under this region. East Pokot is not part of this study as it falls in Baringo County.

1.8 Pokot Socio-Economic Activities

Arguably, some of the socio-economic activities of the Pokot community have been associated with the persistence of conflict. For example, Pokot men's wealth is counted in terms of the number of cattle one possesses. This would lead to cattle raids aimed at restocking after droughts, which are common to retain wealth that comes with socio-status in the society. Young men who go for the attacks for dowry payment and proof of their heroism are still associated with cattle. Oranga (2007) attests to the Pokot economic bedrock based on livestock rearing thus: "the Pokots' economy involves rearing of goats, cattle and sheep and to a small extent, camel. Besides, they practice agricultural farming. They live a semi-nomadic lifestyle in different degrees, depending on the number of livestock they possessed and fertility of the land " (p.30).

Pkalya et al. (2004) state that the Pokot territory has very moderate rainfall. For this reason, their way of life involves a lot of movement with their herd in search of pasture and water. This movement to neighboring communities' territories, such as Turkana, would lead to conflict. According to Osterle and Bollig (2007), Pokot herders protect themselves against various risks of a drought-prone environment by employing mobility, herd diversification, dispersal of livestock property, and widespread exchange networks due to pressure on the local economy.

The Pokots in high altitudes like Cherangani Hills, Sekerr Hills, and highlands around Kapenguria, keep animal practice limited to agriculture. They grow crops like millet cassava, vegetables, fruit, and maize. From this, they can make traditional food (*pan*) and beer (*komin*), without which no ceremony can occur. It is worth noting that foods and drinks accompany Pokot ceremonies. Women prepare traditional beer for their husbands during dowry payment and boiled maize for the young men going for the raids (as packed lunch).

Pokot and Turkana communities have specific fixed gender roles. Men in both communities are the custodians of moral norms and provide security, while women build houses and care for their children. However, in the recent past, women have taken guns to protect themselves in the absence of their husbands during raids.

Referring to the earliest documented sources from the Pokot Archives, specifically the works of Peristiany (1951), Schneider (1953) and Bollig (1998), the social organization of the Pokot people is based on patrilineal descent groups, age, and generation sets, and extended personal networks. Most of the local problems are solved using the traditional governance system. This is the institution led by the council of elders known as *Kokwo*. The council of elders comprises men of good repute and handles most conflicts that cannot be handled at the family level. It is the highest 'court' of appeal, and its decision is considered final.

Osterle and Bollig (2003) further argue that in the 1990s, a group of young educated Pokot elite established themselves in the growth centers as businessmen, politicians, and local development workers who now wield significant influence. Whereas the power of elders waned, parallel authority structures emerged. The educated group has recently been referred to as "a change agent" because of its crucial role in changing the household economy and the "belief system of pastoralists". To some degree, I concur with Osterle and Bollig (2003) that the upcoming group of elites has posed a challenge to indigenous institutions; however,

these institutions remain influential in the villages, specifically along the conflict corridor, which remains marginalized.

The nomadic life of the Pokot people has allowed them to come into contact with numerous people throughout history. This interaction allowed the Pokot to incorporate social norms and customs, including intermarriage with other ethnic communities. As Osterle and Bollig (2003) claim, many Pokot customs seem to be borrowed from the Turkana and Karamojong neighbors, for example naming of children, and oxen, the use of Diviners (*emuron*) to bless or sanction raids, the use of body tattoos to shed blood after killing among others. Bollig (1990) points out that intra-ethnic conflict management amongst the Pokot is characterized mainly by peaceful strategies such as the council of elders' sittings. Physical violence is only permitted in specific highly ritualized contexts such as cursing rituals, but inter-group conflicts are exceedingly violent. In this study, I question why intermarriages between the two communities have not positively minimized the conflict, as Osterle and Bollig (2003) put it. How much does intermarriage strengthen the bonds between the two communities? While the colonial regime had succeeded in keeping inter-group violence at low levels for some decades, inter-group raiding flared up once again in the late 1950s. I am also keen to investigate what the colonial government did to maintain intergroup conflict at low levels if they succeeded. What can we borrow from their approach today?

A series of age sets govern the Pokot community. Group membership is determined through the age at which one undergoes initiation. For young men, this is done at around the age of twelve and at the onset of menarche (Mwaniki et al., 2007). This age-set system, as explained below, has been associated with masculinity constructions that abet conflict.

1.9 The Pokot Age-Set System

The age-set system among the Pokot people is essential in this study as it depicts a male-based system that keeps women at the periphery. The age system is a social division among the Pokots, which like other Kalenjin groups, is exclusively male-based and consists of males who were circumcised and initiated at the same time, irrespective of one's background, that is, one's family clan or social status (Mwaniki et al., 2007).

A Pokot man is not a man until he is initiated into adulthood through a ceremony called *sapana*. This ceremony describes masculinity constructions among the Pokot people, the links to patriarchy, and the resulting position of women in society. In age status, the Pokot

rank as non-initiated until the performance of *sapana*. Within the category of the uninitiated, individuals belong to different grades according to their physical maturity and according to the ceremonies which have been performed on their behalf. The rate of a child's physical and social growth is not linked with that of a group of coevals. When entering the category of the initiated, the adolescent is inducted alone for the last time, but the moment he crosses this threshold, a new situation arises. The initiate is no longer a solitary youthful figure surrounded by a group of elderly kinsmen, as during his childhood ceremonies (Mwaniki et al., 2007). Round the fire on which is being roasted the ox he has speared; he is greeted by a group of young men similar physical and of the exact social age. They act as one body on all ethnic matters and develop a strong bond of brotherhood among themselves since they are 'age-sets' (*pin*). Thus, in every generation, the community of the Pokot is stabilized by the activities of various age sets that are together in harmony as a common communal goal in all spheres of life.

Besides, the primary role of the age set system seems to be presiding over rituals and making political decisions. Among the Pokot (Oranga, 2007), twelve age sets consist of nine major age sets and three minor age sets. The primary age grades are divided into three levels; senior members, middle and third level members, all of whom share a typical ornamental design. These ornaments, made of beads, are designed for each age group with which age-mates identify themselves, and no other individual can bear a similar beaded ornament.



Figure 1-3: West Pokot County Map Courtesy of GOK 2019 Census

1.10 Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, which is described by Creswell (2012, p.36) as a "process of research flowing from philosophical assumptions, to worldviews and through a theoretical lens, and a procedure involved in studying social or human problems". The approach taken under qualitative research was that of thick description. This approach allows me to discuss in detail the participants' experiences in the Pokot-Turkana conflict, either as state agencies, non-state agencies, religious leaders, or the people who have lived in the conflict corridor.

I will also use Focused Group Discussion (FDG) to explore a Collective Engagement on the experiences of the conflict. Guiding me into conversations, delving deeper into personal

experiences through Individual Interviews, and further exploring using a research diary as an essential tool in reflection and analysis. This will also acknowledge the sampling method used in collecting data. Ensuring that the reader understands the number of views and factors that informed the information collected will give an understanding of the measures taken to ensure that the study is reliable and has a degree of validity in the way in which it is to be carried out.

1.11 Theoretical frameworks

In this chapter, I reflect on three theoretical frameworks that are used while exploring the intersection of gender, culture, and religion when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict. They include Edward Azar's protracted social conflict theory (PSC), Kanyoro's feminists' cultural hermeneutics, and Pankhurst and Pearce's steps in engendering a disciplined framework to address the gender aspect missing in conflict management theory. I use Azar's PSC to analyze the underlying causes of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, seeking to understand why the conflict has persisted for decades since this study assumes that gender bias in the indigenous alternative justice systems has been a stumbling block to managing the conflict. I use Pankhurst and Pearce's gender lens, Pankhurst and Pearce, in analyzing the Pokot-Turkana gender roles in the conflict. This is complemented through Kanyoros' cultural feminists' hermeneutic lens to provide space to examine the narrative from the collected data.

1.12 Chapter Outline of the Study

1.12.1 Chapter Two - Literature Review

This chapter provides reviewed literature of the study. It enables the reader to understand the existing literature informing this research. The central theme of this study is an analysis of the intersections of gender, culture, and religion when engaging the conflict along the West Pokot and Turkana Counties border in Kenya. To employ this theme, I review relevant literature on gender, culture, religion, and conflict. By engaging different scholarly works in this field, I establish the existing gaps in knowledge that this study aims at filling.

As such, I structure my literature review by looking at these four categories: First, the liberal and indigenous conflict management approach. Under indigenous conflict management, I trace the role of these institutions prior, during, and after independence in Pokot and Turkana communities. Second, I also interrogate the role of culture both as a pawn and a resource in conflict and conflict management. Third, I engage gender as a unit of analysis and further locate gender within conflict and conflict management approaches. This entails engaging the

Pervasiveness of Patriarchy, and male privilege as the underlying system contributing to gender biases in conflict management approaches both by the indigenous conflict management and other closed societies such as the Catholic Church as experienced in the realities of individuals situated within the African context such as communities under study. This feeds into the understanding of gender and the need for gender inclusion in the broader peacebuilding frameworks.

1.12.2 Chapter Three - Theoretical Framework

This study applied a combination of theoretical frameworks in exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and culture in conflict and conflict management. Theoretical lenses be used in this research include; Azar's protracted social conflict theory in analyzing the nature and persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, Pankhurst and Pearce's steps in engendering a disciplined framework to address the gender aspect missing in conflict management theory. Also, I apply Kanyoro's feminists' cultural hermeneutics theoretical to address the intersections of gender, culture, and religion. The research problem informs the rationale behind my choice of these three theories - the persistent conflict between the Pokot and Turkana; the lack of gender inclusion in the intervention peace management strategies in the existing literature reviewed on indigenous conflict management approaches; and finally, the role of the Catholic Church in the region in mitigating the conflict.

1.12.3 Chapter Four - Research Methodology

This study is designed to employ qualitative research methods. As Creswell (2012) rightly claims, qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and interactions therein. This is an analysis that strives for a depth of understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and the intersection of gender diversity, religion, and culture in conflict and conflict management approaches.

Under qualitative research, this study uses a cross-sectional study design. This study design is deemed suitable for this study because it aims to find the intersection of gender, religion, and culture when engaging conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana by taking a cross-section of the population. Further, I examine the lived experiences of the people involved in the conflict, either living within or working along the conflict corridor. To do so, I used a Focused Group Discussion to explore a Collective Engagement on the people's experiences and the role of the Church in conflict management. This guided me into conversations, delving deeper into personal experiences through Individual Interviews.

Further, the chapter explores the use of a Research Diary as a vital tool in the process of reflection and analysis. This also acknowledges the sampling method used in collecting data. Ensuring that the reader understands the number of views and factors that informed the information collected will give an understanding of the measures taken to ensure that the study is reliable and has a degree of validity in the way in which it was carried out.

1.12.4 Chapter Five - Data Presentation

This chapter presents data collected from the field. I engage the data captured within the field, stating the processes followed in the data collection process. This entails giving an idea of my positionality/ situated-ness within the study, capturing my experiences as a researcher as recorded in the Research Diary. I also share my observations as I engaged in conversations with the participants/interviewees of this study. This also lays bare the experiences of the participants during the engagement. I also note the key themes that were identified using Thematic Analysis as my primary tool in the process of analyzing data. As such, the data collected is presented in themes and sub-themes across the different methods used in the research.

1.12.5 Chapter Six - Data Analysis

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected from the field as presented in chapter five. I describe the themes and sub-themes that were identified, thus bringing the literature, data presented, and theory into a conversation as I reflect on this study's objectives and the overarching research questions guiding this process. By sharing the observations made while conducting this study, I position myself in the debate by sharing my personal experiences and describing the documented contextual realities and experiences of the Turkana-Pokot conflict.

1.12.6 Chapter Seven - Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion

As I come to the end of this research project, this chapter provides a summary, recommendations, and conclusion of the entire study. The chapter also provide a platform for me to share my reflections on my journey in this research. I summarize the work done to fulfill the objective of this study, as I note the steps taken to respond to the over-arching research question and sub-research questions. Through this, I discuss the gaps noted in collecting data, allowing me to share my recommendations, leading to the conclusion of the work done.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter carries the general introduction of the research project. It has highlighted the intersection of religion, gender, and culture while engaging the Pokot-Turkan conflict. It has indicated, in the background of the study, how masculinity formations and socialization among the communities' cultures could be linked to the persistence of the conflict. I have also pointed out that the dominant patriarchal ideals of masculinity afford power to men and disadvantage women and thus need men to validate and demonstrate power through cultural practices and rites of passage.

Further, the chapter has highlighted the theoretical frameworks used for the study, Pankhurst and Pearce gendering a discipline, Edward Azar's protracted social conflict theory, and Kanyoro's feminists' hermeneutic interpretation.

In addition, the chapter has highlighted the study's methodology to answer the proposed research questions to arrive at the set objectives. I have also outlined the study limitations showing my positionality in the study.

The following chapter will engage the three main themes as I interrogate the existing literature. The ideo-theological resources used by the Roman Catholic Church and literature on gender and culture and how this literature helps situate the Pokot-Turkana conflict within larger peace-building frameworks.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, I have provided a general introduction to the study. This has introduced the central theme of this study, which analyzes the intersections of gender, culture, and religion when engaging the conflict along the West Pokot and Turkana Counties border in Kenya. To engage this theme, I review relevant literature in the field of gender, culture, religion, and conflict. By engaging different scholarly works in this field, I establish the existing gaps in knowledge that this study aimed at filling. This literature review is aligned with the objectives of this study which are the nature and persistence of the conflict, gender bias in the conflict management strategies, and the role of the Catholic Church and its intervention strategies in the conflict.

I structure my literature review by looking at these four categories: First, the liberal and indigenous conflict management approach. Here, I trace the role of these institutions prior to, during, and after independence in Pokot and Turkana communities. Second, I interrogate the role of culture both as a pawn and a resource in conflict and conflict management. Third, I engage gender as a unit of analysis and locate gender within conflict and conflict management approaches. Finally, I discuss the role of religion in the conflict, indicating the background of the history of the conflict and the role that the Roman Catholic Church in the region (Catholic dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar) has played in her effort to mitigate the conflict.

2.2 Interrogating Liberal and Indigenous Conflict Management Approaches

According to Olowu (2018), indigenous mechanisms are grass-root approaches to solving societal conflicts. These mechanisms use local actors and traditional community-based judicial and legal decision-making systems to manage and resolve disputes within or between communities. The word is invariably applied as a reference to that which was part of traditional, customary, pre-colonial Africa as opposed to models imported under colonial legal heritage. In other words, customary can substitute the expression "indigenous" in this study. Olowu (2018) further claims that liberal/ western/ formal justice mechanisms derive from the power of a specified entity within the nation-state. The official courts form the center of the formal justice sector. In this study, liberal justice mechanisms can be substituted

with the terms western legal systems or formal justice systems. While indigenous systems are homegrown, western justice systems are perceived as alien and a product of colonization.

Roger Mac Ginty, one of the prominent authors in the field of conflict management, uses the concept of "indigenous peacemaking". He postulates that the topic of indigenous peacemaking has been on the rise since the official recognition of the 1995-2004 years as a decade of Indigenous peoples by the UN (Mac Ginty, 2008). He points out three factors that have led to the increase in the general interest: They include: a deeper understanding of conflict complexity and the absence of a unified recipe for conflict resolution employing international organizations and coalitions; besides, greater interest in the topic of sustainable development, and the arguably profound role of local communities in the process and the increased importance of participation of local communities in the peace-building process.

Mac Ginty (2008) further argues that the resurgence of indigenous approaches to post-independence Africa is due to state weakness. That state's weakness makes it impossible for service provision and effective justice delivery, creating a power vacuum in communities. What Strange (1997, p.366) would call "the retreat of the State". At such a time, non-state agencies and cultural institutions such as the council of elders come in to fill the vacuum. In Sub-Saharan African societies, this framework is deeply rooted in principles of communal living and traditionalism. Ahmed (2013), in his book, *The Thistle and the Drone*, investigates the adverse effects of dismantling or weakening the tribal leaders in Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan and claims how they were effective in conflict resolution under Islamic tradition. He emphasizes the homegrown solutions to the conflict based on people's cultural practices while advocating for indigenous conflict management mechanisms.

In the same line of thought, Kenyan tribal elders' contribution to conflict resolution mechanisms is unique. However, they enjoy similarities with most Sub-Saharan African tribal elders based on shared cultural practices and religious worldviews. In as much as these cultural means are different from the Middle Eastern cultures, my was enriched by Middle Eastern literature on the tribal leadership council of elders referred to as *Jirga* and their conflict resolution mechanisms.

Huyse and Salter (2008), in their edited book on *Traditional Justice and Reconciliation After Violent Conflict: Learning from African Experiences* suggest that indigenous conflict mechanisms can complement conventional judicial systems in some circumstances. At the

same time, they caution against unrealistic expectations of traditional structures and offer an assessment of the strength and weaknesses of the exact mechanisms. Conventional structures favor males, especially in patriarchal societies such as the Turkana and Pokot. At the same time, they might be limited in their capacity to handle conflicts where police or military interventions are required.

This is why Zartman (2000) talks of complementarity between indigenous and legal systems in conflict management. Zartman (2000, p.25) argues that "Customary Conflict Resolution (CCR) is a concept gaining noticeable attention in the context of the inefficient performance of a country's legal system. As such, whatever the elders cannot handle, cases can be referred to judicial procedures. This is because indigenous systems are based on local ownership, respect for tradition, cultural continuity and local customs, but lack enforcement aspect, relying solely on social pressure and communal control". He further contends that traditional conflict management techniques still exist due to the existence of "communal spirit" and will to deal with conflicts intra-communally (Zartman, 2000). Thus, relationships and values are essential preconditions for customary conflict resolution. The practice could be successfully performed only in societies with a high presence of symbolism and a low level of social atomization. These characteristics are inherent features of Chiefdom and tribal models of socio-political organization, i.e., the pre-colonial state of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Buur (2007) supports a claim that in public and popular perception, traditional leaders, as actors, are frequently more respected than official authorities. The authorities are perceived as corrupt and brought from outside by colonial powers. Traditional leadership and practices are believed to have historical continuity, higher moral value, and local ownership. These local practices of Customary Conflict Resolution (CCR) can substitute demands for justice delivery and security provision - functions the state cannot perform. Muluken (2020), Mwangi (1996), Hare (1998) and Kajibwami (2019) have written on conflict management in the post-cold war period discussing specific peace processes. They have widely delved into the resurgence of the indigenous conflict mechanisms in handling protracted conflicts in Africa that were overwhelming to the state judicial systems, such as in post-genocide Rwanda. They view culture as a resource for conflict management and how many peacebuilding agencies have used it. Predominantly, culture informs indigenous approaches among the pastoral communities in northern Kenya.

However, Mac Ginty (2008), by contrast, cautions us that it's essential to not over-romanticize indigenous peace-making or customary conflict resolution since, in some cases, it may be exclusionary and affect the tendency of preserving power at the hands of chiefly classes. Besides, he argues, customary conflict resolution and indigenous practices of peacemaking could work only at a grassroots level, making it hard to replicate in other parts of the country, and subsequently having a low extent of national importance.

This literature review is enriched by the historical background that indicates the progression of the indigenous justice system before, during, and post-colonial periods. Before the colonial period, livestock transactions maintained social interactions that cut across ethnic boundaries and linked neighboring ethnic groups. That was grown out of mutual economic interests between groups that lived near each other. Mkutu (2003) argues that the Turkana District established dependent relationships with the Pokot and Karamoja, which allowed them access to dry season grazing across the border with Uganda. He adds that such relationships were very beneficial in securing individual survival during disasters such as raids, droughts, and diseases. The Pokot and Turkana, with other pastoral communities in the region such as Dassenech (Merle) and Toposa, would freely graze their animals in their neighbors' territory. The same arrangement is still in place today but has been disrupted by fixed borders established by the colonialists (Muwonge, 2009; Bevan, 2007). The key to this arrangement was the indigenous institutions mandated to resolve any disputes arising due to non-compliance to the established rules; payment of fines referred to as *Lapai* was the norm for failure to keep the rules, primarily when death occurred. The elders oversaw compliance with their established norms.

However, colonization came with border fixity and the introduction of the modern law system. The border fixity created barriers (Muwonge, 2009) between communities, restricted the movement of the pastoralists, and created the notion of difference among the Pokot, Turkana, and other pastoralists for purposes of divide and rule. Mkutu (2003) and Leff (2009) advance that the creation of fixed ethnic borders limited free access to grazing land and water and increased territorial, ethnic land area, and social conflict among the pastoral Africans. Such difference would complicate the use of *Lapai* in indigenous conflict management in inter-community disputes, which was not the case before colonialism. In addition, the introduction of western approaches to managing conflicts created at the expense of the indigenous justice systems was meant to weaken the latter. Besides, the British

government portrayed the indigenous justice systems as weak and encouraged their approaches, which were regarded as superior.

In addition, the British colonial government in Kenya adopted policies that contributed to pastoralist communities' economic and political marginalization. The colonial governments favored the establishment of white agricultural settlers and a plantation economy at the expense of peasant production. Colonial officials also regarded pastoralism as a primitive mode of production and tried to discourage it.

Arguably, the state of marginalization among the pastoralists in northern Kenya did not end with independence. As Pavanello and Scott-Villiers (2013, p.5) argue, “policies pursued by post-colonial governments failed to reduce the exclusion of pastoralists from mainstream national development. There has been a tendency to neglect the needs of pastoralists and even to envisage the gradual eradication of pastoralism. More attention has been paid to the interests of agriculture and urban dwellers”. Besides, the post-colonial period has seen a further weakening of traditional governance institutions in pastoral community areas in Pokot and Turkana counties. This is partly due to the failure of the Kenyan and Ugandan governments to realize the role of the traditional institutions in management at the community level (Ngeiywa & Benson, 2008).

As observed by Kendagor (2005), at the Pokot-Turkana border, the erosion of traditional governance institutions has weakened the ability of community elders to exercise control over young men, especially in a cattle raid. While "eldership" was merit before colonization, today, it can be attained by wealth. This is evident when wealthy politicians have crowned community spokespersons not based on merit but because they can facilitate the process. Youth are often well-positioned to attain wealth if they can access guns. Elders now have to 'negotiate' with such youth in a way that has not been the case.

While article 159 of the Kenyan Constitution (2010) mentions the alternative justice systems and the role of elders in conflict management, little has been done to empower them. At the same time, official administrative governance structures since the post-colonial period have been unrepresentative. Kendagor (2005) claims collaboration and coordination between the governments and their border societies are relatively rare unless a raid occurs. The authorities have undermined traditional structures without 'modern' alternatives being established to replace them. It is worth noting that colonial effects on indigenous justice

systems are felt even today among the Pokot and Turkana communities. However, today elders still possess power in handling intra-conflicts in the two communities under study.

One may question the preference for the indigenous justice system over western approaches by the two communities under study. Available literature indicates that liberal/western conflict management approaches have been used for centuries to resolve and manage conflicts even of high magnitudes. They are based on western cultures in a low context in nature. According to Bert (2008:18), common context culture is centered on individuals vis-à-vis collectivity (as in high context cultures). Liberal approaches to conflict revolve around court procedures resulting in a win-lose outcome. Indigenous approaches are geared towards win-win outcomes, healing, and reconciliation. Nganga (2019) argues that Pokot and Turkana communities prefer indigenous conflict management to court processes because there is a need for healing and reconciliation post the conflict period. Besides, indigenous conflict management approaches are meant for well-being and positive social change among warring communities. They help to exchange information and clarify issues about the conflict. The desired result of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms is a sense of harmony, solidarity, and shared dialogue among conflicting parties, not punishment (Alemie, 2018).

Adding to the importance of indigenous conflict mechanisms, Ajayi and Buhari (2014) argue that conflicts should be viewed as non-isolated events in their social contexts. The elders from a family, clan, or state see their traditional objectives in conflict resolution as moving away from accusations and counter-accusations, soothing hurt feelings to reaching a compromise that may help to improve future relationships.

Oranga (2007) echoes similar sentiments, although in different words, when he claims that family ties and community networking are constantly respected, maintained, and strengthened in Africa. Besides, when there is a dispute among various parties, priority is given to restoring relationships. Comparing the western liberal and African indigenous approaches, Bob (2000) posits that a western mediator may begin the exploration by tracing the steps of the parties to the point of the initial conflict. But an experienced African elder, considering the social realities, may start from a vantage point further back and try to form a frame of social reference.

In the same line of argument, Bukari (2013) claims that traditionally based mechanisms are still used in regulating conflict and providing justice. They further argue that before the conventional conflict resolution mechanisms, pastoralist communities such as the Karamoja cluster (where Pokot and Turkana fall) developed and refined their traditional mechanisms for easy planning, administration, prevention, management, settlement, and resolution of local level and cross border disputes. These approaches were based on solid traditional institutions led and controlled by the elders. The council of elders (Guy & Heidi, 2003) was the highest institution of conflict management and social-political organizations in traditional African society. Besides, elders were used to negotiating and making treaties on peacekeeping and using facilitated dialogues for resolving conflicts. The success of this institution was anchored on the fact that elders had a respectable status in society. Also, the criteria for choosing elders for these institutions were based on age and experience, equated with wisdom that gave them enough authority to be the final decision-makers in a conflict. In this study, I conceptualize the concept of 'eldership' in the indigenous justice systems enshrined in the council of elders as an institution. I further establish the linkages between the council of elders with Pokot and Turkana cultures, the spiritual/religious meaning within, and how this affects either positively or negatively conflict management.

Huyse (YEAR), in his article titled *Traditional Based Approaches in Peacemaking, Transitional Justice, and Reconciliation Policies*, underscores the undervalued indigenous conflict management resource that is found in the sphere of traditional social mechanisms. In the same article, other scholars such as Bert (2008), Dias-Lambranca (2008), Latigo (2008) and Alie (2008) highlight the potential roles of indigenous mechanisms in reconciliation and transitional justice strategies used in Africa. Huyse argues that Uganda utilized the indigenous reconciliation practices of the Acholi people to achieve a peaceful settlement of the country after more than a two-decade-long conflict and the reintegration of the former child soldiers back into the community. This indicates that indigenous mechanisms are increasingly in the policy spotlight in Africa, Kenya and other parts of the world. Besides, understanding the Pokot and Turkana indigenous conflict mechanisms will add to the existing cultural ways of resolving conflicts in pastoral communities in northern Kenya.

2.3 Intersection of Culture and Conflict

One cannot envisage the concept of elders without attaching it to the cultural foundation of a given society. This is because elders' standing in the communities is founded on the group's

culture. The council of elders cannot be separated from the culture, as it is an indigenous institution that historically handles disputes among pastoral communities. However, what is culture? Clerk (2002), in her book "In Search of Human Nature," defines culture as "beliefs and assumptions by which individuals make sense of experiences that are hidden deep within the traditions...cultures are shared values on which rest the customs, norms, and institutions of a particular society" (p.1). In her definition, she claims that when these shared norms and values of 'culture' are threatened by members of the same group or a different group, as in the case of Turkana and Pokot, conflicts become inevitable.

Deducing from Clerk's (2002) definition, culture is a worldview within which people form their perceptions and ideas about the world and others. Thus, culture can perpetuate conflict when there is a conflict of interest. Each party in the dispute uses culture to advance their interests while simultaneously holding their cultures sacrosanct without leaving room for others. It is important to note that various contrasting definitions of culture have elicited debate. Clerk's definition suffices in this study and is used to conceptualize a description of the council of elders (*Kokwo*) for Pokot and (tree of men) for Turkana communities, respectively), in addition to their women's forum called *Mboi* as important cultural institutions.

On the same note, Riek et al., (2006) observe that, in general, intergroup threat occurs when one group's actions, beliefs, or characteristics challenge the well-being of another group. Intergroup threat has traditionally been depicted as competition for resources or status but also occurs under conditions of social comparison (Bar-Tal, 2019). At such a time, the elders who are custodians of the community moral code intervene to bring order and harmony to the community. This makes culture a key component in inter-group conflict. Trujillo et al. (2008), Avruch (2012) and Boulding (2000) have highlighted the importance of culture in dispute resolution. At its most basic, the reason is that since conflict is often culturally located, it is sensible that attempts to resolve and manage the conflict are respectful of culture (Avruch, 1998).

LeBaron (2003) and Seul (1999) note that "culture is an essential part of conflict and conflict resolution." Its role in "othering" or "differentiation of "we" and "them" will be examined in the context of the Pokot and Turkana conflict. Also, the same culture will "tap" the resources available in their cultural practices. Since Pokot and Turkana cultures form their worldview, their perception of women in conflict management mechanisms could easily be

gender-biased as *Kokwo* (council of elders) and (tree of men) rests squarely on men. However, LeBaron (2003) goes beyond such binaries and claims that cultural influences and identities become important depending on context. When an aspect of cultural identity is threatened or misunderstood, it may become relatively more important than other cultural identities. This fixed, narrow identity may become the focus of stereotyping, negative projection, and conflict. This is a prevalent situation in intractable conflicts. Therefore, it is helpful for people in conflict to have interactive experiences that help them see each other as broadly as possible, experiences that foster the recognition of shared identities and those that are different.

It is evident from the literature available to make an observation that indigenous conflict management systems are intertwined with the cultural practices of the people. This is a clear indication of the intersection of culture and conflict. Utne (2001) contends that conflict's resolution technique among pastoralists exists in the form of unstructured or informal dimension. The systems comprise the elders' meetings and directives, cultural orientations, and value-based approaches. Utne further argues that the decisions arrived at in those approaches are more of a consensus, and the agreements are ritualized in unpublished binding rites. My coinage of 'ritualized peace agreements' will play a role in collapsing the held dichotomies between culture and religion discussed within the lens of indigenous conflict management. Muchungu (2012) adds to the conversation when he claims that negative cultural practices have been the cause of the conflict. It is also true to claim that indigenous conflict management mechanisms are ingrained within the cultural worldview of the Pokot and Turkana communities. This means that Pokot and Turkana cultural practices can be used both as a 'pawn' in instigating the conflict and as a resource for conflict management.

The African indigenous method has been in place among many African societies including but not limited to the Pokot council of elders, Turkana Tree of men, and *Gacaca* courts in Rwanda. Initially, the *Gacaca* courts settled village or family disputes. The courts were informal means of solving disputes around theft, marital issues, land rights, and property damage. They were constituted as village assemblies, presided by the elders, where each community member could request to speak. The trials were meant to promote reconciliation and justice for the perpetrator in front of family and neighbors. The critical component that this study is borrowing from *Gacaca* courts is the ritual aspect that accompanied the practice

and that brought closure to the affected. Confession in the Catholic Church is accompanied by the cleansing ritual informing of absolution/forgiveness from the priests.

Mwagiru (2000) cites the UN Charter (Article 33[1]) and the African Union (Article 3[4]), which specify the methods of peaceful settlement of disputes. Mwagiru (1998) classifies these methods as either coercive or non-coercive. Among the coercive methods are judicial settlement and arbitration. The non-coercive include negotiation, mediation, and problem-solving workshops mainly anchored on the cultural practices of a people. This study uses some non-coercive methods because they align with the Catholic Church's essence, which promotes the spirit of dialogue, reconciliation, forgiveness, and voluntariness. According to Oranga (2007), the exploration of indigenous societies and their conflict management mechanisms were resolved after careful investigation of the causes of the conflict in both warring communities involving members of society. The resolution culminated with a ritual. These reconciliatory rituals cemented societal cohesion even with the ancestors. Among the Pokot and Turkana communities, for instance, the rituals that involve swearing under oath (*muma*) are rituals that many people avoid because going contrary or failing to honor the stipulated oath guidelines has dire consequences (Oranga, 2007). In Kenya, such rituals are common among other communities such as the Agikuyu's *Kwihita na Teri* and *kuringa thenge* (translated as taking oath by the soil or by the goat). The Agikuyu people revere the two due to their deadly effects on those who go contrary to their guidelines. These rituals were cultural but, at the same time, religious, as there were rites followed when administering them. However, these rituals brought harmony and discipline to society; they bound people in the oath of peace, solidarity, and respect.

Literature indicates that indigenous conflict management mechanisms are culturally sensitive and thus remain popular among the indigenous groups who value honor and saving face in times of Conflict. Wanis (2012) argues that rituals [as part of cultural practice] have long accompanied words, and symbolic representations of the ending of conflict help us commemorate, witness, close, and celebrate such events. Thus, indigenous reconciliation and peacemaking practices resolve local conflicts and manage the webs of social relationships in indigenous communities in culturally relevant ways. Bert (2008, p.28) concurs with Wanis when he claims that "... increasingly the accepted wisdom is that the best resources—hence the best "answer"- too many seemingly intractable dilemmas of managing the consequences of the violent conflict lie within countries themselves". This translates to countries' cultural environment.

The literature on mediation advocates for the role of the third party in conflict resolution. Bercovitch and Jeffrey (1992), Claas Knoop (2014) and Ury (2000) have investigated the need for mediation and third-party roles in conflict resolutions. The function Augsburger describes as "more than the ability to define and clarify, to separate and discern, to link and reconcile opposites Augsburger (1993, p.90). Lederach's (1995) "elicitive" and "prescriptive" models point to elders' role as mediators. The current study draws from his elicitive model, which emphasizes "homegrown" and "bottom-up" approach in mediation (Korir, 2009). It is a model which treats each conflict as unique and needs a unique approach considering cultural specifics; rather than the prescriptive model, which is a "top-down" approach. Lederach (1995) refers to the prescriptive model as "western approaches" that is a form of "template" with guidelines that are to be applied in all conflicts.

This literature on mediation is vital in looking at the specific, practical contribution of gender as the mediators or "go-between" disputant parties in conflict and indigenous conflict management mechanisms. The question I ask is: since the bottom-up approach is better, according to Lederach (1995), can there be gender balance at the bottom rather than keeping some at the periphery? How can we gender the indigenous conflict management strategies that are bottom-up but lacks gender consideration? Such conversation will lead to a better understanding of how the Catholic Church and other intervening parties/mediators can make their approaches more productive in considering the role of culture and gender.

This cultural lens advocated for by many scholars calls for a holistic approach where all peacebuilding actors are crucial in coming up with long-term peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies. As Utne (1996) rightly puts it, there is a need for African intellectuals and professionals in conflict studies to seek to teach African ethical values based on their cultures in modern academic structures, especially in conflict resolution as a strategy for managing conflicts. In this approach, intellectuals and professionals will give their interpretations based on their vast experience on the theoretical level. Elders at the grassroots will provide their views according to their experience at the grassroots and community level. Utne (1996) calls for caution while addressing questions about the nature of involvement between professionals and the village elders to distinguish between the initiatives of the community members working for change within their societies and those who work in cultural contexts other than their own. Cultures are rich and diverse in terms of what they can offer in peacebuilding, and there is a need to narrow the gap between the professional and non-professionals who tap from the same cultures.

Like many African communities, the Pokot and Turkana communities have positive cultural values that underlie their indigenous justice systems. African traditional values are anchored on African cultural values that bind the society/community to one another. Lack of these values or erosion of these values leaves a society vulnerable and susceptible to conflicts. Manuel (2000), referring to the African spirit of oneness/togetherness, brings in the concepts of "warp and weft," which is about two interwoven elements that have been used from the beginning of weaving to date. The concept denotes that even if the most complex designs are incorporated into a piece of cloth, the basic structure is formed by two interwoven sets of thread, traditionally called the warp and weft. The concept is evident in the conflict transformation system of Africa.

Manuel (2000) further elaborates that; one of the two essential elements of 'warp' is the tradition of family or neighborhood negotiation, which elders generally facilitate. 'Weft,' on the other hand, is the attitude of togetherness in the spirit of humanhood. This is referred to as *ubuntu* in the Zulu language of South Africa, *Ujamaa* in Tanzanian socialism, and *nyumba* a concept in Kenya's Agikuyu community denoting a family feeling of togetherness. These two concepts imply and emphasize the communitarian spirit, association, and relationships, as well as the collective goal of peace and co-existence. In the past, the concept of *ubuntu* has been applied in social-political, economic, and cultural settings. However, this term is highly contested and requires explanations for its applications in conflict management. To do this, I define it and show how it is employed in this study.

There are various definitions of *ubuntu*. For example, scholars such as Tutu (2000), Wichtner (2012) and Hailey (2008) claim that *ubuntu* has been interpreted to mean different things at different times depending on the usage, such as *ubuntu* is the opposite of vengeance, confrontation, and retribution. At the same time, the concept denotes humanness, harmony, and reconciliation. Akinola and Okeke (2018) categorize *ubuntu*, an African ideology, as an indigenous approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. They explore the place of *ubuntu* in the continent's peace and security projects. They argue that despite the utility of *ubuntu*'s principles in a few post-conflict societies, there exist difficulties involved in its adoption by state institutions. However, adherence to the principles of *ubuntu* by the state would drastically reduce threats to peace and security in Africa.

The most recent definition was provided by Mugumbate et al. (2020, pp.4-23) who defined *ubuntu* as "A collection of values and practices that Black people of Africa or African origin

view as making people authentic human beings. While the nuances of these values and practices vary across different ethnic groups, they all point to one thing – an authentic individual human being is part of a larger and more significant relational, communal, societal, environmental, and spiritual world". The significance of such common values in society helps minimize conflicts or become the base for conflict management.

More so in conflict management, Teffo (1994) argues that *ubuntu* underscores the importance of agreement or consensus. He contends that African traditional culture has an almost infinite capacity to pursue consensus and reconciliation. The typical conventional African democracy informs this in the form of (sometimes highly lengthy) discussions until an agreement arrives (we argue until cows return from grazing-a Kenyan saying). This is typical of the council of elders deliberating on conflict issues. Broodryk (1997) concurs with similar sentiments, arguing that although there may be a hierarchy of importance among the speakers, every person gets an equal chance to speak up until some agreement or consensus or group cohesion is reached. However, for this study, the terms *ubuntu*, *ujamaa*, and *nyumba* are limited to mean oneness, togetherness, and their importance in conflict management. Thus, any other usage of the term will not be applicable since it will not fit into this conversation. Mungambate's definition suits the concept of *ubuntu* in this study.

It is worth noting that although *ubuntu* articulates such essential values as respect, human dignity, and compassion, the desire for consensus also has a potential dark side in terms of which it demands oppressive conformity and loyalty to the group. Failure to conform will be met by harsh punitive measures (West, 2014; Oyowe, 2013). Such a derailment of *ubuntu* is entirely unnecessary. Besides, there are many different (and only sometimes compatible) definitions of what *ubuntu* is.

The feminist critics of *ubuntu* claim that although *ubuntu* is often posed as a super value, it is sometimes employed as a tool to maintain the status quo of patriarchy. As Chisale (2018, p.1) acknowledges, previous research has demonstrated that *ubuntu* is generally seen “as a double-edged sword that empowers women on the one hand by advocating for notions of equality and human dignity and, on the other hand, oppresses them by perpetuating the masculine authority and patriarchal values”. Despite such criticisms, which cannot be ignored, this study demonstrates that there are gendered conceptions of *ubuntu* that can provide opportunities for *ubuntu* to be used to address progressively and correct the gendering of indigenous justice systems among the communities under study.

The key learnings in this section are many and can be summarized down to three. First, although this study does not deal with the question of what necessitates the choice between liberal (western) and indigenous (African) approaches among the pastoralists from the literature examined, the choice would depend on maintaining the social fabric and communal cohesion.

Second, the council of elders' institution is based on the two communities' culture and are inseparable. Culture informs people's behaviors and forms their worldviews. Furthermore, finally, one cannot separate the cultural practices of the Pokot and Turkana communities from their religious beliefs.

Thus, I interrogate how the Catholic Church in the region has used these indigenous institutions, if any, in mitigating the conflict. In other words, I seek to know whether the Catholic Church considers Pokot/Turkana cultural values enshrined in their indigenous conflict management approach. Or how can the Catholic Church use the indigenous conflict management resources without compromising its dogma/doctrine? How can the Catholic Church in the region make use of the spiritual dimension found in the Pokot-Turkana cultural rituals to enhance conflict management strategies? Following Mbiti (1991), the spiritual dimension of conflict resolution refers to creating and restoring impaired relationships with God, the spirits, ancestors, family, and neighbors, as the case might be. In this context, rituals play an essential role in the reconciliation process. They help to link people to the past, present and future. This is in addition to gender consideration in indigenous conflict management and the Catholic Church strategies in mitigating the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

2.4 Intersection of Gender and Conflict

Gender is described as a “set of behavioral, cultural, psychological and social characteristics and practices associated with masculinity and femininity”. According to Tolbert (2000, pp.99-104), "gender from a modernist perspective is generally understood as a set of innate social traits that naturally accompany biological sex". Modernists would further argue that it is a universal and essential social correlative of binary biological differentiation.

Contrary to this held position, postmodernists argue that gender is a socially constructed set of behaviors with deep political roots enacted in multiple and different ways in each historical and local setting. I could elaborate on these differences with various social categories. Still, the point is made; namely, that gender is a time and culture-specific

construction dependent on or linked with other social categories such as class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and religion. This definition makes gender 'a fluid and shifting' category, for females and males of the same society and country will be constructed differently (Tolbert, 2000, p.99). The two communities under study are better described by the coinage "penis centered" since masculinity is socially and culturally constructed depending on having or not having a penis that qualifies one to be a man or a woman. This becomes the basis of the association of gender roles. Unfortunately, this leaves a vacuum regarding how LGBTIQ+ people are treated.

The Turkana and Pokot communities believe that women are not equal to men. This is reflected in the composition of their indigenous justice systems and even the name depicted for these institutions. For instance, for the Turkana community, they call it the tree of men, while for Pokot, they call it the *Kokwo* (council of elders) who are men. Tolbert (2000, p.100) argues that such was the case in the United States in the 1970's thus: "gender was viewed as the universal ascription of unequal social power relations, allowing one gender to dominate and requiring the other to be subordinate, on relatively minor biological distinctions...all men were privileged by these unequal ascriptions while women were disadvantaged".

Nicholson (1994), to some degree, concurs with Tolbert (2000) on gender, defining gender as the social construction of social relations. He agrees that these social and cultural constructs have led to male privilege in patriarchy societies. He observes that "... one may understand gender in terms of the individual gender identity (social norms and socially constructed personal identity)" (Nicholson, 1994, p.79). Masculinity is, for example, associated with objectivity, reason, autonomy, and production, in contrast to femininity, which is equated with subjectivity, feeling, and dependency. Sandra (2022) also contends that one may understand gender in terms of structure, i.e., the organization and institutionalization of social action in public and private spheres. She further argues that gender is not biologically driven but a socially constructed process. Individual gender identity is a fluid and transformative construction derived from certain notions of femininity and masculinity, which, in turn, are very much based on the distribution of labor in public and private spheres (Sandra, 2022).

It is worth noting that the question of gender in peacebuilding has been ongoing for quite some time. It has been over two decades since the passage of the United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325. The resolutions contained in this document reaffirmed

the importance of women's participation and involvement at all levels of the peace and security agenda. The resolution underlined the gradual acknowledgment among international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) that women and men have differential experiences both during and post-conflict and that women have a unique set of challenges related to peacebuilding and security (Beever, 2018). Besides, the informal contributions of women have been highlighted and declared invaluable to resolving conflict and building sustainable peace (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011). In addition, one of the millennium development goals is gender equality and women empowerment.

While this study looks at gender considerations in the peacebuilding existing frameworks/institutions in the two communities, Tolbert (2000) cautions us that unequal social power relations could be a possible hindrance to managing the conflict and thus lead to the persistence of the conflict. An argument supported by Diaz (2010) is that formal peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives continue to ignore or marginalize issues of gender and women's involvement in formal missions. Moreover, as observed by Strickland and Duvvury (2003), those which take into account issues of gender, overwhelmingly fail to address structural inequalities and power dynamics, which are the foundation of gender discrimination.

Besides, Puechguirbal (2010) argues that women are not more vulnerable per se in times of war; they are made more vulnerable because of pre-existing inequalities in so-called peaceful societies. Pankhurst holds a similar view that women do not suffer because of intrinsic weakness but because of their societal position (Pankhurst, 2000).

In her dissertation, Cordula (2000) argues that gender, as an analytical category, must be gender-sensitive. She contends that gender as an analytical category offers us some analytical space to discuss the following points: While looking at individual gender identity and gender symbolism, one can focus on theorizing identity and its social construction. Moreover, analyzing the personal gender identity also points to the changing nature of identity/ies: Questions of the individual gender identity and gender symbolism allow us to ask about the historical variability of identity as a social construction. Furthermore, the analysis of gender symbolism and gender structure highlights the necessary theorizing of social change next to historical variability. Gender structure puts center stage in theorizing hierarchical power structures and their taken-for-granted distribution. Like most other pastoral communities, the Pokot and Turkana communities are patriarchal. This study will

investigate how these two communities conceptualize Gender in their indigenous conflict management mechanisms. Whether men's and women's voices are equally heard or women's voice is muted.

Referring to Woroniuk (2000), the goal of engendering society or politics is not a reversal of discrimination or an attempt to make men and women similar. Rather, it is a means to attain equity through equal opportunities and life chances. As long as men and women can make their own choices and have equal opportunities and access to resources and power, gender equality can vary according to culture and society. Nevertheless, "as traditionally, men have had a stronger position than women in societies around the world, the values and norms in society have been shaped accordingly" (Kvinna, 2001, p.6). In other words, there are male biases, and gender roles so far still "diminish women's socio-economic positions in most societies" (Tickner, 1999, p.9). This makes "equal treatment of women and men...insufficient as a strategy for gender equality if there is no parallel shift in discriminatory attitudes that exist toward women (as well as men) and institutional practices and social relations that reinforce the lower status of women (Woroniuk, 1999, p.2). This is common among the pastoralist communities in Kenya, where the two communities under study fall. When there is no equal treatment of men and women in all spheres of life (i.e., political, economic, and cultural), which the Catholic Church in the region seems to perpetuate by not providing equal space for all in conflict management, then actual conflict management might remain a mirage for more decades to come.

In defense of equal treatment for all gender categories of sexual orientation and identity, Butler (1990) argues that discriminatory attitudes must be dealt with. For Butler, gender is neither essential nor biologically determined; instead, it is created by its performance and is performative. Butler claims that the term performativity was first used in Austin's (1962) work on performative utterances that refer to speech acts or behaviors that create the things they describe. For example, when a pastor or a priest makes the statement, "I now pronounce you man and wife," it not only explains what the person is doing (i.e., pronouncing something) but also creates the marriage (i.e., the thing it is pronouncing) through the pronouncement. Butler (1990) builds on this work by exploring how gender works similarly; gender is created by its performance.

However, as this binary performance of gender is almost ubiquitous, its performative nature is concealed. The binary performance of gender is further reinforced by the reactions of

others to those who fail to adhere to gender norms. Butler (1990, p.522) argues that “Discrete genders are part of what 'humanizes' individuals within contemporary culture; indeed, those who fail to do their gender right are regularly punished”. This punishment includes the oppression of women and the stigmatization and marginalization of those who violate the gender binary, either by disrupting the presumed link between sex and gender (e.g., transgender individuals).

These adverse reactions and the binary performance of gender, Butler argues, do not exist by chance. Instead, they serve as tools of a system of power structures that are trying to reproduce and sustain itself, namely a patriarchal system of compulsory heterosexuality in which women are a means of reproduction to men as their mothers and wives. These power structures are both prohibitive, repressing deviating gender performance, and generative creating binary, hetero-normative gender performance.

Building on Butler's (1990) work, I analyze how the indigenous conflict approaches can incorporate gender or how women can stand up as women (not necessarily against men) and take their path in managing the conflict as an affected party. This will be a call to action to overthrow these structures and end the problematic practices they engender. Thus, redefining the Pokot-Turkana men's role of "defining" women through their existing cultural structures gives women equal chances in society.

Regarding analysis, McCall (2005), a feminist scholar, claims that gender cannot be used entirely as a single category of analysis in women's studies. As such, she advocates for intersectionality, which is the relationship among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formations, as gender is the central category of analysis. McCall further stresses intersectionality as the most important theoretical contribution to women's studies, claiming that it has become the "gold standard" multi-disciplinary approach for analyzing subjects' experiences of identity and oppression (McCall, 2005, p.1771). She adds that the concept of 'intersectionality' is the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination.

Arguments supporting a gendered approach to peacebuilding and conflict resolution come from a diverse set of actors, from various disciplines, with different political opinions and recommended methods. Many of these arguments, especially those brought into mainstream discourse, are instrumentalist in their approach, seeing women as instrumental in bringing

about sustainable peace and focusing narrowly on 'what women can do for peace. Puechguirbal (2010) believes that peacebuilding initiatives and movements employ essentialist definitions of women, confining them to their roles as mothers and caregivers and thus denying them access to the broader agenda of peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Puechguirbal (2010) further claims that many authors argue that the UN continues to employ essentialist definitions of women as mothers and signifies innocence, vulnerability, and in need for protection. Arguably, this focus on vulnerability and protection continues to form part of a stereotype of women, which aims to justify their exclusion from negotiations and the influential roles involved in peacebuilding and security. This kind of narrative by the essentialists needs to be debunked. Since this has led some authors to argue that the celebration of the women, peace and security agenda, and UNSCR 1325, is little more than empty rhetoric (Puechguirbal, 2010).

As victims, actors, and perpetrators in conflict, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution, excluding women from formal processes is inexcusable. Their inclusion is imperative to reaching inclusive peace agreements that lead to positive and sustainable peace (Sweetman, 2005). This means a further strand of a gendered approach to peacebuilding and conflict resolution is the requirement that women must be involved at all levels and all stages of the peacebuilding process. The different roles that gender play in society give them different insights and knowledge; at present, much of women's knowledge and wisdom is not considered.

In this study, I outline the range of arguments within the overall gendered approach, ultimately concluding that even a simple gendered system understood by the UN and other peacebuilding community actors could fail to build a sustainable peace if it remains only in scholarly works and fail to trickle down to grassroots such as in community or group (Turkana and Pokot) conflict management institutions. In other words, theory must inform practice and vice versa. As elaborated in the previous section on indigenous conflict management systems, men take center stage while relegating women to essentialist roles, thus downplaying their capacities in peacebuilding. Moran (2010, p. 265) claims "that even those countries that have transitioned to democracy and relative stability face the threat of falling back into conflict, and the proliferation of light weapons and endemic violence against women continues". Given this context, a different approach is necessary, one that takes a more holistic vision of peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

There are various examples from feminists' scholarly conversations that outline the gendered approach's success in peacebuilding. These scholars underscore how the gender framework has been used in conflict analysis and management. For example, Peterson (1992) identifies three ways feminists have looked at the connections between peace, war, and gender. Essentialist feminism argues that "including women in peacebuilding makes a difference because women are more peaceful than men," and standpoint feminism "urges us to look at women's experience of war and peace for more sustainable peace to emerge from the processes of peacebuilding" (p.141). Essentialist and standpoint feminism both "leave the foundations of peacebuilding unexamined and thereby run the risk of repeating and reproducing mainstream thinking and practice," delimiting women's agency by confining it to the "binary opposition established by modernity" (p.150).

Referring to Tarja (2010), a post-structural feminist approach also interrogates the discursive function and representation of "local women" in peacebuilding. "The wish to hear the voices of 'local women' is distinctly problematic and opens up a critical research agenda that seeks to examine the role of colonial and subaltern subjects in the construction of first world agency." Drawing from Gayatri Spivak ("can the subaltern speak?") and Judith Butler ("what can we hear?"), she points out, "Our capacity to hear these voices is limited and, therefore, a single-minded attempt to include local women in peacebuilding should be scrutinized with care by taking into account both the global macro practices and local micro-practices of power that shape the formation of subjectivity" (150-151). A challenge to policymakers and researchers, then, is to be sensitive to "dangers of projecting and being complicit in liberal hegemony" (Tarja, 2010, p.150-151). So, beyond arguing for reflecting on the contextual embodied reality of women and using this as the starting point for the discussion, intersectional feminism argues for the multiple axes of oppression and the positionality of women.

According to Thornton and Whitman (2013), "[...] most of the twentieth century, women and issues of gender have been ignored or marginalized rather than mainstreamed". Zelizer (2013, p. 103-104) argue that "efforts of ensuring that the different needs of women and men are taken into account in all peacebuilding policies and interventions have failed". This argument indicates that indigenous mechanisms have missed innumerable opportunities for peacebuilding and creating sustainable peace by not incorporating gender roles in their search for peace along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor. This study argues that gender-neutral is discriminatory against women and thus makes them less likely to be successful.

Augsburger (1992, p.164) contends that “women possess many powers, but they are limited, channeled, suppressed and denied by men's power. The more valuable, crucial, or brilliant women's gifts, the more male-dominated structures are willing to exploit them or take credit for them”. Although Augsburger (1992) acknowledges the social and political powers of women's networking, which is most often equal to and frequently superior to the relationships maintained by males within and between families, he fails to point out the specific contributions of women. His work does not highlight women's role in overly male-dominated societies concerning inter-group and inter-community conflicts. Instead, it gives a general overview of the strength of gender.

Chitando and Chirongoma (2012) support African women feminists' theory that insists on the conceptualization of African women's agency individually and collectively in coping with and resisting interpersonal violence. The underlying assumptions of African feminism are based on hearing the voices of female victims of hegemonic masculinity that use its power to wage violence on women in contexts of politically induced civil strife. They would further contend that the theoretical redemptive masculinity paradigm challenges the social constructivists' notion of masculinities and agitate for responsible masculinities. Redemptive masculinity views religion as a tool of masculinity transformation.

Similarly, Johnson (2005, p.6) contends that "society is patriarchal to the degree that it promotes male privilege by being male-dominated, male-identified, and male-centered". This is a male-centered approach to most issues culturally ingrained among the Pokot and Turkana communities. Many scholars who have written on the Pokot-Turkana conflict in the past would agree with Kanyoro (2002); this cultural limitation that hinders women from reaching their full potential has left them at the periphery instead of being in the mainstream peacebuilding framework. The redemptive masculinity theory will provide a practical paradigm shift for the Pokot and Turkana council of elders to acknowledge the role of women in peacebuilding. Besides, the redemptive masculinity theory will speak to the study and address the concerns of scholars who have been critical of the religious/church discrimination against women on specific structural issues, as highlighted below, and elaborate on the need for the Church leaders to be gender-sensitive in handling the conflict.

Ignoring underlying gendered power relations and societal inequalities can lead to an oversight of some of the fundamental causes of conflict (Anderlini, 2007) and undermine work toward building sustainable peace. Furthermore, painting women purely as victims can

obscure women's agency, undermine the positive result of some women resisting conflict and violence, and weaken future potential (Strickland & Duvvury, 2003). Moreover, it also belies women's diverse roles and positions in society. Women are also involved in supporting conflict, agitating violence, and directly participating in combat (Pankhurst, 2000).

Dekha Ibrahim, a mediator and a woman living in a Muslim context, emphasizes the need for local women's voices to be heard in conflict management. This will give credibility to the resolutions and provide a gender perspective to them. This approach is also a unique and non-antagonistic way of dealing with gender questions in a culturally sensitive context. She argues that the voices of women peacebuilders must be heard if the conflicts are to be managed. She observes that for long, communities in northern Kenya have muted women's voices. In particular, the voices of women mediators working in such contexts remain largely unheard because they are seen far removed from the centers of political power dominated by men (Dekha & Mason, 2019).

Ogundipe-Leslie (1995) concurred with Dekha's sentiments when she argued in support of the inclusion of women in development; "Nigeria may be best developed with the inclusion and rediscovery of the role of women," thus putting women right at the center of development. Kelly (2000, p.62) argues that; for African feminists, any "peace" must involve a transformation of power relations – not only between nations or ethnic groups but also between men and women. In any "nation-building" agenda, African women must no longer remain silenced and stigmatized by their experiences.

Musimbi (2002) underscores the same sentiments, albeit in different words, when she provided space for local women from her village to share their stories and make their voices heard. Kanyoro (2002) points out that she realized that cultural worldview could become a barrier to women's development agenda by becoming strict custodians of the same cultures that oppress them. Lederach (2010, p.10) explains that peacebuilding in any conflicting society should empower the 'indigenous' while respecting and promoting human rights and cultural resources within a given setting. Lederach further claims that peacebuilding should forge to address problems like patriarchy and the ethnic divide of civil or pro-violence civil societies.

Bouta and Frerks (2002) raise critical questions concerning gender consideration; How do development institutions working on armed conflict integrate gender issues into their policy

and real-life situation? Where can women be located in these very critical institutions? Bouta and Frerks (2002) and Dubravka Zarkov (2018) provide an elaborate exposé on the role of women before, during, and after armed conflict, including women as victims, combatants, peace activists, and participants in formal peace politics. In the same line of thought, this study investigates how the gender dimension fits in this conversation with the objectives mentioned earlier. The study explores how to ensure that gender-specific needs are identified and addressed within the larger conflict management framework. That is, how can these needs be addressed and strategies placed that can minimize gender discrimination?

In Louise's (2001) article "Engendering peace in Africa", the author postulates that women's peacebuilding capacities must be critically investigated. He recommends a gendered approach as a corrective to stereotyped perspectives about women and peace and gender-blind experiments. He further argues that such an approach may be found realistic and valuable, not only in everyday circumstances but especially in war and post-war situations. On the same line of thought, Schirch (2008) observes that a broader range of efforts should be put in place by peacebuilders to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people recover from violence in all forms at all levels of society and in all stages of conflict. Correspondingly, Shank and Schirch (2008, p.220) emphasize that in disputes where power is unbalanced, there is little public awareness of the issues, and it is often challenging to get conflicting parties to negotiate.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (2002) echoes similar sentiments, albeit in different words, when it argues that crisis can break down social barriers and provide windows of opportunity for change concerning gender roles and stereotypes, providing opportunities to increase women's skills, income-generating chances, and overall empowerment. There is a need to incorporate a practical gender perspective in the planning and implementation process after the post-conflict period. As I had argued before, gender as a social construct leads to socially gender-assigned roles; the (UN) 2002 argues that there is a link between specific experiences of women and young girls to their social status in society. Besides, the United Nations claims there is a need to examine the impact of armed conflict on women and girls; the role of women in peacebuilding; and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution (p.4). The role of women in peacebuilding has a long history in the international arena since the first world war.

There is now a consensus on the need for a gendered approach at the international level. This results from long-term activism and lobbying by feminist and women's networks and organizations worldwide (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011). Indeed, ever since women from different nations met together in a congress of women to protest against the First World War and founded the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which is still active today, their capacity to build consensus was realized (Sharp, 2012; WILPF, 2012).

Scholars who have written on conflict and gender in the Kenyan context point to women's power that needs to be explored fully in inter-community disputes. For example, Manuel (2000) narrates that the Luo women of Kenya were at the forefront in the various stages of peace processes, for instance, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding. They used methods such as direct or indirect interventions through elders and women's networks that existed within warring parties. Manuel further contends that in sensing conflict or an outbreak of war, Luo women would come together and discuss their issues. They would then ask the elders in their clan or community to dialogue with their adversaries to make peace and resolve their differences in a non-violent way.

Brock-Utne (1985) concurs with Manuel (2000) and asserts that this was necessitated by the fact that women knew their children were the most significant casualties and vulnerable in conflict situations. Citing various examples of African women participating in peacebuilding, Brock-Utne (1996) claims that women in Pokot, Samburu, and the Agikuyu communities, had the capacity and ability to make peace at the eleventh hour. He observes that, in these communities, women would block, with their hands raised, the path of warriors who had set out for battle, and the warriors would then turn back. No warrior or elder could ignore the women's cry for them to refrain from fighting, and no woman ignored her moral obligation to intervene and create peace in the face of violence. Utne (p.23) further postulates that among the Agikuyu community of Kenya, a woman only needed to stand between two men engaged in a fight for them to stop. Also, in the Luo community, if one sought refuge in a woman's hut, the opponent was forced to abandon the fight and communal conflicts.

The examples mentioned above further the argument that conflict resolution should not be the responsibility of a privileged few. Instead, it should be a participatory process involving all affected parties. Conflict management is a gender affair and not a reserve of the council of elders as it has been portrayed in some indigenous approaches where only men are allowed

in the highest decision-making institution. In this regard, I do advocate for the essentialist approach discussed above. On the contrary, I align with the contours of intersectional feminism and focus on instrumentalist and participation gender approaches, how various roles and functions define gender in society and how this plays out in conflict management. For many actors in the international arena concerned with peacebuilding and conflict resolution, the logic behind supporting a gendered approach is that it "enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of peacebuilding and that women's peacebuilding efforts are a valuable resource for the development of sustainable, inclusive approaches to peace and security" (Onslow & Schoofs, 2010, p.11). This can be defined as the 'instrumentalist' approach, which concerns what women can do for peacebuilding, not the reverse (Strickland & Duvvury, 2003, p.15).

Based on the previous postulations, the study interrogates the peacebuilding initiative (2009), which argues that there are two critical dimensions in a gendered approach to peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Firstly, the approach must acknowledge differences in gender experiences, ensuring that women's interests and needs are met. The second approach will involve recognizing women's critical roles in peacebuilding and conflict resolution and facilitating those roles wherever feasible (peacebuilding initiative, 2009). However, I must acknowledge that it is impossible to subdivide the different strands relating to these two dimensions since they make sense when approached together.

When one talks of mediation among the pastoralist communities in general, what comes to mind are the indigenous institutions under the council of elders. However, gender question is rarely discussed. While we have a vast body of literature about "resolution," "mediation," "negotiation," "management," "prevention," and "transformation" (Ramsbotham et al., 2005), we know relatively little specifically about how gender along Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor make contributions in "ending," "stopping" or "preventing" conflicts. In other words, scanty literature touches on gender inclusion in the indigenous institutions of the council of elders and how they use gender aspects to resolve/manage conflicts. This leads me to ask; how does gender contribute to existing conflict management mechanisms locally? It is by responding to this question that will make women visible agents of conflict management mechanisms.

Besides, I rethink conflict management theory to take gender into account and incorporate gender into conflict management along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor. To achieve this,

this study employs an intersectional approach. According to McCall (2005), an intersection theory in social sciences denotes the crossing/meeting point of culture, religion, and gender as social categories and patriarchal systems of power and dominance in the communities under study. As clearly depicted in this literature review, these categories and systems include social identities and space provided in religion and culture to Pokot or Turkana women and how this has directly or indirectly perpetuated the conflict. In this context, the intersectionality of these categories specifically addresses how patriarchy and other discriminatory systems/indigenous institutions contribute to creating layers of gender inequality structures that prefer male privilege among the Pokot and Turkana communities.

Although this literature examines the role played by indigenous justice mechanisms dealing with the legacy of violent conflict in some African countries, it is centered on men. This literature has demonstrated a dearth in systematic attempts to analyze the contribution of gender diversity directly in restorative justice, specifically in community or intergroup conflicts. In addition, it is clear from the literature that "elders" means men or a group of men that forms the highest decision-making institution among the pastoralists, which begs the question; should gender consideration be a fundamental component of issues discussed for the good of all in the society? If yes, why do "elders" only discuss such community issues?

The section below will interrogate the religious dimension and how the Catholic Church in the region interconnects it to the conflict through various intervention strategies. Furthermore, how the Catholic Church can advocate redemptive masculinity that views religion as a tool of masculinity transformation is discussed.

2.5 Catholic Diocese of Kitale and Lodwar Engagement in the Conflict

This section addresses the general question of what religion is and the difference between organized religion and indigenous religion. Moreover, it establishes a conversation between the Catholic social teachings on peace and reconciliation with Turkana/Pokot beliefs and cultures that sustain the conflict in the light of the Gospels. The subject of conflict management and peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict societies has received much academic attention from peace studies scholars.

According to Adossi (2009), Mwaura (2013) and Cutter (2005), peacebuilding is a process and not an event, and as such, there is a need for concerted efforts to mitigate and manage

conflicts. Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2012, p.23) argue that peacebuilding “becomes an essential mechanism of restoring trust for building a shared future, thus, averting future violence”. Analyzing and understanding how conflicts are caused and resolved requires ongoing study. This not only justifies this particular study but also is an invitation for scholars in the field of peacebuilding to investigate how practice informs theory in terms of gender inclusivity in conflict management. This study examines the role of the Catholic Church in the Pokot-Turkana conflict corridor in the two dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar in overcoming violence through their existing structures and by gender consideration. One way the church may understand the dynamics of any conflict is to examine the attitudes and perceptions of survivors of the conflict (both victims and perpetrators). Critical questions about the Catholic Church's involvement in peacebuilding efforts in the region must be posed: Whose interests should the church's mission in peacebuilding serve? Is there a need within the Catholic Church for gender sensitivity and standards of competence for peacebuilding?

2.5.1 Defining Religion

The definition of Religion is controversial and complicated in religious studies, with scholars failing to agree on any single definition. For example, Durkheim (1912) defines Religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them." Further, Religion is "the self-validation of a society employing myth and ritual."

On the other hand, Cummings (2018, p.10), in his book, *Defining Religion: Essays in Philosophy of Religion*, provides essential elements of Religion. He claims that a religious tradition has at least three primary components, each handed down and developed in many ways traditions transmit. One factor is a mythic, philosophical, or theological cosmology defining the fundamental structures and limits of the world and forming the primary ways in which cultures and individuals imagine how things are and what they mean.

A second essential element of Religion is ritual. Rituals are a finite set of repeatable and symbolizable actions that epitomize things a tradition takes to be crucial to defining the normative human place in the cosmos. Early layers of ritual epitomize the hunt, nurturing of agricultural fertility, acknowledgment of political authority (worship of gods as lords), and acts of commitment to other individuals.

The third essential element is that a tradition has some conception and practical procedures for fundamental transformation aimed to relate persons harmoniously to the normative cosmological aspects, a path of spiritual perfection. In theisms, this usually means salvation, a proper relation to God. In Buddhism, it means transformative enlightenment about the truth of change and suchness (Cummings, 2018).

The second essential element is vital in this study, especially in the intersection of culture and Religion, where the difference between the Pokot and Turkana cultures collapses. I analyze the aspect of rituals and how they are used in masculinity and femininity construction aspect of rituals and how they are used in masculinity and femininity construction.

It is also essential to engage Religion from the Catholic perspective, which is the core of this study, how the Catholic church defines Religion; "Religion.... means the voluntary subjection of oneself to God" (The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913). Both Pokot-Turkana culture and the Catholic Church have many rituals that accompany words. Specifically, the sacrament of reconciliation in the Catholic Church, which entails building newness in individuals and communities, the Pokot and Turkana rituals are rich in their reconciliatory tones, such as in *Muma* ceremonies. This begs the question: How can the two rituals, one anchored on indigenous Religion and the other on Catholic faith, be used to manage the conflict?

2.5.2 Traditional African Religion

Olupona (2001), in his book *African Spirituality: Forms, Meanings and Expressions* contents that traditional African Religion refers to the indigenous religions of African people. It deals with their cosmology, ritual practices, symbols, arts, and society. Because Religion is a way of life, it relates to culture and society as they affect the worldview of the African people. It comprises the following elements: spirits, rituals, the divine, and harmonious living.

While Foster Wallace (2018) defines Religion as "a set of rituals, rationalized by myth, which mobilizes supernatural powers to achieve or prevent transformations of state in man or nature", Schmidt (1971) is of the view that religions are systems of meaning embodied in a pattern of life, a community of faith, and a worldview that articulate a view of the sacred and of what ultimately matters.

African religious and cultural traditions understand reconciliation as peace and a return to harmony manifested in a person's interior and exterior state. Reconciliation is also beneficial and active goodness, which shows care and concern for the well-being of others. Generally, African indigenous methods fall under the symbolic approach to conflict, which uses rituals as a reconciliation method. This study investigates whether it is possible to integrate Pokot and Turkana rituals with their cultural practices in conflict management approaches since they are part and parcel of the African identity, along with the biblical and theological teachings of the Catholic Church.

As described above, religions from the western and the traditional African understanding have a lot in common. This common aspect acts as the glue that holds members of a given community together. Religion, as defined by the western and African perspectives, pointing to the intersectionality of Religion and conflict will provide a deeper understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict in terms of causes and possible mitigating approaches.

2.6 Religion and Conflict

Considering Religion more elaborately and its significance in conflict management, Seidel and Abu-Nimer (2017) argue that the role of Religion in peacebuilding and transformation cannot be understated. It is essential yet can be complicated. In their argument (Appleby, 2000), they claim, "Religion has not received proper attention but has been regarded as irrelevant or worse as an obstruction to an effective resolution of conflict".

Appleby's view could be translated to mean that a society's development into a modern state requires the relegation of Religion to the periphery. Seidel and Abu-Nimer (2017) debunk this view. For them, this view relies on the illusory assumption that people and policymakers can mechanically separate or debunk politics from Religion. This has proven inaccurate, especially concerning non-western societies and their governance frameworks, particularly in areas where conflict is occurring.

This study assumes that there exists a link between Religion and conflict; the main challenge facing conflicted societies such as Turkana and Pokot communities and other parts of the world with similar setups is to manage this link in a way that allows conflict to be peacefully resolved.

To establish the process involved in this kind of transformation /management, this study ask a fundamental question: What role does Religion play in conflict management and transformation?

In response to this question, what comes to mind is the existing differences between traditional and organized religions. Although both are based on cultures, the western and African cultures, differences exist within their practiced cultures. The Pokot and Turkana traditional religions and cultures are intertwined, so one cannot put a clear-cut line between them. This would mean the cultural cause of conflict in the two communities could also be termed religious.

Any approach, which relegates Religion to the periphery, especially in the Pokot-Turkana conflict, is inadequate since one cannot argue on the Pokot and Turkana indigenous justice system, which is based on culture while pushing Religion to the periphery since culture and Religion in the two communities are used interchangeably. Kanyoro (2002) argues that African cultures and religions are tied and explained interchangeably. One can claim that Pokot and Turkana cultures have been categorized as causes of conflict (Oranga, 2007). Religion and culture cannot be de-linked from conflict transformation along the Turkana-Pokot Border. More specifically, this study explores the relationship between Religion and cultural identity and its impacts on peacebuilding contexts and conflict management processes. Literary, this would place culture and Religion as pawns and resource for conflict management in the Pokot and Turkana setup.

The role of Religion has received some attention in the literature on conflict transformation. Scholars such as Abu-Nimer (1996, 2003), Appleby (2000) and Gopin (2000) have discussed broadly how conflict and violent conflict, in particular, have been expressed through frameworks of religions. The role Religion plays in conflict resolution through the deployment of its value, rituals, and institutions, such as the Catholic Church in the two counties of Pokot and Turkana, have been explored. Bishop Korir, the lead mediator in the Pokot-Turkana conflict, reflected on the nature and effects of his identity as a Bishop and peacebuilder with his religious affiliation. In his book on peace at the grassroots, Korir (2002) investigated the impact generated when appeals to Religion are used to produce transformative moments in conflict management.

Johnston and Sampson (1994) agree that Religion should be taken seriously because it can create opportunities for spiritually motivated peacemakers. Similarly, Sampson (1997) explores the role of those peacemakers motivated by Religion or spiritual concerns who take on the functions of advocates or educators. She further points out that peacebuilding and conflict resolution best understood in religious terms are not learned because they emerge from religions but rather from secular contexts. Appleby (2000) uses the phrase "ambivalence of the sacred" while reflecting on the potential for Religion to work, either as a resource for violent conflict or a tool for promoting peace and non-violent resolution of conflict situations, thus generating constructive effects. Arguably, Religion is part of the problem informing conflict, but it also has liberating potential.

Appleby's (2000) coinage and usage of the phrase "ambivalence of the sacred" speak directly to my study. Religious differences are not an issue in the Pokot- Turkana conflict from documented sources; however, it remains a widely untapped resource in conflict management. This makes religion and spirituality a rich area that has the potential to open up productive lines of inquiry and practice, which this study explores. Religion's reconciliatory aspects could significantly boost conflict transformation if well utilized by conflict managers. However, this is only sometimes the case. Seidel (2017) rightly observes how Religion has been in peace processes as an addendum rather than at the centre of the peace agreement processes. Seidel cites scenarios from Afghanistan, where the United Nations Mediation process may inject a few prayers into the initial or final ceremonies of a peace process or secure blessings of tribal leaders when an agreement is signed, thus placing Religion at the periphery. Incorporating such instrumentalized religious gestures and symbols may be counter-productive in the view of the local audience, who might delegitimize the agreement. In such a case, Religion is treated as an add-on to a fundamentally secular process rather than as something to be taken seriously on its terms (Seidel, 2017). As such, this study asks how Religion can be incorporated into mainstream peacebuilding rather than be taken as an "add-on." Contrary to this, in this study, I look at the feature of Religion's positive values, its constructive role, and a common concern for humanity that has been neglected or left outside the peacebuilding analytical framework.

2.7 Catholic Social Thought and Conflict

The Vatican II council passionately called believers to cooperate with all, aided by Christ, "in securing among them peace based on justice and love and in setting up the instruments of peace" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 77). The rich biblical texts on reconciliation inspire the church's

work. There is the narrative of reconciliation between Jacob and Esau (Genesis 33:1-20), the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), and the images of reconciliation between God and Israel throughout the Old Testament prophets.

In addition, referring to Pope John XXIII's 'Pacem in Terris' Catholic, Social Teaching has included a strong focus on peace, with connections to reconciliation and justice following naturally. In the same document, Pope John XXIII claims that: Scripture and theology are the basis for the approach to reconciliation found in official Catholic Social Teaching. Its core principles are human dignity, a preferential option for the poor, global solidarity, the pursuit of human rights and the common good, and the significance of mercy.

John Paul II (1984) adds to the Catholic social teaching's claims; that the church feels obligated to go to the grassroots of the conflict to bring healing and re-establish, so to speak, an equally original reconciliation which will be a practical principle of all true reconciliation. Therefore, the church has the mission of proclaiming this reconciliation. This study investigates the extent to which the Catholic Church in the region has used these theological resources, such as reconciliation, healing, and justice, in managing the conflict. Specifically, I interrogate how the Catholic Church has been engaging in this conflict. What has it done to intervene? What specific things have the church done? Were there scriptural verses or theological teachings being used? How did the church deal with cultural practices promoting raiding?

Building on John Paul II's the need for the church to be a reconciling voice between warring communities, Magesa (2012, p.90) argues that "in the context of change now taking place on the African continent, the church has a role to play in reducing or eliminating the root causes of simmering or open conflicts and effecting true peace. One way of generating true peace is by becoming agents of peace and reconciliation". In the same line of thought, Lederach (2010) contends that, in post-violence contexts, it is crucial that church actors, both individuals, and church-affiliated organizations, take on church-specific roles and contribute from their strengths in ways consistent with their Christian mission. Lederach argues that church actors have a faith-based mission rooted in Gospel values and social teachings on justice, peace, and reconciliation and possess numerous assets that are particular to them. This is coupled with many advantages the Catholic Church enjoys globally and more so to the remotest parts.

Lederach (2010, p.34) has described this as a "ubiquitous presence" with both horizontal (geographic) and vertical (structural) reach. He further argues that, in addition to spiritual, theological, ethical, and pastoral principles, in some contexts, the church has a wide geographical presence through a variety of institutions, as well as access to people across a broad range of social strata, structures, and circumstances. This study was enriched by unpacking the aforementioned ideo-theological resources within the Catholic social teachings and interpretations of biblical texts and themes and tying them to the Pokot-Turkana cultures, practices, beliefs, and values that enhance conflict management or critique them. However, I did not delve into Biblical text analysis or exegesis.

West (2014) interrogates how biblical texts and African context illuminate or dialogue with one another. To realize this, he uses two approaches; the first approach seeks to evaluate elements of African culture, Religion, beliefs, concepts, or practices in the light of the biblical witness to arrive at a Christian understanding of them and bring out their value for Christian witness. The second approach concerns what a biblical text or theme has to say in critiquing a particular issue in society or the church's life or what may draw lessons from a biblical text or theme for a specific context. Borrowing from the two approaches, this study interrogates how the biblical texts and Catholic social teachings (which provide ideo-theological resources) can dialogue or illuminate the Pokot and Turkana communities' cultural practices, beliefs, and practices that cause conflict, projecting that these resources can transform the conflict.

This means the focus will be on both values in the cultural practices that can be tapped into conflict management and a critical analysis of the harmful cultural practices or liabilities and challenge them with the biblical message and Catholic social teachings. Thus, seeking answers to the questions; how can there be an explicit conversation between Catholic social teachings, biblical texts, and cultural realities of the two communities' understudy? What does a biblical text or theme have to say in critiquing the Pokot-Turkana conflict? What lessons may be drawn from a biblical text or theme for this particular conflict? West (2014) has employed a comparative or evaluative approach which I borrow in this part of the study. By so doing, I link my overall research question: What gender-sensitive ideo-theological resources (social/biblical teachings, structures) could be offered by the Catholic Church in the region in the process of conflict engagement in the Pokot-Turkana conflict? I interrogate the responses in the interviews and focus groups through these questions. I intend to use the

intervention strategies used by the Catholic Church in the past to evaluate the current situation through the responses provided through interviews.

In response to some of these questions from the reviewed literature, the Catholic Church has played a significant role in dispute resolution. Throughout the 1990s, the Catholic Church got more involved in monitoring political development and human rights issues impacting the two communities through its Justice and Peace commissions. Despite considerable opposition from the local chief, a government appointee, they opened a Justice and Peace Office in Lodwar among the Turkana in 1993 and West Pokot in 1999 (Dolan, 2007).

The Catholic Church believes that the state's conflict resolution policies and procedures are insufficient to deal with the dispute or provide an alternative way of life for the people involved (Catholic Diocese of Lodwar Pastoral Plan, 2007). According to Catholic Church employees, pastoralist areas were still characterized by harassment, intimidation, and denial of fundamental human rights until the conclusion of the KANU regime in 2002 (Dolan, 2006). Furthermore, it is claimed that government politicians treated their districts as personal chiefdoms, obstructing development projects such as school construction and harassing the young local educated elites, all while "being aided by a repressive, corrupt provincial administration determined to keep these areas designated as Kanu Zones" (Dolan, 2006, p.47).

What is stated concerning Catholic Church activities in Kenya that are primarily related to the conflict is based on the fact that the aim of the Catholic Church's actions as a non-state institution in Kenya is not controlled per se. The promotion of peace and justice, the sacredness of human life, human rights, integrity, development, and ethical character formation of human agency are all central to the church's mission in Africa (Flannery, 2000; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace [PCJP], 2005; Synod for Africa, 2009; Francis, 2015).

According to Johnson and Sampson (1995), Devine (2011), Tomalin (2013) and Mandaville and Silvestri (2015), the Church operations are primarily not aimed at ensuring the people of the North Rift's obedience, law, and order. Law and order are social-political issues in nature and so fall under the jurisdiction of the Kenyan government. They are an integral aspect of the state's obligation to offer political goods and services to make its rule legitimate

in the eyes of the public or the ruled. However, Kenyan laws govern all Catholic Church peace and development operations in Kenya.

These scholars (Johnson & Sampson, 1995; Devine, 2011; Tomalin, 2013; Mandaville & Silvestri, 2015) agree that Religion is rapidly recognized as an essential factor in conflict resolution and development, statecraft, diplomacy, and national security around the world. Lamb (1985, p.141) concurs with this line of thought when he claims that "today ... the Christian Church is undoubtedly the most dominant institution in Sub-Saharan Africa". As a result, the Catholic Church is arguably the most prominent among faith-based organizations when it comes to engaging in activities linked to peace, such as conflict resolution, social improvement projects, and reconciliation processes (Gifford, 2009). In addition, Catholic social teaching principles align with conflict theory's analytical aspects, which deal with structural violence, conflict management, conflict settlement, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, and reconciliation (Lederach, 1995; Burton, 1997; Appleby, 2010).

As a Track I and II conflict management actor in each African country, the Catholic Church uses its Catholic Justice and Peace commissions as the primary means of monitoring and reinvigorating programs on conflict resolution, civic peace, justice, educational and medical development, and environmental integrity (Dolan, 2006; CJPC, 2013). In Kenya, the Catholic Church's social teaching and activism share the same vision and aim (Good, 2007; CJPC, 1988; CJPC, 2005; CJPC, 2013; Benedict XVI, 2011; Mwaniki, 2015; Francis, 2015). The Catholic Church's presence in Pokot and Turkana counties cannot be understated. Since its reach is constantly present in the remotest places, it collaborates with ethnic communities experiencing conflict through its development projects and justice and peace commissions in each diocese (Dolan, 2006; CJPC, 2013).

Besides, the Catholic Church's mission and service activity in Pokot and Turkana is centered on issues of peace and development, as well as concern for the integrity of creation and the ethical and moral formation of human agency (Good, 2007; Mwaniki, 2015; SCCRR, 2015). Currently, the Catholic Church's role among the Pokot and Turkana peoples entails providing medical and educational services and some peace activities of varying scope and substance (Catholic Diocese of Lodwar Pastoral Plan 2007-2012, 2007; Mwaniki, 2015).

Following the views of Good (2007), Mwaniki (2015), Pierli (2015) and (CJPC, 2015), preaching, facilitation of peace meetings, fostering tolerance, assisting the displaced, supporting schools and students, feeding programs, helping the injured, and building educational and health facilities are among the activities of the Catholic Dioceses of Lodwar and Kitale. However, the church's provision of such services is significantly hampered by the rugged terrain and the sporadic cattle raid and counter-raids. The Catholic Church collaborates with traditional ethnic conflict management institutions due to its presence (Koros, 2014).

Through the work of its Justice and Peace commissions, the Catholic Church frequently serves as a vital link between such procedures and alternative methods arising from the state and NGOs (Catholic Diocese of Lodwar Pastoral Plan 2007-2012, 2007). Mburu (2007) argues that all parties involved in the Pokot-Turkana conflict should support and benefit from the work of Christian missionaries in the area since, unlike the state, they are often successful in bringing traditional pastoral adversaries together under one roof due to their presence. In the Pokot Turkana conflict setting, the Catholic Church sees the critical need to address behavioral and structural violence issues. In doing so, it incorporates components of conflict resolution theory into its actions to assist people in realizing their full potential. This requires addressing basic human needs, as well as conflict transformation at the interpersonal, relational, institutional, and cultural levels, all of which lead to reconciliation based on peace, truth, justice, and mercy (Njue, 2010; Memorandum of Understanding, SCCRR & AMECEA, 2015).

A report by CJPC in Lodwar and Kitale claimed that the degree of the Catholic Church's projects' success has yet to be determined definitively through research. The ongoing nature of the conflict under investigation raises concerns about the Catholic Church's ability to successfully manage the conflict both in terms of conflict management resources and technical expertise. The Catholic Church's efforts in the ongoing conflict are most visible in its justice and peace commissions and social development activities governed by respective offices in the dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar (CJPC, 2013). Both elements (justice and peace commissions, as well as social development) are, in reality, inextricably linked.

Bishop Korir, keen on the inseparability of peace and development, built on that and used Catholic Social teachings to advocate for restoration and reconciliation in the Pokot-Turkana conflict (Korir, 2009). As mentioned in the background, Bishop Korir, the lead mediator in

the Pokot-Turkana conflict, was informed by daily reports of the sufferings, killings, and displacement of the people in the region due to the conflict. His primary focus was the cessation of hostility among the warring communities. He would call for meetings of the opinion leaders and non-state agents working in the region to discuss how to end the conflict. Also, he would personally facilitate seminars and workshops calling the communities to reconciliation (Kitale CJPC, 2015). Since the two counties lag in development, his theme was "peace for development". He argued that once peace prevails, development partners will invest in the region, and alternative sources of livelihood will exist. As such, the communities will stop depending on livestock and diversify to other areas of livelihood. This will culminate in peaceful co-existence.

After the death of Korir, the focus with the bishops of Kitale and Lodwar shifted to supporting the government on the disarmament program with an emphasis on healing and transformation of minds and hearts (Lodwar CJPC, 2019) through restoration and reconciliation from the religious leaders. They argued that the change of the minds and hearts of the local community must go hand in hand with the government disarmament program. The bishops of the two dioceses argued that this would bear a lasting solution to the region. However, some scholars such as Mkutu (2005), Muntet (2016) and Wepundi (2011) have criticized the disarmament program citing failures in the past due to the use of excessive force in the process that has left the local community in more pain than the conflict itself.

Contrary to the efforts made by the Catholic Church in peacebuilding, some scholars have been forthright in criticizing the church for its lack of gender consideration. Kubai (2005) and Githigaro (2012) claim that the church, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, has not fully included women in its missional identity, vocation, and witness, especially in its peacebuilding processes that seek to overcome violence against women. Besides, Kaunda and Hewitt (2016) and Rakoczy (2004) have criticized patriarchy and expressed displeasure over gender injustice against women, even within the ecumenical movement.

On the same, Seitisho and Siwila (2017) argue that Religion as a form of situated knowledge has historically influenced a gendered conception and acquisition of knowledge and thus should be critical in social transformation vis-a-vis the tool of oppression and injustice against women. Siwila (2016) would further argue that the mere fact that women are sometimes excluded from full participation, even in equal participation in the ministry of the

Eucharist, constitutes a form of violence against their human dignity (Siwila, 2016; Rakoczy, 2004).

According to Lederach (2010), peacebuilding in any conflicting society should empower the 'indigenous' while respecting and promoting human rights and cultural resources within a given setting. Besides, peacebuilding should address problems from patriarchy, the ethnic divide of civil societies, or pro-violence civil societies. Staub (2006) argues that peacebuilding efforts should correct severed relations, violated norms, distorted identities, and absorbed impacts of trauma created as a result of violence. The question of malformed identities is a significant issue in conflict management. As such, for the Catholic Church to manage the Pokot-Turkana conflict, this study assumes that it should employ more than one strategy to attest to the variegated nature of the peacebuilding exercise. The Catholic Church should be aware that there is a pervasiveness of binary gender construction and various ways it is maintained. This is mainly to cultural meanings attached to men's and women's roles; and how individuals understand their identities, including, but not limited to, being a man, woman, transgender, intersex, genderqueer, and other gender positions. Gender involves social norms, attitudes, and activities that society deems more appropriate for one sex over another.

Based on the preceding claims, this study will not be complete without reflections on the Roman Catholic Church's understanding of gender. It has a complicated relationship between gender-diverse people. This will better be understood by looking at how the Roman Catholic Church constructs masculinity. The debate on gender issues has taken center stage in many academic, political, and religious discussions; however, in the Catholic Church, Pope John Paul II referred ordination of women as a 'closed' chapter (Ndubisi, 2016). This means that there is no engagement on the topic relating to the ordination of women. Despite this declaration by the Pope, many people are currently becoming aware of gender inequality and the necessity of gender equality even within the Roman Catholic hierarchy. This awareness is not only in the political or academic sphere but also in other religious spheres (Ndubisi, 2016, p.30). Experience has shown how some people are denied opportunities simply because the person belongs to a particular gender identity group.

This attitude points to the reality of gender inequality in our society. Referring to his article titled *Gender Inequality and Roman Catholic Priesthood*, Ndubisi (2016) claims that the Catholic Church is discriminative in matters to do with priestly ordination by denying

women the opportunity to be ordained Roman Catholic priests, which for him leads to gender inequality. He calls it an exclusive preserve for men and prejudices against women. However, what informs this kind of narrative in the Roman Catholic Church? Could this same prejudice have affected how conflicts are managed between the Pokot and Turkana communities by the Catholic Church in the region by not being gender sensitive? Maybe the church documents can shed some light on this crucial question of gender bias.

According to the Code of Canon Law (1983), it is stated, "only a baptized man can validly receive sacred ordination" (No. 1024, section 1, p. 183). The implication is that women are excluded from ordination to the Catholic priesthood. This paints a picture of the Roman Catholic Church as very rigid as far as ordination is concerned. Another critical document of the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church is the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994), which gives a detailed discussion in this regard: only a baptized man validly receives sacred ordination. It claims, further, that the Lord Jesus chose men to form the college of the twelve apostles, and the apostles did the same when they chose collaborators to succeed them in their ministry. The college of bishops, with whom the priests are united in the priesthood, makes the college of the twelve an ever-present and ever-active reality until Christ's return. The church recognizes itself as bound by this choice made by the Lord himself. For this reason, the ordination of women is impossible (Catholic Catechism No. 1577, p. 389).

These documents depict the Catholic Church as rigid, conservative, and, using Karl Popper's words, "a closed society rather than an open society" regarding women's inclusion in their Ministerial priesthood. While it is proper for the catholic church to have its perspective regarding its operations, if such gender exclusion is applied in conflict strategies, it could hinder conflict management.

2.8 Summary

As discussed in Chapter One, the research questions of this study were as follows:

- i. Research question #1: What is the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana border, and why has the conflict persisted?
- ii. Research question #2: How has the Catholic Church been involved in the conflict management process, and how could it enhance its engagement with those affected

by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution?

- iii. Research question #3: How could an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions?

In relation to these research questions, this chapter has established the existing gaps in the literature that this study fills. The literature reviewed has highlighted unequal gender social power relations in the two communities from the indigenous justice systems and Catholic Church intervention strategies. Addressing gender inequalities and gender consideration in the conflict engagement will help answer the first question; why does the conflict persist despite the Catholic Church and other stakeholders engaging those affected by the conflict? By considering the gender inequalities discussed in the literature review, the data collected from the field provides answers to the second question; how an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict will contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions.

Another gap in the literature review is the lack of a holistic peacebuilding framework tailored to the Catholic Church approach and indigenous processes. This lack of incorporating theological/scriptural teachings with the Pokot-Turkana cultural/indigenous justice system that the local communities used in the past need to be interrogated. It is evident from the literature that although the Catholic Church has been dealing with the council of elders [part of indigenous approaches] to mitigate the conflict, there is no tangible evidence of working within one framework. This study seeks to establish the possibility of a common Pokot-Turkana conflict management framework that is gender, culture, and religion sensitive. The common framework is in response to the third research question. It shows how the Catholic Church could be involved in the conflict management process and how its framework could enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution. At the end of the data analysis, later in this study, I develop a conflict management model based on the findings that can apply to the Pokot-Turkana conflict and other intergroup conflicts with similar set-ups in other parts of the world.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1 Introduction

In responding to the overarching research question on the ideo-theological resources, this study applies a combination of theoretical frameworks in exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and culture in conflict and conflict management. After engaging in the literature reviewed above, I have realized how other researchers have defined and drawn connections between key concepts in conflict, culture, and gender. As such, in this section on theoretical frameworks, I compare and critically evaluate the approaches that different authors have proposed. Since the theoretical framework is vital to all research, I clarify the implicit theories that I used in a manner that is more clearly defined. I also use theoretical frameworks that limit the scope of the relevant data by focusing on specific variables and determining the particular viewpoint [framework] I take in analyzing and interpreting the gathered data.

Theoretical lenses used in this research include Azar's protracted social theory in analyzing the nature and persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, Pankhurst and Pearce's steps in engendering a disciplined framework to address the gender aspect missing in Protracted social conflict theory explained by Azar. I also apply Kanyoro's (2002) feminists' cultural hermeneutics theoretical framework to address the intersections of gender, culture, and religion. The research problem informs the rationale behind my choice of these three theories. The persistent conflict between the Pokot and Turkana and lack of gender inclusion in the intervention peace management strategies in the existing literature reviewed by indigenous approaches and even the Catholic Church in the region. The combination of the three frameworks will provide a holistic analysis of the three critical dependent variables, culture, religion, and gender, concerning the defining variable-conflict.

3.2 Edward Azar's Protracted Social Conflict Theory

In this study, Edward Azar's Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) theory is applied in mapping out the conflict to identify the actors or parties in conflict, identify the main issues in the conflict and make an analysis. Azar (1990), one of the forefathers of the conflict resolution field, was the first to describe violent events in the developing world as Protracted Social Conflicts. In Ramsbotham et al. (2005), the Protracted Social Conflict theory explains contemporary conflict and assists in situating it in the social and international context. This

is because it assists in explaining the social roots of disputes and the failure of governance at the local level, which then causes prolonged and violent conflicts.

Edward Azar's background and work among scholars help situate his theory on the broader peacebuilding scholarship. When he was writing on PSC theory in the 1990s, other scholars such as Holsti (1996), Bircan et al. (2017), Straus (2012), and King (1997) had written widely on the state, war, civil wars, and international conflicts. However, Azar (1990) and Holsti (1996) were more concerned with the emergence of new wars, civil wars, and inter-group conflicts, which pointed to a paradigm shift from State wars and foreign policies that dominated the scholarship to the status of the nations and internal conflicts.

Influenced by the persistent conflicts in his native Lebanon and countries like Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Northern Ireland, Israel, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Nigeria, Azar developed a framework for the analysis of such conflicts, which he called Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) and defined it as: "the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation (Azar, 1990, p.12). Azar argued that the denial of basic human needs to a large portion of the population-initiated instances of protracted social violence. Azar isolates four pre-conditions as predominant sources of PSC. These are communal content, deprivation of human needs, governance and the state's role, and international linkages (p.12).

Since the cross-border conflict between Turkana and Pokot exhibits this kind of conflict, Azar's PSC theory is the most appropriate. Azar's PSC theory is relevant to this study since the related literature reviewed shows that the Turkana and Pokot suffer from drought, marginalization, porous borders, and poverty conditions that exacerbate raids, livelihoods, cultural nature of raids to commercialization, the intensity and frequency of conflict due to raiding, the impact of small arms on the conflict, and the failure of peacebuilding. According to Azar, this leads to the four predominant sources mentioned above.

Azar considers the communal content of society the most important source of a PSC. He goes back in the conflict history to the colonial period, where community groups were directly influenced by historical rivalries and a colonial policy of divide and rule as witnessed in Kenya and other African countries (Azar, 1990). The literature reviewed has indicated the effects of colonialism in dismantling or weakening the indigenous conflict

management approaches (Akbar, 2013) in their zeal to establish western legal processes in conflict management. In the post-colonial period, Azar stresses, many multiethnic societies' states emerged, dominated by a single communal group. This communal group ignores the needs of other community groups, thereby breeding frustration and polarization (1990, p.7).

In terms of human needs, Azar argues that all individuals aim at fulfilling their collective needs through their collective identity group. Needs deprivation leads to increasing grievances, which individuals express collectively (Azar, 1990). He further distinguishes between different needs, such as political access, security, and acceptance (Azar, 1990, p. 10).

As far as political access needs are concerned, Azar refers to the effective participation of individuals in political, market, and decision-making institutions. Azar defines security needs as the material needs for physical security, nutrition, and housing, while acceptance needs point to the need for "distinctive identity" and social recognition. Most importantly, Azar's concept of human needs explicitly takes up the idea of power inequalities: The dominant social group "satisfies" its political access, security, and acceptance needs at the expense of the needs of other social groups. As a result, the dissatisfied social groups are frustrated and feel more and more marginalized and excluded from social, economic, and political participation. Using Azar's basic needs theory, the study analyzes how the limited natural resources in Pokot and Turkana counties could be perpetuating the conflict. This study interrogates whether there exist linkages between the persistence of the conflict and lack of basic needs, such as food, and other limited natural resources, such as discovered oil, pasture-land, and water. It thus projects that addressing these needs will lead to the management of the conflict.

The state as a "power container" cannot mediate a level of need satisfaction for multiple communities. As a result, there is a growing "disarticulation between the state and society as a whole" (Azar, 1990, p.7) as the state increasingly pursues policies that are contradictory to the needs of the general public (Azar, 1990, p. 11). Azar claims that while questions of governance and the state's role are pivotal in the satisfaction or frustration of individual and identity group needs, most states going through protracted social conflict are governed by "incompetent, parochial, fragile, authoritarian" regimes. Given the relatively rigid or fragile authority structure, the policy capacity and political access needs are limited to the needs of the dominant community at the expense of all other identity groups. This monopolization of

power of the dominant community results in "crises of legitimacy" as the state cannot meet the excluded groups' political access, security, and acceptance needs.

At the same time, the sovereign of the state in most protracted social conflict is increasingly dependent on what Azar called international linkages; that is, both economic and military dependency politically and economically compromises the form of rich(er) and strong(er) states (Azar, 1990, p.10). The porous international borders between Turkana and Pokot counties with South Sudan and Uganda, respectively, are analyzed purposely to ascertain whether they are the gateway to the proliferation of small arms in the region. Although the study does not majorly deal with international borders but rather inter-community boundaries (which is here referred to as conflict corridor), it is of interest to investigate and establish the linkages between sustenance/persistence of the conflict and proliferation of small arms from the neighboring countries. It is essential in this study, as I assume that the proliferation of arms has sustained the conflict for decades. The study also investigates whether gender is involved in the region's gun trade.

Although Azar's theory on protracted social conflict explains contemporary conflict and assists in situating the Pokot- Turkana conflict in the social and international context, it fails to capture the gender roles of protracted social conflict due to its fixity and rigidity. It is what Reimann (2000), Azar's critic, is saying, albeit in different words when she uses the gender analysis approach to critique Azar's PSC theory. She used the threefold understanding of gender analysis as; social construction, social change, and historical variability to critique Azar's theory. Reimann states that in terms of social construction, Azar has a relatively static and fixed idea of identity and human needs.

Reimann (2000, p.34) further argues that "Azar's four clusters neglect the underlying gender-specific, if not gender clusters of protracted social conflicts such as increasing domestic violence, gender-specific needs, grievances, and gender-related interests, the changing division of labor, and the changing and multiple notions of femininity and masculinity during a protracted social conflict. Although Reimann's criticism of Azar's PSC is valid, this study incorporates both positive criticisms of Reimann to fill in the gap on gender left by Azar. It capitalizes on Azar's PSC to analyze data collected on the causes of the conflict. Since this theory lacks gender consideration, the research assumes that gender bias in the peacebuilding framework leads to failure to manage the conflict. Pankhurst and Pearce's gender approach

and Kanyoro's cultural feminist hermeneutic interpretation will clearly explain socially assigned gender roles in the conflict as discussed above.

3.3 Pankhurst and Pearce's Gender-Sensitive Approaches Framework

While Azar's PSC theory is used to analyze the causes of the persistence of the Pokot Turkana conflicts elaborated, it is not sufficient to take care of the intersection of gender and conflict. As such, Pankhurst and Pearce's (1997) general steps in engendering an area of study complement it as another analytical approach to fill the gap. Ramsbotham et al. (2012), in their chapter on "Gender and Conflict Resolution," point out the observation of many that conflict resolution has historically suffered from "gender blindness." Efforts to correct this deficiency have led to the development of gender-sensitive approaches in the field.

They discuss four steps Pankhurst and Pearce (1997) identified as general steps involved in engendering a discipline or area of study. The first is making women visible as agents of change. This will correct the anomaly Reimann (2000) identified while criticizing Azar's PSC as gender blind. However, this does not render Azar's PSC theory irrelevant but complements it. Pankhurst and Pearce (1997) highlight the work of Elise Boulding in making significant contributions to making women visible agents of change in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In this first step, the study will interrogate ways to make Pokot and Turkana women visible agents of change in indigenous conflict management approaches. However, it is essential to note that it is not only the indigenous approaches that can make women visible agents of change. I will explore other areas within Pokot and Turkana structural leadership spaces where they can be visible. Besides, women can be agents of change using their own Pokot and Turkana women gatherings, cutting their niche in peacebuilding that can leave a long-lasting impact in the region.

The second step is removing male bias in conflict resolution data-collection and empirical research, and the third step is rethinking conflict resolution theory to take gender into account (Ramsbotham et al., 2012). Considering these two steps, the dominant research methods, and theoretical constructs, new areas of inquiry have been opened around categories of power and participation in their concentration on transformation as the deepest level of conflict resolution. For example, regarding methodology, women in the field have argued in favor of qualitative methods where people's experiences can be heard and recorded instead of relying on the aggregation of conflict-related statistics (Ramsbotham et al., 2012, p.313). In these two steps, I will be looking at the gender roles of Pokot and Turkana in conflict

transformation, challenging the long-held notion that indigenous conflict management approaches are reserved for the council of elders-men. During data collection, I was keen on details since the interviewees can easily mislead the researcher where gender issues are trivialized due to patriarchal or male chauvinist attitudes. At the same time, being conscious of my biases as a man researching gender-thus, it was essential to state my positionality.

In the search for more critical theoretical approaches, Pankhurst and Pearce highlight Vivienne Jabri's discussion of the "hegemonic discourse" that violent conflict generates and the danger of conflict resolution to merely reproducing "the exclusionist, violent discourses and practices which perpetuate it" (Jabri, 1996, p. 181). Challenging this, Jabri introduces the idea of "an emancipatory politics as the most relevant discourse for conflict resolution and peace, in which the main stress is on the interrelated elements of public space, participation, and individuality, thereby at the same time transforming institutional and discursive gender distortions" (Ramsbotham et al., 2012, p. 313).

The fourth step in this gendering process is incorporating gender into conflict resolution policymaking and practice. A step toward realizing this was seen in the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, which called for further representation of women in peace negotiations and the highest offices of the UN, as well as the incorporation of gender perspectives in peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and conflict-prevention activities (Ramsbotham et al., 2012, p. 314). In this step, the study investigates how gender in Pokot and Turkana can be involved in conflict resolution policymaking along their borders and other places with similar setups.

Since the core of this study is on the ideo-theological resources the Catholic Church has used in managing the conflict, this deems Pankhurst and Pearce incapable of providing analyzing lenses for this section. It will complement Kanyoro's Feminists cultural hermeneutics framework to examine the intersection of religion and conflict.

3.4 Musimbi Kanyoro's Feminists' Cultural Hermeneutics Framework

To understand Musimbi Kanyoro's feminists' cultural hermeneutics framework and Pearce and Pankhurst's on gender inclusion in peacebuilding frameworks, one needs to understand the historical development/stages regarding feminism development, that is, the four waves. It would also situate Kanyoro (2002) within the African Women Theologians' contribution to the discussion about alternative masculinities. From the existing literature, these women

theologians belong to the Circle of Concerned African Female Theologians, whose use of critical tools such as alternative masculinities have opened up a discussion on the essential role women have played in their struggle to make women agents of change in the society. Primarily, the Circle writers engaged with the concept of alternative masculinity from the perspective of Christology, associating Jesus with 'mother-like' virtues of caring and loving, which also became the basis to critique African hegemonic masculinities and patriarchy. This was contrary to the patriarchal held notion of Jesus being the son (man) and God being the father (man) (Elliott, 2007).

Using Kanyoro's theoretical framework, in addition to Pearce and Pankhurst's on gender inclusion, my research draws these theories from cultural/gender studies to locate the voices of African women theologians in their discussion of Alternative masculinity. By using contextual Christology's based on the African woman's experience as Kanyoro and Chitando does, the study adds to knowledge concerning the debate on gender and alternative masculinities, in the process, highlighting the voices of African women theologians in the discussion. Moreover, it adds to the corpus on how one can use these voices to interrogate the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

According to Elliott (2007), two major historical influences exist in the circle of women. First, the shift from colonial entities to independent geographies created space for discussions about other liberations-gender, economics, education, and others. Secondly, the advent of postmodernism, a worldview that opposes meta-narratives and promotes individual freedom, coincided with the campaign for individual rights after the 1950s and gained momentum in the 1980s (Elliott, 2007). The 1950s are significant in that we witness a world healing from the aftermath of World War II and the universal campaign for other forms of freedom. This should understand the desire for universal human freedom within the matrix of postmodernity, a worldview, and a mindset that promotes individual freedom and choices (p.344).

It is even more elaborate by Rampton (2008), who provides a historical background and development of the four waves in the feminist movement. She argues that the first wave of feminism in Zarkov (2018) took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics. This wave aimed to open up opportunities for women, focusing on suffrage. She contended that discussion about the vote and women's participation in politics led to examining the

differences between men and women as they were then viewed. Some claimed that women were morally superior to men, so their presence in the civic sphere would improve public behavior and the political process.

Further, Rampton (2008) and Zarkov (2018) postulate that the second wave began in the 1960s with the anti-Vietnam war and anti-colonialism and continued into the 1990s. In this phase, sexuality and reproductive rights were dominant issues. They focused much of the movement's energy on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex. This phase defined the woman's role as wife and mother and differentiated sex and gender. The former is a biological and while the latter social construct that varies from culture to culture over time.

The third wave of feminism began in the mid-1990s and was informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking. In this phase, many constructs were destabilized, including the notions of "universal womanhood," body, gender, sexuality, and hetero-normativity. Zarkov (2018) argues that this wave marks the western feminist theoretical and political perspectives and only puts women of the third world in western scholarship as fixed, homogenous categories and victims.

The emerging fourth wave speaks in terms of intersectionality whereby women's suppression can only fully be understood in the marginalization of other groups and genders—feminism is part of a larger consciousness of oppression along with racism, ageism, classism, ableism, and sexual orientation. This provides analytical lenses for the gender analysis in the Pokot-Turkana conflict, where gender is socially and culturally constructed with definite gender roles and different spaces for different gender, even in indigenous conflict institutions.

Besides Pankhurst and pierce framework discussed above, this study also applies Kanyoro's feminist cultural hermeneutics theory. Kanyoro falls in the circle of African women theologians. In her book, *Feminists' Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective*, Kanyoro (2002) provides a framework/lens to analyze the intersectionality of gender, religion, culture, and conflict. Kanyoro defines hermeneutics as an interpretation. She contends that cultural interpretation is critical in understanding people's way of life. She further argues that African culture is perceived as the thread which strings the community beliefs and social setup together (2002). Geertz (1973) echoes similar sentiments in her book *Interpretation of Culture*, where she claims that “cultural interpretation defines people's

world view”. The literature review above extensively discussed the question of culture as a pawn and a resource in conflict. Kanyoro's framework will help me interrogate the Pokot and Turkana cultures and give meaning to the cultural values therein that can hold the communities together while at the same time leading to a deeper understanding of the harmful cultural practices that require transformation. It will also provide a forum for discussion on the linkages between culture and religion and how they are tied to the persistence of the conflict.

Like Geertz (1973), Kanyoro (2002) provided space for dialogue with women from her rural village to express their concerns in a storytelling approach. Similarly, Ayanga (2016) contends that the African feminist framework gives a woman a space to tell her stories and write her healing and liberating identities, as she is an expert in her stories. The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians is conceived mainly as African, and it addresses the issues of African women within the realm of African culture and religion. Just as there is a need to provide space for the Pokot and Turkana women to articulate and engage them in conflict, the circle pursues a “heritage of voicelessness where women voice their experiences in the context of culture and religion in ways hitherto unknown and untested” (Ayanga, 2016, p. 3).

Kabira and Lanoi (2020) in their work, *Feminism and Feminist Research: Making Research Work for African Women*, claim that the more we argue that women are conditioned by society, the more we appreciate that emancipation of women will transform our community. They further say that some of the significant gender and social-cultural problems women face in the African context result from misunderstanding and misrepresentation of women (p.2). By extension, this affects women and society at large.

Kanyoro's feminist framework involves four significant steps; the first is to provide the people with the space necessary to dialogue and give their stories. Second, share their stories and allow all to contribute. Third, analysis/interpretation of the stories within the cultural prism, and lastly, interrogate how this has affected how people interpret the bible. While embracing the same approach, this study will provide space to actively listen to stories such as: what roles do women, men, and youth from both communities under study play in the conflict? Which intervention strategies have catholic leadership in the region, state, and non-state agencies used in the Pokot-Turkana conflict? The study will later analyze those stories within feminist and gender theoretical frameworks. Providing space for discussion through

focus groups will help better understand the conflict's nature. The role of women as defined by their cultures and their interpretations discussed will further enrich this study in terms of engendering peace studies.

I analyze and interpret the data collected in light of the concepts of theoretical frameworks discussed above. Azar's protracted social conflict theory lays the foundation for the engagement, discussion, and interpretation of the causes and persistence of conflict, whether they are religious or cultural. Since Azar's framework is not sufficient to interpret the gender aspect of the study, Pankhurst and Pearce's gender framework complements it. It helps interrogate how to make Pokot and Turkana women visible agents of change and how they can incorporate gender into the peacebuilding frameworks. This will lead to a deeper conversation on the conflict and give the focus group participants the space necessary to dialogue and share their stories based on the main research question and objectives. It also links the persistence of the conflict with a lack of gender consideration or other unexplored factors and new trends in the conflict. With the stories/narratives gathered, I describe the meaning of lived experiences and "texts" of life interpreted using Kanyoro's feminists' cultural hermeneutics framework.

3.5 Summary of the Theoretical Frameworks/Concepts

The overall aim of the frameworks was to make my research findings more meaningful, acceptable to the theoretical constructs in the research field, and ensure generalizability. This gave me sufficient support to explain the study's need and relevance in the area. The theoretical framework that guided this research is constructed from several peacebuilding and reconciliation models and theories advanced in religion, culture, gender, and peacebuilding.

Edward Azar briefly summarizes some of conflict resolution's most important values and principles. He argues that conflicts cannot be resolved or peace be made unless the root causes of the conflict are identified and dealt with. It is impossible to resolve disputes and attain peace unless attention is given to the justice and fairness of the process as well as the outcome of the settlement (Azar, 1990, p. 6). Besides, Azar claims that people get involved in conflicts because their civilization's interests or values are challenged or because their informational needs are unmet. Indeed, ethnic conflicts, especially conflicts between ethnic communities over resources, tend to be intractable. They cannot be settled for a certain period unless the root cause is identified. Actors in such conflicts often block each other's

basic human needs to satisfy their own needs (Azar, 1990, p. 7). Using Azar's basic need theory, the study analyzes how the limited natural resources in Pokot and Turkana counties could be perpetuating the conflict.

A complementary approach guides the current research because of the varied models and approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation. This approach entails a combination of the theological/penitence approach used by the Catholic Church, Azar's and Kanyoro's models, and the symbolic approach based on African indigenous methods. The complementary approach integrates the human needs theory by Azar, submission, and confession used by the Catholic Church, feminist hermeneutic interpretation by Kanyoro, Pankhurst, and Pearce, gender-sensitive approaches in peacebuilding methods, and ritual reconciliation in the African indigenous process. The theoretical framework entails an interdependent application of the varied individual methods of peacebuilding and reconciliation. Combined methods will yield a complementary approach toward sustainable peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Each method is unique and has intrinsic value, which the other lacks. From Azar's model, the research picks the part of human needs, which entails a search for the probable cause of the Pokot/Turkana conflict. This is geared toward unearthing an unbiased probable cause of the conflict. Inquiry of human needs, border issues, and limited national resources lead to a cycle of conflict in most group conflicts. From the Catholic Church model, the research opts for submission and confession as some of the theological resources, which applies to Africans who may be non-Christians as it is also African. These two parts entail a sincere contrite acceptance of the mistakes and readiness to accept forgiveness. While attending one of the Muma/oath-taking ceremonies along the border, I realized that the basic tenet that informs this process is the truth about their involvement in the conflicts/killings. Fact entails the provided parties or ethnic communities disclosing all mistakes and heinous acts done. It ends with forgiveness and payment of the damages to the other party in what is referred to as *lapai*. In Agikuyu tradition, *ndahikio* involved members undergoing a ritual to forgive mistakes. The research then picks the Catholic Church's non-coercive methods, mediation, and round table talks to nurture the spirit of dialogue between the warring communities. Mediation entails bridging the gap between the warring communities by capitalizing on the commonalities that act as bridges.

On the other hand, the round table talks advanced by Bishop Korir involve holding meetings even under a tree to look for solutions to the problems facing the communities mutually. Principles inform these non-coercive methods of dialogue and willingness to talk. It is based on what Zartman said, "conflicts are better resolved when they reach mutually hurting stalemate".

In order to emphasize the usefulness of African indigenous peacebuilding and conflict resolution methods, this study emphasizes on ritual reconciliation. This method is informed by the attachment that communities have to their rituals. The ontological connection of the rituals to daily human activities and practices necessitates its inclusion in the complementary approach to peacebuilding and reconciliation. This study holds that the escalation of ethnic conflicts results from a lack of effective methods of resolving the varied root causes of the disputes. Thus, by integrating the four approaches (Theological/penitence, Azar's, Kanyoro's, and Pearce and Pankhurst's on gender inclusion) of peacebuilding and reconciliation, the study provides effective ways of preventing and managing ethnic conflicts.

There are three key points/learning that I have drawn from these three theoretical frameworks. That is, there is a link in the persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict with the masculinity formations discussed in the rite of passage by the two communities under study, where the position of women is clearly at the periphery and to reclaim this position to the center and the table of decision making one has to interrogate the literature on the development of feminism and efforts by the circle of women theologians in their quest in making women agents of change. This lack of gender consideration and peripheral position established for one gender by the cultural practices of the Pokot and Turkana communities for me could be the hidden cause of the persistence of the conflict.

I have also concluded that Using Kanyoro's feminists' cultural hermeneutics framework and Pankhurst and Pearce's gender framework as feminist analytical tools; makes it possible for me to make meaning of the data collected from the field. Finally, although this research is not on biblical exegesis, borrowing from the circle of women African theologians, this study picks on biblical passages on peace and conflict management as some of the theological resources that either used or could have been used by the Catholic Church in the conflict management.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings and in quiet resting places ~ Isaiah 32:18, NIV

4.1 Introduction

This chapter states the methodology and research design of the study, capturing the means of data collection, sampling, and the various approaches to engage participants and the contexts in which they were observed. It also describes the analytical process for engaging this study.

A research methodology refers to procedures and techniques that help the researcher accurately carry out a study without bias. Further, it describes the research design, targeted population, study area, sampling designs, description of research instruments, and data collection and analysis procedures. In this regard, all the data derived from answers to questionnaires, interview schedules, and focus group discussions were analyzed descriptively and presented in a narrative form, and graphs, pie charts, and tables for illustrations where necessary.

4.2 Research Design

Referring to Thyer (1993), a traditional research design is a blueprint or detailed plan for how a research study is to be completed, operationalizing variables so they can be measured, selecting a sample of interest to study, and collecting data to be used as a basis for testing hypothesis and analyzing the results. In other words, a research design is a procedural plan that the researcher adopts to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately, and economically.

4.3 Qualitative Research Design

This study was designed to employ qualitative research methods. As Creswell (2012, p.210) rightly claims, “qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and interactions therein”. This study is an analysis that strives for a depth of understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and the intersection of gender diversity, religion, and culture in conflict and conflict management approaches.

Under qualitative research, this study used a cross-sectional study design. This study design was deemed suitable for this study because it aims to find the intersection of gender, religion, and culture when engaging conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana by taking a cross-section of the population. This was done by taking a cross-sectional of the study population and the time of the investigation. The cross-section of the population was be chosen from DCCs, ACCs, Chiefs, NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs.

I obtained Government documents from police stations, hospitals, and Census materials from statistics officers that provided the secondary data needed to enhance this research. I also used secondary data from scholarly work from published books, unpublished theses, periodicals, seminar papers, and dissertations. This was sourced from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Library, Margaret Thatcher Library-Moi University in Kenya, the Kenya National Archives, and police and medical reports from the two counties dating from 1963 to 2015. It is important to note that, in this study, I qualitatively analyze and interpret data.

4.4 Study Population

The study population is the subset of the target population available for study. As such, in this study, I have broken down the study population as follows; I drew a minimum of 1 respondent from each of the following: National Coordination and Interior government from each district 3 (DC, DO, Chief), NGOs (4), CBOs (1), FBO (3), Women representative (2), member of parliament (2), member of county assembly (2), village elders (15), village headmen (15), women elder (5), youth leader (1), Businessmen/women (5), Traders (10), Market chairmen (5), Herdsmen (5), Emuron (3), focused group discussions (7) interviewees in each County in 5 different groups, being equally distributed in the two target areas. It is worth noting that the study population was be drawn along the conflict corridor. However, I removed a few selected populations from offices in nearby cities, such as Kapenguria, Lodwar, and Kitale. These cities are the headquarters of the Catholic Church administration and political capitals for the government administration in the respective Counties of Pokot and Turkana.

4.5 Sampling

Interrogation of the research questions on the persistence of the conflict and the role of the Catholic Church in its mitigation efforts, the question of gender, and a well-chosen research representative sample size are essential for a good outcome. As such, in terms of sampling, I applied random/probability sampling and the non-random/non-probability sampling

technique. Under random/probability sampling, I selected participants from different NGOs and Catholic Priests, nuns, and parish council leaders working in parishes of Kainuk, Nakwamoru Sigor, and Amakuriat for the study. The choice of these participants was informed by the fact that they lived in the conflict zone and worked closely with Bishop Korir and the Catholic Church leadership. They were thus in a better position to answer the question of the Catholic Church intervention strategies, gender inclusion, or lack thereof, and how these strategies impacted the local communities.

The study also used cluster sampling to gather as much information from targeted opinion leaders, district officers, and chiefs with gender consideration from the two counties. This group of participants acts as gatekeepers and holds a lot of information and a history of the conflict. I sought answers to the question; what are the causes of conflict, and are there new trends and dynamics to the conflict that could sustain the conflict? Besides, the study used stratified sampling to collect information from selected youth, women, ward representatives, businessmen and traders, and raiders/herdsmen through interview guides.

Besides cluster sampling, the study also made use of purposive sampling, as indicated below.

4.6 Non-Random/Non-Probability Sampling

Using non-random/non-probability sampling, I used purposive sampling to collect information from various regional groups and organizations working for peacebuilding. They included District Peace Committees (DPCs), NGOs, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), and International Organizations (IOs). I assumed these organizations had been working in the region at different levels and using different strategies to mitigate the conflict. It was enriching for my research to find out from them why the conflict has been persistent. What could be their undoing/challenges, and if there are new dynamics and trends that they have observed during their engagements and their suggestions on the way forward?

Following Struwig and Stead (2013, p.127), purposive sampling enabled me "to identify a sample of information from rich participants." The choice of the mentioned groups and organizations was based on their presence in the region for an extended period with minimal impact on managing the conflict. They responded to the question on the strategies they have put in place and what they have achieved or failed to provide the way forward. I also sought to establish whether they are collaborating with the Catholic Church and whether they have

considered gender inclusion in their framework. And if yes, how has it impacted the local community?

4.7 Interviews: Structured and Unstructured

This study employed both structured and unstructured interviews to collect in-depth data. The use of interviews allowed me to study experiences and meanings as accounted for by the participants. On my interview schedule, those to be interviewed included the bishop Catholic Diocese of Lodwar, Kitale, and Eldoret; the directors and officers who work for Lodwar and Kitale's Justice and peace offices; and the priests and nuns who work in the parishes of Kainuk, and Nakwamoru, in Turkana South and Sigor, Kacheliba, and Amakuriat in West Pokot County (conflict corridor). During the interview with these church leaders and the faithful, I asked about the intervention strategies the Catholic Church has put in place, whether they are relevant today, and what else needs to be done to mitigate the conflict. This opened up a discussion on the Catholic Church's ideo-theological resources in her mitigating efforts. The data collected was analyzed using Pankhurst and Pearce, engendering a theoretical discipline lens.

I also interviewed the Interior government from Turkana South District on the nature and persistence of the conflict. This opened a conversation on the causes, government interventions, and their failures and success stories. Also, directors and employees of Shalom center for conflict resolutions, Riam Riam, World Vision, and Sikom Ngo's working in the conflict corridor were interviewed. The interviews were conducted until I reached data saturation -the participants started giving similar responses. The data collected was analyzed in line with Azar's PSC theory.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I was, at times, forced to interview participants online via phone and send questionnaires through email. I used Zoom, where possible, as my online platform for communicating with participants. I ensured that questions were sent before the interview to provide enough time for the participants to familiarize themselves with the questions. It is clear that through this method, I cannot acquire signed written consent; I will ensure that a consent form is distributed and participants will forward verbal recorded consent. Since this study deals with conflict-related interviews, I acknowledged there might be a likelihood of encountering people with past traumatic experiences. To counter this challenge, I requested assistance from Ortum Mission Hospital to provide counseling over the phone to the participant at no cost.

4.8 Focus Groups

Another method of data collection was the formation of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The primary purpose of focus groups in this research was to draw upon respondents' feelings, attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and reactions in a way that would not be feasible in other methods discussed above. I had five focus groups of seven and scheduled the discussion with them twice. This was for counter-checking, addition, and confirmation of gathered information. I used the same questions in this process: "why do you think the Pokot-Turkana conflict is persistent? "How could an intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions? I broke down the question further: Do you think women have been involved in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict? If yes/no, what do you think should be done? Are there tangible things the Catholic Church in the region has done to include women in mitigating this conflict?

I selected the focus groups from the four parishes in the conflict corridor. Each focus group included a priest, a nun, and a parish council member who works as Justice and peace representative and has been engaged in the conflict. I also had a focus group comprising priests and nuns from the Catholic Parishes along the conflict corridor specifically to collaborate on the data collected on the involvement of the Catholic Church in mitigating the conflict. Including the clergy and nuns in the focus groups enriched the discussion by interrogating the strategies laid down by the Catholic Church in the region guided by the Catholic social thought on healing and reconciliation. Also, these focus groups included district peace committee representatives, the area chief, and women group representatives such as Riam-Riam, that works for peacebuilding in the region. The additional members helped capture participants' understanding of gender and gender roles, religion, and culture, revealing participants' positionality in the conflict.

This was the entry point into a discussion on participants' understanding of the conflict from their cultural, religious, and gender experiences. As advocated for by Kanyoro (2002), the participants used the space provided to ventilate their experiences and provide a way forward depending on their discussions. Referring to Denis Philippe's (2008) role of "memory boxes" and their healing effects, the focus groups comprised women who need space to express themselves within a conducive environment that can also be a source of healing to some who were emotionally hurt by the conflict.

4.9 Questionnaires

During the COVID-19 period, when face-to-face interviews will not be possible, it will be appropriate to email the questionnaires and keep the research on schedule. This study will use questionnaires to enable individual participants (DCs, DOs, Chiefs, NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs) to respond freely by providing their answers to the questions asked (refer to Appendix III). This instrument will be helpful because the participants will have adequate time to think and develop well-thought-out answers. Questionnaires will facilitate the collection of large data samples, which are expected to be reliable in providing solutions to the research questions. If emails do not work for some targeted respondents, I will revert to phone call interviews using the questions to be emailed.

4.10 Interview Guideline Schedules

Post-COVID 19/or after the virus is contained, I will use the interview guides to gather data from the targeted population, which has the responsibility, experience, and authority of security mandate in West Pokot and Turkana counties. I will use this instrument in a face-to-face dialogue with the participants to gather more information through exploratory skills and to understand the feelings and emotions of opinion leaders, politicians (the area members of parliament in Turkana south, Sigor and Kapenguria constituencies, business people in Kainuk and Kacheliba, and Ngimurok/seer in the two counties regarding the nature of the conflict, and gender roles. The interviews will demonstrate the impact of the conflict on the local communities. They will open up a discussion on their thoughts on strategies that have been in place by the Catholic Church and other stakeholders, why these strategies have failed or succeeded, and what needs to be done.

4.11 Participant Observation Method

Another method of data collection was the participant observation method. This method fed into my notebook and guided me in making my reflection at the end of the day on the data collected. Participant observation as a method provided this study with meaningful and firsthand information about the conflict. In the research, participant observation served as both an approach to inquiry and as a data-gathering tool during chiefs' weekly briefings and community meetings on security. My presence during the chief's weekly briefings allowed me identify government security preventive measures. The security preventive measures come from the causes of the conflict and new trends and dynamics, which the government agents could have identified. This was an opportunity for me to get firsthand information on what the government is doing regarding the negative impact of the conflict on the local

communities and establish the links between catholic church teachings on reconciliation, government security preventive measures, and cultural/indigenous conflict management approaches.

4.12 Positionality

In the introductory chapter, I briefly stated my positionality. Here, I comprehensively unpack it. It is of utmost importance that the researcher defines her/his standpoint. According to Qin (2016), positionality is the practice of a researcher delineating their position within the study, with the implication that this position may influence aspects of the study, such as the data collected or how it is interpreted. As a clergy, I consider myself an insider in the religious circle, which could lead to bias in data collection and interpretation. Kirk and Miller (1986) call on me to control biases and personal viewpoints to remain objective. For Miller et al. (2012), objectivity is the extent to which research projects are undistorted by the biases of researchers. The view of objectivity as a necessary characteristic of research projects is usually associated with work rooted in positivist or post-positivist tradition. This paradigm suggests that there is a single, identifiable truth that can be learned (or at least approached) through rigorous scientific research. To this end, biases and personal viewpoints should be controlled for and, as a result, "irrelevant to the findings" (Miller et al., 2012, p.573). In Miller et al.'s argument, being a man, I could easily fall into the same trap the Catholic Church leadership in the region fell into, where gender consideration was blurred by the very nature of its hierarchical structures that are not women-friendly influenced the selection of who were invited to discuss conflict management strategies. Sadly, women were still kept at the periphery.

To counteract this bias in my research, I ensured gender consideration in all interviewees and focus groups. Besides, this called for removing biases from the onset of data collection, hence my choice for a woman research assistant. The research assistant played a pivotal role in listening to women's stories that they might feel uncomfortable recounting to a male interviewer for personal reasons. At the same time, I observed honesty and transparency throughout the research process. This offered meaning and insights into the study. To keep precise records during this study, a consent form was kept, which stated clearly the aims of the interview, the name of the interviewer, and the conditions of our agreement - the interviews were voluntary and would not be held against the participants. I used a recorder and notebook to record participants' responses and kept a field diary that captured my own lived experiences in the process of field engagement, capturing my thoughts.

In as much as I remained objective in this study, it is worth noting that I would be subjective at some point as an insider, thus putting my voice and thoughts in the research (i.e., a clergy, male, and working in the conflict corridor). As the lead researcher, I remained transparent and contextualized my research throughout the process. This makes my findings valid, make meaning, and thus lead to socially responsible action in the conflict management strategies I hope to develop. As Miller et al. (2012, p.573) rightly argue, “researchers are often positioned as advocates who present a credible, trustworthy depiction of a people, condition, or phenomenon, but doing it from a real, contextualized, involved position. Data are not, then, presented as subjectively emanating from the researchers' whimsies; rather, they authentically, purposefully, and contextually emerge from the dynamic intersection of researchers and research participants' unique identities, beliefs, ideas, passions, and actions”.

4.13 Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis was thematic, as I got cross-cutting themes from the narratives of focus groups and interviews. The data analysis was an ongoing interactive process where the data was continuously collected and analyzed. The analysis was done and grouped into three sections based on the three main objectives of the study. I examined the conflict's nature and persistence through Azar's PSC theory. The question on gender and the role of the Catholic Church will be analyzed through Pankhurst and Pearce's engendering a discipline and Kanyoro's cultural feminists' hermeneutic theories, respectively. Analysis of the narratives carried throughout research from interviews, focus groups, and notes from participant observation was classified into several cross-cutting themes and sub-themes of agreement across interviews in response to the questions. I analyzed this through the three theoretical frameworks discussed above. This analysis considers the research questions and objectives as significant themes.

4.14 Narrative Analysis

Referring to Kanyoro (2002), storytelling is a powerful way of sharing and making meaning out of the experience. Miller and Glassner (2016, p.53) agree with Kanyoro (2002) that “narratives are central to human existence in telling stories and interviewing subjects' social worlds”. Using Kanyoro's four-step approach, I generated and analyzed narrative/stories (data) from the four focus group discussions on the research question aligned with the study's objectives. They include the nature and persistence of the conflict, gender bias, and the Catholic Church's role in managing the conflict. This gave an authentic insight into people's

experiences on the nature of the conflict and socially assigned gender roles that lead to conflict.

4.15 Coding

The labeled and grouped data was coded with answers to specific questions. The codes were descriptive statements based on cross-cutting themes. The researcher answered this study's three questions and objectives using descriptive data while supporting the narratives using bar graphs, tables, and pie charts data presentation for illustrations.

4.16 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in Kenya, which has subscribed to the international code of research conduct. As such, I applied and got the relevant documentation from the Kenyan government [**License No: NACOSTI/P/22/15885**], and I was permitted to conduct the research. I also got full ethical approval to research from the University of KwaZulu Natal as required [**HSSREC/00003700/2021**].

In line with the principle of 'no harm', each participant was required to sign a consent form which was stored safely after that. Before signing the consent form, I ensured the participants had received the information about the research and indicated that there is no coercion and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any point if they feel uncomfortable. If a participant had psychological disturbance due to unearthing past experiences from the interview, I would terminate the interview and make a referral to a place they can get help. In this regard, I had already made arrangements with Ortum Mission Hospital to offer counseling sessions if need be. Where necessary, questions that could unearth emotions of past trauma were reserved for different groups of interviewees since they could answer them in a non-conflict setting.

Given the sensitive nature of the conflict zone, participants' discussions were kept confidential, and pseudonyms assigned to participants in the final write-up. Sieber's (1992) dominant approach method addresses confidentiality through data cleaning. Borrowing from this approach, I removed the identifying characteristics from the data collected.

Finally, I informed and arranged with participants who wish to read the study's outcome to access the final submitted thesis on the University's repository.

4.17 Validity, Reliability and Rigor

This part applies to empirical research. The rationale for this consideration is that the study's findings become credible data for further investigation. In his book, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, Creswell (2012, p. 206) claims that validity is understood as “the attempt to access accurate information and ensure that your findings are an accurate reflection of the data found in the field as described by the participants and observed by the researcher”. The study ensured that the data collected reflects a proper understanding of the phenomenon by the participants. As a researcher, I also ensured that the questions asked in focus groups or interviews yielded answers in cross-cutting themes and sub-themes. I also verified the data by going through the questions asked and the responses from the participants.

Further, Creswell (2012) claims that reliability can be observed in how data is collected and kept. Besides, Creswell (p. 209) mentioned the importance of having tools such as well-detailed field notes, good-quality tape for accurate decoding of information, and accurate transcription and evidence. In facilitating these discussions and observing participants, I ensured that the information shared is stored in a manner that allows for validation upon request. I transcribed to ensure detailed analysis and accurate interpretation of data as stated by the participants of the phenomenon they shared. In this work, I present the findings in such a way that it tells the stories of the lived experiences of each participant regarding the conflict and gender inclusion in the management.

4.18 Anticipated Problems/Limitations/Scope of Study

This study focuses specifically on the intersectionality of gender, religion, and culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015. Although there is conflict on the Turkana-Pokot border with Baringo and Samburu Counties, this study is limited to the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor, which has persisted for decades.

Other limitations expected when collecting data include but are not limited to the following;

Personal biases are a potential limitation. Having worked in this region for ten years, I have a personal point of view on the conflict. To ensure this does not affect my findings, I will state my position clearly in my introduction when stating the reasons for conducting this research. This will help ensure that the reader understands that the findings are an

interpretation of participants' understanding of the phenomena and a reflection of their lived experiences.

Maturation bias- is another potential bias due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Context or people's attitudes may change. To ensure this does not affect my research schedule, I will email the questionnaires to participants and prepare zoom interview meetings to keep my schedule on course.

In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic is a potential bias. There is a limitation regarding the participants I will engage in the study should data be collected online. This includes a limitation in movement and restriction in gatherings (chief's briefings) where I would collect data through participant observation, which means I will only be able to engage with participants online as a safety regulation. This means participant selection will be limited to individuals with access to smartphones or laptops with knowledge of using Zoom. To counteract this and remain on schedule, I will email some of the questionnaires and even send hard copies to those that are not accessible on the Internet.

4.19 Summary of the Methodology Section

Overarching Research Question: What gender-sensitive ideo-theological resources (social/biblical teachings, structures) could be offered by the Catholic Church in the region in the process of conflict engagement in the Pokot-Turkana conflict?

Table 4-1: Summary of the Research Methods Section

Research questions and Research population	Methodological considerations	Ethical Considerations
<p>1). What is the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana border and why has the conflict persisted?</p> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <p>What are the causes of the conflict?</p> <p>Why is the conflict persistent?</p> <p>What are the new trends and dynamics causing the conflict?</p> <p>Research population ; Local leaders such as chiefs, district commissioners, village elders</p>	<p>Random/probability sampling</p> <p>Structured and less structured interviews; This method will help collect in-depth data.</p> <p>Research instruments:</p> <p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Surveys</p> <p>Participant Observation: during chief’s weekly briefings on security.</p>	<p>If a participant has psychological disturbance due to unearthing past experiences from the interview</p> <p>A female researcher to counter gender bias</p>
<p>2). How has the Catholic Church been involved in the conflict management process and how could it enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict</p> <p>Sub-questions</p> <p>What has the church done to mitigate this conflict?</p> <p>What is the church doing today?</p> <p>What do you think need to be done?</p> <p>What ideo-theological resources has the church used?</p> <p>Research population to be interviewed</p> <p>Catholic church leadership: Bishops catholic diocese of Lodwar and Kitale, catholic justice and peace employees working in the region, catholic priests and nuns working in parishes along the conflict corridor. Other non-Catholic religious leaders.</p>	<p>Purposive sampling</p> <p>Structured interviews and focus group</p> <p>Evaluative method using the biblical texts and catholic social teachings to critique negative cultural practices</p> <p>Research instruments:</p> <p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Surveys</p>	<p>I will need to cleanup data collected and get the right terms and concepts for my final write-up.</p>

<p>3). How could an intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions?</p> <p>Research Sub-questions</p> <p>As women do you think women have been involved in search for a lasting solution to the conflict?</p> <p>If yes/no what do you think should be done?</p> <p>Are there tangible things that the Catholic Church in region has done to include women in mitigating this conflict?</p> <p>Research Population</p> <p>Selected women from NGO's, the catholic church, elected women leaders at county level, women activists working in the region and two women chiefs the two communities and other women opinion leaders.</p>	<p>Focus group, participant observation</p> <p>Research instrument:</p> <p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Checklist</p>	<p>Referrals in case of emotional hurt.</p> <p>Already contacted Ortum mission hospital</p>
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The table above is a summary of the research methods section. It highlights simple but clear illustrations of the key research question and sub-research questions, research population, methods, and ethical considerations. In an interrogation of the table above, one finds the over-arching research question guiding research; “what ideo-theological resources could be offered by the Catholic Church in the region in the process of conflict engagement in the Pokot – Turkana conflict? The response to this question will be anchored on the objectives of the research that seek to establish the nature and the persistence of the conflict despite several attempts by the Catholic Church to intervene/mitigate it. The table also points to various sampling methods, research instruments to be used and ethical considerations necessary based on do no harm policy.

4.20 Summary and Conclusion

As discussed in Chapter One, the research objectives of this study were as follows:

- i. **Research Objective #1:** To trace the nature and persistence of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana in general
- ii. **Research Objective #2:** To interrogate how the Catholic Church has been involved in the conflict management process and how it could enhance its

engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution.

- iii. **Research Objective #3:** To examine how an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict could contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions

Concerning these objectives, this chapter has delineated the methodological processes undertaken in the data collection process. I have further discussed the different stages and procedures pursued during the data collection.

As the researcher, I have given a detailed account of what a qualitative study entails and how used the theoretical lenses in Chapter Six to discuss, analyze and interpret the collected data. Besides, I have outlined the methods used to gather data, including the sampling processes, the criteria for participant selection, and the ethical considerations adhered to throughout the study.

In this chapter, I have also detailed the research methodology processes and the research design employed in this study. I have further provided different research methods and how interviews and focus group discussions answered the research questions in Chapter One. I have also discussed and explained in detail the sampling procedures that I employed and the challenges I experienced during sampling. The latter part of this discussion provided the challenges while clearly articulating how it addressed each presented challenge. Toward the end of this chapter, I thoroughly explained the importance of ensuring that the ethical considerations were strictly adhered to protect the participants and the research from harm.

These research methods provide a roadmap for filling in the gaps established in Chapter Two - on the literature reviewed. The literature reviewed highlighted unequal gender social power relations in the two communities from the indigenous justice systems and Catholic Church intervention strategies. By considering the gender inequalities discussed in the literature review, the data collected from the field provided answers to the research questions and met the objectives set for the study in Chapter One. In addition, the literature review established a lack of a holistic peacebuilding framework tailored to the Catholic Church approach and indigenous processes. This lack of incorporating theological/scriptural teachings with the Pokot-Turkana cultural/indigenous justice system that the local communities used in the past

needed to be interrogated through the theoretical lenses provided in Chapter Three. It is evident from the literature that although the Catholic Church has been dealing with the council of elders [part of indigenous approaches] to mitigate the conflict, there is no tangible evidence of working within one framework.

I introduced and discussed the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study in Chapter Three. The protracted social conflict theory by Edward Azar was engaged as a tool that opens a conversation on why group conflicts such as the Pokot and Turkana conflict persists and provides some insights that could lead to their management. While engaging the literature in chapter two, it was clear that though the PSC theory was sufficient to explain the causes of the conflict, it suffered from gender blindness and, thus, a need for other theoretical frameworks that fill in that gap on gender suffice. This led to considering the Pankhurst and Pierce gendering peace frameworks and Musimbi Kanyoro's feminists' Hermeneutic theoretical framework that was critical in curating lived experiences of peacebuilders, which was uncovered through storytelling in both interviews and focus group discussions. This is done to enhance indigenous and Catholic Church approaches in conflict management by encouraging these institutions to provide space where systems of patriarchy that push women to the periphery and create power inequality can be transformed. Thereby giving back power to the previously marginalized.

In Chapter Five, I present of data that emerged from the fieldwork. The data presented here is based on the stories from interviews and focus discussion groups. These will be analyzed, interpreted, and discussed in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION

Phase I: An Account of the Participant's Individual Interviews Responses

5.1 Introduction

Chapter One provided a general introduction to the study. It introduced the central theme of this study, which was to analyze the intersections of gender, culture, and religion when engaging the conflict along the West Pokot and Turkana Counties border in Kenya. To engage this theme, I reviewed relevant literature on gender, culture, religion, and conflict. By engaging different scholarly works in this field, I established the existing gaps in knowledge that this study aimed at filling. The literature reviewed highlighted unequal gender social power relations in the two communities from the indigenous justice systems and Catholic Church intervention strategies. Unequal gender relations led to what Vivienne Jabri refers to as 'hegemonic discourse,' where violent conflict generates the danger of conflict resolution to merely reproducing "the exclusionist, violent discourses and practices which perpetuate it" (Jabri, 1996, p.181). This was evident in the data presented in this chapter, where some men were considered superior to others after undergoing the rite of passage. The literature reviewed also indicated the linkages between masculinity formations and the persistence of the conflict. The literature pointed out that the dominant patriarchal ideals of masculinity afford power to men and disadvantage women. Thus, men must validate and demonstrate power through cultural practices and rites of passage. Considering the gender inequalities and the nature and persistence of the conflict discussed in the literature review, the data collected from the field in Chapter Five provided answers to the research questions.

Chapter Three has highlighted the theoretical frameworks used to analyze the data collected. They include; Pankhurst and Pearce's engendering a discipline, Edward Azar's protracted social conflict theory, and Kanyoro's feminists' hermeneutic interpretation.

There are three key learning that I have drawn from these three theoretical frameworks. That is, there is a link in the persistence of the Pokot Turkana conflict with the masculinity formations discussed in the rite of passage by the two communities under study, where the position of women is clearly at the periphery, and there is a need to reclaim this position to the center and the table of decision making. This came out during the individual interviews presented in this chapter. This will be discussed later in Chapter Six using theories on the

development of feminism and efforts by the circle of women theologians in their quest to make women agents of change. During data collection, I was keen on details since the interviewees can easily mislead the researcher where gender issues are trivialized due to patriarchal or male chauvinist attitudes and especially in some instances where there was gender imbalance among the participants due to failure to turn up during the discussions. This is why Pankhurst and Pierce call for researchers to be wary of male domination during research and avoid skewed data in favor of one gender (Ramsbotham et al., 2012, p. 313). In addition, Chapter Four highlighted the study's methodology to answer the proposed research questions and arrive at the objectives. The methodology chapter has provided the sampling and coding procedures, the participants' selection process, and the research instruments used.

In this chapter, I present the data that emerged from the fieldwork in an ethnographic manner. The data is presented in two sets. This first phase of data presentation is divided into two sections. Both sections provide an account of the participant's interviews. The second data phase, divided into two sections, was from FGD. Although there are two sets of data, there exists a conversation centered on why the conflict is persistent from gender and religious perspectives. The two data sets are synchronized in Chapter Six's data analysis, interpretation and discussions.

I conducted fifteen interviews, out of which twelve were face-to-face, and three were phone interviews. I was taking notes on the face-to-face interviews, while the phone interviews were recorded and transcribed later. In qualitative research, an interview relies upon asking questions to collect data. To collect that data, I used a questionnaire as my research instrument.² The narratives are provided by selected participants based on their history in the conflict, as outlined in the methodology chapter. According to Boonzaier (2008), narratives are context-bound and therefore shaped by cultural, social, political, and historical factors. Narratives depend on contexts. They rely on the art of language, demonstrating what is told and how it is told. In addition, narratives are unique tools allowing each interviewer to tell their story through their context and language, making meaning of a contextual lived experience.

² The questionnaire is presented as an appendix in this work.

Notably, in the individual interviews, there is a gender imbalance where there are more men than women. It is worth noting that three men were selected due to their involvement with Anti-Female genital mutilation and in support of the girl-child campaigns. I considered them champions of women's issues in a highly patriarchal community. However, some of the invited women participants did not turn up as mentioned above. Other participants were reformed warriors, religious leaders, non-governmental organization employees, faith-based organization employees, Justice and Peace employees, opinion leaders, and state agents in the region stated in the research methods chapter on Participant's selection criteria.

This chapter explores the intersection of gender, culture, and religion while engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict. The experiences of different interviewees and in the focus groups' discussion prompted a conversation on the cultural gender roles sustaining the conflict and how the cross-sectional gender approach could be used in managing the conflict. The experiences also brought to the forefront the Catholic Church's role in mitigating the conflict and other strategies capable of transforming the conflict that has not been explored.

In terms of this study, research questions were developed in English and translated into Swahili. The participants were welcome to respond in any of the two languages they felt comfortable with.³ Some participants used Swahili, Pokot, and Turkana words to emphasize critical issues, which have been written and translated into English. My research assistants, James and Grace, assisted with the interpretation.⁴ I sent all the questions before the interview so they could be familiar with them, which was well-informed as it kept the conversation and engagement going smoothly and saved time. Most of the meetings for the interviews took place in restaurants, offices, and homes. The participants' venue of choice was given preference. I observed Covid-19 protocols for face-to-face interviews and focus discussion groups. Masks were always worn during the interviews.

The causes for the conflict's persistence from focus group and individual interviews presented in this chapter are tabulated at the end of this chapter. The leading causes identified will form part of the themes to be analyzed and discussed in Chapter Six. The themes generated from the two sets of data are interrelated as they provided answers to the research questions. They are linked through the topic of this research; the intersection of gender,

³ The translated version of the questionnaires in Swahili are provided as an addendum

⁴ James and Grace not their real names were picked as the research assistant due to their understanding of the Pokot and Turkana languages. As such they interpreted the concepts and terminologies in this chapter. They also assisted with transcriptions.

religion, culture, and conflict. The themes and sub-themes provided answers to the persistence of the conflict from two perspectives. First from the general causes and second from the cultural gender roles.

Theme 1: General Causes of the Persistence of the Conflict

Sub-Themes
Cultural practices
Commercialization
Political incitement
Climatic conditions/resources
Arms proliferation
Marginalization/Poverty
Border conflict/oil

Theme 2: Cultural Gender Roles as Causes of the Conflict

WOMEN	MEN
Sub-themes	Sub-themes
Women and Dance	Heroism tattooing
Women and anointing	Spies before raids
Women and protection of raiders	Male seers
Women and failed raids	Diviners
Women and guns	Shoe throwers
Bride price	Intestines readers
Role of women in preparation for raids	Expert cleanser
Female seers	

Theme 3: Catholic Church Intervention Strategies

Sub-themes
Early warning signs systems
Economic empowerment
Paradigm shift from handouts to commitment
Reaching out to reformed warriors
Dismantling the raiders command structure
Beyond the gatekeeper's strategy
Church and cultural dance
Strengthening Indigenous deterrent factors
Dialogues with council of elders (Church and reconciliation, Mathew 6: 14-15)
Youth exchange and sports program [Math 5:13] Youths as agents of Peace)

The table below shows a summary of the research questions, methods used and the research population that this chapter was focusing on and the rationale for the choices of the methods and population sampling. In response to the over-arching research question the research was designed to use qualitative research methods which in this case includes focus group

discussion and structured interviews. Since this research uses different methodologies, they converge while responding to the key research question.

Table 5-1: Summary of the Research Questions, Methods Used and the Research Population

Research Question	Population	Methods	Rational /Why
What is the nature of the conflict and why persistence?	Local leaders such as chiefs, DCs, CJPC and Village elders	Interviews and Kacheliba FGD	Get in-depth understanding of the conflict
What is the role of RCC/Which theologies inform their approach?	Bishops, Cjpc employees, priests and Nuns	FGD, interviews	Evaluate the role of RCC and their strategies
How could an intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions?	Women opinion leaders, CJPC, Bishops	Interviews and FGD	Search for a common approach from the church and indigenous justice system on how gender can be included

The interviews were aimed at responding to the following questions

- i. What is the nature of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and why is it persistent?
- ii. What roles has the Catholic Church in the region played in mitigating the conflict?
- iii. What roles does gender play in the conflict? What cultural gender assigned roles cause conflict?

I present the analysis of the (15) narratives in Chapter Six.

5.2 Research Participants Profiles⁵

5.2.1 Participant Religious Leader of Kitale Diocese

The religious leader is 75 years old and ex-patriate. He has been in the Diocese of Kitale for 24 years. Prior to coming to Kitale Diocese, he worked as a high school teacher for 20 years in a neighboring county. As a shepherd of the Pokot community, he has been involved in discussing peace and development for many years. In times of violent conflict and

⁵To ensure that research ethics are maintained, the names of the persons profiled in this study are not the real names of the participants. These are pseudonyms, used by the researcher to protect the identity of the participants. They are picked from most common names in the community

displacement of persons, he has hosted many internally displaced persons in church compounds that he oversees. He has also mediated warring parties severally in an effort to manage the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

5.2.2 Participant Religious Leader of Lodwar-Turkana

The religious leader is 61 years old. He has been the religious leader of the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar for 10 years. He is from one of the tribes that has been in constant conflict in Baringo, Kenya. He is well-endowed with indigenous conflict approach skills. He has convened many conferences in his effort to reconcile the warring communities. He is the shepherd of the Turkana community. His Diocese borders the Diocese of Kitale.

5.2.3 Participant Linus

Linus is a PhD holder from the University of Nairobi, specializing in international relations and conflict resolutions. He did his research on early warning signs in the Ogden triangle involving pastoralist communities. He works with the Shalom Center for Conflict Resolution that is greatly involved with empowering the two communities under study. He is a consultant in the field of peace building and a champion of the subaltern communities. He is also a gender champion. One of the conversations I had with him rotated around gender question in relation to the nature of the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

5.2.4 Participant Samuel

Samuel is a graduate from the University of Nairobi. He is specialized in conflict management. He works for the Justice and Peace Office in Lodwar diocese. He also works as the Cross-Border Director along the Pokot-Turkana counties border. He conducts grassroots mobilization through workshops and seminars as communities' trainer of trainers who in turn become agents for peace. He is among a group of people who were surrounded by raiders who threatened to kill all of them for being sympathetic to their perceived enemies in the Pokot community.

5.2.5 Participant Patrick

Patrick is 33 years old. He graduated from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology with disaster management major. Currently, he is an Assistant County Commissioner. Prior to his appointment, Patrick worked as the Director of Justice and Peace in the Diocese of Kitale attached to the cross-border program. He worked closely with Samuel of the Lodwar Diocese. His target group were the high school and primary school

children who were recruited as warriors by their peers to be raiders. He held several activities that brought the youths together for sports and seminars. He emphasized education as a transformational tool.

5.2.6 Participant Koskei

Koskei is 38 years old. He graduated from the University of Nairobi with a degree in Agricultural Engineering. He is currently the Director of Justice and Peace in Eldoret Catholic Diocese. He worked closely with the lead mediator in Pokot-Turkana conflict who was fronted by Kenya Catholic Episcopal conference. Koskei was instrumental in the writing of Bishop Korir's book on Peace at the grass roots (*amani mashinani*). Together with Bishop Korir, they introduced seed distribution program along the Pokot-Turkana border offering alternative livelihoods to the communities as a mitigating strategy.

5.2.7 Participant Kimisoi

Kimisoi is 74 years old. He works under the Bishop of Eldoret, whose main work is mediation between the Pokot-Turkana and Pokot and Marakwet . He has a deep understanding of the causes of the conflict having worked in the conflict corridor for decades. He is also good in both English and Swahili, written and oral. He articulates the various causes and new trends to the conflict and stands out among his peers. He has also been involved with the inter-clan conflicts among the Marakwet communities on issues surrounding land sub-divisions. He is also known for his role as an anti-female genital mutilation crusader. I considered him a champion of women issues in a highly patriarchal community.

5.2.8 Participant Lopetakou

Lopetakou is 69 years old. He is well renowned in Pokot culture. He is referred by the title "*Baba culture*" meaning the father of culture. He is the custodian of the Pokot culture. He has been involved with cultural institutions that mitigate and manage conflict. Also, the rite of passages where young men are made men through *Sapana* ceremonies. In his narrations, he takes credit being the organizer of the *muma* (oath taking) that acts as deterrent to the warriors. He is also gifted with indigenous herbs that he sells for a living.

5.2.9 Participant Aziza

Aziza is 30 years old. She accepted I use her real name in the study. She is a master's holder in Conflict and International Relations from the University of Nairobi. She is currently working for the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar and Eldoret in capacity building and training grassroots peace agents. She has previously worked with women peace-makers in Wajir and initiated many programs to hold the women together in their struggle for lasting peace. She is also well-equipped with indigenous methods of conflict management.

5.2.10 Participant Madam Chief

She is 74 years old. A very respected retired senior chief. She is from West Pokot County who was deeply involved with conflict management in her work station when she was active. She has served three consecutive governments in Kenya and oversaw the introduction of the western justice systems among the nomadic tribes. She still holds that local solutions to local problems are the way to go. The retired chief is credited for fighting against female genital mutilation in her jurisdiction and advocated for the rights of girl child through education sponsorship.

5.2.11 Participant Kassim

Kassim is 88 years old. He is one of the two elderly interviewees in this study. He is rich in wisdom and custodian of the Pokot culture. He has seen all the disarmament programs by different governments. He is also aware of stories of the Pokot People before, during and after independence. He has seen the Pokot and Turkana conflict evolve from use of bows and arrows to use of small arms. His narration on the '*sowe*' curse and the shift from killing animals such as lions for heroism to killing human changed the conflict to what it is today. His responses to the research questions enriched my study.

5.2.12 Participant Paul

Paul is 68 years old. He is a Turkana village elder. He is from Kainuk in Turkana South. He is the one who organizes chief's *baraza* in his area of Kainuk. He is the custodian of the Turkana culture. He is able to foretell an incoming raid by reading animal intestines. He is a gate keeper of the community and thus has worked with many FBOs, NGOs and CBOs. He literary knows who is who in the conflict corridor on the Turkana side of the border. The dark side of gatekeepers of these communities is that whatever he says must be collaborated with other interviews as gate-keepers tend to be biased about the others especially perceived enemies. This is informed by the NGO's concern about gatekeepers and their need for

allowances for them to tell you ‘what you want to hear’ as a potential bias. Collaborating gate-keeper’s responses with focus group discussion in the same place helps to counter such biases.

5.2.13 Participant Leo

Leo is 90 years old. He is an expatriate Catholic Priest who has worked in West Pokot for 50 years. Though retired, his memory is extremely sharp. In Pokot, he is a ‘walking library’ of the Pokot events for decades. He translated all liturgical books into Pokot language. He underwent the rite of *sapana*, and is fully accepted as a Pokot elder. During the ceremony, he was given a new name: *Lokomol* in Pokot which, means a bull with curved horns. Many people don’t know his other name other than *Lokomol*. He is well-versed with both Pokot and Turkana cultures. He is known as a champion of the girl child. He rescued so many under-age girls who had been given out for marriage.

5.2.14 Participant Rosanna

Rosanna is 50 years old from Pokot North. She has worked as a peace ambassador and a Catholic Church volunteer for many years. She attended primary school education up to class seven/grade seven. She has attended many seminars and worked for different NGOs as their contact person in grass root mobilization. She was among the group that brokered peace agreement between Pokot and Sebei along the Pokot-Uganda border.

5.2.15 Participant Sarah

Sarah is 43 years old from Kainuk in Turkana South. She is a business woman in Kainuk in Turkana South. She is the one who coined the phrase “*biashara ya mizozo*” translated as” conflict entrepreneurs” referring to people who are the beneficiaries of the conflict. She is also a champion of education for all the pastoralists, claiming that education as a transformational tool is the answer to the conflict. She lost her husband and a brother to the conflict.

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Name	Age	Education Level	Profession	Gender
Participant A	50	High School	Riam Riam: NGO	Female
Participant B	55	College	Sikom Ngo	Male
Participant C	76	College	Retired chief	Female
Participant D	50	High school	District committee	Female
Participant E	25	University student	Volunteer Sikom	Male
Participant F	26	Primary school	Reformed warrior	Male

In this phase I have provided a snapshot of the participants profiles to give understanding and context to each of the fifteen participants and their involvement in the conflict. In the following part I will give extracts from the interviews that demonstrate the themes and sub-themes as the participants were asked about the three research questions on the nature and persistence of the conflict, the gender roles and the role of the catholic church in the conflict management.

5.3 Themes and Sub-Themes

In the first phase of data collection, interviews were conducted, the interview schedule was used to guide the interview conversation. The main question in this phase of the interview was to establish the following: *What is the nature of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and why is it persistent?* Various themes and sub-themes of the causes of the conflict emerged as participants were asked to share their views on the nature and causes of the conflict.

5.3.1 Theme #1: Nature and Persistence of the Conflict

During the interview on the on the nature and persistence of the conflict, a participant was quick to respond;

For me the persistence of the Pokot/Turkana conflict can be linked to several reasons, which are also interconnected to each other. Considering the long history of conflict between the Pokot /Turkana which has existed for more than a century and has evolved over the years from the traditional use of bows and arrows to the use of guns. For me, the main reason is the lack of political will by different political regimes to secure the region. This has resulted in the proliferation of small arms in the two communities, which have been used not only to raid the cattle but also to kill people. What I know is that, that this is connected to the political instability in the neighboring countries such as the Karamoja region in Uganda, the Toposa region in South Sudan, and in Ethiopia – Merille/Dasaanach region that has become the source of arms supplies to the Turkana and Pokot communities in Kenya [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April, 2022].

5.3.1.1 Sub-Theme #1: Climate Change

Another cause of the persistence of the conflict was linked to the change in climate. This was affirmed by Patrick in an intervCiew where he said that:

Change in climate has affected the economic stabilization of the communities. He further claimed that Climate change and Global warming have led to a lack of rainfall in the area leading to drought. By extension, drought leads to a lack of pasture and water for the livestock. Since livestock rearing is the communities' major

economic activity, which highly depends on water and pasture, with a lack of rain most of the animals die, creating the need for restocking during the rainy season [Research Participant Patrick, 18th April, 2022].

On how change of climate is related to cattle raids, Patrick added that “the easiest way to restock after severe drought is by raiding their neighbors and thus the full cycle of the conflict”.

He further claimed while referring to a place called Kakong and the wildlife conservancy in the area that;

Conflict will never end until the Pokots who come and put-up temporal shelters (kraals) during the dry season are dealt with. She held that during the dry season, the Pokot from east Pokot, specifically the Tiaty region move in with their animals purporting to search for green pastures and water. They stay in the conservancy until the dry spell is over and return home at the onset of rains. Unfortunately, when they move out of the former grazing fields, they take with them Turkana communities' livestock. By so doing, the communities whose animals have been taken away feel agitated and resort to go and bring back their animals. On such occasions, conflict erupts and the conflict cycle continues each year as a result of the change in climatic conditions. Such situations have been experienced in Kainuk and Kakong areas along the border [Research Participant Patrick, 24th April, 2022].

Patrick also contended that;

I have dealt with issues where in other situations, the Pokot community tends to allow their animals to graze freely on their own. This makes it easy prey for my community to raid the animals. I came to realize that, this is strategic for the Pokot community to leave their animals to graze without a close watch during a drought so that they can be raided by the Turkana community where there is plenty of pasture around lake Turkana. At the onset of rainy season on the Pokot side, it is at this time that they come to raid, calling it 'to take' back their animals, which they 'released' for grazing [Research Participant Patrick, 24th April, 2022].

In that quest, they take more than what they released therefore causing conflict in the region.

Another participant claimed that;

This is the rationale behind the Pokot claims that they don't steal cattle but only bring back home their cattle left to roam around Turkana land. This justification by Pokots is also shared by the Turkana worldview on livestock, "bringing back home the animals left behind [Research Participant Samuel, 24th April, 2022].

Further, participant Patrick provided another side of climate change as cause of the conflict in relation to over-stocking;

Lack of control on the number of animals that one should possess concerning the availability of pasture and water has led to conflict between the Pokots and Turkana communities. This is worsened by the effects of overgrazing that have resulted in a lack of sufficient pasture and water for livestock in the region. This causes the communities to move to other territories in search of these resources hence leading to conflict [Research Participant Patrick, 22nd April, 2022].

Patrick also narrated to me how poverty levels have sustained the conflict;

The level of marginalization of the two counties by the previous government, poor infrastructures, and other social amenities such as schools and hospitals has left the majority of the population poor. This leads the youths who cannot access education to see cattle rustling as the only source of income. Lack of education has made the youth unable to secure employment in the formal sector. In addition to climate change which has led to limited natural resources of pasture-land and water, leading to poverty, economic constraint, and conflict, lack of clear border has led to persistence [Research Participant Patrick, 22nd April, 2022].

5.3.1.2 Sub-Theme #2: Conflict Entrepreneurship/Commercialization

Commercialization of the conflict is another cause of conflict. This points to some new trends and dynamics in the conflict that were not been addressed before.

Participant Samuel claimed that “the continuous conflict between these two communities is the commercialization of cattle rustling whereby there is a demand from some business people who buy the raided cattle and drive them to untraceable markets” [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April, 2022].

He went on to say that;

This factor explains why the raided cattle can no longer be found in the community of the young warriors shortly after the raid contrary to the traditional raiding habit where the animals were brought to the community. Hence the traditional cultural motifs of cattle raiding have been replaced with the commercialization of the raids. It is a thriving business he posed [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April, 2022].

This participant concurred with Participant Sarah that the phrase ‘*conflict entrepreneur*’ refers to the attitude of those who benefit financially from the conflict. They include those

who buy stolen animals and those who benefit directly or indirectly through funding from international communities abroad.

Participant Paul, from Kainuk agreed with Samuel claiming that he has benefited from the commercialization of the conflict by non-governmental organizations;

I have educated all my children because of this conflict, NGOs invite us for a peace seminar, they pay us hefty allowances which could go up to 50 dollars (Kshs.5,000/=) for us to sign their allowance papers” which they would claim from their donors [Research Participant Paul 17th April, 2022].

In a very different way of explaining the conflict beneficiaries, Paul brought in a new dimension to it. He said;

This question of who benefits from the conflict also touches the multinational companies who are interested in oil reserves and conservancies expanding their boundaries. Both foreigners and locals own the conservancies and benefit from the conflict. I have seen conflict beneficiaries working tirelessly to ensure that conflict between the two warring communities doesn't come to an end [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

He further claimed that;

The oil discovery in the area has led to the attraction of both local and foreign investors. These investors have been on the target of acquiring land where the said oil can be found. They sponsor the young warriors in the region to burn other communities or clan houses in the region making them vulnerable and hence forced to move out of that area or region [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

According to Paul, these conflict entrepreneurs have been perceived to compromise the government and especially the Kenyan police because;

None of the investigations done have proved or identified culprits. They have taken advantage of corruption within the force to manipulate those civil servants holding the public offices in the region and at the national level [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

A similar claim on conflict entrepreneurs was made by Participant Linus from Shalom Conflict Centre; “the conflict is accelerated and sustained by conflict entrepreneurs/beneficiaries. Those who benefit from the conflict among the men and women.”

He added;

How would you like the conflict to end while it's your source of livelihood, you make the two parties fight, you get funding from abroad, you just need those photos and little narratives, especially those depicting death and suffering. He would further claim that the prolonged conflict is designed to be so by conflict beneficiaries [Research Participant Linus, 19/4/2022].

5.3.1.3 Sub-Theme #3: Children Upbringing and Socialization

Children upbringing was another sub-theme that I deduced from the interviews. Participant Kimiso raised concern that the upbringing of children was another cause of the prolonged conflict. He claimed that “mothers have a lot of influence in mothering their children and the way they pass on their cultural practice” (Research Participant Kimiso, 28th April, 2022).

Similar sentiments were raised by participant Sarah from Kainuk in Turkana south who claimed that;

Since I was young, my Turkana community always referred to Pokots as Emoit (enemy). Even among the Pokots we refer to Turkanas as Punyon meaning an enemy. That is how our mothers from our side and the Pokot side bring up our children telling them of their enmity and as such, children are born and grow knowing of their perceived hatred for the 'other'. Mainly mothers nurture this concept of 'othering' at their tender age [Research Participant Sarah, 24th April, 2022].

Participant Sarah was categorical that how children are socialized is a contributing factor. She claimed;

When fathers of the household tell boys you are not like girls to be seen in the kitchen cooking or a woman should not tell you what to do in marriage, this kind of socialization leads to men looking down on women when they grow up [Research Participant Sarah, 24th April, 2022].

According to another participant (Paul);

This kind of thinking has become part of our cultural belief system, and we pass it on from one generation to the other. When our children are brought up in such a way, they in turn, become perpetrators. Mothers pass on narratives of their kinsmen and women killed during the Pokot-Turkana raids. When you hear these stories from your own mother you trust and feel very bad...this creates the need for revenge when you grow up [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

Participant Paul agreed with Sarah on the claim that the role of mothers in nurturing their young ones has turned out to be a way of upbringing future raiders in the society.

The participant agreed that;

... while women have been perceived as victims in conflict, their role as mothers in the two communities has turned them to be perpetrators of the conflict in their nurturing role. The upbringing of children by our mothers and how we socialize them which includes telling them who they are and whom they should be wary of has had far-reaching implications in sustaining the conflict [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

Participant Linus did not want to blame mothers only in their role as he brought in their fathers too;

I think the role of fathers is also to blame in this conflict, although the Pokot and Turkana mothers have played this role for long our fathers have also been part of the same kind of narrative but in different ways. It is men who teach us the boys how to be 'boys' for example my dad taught me how to use arrows and later guns [Research Participant Linus, 19th April, 2022].

5.3.1.4 Sub-Theme #4: Clash of Pokot and Turkana Worldviews

The clash of worldviews between the Pokot and the Turkana has been attributed to be a cause of their conflict along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor. According to Participant Rosanna, from Kacheliba in Pokot North;

Since we have no word for visitor apart from enemy, if one is not one of us of course, he is an enemy. This is how [we] were brought up knowing, it is based on the concept of "we" and "them". This is what we use to differentiate an insider "we" Pokots or Turkanas and the non-Pokots or non-Turkanas "them". Due to this perception, therefore, we believe that all cows belong to "us" insiders and not to "them" outsiders. This is also embedded in our myth of the creation story where we believe God gave the Pokots cattle. I know all cows belong to us and anybody else with cattle took them from us and we must return them. How do you call that stealing? [Research Participant Rosanna, 23rd April, 2022].

Participant Sarah from Kainuk also was of the view that;

Our Turkana women have been at the forefront of inculcating this type of thinking among their children at a tender age making them feel proud of the fact that all cattle belong to us as such they grow too longing for the day, they will go raiding to bring back all the cattle, which "belong" to their community [Research Participant Sarah, 24th April, 2022].

5.3.1.5 Sub-Theme #5: *Sowe* Curse and Persistence of the Conflict

During my interviews with participants from Pokot North, they kept referring to an elderly man whom they claimed was rich with the history or the genesis of the Pokot community in relation to raiding and the protracted conflict. They advised me that my research cannot be complete without having a one-on-one with Kassim. In an interview with Kassim, an elder who has seen the conflict evolve and become one of the longest conflicts in Kenyan history, he gave a narration of what transpired before the conflict in the early 1940s and how this later became the “elders’ curse (*sowe* curse) to the Pokot community in Kanyerus conflict corridor and by extension the Pokot community with their Turkana neighbors.

Kassim further claimed;

In life I have witnessed many Pokot rituals and have participated in many ceremonies. During our young age rite of passage to adulthood was a big ceremony. The young warriors were to be recognized as protectors of the community and tattooed only after a fierce fight with wild animals like the lions and Leopards. However, in 1940 an age-set called the SOWE approached the elders and asked for their blessings to go out and kill their perceived enemies, the SEBEI and KARAMOJA, and be tattooed instead of wild animals. Their cry for killing humans was granted through a ritual ceremony that was contacted by the elders.” When they asked for permission, the elders in agreement took honey and milk, millet, and fatty parts of meat, then dug a hole and buried them signifying bringing an end to the wealth that made the young men generation defy their elders. After the curse was initiated, the communities started to experience drought and as a result, the productivity was reduced, and animals started to die as a result of the curse [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

Kassim further elaborated that;

It was at a place called Paripar in Uganda side of the border where all this happened. The elders went there and provided honey/traditional beer, broke a huge stone, and commissioned the Pokot warriors to go and raid from their enemies”. The Pokots went and successfully raided the Karamoja community. However, their success was short-lived as in 1962, the Karamoja counter revenged killing many from the Pokot community and taking away their livestock.” I was a young boy at the time and I witnessed these raids and counter-raids. At that time the British colonialists did not understand how to solve this conflict using the rule of law that was being introduced in their colonies. They resolved to investigate how the local communities solved their conflicts using the council of elders [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

Another participant, Rosanna, from the same place Kacheliba, in a separate interview agreed with Kassim that;

We taught them (British) how to solve African problems in an African way. They had to borrow our concept of LAPAI (fines for the blood spilled). The British took some cattle from the Pokot community and paid the Karamoja and took some from Karamoja and paid the Pokot, for the deaths of their community members [Research Participant Sarah, 24th April, 2022].

This was the first time for a well-elaborated blood money exchange between the two communities. In his narration, I was forced to interject and ask whether the rituals performed were gender sensitive. In his response, Kassim claimed that “the *sowe* curse is religious since it is full of rituals and it was also gender sensitive as in involved everybody in the society” (Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022).

This is explained step by step in the recanting of the oath that was aimed at mitigating and ending the conflict at some point.

Kassim argued that;

With the blessings from the elders to the young warriors to kill their neighbors and be tattooed instead of killings lions and leopards, the conflict was accelerated and became unmanageable. It even worsened with the proliferation of small arms. Before the raids on Moroto Barracks in Uganda, the Pokot community was using bows and arrows. With guns at their disposal, the number of casualties increased and reached the peak of lawlessness [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

Participant Rosanna, in a separate interview, sought to clarify the misconception that the Pokots raided the Moroto Barracks, and how the Pokots gain access to guns;

It was the then Ugandan president, Idd Amin who opened the barracks and told the people to protect themselves when he realized he was going to lose the war against the rebels supported by Tanzanian troops. The Karamoja from Uganda are the ones who sold the guns to the Pokots in exchange for cattle. We never raided the barracks! [Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April, 2022].

Rosanna would further claim that;

It was due to the lawlessness that the government had to intervene. The Kenyan Government intervened in 1984 to disarm our Pokot community in the infamous program, Operation Nyundo. This was after the Pokots had killed hundreds of the Sabei community. According to Rosanna, this disarmament program initiated by the

government left the North Pokot community with permanent scars, many of our brothers and sisters were killed and maimed by our own government security agents [Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April, 2022].

Participant Kassim further argues that the elders realized that their 1940 oath needed to be recanted in order to manage the conflict. According to Kassim;

The elders reached an agreement to recant the SOWE oath for the benefit of its community members, whom they claimed were victims of that oath. The elders provided specific gender roles in carrying out the oath recanting process. The cleansing rituals were the core of the process [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

Kassim went on to say;

As an elder we started a series of cleansing rituals. The first in a series of rituals took place at CHEMSIK near Kongelai in Kacheliba, where we went to “remove” the sowe curse. To provide a remedy, we performed a ritual to remove the curse that was making the communities suffer. The name of the ceremony is called ‘Yatata Koor’ meaning healing of the earth. Symbolic animals were slaughtered in the ceremony, a black cow was slaughtered to remove what was termed to be the darkness that had prevailed within the community, a brown cow symbolized the removal of calamities, and a white cow to bring peace and blessings between us the Pokot and Turkana communities. We ordered members of the community especially women to bring millet, cow fat, Milk, and honey which were symbols of removing the curse and a sign of good things to come. To finalize, one of our clan members climbed a tree and then poured millet, milk, and honey from the top to cleanse the community of the curse. We also used the palm branches as a sign of good tidings and peace. All present were to partake in the ritual as a way of cleansing the community. We also with other elders also used some words of blessings and recanting the sowe oath. The second in the series of rituals of recanting the sowe oath and curse took place at Chepakatina near Kanyerus, at a famous moning/Werkoyon’s home (Orondo Lotuliatum) [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

In addition, he claimed;

We did the last in the series of recanting of the sowe oath at a place called MUMUR. We reconciled the Pokots and Sabei after decades of fighting. We urged the two communities to slaughter a bull and share a meal as a symbol of unity and entered into an indigenous peace agreement to end hostility between the two communities. While men of good repute from the group of elders performed the ritual, women prepared meals and the meal was shared by all who had attended the ceremony [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

In response to my claim that the conflict is still persistent along the corridor and it seems the curse is still there, Kassim observed that;

The Pokot community was yet to settle their differences with the Turkana community today by performing these rituals along the county borders, I advise you to follow up for the rituals to be performed and I assure you the conflict will be managed. Look at wherever we did these rituals there are no violent conflicts [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

Another participant Sarah in a separate interview explained what Kassim was saying;

I am convinced that the same rituals that were carried out at a place called Konyao between the Pokot and Karamoja in North Pokot brought the prevailing peace between the Pokot and Karamoja communities. Despite the cleansing rituals, the Pokots believe the sowe curse is one of the main causes for the persistence of the conflict [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

5.3.1.6 Sub-Theme #6: Masculinity Formations Linked to Persistence of the Conflict

In response to the question on why the Pokot-Turkana conflict is persistent, it was clear that masculinity formations are a key factor in sustaining the conflict. This was well elaborated by interviewees from both communities under study in their rites of passage to adulthood for men in their famous ceremonies called *Sapana*. This ceremony, which is coveted by every young man, was linked to the persistence of the conflict.

***Sapana* Ceremonies**

According to participant Lopetakou:

A man is not a man in Pokot and Turkana communities without going through a ceremony called 'Sapana' where he is crowned to be a real man to have a say in the community and talk before elders. This cultural ceremony is done after a Pokot man has undergone circumcision where the whole village is congregated in a central place to crown the initiate [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

Similar ceremonies are also common among the Turkana community. This was a narration by Mzee Lopetakou (referred to as *Baba* (father) culture. He is called by this name to signify that he is an authority in matters of Pokot and Turkana culture:

*The rite of passage for a Pokot man from childhood to adulthood is performed in a ceremony called *sapana*. The Turkana community has the same ceremony but with some small differences. We have 37 clans in the Pokot community. The 37th clan is the remnants of other tribes who were the indigenous people of the Pokot land, they*

include (Sirikwa, Naruka, and oropom/orkom). The Pokots are part of the Karamoja cluster, which includes, matheniko, Turkana, nyangatom, merille, toposa, pian, and kii. The Sapana ceremonies originated from the Karamoja cluster specifically the Pian group. Sapana is regarded as a bull killing ceremony. It is meant to sacrifice the bull as purification for sins. Thus, it is a religious activity meant to cleanse the people, and a bull slaughtered is a sign of cleansing the community from their sins. Besides, during the ceremony the blood from the bull and the milk, which is brought by the women, is mixed and consumed to signify communion. According to Lopetakou, the consumption of blood and milk is exclusively reserved for those who have gone through the Sapana rite [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

Lopetakou contended that;

It all starts with the preparation for the big day after the young man informs the father of his intentions of ascending to adulthood. Unlike circumcision where all Pokot men have to undergo the cut the rite to adulthood is not required but encouraged. The father to the initiate sends for a bull from good renown and respected elder. The elder must be from a clan that is of good repute and not from a cursed family. It must be castrated... Lopetakou claimed that it is a sign that it is non-productive. A productive bull cannot be offered for the ceremony as it is considered a waste of its future generations. The bull is not from a local elder but gotten from a far, which symbolizes blessings from outside and not from within. The bull is not sold but is exchanged with a young heifer. The bull is to be speared by the initiate the following day during the ceremony [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

Participant Rosanna agreed to the narratives by Lopetakou, she said that;

A trumpet called konti is blown and a word is sent out to all the villages/kraals that there will be a ceremony to initiate a young man into adulthood. Women are informed because they have a role to play. They bring milk that will be used in the ceremony. The young man spends the night in a designated hut waiting for the sunrise. As the sun rises, the young man walks toward the bull, fixes his aim, and pierces the animal with a spear on its right side. This is with an aim of piercing the heart. Sikamoi said that; according to tradition, the bull must be speared several times before death, as a way to respect its life to consider that a single blow could fell a bull would be to dishonor the animal. The bull must fall facing east which is significant as it is the source of life and blessings. Village men who have gone through the rite open up the slaughtered bull [Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April, 2022].

Participant Kassim explained in detail what happened during his *Sapana*. Though an old man in his late 80s, he remembers everything as if it happened yesterday;

After the bull is slaughtered, the meat has to be divided especially since each piece of meat is symbolic. First, the hind legs/steak called the kipess were put aside or reserved for the seniors only. However, the elders eat one of the hind legs amuro the following day. This was being mindful of elders who did not attend the ceremony; this signifies communal meals and by extension communal decision-making. The front left leg called charot was reserved for the local leaders such as a government representative if, in the ceremony, the right front leg was for the in-laws, the tail and the back meat were for the warriors or protectors of the community against aggressors. The chest takat is given to the most generous or wealthy who gives back to society. Most of the blood is kept in a wooden container called ateker to be mixed later with milk, a traditional delicacy to be shared. The meat is divided with gender roles reserved for males in society. Men take their place in a semi-circle and wait for the best parts of the animal to be cooked and served to them. Women and children wait their turn at a distance. Every single part of the animal has been eaten apart from one hind leg, which is kept until the following day to be eaten by the elders only [Research Participant Kassim, 15th April, 2022].

Participant Lopetakou explained that one of the most important final stages of the ceremony is when;

Respected elder smears the contents of the animal's chime called eghyan on the whole body of the initiate. He claimed that this is the concluding rite that seals the young man's entrance to adulthood, conferring a new status on him and gives him authority to speak before elders. A chime is used to cleanse the young initiates from all sorts of defilement. All men who have gone through the rite partake in the cleansing ceremony by taking some chime and smearing the initiates on their foreheads, chest and knees. Only then will he be able to speak to elders," Lopetakou said. In return the initiate will be listened to and respected. In our culture, Sapana is the most important rite for a man to be able to gain authority within his community [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

Participant Rosanna, agreed with Lopetakou and claimed that;

The young men officially join the circle of elders, where he can dine and wine and make decisions with the elders. Since women do not culturally undergo sapana rites, it automatically locks them outside the decision-making indigenous institution. The ritual allows men to sit with local elders and take part in their community's decision-making. Sapana also gives improved access to marriage, once the man and his family have accumulated cattle for dowry [Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April, 2022].

My own reflection as a participant observer is that many activities make up the *Sapana* ceremony. The most iconic and often strange one to outsiders like myself is the spearing of the ox. I got the rare opportunity to witness this firsthand: The bull was huddled in a small

kraal/space in Masol in Pokot Central. Men, both young and old (who had undergone the rite) were sitting on their three-legged stools around a fireplace on one side. Women watched from a distance. It is an exercise that's not usually permitted to outsiders, so I count myself lucky to have been allowed to be there to witness it. Suffice to say, Powon didn't kill the bull in one thrust. He injured the very bull in the process. Amid shouts and the confusion that ensued after the missed shots, he finally got his spear through the heart of the bull. It was painful to watch. After he pulled out the spear, the bull jumped over the thorny hedge and fell with a thud unfortunately facing west, a few meters away from the shed, dead. Ululations filled the village. I asked Peter who had invited me to the ceremony, why are elders and other people murmuring? Is there something wrong?

Peter explained to me: "something wrong has happened. It was supposed to face east and to appease the gods, another animal is to be killed, and it is a goat this time".

It was also subjected to the same spearing process, not slaughter. He held the goat's hind leg with one hand and used the other to spear it. I couldn't stand it this time.

Peter, who accompanied me to where the event took place, would later explain that the mother and a few other women then smeared the young man with ghee/oil from the animal fat stored in horns. They applied it all over his head, hands, and legs, as well as the spear as a blessing. It also signifies calling the spirits to take charge of the young man. What follows are ceremonial rituals, elders and young men who have gone through the *Sapana* rite drink blood from the bull mixed with milk. Meat is roasted and other activities follow, to complete the whole *Sapana* ceremony. I observed that the *Sapana* ceremony is full of Pokot and Turkana religious activities where all activities were accompanied by a ritual (Personal reflection field diary, 15th April, 2022).

According to Participant Paul, the Turkana community performs similar rituals albeit in a different manner. The participant explained;

That there are two age sets among the Turkana community, the Ngirisai-goat (ekoroi) and the Ngimor –sheep (imethek). There is a clear distinction between the two age sets by the necklace they wear. A woman married to Ngirisai puts on a yellow necklace, while ngimor puts on a black necklace. Besides, Ngirisai puts on a white feather headgear while ngimor black feather as headgear. During the Sapana ceremony, each son partaking in the ceremony dresses in a headgear indicating his age set. He is then given a spear that is blessed by the father (the father spits saliva

on the spear), which means that the son is now taking the leadership mantle. He is now ready to spear the goat, or a sheep depending on his age set. After killing the goat, the godfather brings the young man under the occasion and then requests him to sit down. Chime is then smeared on his body while he is naked. This activity happens in absence of the women [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

The participant further narrated that;

Together with the godfather, the initiate goes to his home and sleeps there for four days. At this time, the wife is not at their home only to arrive there on the 5th day. The godfather gives an animal either a goat or cow to be given to the father's initiate. The initiate now blesses all the properties as a sign of the beginning of a new life. If he is the first to Sapan in his age set then he becomes the senior-most and is given leadership role such as Ekadwaran/counselor. He becomes the leader of his age set and therefore entitled to a share of meat from all those age sets who sapana after him [Research Participant Paul, 17th April, 2022].

The interview on the masculinity formations and their linkages to the conflict were collaborated during the focus group discussions in Kainuk in Turkana South and Kacheliba in North Pokot. The members of these discussion groups agreed with the narrations from the interviews that;

Smearing of munyan paint signifies approval of the boy stage to adulthood and the initiate is given a headrest called akicholon'g. A bull is slaughtered and its head is preserved for the villagers to dance around the head. The bull's head is placed on leaves and an old woman surrounds the head while oiling it with some ointments. Sweet traditional celebratory music sung by renowned local musicians is sung as the villagers sing along and dance all day. Signs that indicate they are ready to protect their cattle and community accompany the songs. Specifically, men point their hands as if holding arrows or guns signaling their readiness to lay down their lives for the sake of their cattle and community. Most songs are praising the initiate for the transition to another level of being an elder in the community [Participants, FGD Kacheliba North Pokot 5th May, 2022].

The FGD further claimed that;

It is during this period, in a celebration mood, that the elders would ask the young men to identify areas of interest to go and carry out cattle raids. Sapana plays a role in triggering the boys to go raiding. It was during the sapana that the young men would identify beautiful ladies. Ekiriamet a kraal leader in Turkana south would claim; "the elders will ask the young men how will you marry these beauties if you don't have cattle for dowry...beautiful they are yes, but to marry one has to pay a dowry of 30 heads of cattle. It is at this point four spies (ghotti) are sent to watch out

and identify areas with cattle where the newly sapaned can go and raid [Participants, FGD Kacheliba North Pokot 5th May, 2022].

5.3.2 Summary

The first phase of data collection has provided the general causes of the conflict. The leading causes identified form part of the sub-themes to be analyzed and discussed in Chapter Six. These sub-themes generated from this set of data provided answers to the research question on nature and persistence of the conflict. The sub-themes include; cultural practices, commercialization of the conflict, political incitements, climatic conditions, arms proliferation, marginalization and border conflict. The sub-themes were majorly from the individual interviews although some input from FGDs touching on the general causes were also added in this section. Thus, sections in this chapter are not totally independent.

In the next phase, I look at how the Catholic Church addressed the above causes using different strategies. This set of data aimed at interrogating the role of the Catholic Church in managing the conflict.

Table 5-2: Summary of the Sub-Themes from the Data

Sub: Themes
Cultural practices
Commercialization
Political incitement
Climatic conditions/resources
Arms proliferation
Marginalization/Poverty
Border conflict/oil

Table 5-2 above provides a summary of the sub-themes deducted from the individual interviews' participants in relation to the first objective of this study; The nature and persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

Data Presentation: Phase-II, Section I

5.4 The Roman Catholic Church's Role in Conflict

This section is a continuation from the first phase above. I had three focus group discussions and five individual interviews. The purpose of this section was to get a deeper understanding of the conflict from the religious perspectives. More so, the section, through the questions, aimed at establishing the role the Roman Catholic Church has played to mitigate this conflict. It also aimed at interrogating the theological resources, and other strategies that

were used. At the same time looking at what can be done in future to avert or manage community conflict. This created a conversation between the first phase and this section. The conversation is centered on causes of persistence vis-a-vis possible ways of dealing with them.

The individual interviews aimed at responding to the following questions;

1. What ideo-theological resources did the Catholic Church use in its intervention use?
2. Did the church consider the role of gender in mitigating the conflict?
3. How did the church involve women in mitigating the conflict?

5.4.1 Details of the Focus Group Discussion Participants

Having cited this as a point of departure, data for this section was collected using focus group discussions. Participants of the focus groups were drawn from various backgrounds and gender was a factor in choosing them. The composition of the focus group discussion is presented in tables 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5 below.

Table 5-3: Personal Details – Focus Group Discussion Group Session (Kacheliba FGD; 6th June, 2022)

Name	Age	Education Level	Profession	Gender
Participant A	50	High School	Riam Riam: NGO	Female
Participant B	55	College	Sikom NGO	Male
Participant C	76	College	Retired chief	Female
Participant D	50	High school	District committee	Female
Participant E	25	University student	Volunteer Sikom	Male
Participant F	26	Primary school	Reformed warrior	Male

Table 5-3 above shows the age of the participants with pseudo-names. The oldest being 76 years and the youngest being 25 years. The table also shows their education level, profession and gender. The total number of the females invited were four; unfortunately, two did not turn up. It is worth noting that the questions that were discussed in all the focus groups were the same hence the absence of the other two women did not affect the results of the discussion.

Table 5-4: Personal Details - Focus Group Discussion II (Kainuk FGD; 8th June, 2022)

Name	Age	Education Level	Profession	Gender
Participant G	52 Years	College	Senior chief	Female
Participant H	68	High school	Village elder	Male
Participant J	59	Primary	Kraal leader	Male
Participant K	61	College	Assistant chief	Male
Participant L	57	High school	Business	Female
Participant M	43	University	Nun	Female

The table above shows the age of the participants with pseudo-names. The oldest being 68 years and the youngest being 43 years. The table also shows their education level, profession and gender. This was a mixed group from different profession and working in the conflict corridor.

Table 5-5: Personal Details - Focus Group Discussion II (Kapenguria FGD; 7th July, 2022)

Name	Age	Gender	Education Level	Profession
Participant N	38	Male	University	Director CJPC Turkana
Participant P	33	Female	University	Disaster office Pokot
Participant Q	42	Female	MA-University	Disaster office Pokot
Participant R	32	Male	University	Assistant C. commissioner
Participant S	35	Male	University	Director CJPC Eldoret
Participant T	69	Female	University	CJPC Eldoret

The table above shows the age of the participants with pseudo-names. The oldest being 76 years and the youngest being 25 years. The table also shows their education level, profession and gender. This focus group is of level of education as it is a requirement for their employment. A minimum of a bachelor's degree was the criterion for their employment. This focus group forms the majority of those who work in various NGO's offices and Catholic Justice and Peace offices in the two dioceses.

Table 5-6: Research Participant Profiles - Masol Focus Group Discussion; 5/5/2022

Name	Age	Education Level	Profession	Gender
Participant U	48 Years	Primary	Reformed warrior	Male
Participant V	37	Primary	Reformed warrior	Male
Participant W	30	Primary	Reformed warrior	Male
Participant Y	61	High School	Area Chief	Female
Participant Z	57	High school	Business	Female
Participant Z1	43	University	Catholic Nun	Female

Table 5-6 shows the participants profiles. The Masol focus discussion group comprised 6 participants. These participants were so important for it comprised three reformed warriors who have worked closely with the Catholic Church in the region. They are part of individuals who formed early warning systems through mobile phones and would update the church leadership on events as they were about to happen and thus pre-empt several planned attacks. The participant ages range from 30 years to 57 years. The Catholic priest in this group has been responsible in early warning monitoring system who worked with the reformed warriors.

5.5 Research Participants' Profiles

5.5.1 Participant Religious Leader of Kitale Diocese

The religious leader is 75 years old and ex-patriate. He has been in the Diocese of Kitale for 24 years. Prior to coming to Kitale Diocese, he worked as a high school teacher for 20 years in a neighboring county. As a shepherd of the Pokot community, he has been involved in discussing peace and development for many years. In times of violent conflict and displacement of persons, he has hosted many internally displaced persons in church compounds that he oversees. Has also mediated warring parties severally in an effort to manage the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

5.5.2 Participant Religious Leader of Lodwar-Turkana

The religious leader is 61 years old. He has been the religious leader of the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar for 10 years. He is from one of the tribes that has been in constant conflict in Baringo, Kenya. He is well-endowed with indigenous conflict approach skills. He has convened many conferences in his effort to reconcile the warring communities. He is the shepherd of the Turkana community that is in conflict with the community under the religious leader of Kitale-The Pokot community. His Diocese borders the Diocese of Kitale.

5.5.3 Participant Samuel

Samuel is a graduate from the University of Nairobi. He is specialized in Conflict Management. He works for the Justice and Peace Office in Lodwar diocese. He also works as the Cross-Border Director along the Pokot-Turkana counties border. He conducts grassroots mobilization through workshops and seminars as communities' trainer of trainers who in turn become agents for peace. He is among a group of people who were surrounded by raiders who threatened to kill all of them for being sympathetic to their perceived enemies in the Pokot community.

5.5.4 Participant Koskei

Koskei is 38 years old. He graduated from the University of Nairobi with a degree in Agricultural Engineering. He is currently the Director of Justice and Peace in Eldoret Catholic Diocese. He worked closely with the lead mediator in Pokot-Turkana conflict who was fronted by Kenya Catholic Episcopal Conference. Koskei was instrumental in the writing of Bishop Korir's book on Peace at the grass roots (*amani mashinani*). Together with Bishop Korir, they introduced seed distribution program along the Pokot-Turkana border offering alternative livelihoods to the communities as a mitigating strategy.

5.5.5 Participant Kimisoi

Kimisoi is 74 years old. He works under the Bishop of Eldoret, whose main work is mediation between the Pokot-Turkana and Pokot and Marakwet conflicts. He has a deep understanding of the causes of the conflict having worked in the conflict corridor for decades. He is also good in both English and Swahili, written and oral. He articulates the various causes and new trends to the conflict and stands out among his peers. He has also been involved with the inter-clan conflicts among the Marakwet communities on issues surrounding land sub-divisions. He is also known for his role as anti-female genital mutilation crusader. I considered him a champion of women issues in a highly patriarchal community. He is also gifted with indigenous herbs that he sells for a living.

5.5.6 Participant Aziza

Aziza is 30-years old. She accepted I use her real name in the study. She is a master's holder in Conflict and International Relations from the University of Nairobi. She is currently working for the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar and Eldoret in capacity building and training grassroots peace agents. She has previously worked with women peace-makers in Wajir and

initiated many programs to hold the women together in their struggle for lasting peace. She is also well-equipped with indigenous methods of conflict management.

5.5.7 Participant Leo

Leo is 90 years old. An expatriate catholic Priest who has worked in West Pokot for 50 years. Though retired his memory is extremely sharp. In Pokot he is a ‘walking library’ of the Pokot events for decades. He translated all liturgical books into Pokot language. He underwent the rite of sapan, and fully accepted as a Pokot elder. During the ceremony he was given a new name *Lokomol* in Pokot which, means a bull with curved horns. Many people don’t know his other name other than *Lokomol*. He is well-versed with both Pokot and Turkana cultures. He is known as a champion of the girl child. He rescued so many under-age girls who had been given out for marriage.

5.6 Theme #1: Catholic Church and Conflict

According to participant Koskei;

The Church used Catholic social teachings and the scriptures – which touched on reconciliation and forgiveness, encouragement of living Christian values such good neighborhood. For example, Bishop Korir would read Mathew 5:9 (blessed are the peace makers for they will be called children of God). He called us to deeply reflect on these words before every meeting [Research Participant Koskei, 28th April, 2022].

Besides, the church used traditional means of conflict resolution from the conflict communities; “The use of community dialogue forums which brought together the elders as well the worriers, use of the community gatekeeper or community game-changers to persuade the community to shun violence” (Research Participant Koskei, 28th April, 2022).

Koskei would further claim that;

The bishop used non-violence and nonpartisan approaches to conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, multi-sectorial approach – the involvement of the government personnel, security organs, religious leaders, community elders, community youth and young warriors in the peace process [Research Participant Koskei, 28th April, 2022].

This was a shift from earlier approaches that focused on winning of souls only. The priest claimed that “the focus of the Catholic Church and other faith-based organization was more on increase of numerical in their churches and saving more souls as opposed to peace building” (Research Participant Fr. A-5, Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

I went on to ask Participant Samuel who worked with Bishop Korir from Turkana County on what else the Catholic Church should do. He responded that even though the Church has been advocating for the disarmament of the people with illegal firearms;

I think the Church needs to go a step higher in petitioning the governments of (Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda) to fully disarm the people and provide security to the communities living at the border areas. This is the only way to have a stable and sustainable peace along the conflict zones which in turn would result into the development of the areas [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April, 2022].

The Church could also partner with well-wishers and the government for alternative livelihood programs which will help in improving the living conditions of the people;

Partnership is the sure way of changing the lives of the people living along the borders and fighting over the natural resources. Such partnership should also focus on connecting different communities living side by side in order to reduce the animosity that has existed for so many centuries through connector projects [Participant Samuel, 16th April, 2022].

In response to whether the Catholic Church considered the role of gender in mitigating the conflict and the extent of women involvement in mitigating the conflict, Koskei was not convinced that the Church had taken gender balance in its approach seriously. He claimed that “the gender perspective of conflict mitigation in the region has been missing and the Church has not yet expressly targeted women in the community forums and intercommunity dialogues” (Research Participant Koskei, 28th April, 2022).

Participant Samuel argued that;

The reasons why the Church was slow targeting women in conflict mitigation in the region have been strongly weakened by the fact that these communities along the borders have remained with their strong traditional practice of separation of roles and responsibilities of men and women in the community; and he claimed that, the communities are strongly patriarchal. Men and women sitting together to solve issues that are affecting the communities is still considered to be lowering the position of men and raising up the position of women [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April, 2022].

However, Aziza’s disagreed with Samuel and Koskei on these claims and held that “it is possible to make women visible agents of change by creating space for them to engage and interrogate the causes of conflict and provide action plan” (Research Participant Aziza, 30th April, 2022).

Besides, Aziza argues that “Pokot and Turkana women can be agents of change using their own Pokot and Turkana women gatherings, cutting their own niche in peace- building that can leave a long-lasting impact in the region” (Research Participant Aziza, 30th April, 2022).

Participant Leo (*Lokomol*) who has worked along the Pokot –Turkana conflict corridor for over 50 years is a good example of an ex-patriarch priest inculcated into Pokot culture and given a Pokot name *Lokomol*. This was through *sapana* initiation ceremony. After being initiated into the Pokot council of elders he was “*given the voice*” as he would narrate to me, to speak to the elders and the people on issues affecting the community. He would attend the council of elders meeting where decisions were made affecting the community. As a Church leader, he would positively influence their decisions.

In my interview with him on the role of the Catholic Church in conflict management in the region, he was quick to respond;

For the 50 years, I have worked in this region, I realized that learning people’s language and culture is key in being accepted by the community... I became one of them to stop them from the killings. Conflict management strategies must be homegrown and not imported and must be culturally sensitive. I have used my sermons in the Church and during funerals where I have huge crowds to pass peace messages [Research Participant Leo, 16th April, 2022].

I also asked him about the role of women in these decision-making institutions and he claimed that “although the two communities are patriarchal, elders come from homes to those sittings and their wives advise them before coming so they participate behind the scenes” (Research Participant Leo, 16th April, 2022).

In response to my question on how we can make women more visible agents of change, he postulated that;

Despite this perceived isolation of women, women can create other forums different from the council of elders to address conflict matters, e.g., they meet at market places, water points to draw water and even have their women council referred to as ‘Mboi’. They need to use those avenues to discuss peace issues. They should not wait to be included rather they should seize the opportunities available. Women must be pro-active rather than being passive spectators/listeners [Research Participant Leo, 16th April, 2022].

Similar sentiments were echoed by Participant Aziza;

Women don't need to be part of the council of elders since it is a traditional system that is patriarchal... that there is more space, women can create their own space without compromising their culture and religion just as Dekha did [Research Participant Aziza, 30th April, 2022].

She further noted that the Catholic Church can create that space for women and empower them in their peace building efforts. Thus “women must get out of Men’s shadow or armpit and cut their own path in peace building” (Research Participant Aziza, 30th April, 2022). In addition, Aziza advocated for: “*women talking circle*” Aziza borrowed this from Wajir where it was a success. Turkana women talking to Pokot women on effects of conflict and benefits of peace.

Agnes, a participant in Kainuk FDG working with a local NGO called *Riam Riam* in Kainuk, in Turkana South was of the idea that Women from both communities should engage;

I think women from both communities should meet at certain border points considered “most” affected along Turkana- Pokot counties’ border to pray together, sing, dance, and talk. This should be “women to women peace Day”. This is what is lacking, where women from both sides do not meet to discuss how conflict is affecting them despite a majority having had the brunt of the conflict [Research Participant Agnes-Kainuk FGD, 5th June, 2022]

This meeting will create space for them to discuss and interrogate their roles in the conflict and to address the challenge.

Pressing Lokomol further on what the Church is doing to create space for women he claimed that “in our Church, we have small Christian communities and 90% percent are usually women, they can use those platforms after their prayers to discuss peace issues and even sell out their best ideas to the few men present” (Research Participant Leo, 16th April, 2022).

Leo also added that;

Women should take the advantage of the third gender rule enshrined in the 2010 Kenyan constitution to empower themselves in terms of leadership. The Catholic Church has been in the fore-front providing the civic education in the Pokot-Turkana region with an aim that once women know their rights, they would position themselves in government appointments and by extension work for peace building in the region [Research Participant Leo, 16th April, 2022].

However, Father Leo was quick to say that;

Although the Pokot community are good in terms of coming to Church, the big challenge is that, they prefer their cultural practices even when they contradict the gospel message. For example, even when the Gospel talks of men to love their wives, the Pokot men still view women as subordinate, and categorize them with properties due to the heavy dowry they pay. This dowry payment takes away the voice of women especially in remote areas. This has only perpetuated the patriarchal held notions that women are not equal to men in terms of decision-making [Research Participant Leo, 16th April, 2022].

In a separate interview with Participant Religious Leader of the Catholic Diocese of Kitale that covers West Pokot County, being the leader of a diocese that has been severely affected by the conflict I wanted to establish the ideo-theological resources the Church has been using to manage the conflict.

In response to the question, the participant religious leader claimed that “*grace is built on nature*”. He went further to claim that as a result before we get to the ideo-theological resources the Church had to do a lot of ground work. According to him, he had first to develop;

The openness and desire of knowing better the cultural heritage of people with whom one comes into contact, since this would help to eliminate attitudes of prejudice which hinder healthy avenues of consolidating conflicting communities to live in harmony. This process ought to be continuously fostered since such unpleasant and inhuman attitudes tend to re-occur under new forms. What this means is that there is need for every individual, as a member of one human family to understand and respect the value of human diversity and direct it to the common good [Participant Religious leader Diocese of Kitale, 4th March, 2022].

He was categorical that the conflict between the two communities also took a tribal angle, which destroys the sense of a family. In his role as the leader, he claimed that;

He had opened an office of Justice and Peace in West Pokot County to address the issues affecting the region and appointed priests to be reconciliation agents. Referring to John’s Gospel on call to be one (John 17), He held that, unity calls for Peaceful co-existence. In this context it requires constructive appreciation and development of what distinguishes people as individuals from communities and what constitutes their identity. In addition, it contributes to the building of a united and peaceful community [Participant Religious leader Diocese of Kitale, 4th March, 2022].

The religious leader argued;

That can only be realized if we do to others what we would like them do unto us. Emphasizing on the universal principle enshrined in most of the religious grouping's writings, "Do unto others as you would like them do unto you [Participant Religious leader Diocese of Kitale, 4th March, 2022].

The religious leader further claimed that;

For the diocese to help build peace in the conflict corridor and bring down conflict there is need to develop positive attitude towards other people. It is important to answer the question; what attitude does God expect people to have towards others of different ethnicity and culture? Jesus Christ put the attitude perfectly when He said "whatever that you wish (people) would do to you, do so to them" (Good News Bible, Mathew 7:12). This requires that each put him or herself in the place of the other [Participant Religious leader Diocese of Kitale, 4th March, 2022].

This was also affirmed by the religious head of Catholic Diocese of Lodwar who asserted that "if the people living along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor/border of West Pokot and Turkana counties apply this golden rule in resolving the conflict it would mean a way forward to a better attitude of co-existence" (Participant Religious leader Diocese of Lodwar, 4th March, 2022).

He further argued on the importance of seeing the face of God in every individual, building on religious leader in Kitale sentiments on universal principle. He held that;

This is based on attitude towards others. This attitude of the other, as a person, is mutual and can become the basis between persons and community arriving at the shared unity in diversity. Unfortunately, politicians in the region creating barriers between the two communities have used the concept of 'othering' for long [Participant Religious leader Diocese of Lodwar, 4th March, 2022].

In his role as the religious leader, he claimed that he had opened an office of justice and peace in West Pokot County to address the issues affecting the region and appointed priests to be reconciliation agents.

Referring to John's Gospel on the call to be one (John 17), he held that "unity calls for peaceful co-existence". In this context it requires constructive appreciation and development of what distinguishes people as individuals from communities and what constitutes their identity" (Participant Religious leader for Kitale, 4th March, 2022). In addition, "it

contributes to the building of a united and peaceful community. Participation of people in respect of their diversities in various activities is key to unity and peace”.

The Religious Leader of the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar also pointed out that;

Participation in the life of the country is not just a right, it is also a duty that each Christian should be proud to assume and exercise responsibility. People in positions of authority, in government and administration, have a particular duty to work for restoration of a climate of trust and openness. The mistrust observed between the warring communities can only change if all of us lived as per our gospel expectations...as brothers and sisters. This can only work through conversion of minds and hearts [Participant Religious leader for Lodwar, 4th March, 2022].

The religious leader echoed the words of the Director of Justice and Peace Office in Kitale who argued that there is need to have alternative livelihood and move away from total dependence on livestock;

Total dependence on livestock has impoverished the people and during long dry season when most of the livestock die, they end up stealing others’ animals with an effort to re-stock their herds. This is due to lack of diversification on livelihood. The church provides the generators as alternative way of feeding their families [Participant Religious leader for Lodwar, 4th March, 2022].

Table 5-7: Participants Personal Details - Priest, Religious Focus Group Discussion; Zoom 10th June, 2022

Participant Fr. A1	38	University	Kainuk Turkana south	Male
Participant Sr. A2	33	University	“ “ “	Female
Participant Fr. A3	42	University	Pokot North	Male
Participant Sr. A4	38	University	Kacheliba Pokot south	Female
Participant Fr. A5	35	University	Kacheliba Pokot North	Male
Participant Fr. A6	64	University	Nakwamoru Turkana South	Male
Participant Sr. A7	32	University	Sigor Pokot Central	Female

5.7 Research Participants Profiles⁶

5.7.1 Participant Religious Leader of Kitale Diocese

The religious leader is 75 years old and ex-patriate. He has been in the Diocese of Kitale for 24 years. Prior to coming to Kitale Diocese, he worked as a high school teacher for 20 years in a neighboring county. As a shepherd of the Pokot community, he has been involved in discussing peace and development for many years. In times of violent conflict and displacement of persons, he has hosted many internally displaced persons in church compounds that he oversees. Has also mediated warring parties severally in an effort to manage the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

5.7.2 Participant Religious Leader of Lodwar-Turkana

The religious leader is 61 years old. He has been the religious leader of the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar for 10 years. He is from one of the tribes that has been in constant conflict in Baringo, Kenya. He is well-endowed with indigenous conflict approach skills. He has convened many conferences in his effort to reconcile the warring communities. He is the shepherd of the Turkana community that is in conflict with the community under the religious leader of Kitale-The Pokot community. His Diocese borders the Diocese of Kitale.

5.7.3 Participant Samuel

Samuel is a graduate from the University of Nairobi. He is specialized in Conflict Management. He works for the Justice and peace office in Lodwar Diocese. He also works as the cross-border director along the Pokot-Turkana counties border. He conducts grassroot mobilization through workshops and seminars as communities' trainer of trainers who in turn become agents for peace. He is among a group of people who were surrounded by raiders who threatened to kill all of them for being sympathetic to their perceived enemies in the Pokot community.

5.7.4 Participant Patrick

Patrick is 33 years old. He graduated from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology with disaster management major. Currently an assistant county commissioner.

⁶To ensure that research ethics are maintained, the names of the persons profiled in this study are not the real names of the participants. These are pseudonyms, used by the researcher to protect the identity of the participants. They are picked from most common names in the community.

Prior to his appointment Patrick worked as the director of Justice and peace in the Diocese of Kitale attached to the cross-border program. He worked closely with Samuel of the Lodwar Diocese. His target group were the high school and primary school children who were recruited as warriors by their peers to be raiders. He held several activities that brought the youths together for sports and seminars. He emphasized education as a transformational tool.

5.7.5 Participant Koskei

Koskei is 38 years old. He graduated from the University of Nairobi with a degree in Agricultural Engineering. He is currently the Director of Justice and Peace in Eldoret Catholic Diocese. He worked closely with the lead mediator in Pokot-Turkana conflict who was fronted by Kenya Catholic Episcopal conference. Koskei was instrumental in the writing of Bishop Korir's book on Peace at the grass roots (*amani mashinani*). With Bishop Korir they introduced seed distribution program along the Pokot-Turkana border offering alternative livelihoods to the communities as a mitigating strategy.

5.7.6 Participant Kimisoi

Kimisoi is 74 years old. He works under the Bishop of Eldoret, who's main work is mediation between the Pokot-Turkana and Pokot and Marakwet conflicts. He has a deep understanding of the causes of the conflict having worked in the conflict corridor for decades. He is also good in both English and Swahili, written and oral. He articulates the various causes and new trends to the conflict and stands out among his peers. He has also been involved with the inter-clan conflicts among the Marakwet communities on issues surrounding land sub-divisions. He is also known for his role as anti-female genital mutilation crusader. I considered him a champion of women issues in a highly patriarchal community.

This focus group discussion comprised Catholic priests and nuns working in the four Catholic parishes along the conflict corridor. Two of the parishes are in Turkana South. They include Kainuk and Nakwamoru parishes. The other three parishes are in West Pokot County, which include Amakuriat and Kacheliba in Pokot North and Sigor in Pokot Central. Due to covid-19, we agreed to have a Zoom discussion which was a success. The age of the participants ranges from 32 years to 64 years old. All of the participants are university graduates. The aim of this group was to provide ideo-theological resources that the catholic church used in the management of the conflict, strategies that were put in place, and other

views on what needs to be done. The names provided in this part are pseudo-names and not their real names.

In section II of the second phase of data presentation which is the last part of the focus group discussion, the main foci were to establish the role of the church in the management of the conflict and the strategies the church put in place to mitigate the conflict. Being the core of the study, the focus discussion groups mainly comprised of clergy and nuns working in the parishes along the conflict corridor. This was collaborated with structured interviews with the top leadership of the Catholic Dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar i.e., the religious leaders of Lodwar and Kitale. Besides, the Personal assistants to the late Bishop Korir, the lead mediator in the Catholic Church in the region was also interviewed.

5.8 Theme #2: Catholic Church Engagements in the Conflict

How has the Catholic Church has been involved in the conflict management process? What strategies did the Church use in its approach? What new strategies can the church use?

In an interview with Kimiso and Koskei, who were the assistants to the Late Bishop Korir of the Catholic diocese of Eldoret, it was established that the Catholic Church came in to address the key conflict issues that were affecting and threatening the lives and livelihood of thousands of people in the dioceses of Kitale and Lodwar. These two dioceses geographically cover the Turkana and West Pokot counties. The main agenda was to offer the Church as a mediator and address the reconciliation process. Kimiso gave in detail the case scenario that led to the Church intervention coupled with a fact-finding mission through a survey done by the Church leadership to identify the causes and possible interventions.

Kimiso referred to the reports from the chief's office as the icebreaker and an eye opener to Bishop Korir;

According to the area chief in his (2014) documented cases in the conflict, a very unfortunate incident had happened in a location called Nakuse and Lokwar on the Turkana side, and the effects of the conflict were severe. Four hundred and thirty households had been affected and turned into internally displaced persons (IDPs) [Participant Kimiso, 4th April, 2021].

Besides,

Twelve people were injured, and in two months, 25 people had been killed. The chief also reported that in the same month a huge number of animals had been stolen from

both sides through attacks and counter-attacks. They were 20,685 goats and sheep, 1,309 cattle, 258 donkeys, and 62 camels [Participant Kimiso, 4th, April, 2021].

In response to the killings and animal theft, there was the rise of armed groups who rose to protect their communities. According to Koskei;

It became a lethal organized gang that terrorized and robbed motorists on the only inter-county highway to sustain their activities. The bandits from the two communities targeted majorly their perceived enemies and created a wedge of “we” vs. “them” between the Pokot and Turkana. It was meant to retaliate for their killed kins [Participant Koskei, 4th April, 2021].

A nun working in the Kainuk parish claimed that; “*banditry in the region was an organized crime*” authenticated Kimiso’s narration. He claimed during the focus group of the religious that;

The killing of ‘punyon’ (enemies) is done by the Pokots from Uganda as we border them on the north sub-county. There are claims that there is a gang of six for hire by some well-connected individuals probably to instill fear among the Turkanas living along the county borders to relocate to other places thus creating room for extending their border. Solely intending to get to our oil fields and grazing fields [Sr A7, Participant in Religious Focus Group, 10th June, 2022].

Kimiso also claimed that the other issue the church was looking at was the Pokot-Turkana leadership.

The Catholic Church identified the weak linkages between politically elected and government-appointed administrative leaders with the local people. This created a lacuna in leadership. This was a cause of nurturing criminals within the community who raid their neighbors due to a lack of collaborative and common approach towards dealing with criminals [Participant Kimiso, 4th April, 2021].

The high number of stolen animals without trace provoked the church to question the beneficiaries of the conflict. “How can such a herd of cattle be stolen without a trace? Koskei responded that “the business people, the seers, the healers, and the warriors are beneficiaries” (Participant Koskei, 4th April, 2021).

Further, Kimiso claimed that;

This is the meat eaten in Nairobi and other big cities. The raiders have a ready market for the stolen cattle. There are trucks ready waiting for the animals. They only need to pay the warriors some amount and get off with the cows to the abattoirs.

Besides some are given to the seers for foreseeing and clearing the path for a successful raid. This was the origin of the phrase, 'conflict entrepreneurs' [Participant Kimiso, 4th April, 2021].

These claims by Koskei and Kimiso had been mentioned by previous focus discussion groups and interviews on the nature and persistence of the conflict. At this point, the Catholic Church leadership in the region came up with the following strategies hereby termed as Sub-themes.

5.8.1 Sub-Theme #1: Early Warning Monitoring Systems

Participant Koskei, whom together with Bishop Korir laid good foundation in conflict management in the region, claimed that;

In one of the workshops we held in Kainuk chaired by Bishop Korir with various stakeholders from state and non-state agencies, the agenda was on how to come up with a common approach to managing the conflict. It was agreed we establish a conflict monitoring system [Participant Koskei, 4th April, 2021].

Koskei argued that;

This could not happen without identifying the parties involved. The main challenge remained how to establish the bandit command hierarchy. As an organized crime, it became very difficult to know who commands the warriors. An idea came up that the secret was to use the once dreaded but reformed warriors [Participant Koskei, 4th April, 2021].

It was the efforts of the two offices of justice and peace in the two dioceses to come up with names of the people to be included in the monitoring system. Participant Kimiso observed that;

This was aimed at preventing future conflicts by alerting the relevant authorities when suspicious activities of the raiders are detected. These early warning monitoring systems included the trained peace ambassadors in the region. A majority of them were reformed warriors, the area chiefs and sub-chiefs, police, and some of the NGO employees working in the region with the nerve center at the Diocesan offices of Lodwar and Kitale. The communication was purely through cell phones [Participant Kimiso, 4th April, 2021].

The Church also influenced the cell phone providers to put signal masts in the areas of Masol and Kainuk and along the conflict corridor to improve cell phone reception.

In an earlier focus discussion group, Participant-G from Kainuk FDG confirmed to me that “the monitoring system was a success because of the trust and confidence the reformed warriors had in the Catholic Church leadership. This made them reveal raiders' secrets and pre-empt some of the planned raids” (Participant G, FGD-Kainuk, 6th June, 2022).

5.8.2 Sub-Theme #2: Economic Empowerment Strategy

Another strategy the Catholic Church used in mitigating the conflict was economic empowerment of the two marginalized communities. Participant Christine from FDG in Kainuk claimed that “at some point, the Church came face-to-face with the reality of poverty, unpredictable rain patterns coupled with limited resources of pasture and water, which were linked to the conflict” (Participant 1, FGD-Kainuk, 6th June, 2022).

These sentiments were echoed by a priest from Kainuk and the Religious FDG who argued that;

The Church has served a significant role in helping the communities mitigate conflict by improving the community's resilience. The warring communities were advised and helped to have alternative ways of livelihood. The bishops from the two dioceses decided to make use of the short-term rain seasons to provide food to the communities through the program of seed for planting. Besides, they were offered water pumps as well which could help in pumping water to irrigate their farms [Participant Fr. A-1, Religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

According to a nun from Pokot North, the Church embarked on teaching on alternative livelihood because:

This kind of diversification was important in helping the two communities reduce their overreliance on the livestock economy. This envisioned that the surplus from the harvest would get to the market, thus enabling the community to buy other basic needs. In addition, it was meant to limit the movements of these pastoral communities and by extension reduce the risks of conflict that comes with nomadic life [Participant Sr. A-4, in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022].

5.8.3 Sub-Theme #3: Paradigm Shift from Handouts to Commitment

The Catholic Church worked on a change of strategy from a handouts/money-oriented approach used by NGOs to a genuine peace-building strategy. According to Participant Koskei;

The Church realized that there were so many briefcase NGOs on the ground that had no idea of what was going on at the grassroots. It was with this realization that

Bishop Korir decided that there are no more workshops outside the conflict zones. This meant that there was no question of reimbursement for transport and only those who were interested in genuine peace would come for the workshops [Participant Koskei, 4th April, 2022].

Koskei was of the view that;

The Church also took advantage of its existing structures and its presence on the ground to reach out to the affected communities. This was done through the priests, nuns, and Church leaders working in parishes to spread the messages of peace during the various church activities such as funerals, weddings, and Sunday services [Participant Koskei, 4th April, 2022].

A participant, from Kacheliba explained the importance of this approach by the bishop when he said that;

To strengthen this approach in a deanery meeting comprising all the catholic parishes in the region, the bishop had a candid discussion with the priest citing their role in peace building and encouraging them to use the structures of the church to reach out to the warring communities. To this, the priests organized and celebrated masses in Lorogon, Kainuk, and Orwa, which were perceived to be the hotspot of conflicts [Fr. A1, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022].

He further claimed that;

After the mass, we the priests from Sigor took the opportunity to teach about the importance of peace referring to the biblical verses “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God”. (Mathew 5: 9) They also used Catholic teachings “Pacem in terra” (peace on earth) by Pope John the XXIII [Fr. A1, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022].

At the close of the day, it was my feelings based on the discussions held that, there is a lot that the Catholic Church can offer in its continuation in mitigating the conflict. The employees working in these offices unanimously agreed that there should be a continuation of previously held programs to strengthen the role of the Church in conflict management (Personal field diary 8th July, 2022).

5.8.4 Sub-Theme #4: Reaching Out to Reformed Warrior’s Approach

In our discussions with the priests and nuns working in the region they kept talking of, ‘men of clean feet’. This prompted me to go deeper to understand who they were and their role in the mitigation of the conflict. A priest made it clear to me that “the phrase referred to reformed warriors. Reformed warriors in Turkana and Pokot counties are referred to as men

of clean feet signifying their role as people who come to bring peace” (Fr. A-6, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022).

A nun participant from the same FDG provided even a wider picture of the group claiming that;

There are many stories behind reformed warriors. Some reformed as a result of a narrow escape in a raid gone awry where the rest were killed or maimed. Others were as a result of religious or NGO efforts to reach out to them [Sr. A-2, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022].

Further, the nun, using an analogy from an African saying - you cannot take away a knife from a child not to harm itself without replacing it with a stick - indicated the role of the Catholic Church thus by observing that “the Catholic Church took the initiative of empowering the former raiders through group projects and alternative sources of livelihoods such as buying motorbikes for them in a program “motorbikes for change”. This led to many giving up raiding in exchange for motorbikes” (Sr. A-2, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022).

The re-stocking program was an initiative by the Church based on church teachings as restorative. A priest from Pokot north claimed there was need to restore the families affected after losing their livelihood to be restored back to what could sustain them to prevent revenge. He stated that “in collaboration with other non-state agencies, the Church started a program to re-stock stolen animals to the most affected to pre-empt revenge and self-re-stocking through raiding” (Fr. A-3, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022).

The same Participant further claimed that;

The Church held various workshops aiming at changing their worldview from cattle dependence to diversification. This was in a church campaign referred to as “change of minds and heart” of the pastoral communities. This was based on the biblical story of the prodigal son Luke 15. There is need to welcome back the lost sons and help them undergo a complete change of heart towards stealing [Fr. A-3, a Participant in Religious Focus Group, 8th July, 2022].

This approach by the church was not sufficient and could not succeed in isolation. There was a need to look into the structures that held the raiding in place and dismantle those structures.

5.8.5 Sub-Theme #5: Dismantling the Raiders' Command Structures

The Church had come up with a way to dismantle the structures of the well-organized gang of leaders. Participants Koskei and Kimisoi provided their own experience working with Bishop Korir and how they managed to use some of the raiders to manage the conflict. Koskei claimed that;

I was part of the church leaders searching for lasting peace and stability in the region, I give my own experience as a participant of the bishop's think tank. I had for long suspected that cattle raiders have a command structure in place but I could not quite understand how it worked and who were the leaders [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

He went on to argue that;

Raiders from pastoral communities have structures in place and they have a commander who links the raiders with all beneficiaries of the raids. The structure begins with seers (mooning/Werkoyon) who foretell a successful raid and is given a certain bull. The seers are endowed with the gift of seeing and foretelling whether the raid will be successful or not. Referring to a successful raid, the seer describes a certain bull among the herd, its colors and type of horns and they must bring it to him. In the structure are the diviners/healers (Kapolok) whose role is to cleanse the raiders in the event the seer has foreseen a pending calamity to the raiders. The business people are part of the structure as they provide a ready market for the stolen animals. All of this has been elaborated on in the preceding sub-themes. In the structure are suppliers of guns and bullets to the raiders [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

Participant Kimisoi also added to Koskei's narrations claiming that;

The raiders have a commander just like in the military who organizes them and today with the development of technology and the availability of cell phones, it becomes easy for the commander to mobilize and organize his troops. We had to identify these commanders from both communities. Earlier the government issued a shoot-to-kill order if any of the most wanted criminals were spotted. This was after the raiders killed 24-security personnel in Suguta valley in Samburu County. The raiders were from the Pokot community and their commander went into hiding [Participant Kimisoi, 4th May, 2022].

Further, Participant Kimisoi added;

We had to search for him as the Church to ask for his amnesty from the government and make him a key partner in our monitoring system. We successfully, through Bishop Korir got amnesty for him. He would later become reliable in establishing a

monitoring system on both sides of the Turkana and Pokot counties in bringing on board other raiders and thus it became easy to manage the conflict [Participant Kimiso, 4th May, 2022].

Before reaching out to the commander in the conflict there were other hurdles the Church was facing. The challenge was how to reach the real parties in the conflict, as the gatekeepers were standing in the way.

5.8.6 Sub-Theme #6: Beyond the Gatekeepers Strategy

The communities' gate-keepers can be a stumbling block to true peace but can also be the entry points into a lasting peace. According to a priest from Pokot North, "the Catholic Church had to look for a way of dealing with the gatekeepers". He defined gatekeepers as;

The gateway to these warring communities. He further claimed that at the time of the Church entrance search of peace in the region, they had become stumbling block to the attainment of true peace in the region. They would use their knowledge of the existing conflict to solicit money from the NGOs, CBOs, and even FBOs for their selfish interest instead of promoting peace in the region [Fr. 5-A Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

In his wisdom, "to avoid being arm-twisted by the gatekeepers, Bishop Korir and his team went directly to the affected individuals through the existing structures of the church...catholic parishes and convents" (Fr. 5-A Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

5.8.7 Sub-Theme #7: Church and Cultural Dance Resources in Conflict Resolution

The Church also used Pokot and Turkana songs and dance to bring together warring communities together. According to a priest from Turkana south, "Pokot-Turkana cultural dances are very rich". They can be used to pass across peace messages because;

As the church, we tapped into this area by bringing both Pokot and Turkana women from the 3 parishes of Nakwamoru, Mbara, and Kainuk for the cultural dance exhibition. At that time women from both communities would share their stories about the conflict. The space provided by the church turned into a container where women would pour out their anger, emotions, and hurt and it became a healing moment for the majority [Fr. A-1 Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

5.8.8 Sub-Theme #8: Youth Exchange and Sports Programs

The priest would further elaborate on the role of the church in bringing together the youths from the two communities to discuss peace. During the FGD for priests and religious leaders, he claimed that;

This required collaboration with other stake-holders in the region. We had to work with Bungei who was the regional Finland Aid program manager in a collaborative approach and in partnership with the Catholic Church in the region, we developed a joint program for the youths. This included sports for peace and exchange programs where the youths from Turkana would visit their counterparts in Pokot for a seminar and culminate with different game balls and athletics [Fr. A-1 Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022].

The priest would further argue that;

Through the sponsorship of the Finland Church Aid and shalom Center of Peace, and the Catholic Church in the region, we were able to hold exchange programs aimed at bringing together the Pokot and Turkana youth to learn the significance of peace and development in the region. This culminated with sports for peace aimed at strengthening the bonds between the two warring communities [Fr. A-1 Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022].

Sr. Mercy would add to the discussion on the implication of this approach by claiming that “this was based on the commandment of love... love one another as I have loved you, and call to the basic principle of ‘do unto others as you would like them to do unto you’” (Sr. A-2, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022).

The interactions between the youths from the warring communities were aimed at building connections, brotherhood, and friendship.

5.9 Theme #3: Strengthening of Indigenous Conflict Management Approaches

According to Koskei, in the effort to manage the conflict as a Church it dawned on them that the council of elders was a very powerful institution in the two communities. This was attested by one of the reformed warriors during the seminar when he claimed that “when those responsible in creating and keeping law fails, the commanders of the raiders seize the opportunity to command ‘his troops against the enemy (the other community)’” (Participant W from Masol FGD 5th April, 2022).

During the FDG in Masol, it was evident that it takes the elders to stop the raids through consultation and engagement with the warriors. As attested by Participant Nicholas, “if you

want this conflict to end you must summon peter (an elder) to talk to us” (Participant W from Masol FGD 6TH June, 2022).

It was also surprising that raiders from the Pokot community knew raiders from the Turkana community. A participant who is also a Pokot reformed warrior mentioned by name some of the most feared warriors claiming that “they are good commanders, and sharp-shooters”. He said, “I am advising the bishop and other religious leaders to look for a way and bring them on board in the peace building strategy. Because there will be no meaningful peacebuilding that can be done without those raiders” (Participant Z-1 from Masol FGD 6th June, 2022).

As the saying goes, use a thief to catch a thief. This led the interfaith group led by Bishop Korir, to go back to the drawing board and convene another meeting with the specific individuals mentioned and the Kraal elders. A participant priest claimed that;

This meeting became a game-changer in the way intra/inter conflicts were managed. It was easy to get rid of the “gatekeepers” who were there to benefit financially from them while blocking them from reaching the real elders who are the moral custodians of the communities [Fr. A-1 Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

5.9.1 Sub-Theme #1: Dialogues with the Council of Elders’ Institution

Why did the Catholic church use the dialogue approach and what was its importance in mitigating the conflict? Koskei who worked in Bishop Korir’s office and edited his Book ‘*Amani Mashinani*’ (peace at the grassroots) in an elaborate interview together with Kimisoi explained to me the basis of the book; “people sit down to discuss the negative impact of conflict and talk about the ways they can come up with to resolve the conflict” (Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022).

Koskei argued that;

The Amani Mashinani model has been proven to be efficient when there is consistency in talking and conversing on the matters of conflict and the importance of peace between the conflicting communities. It was evident from the discussion that the bishop was influenced by a series of meetings held along the Turkana-Pokot conflict corridor [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

This is what Kimisoi referred to as “contact theory”, consistent contact with the elders and the parties in conflict leads to building trust levels for any mediator. Kimisoi claimed;

The bishop emphasized dialogue as a strategy to come up with a lasting solution between the warring communities. These were round table talks the elders, opinion leaders, 'Kraal' leaders, and government representatives like chiefs under the leadership of the bishop as the mediator. These dialogues aimed at mitigating both intra-community and inter-community conflicts. The dialogues addressed proximate and immediate causes, possible solutions, and a way forward. The dialogues culminated with a peace agreement that laid out different strategies on mitigating the conflict [Participant Kimiso, 4th May, 2022].

Participant priest, also working closely with riam-riam non-profit organization in Kainuk, observed that;

The church has tried to strengthen the indigenous institutions of solving conflict. The council of elders among the warring communities used such indigenous methods. This is because the council of elders' institution is the top-most structural authority in these communities. People would listen to their wise counsel and, therefore, the Catholic Church took that advantage to strengthen and support these institutions [Fr. A1, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022].

The priest further claimed that “the Pokot and Turkana communities, have ways that are used in conflict mitigation. For example, payment of fines (*Lapai*) and performing of cursing rituals called *Kerelit karas*” (Fr. A1, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022).

Lapai meant that a clan would pay a fine if their kinsman killed a member of the other clan whereas *kerelit karas* was a religious activity done by the elders at night to curse/spell doom to those who have killed in the community and are not ready to surrender and ask for forgiveness. The church with the elders of the Pokot community would join hands to perform these rituals and ceremonies to deter the young people from the killings.

A participant Nun observed that;

In the Turkana community, the Catholic Church met the elders and discussed cursing rituals/chepot to be performed in the area. These traditional religious activities performed by the communities in conjunction with the Church have been significant in reducing conflict in the region. Besides, the church created space for dialogue where conversations on causative issues were discussed and the communities were encouraged to live in peace. [Sr. A7, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th April, 2022].

The Church has helped the communities in accessing healthcare. It is in these health facilities the two communities seek medical care. According to Sr. Jane who runs a health clinic in the parish claimed;

The rationale of providing healthcare was to create awareness and make them realize that they all suffer the consequences of the conflict as the casualties met in the health facilities looking for medical care. This realization they all suffer from sickness helped to reduce conflict [Participant Sr. A-4, in Priests and religious FGD, 10th April, 2022].

The nun would further contend that;

The Church constructed schools at the border where Turkana and Pokot children could attend. When children from different communities attend school, it made them meet and create friendships with each other. Through friendship, it led to a generation that grew without a conflict mentality, without seeing each other as an enemy but as colleagues [Sr. A-4, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

This was meant to change the existing narratives of hatred among the two communities.

5.9.2 Sub-Theme #2: Indigenous Deterrent Factors as a Conflict Management

Strategy

According to Koskei and similar sentiments echoed by the priests in the focus group discussion, “the Catholic Church used local resources in terms of conflict management to restore peace and mitigate the conflict. It was a hybrid approach where the Church and the elders worked together to achieve a common objective—peace” (Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022).

It is a clear manifestation of an intersection of religion and culture. Koskei would claim that;

The bishops would claim that when indigenous cultural practices do not contradict the biblical teachings, they could be acceptable. As a result, the Catholic Church leadership held joint sittings with the elders, held seminars and workshops together and they sanctioned the elders to proceed with a cultural solution to the cultural problem of cattle rustling [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

The priests in the focus group observed that “the happenings of the most affected areas of Nakwamoru-Kaputir, Kaputir-Kainuk, and Kakong-Karimorok providing a narration of the deterrent factors in conflict management that was sanctioned by the Catholic Church in the region” (Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

I also got the chance to attend one of the meetings after several raids had led to killings as a participant-observer. I witnessed two important rituals. Paying of *Lapai*/fine and Oath taking *muma*/ cursing rituals.

5.9.3 Sub-Theme #3: Paying of *Lapai*/Fine among the Pokot Community

The Catholic Church was very keen on the revenge and counter revenge. To end this cycle, the Church advocated for the indigenous methods ending the cycle by paying heavy fines called *Lapai*. According to a priest participant, “*lapai* is defined as paying of fine for a crime committed. It is strictly a fine for murder of kin also referred to as ‘blood money—money paid for blood poured. *Lapai* is a form of restorative justice” (Fr. A1, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

In addition, another priest from Pokot North claimed that;

Lapai is a fine paid to the aggrieved party. It was common in the olden days before the rule of modern laws. This was the compensation, a fine for the murder of a kinsman. Lapai is more of instant reflex action to revenge for killed kin, the members of the diseased rise up for revenge. It can be very messy; it can include the burning of the murderer’s house and even taking away all his wealth and giving it to the diseased family [Fr. A-5, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

From my field diary, *lapai* includes three key components: paying of fine, banishing the perpetrator—killer, and cleansing (My Personal Field Diary; 10th June, 2022).

Fr A-6, who was the oldest the in the focus group discussion, gave the detailed events that characterize *lapai*. He claimed that “during the colonial period in Kenya, the Pokot and Turkana communities used *lapai* as a strategy to deter would-be conflicts and strict fines were imposed on those who went contrary to the set norms regarding killing” (Fr. A-6, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

He further added that;

There were two ways of carrying out Lapai; first, when a member of a clan killed kin, the whole clan was affected as it was the duty of the clan to inculcate morals in their children and if one was found culpable the clan was held responsible. As such, all the houses of that specific clan were burnt down, their animals killed and the entire clan banished. The clan was ostracized from the community. It would take long before intermarriage with this clan was allowed. They all carried the label of murderers or the killer clan [Fr. A-6, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

The priest would also claim that “the second step was a special sitting with the banished clan. During the sitting, there were negotiations with the banished clan on what to pay as

blood money for the loss of their kin” (Fr. A-6, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

According to a nun participant;

In the olden days, the fine would be as many as 600 cattle and 200 goats, however today it will be 200 cows”. It is after 10-15 years that another ritual is performed. It is a ritual of reconciling the clan back to the community. It is believed that at that time the wounds of death have healed [Sr. A-4, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

She further explained that;

This cleansing ritual suspends the punishment meted on the clan. The ritual allows intermarriage between the two clans that were affected earlier. It is worth noting that in the recent past the punishment has been moved from the clan to the individual who kills, it is taken as personal responsibility and not a clan responsibility [Sr. A-4, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

In the evening, I reflected on what *lapai* means and its implication in the management of the conflict. As a participant-observer, it was an eye-opener on the role of culture and its common aspects with religion when I attended one of the *lapai* rituals in Masol. This was for an inter-community conflict that had led to several deaths in both communities under study. I wanted to see as an observer what it entails. I was in the company of my Bishop and three other priests. This was a rare and unique experience as I was made to understand that *lapai* was very much successful when it is an intra-conflict, but this was for an inter-community conflict where the issues of the clan were not applicable. [My personal reflection from my field diary 10/6/2022]. The whole ritual is narrated step by step below;

5.9.3.1 *Lapai* among the Turkana Community

Just like the Pokot community, the Turkana are known to have a very strong belief in *Lapai* as a deterrent factor to the conflict that has seen the community co-exist. During the focus group discussions in Kainuk, Participant G, claimed that “the socio-political organization of the Turkana community and customary institutions could be summed up as the extended family, neighborhood, clan, and ethnic group. The clan is made up of closely-knit families collectively grouped under one name, enachar” (Participant G, FGD-Kainuk, 6th June, 2022).

She further claimed that “it was important to note that for the Turkana community, each clan has its grazing zone, and negotiations must precede accessing grazing land and watering of

the other clans. Where this is not done, conflict is bound to occur” (Participant G, FGD-Kainuk, 6th June, 2022).

Another participant from Turkana South claimed that;

To deter these would be conflicts strict penalties and fines are imposed on the culprits, whether in the killing of kin or even in women violation through rape or adultery cases”. Fines and compensations are part and parcel of the Turkana daily lives. For example, murder (akibut) is regarded as a serious crime among the Turkana people. If proved guilty beyond any reasonable doubt, the murderer is fined heavily depending on the sex and marital status of the slain. For a man, 30 animals are paid as compensation. Whereas 60 animals are paid for an unmarried woman since she would have brought more heads when she would have been married. A married woman is compensated with 40 animals. The murderer is expected to meet the cost of the fine [Participant L, FGD-Kainuk, 6th June, 2022].

However, family members are free to assist. Neither the extended family nor the clan is killed. In the case where there is no clear suspect, a nun narrated that;

A ritual called aiyomit/asubes/akinyam similar to that of muma is performed. In case of adultery (elomit) the suspects are brought before the elders, beaten severely and at times burned with a red-hot livestock-branding tool. The aggrieved husband takes the assets (livestock) of the culprit as a form of punishment. To make the punishment more humiliating, the two are publicly stripped and forced to carry the intestines of a cow around their waist murmuring the words toyon toyon (meaning calm-calm) [Sr. A-4, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

This is done in the presence of the members of the public to deter future occurrences.

In the discussion group held in Kainuk in Turkana South and Masol in Pokot Central, I was interested to know whether these fines can be applied for inter-community conflict or if they were only for intra-community conflict. In Kainuk, the FGD referred to inter-community fines as *Ekuor*. It is equivalent to *Lapai*. It is for both intra and inter-community conflict. A priest presented to us with a documented example where a Pokot killed a Turkana in Kadongoi near the Pokot border and the perpetrator was asked to pay 15 cows and 35 goats. He claimed that “the Catholic Church leadership was behind inter-community fines Ekiriamet posed. He gave credit to the church for recognizing their existing laws on fines and applying them in inter-community conflicts. This severe punishment is meant to deter future killings” (Fr. A-1, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

According to Fr. A-1;

The Turkana and Pokot have an existing agreement on killing. The fine is 40-cows while an injury is 20 cows, as documented in the Kolowa 1992 agreement. On the other hand, a Turkana killed Pokot kin in a place called Amolem and was fined 37 goats, 1 cow, and a donkey. This means that 8 goats would equate to one cow". The priest would claim that Ekuor is possible for inter-community conflict hence need to extend this cultural practice [Fr. A-1, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

During the interviews, I wanted to have an insider's story on how the *muma* rituals are performed to interrogate the intersection of culture and religion. For the sake of confirming the claims during interviews, I discussed the steps with the three different FDGs, Kainuk in Turkana South, Kacheliba in North Pokot, and Masol in Central Pokot.

Here are the agreed steps;

5.9.4 Sub-Theme #4: *Muma* Oath or Cursing

5.9.4.1 First Step: *Kirelitot*

The Catholic Church was keen to understand how these cursing rituals can help end the conflict or manage and transform it. According to a focus discussion group in Kacheliba;

The first step is called kirelitot, which means exposing out without harm. The council of elders, together with the area chief calls for a meeting. This meeting is important and all Kraal leaders are asked to make sure that everybody attends the meeting. This meeting is meant to warn all suspects involved in the killings to come out and surrender [Participants FGD Kacheliba].

The group further claimed that;

The elders also do an investigation to establish if it is one of their sons or neighbors. At this point, if the culprit comes out, he is asked to slaughter a bull to be eaten by the elders. This is considered an act of remorsefulness and the elders cleanses that person [Participants FGD Kacheliba].

The religious head of the diocese of Kitale;

Likened the first step to the famous biblical story of Jonah who called the community to repent. Just as during the time of Jonah: (2:1-10)" when he was sent by God to tell the people of Nineveh to repent or face the wrath of God. The religious leader participant had encouraged those responsible to come out and repent and be reconciled with the community at the same time he advised the elders to call the community to identify the perpetrators to own their mistakes, surrender and repent [Religious Leader Kitale Diocese; Interview 7th July, 2022].

5.9.4.2 Step 2: *Kerustagh*

In the event the person responsible for the killing does not come out in the first step, the elders proceed to perform the cursing ritual called *kerustagh* meant to force the culprit to come out. According to Kacheliba FGD, the ritual is a concoction of herbs from different trees. They would further claim that;

All elders are called from the warring communities, they bring their walking sticks and put them together in an upright position and push them to fall while uttering the cursing words, meaning all thieves will die with the fall as those walking sticks. They also use a spear to curse the evil spirit leading young men into killing kinsmen and women...This is the most secretive as it is done at night where only the elders are allowed as they strip naked” [Sr. A-7, Participant FGD Kacheliba 10th June, 2022]

(Due to the secretive nature of the second step the clergy did not attend).

Participant priest from Kacheliba claimed that “the elders do not reveal what they do, however after the ritual the culprit becomes absent-minded and comes out to claim he was responsible for the killings” (Fr. A-5, Participant in Priests and religious FDG, 10th June, 2022).

Chris would further say that it is at this time that;

*The culprit is asked to pay the fine laid down by the elders. It is called *lapai*, the blood money paid for killing. If the killer cannot be able to offset the fine required, the extended family is expected to help and even the clan members. Later his house is demolished and all his possessions confiscated and he is banished from the community permanently”. This severe punishment is meant to deter others from killing [Fr. A-5, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].*

According to the priest participants, the Catholic leadership preferred this form of punishment to the curse that causes the death of the killer elaborated below as the third option. Note that, this is the modern-day *lapai* where individual sins are emphasized as opposed to the olden days where the clan was held responsible.

5.9.4.3 Step Three: *Chepot*

The alternative to the first two steps is cursing the perpetrator of the crime to cause death in a ritual called *chepot*. One of the priests from the religious focus group claimed that “this is a public ritual, which I attended and other religious leaders. It is the last option after the killings reached a peak with a very big number of casualties, with perpetrators’ refusing to

come out”. He went on to say that “as a public ritual, the elders evoke the baraza, and ask the person to surrender for the last time and cursing is thus performed in the glaring of the public” (Fr. A-5, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022).

The following steps are followed to accomplish the ritual; This narration of the cursing ritual was given by an Elder Lopetakou in a previous interview;

Herbs from certain trees are collected and a bull is slaughtered. The elders go to the lager/seasonal riverbank with the shrubs. Only elders of the same age set are allowed. The elders, while in a secluded place in the cover of darkness, strip naked and curse the perpetrators of the crime. Stripping naked is symbolic as it signifies, they stand before God naked and that God is seeing them and answers their cry for justice for those killed by the enemy. The elders come back from the lager/river bank and roast the meat from the slaughtered bull. An elder remove one of the left ribs and removes all the flesh, this signifies –revealing. The elder uses the bone to coffer the cursing words [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

I wanted to know whether women are involved in any way in this ritual. Lopetakou claimed that;

While women are not part of the cursing rituals, women are at the same time highly regarded as the elder who is given this special role of ‘spitting’ or ‘coughing’, the cursing words must have had a girl as his first born. The girl symbolizes peace since traditionally girls don’t go for raids or war [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

Lopetakou added that;

In the olden day women were strictly not allowed to be near where the elders were carrying out cursing ceremonies. This ritual was exclusively men’s affairs. However, women were also allowed to carry out similar cursing rituals on their own. Women were allowed to create their own space without necessarily being part of the elders. However, on more interrogation, Sikamoi, who was my lead interpreter of the happenings told me that men, who are majorly the perpetrators, did not take women’s cursing ceremonies seriously [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April, 2022].

A Participant priest from Priest FGD who works in Turkana South, who is familiar with the Pokot cursing ceremony, claimed that;

The Turkana have similar cursing ceremonies called ng’ilam. Just like the Pokot community ng’ilam is a deterrent factor to prevent killings within a community. The curse would be done when the young men do not listen to the wise counsel of the elders. They invite the community for a meeting and ask the young men to surrender.

Elders alone come and reflect on evils caused, and warn the perpetrators. They kill an ox using akadwaran/ spear, which is also named after the person who spells doom. The use of a spear to curse while facing east where the sun rises, after that the spear is thrown on the west while the elder faces east [Fr. A-6, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022].

The priest would further argue that;

For Turkana the west signifies sunset-death. Once the culprits from communities have agreed to come out and be fined, the community may go to the next level of reconciliation and make sure that the crime is not repeated through the burying of hatchet ceremony [Fr. A-6, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022]

5.9.5 Sub-Theme# 5: Burying the Hatchet Ritual

The Catholic Church realized that the Pokot and Turkana have a very strong reconciliation process referred as burying the hatchet. The Pokot-Turkana peace agreements are ritualized to make meaning to the warring communities. According to participant Koskei, “once the warring parties agree to end hostilities, the elders choose a day they sit together not as enemies but as peacemakers” (Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022).

Koskei further claims that;

Peace making for the Pokot and Turkana communities is a process, not an event. It starts with negotiations, and payment of fines, which could be hundreds of animals for the injuries caused by either party. This happens after the elders from both sides reach a mutually hurting stalemate where nobody seems to benefit from the conflict [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

It is at this moment they agree to bury the hatchet. Participant Kimisoi explained that;

The rituals are performed to seal the agreement. The elders literally bury the weapons used in the conflict such as Bullets, arrows, spears, and special shrubs. What makes it a deterrent to the conflict is the rituals of uttering words by elders calling the age set/groups involved in the conflict this signifies those who were involved have repented and reconciled or reintegrated back into the community with a condition that if they repeat their wayward ways, they will perish with the weapons buried (they will be buried) [Participant Kimisoi, 4th May, 2022].

Many of those interviewed gave similar responses regarding culture, religion, and conflicts and have extensively argued on the reasons for the persistence of the conflict. They also highlighted why various peace agreement processes along the border in the past have failed. According to Koskei;

One of the reasons why they failed is the “copy and paste “approach, whereas conflict management’s approaches in other parts of the world are used in Kenya regardless of the community's cultural beliefs, some approaches cannot be transferred [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

This was confirmed by a priest participant who claimed after the signing of the peace agreement in Aturkan Hotel in Kitale town between the two warring communities who observed that “this paper peace agreements in hotels don’t work...we must go and do it our cultural way” (Fr. A-6, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022). He was referring to burying the hatchet in cultural rituals and agreements.

Referring to Participant priest from Sigor, “there are traditional peace agreements that have survived the test of time, such as the Pokot-Marakwet peace agreement has been effective for 10 years, and the Lokiriyama agreement between the Turkana and Matheniko has been effective for 40 years. Emphasizing the role of culture and the institution of the council of elders” (Sr. A-7, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

The focus discussions were clear that;

The elders from both Turkana and Matheniko communities were involved from the very beginning of the inter-community dialogues. A peace agreement was only a culmination of the process under the watchful eye and guidance of the elders”. [Participants in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

Participant Sister Mercy, concurs with these sentiments claiming;

In Lokiriyama and Marakwet-Pokot peace agreements, the concept of eldership enshrined in our cultures was upheld. Elders are the pillars and foundation of peaceful resolutions and undermining them or going to the peace agreement led by politicians without elders as the communities’ gatekeepers are destined to fail [Sr. A-2, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

According to the late Bishop Korir, upon realizing the powers vested on the council of elders in the two communities, he embraced the institution and worked with them.

According to the general agreement by the Priests and nuns in their focus group, “this was the reason peace agreements through the mitigation of the Catholic Church in the region embraced a hybrid model. The model was made up of three pillars, which are the Church, the government, and the elders each playing their part” (Participants in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022).

According to documented sources, the National Council of Churches of Kenya, Peace Program (NCKK-NAPPA), more than two decades ago, the Catholic Church brokered peace between the Samburu and the Pokots. A nun participant claimed that;

The Pokot and Samburu communities in the North rift region, buried spears on the common border in the presence of politicians and leaders from other communities. The ceremony was a symbol that all instruments of violence had been destroyed. Thus, for several years the Pokot and Samburu lived in peace.” [Sr. A-2, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10th June, 2022].

A Participant priest argued that “such success stories have led the National Council of Churches in Kenya and the Catholic Church in the region advocate for such cultural initiatives to restore peace between the Turkana and Pokot communities” (Fr. A-1, Participant in Priests and religious FGD, 10/6/2022).

Participant Koskei, commenting on the work of Bishop Korir, acclaimed that;

The presence and possession of instruments of violence, cattle rustling has become a way of life for the communities in the region. Using the hybrid model that encourages working together with the Church, government, and community elders the bishop held that it is “the way to go [Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022].

Further, the religious leader in Lodwar Catholic Diocese claimed that “the focus should be to disarm the minds and hearts of the warriors through evangelization by the Church, education by the government, and guidance by the elders who are the custodians of the community ethos.”

5.9.6 Sub-Theme #6: Church and Reconciliation

According to Koskei, the church used both scriptures and Catholic social teachings to bring the two communities together. One of the approaches used by the late bishop Korir was reconciliation. He would open each dialogue forum with a scriptural verse. This was based on the Lord’s Prayer ... forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matthew 6:12). Bishop Korir held that “we must learn to forgive one another and not perceive each other as enemies. However, this must also include reparation for the offences and injustice committed against one’s neighbor. This will show true love”. He congratulated the elders for the indigenous methods that dealt with reparations...and encouraged to pay lapai/fines as reparations. The Church has a duty to promote that common good” (Participant Koskei, 4th May, 2022).

Table 5-8: Summary of the Theme ‘Catholic Church Intervention Strategies’

Themes	Sub-Themes
Catholic Church Intervention Strategies’	Early warning signs systems
	Economic empowerment
	Catholic Church and reconciliation
	Paradigm shift from handouts to commitment
	Reaching out to reformed warriors
	Dismantling the raiders command structure
	Beyond the gatekeeper’s strategy
	Church and cultural dance
	Strengthening Indigenous deterrent factors
	Dialogues with council of elders [Isaiah:18]
	Youth exchange and sports program [Math 5:13]

Data Presentation: Phase II, Section II - Focus Group Discussions

5.10 Gender and Conflict

5.10.1 Introduction

The data presented in section II of phase II was generated from focus group discussions and the individual interviews. The cited excerpts are taken directly from the narrated responses of the study participants. The main objective of this was to demonstrate how cultural gender roles are a factor in sustaining the Pokot-Turkana conflict. Since the Pokot and Turkana communities have well defined cultural norms, the discussion aimed at bringing to the forefront those roles that indicate their active role in abetting the conflict.

Section-1 of this data presentation engages comprehensively on sub-themes that were collated from Five focus group discussions. Focus groups were specifically engaged in this study examining the gender roles in the conflict and how they are maintained and by extension leading to the persistence of the conflict. The second phase of empirical work undertaken in this study sought to answer the following two critical questions:

What cultural gender roles do Pokot and Turkana play in the persistence of the conflict?
How can a cross-sectional gender approach be used to manage the conflict?

5.11 Theme #1: Cultural Gender Roles and Conflict - Women

Theme #2 on cultural gender roles is categorized as a cause of the persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict. This theme is related to the other themes in part one of this data in the sense that both themes engage on the causes of conflict though from different perspectives. This section is a conversation of the various gender roles as sub-themes with the overarching theme on the persistence of the conflict. Thus, it is linked to the other causes of the conflict listed in section-1 of this chapter and a continuation of the first objective of this study. During the field data collection, it was clear that there are linkages between the Pokot and Turkana gender roles and the persistence of the conflict. The focus group participants in Kacheliba agreed that there couldn't be a lasting solution to the conflict without looking into these roles that by design or default have sustained the conflicts for decades.

During the FDG in Kacheliba, a participant claimed that “the Pokot community has high regard for a woman in as far as their cultural roles are concerned. They define her as a virtuous woman (*Tingan*)” (Participant E, FGD Kacheliba 6th June, 2022).

Other participants unanimously agreed with him that;

For the Pokot community a virtuous woman is hardworking. They claimed that Pokot girls are expected to get married soon after their passing out ceremony that marks the end of the transition period from childhood to maturity through a female cut (this was in the olden days today the practice is illegal). The girl was supposed to be a virgin. She must ensure the continuation of the human race by bearing and caring for her husband's children. Among the farming Pokot, she is expected to herd cattle and cultivate crops that provide food security for her family. Further, she is expected to follow men as they graze the animals to draw water from the wells for them, build the house for herself and her husband and finally take care of the entire domestic chore except for security. In this case, a hardworking woman is referred to as 'Korka nyole ting'an' [Focus Group Discussion-Kacheliba, 6th, June, 2022].

This study found other cultural duties/roles that are not in the literature reviewed. These roles are the leading path to conflict between the communities under study as explained by the same [FDG in Kacheliba, 6/6/2022]. While it is evident that gender roles have led to conflict, in this research, I found out that it is also possible to use gender roles in managing the same conflict. The research findings of this study also show that women are perpetrators of the same conflict through their gender roles such as dancing for the raiders after a successful mission, influence from the women, dowry paid for the bride, anointing rituals as a reserve

for women, protection of raiders by wearing the waist belts, and cooking packed meals for the raiders as elaborated below:

5.11.1 Sub-Theme # 1: Women and Dance after the Raid

According to a participant in the Kacheliba FDG, women dance after a raid to signify a successful raid. The participant noted that “a raid is considered a success between the Turkana and Pokot the moment the young men referred to as ‘ngorokos’ who go raiding arrive home with a herd of cattle from their enemies (*Punyon* for Pokots or *Emoit* for the Turkana)” (Participant B-Kacheliba FDG, 6th June, 2022).

Another participant in her contribution claimed that “women play a pivotal role in sustaining the conflict through the singing of praise songs for the warriors. They make them feel like heroes and thus create a need, thirst, or longing inside those warriors to go back and raid”. FDG also claimed that, “they also make a mockery of their husbands who did not go for the raid.” Thus, provoking them to be part of future raids” (Participant D-Kacheliba FDG, 6th June, 2022).

A participant from focus groups at Kainuk in Turkana South claimed that “singing in praise of the warriors and dancing by women after a successful raid was a leading contributing factor for women as perpetrators of the conflict”.

5.11.2 Sub-Theme #2: Women and Anointing Rituals

The field data show anointing ritual which is both cultural and religious is a good pointer to the factors that contribute to the inter-community conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana. It is within the cultural role of both communities for women to anoint the raiders and keep the evil spirits away and bless the raiders. Participant F from Kacheliba FDG in North Pokot, claimed that;

It is we the women who play a pivotal role in sustaining the conflict through anointing rituals. It is us using oils from the milk cream who anoint the warriors after the raid. We use a horn full of oil called “Lal (pung in plural) to anoint warriors. Lal containing oil from milk cream is used as a sign of cleansing [Participant D, Kacheliba FDG 6th June, 2022].

Another participant agreed that;

The cream oil is used during the cleansing ritual of evil spirits from their enemies. It is believed that the young warriors once they kill their enemies are bound to come

back with evil spirits from those territories and thus need cleansing before joining their families. The oil from the milk has two dimensions; other than offering protection to the raiders, it also catalyzes heroism amongst the warriors. Being the very part of women chores to milk and tend to their animals at home, it becomes their role in preparing the anointing oil. It is also manifested during the Sapana ceremonies where the young boys are initiated into adulthood [Participant-A Kacheliba FGD, 6th June, 2022].

The nature of mothers in nurturing their sons makes it key to women explicitly abetting conflict along the corridor. The focus group in Kainuk confirmed similar roles played by Turkana mothers. Ekiriamet claimed that;

On their return after a successful raid, the young men are welcomed home with ululations from the women of the clan...It is time to celebrate victory. The whole community is happy. It is at this time when the animal fat (cow) whose first-born calf is not dead is smeared on the young men. This act symbolizes that the young men who conducted the raids and came home safe are warriors [Participant-F, Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022].

Another participant added that “the old men in the community would spit milk on these young men symbolizing blessings from the old men to the young generation. Besides, a fattened sheep tail is melted to produce oil, which is also smeared on the same men” (Participant G, Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022).

Participants G and E, opened up more with claims of the meaning of oils and their contribution to the conflict. They claimed that;

The smearing of the oils both from the milk and the sheep symbolizes purification. Both the Pokot and the Turkana believe in purification from the curses after the raid and specifically when the raid involves the killings of their enemies. So, it is the role of women in these cleansing rituals, which assures the young men that nothing will happen to them after the cleansing ceremonies by their mothers. The role of women is extended further in case one of the raiders is killed. During raids, self-defense is key to survival and coming home as a warrior. The grandmother does partial shaving of the hair of the family members. She also removes the bangle from the hand of the deceased wife called ‘Tirim’. The beads are removed and hide put on the neck and the hand where the tirim had been removed [Participants G and F, Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022].

The death of the warriors during the raids is common and women are given the responsibility to offer cultural remedies in form of protection as elaborated below.

5.11.3 Sub-Theme: Women and Protection of Raiders

One of the sub-themes that came out during the discussion groups on the role of women in Pokot-Turkana conflict was their role to protect the raiders. Participant Rose from FDG in Kacheliba explained that;

Lokotyo is the maternal belt, which we refer to it as the protection belt. Traditional belt made from cattle skin, decorated with cowrie-shell worn by women around their waist from the front.” We, the Pokot, believe that women have the power to create and not men. This power to create is symbolized by wearing our maternal belt around our waist. This is meant to protect our sons from harm and keep them safe while conducting raids. As their mothers we use “lokotyo’ for protection. It is usually used to help pregnant women protect their children [Participant-A from FGD- Kacheliba 6th June, 2022].

The tying of *Lokotyo* around their waist helps to assure raiders that even they won’t stumble on their way, thus encouraging raiding.

According to Eglah from Kapenguria FGD, *Lokotyo* is significant in perpetuating the conflict in that during the raid the mothers of the raiders tie the belt as a symbol of protection and safety of their sons during raids. Similar sentiments were echoed by FGD participants who work in the disaster management office in the West Pokot County, the mothers have to tie the *Lokotyo* at all times even while sleeping until the sons come back from the raid.” Besides, Domong’ura argues that the sons go out courageously knowing that their mothers protect them and “have their back”. The *Lokotyo* has to be tied firmly, which is so significant that their mothers are protecting them just as they carried and protected them in their womb before they were born. This conviction that their mothers are protecting them has been the driving force behind sporadic raids within the Pokot- Turkana border. [Participants from FGD in Kapenguria 7th July, 2022]

Intentional lack of tying the *lokotyo* by the mothers is key in stopping and managing the conflict, as attested by Participant P that;

In the event the sons went for the raids against their mothers’ wishes then the mothers don’t wear the protection belts Lokotyo and it would spell doom to the raiders. Eglah also claimed that the mothers of the raiders are usually aware of any impending raids and have the power within their cultures to condemn and stop the would-be raid-simply by refusing to wear the belt [Participants-P, FGD in Kapenguria 7th July, 2022].

Focus group discussion in Kainuk agreed that in both the Turkana and Pokot communities' women, specifically the mother of the warriors, plays a significant role in the sustenance of the conflict.

Participant H, from Kainuk FGD, claimed that;

The young warriors before going for a raid visit their mother's home when they are from Koko because their mothers are strong enough to withstand anxiety. Compared to their wives who would want to discourage them not to go and conduct such raids. The reason for the discouragement from the wife is that they are usually afraid of losing the father of the family [Participant H from FGD in Kainuk 8th June, 2022].

Just as Sikamoi and Eglah had mentioned above, the Pokot mothers hold the key to the conflict management by denying cultural protection of tying waist belt Lokotyö that will discourage raiding”.

In one of the interviews, I wanted to know the role of women/mothers in the event the raid was not a success.

5.11.4 Sub-theme #4: Women and Failed Raids

In my previous interview with Lepetakou he claimed that;

There are incidences where the raiding missions fail. This is associated with many factors. It could be the raiders did not follow the seers/elders' advice not to raid. It could also be associated with the raiders' withholding their promise to reward the magicians who foretold a previous successful raid. It could also be as a result of disrespecting their mothers who in turn withdrew their protection. If the raiding mission fails, the mothers and wives of the raiders pour water on their food to signify the sons/husbands are useless and failures [Participant Lopetakou, 24th April, 2022].

In addition, Participant F held that “this is meant to provoke the raiders to go back more prepared, brutal, and aggressive in their mission. Women also sing provocative songs demonstrating their failure. These songs are meant to demean and incite them” (Participant-F from FGD in Kainuk 8th June, 2022).

It also emerged that women are not only left with anointing or singing for the raiders but they are also taking guns to protect their families as explained below.

5.11.5 Sub-Theme #5: Women, Guns, and Conflict

In the three-focus group discussion I had with participants regarding the role of women in the conflict' it was clear that the Pokot/Turkana conflict was initially left for men to carry guns but this is no longer the case. While driving to a focus discussion group held in Kainuk in Turkana South, I observed young women carrying guns while tending to their flock. I interacted with one of the young women carrying a gun who told me that; "My father was killed during a raid and I took his gun to protect our cattle. I learned how to shoot and I have perfected the skills" (My field diary noted on 23rd April, 2022).

This claim goes contrary to the past-held belief that women are only victims of the conflict. For participant G;

Some women have also taken up guns for revenge for their sons or husbands who were killed during the raids. This has seen the rise of women warriors in both communities, although these women don't go for raids, they have given out the same guns to their sons for raiding purposes. Women give out their guns to raid for various purposes, which include but are not limited to dowry payment [Participant G-FGD-Kainuk, 8th June, 2022].

5.11.6 Sub-Theme #6: Cost of Marriage - Bride Price

The bride price among the Pokot and Turkana women is an expensive venture. According to Participant-P, she prides for having been married at a very high bride price during her days saying, "my husband paid thirty heads of cattle as it was the tradition. The Pokot North where I come from dowry price is the highest and this has become the catalyst in raiding missions across the Uganda border, although this was managed through the Kenyan and Ugandan governments" (Participant- , FGD-Kapenguria, 7th July, 2022).

She went on to say that;

Among the cattle given as dowry price includes a cow with a young calf meant for the mother. If cow "Tepa-Yoo" for the mother is not there, the mother cannot release the daughter for marriage. This means, the son-in-law who many a time has no means, has no choice but to raid and bring the "Tepa-Yoo [Participant P, FGD-Kapenguria, 7th July, 2022].

A Participant in Kapenguria also held that;

During Adonga/Kidonga, which is a traditional dance characterized by singing and jumping, the man sings and praises the bull he brought from the raid. Other men who have bulls but did not raid only describe their bulls. As a mockery, women cheer and

clap for the raider as a hero. In this context, women make raiding the norm [Participant Q, FGD-Kapenguria, 7th July, 2022].

Another Participant also claimed that;

The warrior hero who is referred to as Chep-Laleiyo attracts various women to sing and praise him for being a hero and many girls come in ready to be married by the warrior. In addition, girls anoint him with oils. This cultural aspect spearheaded by women becomes one that sustains the conflict. Every young boy growing up in such an environment looks forward to being crowned by women as a hero, and by extension getting a hand in marriage after gathering enough cattle for dowry [Participant R, FGD-Kapenguria, 7th July, 2022].

5.11.7 Sub-Theme #7: Role of Women in Preparation for the Raids

It is the role of women to prepare food for the raiders, as explained by one of the respondents from Kacheliba FGD;

The mothers of the warriors would prepare food that will prevent them from starving. In addition, women make portable carrier bags for their sons to take with them to boil maize, milk, and sorghum mixed with water and maize flour [Participant F, FGD-Kacheliba, 6th June, 2022].

On the other side of the border in Turkana County, a participant from Kainuk FGD concurred with this claim; *“That the Turkana women apart from preparing food for the raiders also remain on guard with their sons sleeping blanket ‘a cow skin’ as a sign of protection”.*

She stated that;

The mother rolls the sleeping blanket so that none of the siblings will sleep on it or even touch it for it will be a sign of bad omen until her son is back”. In the event, a mother does not want her son to be part of the raiders a typical Turkana woman would not separate the mat from the rest or will put it at the door where anyone coming in or out of the house will step on it and this acts as a deterrent to the boy from joining the raiding mission [Participant G, FGD-Kainuk, 8th June, 2022].

Apart from mothers preparing food for their sons to carry during the raids, the female seers play a key role in abetting raiders.

5.11.8 Sub-Theme #8: Female Seers and the Conflict

The Pokot and Turkana believe that visiting a female seer-*Werkoyon* for a blessing is more powerful than visiting a male seer and leads to a successful raiding mission.

This was attested to in one of the focus discussion groups held in Kacheliba in North Pokot, the participants unanimously agreed that “there was a woman seer who not only spells doom to raiders if they don’t follow the rules given but also is entitled to a share in every successful raid she sanctions” (Participants, FGD Kacheliba 6th June, 2022).

In a narration provided by one of the participants from Kacheliba FGD;

Women from both the Pokot community and the Turkana community have been instrumental in ensuring that there is a success when the young men carry out the raids. They range from older women to young women. Apart from the mothers who offer protection to their sons while on raiding missions by wearing the waist belt, both communities believe in the role of women seers. These are women with special gifts of predicting the future. Within the Pokot community, the woman seer is called Koko [Participant A, FGD Kacheliba 6th June, 2022].

According to participant A;

The role of Koko in supporting these raids is that she is responsible for foreseeing a successful raid and a would-be failed one. It is believed that she can see where the animals are found and prescribes to the young men what to do in their raiding mission. The instructions are issued from the ‘kopo Koko’ house of the seer. In her seeing, she identifies a particular cow that the young men on their return should bring the cow of her choice. For example, she could specify to be brought an ox that has long horns or with spotted colors. Such activity was perceived to be her commission or payment in kind [Participant A, FGD Kacheliba 6th June, 2022].

But one would ask, what happens when the young men visit the house of the seer - *Kopo Koko*? Well, one of the participants claimed;

The rituals performed by Koko are symbolic of the protection when the young men embark on their raiding mission. The ritual performed consists of items such as the Otupo-a wooden bowl, water, leaves from a special tree called Sitot, and her saliva. They are all mixed in otupo and Koko splashes the mixture on the warriors as a sign of blessings and protection. This act symbolized protection from the enemy and they believe the young men would return home safely [Participant K from Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022].

The same participant further claimed that;

After the young men in the Pokot community have finished seeing the ‘Koko’ they are not allowed to spend the night with their wives rather they spend that night at their mothers' home. The mothers in the Pokot community played a vital role in cattle

rustling. Young men would seek permission from their mothers before leaving their homes [Participant K from Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022].

5.12 Theme #2: Cultural Gender Roles and Conflict - Men

5.12.1 Sub-Theme #1: Heroism - ‘Real Men’ and Recognition (Tattooing)

In an interview with a Chief from Masol area, young men covet tattooing among Pokot and Turkana communities. He claimed that;

Tattooing from elbow right hand for any killing during the raid. Tattooing (Koli in Pokot) is a symbol of heroism. Young men would love to be seen as a hero through tattooing that comes only through killing an enemy. This encourages killing during the raid. “Killers are rewarded” through individual tattooing special ear “ngachilan” notching of his favorite bull and refer him with the name he gives to his bull [Participant U, FGD Masol, 5/5/2022].

Another participant who is full of visible tattoos would further assert that;

These tattoos are a sign that I am a hero. A hero is revered by all and women will sing songs of praise calling him by his bull’s name. After the raid where the raiders have killed enemies, on their return, they slaughter a white goat and tie a thin skin thread (masoy) above the knees and their elbow. This signifies that he is a brave man; a “hero” and the young men admire such brevity and would also prepare to go out and raid. During the raid, men are considered braver if they killed men from among their enemies. Names depicting such warriors end with “Le” or “Tum” e.g., “Loyatum or Lipale [Participant W, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

In the same line of thought, a respondent Y from *Kambi karaya* in Masol FDG emphasized that brave men killers of the enemies also are significant in the “*Kolat*” ritual. He claimed that;

This “Kolat” ritual happens in a family where a child is born and takes a long time to start walking. In this ritual, the brave men are invited to paint the body of the child with Red and White colors from a certain type of soil. The man in exchange is given a goat and beer for the service rendered. This has been a reason some young men opt to go on cattle raids and even kill their enemies for such recognition and status in society [Participant Y, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

In brief, tattooing is a recognition and conferment of social status for both communities.

Just like their counterparts the Turkana also attach prime importance to heroism. A priest participant claimed that “heroes (*ekaruang*) are men/warriors singled out for special recognition for protecting the community. They are recognized for killing warriors who are

their enemies. Those who kill the enemy are marked with special tattoos to show that they are heroes” (Participant Fr. A1, Priests and Religious FGD-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022).

The more tattoos a warrior gets, the more successful and brave he is and commensurate cultural honor is bestowed upon him. Women in this situation sing praises to such men, particularly praising the raiders. For a nun participant;

Heroes attract the best of the village girls and since the majority are polygamist’s, young men stand to marry more women who want to be associated with greatness. This act of tattooing and songs of praise is meant to cultivate “male pride” in both communities [Participant Sr. A2, Priests and Religious FGD-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022].

Another participant, would further explain that Pokot men after the raid sing in praise of the bull they raided, the distance they went to raid, and the place by observing that “they also praise the company of other warriors who accompanied them, (hegemonic masculinity) these songs become a way of enticing the other young men who also wish to go and raid” (Participant U, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022).

5.12.2 Sub-Theme #2: Spies before Raids Aid Conflict

A participant and a reformed warrior from Masol FGD thought that spying on the areas to be raided is a reserve for men. He claimed that;

An even number of men two or four are sent to spy on the presence of livestock in the neighbors’ territory, the routes to be followed and how armed they are. It is men who are sent on such spying missions. These men are rewarded for their work; they are given the best part of the meat. After the raid, they are also entitled to a share of the raided animals [Participant W, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

The spies (men) are mainly bilingual to camouflage within their enemies' territory without being noticed. If the spies were to bring different reports as to why raiding should not be commissioned, “it would pre-empt the conflict to be”.

The same participant would further claim that;

The Pokot men are referred to as the protectors of their families and community at large. This means during circumcision young men are also encouraged to learn the skills of using bows and arrows with the proliferation of small arms among the pastoralists gun ownership is rewarded after the raid. Those with guns are entitled to a bigger share of the animals stolen. Cowardice among the Pokot and Turkana men has no respect or value. Warriors, women, and the entire society mock those

who never participate in raids. Their wives would pour water, and soil into their food as a way of mockery. This is meant to provoke them to join the raiders. [Participant W, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

5.12.3 Sub-Theme #3: Seers/ Mooning/Werkoyon

The seers are another category of men that indicates cultural role of men in the conflict. During the discussion, a participant claimed; “we refer to a Seer or Werkoyon is referred to as mooning meaning children due to their ‘childlike’ nature, I was told that they are never referred to as Werkoyon in public, but rather mooning as a way of respect”. [Participant-Y, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022]

Attending one of the meetings with the seers was one of my dreams come true as a researcher. Men whose words are considered sacrosanct and final, unlike in other interviews the seers are men of very few words and were always speaking through a spokesperson who interpreted to me the discussion on how they were to spell doom to young warriors who had killed women and children which was not permitted in Pokot culture. The warriors were either to surrender willingly or face the wrath of the elders’ curse. The Pokot and Turkana seers are regarded as prophets. They have a gift of “seeing” forecasting and foretelling successful raids or calamities that may befall the community [My field diary on Participant observation, 15/6/2022].

According to a participant well-versed with the duties of seers; “The seers come from only two clans among the Pokots from a total of forty-two clans. The clan of the sun “sotot” and the clan of the crow “Kukayoyo” and “Talai” are known to be the seers' clans. Young men before going for a raid consult the seers through a mediator putting this question before him; “*our children would like to go for a raid what is the situation?*” [Participant-Y, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

The mediator would seek to know. The seers would provide an answer to the question which must be followed to the letter. In response to the question;

They advise for a protection ritual to be done on the young men before embarking on their mission to raid. The seers can also foretell the type of the animals the raiders will get e.g., animals with certain colors or horns and even the number of animals [Participant Y, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

A participant from Masol FGD, added that “just like the female seers, the male seers benefit from the raid since those animals they mention to the raiders of given colors and type of horns belong to them” (Participant Z, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022).

In addition, participant V, a reformed warrior, would argue that;

The seers also provide the rules of engagement for the warriors “do not kill a woman elderly, children or disabled.” They advocate for a “Bloodless raid”, though they are beneficiaries of the raid, they do it to restock their livestock [Participant V, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022].

In a survey conducted among the two focus groups in Kainuk in Turkana south and Masol in Central Pokot they unanimously agreed that “seers carry the keys to resolving the Pokot and Turkana conflict because their word is final”.

A participant would further claim that “you don’t play around with the seers for their curse surpasses the biblical powers... you cannot be cleansed of the curse by the Church leaders only the elders can reverse the curse” (Participant Z, FGD Masol, 5th May, 2022).

When the same question on the role of men in sustaining the conflict was posed to the Kainuk FDG, participant Father. A-1 gave a similar narration on the role of cultural practices and specific revered individuals who through their roles have sustained the conflict for decades. He postulated that;

The parents of the warriors were believed to play a significant role to boys when they wanted to go for raids. Both the mother and the father played the role of blessing the young warriors. When the young warriors are going to raid, their mother blesses them by washing their breasts. The water that has been used to wash the breasts is then mixed in a wooden bowl called ‘Elepit’ and sprinkled on them [Participant Fr. A-1, Priests and Religious FDG-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022].

Two participant priests agreed that;

This was symbolic because it is the breasts that the young warriors sucked when they were young and therefore mothers’ blessings are of paramount importance. Men (fathers) on the other hand spread their legs and their sons pass between the legs as they spit milk mixed with saliva on them. This would signify the protection of the young men when they go raiding [Participants Fr. A-6 and A-7, Priests and Religious FDG-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022].

A priest participant conversant with Turkana culture further claimed that;

When the young men leave, their mothers would remove the cow skin, which they sleep on so that nobody sleeps on it until their son is back. While folded, the mother would always sprinkle water on it as a sign of blessing it. It, therefore, means that if another person sleeps on it, then the one who went raiding will not return. Upon return, the son is given back the skin that he sleeps on. [Participant Father. A-3, Priests and Religious FGD-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022].

This clearly shows the role of gender in the conflict.

Although the two communities have a lot in common as gender roles, they, however, use different names for seers. Fr. A-3 gave a difference between Pokot names for the men with special gifts who aid the raiders. According to him “*Laibon* (seer) also referred to as *Emuron* through dreams can foretell a successful raid. The *Laibon* can be male or female. In his dream, he would see the type of animals the raiders will find, and further describes the type of a cow that he would be given upon the raiders’ return” (Participant-Father. A-3, priests and religious FGD-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022).

For Participant Sister A-4,

... it is after foreseeing a successful raid the seer (emuron/laibon) organizes the warriors on how they should go. The seer performs a ritual on the raiders and smears them with white clay soil called Emunyan/Lakwan. After this ritual, the seer sends the raiders to visit Ekwadwan an elderly man who blesses or curses people in the community. He then lies down and young men skip or pass between the legs. He then invokes words of blessings upon the raiders to go and come back safely. Emuron can ask the raiders to bring a white or black goat and their wrist is tied with a piece of the skin before going out to raid. It is a sign of protection and good luck [Participant Nun A-4, Priests and Religious FGD-Kainuk, 10th June, 2022].

A government administrator in Turkana South, in a separate interview, linked the benefit of the seer to the persistence of the conflict. His claims were in line with other focus group members who argued that;

The emuron/seer instructs the raiders regarding the color of the bull they will find and this bull must be brought to him as a reward for a successful raid he foretold”. He also instructs them to kill either grey or a spotted cow to block security personnel from pursuing them. Upon return, the mother sprinkles water on the son. The father also takes water and milk to bless the son before the cows get into the compound. It is a way of receiving back a hero. In the event the son did not come back, an elderly who lost a husband or child comes to shave the heads of the sibling to cleanse them from the bad omen [Participant K, 8th June, 2022].

The participants in FGD in Kainuk postulated that unlike in the Pokot community, no praise songs are sung in the Turkana community after the successful raids. If the mother does not want her son to go raiding, she does not take care of the skin/sleeping mat the boys sleep on. In the event the seer foresees any danger, he advises the raiders to visit the diviner's house before embarking on their mission for protection as explained below [My personal field notes, 8th June, 2022].

5.12.4 Sub-Theme #4: Diviners/Magicians/Healers and Conflict

The role of male diviners and healers was associated with the persistence of the conflict. The participants were majorly concerned with the directives they give to the raiders. A Participant from Masol FDG claimed that;

After the seers have foreseen an impending danger during the upcoming raid, the mediator seeks the healer's intervention-Kapolok, to protect the young men going for the raid. The Kapolok follows the instructions from the seers and administers or dispenses the ritual advocated by the seers [Participant Z-1, Masol FGD 6TH June, 2022].

This builds confidence among the young men going for the raids. Participant-V concurs with Z-1 that “the healer or diviner slaughters a goat and smears the warriors with intestine waste- (*Eghyan*) and black clay soil (*Munyan*) in a protection ritual. They also tie the warriors with a piece of the slaughtered goatskin” (Participant V, Masol FGD 6th June, 2022).

The FDG in Masol unanimously agreed that;

Some rogue Kapolok (diviners) usurp, seer's powers, and perform rituals, without the seer's instructions. Participant Kones refers to such rogue diviners as “brokers” since the rogue Kapolok is not so keen on human life protection as the seers. The raiders tend to go to them rather than seeking advice from seers, this leads to violent conflicts and resulting in killings [Participants FGD Masol, 6th June, 2022].

On a separate discussion with my research assistants, Sikamoi would clarify to me that the rogue diviners are only interested in the share attached to them after the raid and not so much the survival of the raiders. As such, they give false hope to the raiders while encouraging cattle rustling [Personal field Diary, 7th July, 2022].

In addition to the diviners, there are other categories of individuals who are blamed for the persistence of the conflict such as shoe throwers.

5.12.5 Sub-Theme #5: Shoe Throwers before the Raids

In my data collection, I happened to meet the shoe throwers who foretell the future. For me, I saw them as magicians who earn their living on ‘lies’ for lack of a better word. The unfortunate part is the trust and faith the two communities have in them. This trust has made them very reliable since they don’t ask for a share from the raided animals. They only ask for a little amount of money to perform their work. These are men who “throw” shoes up in the air and depending on how they fall, interpret the kind of dangers and confrontation warriors will encounter and the success or failures of the raids [Personal field diary, 7th July, 2022]. According to Mary, my research assistant, they are referred to as “*Karoyok*” and come from the wild pig clan (*Pkomor*). They determine how the raiders will prepare for a successful raid, depending on the foretold resistance [Personal field diary, 7th July, 2022].

5.12.6 Sub-Theme #6: Intestines Readers before the Raids

In two of the FDGs in Kainuk in Turkana South and Kacheliba in Pokot North, there was an agreement on the role of the goat intestine readers: “These are men with the gift of reading and interpreting the intestines of a slaughtered goat for the preparation ritual before a raid. They slaughter a healthy male goat of any color”.

But how do they read the intestines and how is it related to the conflict? A participant from Masol would argue that;

If they see any blood stains in the intestines, that shows the raid will be dangerous, if they see black spots in the veins of the intestine that means their enemies are armed in groups and If the intestines are clear of any stains, then it means the raid would be a success [Participant Y, Masol FGD 6th June, 2022].

Intestine readers can be from any clan.

5.12.7 Sub-Theme #7: Expert Cleanser after the Raid - *Porpori*

Pokot and Turkana men take the role of cleansing the raiders after the raid. According to Christine from FDG in Kainuk, “the Turkana and the Pokot fear the evil spirits that follow the raiders from their enemies after a raid. As a result, this requires cleansing from an expert. This kind of cleansing among the Pokots is called *porpori*” (Participant K, Kainuk, FGD 8th June, 2022).

A cultural expert in both Turkana and Pokot communities does the role of cleansing those who kill during a raid before joining back the community. Participant V would concur with Participant K, that;

Cleansing of “Mori” (evil spirit) by slaughtering a white goat, to avoid contaminating or bringing bad omen/spirit (Mori) from the killed enemies becomes a catalyst in the conflict. These cleansing rituals make the young men feel that killing is nothing as long as one can be cleansed [Participant V, Masol FGD 6th June, 2022].

They also use some of the stolen animals for cleansing.

Table 5-9: Cultural Gender Roles

Women	Men
Women and Dance	Heroism tattooing
Women and anointing	Spies before raids
Women and protection of raiders	Male seers
Women and failed raids	Diviners
Women and guns	Shoe throwers
Bride price	Intestines readers
Role of women in preparation for raids	Expert cleanser
Female seers	

The table above is a summary of the Pokot and Turkana cultural gender roles from the data collected. Gender roles has impacted the conflict in a negative way. The Pokot and Turkana communities have well-defined roles and each gender plays their part without overlapping other gender role.

5.13 Conclusion

The table above is a summary of the theme and sub-themes from the data collected based on the research question on the role of the catholic church in mitigation of the Pokot-Turkana conflict. The Catholic Church used various strategies in managing the conflict. Most of these strategies were anchored on the biblical and catholic social teachings. Use of scriptures touching on unity such as John 17: 21, Ephesians 4:13 were used in seminars and conferences for peacebuilding.

CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

Section I: Nature and Persistence of The Conflict

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter Five, I presented data collected from the field through interviews, focus group discussions, and field notes through participant observation. This chapter provides and analyzes the data contained in Chapter Five, focusing on the three objectives of the study. This includes; the nature and persistence of the conflict, the cultural gender roles, and the Catholic Church's activities in managing the conflict. It analyzes the findings through the lens of the theoretical frameworks provided in Chapter Four.

Further, while this chapter takes into account the chapter on the literature review, the aim is not to affirm or disaffirm what the literature review says; instead, it is a presentation of the analysis, discussions and interpretations of what the participants provided as the nature and persistence of the conflict, cultural gender roles, and Catholic Church intervention strategies linking the discussion with theories. Guided by the over-arching research question, this chapter provides descriptions and explanations of the activities observed. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section analyzes the nature and persistence of the conflict. The second section analyzes the data on gender roles and conflict and the role of the Roman Catholic Church activities in managing the conflict. Based on the research questions below, I have presented the causes and the parties involved in the conflict. In addition, I interrogate the nature and persistence of the conflict. This highlights the question of masculinity formations and their linkages to the persistence of the conflict. It places both genders from the two communities in the middle of the conversation. In this chapter, I have provided a rich analysis based on theory to analyze the nature and persistence of the conflict, the question of gender roles in the conflict, and the role of the Catholic Church in the conflict.

The field data in this study was in response to the following questions:

- i. What is the nature of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, and why is it persistent?
- ii. What role has the Catholic Church in the region in mitigating the conflict?
- iii. What roles does gender play in the conflict? What cultural gender-assigned roles cause conflict?

6.2 Findings Relating to Interviews

The following table presents what emerged from the data collected on the nature and persistence of the conflict. The results are based on the findings and analysis of the themes and sub-themes discussed below. A table snapshot below finds the linkages between the themes and sub-themes derived from the data collected in Chapter Five. Three themes are directly linked to the research questions. That is, the nature and persistence of the conflict are linked to the first research question; what is the nature of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, and why is it persistent?

The second theme on culture and conflict explained the link between cultural practices, rituals, and conflict. How masculinities are formed and their effects on the conflict. The third theme was gender and conflict; its sub-themes show the different gender roles in the conflict. Another table in the second section below provides the fourth theme, which shows the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in mitigating the conflict. All these themes and sub-themes exhaustively analyzed, interpreted, and discussed the intersections of gender, culture, and religion when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in this study.

Table 6-1: Themes and Sub-themes on the Nature and Persistence of the Conflict

Themes	Sub-Themes
Nature and Persistence of the conflict	Climate change Proliferation of small arms
Marginalization and limited resources	Conflict entrepreneurship
Culture and conflict	Masculinity formation Clash of worldview Curse and rituals Children socialization
Gender and Conflict: Cultural gender roles	
Women	Men
Women and Dance	Heroism tattooing
Women and anointing	Spies before raids
Women and protection of raiders	Male seers
Women and failed raids	Diviners and healers
Women and guns	Shoe throwers
Bride price	Intestine readers
Role of women in preparation for raids	Expert cleanser

6.3 Theme #1: Nature and Persistence of the Conflict through Edward Azar's

Lenses

This theme was based on the research questions and the objectives of this study. It aimed at interrogating the nature of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and why it is persistent. This was based on Edward Azar's PSC theory which provided analytical lenses for the causes of protracted social conflicts.

Several explanations from the participants in this study have been provided regarding what causes conflict between the Pokot and Turkana communities in Kenya. However, a theory exists that explains contemporary conflict and assists in situating it in the social and international context. Azar's (1990) theory of Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) is explained by Ramsbotham (2005). Edward Azar offered one of the first analytical attempts to comprehensively analyse and explain the protracted nature of intra-state conflicts (Ramsbotham, 2005). Azar's (1990) lens on protracted social theory provides insights into why inter-group or social conflicts are protracted. Azar's concept of human needs explicitly takes up the idea of power inequalities. He claims that; "the dominant social group 'satisfies' its political access, security, and acceptance needs at the expense of the needs of other social groups" (Azar, 1990, p.10). As a result, the dissatisfied social groups are frustrated and feel more and more marginalized and excluded from social, economic, and political participation.

Using Azar's basic need theory, the study established how the limited natural resources in Pokot and Turkana counties are perpetuating the conflict. This was by interrogating the linkages between the persistence of the conflict and lack of basic needs and other limited natural resources. For example, in an interview with Patrick, a former CJPC Director in the Diocese of Kitale, he claimed that;

"Lack of control over the number of animals one should possess concerning the availability of pasture and water has led to conflict between the Pokot and Turkana communities. Overgrazing has resulted in poor pasture and water for livestock in the region. This causes the communities to move to other territories in search of these resources, leading to conflict". [Research Participant Patrick, 22nd April 2022].

This claim takes us to the first sub-theme on the nature and Persistence of the conflict-marginalization.

6.3.1 Sub-Theme #1: Marginalization and Limited Resources

Basic need theory was Azar's first argument. The Protracted Social Conflict by Azar argues that the pre-condition of the Communal Content continued to serve as the theoretical foundation in PSC. Azar states that "communal identification based on race, religion, and ethnic group or cultural links is communal content in PSC settings" (Azar, 1990, p.7). This is significant since these identities are used to elicit basic needs. States dominated by a single communal group develop in many multi-ethnic countries. This group or coalition of groups puts pressure on the social fabric by ignoring the needs of other groups, eventually leading to disintegration and protracted social conflict (Azar, 1990). This study established that these needs include limited natural resources of pastureland and water. Some respondents pointed out basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter due to marginalization by previous governments, leading to poverty. Goldsmith (2007) attested to this when he argued that scarcity of resources within one community leads to the search for resources elsewhere. In this process, that community breaches territorial borders. It extends the search for resources to its frontiers. These movements result in contact between the new arrivals and the host community, which in most cases, ends up in a violent clash. This scenario was reported to be between the Turkana and the Pokot. During the data collection, I could not imagine we lived in the same country because the high poverty levels were glaring. Lack of necessities, such as clean drinking water, lack of roads, and children with protruding bellies only collaborated Azar's linkages of marginalization, lack of basic needs, and conflict. Patrick also reiterated this during the interviews when he claimed that marginalization of the pastoral communities has led to a high level of poverty, among other factors that have sustained the conflict;

The previous government's marginalization of the two counties, poor infrastructures, and other social amenities, such as schools and hospitals, has left most of the population impoverished. [Research Participant Patrick, 22nd April 2022].

The need to expand their territory arose to meet the growing demand for grazing land to cater to the massive number of animals. Informed by the 'expansionist approach', most interviewees were categorical that the Pokot community was trying to expand their territories through violence. Boundary disputes have played a significant role in making peace unattainable within the two communities. Effects of marginalization that leads to poverty make it possible for the communities to fight and expand their territories, hoping to get fortunes in the newly discovered oil fields.

This claim was attested for by a participant who argued that;

Recently, the border conflict has worsened with the discovery of crude oil in Turkana South-Lokichar. Arguing that the Pokot are disguising cultural cattle theft to expand their territory. It is pure greed as opposed to cattle rustling. [Research Participant Patrick, 24th April 2022]

The participants at Kainuk-FGD, where the border dispute has been ongoing for a long time, argued that the national government has never been transparent on the border between the Pokot and Turkana counties (previously districts) since independence. Lack of clarity on the boundary between the two communities has caused uncertainty on where the two communities can graze their cattle as their land resulting in conflict. This has been witnessed in the Kakong area in Turkana County, leading to competition over the limited resources by the two communities wanting to acquire more grazing areas across the border, causing conflict with their neighbours. Addressing these needs will lead to the management of the conflict. On a different argument, Azar links the persistence of the conflict to the lack of political access, as explained below.

6.3.2 Sub-Theme #2: Political Needs and Persistence

The need for political access is the second argument. Edward Azar listed the isolation from political needs as crucial in the persistence of the protracted social conflict. The dominant group excludes the rest in terms of political and economic access. Needs deprivation leads to increasing grievances, which individuals express collectively (Azar, 1990). He further distinguishes between different needs, such as political access, security, and acceptance (Azar, 1990). The study found that political marginalization by the Kenyan government as a failure of the government contributed to the escalation and ongoing conflict between the two communities. As captured in Chapter Five, respondents in both Turkana and West Pokot counties claimed that political exclusion was a factor in the persistence of the conflict. Besides, FGD in Kainuk claimed that the community felt excluded from the education sector because there were so few and dispersed schools in Katilu, Kainuk, and Nakwamoru. According to Azar (1990), all this falls under a lack of political access. Since national resources are supposed to be evenly distributed, this happens at the political decision-making table. In this context, both communities expressed their unmet political, security, and acceptance need during this study, citing low levels of education, hospitals and communication networks, and inadequate service provision by the government due to the

low presence of government officers. This leads the youths who cannot access education to see cattle rustling as the only source of income.

On this note regarding lack of political access/ exclusion and marginalization, a participant claimed that;

Since the Turkana are nomadic people that roam about, the government ought to have made sure there were enough schools close to the kraals/villages so that people could enroll their children wherever they relocated. [Participant-G, Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022]

However, this was different in some parts of Turkana South, such as Kakong, where their main concern was the need for more health facilities and schools. According to the FGD, Kakong has a small number of healthcare facilities. The patients were driven more than 100 kilometres to Lodwar Hospital when necessary. Some people died while being taken to hospital due to the road's dire condition. It is lack of political access that leads to self-redress and this only sustains the cycle of conflict in the region. This cycle of conflict is linked to the availability of small arms as explained below.

6.3.3 Sub-Theme #3: International Linkages and Proliferation of Small Arms

In Chapter 3, I highlighted international linkages by Azar as a factor in protracted social conflict. Azar argues that the sovereign of the State in most prolonged social battles is increasingly dependent on international linkages; that is, both economic and military dependency politically and economically compromise the form of rich(er) and strong(er) states (Azar, 1990). From the interviews, the porous international borders between Turkana and Pokot counties with South Sudan and Uganda are the gateway to the proliferation of small arms in the region. The participants who partook in the interviews agreed that the porous border with neighbouring countries had been the leading cause of the proliferation of small arms into West Pokot and Turkana counties. When arms get to the hands of the pastoralists, it leads to the need to dominate those who do not have access to the arms. This leads to an arms race where each group seeks to outshine the other with the most sophisticated arms. This was confirmed by the secondary data from the Turkana County archives in a report by the Kenya Government on the State of Environment for Kenya which revealed that; "several decades of regional instability have adversely affected Kenya" (GOK, 2007, p.89). Further, a government employee for Turkana South was categorical that; "the

Turkana community is militarized, and for them, guns have become part of their lives." [Participant-F, Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022]

Many scholars have widely written on the effects of small arms on the regions' lack of stability. Mkutu and Wandera (2013, p.24) affirmed that; "there are sustained arms flows across Turkana's long porous borders, such that the Turkana community has become the most militarized in Kenya". They also explained that Turkana has a small government presence and is heavily dependent on the Kenya Police Reservists (KPRs) as its first line of security (ibid). This has led to more arms in the hands of civilians, especially in the Pokot North and Turkana South regions, which are at the border of the two counties where this study was conducted. The study established that porous borders contributed to the easy flow of arms. Chapter Five put the proliferation of small arms as a leading cause of the conflict. This could be attributed to the proximity of Turkana County to international borders such as Ethiopia, Uganda, and South Sudan as exacerbating conflict within Turkana South. This would mean that to deal with the conflict, the question of curtailing the flow of arms must be addressed. This was affirmed by Samuel, working for CJPC Lodwar, when he stated that;

There is a connection between the proliferation of small arms in the region to the political instability in the neighbouring countries, such as the Karamoja region in Uganda, the Toposa region in South Sudan, and in Ethiopia – Merille/Dasaanach region that has become the source of arms supplies to the Turkana and Pokot communities in Kenya. [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April 2022]

The international linkages, according to Azar, are; "political-economic relations of economic dependency within the international economic system, and the network of political-military linkages establishing regional and global patterns of clientele and cross-border interests. Modern nations, particularly weaker ones, such as those frequently embroiled in protracted civil conflict, are more influenced by external links" (Azar, 1990, p. 6). Given that this type of conflict exists on the Turkana-Pokot border, Azar's PSC theory was significant as it established a direct link between the proliferation of small arms and their impact on the communities under study. One respondent from Alale in Pokot North claimed that to counteract the influence of the international linkages that have sustained the conflict for decades, the government must deal with lawlessness;

It was due to the lawlessness that the government had to intervene. The Kenyan Government intervened in 1984 to disarm our Pokot community in the infamous program Operation Nyundo. This was after the Pokots had killed hundreds of the

Sabei community. According to Rosanna, this disarmament program initiated by the government left the North Pokot community with permanent scars; many of our brothers and sisters were killed and maimed by our government security agents. (Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April 2022).

The high rate in proliferation of arms coupled with international linkages calls for strong governance that can protect its citizens. This was the argument by Azar on governance and the role of the state as discussed below.

6.3.4 Sub-Theme #4: Governance and the State's Role

Another sub-theme that created discussion was governance and state's role (the fourth argument), where Azar states that; "the governments are endowed with the authority to govern and use force where necessary to regulate society and to protect citizens", (Ramsbotham, 2005, pp.84-87). Azar cited governance and the state's role as the critical factor in the satisfaction or frustrations of individual and identity groups. Azar (1990) states that most states which experience protracted social conflict tend to be characterized by incompetent, parochial, fragile, and authoritarian governments that fail to satisfy basic human needs. It is said that governments, expected to be unbiased and impartial, tend to be dominated by the leading identity groups or those that have been able to monopolize power within a country or territorial entity. Azar argues that whereas in Western liberal theory, the State is an aggregate of individuals entrusted to govern effectively and to act as an impartial arbiter of conflicts among the constituent parts, treating all members of the political community as legally equal citizens, this is not empirically what happens in most parts of the world, particularly in newer and less stable states where political authority tend to be monopolized by the dominant identity group or a coalition of hegemonic groups which use the State to maximize their interests at the expense of others.

The monopolizing of power by dominant individuals and groups and the limiting of access to other groups precipitates a "crisis of legitimacy" so that "regime type and the level of legitimacy" come to be seen as "important linkage" variables between needs and PSC (Azar, 1990, pp.11-12).

Ramsbotham (2005, pp.84-87) concurs with Azar's argument that the government must protect its citizens even if it means the use of force and avers that governments are "endowed with the authority to govern and use force where necessary to regulate society, protect citizens, and provide collective goods". Azar cited governance and the State's role as a

critical factor in the satisfaction or frustrations of individual and identity groups. It is such frustrations that lead to self-redress and arming. This was what informed the government's disarmament program. Although the disarmament program in the two counties was well intended, the research pointed to a different view. During the interviews, these programs were termed ill-advised, citing why the Catholic Church in the region came in to mitigate and provide alternative ways of managing the conflict.

The focus groups I held in Kacheliba, Masol and Kainuk revealed various reasons why the Church and other faith-based organizations got involved in managing the Pokot-Turkana conflict. For example, a participant from Pokot North condemned the government's ineptitude and ineffectiveness in resolving the issues between the Turkana and Pokot populations claiming that;

Victims of the conflict who had been displaced and had lost their livelihood resorted to going to the Catholic Church compound for refuge due to the government's failure. [Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April 2022].

By listening to the participants, it was evident that the disarmament program by the government was counterproductive. This counter-productivity only led to the growth of mistrust between security officers and the local communities. For example, a participant from Alale in Pokot North claimed that the GoK failed to collaborate with their Ugandan counterpart to disarm the Karamojong. The majority moved and lived across the Ugandan border during the disarmament drill in 2008. This resulted in one society possessing weapons while the other was being disarmed. In addition, human rights violations were committed during this disarmament operation, including rape and physical torture of women in the Pokot villages. The FGD in Kacheliba claimed that a disarmament exercise in 2009 harmed the community. Many individuals in the area feared that the authorities had not received the seized rifles and ammunition even after the disarmament. Regretfully, the Pokot community lost much livestock, and the males were brutalized and forced to battle for their lives. Security officers involved in the recovery of stolen cattle and disarming exercises were the beneficiaries of the exercise. A participant from Kanyerus elaborated to us that the locals claimed that;

... the operation had been criticized as ineffective, contentious, and complex, and the dispute had intensified rather than subsided, resulting in the government's mitigation attempts failing. [Research Participant F, 2nd April 2022].

Boonzaier (2008) argues that narratives are context-bound and therefore shaped by cultural, social, political, and historical factors. The stories from the participants in the interviews and the FGDs provided the contexts; they rely on the art of language, demonstrating what is told and how it is told. These narratives explained the pain caused by the conflict and how the government failed to use humane ways to get rid of the guns from the hands of civilians. The government inflicted more pain than the guns did. Hence, these narratives present a safe space for debriefing their pain, deconstructing their clutter, and deconstructing meaning from their lived experiences in conflict zones. Preventing small arms from entering the Turkana and Pokot territory should begin with awareness and voluntary surrender of the arms with a promise of a token, or the government should buy the arms from civilians and promise security to the communities.

Although Azar claims that the Governments are endowed with the authority to govern and protect citizens, and provide expected benefits, based on the claims mentioned above by the interviewees, the government disappointed the local community. The Government of Kenya (GoK) employed excessive force to collect guns from the Pokot community in the context of this study. Rossana, one of the interviewees from Kacheliba, posited that "the use of force against the Pokot was unrestricted, and even those without weaponry were subjected to it." [Research Participant Rosanna, 2nd April 2022]. She further held that the Pokot community does not feel protected by the government, and the GoK does not provide them with collective political benefits. They are filled with hatred and are subjected to severe use of force. A participant pointed to the challenges of international linkages and was categorical that the use of force has led to the Persistence of the conflict since the Pokots take advantage of the porous borders and prefer moving away to the neighbouring countries at night to hide their guns and only to return after the disarmament program is over [Research Participant John, 2nd April 2022].

Azar would refer to the situation as a failure by the government. The State as a "power container" cannot mediate a level of need satisfaction for multiple communities. As a result, there is a growing "disarticulation between the state and society as a whole" (Azar, 1990, p.) as the State increasingly pursues policies that are contradictory to the needs of the general public (Azar, 1990, p.11). Azar claims that while questions of governance and the State's role are pivotal in the satisfaction or frustration of individual and identity group needs, most states going through protracted social conflict are governed by "incompetent, parochial, fragile, authoritarian" regimes.

The majority of the participants that I interviewed thought that since the guns in the hands of civilians were bought by the people, the government should use an effective method of getting the guns from the people rather than using force, citing the example of a similar program in Congo...referred to as "guns for bikes," where people would surrender their guns in exchange for motorcycles (though a noble idea, I had my reservation not to turn it into a gun trade). Besides, he claimed that the lack of security officers being humane in their approach led to hostilities and mistrust between the people and the security agents, leading to an unwillingness to surrender the guns and, by extension persistence of the conflict. Citing the previous disarmament programs that disarmed one community and, at the same time the other was not, led to hiding guns in the subsequent disarmament programs for fear of being attacked by the advantaged group.

Respondents from Turkana South expressed the same fear. Most Turkana South respondents from Kainuk, Kalemngorok, and Nakwamoru felt that the government's forced uneven disarmament resulted in hostility and animosity between the government and the population. Koskei, a participant who worked in the conflict corridor in Kainuk, claimed that reports of harassment and other human rights breaches by troops have strained relations between the Pokot and Turkana communities and the area's security forces. People's memories of a disarmament exercise that took place in 1984 are still fresh. He would refer to the effects of forced disarmament as brutal;

“Security officers brutalized men, raped women, and forced individuals to consume raw skin used as women's clothes. Such an experience had such a bad influence on the community that the government had to reconsider its methods for subsequent disarmament exercises”. [Research Participant Koskei, 28th April 2022]

He would, however, explain that the most recent disarmament exercise, which took place in 2011, was more equitable, as the community voluntarily surrendered their arms. The failure informed this change of approach by the government of the previous disarmament programs. For Azar (1990), the government's role is to provide security needs to all its citizens. If it is the role of the government to provide security, as Azar puts it, how does the government use violence to end the conflict? The use of force, a realist's position, could have informed the government's decision to pacify the communities. Unfortunately, after the disarmament, the communities remained vulnerable as no security was provided to protect them from external

aggression from their armed Ugandan and Sudanese neighbours. This made the communities to re-arm themselves again.

According to Sikamoi, a respondent working with the disaster management office in Pokot County and a resident of Kacheliba, the government's efforts to mitigate the ongoing and regular conflict between the Turkana and the Pokot had been impeded by a lack of enough security officials. Because of the tiny number of security officers in Turkana South and Pokot North, providing security to the population has been problematic. This is why there is an easy flow of arms in the region aimed at self-protection. In addition, due to a lack of road and communication network infrastructure, many security officials have shied away from postings in hotspots along the Turkana-Pokot border. As a result, few security officers were available to safeguard these areas' residents against attacks by hostile raiders. When raiders steal big herds of cattle, it becomes difficult to track them down. These attacks have in the past enraged the community, who blamed the security officer's failure to engage the attackers. The government had to reduce the number of police officers in Turkana South due to a shortage of police officers. Kenya Police Reservists (KPR) was turned to, and the community had become severely reliant on them as its first line of defence. As I was traversing the region during data collection, I was shocked by the lack of police posts as it is in other parts of the country. You would rarely see any police presence. However, herders carried guns as they grazed and tended to their flock.

An interview with a government official in Turkana South revealed that, although unpaid, the KPRs continue to provide security for kraals and villages and fill tasks previously performed by police. The officer would claim that;

“Unfortunately, the Kenya Police Reservists (KPR) had resorted to selling ammunition to buy local beer or food in towns like Alale, Kainuk, and Sigor. This indicated that proliferation of small arms and abuse by the KPR happened due to lack of basic needs”. [Research Participant Samuel, 16th April 2022]

This had adverse effects, as lack of security personnel fostered anarchy and violence. Similarly, on the persistence of the conflict, a peace ambassador in Kacheliba stated that security personnel had been stationed in the area. However, they were offered transfers as soon as they arrived. Officers willing to operate there complained of a lack of suitable housing, severe temperatures, harsh and rugged terrain that hampered the chase of stolen

livestock, and the Pokot community's secrecy regarding sharing information about stolen animals.

A focus group in Kainuk thought that in the past, two warring communities employed their elders to mediate and resolve the dispute. They would encourage intermarriages to foster ties. As a participant would claim that;

“Turkana women would offer their daughters to Pokot men for marriage. Inter-community marriage was used as a bridge to strengthen inter-community ties”.
[Research Participant Paul, 17th April 2022].

However, the situation had deteriorated, and typical dispute resolution approaches were no longer practical. Members in both communities exhibited suspicion and a desire for vengeance. As a result, the government's and other peace stakeholders' initiatives failed. Regardless of how many times they failed, the government presented remedies, including disarmament, as revealed by a focus group debate in Kacheliba that began in 1984 and ended in 2012. Furthermore, during my research, the government was still active in recovering unlicensed guns. This is informed by the government's responsibility to protect any human violations; as Marcuse (1978)would argue that "in a conflict situation, there is no distinction between acts of violence perpetrated by the strong party against the weak party and acts of violence perpetrated by the weak party against the strong party. All forms of interethnic violence, whether brief or long-term, executed by the powerful against the weak or vice versa, have one basic denominator: inhuman because it violates human rights”.

Edward Azar’s lenses were used to interrogate and analyse the persistence of the conflict. various sub-themes were generated from the data and were used in the above discussion. The following section analyses the cultural gender roles and their links to the persistence of the conflict.

6.4 Theme# 2: Gender and Conflict

Another theme that created discussion was gender and conflict. What roles does gender play in the Pokot and Turkana conflict? What other strategy can be embraced in gender consideration? The researcher identified other gender strategies applicable to mitigate the conflict. In response to the research question on gender roles that were in line with the study's second objective, the participants interrogated the role of gender in the conflict.

Using the circle of women theologians and Kanyoro's theoretical framework, the first step was to establish the (missing) link between women's active roles in the conflict and the peripheral role imposed on them by the patriarchal system that denies them space to voice out their issues and how this fits the broader peacebuilding frameworks. In this context, Kanyoro (2002) provided a lens to analyse the intersectionality of gender, religion, culture, and conflict. Kanyoro defines hermeneutics as an interpretation. She contends that cultural interpretation is critical in understanding people's way of life. She further argues that "African culture is perceived as the thread which strings the community beliefs and social setup together" (2002, p.8). This is in line with the majority of the interviewees in Chapter Five on the role of gender in the conflict. One would see the intersection of gender roles and the conflict, e.g., women singing and dancing for warriors after a successful raid or men tattooing warriors as heroes after the attack. Geertz (1973) echoes similar sentiments in her book *Interpretation of Culture*, where she claims that "cultural interpretation defines people's world view" .

Based on the above distinction created through Pokot and Turkana gender roles and their linkages to power imbalances, I argue that this is the reason why some feminist scholars such as Tickner and Laura (2011, p.4) suggest a distinction between "sex" and "gender" to address what has come to be understood as 'essentialist' thinking about women and men based on biology. For these scholars, "sex" refers to biological maleness or femaleness while gender refers to personality traits and conceptions of self that we expect people to have based on their sex, where masculinities are associated with maleness and femininities with femaleness (ibid). It was established that essentialist thinking based on biological traits aims at creating binaries where one is subordinate to the other. However, the focus of the study was on gender traits that could enhance equality in gender within the broader peacebuilding frameworks.

In addition, masculinities and femininities are not just differences; "they are differences that have hierarchical power implications...and while the Content of the hegemonic masculinities varies across time, place, and culture, feminist political scientists, sociologists, historians, and anthropologists have observed that gender hierarchies shape social and political interactions in most societies. This means we cannot think of just one "gendered" experience because genders are lived and performed differently and in different contexts. Nonetheless, gendered power relations are salient in almost every area of social and political life" (Tickner & Laura, 2011, p.5). Relatedly, feminists have argued that gender is neither

constructed nor given but performed; therefore, it should be read differently from how biologists or norm-analyzing social scientists might read it (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). This places the Pokot-Turkana gender roles on the spot concerning what women and men perform as provided for by their cultures.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two extensively discussed the question of culture as a pawn and a resource in conflict. In Chapter Five, Kanyoro's framework helped me interrogate the Pokot and Turkana cultural practices, such as *sapana* ceremonies described by Lopetakou as rites that "make boys men." Since it was clear that women knew when the warriors were preparing to raid their neighbours and offered cultural protection through maternal belt as attested by a participant;

Lokotyō is the maternal belt, which we call the protection belt. Traditional belt made from cattle skin, decorated with cowrie-shell worn by women around their waist from the front." We, the Pokot, believe that women have the power to create and not men. This power to create is symbolized by wearing our maternal belt around our waist. This is meant to protect our sons from harm and keep them safe while conducting raids. Their mothers, we use "Lokotyō" for protection. [Participant-A from FGD-Kacheliba 6th June 2022]

However, it would make sense if the same women made meaning to the cultural values therein that could hold the communities together while at the same time leading to a deeper understanding of the harmful cultural practices that require transformation. This will change cultural gender roles towards peacebuilding rather than conflict.

During the focus group discussion in Kainuk that comprised women leaders such as the area chief, employees of different non-profit organizations claimed that to address the issue of gender bias, "there is a need to look at the question of male privilege" how men are socialized determines how they treat women and even in matters of conflict and gender-based violence. A participant from the focus group was categorical that;

When fathers of the household tell boys they are not like girls to be seen in the kitchen cooking or a woman should not tell you what to do in marriage, this kind of socialization leads to men looking down on women when they grow up. [Participant G, Kainuk FDG, 8th June, 2022]

This kind of socialization could have put women at the periphery of most community activities, including disregarding them when decisions are being made in the community that affects all. Interrogating on what the circle of female theologians has achieved in their

advocacy on alternative Masculinity, I see the need for Pokot-Turkana women to take their position in society and champion their issues. This will be one of the ways they can be visible as agents of change in the region, as advocated for by Pearce and Pankhurst (1997). Besides, I agree with Musa Dube (2016), who posits that, essentially, the circle writers engaged with the concept of alternative masculinity from the perspective of Christology, associating Jesus with 'mother-like' virtues of caring and loving, which also became the basis to critique African hegemonic masculinities and patriarchy.

This paradigm shift from traditional masculinities to alternative masculinities where women are viewed from a Christological perspective would change how Pokot and Turkana communities treat gender disparities. Chitando and Chirongoma (2004, p.151) refer to this as “alternative masculinities conceptually conceived as different from traditional pervasive hegemonic masculinities [...] alternative masculinities as a perspective known by different terms, for example, redemptive masculinities”. The same traditional masculinities responsible for the persistence of the conflict are the same that perpetuate gender-based violence. As Halberstam (1998, p.2) puts it, "traditional forms of masculinities are accused of perpetuating gender-based violence, women and child abuse, economic and political violence. It is perceived as associated with historical evils such as wars, imperialism, and colonialism". Alternative masculinities house different perspectives depending on the issues. It was my observation during data collection that this has led to complicating the production of gender as Anne Fausto-Sterling (2000) claimed; "masculinity is never truly hegemonic—it will always need to be reproduced; and gender hierarchies sometimes take forms other than strict patriarchies anchored by solid and hegemonic masculinities (ibid, p.227). At the same time, we know that both masculinities and femininities are [plural and] varied in any given social and political context. It will be necessary for feminists looking forward to asking how particular masculinities and femininities are constituted and how they come to be organized along gender hierarchies (ibid, pp.227-8)—underscoring a concern with how to understand incomplete, hybrid, or subtle gender oppression (ibid, p.228), or in other words, where gender subordination is often partial, subtle, and hybrid, both in its performance and in its results (ibid, p.229).

Kanyoro (2002) and other circles of women theologians voice the use of alternative masculinities as a tool to criticize patriarchal culture. It comprises representatives of feminist movements, pro-feminist movements, and gays and lesbians. They argue that, due to socialization, men are wrongly socialized into believing they are biologically conditioned to

lead, control, and decide for everyone (Millet, 2000). This conditioning of men to think this way has far-reaching effects in-group or community conflicts such as Pokot and Turkana. This is the reason why a participant from Kacheliba, a Pokot activist and defender of gender rights, argued;

Until male control in the indigenous justice systems is countered by women getting back their voices and 'shouting' their position in the society, women will forever remain in the peripheral decision-making organs in the society. [Participant Z, FDG Masol, 6/7/2022]

While agreeing that we have elite women from both communities who have taken the lead in spearheading the rights of women and the girl child, it is a concern that more needs to be done to empower women economically as women's empowerment removes them from totally depending on men. This will confront the idea that cultural control of women must be overcome. A participant claimed that;

Both communities are pastoralists and are conditioned culturally to believe that cows and goats belong to men while women own the chicken, which is of less value. [Participant Y, FDG Masol, 6/7/2022].

The above sentiments speak of male privilege, which perpetuates gender power inequality. This led to what the participant referred to as 'economic inequality'. In the same vein, albeit in different words, Young (1980, pp.137-156) refers to this as "feminine existence - a set of structures and conditions delimit the typical situation of being a woman in society and the distinctive ways women live in this situation". This is calculated from the male-dominating setup, which is intended to muzzle women's economic power leading them to subordination. It is in the same line of thought that this study emphasizes exploring strategies that empower Pokot and Turkana women economically to minimize gender inequality. When they are economically empowered, it will also give them a voice in the society.

Pease (2014, p.17) argues for a paradigm shift in how boys are socialized, when he claims, that "the challenge that confronts men is to find ways to exercise power without oppressing anyone. For men to change for the better, power must be redefined so that men feel powerful when doing things that are not traditional for men". Although this sounds more like men need to be in power, the underlying concern is how men can move away from the traditional setup where men and women have distinctive roles. It is not a call to collapse the differences

in those roles since some are gender specific. However, the goal is to emphasize that men can take up women's roles and vice-versa and avoid stereotyping that leads to both gender suffering in one way or another.

When one talks of gender inequality, religions stand accused of abetting the same; scholars such as Seitisho and Siwila (2017, p.18) argue that “religion, though one of the dominant voices in society, has created and maintained social hierarchies by discriminating against identities' interests and experiences of women”. Such was evident in Pokot and Turkana communities, where this has entrenched the patriarchal systems perpetuating the narratives that men are the holders of family structures, including who owns what, even animals. This is meant to portray women as subordinate to men. Becker (1999) cautions against these attitudes by the patriarchal systems claiming that cultures that limit women's access to decision making and power and which characterize women as inferior to men are more prone to repression and violent conflict.

Interrogating more alternative masculinity is a tool to critique how culture broods patriarchy and hegemonic masculinities. They call people to be free from oppression; it is people's right to live as they please without cultural baggage. Cultural baggage refers to harmful cultural practices that condition people to behave in a manner that oppresses themselves and others.

It is evident from the focus group discussions that pastoralists' cultures are like ‘factories’ where patriarchy is manufactured, and one cannot talk of equality without confronting the barriers created by patriarchal systems. In an interview with Aziza, who has worked for peace building among different pastoralist communities in northern Kenya, she contends that the roles played by women in the inter-community or group conflict are a conversation that needs to be engaged. She gave an example of a renowned woman peacemaker Dekha Ibrahim from Wajir county in Kenya, and I quote;

In the year 1991, when there was an inter-clan war in Wajir, the council of elders was not able to manage the conflict, and Dekha decided to do the unthinkable; she brought women together who had no place in the council of elders and mobilized them to demonstrate and get the attention of the government and even international community. They raised their voices and asked for peace. She formed the women for peace movement recognized by the government and the council of elders. [Participant Aziza, 7/7/2022].

This is an example of how women can create their ways of handling conflicts irrespective of existing patriarchal systems.

As indicated in the literature review in Chapter Two, Dekha Ibrahim was credited for localizing peace through a hybrid approach with three arms, women, government, and a council of elders. Dekha's approach was good, and borrowing from her is worthwhile; however, Aziza observed that unlike in Wajir, in the conflict under study, women play perpetrators' roles through cultural gender roles; I agree with her observations. These gender roles are assigned against the backdrop of patriarchy. It is meant to support the existing patriarchal structures when it sounds like men press certain buttons for women to dance to their patriarchal tune. For example, by dressing down men who do not go raiding, they support the patriarchal system that demands all men behave like men. This is a call to the distinction of gender.

According to Aziza, the Pokot and Turkana women do the logistics in abetting the conflict, as elaborated in Chapter Five (cultural gender roles and conflict). She provided various examples ingrained in their culture, where women sing praises for the warriors after the raid and internal mechanisms that exist and enable mothers of the raiders to know when raiding is to take place.

She claimed;

It is women who dress down their men for not taking part in the raids. Pokot and Turkana women would mock men ...we do not have men in the house...we should wear trousers; this provokes men. [Participant Aziza, 7/7/2022].

When I asked her why indigenous justice systems among the Pokot and Turkana do not include women, Aziza was fast to respond;

Women do not need to be part of the council of elders since it is a traditional system that is patriarchal... she held that there is more space. Women can create their own space without compromising their culture and religion, just as Dekha did. [Participant Aziza, 7/7/2022].

While I support the participant's point of view, I would agree with Tatjana and Solomon (2001) that one way of giving women voices is by devising gender-sensitive conflict prevention policies and strategies while cultivating a feminist culture. In the same vein, referring to Zartman (2001), gender in conflict is a significant factor that cannot be ignored.

He argues that in case of hostilities with neighbours that result in a fight, such forms of conflict could be brought to an end by a third-party intervention such as respected and influential men/women. Men or women from any conflicting group or a different territory could be called upon to seek resolution through mediation and conciliation. This is evident among the Pokot and Turkana communities, where a group of women peace ambassadors under the leadership of a senior chief in Kainuk along the border have been meeting and discussing the effects of the conflict and how they can be agents of peace across the border.

Responding to the question, what other strategies do you think can be embraced in gender consideration, the respondents had varied ideas. Participant Aziza advocated for: “women talking circle” [Participant Aziza, 7/7/2022].

Aziza borrowed this from Wajir, where it was a success. This will make women agents of change, as envisaged by Pankhurst and Pierce. In their chapter on "Gender and Conflict Resolution," Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall (2012) point out the observation of many that conflict resolution has historically suffered from "gender blindness." Efforts to correct this deficiency have led to the development of gender-sensitive approaches in the field. Moreover, they discuss four steps identified by Pankhurst and Pearce (1997) as general steps involved in engendering a discipline or study. The first is making women visible as agents of change. They highlight the work of Boulding in making significant contributions to making women visible as change agents in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

In this first step by Pankhurst and Pierce, Aziza's interview indicated that it is possible to make women visible agents of change by creating space to engage and interrogate the causes of conflict and provide an action plan. She claimed that;

Pokot and Turkana women can be agents of change using their own Pokot and Turkana women gatherings, cutting their niche in peacebuilding that can leave a long-lasting impact in the region. [Participant Aziza, 7/7/2022].

Women should embrace these created spaces and positions and not wait to be given or provided for by men. Tolbert (2000) concurs and observes that gender was viewed as a universal ascription of unequal social power relations that allowed one gender to dominate. The two communities hold this, indicating a system where women are left disadvantaged. This perception of one gender dominating over the other leaves women vulnerable, and for them to be agents of change, they need to come out of that categorization.

The second step is removing male bias in conflict resolution data-collection and empirical research, and the third step is rethinking conflict resolution theory to take gender into account. Considering these two steps together - the dominant research methods and theoretical constructs - new areas of inquiry have been opened around categories of power and participation in their concentration on transformation as the deepest level of conflict resolution. For example, in terms of methodology, women in the field have argued in favour of qualitative methods where people's experiences can be heard and recorded instead of relying on the aggregation of conflict-related statistics (Ramsbotham et al., 2012). The researcher captured the challenge of removing male bias in data collection regarding gender balance among the interviewees and members of the discussion groups. Although the most significant challenge was when the only people who turned up in an FDG were all male, postponement of the discussion was inevitable. This was to avoid replicating similar male voices in conflict and gender issues.

In search for more critical theoretical approaches, Ramsbotham et al. (2012) highlight Vivienne Jabri's discussion of the "hegemonic discourse" that violent conflict generates and the danger of conflict resolution to merely reproducing "the exclusionist, violent discourses and practices which perpetuate it" (Jabri, 1996, p.181). Challenging this, Jabri introduces the idea of "an emancipatory politics as the most relevant discourse for conflict resolution and peace, in which the main stress is on the interrelated elements of public space, participation, and individuality, thereby at the same time transforming institutional and discursive gender distortions" (Ramsbotham et al., 2012, p. 313). I agree with Aziza and Jabri and argue that creating public space for Turkana and Pokot women as a group and individuals will empower them to participate more in peacebuilding work and transform the notion that women are onlookers or spectators by their male counterparts. At the same time, men are the "coffers" of the true meaning of peace and conflict management. These notions needed to be debunked by maintaining gender balance during data collection and thus created room for an all-inclusive approach.

The fourth step in this engendering process is incorporating gender into conflict resolution policy-making and practice. A step toward realizing this was seen in the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, which called for further representation of women in peace negotiations and the highest offices of the UN as well as the incorporation of gender

perspectives in peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and conflict-prevention activities (2012, p.314). Referring to Ramsbotham et al. (2012, p.267), women can be made visible agents of change by abolishing structural and behavioural aggression against women and establishing gender equity. This calls for the production of new meaning in the encounter between the 'self' and the 'other' in the way gender roles are defined in the two communities, i.e., the binaries that exist by defining gender roles. This will meet Reimann's concern that conflict resolution has always been a "gendered discourse" based on unexamined ontological and epistemological assumptions, which by extension, obscure its gender blindness (Ramsbotham et al., 2008, p.272).

Deducing Aziza's claims on 'women talking circles discussions' should guide them to develop a peace action plan. This action program should aim to address the youths/warriors who raid. The goal is to change their minds towards becoming more productive members of the community. They should also gather information and pass it to the relevant government agencies to act on their suggestions. In addition, they should also hold public meetings to sensitize the public on the value of peace in creating an enabling environment for development. This suggestion is very much in line with Kanyoro's (2002) approach, where she acted like an opinion leader and made space for women in her rural home to interpret their daily lives in line with the scriptures. Likewise, the Pokot and Turkana women can also change people's perceptions of them and their capacity to build peace. Ramsbotham et al. (2008) have elaborated on how Boulding made a significant contribution by opening up a discourse and practice in contemporary conflict resolution where women were included as radical change agents and empowered peacemakers. Aziza held that the same could be replicated. Mitchel (2003) claimed that small groups of peace workers sustained the culture of peace in conflict zones during the Balkan state war. This opened up a discourse and practice in conflict resolutions in the war zone.

While trying to avoid the binary of men and women, female and male, I encountered severally of the communities under study who expressed their ideas and opinions based on these binaries. I observed that the gender question is so ingrained that each participant would refer to either gender during the interviews and focus group discussions. These categories influence the pastoralist's decision-making approach and thus condition the communities' view of gender and show how pervasive binary constructions of gender are as informed by patriarchy. Peterson (1992) argues that the "heteronormative order producing and produced by the binary empirical (male-female) sex categories and the dichotomy of analytical

(heteronormative, masculine-feminine) gender codes is so deeply internalized and historically institutionalized that it constitutes a formidable obstacle to critical reflection and analysis” (p. 204), a difficult task not least because it appears "natural" and normalized as "foundational." This is better explained in detail in the discussion on gender constructions and formations below.

6.4.1 Sub-Theme #1: Gender Constructions Linked to Persistence of the Conflict

In Chapter Five, there was an exposition through attending the rites of passage myself, and interviews indicated that masculinity formation among the Pokot and Turkana communities is anchored on their age-set systems through initiation ceremonies called *sapana*. Very few scholars, if any, have been able to link masculinity formation with the persistence of the conflict. The narratives from the focus groups were an eye-opener to me on *sapana* ceremonies, their role in making young men adults, and what that means in highly patriarchal systems such as the Pokot and Turkana governance systems. This study argues that gender constructions in Pokot and Turkana create social power relations that hinder conflict management. This argument is supported by Diaz (2010) and Durvury (2003) who agree that there has been a failure to address structural inequalities and power dynamics, which are the foundation of gender discrimination. Pankhurst (2000) holds that women do not suffer because of intrinsic weakness but because of their societal position. These positions are created through cultural gender constructions. Some men who have not undergone *sapana* rites are considered to be on the same level as women. This study considered what Woroniuk (1999) presents as the goal of engendering a society. He claimed that it is not a reversal of discrimination or an attempt to make men and women similar. Instead, the study took engendering as a means to attain equity through equal opportunity and life chances for both genders.

Sapana is everything young men in the two communities look forward to. For them, one is never a man before undergoing a *sapana* ceremony. It is what separates men and places them in a given age set. *Sapana* becomes the foundation of age sets. All initiates who *sapana* together belong to the same age set. Besides, they are given red, copper, or silver identification marks, which symbolically indicate their age sets. This has religious connotations to regulate morality in society. They reveal who should marry from a given clan, not a prohibited clan.

The initiated are divided into various seniority ranks, and the passage from the lower to the immediately higher rank results from a specific cultural initiation ceremony. The main difference between such a ceremony and *sapana* is that *sapana* admits to manhood individually. In contrast, the ceremonies that follow it raise a whole group (age set) of initiated men through progressively senior age ranks. In one of the oldest existing reports on *sapana* in Pokot County archives (Gulliver, 1951), the initiated men function as part of a precise age-set mechanism. When a man enters one of these strata, his vertical age mobility is conditioned by their movements, and the individual transaction is no longer possible.

In age status, the Pokot rank as non-initiated until the performance of *sapana*. Within the category of the uninitiated, individuals belong to different grades according to their physical maturity and according to the ceremonies which have been performed on their behalf. Gulliver (1951) would further argue that the rate of a child's physical and social growth is not linked with that of a group. When entering the initiated category, the adolescent is inducted alone for the last time, but the moment he crosses this threshold, a new situation arises.

The initiate is no longer a solitary youthful figure surrounded by a group of elderly relatives, as during his childhood ceremonies. Instead, around the fire on which is roasted the ox he has speared, he is greeted by a group of young men similar in physical and the exact social age. These young men have performed *sapana* during the same or the previous season. They are members of his *ma*, his fire. After the performance of *sapana*, the initiate courts, dances, hunts, and travels widely to attend ox feasts, thus extending his range of social contacts. Keen to this set of development, one can trace the reasons why the focus group in Kainuk would claim that "once the cattle are stolen, the police find it hard to trace them... this is purely due to the social ties and bonds that exist in an age set where they consider each other as brothers and revelation of cattle raiders is perceived as a betrayal of brothers". Wherever the initiate goes, his companions will be recruited from among the recent initiates. This is an exhilarating moment in a young man's life as it affords him his first experience of social solidarity, protection, and loyalty to a group that extends beyond the narrow range of kinship ties and the confines of his province. In his second edition, Gulliver (1955, p.240) claims that "a neophyte aptly expressed this: 'wherever I go, he said, 'my' "fire" burns. This 'ma,' these, 'fires' have not yet attained their full social personality. Their members stand in an institutionalized relationship of subordination".

As Kenya develops and more people migrate to the cities in search of work and opening up of rural Kenya through modern infrastructures, such traditional practices are on the wane. However, in this remote conflict corridor along the Turkana-Pokot border, ceremonies such as *sapana* still hold a grip on social ties. In addition, these ceremonies create a family of the initiates. The initiates maintain a high level of secrecy and protection but only among themselves. This works to strengthen patriarchal systems.

6.4.2 Sub-Theme#: The Turkana Masculinity Formation and Age Organization

The Turkana and the Pokot masculinity formations are different though they have some common elements. Gilliver attests to this in his works in Pokot and Turkana counties' archives. The Turkana are nomadic pastoralists who inhabit a semi-desert country in north-western Kenya. A general account of them has been published elsewhere (Gulliver, 1951), and a detailed analysis of their kinship and property systems (Gulliver, 1955). The research describes the structure and operation of their age organization. Unlike the Pokot community, where initiation begins with the cutting of the foreskin for men, the Turkana is different. However, both lead to one becoming an adult male.

Turkana youths are initiated into full formal adulthood at an average age of eighteen, as explained earlier during interviews in Chapter Five;

The age limits vary in practice between about fifteen and twenty years. Initiation occurs by the youth spearing a male, castrated animal-ox, camel, goat, or sheep at a communal ceremony which may last for several consecutive days or be renewed for a day or so over a more extended period. [Participant-H from Kainuk FGD on 2nd May, 2022].

The participant would further explain that on each day, several youths (up to as many as fifteen) present themselves, each with his animal provided by his father. After all the initiates on one day have speared their animals, the carcasses are opened, and the head and body of each youth are smeared with the undigested contents of the stomach of his beast and with the elder's spittle by the senior most elders of the area. This is the standard Turkana method of ritual purification and strengthening employed when an animal is ceremonially slaughtered. The critical feature here is that the act is necessarily performed by the senior-most men in the age-group system, who are thought able to receive the initiates into that system and pass on to them the attributes of solid manhood and the idealized qualities of age-group membership.

This is attested to by Connell (2005, 2002) who describes masculinity as a broad set of processes, which include gender relations and gender practices between men and women and "the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture." After this act, the slaughtered animals are cut up, and the meat is cooked over open fires and eaten by all males in the initiation group. No females are allowed to participate in any part of the affair, but uninitiated boys may be present and eat inferior pieces of meat. The heart is thrown at them at a distance. This is meant to arouse the need to be initiated into adulthood, which comes with respect and dignity. Each initiate separately goes off with a man of approximately his father's generation as his patron. The initiate goes to his patron's homestead and remains there for five days. He is expected to act as if he were an elder. [Personal diary reflection, 2nd May 2022]

The masculinity formations create categorization even among men. Some men suffer due to isolation from being unable to undergo the rite. The fact that they cannot partake of the meat makes them inferior to other men.

Connell (2005) argues that culture dictates ways of being masculine and "unmasculine". In addition, there are several masculinities operating within any one cultural context, and some of these masculinities are: hegemonic; subordinate, compliant; and marginalized. This is linked to social constructionism, a social theory about how meaning is created through social interaction, through the things we do and say with other people. This theory shows that gender is not fixed or innate but varies across time and space. In line with this argument, Vayrynen (2010) identifies three ways feminists have looked at the connections between peace, war, and gender. Essentialist feminism argues that "including women in peacebuilding makes a difference because women are more peaceful than men," and standpoint feminism "urges us to look at women's experience of war and peace in order for more sustainable peace to emerge from the processes of peacebuilding" (Vayrynen, 2010, p.141). Essentialist and standpoint feminism both "leave the foundations of peacebuilding unexamined and thereby run the risk of repeating and reproducing mainstream thinking and practice," delimiting women's agency by confining it to the "binary opposition established by modernity" (ibid, p.150).

To understand how Pokot and Turkana masculinities are formed, I looked at a post-structural feminist approach. This approach "calls for understanding the construction of masculinities and femininities that takes place during the formative moment of peacebuilding" (ibid,

p.142). An alternative post-structural feminist research agenda, then, looks at the role of women in nation-building. "International peacebuilding missions contribute to the construction of masculine and feminine agencies in post-conflict societies by importing, supporting, and creating a limited range of agencies available. An unquestioning acceptance of the hegemonic forms of agency leaves a wide variety of gendered agency untapped, thereby limiting the potential for self-sustaining peace" (ibid, p.150). The research established that while women attend the various rites of passage, they do not question their position in decision-making. I would call it a sealed fate; thus leaving one gender dominating over the other.

A post-structural feminist approach also interrogates the discursive function and representation of "local women" in peacebuilding. "The wish to hear the voices of 'local women' is distinctly problematic and opens up a critical research agenda that seeks to examine the role of colonial and subaltern subjects in the construction of first world agency." Drawing from Spivak (1988), ("can the subaltern speak?") and Butler ("what can we hear?"), she points out, "our capacity to hear these voices is limited and, therefore, a single-minded attempt to include local women in peacebuilding". This resonates well with Pankhurst's first step in engendering a discipline by making local women agents of change. This is by tapping cultural meanings attached to being masculine and feminine influence personal identities, as indicated in the Pokot-Turkana *sapana* ceremonies discussed below.

6.4.3 Sub-Theme #3: Hegemonic Masculinity among the Pokot and Turkana Communities

Hegemonic masculinity is a term that describes a dominant model of masculinity. It represents domination over others, primarily through physical displays (Zevallos, 2015). According to Zevallos (2015), like all social identities, gender identities are dialectical: they involve at least two sets of actors referenced against one another: "us" versus "them." It is not different with the Pokot community, where we have those sitting in the inner circle during *sapana* ceremonies as "privileged men" or "men of honor" because they have undergone the rite and the 'others' who are yet to undergo the rite. This gender categorization in the community has far-reaching implications regarding decision-making processes and is designed to disadvantage women. In Western culture, this means "masculine" versus "feminine." As such, gender is constructed around notions of otherness: The "masculine" is treated as the default human experience by social norms, the law, and other social institutions. Masculinities are rewarded over and above femininity. When I asked the elder

Lopetakou whether women could *sapan*, and his answer was negative. When I pressed for the reason, he said it was a male affair. Hegemonic masculinity, which categorizes some men above others, leads to branding some men as superior and others as inferior. The determinant factor is the rite of passage. This compartmentalizes the male category, which leads to an inferiority complex among men who have not gone through the rite. Just as women suffer from isolation in decision-making, this category of men suffers the same fate.

This is where alternative masculinity offered by Kanyoro (2002) and other circles of women theologians makes sense. These women theologians belong to the Circle of Concerned African Female Theologians, whose use of critical tools such as alternative masculinities have opened up a discussion on the essential role women have played in their struggle to make women agents of change in society. Primarily, the Circle writers engaged with the concept of alternative Masculinity from the perspective of Christology, associating Jesus with 'mother-like' virtues of caring and loving, which also became the basis to critique African hegemonic masculinities and Patriarchy. This was contrary to the patriarchal held notion of Jesus being the son (man) and God being the father (man) (Elliott, 2007, p. 342). This alternative Masculinity intends to empower women by allowing them to take up their roles in male-dominated communities such as those under study.

As mentioned above, the issues surrounding male privilege are only meant to cement patriarchy. This is linked to male chauvinism amongst the Pokot and Turkana, where women are seen as inferior to men. The relationship between Pokot and Turkana men and women as depicted in their cultural rite to adulthood is skewed purposely to favor the boy child. The ceremony "sapana" is choreographed to produce hegemonic masculinity since those who have gone through the ritual are considered superior to women and other men who have not performed the rite. Thus, such men dominate over others, and decision-making in these communities is reserved for them. Groups that receive extraordinary cultural power, such as in decision-making institutions amongst the Pokot and Turkana, exemplify it.

Referring to Zevallos (2015, pp.15-20), "masculinities are constructed concerning existing social hierarchies relating to class, race, and age". Hegemonic masculinities rest upon social context, reflecting the social inequalities of the cultures they embody. Gender norms (the socially acceptable ways of acting out gender) are learned from birth through childhood socialization. This concurs with a participant's claims on the effects of socialization in masculinity formations;

That since I was young, my Turkana community always referred to Pokots as Emoil (enemy)" she said that even among the Pokots, they refer to Turkanas as Punyon, meaning an enemy. That is how our mothers from our side and the Pokot side bring up our children, telling them of their enmity, and as such, children are born and grow up knowing of their perceived hatred for the 'other.' Mainly mothers nurture this concept of 'othering' at a tender age. (Research Participant Sarah, 24th April 2022)

We learn what is expected of our gender from what our parents teach us and what we pick up at school through religious or cultural teachings, media, and other social institutions. *Sapana* ceremonies narrated in Chapter Five show how Pokot and Turkana men and women are socialized in their masculinity formations, and the place of women in the ceremony comes out clearly as 'ceremonial', or 'flower girls'. While attending one of the *Sapana* ceremonies, I realized that the tradition, which is a must for men, is also discriminatory to men who have yet to undergo the rite of passage. Those who have gone through the rite feast on the meat while sitting in the inner circle, while those who have not gone through the rite sit outside the circle where meat is thrown to them like 'dogs' as a way of provoking them to undergo the rite of passage. This is what Connell (2005) describes as hierarchies of masculinity even in the same community; "masculinities do concern relations between men centrally as a group and women as a group, and of course, individual relationships between particular men and particular women. However, they also concern relationships among men".

Zevallos (2015), commenting on Connell's work on Masculinities would, further claim that one of the things research has repeatedly shown in different parts of the world is a kind of hierarchy among masculinities where in a given community or a given organization, one kind of masculinity is the honoured one, is the "top dog," so-to-speak, the hegemonic pattern of masculinity – and other forms of masculinity by the contrast of are less honoured, more marginalized; perhaps even excluded from respect altogether. *Sapana* ceremonies reveal this categorization among the Pokot and Turkana communities. Some men are more men than others, and all men are unequal. *Sapana* becomes the criterion of differentiation between real men and other men. It is also clear that the hegemonic masculinities make decisions on behalf of all, including older men who have not undergone the rite. I learned that age is not a factor for one to be considered an elder; what matters is being initiated into the group of elders. As I would say, the culture draws a wedge into "the in-group" vs. the "out-group."

A research participant in an interview in Chapter Five who had undergone the cultural ceremony claimed that in Pokot history and culture, *Sapana* is a transition to another level for a man since the man who has not experienced the ceremony cannot talk before elders.

He claimed that;

A man who has not undergone 'sapana' is just a man and cannot contribute whenever there is a meeting of elders, so as a man in Pokot, you must call the whole village to feast, dance, and crown yourself to become a complete man. [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April 2022].

He further claimed, "a man must go through this rite. If he doesn't, we punish him by not having a say in the community development". The cultural ceremony, which is only done between September and November, is the climax of a Pokot man's life since it gives a man the mantle of having authority to lead the community. These months are not just picked; Sikamoi from Kacheliba in North Pokot would elaborate; they are selected since there is plenty of food after the rains. The culture brings together elites from the community who mingle freely with others in the ceremony, although observing boundaries if they have yet to undergo the rite.

The ceremony's climax is when the elders crown the initiate to become a real man. He is given blessings and declared a complete man. However, this has significant implications in society as it also creates gender disparity, clearly indicating the positionality of women in these patriarchal societies. Besides, these ceremonies distinguish whom to speak to and whom not to speak to during critical societal times.

I was also interested to know how femininity is constructed. How do women become women? This will lead to the eventual engagement of the gender constructions in the two communities and their linkages to the persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

6.4.4 Sub-Theme #4: Femininity Constructions and the Position of Women in *Sapana* Ceremonies

In one of the engagements/discussions I had with the staff working for the disaster management office in Pokot County [Kapenguria FGD] on gender construction, it was explicit that "gender constructs among the Pokot and Turkana communities are dependent on various rituals performed upon the initiates". A participant and worker in that office had claimed during focus discussions that;

Without undergoing the rites, the woman remains a girl, and the man remains a boy. They cannot be given authority to represent the community. [Participant P, Kapenguria FGD 7th, July 2022]

In addition, another participant who works in the same office argued that;

To understand how Gender is constructed among the Pokot community, the question of taboos/pollution comes in. What men and women ought to do and ought not to do. [Participant P, Kapenguria FGD 7th, July 2022]

The participant further held that among the Pokot and the Turkana communities, in the broader view of gender constructs, it is significant that if a woman misbehaves sexually, it is said that she and her children will be adversely affected. In contrast, a man's sexual misbehaviour is said to affect his wealth, particularly his herds. During the discussions, I learnt that this distinction corresponds to and reinforces the distinction between a woman's perspective, which revolves primarily around herself and her children, and a man's perspective, which revolves around his wealth and herd. Within the generally held model of Pokot society, the male perspective, or values of influential men, are predominant. In practice, the importance placed on male and female perspectives held to be most important is sex-specific. These values are based on maleness or femaleness. This was attested by one of the earliest records from the Pokot archival library-the works of an anthropologist John Peristiany. In his detailed analysis of female initiation to womanhood, Peristiany states that one can use several different approaches when interpreting a complex ceremony (Peristiany, 1956, p.112). This analysis, which follows my focus, is how women's initiation expresses the social status and roles of women concerning men. This is examined from a dominant male perspective.

Female initiation into womanhood has two functions: ushering women into women's roles and granting social status in society. The initiation is significant because it is the principal way Pokot women socialize Pokot girls into womanhood. As such, it is “the most important and recurrent articulation by Pokot women of the female perspective” (Peristiany, 1956, p. 113). By investigating the initiation rite, I examined what Pokot women say women should be and how this gives leverage or non-leverage in the patriarchal societal standing. The initiation rite for women makes a statement of their separate solidarity and power, which focuses on the use and control of their sexuality. During the three months of seclusion for the initiates, the concepts of subordination and power are articulated to the initiates (ibid, p.114).

However, how are the two contradictory concepts voiced and incorporated in the rite to become validated and acknowledged by men? My concern was whether there were other socializing aspects during this initiation rite that brought out the power of women in society and how this can be used in conflict management. According to respondents from Masol FGD in Pokot Central, though women are aware of their role as subordinate to men, they think that women have the power to curse, which men fear, especially the raiders. They claimed that;

Every man is born of a woman-mother, and the role of the mother in socializing the young boys is crucial in abetting or stopping the raids. As such, it is the role of conflict managers to tap on their positive power and incorporate it in the peacebuilding framework. [Participant Y, FDG Masol, 6/7/2022]

This indicates that women can stop, manage and even end the conflict. However, how can this happen when women remain on the side-lines in decision-making in indigenous institutions of both communities?

This question drew me into curiosity during the interviews to establish the position of women in the *sapana* celebrations and how this position influences them to accept the decisions made by elders. According to Lopetakou, although women in Pokot culture do not undergo the rite of passage (*sapan*), they are respected and given different roles in the *sapana* ceremonies. To justify his claims, he posited that;

The initiate invites women to bring milk for the ceremony. They also anoint the initiates with milk as a way of cleansing. [Research Participant Lopetakou, 20th April 2022].

This role given to women symbolizes their innocence in terms of conflicts. They are seen as clean since they are claimed to have "white" hands, while men have "red" hands signifying blood as community warriors. They are also considered witnesses of men becoming adults in the Pokot culture and traditions.

As presented in Chapter Five, when collecting data, I was curious to know whether women partake of the meat-eating ceremony and, if they do, where they sit in that circle of elders. During my attendance at the ceremony, I could see women and all those who had not undergone the rite of passage sitting far from the elders. Women were offered intestines to eat while being given a piece of meat in the basket they used to carry the milk for the ceremony to go and eat at home. For the rest of the men and children who had not undergone

the rite, small pieces of leftovers were thrown to them as you would to "dogs." This was meant to provoke them to perform the ritual in the future. This was an apparent show of the minimal role of women in *Sapana* ceremonies. And by extension, their minimal, if any, in decision-making processes [Personal diary reflection, 2nd May 2022].

After investigating the role of gender in *sapana* ceremonies, the next step was to establish whether there is a link between the rituals, masculinity formations, and the persistence of the conflict.

6.4.5 Sub-Theme #5: The Links between *Sapana* Ceremonies and the Persistence of the Conflict

The *sapana* ceremony can only be linked to the Pokot-Turkana conflict in the olden days: Once one transits from childhood to adulthood, the man is conferred with power to speak with authority to the ills affecting the community. In the olden days, the elders gave blessings to the *emuron/ngorokos*/raiders before embarking on the mission. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the elders have a share of the stolen cattle either as diviners or seers. As such, being crowned an elder was one of the privileges, and one earns a place of honor that comes with it., more so if one is an elder and a seer or diviner simultaneously. Lopetakou would link the recent raids and attacks as a result of pride after *sapana* ceremonies; the young men would possess guns due to porous borders and, as such, gain the courage to raid their neighbours. In the olden days, he would claim elders sanctioned raids with strict instructions not to kill women and children. However, today, due to pride, the raiders kill indiscriminately. The persistence of the conflict is also associated with wayward elders who, out of greed, sanction the raids. Lopetakou claimed that;

These wayward elders bless the raiders to get the proceeds of the raid. The raiders bring "Lokuka," a bull given to elders to eat and celebrate after a successful raid. Until faithful elders regain their glory that is fast waning, criminals will continue purporting to be elders. [Participant Lopetakou, 20th April 2022].

Lopetakou would also claim that seers/elders could carry the blame for the Persistence of the conflict, as when they foretell a successful raid, they expect a reward from the warriors on their terms. In such circumstances, a seer predicts a bull of particular colour in the herd to be brought, and upon a successful raid, they must bring that bull to the seer. They would also foretell an impending disaster during the attacks and ask the raiders to undergo certain protection rituals by the magicians called *Kapolok*. This was the traditional norm for years

that sustained the conflict as the young men, after the protection ritual, gathered the courage to go and raid.

6.5 Summary

In the context of war/conflict, gender equality norms are strong when men and women are allowed to participate in the conflict under the same conditions. Most warriors/combatants and leaders are men (Bjarnegard et al., 2015). This corresponds to Goldstein's (2001) notion of stereotypical gender roles during conflict. As observed in the study, when stereotypical gender roles are prevalent, masculinity becomes synonymous with qualities that define a good warrior. This resonates well with Aziza's claims on women dressing down men to take up arms, fight their perceived enemies, and steal cattle.

The gender norms discussed in this section are hegemonic or explained against the backdrop of patriarchy, which supports generalization to the two communities' notions of gender roles.

As Goldstein argues, "the stereotypical masculinity described ... is only one of two mutually reinforcing gender identities. Thus, men are only expected to comply with masculinity during the war as long as this is contrasted by a stereotypical notion of femininity" (Goldstein, 2001, p.301).

Besides, Magadla (2021) claims that women help combatants with non-fighting tasks. As dependents, women are included in the rebel group due to family ties with the male combatants. According to Caprioli (2003), stereotypical gender roles separate men and women and are thus the foundation for gender inequality. This was captured in the study of the Pokot and Turkana gender roles. These roles are distinct and separate. Following the preceding argument, gender equality norms grow stronger when gender stereotypes are less prevalent. This is why I argue that education is a transformational tool and an essential component in conflict management. The FGD supported this in Kapenguria, who claimed that the more a society is educated, the more open they become to accepting women's role in conflict management. This is different from cultural traditions that emphasize one gender being subordinate to the other.

Reimann's views on the role of gender as a category of analysis in conflicts and peacebuilding is essential in this study. Reimann's (2002) conclusion on the significance and interdependence of identity, symbolism, and structure is important. There are cultural differences in how gender is understood, and even within a single society, there may have

been a historical shift. Finally, the study asserts that one strategy to prevent genderblind research is to use gender as an analytical category. However, it is equally crucial to recognize the limitations of using gender as a single analytic category. To comprehensively analyse the Pokot and Turkana conflict, the study adopted the intersectionality of many types of analysis. The interaction of different identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination in daily life, institutional structures, social norms, and cultural ideologies, as well as the power dynamics that result from these relationships (Avruch, 2020; Sanginga, et al., 2007). From a variety of angles, intersectionality addresses disadvantages and prejudice. Researchers occasionally need help with or understand this idea (perhaps because no definition applies to everyone), but they know its significance. Additionally, only some publications discuss how, where, and when to study intersectionality (McCall, 2005).

Section II: The Role of the Catholic Church in the Conflict

For us, the Catholic Church is like a government because it has initiated 90% of the development projects in this region. We are forever grateful to the Church for providing us with schools, boreholes, and dispensaries. Without the Catholic Church, we would be living in the 18th century in terms of development ~ Participant G, 24th April 2022].

6.6 Introduction

In this section, I establish that the Catholic Church's involvement in mitigating the Pokot-Turkana conflict cannot be understated for various reasons. Its use of the scriptures and various theologies was highlighted during the interviews. However, the interviews also portrayed a lack of mainstreaming gender in their approach due to replicating the same approaches used by patriarchal indigenous justice systems that favor one gender. The study has further established how culture and Religion uphold and bolster patriarchy at the expense of gender balance in conflict management.

In analyzing the data, I focused on two main questions that were asked in Chapter Five during data collection:

- i). What roles has the Catholic Church played in mitigating the Pokot-Turkana conflict?
- ii). What ideo-theological resources did the Church use in its mitigation?

In response to these questions, the analysis was done through the lens of Kanyoro's (2002) feminist cultural hermeneutic theory. Kanyoro's feminist framework involves four significant steps; the first is to provide the people with the space necessary to dialogue and

give their stories. Second, share their stories and allow all to contribute. Third, analysis/interpretation of the stories within the cultural prism, and lastly, interrogate how this has affected how people interpret the bible (Kanyoro, 2002). While embracing the same approach, this study provided space to actively listen to stories and narratives from focus groups and interviews. The narratives were based on the research questions. The table below shows the various themes and sub-themes this Section presented

Table 6-2: Themes and Sub-Themes on the Role of the Catholic Church in the Conflict

Themes	Sub-Themes
Catholic Church and Conflict	Church and gender in conflict
RCC Theologies and engagements	Submission, Confession and Reconciliation
	Unity and harmony of the human family
	Religion, culture and patriarchy
Interventions in development	Monitoring systems in conflict
	Establishment of justice and peace
	Workshop and seminars

6.7 Gender, Religion, Culture, and Conflict through Kanyoro's Lens

In her book *Feminists' Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective*, Kanyoro (2002) provided a framework to analyze the intersectionality of gender, Religion, culture, and conflict. Kanyoro defined hermeneutics as an interpretation. She contended that cultural interpretation is critical in understanding people's way of life. She further argued that; "African culture is perceived as the thread which strings the community beliefs and social setup together" (2002, p.8). Using Kanyoro's first step, the study provided the participants with the space through FGD where they gave narratives of their experiences living or working in the conflict corridor. These spaces advocated by Kanyoro are what Simona (1995) advocates for in her approaches. Among the three approaches Sharoni identifies—dialogue groups, women's peace conferences, and collaborative projects and solidarity initiatives—"it is in the collaborative acts of solidarity where alliances are perhaps the most challenging, requiring hard work, if not because of the need to constantly negotiate the terms of solidarity in situations of power imbalance" (Sharoni, 1995, p. 147). This is one of the great strengths of this book. Sharoni offers an essential critique of the "us-them" binaries that persist in conflict. These binaries, men, and women, male and female, within the context of engendering peacebuilding, compartmentalize the society and, as such, place men against women as they marginalize and subordinate one gender. Sharoni argues that this has been an essential part of many conflict resolution strategies that seek to reframe the relationships

between conflicting parties from intractably antagonistic to something more cooperative or collaborative. However, one may challenge Sharoni for not going far enough in her problematization, as specific binaries still linger in her discussion. Moreover, what would happen if we are oriented with "gendered lenses" that do not criticize or add to peacebuilding but fundamentally change what peacebuilding thinks about its subject matter? What would it mean for peacebuilding analysis and intervention into the Pokot-Turkana conflict if we looked at global or continental politics not simply with a call for more than "gender mainstreaming" but a call for a fundamental critique and reconstruction of the masculinist models? This would indeed be an exciting and critically important direction for peacebuilding research and practice (Tickner & Sjoberg, 2011, p. 231).

Referring to Ayanga (2016), the African feminist framework gives a woman the space to tell her stories and write her healing and liberating identities, as she is an expert in her stories. In her second step, Kanyoro (2002) advocates for women to share their stories and allow all to contribute. The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians is conceived mainly as African. It addresses the issues of African women within the realm of African culture and Religion (P.2). Since women in the two communities have been denied the opportunity to participate in the council of elders for being women, the focus group discussion encouraged them to share their stories which they did with much courage because of the platform provided. Just as there is a need to provide space for the Pokot and Turkana women to articulate and engage them in conflict, the circle pursues a heritage of voicelessness where women voice their experiences in the context of culture and Religion in ways hitherto unknown and untested" (Ayanga, 2016, p. 3). At the same time, sharing their experiences in the conflict enriched this study and provided a healing opportunity, especially for participants directly affected by the conflict.

In the third step, the analysis/interpretation of the stories within the cultural prism, I analyzed those stories within feminist and gender theoretical frameworks. It established that women, at some point, had assumed male roles to protect their families and animal. Roles that were previously believed to belong to men. In my diary, I mentioned incidences where women took guns to avenge their kin who had been killed. This is a shift from previously held notions that women do not engage in war and violence. This brought in the question of women, violence, and war, which is one of the emerging issues in the Pokot-Turkana conflict. The role of women as defined by their cultures and their interpretations discussed further enriched this study in terms of engendering peace studies. This is why Owino (2012)

claims that there is a need to re-evaluate Christian-created spaces that seek to reconfigure ‘godly manhood’ as an archetype of recreated masculinity among born-again Christian men. According to Owino (2012, p.67), these spaces though created for men, should challenge men to remove their masculine masks and become human beings. Robert Morrell (2001) adds to the debate in his claims that to engage research in masculinity successfully; there is a need to address the challenge of identifying what forces operate to effect changes in masculinity and when, where, and how such changes occur, where their efforts are. As such, Kanyoro's framework helped interrogate the Pokot and Turkana cultures and how ceremonies and cultural rites of passage, such as *sapana*, define gender binaries. It was established that in the rite of passage, men are defined to be entirely men while women are only given duties that are not in the mainstream of the various cultural practices. As Lopetakau argued in Chapter Five, "*sapana* cultural rites are men affairs for men." It was evident that these practices give meaning to the cultural values that hold the communities together under Patriarchy while at the same time leading to a deeper understanding of the harmful cultural practices that isolate women and require transformation. This also provided a forum for discussion on the linkages between culture and Religion and how they are tied to the persistence of the conflict. In order to equally include both gender in conflict management, Morrell, (2012, p.67) calls the Catholic church in the region to “re-examine how religion, gender and other factors compound together to inform understanding and constructions of masculinities within faith communities”.

During the focus group discussion, the participants narrated how gender issues have been ignored; not only in the indigenous justice systems but also the Church. This was attested to by one participant who claimed that the Church used council of elders' forums to deliberate on conflict issues;

The church used community dialogue forums which brought together the elders as well the warriors, use of the community gatekeeper or community game-changers to persuade the community to shun violence. [Research Participant Koskei, 28th April 2022]

The Church's approach differed from what Clifford and Kanyoro advocated for. They limited themselves by inviting elders only to the dialogue forums. Unlike the Church, Kanyoro provided space for dialogue with women from her rural village to express their concerns in a storytelling approach. Kanyoro did this knowing that religion is a double-edged sword concerning masculinities formations. On the one hand, religion reinforces dangerous

masculinities, while on the other, it has an enormous potential to transform masculinities. Referring to the above quote from the data collected, the church, by calling elders an institution of men, clearly perpetuated the male privilege. Chitando and Chirongoma (2012, p.17) claim that women theologians consistently cited the bible as “supporting male dominance as supremacy over women; it is, therefore, crucial to engage sacred texts in deconstructing harmful masculinities and generate life-giving masculinities. This is why Kanyoro (2004) argued that the bible must be divested of its patriarchal bias for women to enjoy a total abundance of life. She exposed how men have abused religion and culture to protect their patriarchal privileges.

Referring to Kibira and Iano (2020, P.1) on Feminism and Feminist research, doing research work for African women, they claim that the more we argue that women are conditioned by society, the more we appreciate that emancipation of women will transform our community. They further say that, “some of the significant gender and social-cultural problems women face in the African context result from misunderstanding and misrepresentation of women” (Ibid), which, by extension, affects women and society at large.

6.8 Theme #1: The Role of the Catholic Church in Conflict

The role of the Catholic Church in spiritual, social, and economic development amongst the Pokot and the Turkana communities is evident. Throughout the interviews, there were claims that most development projects, such as schools and hospitals, water projects, and school feeding programs, were either started by or in partnership with the Catholic Church. As a participant noted;

"For us, the Catholic Church is like a government because it has initiated 90% of the development projects in this region. We are forever grateful to the Church for providing us with schools, boreholes, and dispensaries. Without the Catholic Church, we would be living in the 18th century in terms of development". [Participant G, 24th April 2022]

This gives the Catholic Church in the region an upper hand where matters to do with conflict management are concerned. Lamb (1985, p.141) echoes this prominence of the Catholic Church: "Today, the Christian Church is probably the most powerful institution in sub-Saharan Africa." In the same vein, the Catholic Church is arguably the most pre-eminent among faith-based organizations in terms of engaging in activities that correlate with peace,

namely conflict management, social progress projects, and reconciliation processes (Gifford, 2009; Schreiter et al., 2011). One of the focus groups in Kainuk- Turkana South kept referring to the Catholic Church as a government on its right due to initiatives of the various development activities. This claim is what some scholars in conflict management have acknowledged that, religion is increasingly being considered an essential dimension of conflict management, development processes, statecraft, the conduct of diplomacy and national security throughout the world (Johnson & Sampson, 1995; Devine, 2011; Mandeville, 2015). The overall aspiration is to understand where Religion is or is not relevant to various issues and topics in conflict management.

The interviews also established that the Catholic Church's role is intertwined with its history. The history of the Catholic Church in peacebuilding, development, and evangelization was highlighted. According to documented sources in the Diocesan Justice and Peace Office in Lodwar, the office of Justice and peace was opened in Lodwar among the Turkana in 1993 and West Pokot in 1999, despite strong opposition from the local chief, a government appointee (Dolan, 2007). This indicated the Catholic Church's commitment as an agent of peace and transformation in the region. Besides, the Catholic Church considers the state's conflict management policies /structures too weak to deal with the conflict or provide an alternative way of life to those involved (Diocese of Lodwar Pastoral Plan, 2007). Dolan (2006) would further argue that during those days, an atmosphere of harassment, intimidation, and denial of fundamental human rights still characterized pastoralists' areas until the end of the Kenya African National Union party [KANU] era in 2002.

Current personnel in the office of Justice and Peace in Kitale and Lodwar claimed that the government politicians considered their districts' freedoms, obstructed development projects such as the construction of schools, and harassed the young local elites. Dolan also affirms this, "the local leadership in the 1990s was aided by a repressive, corrupt provincial administration who were determined to keep these areas designated as KANU Zones" (Dolan, 2006, p.47).

It is worth noting that the emergence of other voices among marginalized communities in conflict resolution, such as the Church and courts, plays a significant role in offering an alternative to traditional justice mechanisms. Thus, sometimes providing a paradigm shift from traditional to modern approaches in the peace process. In an interview with priests and sisters working in Nakwamoru, Kainuk parishes in Turkana South, Kacheliba and Amakuriat

parishes in North Pokot pointed out specifically the Catholic Church's critical role as an arbitrator in conflict management through forgiveness and reconciliation. Claiming it has had far-reaching effects in complimenting the role of the elders, which have been the majorly dependable voice in conflict management in the region. The ability of the church leaders to understand the cultural practices of the people enshrined in the institution of the council of elders and pick those aspects that do not contradict the doctrine of the Church and use them in conflict management was evident. A priest working in Turkana South would claim that:

The Catholic Church has a very cordial relationship with elders in managing the conflict. He equated the late Bishop Korir to an accepted elder in the Pokot and Turkana understanding who could call for the elders to meet and discuss peace on equal grounds. [Fr. A-1 Participant, 16th April 2022].

In addition, Father Leo, who worked along the Pokot-Turkana conflict corridor for over 50 years, is an excellent example of an ex-patriarch priest inculcated into the Pokot culture and given the Pokot name Lokomol. This was through the *sapana* initiation ceremony. After being initiated into the Pokot council of elders, he was "given the voice," as he would narrate to me, to speak to the elders and the people on issues affecting the community. He would attend the council of elders meeting where decisions were made affecting the community. As a Church leader, he would positively influence their decisions. In an interview with him on the role of the Catholic Church in conflict management in the region, he responded;

For the 50 years I have worked in this region, I realized that learning people's language and culture is key in being accepted by the community... I became one of them to stop them from the killings. Conflict management strategies must be homegrown, not imported, and culturally sensitive. I have used my sermons in the Church and during funerals where I have huge crowds to pass peace messages. [Research Participant Leo, 16th April 2022].

The emphasis laid by Participant Leo resonates well with Dolan (2007) and Devine (2011), who claim that African religious and cultural traditions understand reconciliation as peace and a return to harmony, manifested in a person's interior and exterior state of being. Reconciliation is also beneficial and active goodness, which shows care and concern for the well-being of others. Generally, African indigenous methods fall under the symbolic approach to conflict, which uses rituals as a reconciliation method. This study advocated for integrating rituals in conflict management approaches in Africa because they are part and parcel of the African identity.

6.8.1 Sub-Theme #1: Church and Gender in Conflict

The Roman catholic church has remained a patriarchal institution for many centuries. Its hierarchical nature is a clear example of it. Its operations are mainly informed by traditions where patriarchy is highly regarded, as Owino (2012) rightly puts it; “that every era of history, cultural conceptions of ideal manhood are continuously constructed” (Owino, p. 67). Further Connell (1995) argues that this is also true of religious space, where focus is not principally upon cultural model but on how social, religious and theological belief systems construct meaning and informs perceptions of what it means to be a man. According to Klinken Adrian (2010, p.5), the role of religion in the churches "in the Church in Africa, not only is sexuality a taboo issue, but it is also a power issue at the mercy of those who have decision-making power – in this case, men. The power of men is affirmed and safeguarded by arranging local religions and cultural practices that frustrate mutuality. Based on this perception and concerning Catholic leadership turning a blind eye to the influence of the council of elders over women, very little can be achieved without working towards eliminating the subordination of one gender and its negative effects on a one-sided decision-making institution- (council of elders). This is majorly the informed reason by Klinken (p.8) that "Churches have a major role to play in the transformation of men" [...] and help men appreciate the value of power and overcome the kind of masculine power that tends towards domination," e.g., How frequently does the church address gender justice in line with the transformation of masculinities as part of life bringing mission of the Church. (Chitando, 2009)

Concerning the above claims by gender scholars, Doyle (2012) highlights the values of inculturation in the Church as an attempt of opening a window of change in the Catholic Church. He argued that Pope John the twenty-third was a transformational pope who, for the first time in the history of the Catholic Church, opened a window for change in how the Church was carrying out its evangelization. He thought that by convening the vatical II council, the Church could "open the windows for change in what he described as "to open the windows and let in some fresh air." The word "Aggiornamento" began to emerge as the keynote of the council. It simply meant "bringing the church up-to-date." In terms of the Church, it meant a call for the Church to return to its sources; to discover its faith and tradition and work out what they meant to the modern world. "The intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity in the various human cultures" (Doyle, 2012, p. 21). Although the Church advocated for change in approach to its

mode of operations, there was minimal in terms of gender and conflict. No "windows" were open for women; if any, they must have been tiny compared to men's "windows." For example, when I asked Father Leo about the role of women in these decision-making institutions and the position of the Church in making sure their voices are heard, he claimed;

Although the two communities are patriarchal, elders come from homes to those sittings, and their wives advise them before coming, so they participate behind the scenes. [Research Participant Leo, 16th April 2022].

Why participate behind the scenes? It is my submission that the above narration by a participant would be countered by Chirongoma and Chitando (2012) who would claim that there is need for redemptive masculinity in such scenario. They adopted and employed the concept of redemptive masculinities to characterize and identify masculinities that are life-giving in a world reeling from the effects of violence [...] for them they underline the importance of religio-cultural resources in the emergence of liberating "the more peaceful and harmonious masculinities" (cf. Morrell, 2001b, p7). The Roman church ought to acknowledge the immense contribution both genders can offer towards a peaceful society. That could be through creation of structures that are inclusive instead of making the assumptions that women participate behind the scenes. The church can make them visible agents of change by creating policies and structures that are gender sensitive. I would argue that the Church in the region assumed that women should have initiated their structures to deal with a highly patriarchal culture. However, the Church should instead open a window in its hierarchical structures to include women in decision-making, thus setting an example to the pastoralist's patriarchal systems.

Nevertheless, to justify his claim that women have been given space to participate in conflict management father, Leo claimed,

"In our church, we have small Christian communities, and 90% percent are women; they can use those platforms after their prayers to discuss peace issues and even sell out their best ideas to the few men present" [Research Participant Leo, 16th April 2022].

However, this was different from what Pope John XXIII envisaged. I am convinced he meant the Church should be more accommodating in his efforts to be all-inclusive. Further, for the Catholic church to include both gender in its efforts to mitigate the Pokot-Turkana conflict, its approach should be informed by Chitando and Chirongoma's (2012) redemptive

masculinities, as “the concept evokes a spiritual dimension and resonates with the theological and religious dimensions. They also speak of a transformative masculinity which speaks about the endeavors to generate masculinities that transform the world into a gender-equitable community. (Ibid, p.2)

In this study, I also wanted to establish the theologies that guided the Church's approaches to managing or mitigating the conflict. This was responding to the main research question; What ideo-theological resources did the Catholic Church use in its intervention?

6.9 Theme# 2: Theologies and Church Engagements

6.9.1 Sub-Theme #1: Submission, Confession, and Reconciliation

Reflections on Religion's role in conflict transformation, peacebuilding, and reconciliation studies have steadily increased over the last two decades. In this study, reconciliation is often understood as a set of practices and processes to restore broken relationships so that a society can move from a divided past to a shared future, learning to live nonviolently with a difference (Abu-Nimer, 2001, 2010; Lederach, 1997). This study concurs with the sentiments raised by Seidel and Abu-Nimer that reconciliation is a process and not an event. As a process, it is more involved at various levels. As they argue, reconciliation processes involve personal, communal, social, and institutional initiatives in which community members work to restore peaceful relationships with former enemies. They explore the problematic task of self- and other-identity redefinition, recognizing that identities are not static but dynamic, fragmented, hybrid, and therefore open to transformation (Abu-Nimer & Seidel, 2015).

The study established that apart from the development approach in peacebuilding, the Catholic Church also used contrition, repentance, and reconciliation in its conflict mitigation. Thus, the researcher drew from the Catholic Church model. These were the theologies that informed the Catholic Church in its mitigation efforts. Submission and confession are some theological resources that apply to Africans who may be non-Christians as it is also African. These two parts entail a sincere contrite acceptance of the mistakes and readiness to accept forgiveness. While attending one of the *muma*/oath-taking ceremonies along the border, I realized that the basic tenet that informs this process is the truth about their involvement in the conflicts/killings. Fact entails the provided parties or ethnic communities disclosing all mistakes and heinous acts done. It ends with forgiveness and payment of the damages to the other party in what is referred to as *lapai*.

The Church teaches that it is impossible to reconcile with God before people are reconciled with one another. Galtung (2001), referring to the scriptures, claims that this is because reconciliation must be among people before going to God (Mathew 5:23-25). In this way, the Church acts as a bridging gap and reconciliation agent between God and human beings and human beings with fellow beings (Galtung 2001, P. 3). By and large, the Church used theological/penitence approach in reconciling the two warring communities. The theological/penitence approach is perpetrator-oriented in general and guilt-oriented in particular. Four dimensions of guilt have been indicated: toward others, towards the victim, towards self, and towards God. The approach proceeds in a well-described chain: “submission- confession-penitence-absolution” (Galtung, 2001, p. 4). The church leadership used this approach in managing the conflict with inclusion from the indigenous approaches that also emphasized acceptance of the mistakes and their readiness to make reparations through *lapai*/paying of fines. However, this approach only works for Christian believers. Thus, it is not fully applicable and practical in a situation of ethnic conflicts which cut across other faiths.

Nevertheless, this study found that submission and confession were helpful in their complementary approach to the indigenous approaches that Church acknowledged and utilized. However, I agree with Omer (2012, p.15) in her observations that given the enduring hold of secularist discourses - discourses and imaginaries within which one explores linkages between Religion, conflict, and reconciliation – “a constructive retrieval of theological and other religious resources is insufficient as a method of peacebuilding if there is no accompanying engagement with the kind of historicism and discursive critique that might expose undergirding injustice”. In other words, Religion, adequately disciplined, may occasionally be a means to a more just society, but it can never be an end in itself. This means that forgiveness must be tempered with justice. This is why the Church used the concept of *lapai*/fines, which was meant to make reparations for the crimes committed during the conflict. The Pokot and Turkana communities hold that reparations for the harm as a form of restorative justice must accompany true forgiveness.

The study argues that the Church is obliged to be major among the various players because of its divine mandate to reconcile and build peace. Besides having a spiritual mandate, the Church should be a significant social actor in many regions where conflicts occur because of its grassroots network. Thus, the bulk of peacebuilding and reconciliation falls on the Church, the conscience of society. This argument is supported by Assefa, who claims that

the mission of the Church is to consolidate peace. Therefore, peacemaking and reconciliation are mandates and not merely options for the Church (Assefa & Wachira, 1996, p. 51). Indeed, peace and reconciliation are religious terms inseparable from the Church ministry. Therefore, the Church has a role in reconciling people and maintaining a call for peace. The value of the Church is maintained as long as it actualizes peace and reconciliation in society (p. 54). The research recommended ritual reconciliation to emphasize the usefulness of African indigenous peacebuilding and conflict resolution. As witnessed in muma/oath-taking and sapan ceremonies, the attachment communities have to their rituals informed this method. The ontological connection of the rituals to daily human activities and practices necessitates its inclusion in conflict management approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation. These reconciliation rituals that do not contradict the doctrines of the Catholic Church call for a common approach by the Church and the council of elders.

This study has established that the escalation of ethnic conflicts results from a lack of effective methods of resolving the varied root causes of the conflicts, such as a lack of gender-critical analysis by the Catholic Church that would have addressed gender roles. Thus, by integrating these various approaches (theological/penitence, indigenous justice systems, and gender critical analysis) of peacebuilding and reconciliation, the study provided practical ways of preventing and managing ethnic conflicts. The three approaches are all based on non-violent ways of resolving ethnic conflicts. They all hold that violence is evil and should be shunned at all costs.

In addition, these approaches promote dialogue as a way of reconciling warring parties. Such parties would come together and reach a consensus favorable to both sides, as argued by Osaghae (1995, p.43) that “African approaches to ethnic conflicts apply to peacebuilding and reconciliation. The African approaches give Africans a chance to participate in managing ethnic conflict as they are both authors and owners of the management of ethnic conflicts. Hence, there is a need to implement and re-invent traditional practices within a modern order. Traditional prevention and conflict management methods have been used in dealing with inter-personal or inter-community conflicts, especially in Rwanda”. Thus, the Catholic Church can inculcate the same in the Kenyan context and specifically in Pokot and Turkana conflict.

The study established that when Religion is included in peacebuilding processes but only in ways that instrumentalize its ability to influence people, it can have adverse effects. Seidel

and Abu-Nimer, provide an excellent example of Afghanistan, where the western or United Nations mediation process may inject a few prayers into the initial or final ceremonies of a process or secure the blessings of tribal leaders when an agreement is signed by placing Religion at the periphery, it would effectively maintain a hard and fast distinction between Religion and secularism, (Seidel & Abu-Nimer, 2017, p. 3). Bishop Korir, in his approach, knows this too well that instead of bolstering the mediation process, incorporating such instrumentalized religious gestures and symbols may, in the view of some local audiences, delegitimize not only the agreement itself but those religious leaders who blessed it. It is the submission of this study; therefore, Religion should not be taken as an add-on to a fundamentally secular process somewhat. It should be taken seriously on its terms. This is why the government of Kenya, after realizing the critical role the Church plays in peacebuilding, worked with the religious leaders in the region. After years of brutal disarmament without much success, the government gave the Catholic Church and the council of elder's space to use their structures and institutions to manage the conflict.

6.9.2 Sub-Theme #2: Unity and Harmony of the Human Family

One of the methods/approaches the Catholic Church used was workshops and seminars to show how Religion should inform, transform and help build a culture of peace. In one such peace conference held in Lodwar on the Catholic peacebuilding approach; the lead clergy used the Catholic social teachings of Pope John Paul II (1995). His teaching on peace to clergy and lay people working in the conflict corridor was informed by Pope John Paul's writings on unity and peace.

During the data collection, I was confronted with a question that was worthy of reflection based on the theological teachings of the Church. Why do people go to Church and kill their brothers and sisters? Has the Church done enough to inculcate Christian values in its followers? Although the answer to this question is broad and anchored on church teachings on unity and peace, one thing stands out in line with church teachings on unity and divisions in communities - hatred and revenge. The Pope highlighted the political divisions that destroy the community's cohesiveness, whose solution is promoting a culture of peace. According to the Pope, "on a general sphere, Africa, a continent bitterly torn by ethnic hostilities, promoting a culture of unity and peace would save political, religious, and oppressive social classes among persons. People must acknowledge that cultures or human boundaries do not confine God. God is omnipotent and omnipresent; He transverses cultures and people" (John Paul II, 1995, p.16). Generally, the two catholic religious' leaders for

dioceses of Lodwar and Kitale highlighted the importance of being Christians and living the Christian faith. One cannot be a true disciple of Christ and still propagate hate and conflict in the community. Their claims are based on the theological teachings of the Church on forgiveness and paying wrong with Good.

Referring to Church documents, integral to the mission of the Church in Africa is the sacredness of human life, promotion of peace and justice, the integrity of creation, human rights, development, and ethical character formation of human agency (Flannery, 2000; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (PCJP), 2005; Synod for Africa, 2009; Francis, 2015). On this basis, the Church is profoundly concerned with all forms of violence, including interethnic, and its negative repercussions. Peacemaking has been integral to the Catholic Church's missionary existence in the world from its beginning (Ford, 1984; Bosch, 2006).

The above Church documents [Flannery, synod for Africa and CJPC pontifical council] formed the basis of the interviews on why the Church mitigates the Pokot-Turkana conflict and other conflicts in the country. The message of Catholic Pope John Paul II is quite relevant to the conflicting parties, particularly those in the Pokot and Turkana communities. This is because the unity and harmony of the human family require that societies beyond their ethnic, cultural, and religious differences form a community free of discrimination between people and strive for reciprocal solidarity. In addition, unity requires that differences between members of the human family strengthen unity rather than serve as a case of division. The religious leader of Kitale, whose diocese covers west Pokot County, claimed that

the Pope's message contextualized to the conflict is a call to the openness and desire to know better the cultural heritage of people with whom one comes into contact would help to eliminate attitudes of prejudices which hinder healthy avenues of consolidating conflicting communities to live in harmony. This process ought to be continuously fostered since such unpleasant and inhuman attitudes tend to re-occur under new forms as exhibited in the Pokot community trying to expand their territorial borders through conflict” [Participant Religious leader for Kitale, 4/3/2022].

In my view, there is a need for every individual, as a member of one human family created in God's image, to understand and respect the value of human diversity and direct it to the common Good. On a different note, the religious leader for Kitale was categorical that the

conflict between the two communities also took a tribal angle, which destroys the sense of a family. As the Bishop, he stated that he had opened an office of justice and peace in West Pokot County to address the issues affecting the region and appointed priests as reconciliation agents. Referring to John's Gospel on call to be one (John 17:21), the religious leader held that this was unity calls for peaceful co-existence;

In this context, it requires constructive appreciation and development of what distinguishes people as individuals from communities and what constitutes their identity. [Participant Religious leader for Kitale, 4/3/2022]

To enhance unity in the community or society, the study established that the Roman Catholic Church in the region emphasized the importance of building trust - which strengthen unity. In his address to a peace meeting in Lodwar Town in Turkana County, he pointed out that;

"People in positions of authority, in government and administration, have a particular duty to work for the restoration of a climate of trust and openness. The mistrust observed between the warring communities can only change if we all lived as per our gospel expectations...as brothers and sisters. This can only work through the conversion of minds and hearts". [Participant Religious leader for Lodwar, 4/3/2022]

6.9.3 Sub-Theme #3: Religion, Culture, and Patriarchy

This study established that Religion and culture inform patriarchy in so many ways. Critical analysis of Religion and culture shows that both contribute to building a united and peaceful community, but when not checked, they bolster patriarchy and become gender blind. Participation of people in respect of their diversity in various activities is critical to unity and peace. Within the context of this discussion, respect for cultural differences is vital to unity and peace in the conflict corridor. Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) has well affirmed that "... a church which allows and leaves room for a diversity of cultures offers the kind of witness to which our African continent is particularly sensitive today" (SECAM, 1981, p.18).

Further, all men and women are called to belong to the new people of God. Each part contributes its gift to other parts and the whole Church in that the whole and each of the parts is strengthened by the common sharing of all things and by the joint effort to attain the fullness of unity that prefigures and promotes universal peace (Ibid, P.19). The religious leader in Lodwar claimed that there is a need to respect each other's cultures that are

consistent with sacred teachings. He held that "though cultures differ, they are a source of our wealth" [Participant Religious leader for Lodwar, 4/3/2022]. Cultural differences should not be the cause of the conflicts but rather should strengthen the communities' relationships as each can contribute to the well-being of all.

His sentiments affirm by Bansikiza's (2001, p.160) assertion that "cultures have different ways of understanding the meaning of personal existence and identity. Herein, one learns how significant it is to safeguard the fundamental right to freedom of conscience as the cornerstone of human rights and the foundation of every genuinely free community. In this context, one needs to understand the essential differences between an unhealthy form of cultural identity that teaches contempt for other cultures and a genuine love of one's culture at the expense of others". An unhealthy cultural identity is partly comprised of segregation based on gender. This places the two communities under study into perspective as their cultural practices isolate or segregate women.

Emphasizing the universal principle enshrined in most religious grouping writings, 'do unto others as you would like them to do unto you', the religious leader claimed that, for the diocese to help build peace in the conflict corridor and bring down the conflict, there is a need to develop a positive attitude toward other people. It is essential to answer the question: What attitude does God expect people to have towards others of different ethnicity and culture? Jesus Christ put the attitude perfectly when He said; "Whatever that you wish (people) would do to you, do so to them" (Good News Bible, Mathew 7:12). [Participant Religious leader for Kitale, 4/3/2022]

This requires that each put him or herself in the place of the other. This resonates well with the message of Chiara Lubich in 2001 to the Hindus of Gandhi's saying, "You and I are one. I cannot hurt you without harming myself." In response, Jainst, a Hindu, admits that "unless we seek to be united, there is no possible redemption for humanity, brotherhood, co-existence, love, affection. All this is our duty. In quoting Lubich, Bansikiza says that only peace and love can save us nothing else (Bansikiza, 2001, p. 161).

Based on the above sentiments, the study observes that if the people living along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor/border of West Pokot and Turkana counties apply this golden rule in resolving the conflict, it would mean a way forward to a better attitude of co-existence. This is informed by the fact that most of the population along the conflict corridor are Christians.

Buber rightly highlights the need to demonstrate respect for the other, which he calls "setting at a distance in order to be able to relate is the other (person) and make his/her soul ours (Buber, 1975, p. 108). One participant and religious leader for Lodwar summarized the golden rule as the importance of seeing the face of God in every individual by holding that;

This is based on attitude towards others. As a person, this attitude of the other is mutual and can become the basis between persons and community, arriving at shared unity in diversity. Unfortunately, politicians in the region create barriers instead of building bridges between the two communities and have used the concept of 'othering negatively' for long as opposed to valuing the otherness. [Participant Religious leader for Lodwar, 6/3/2022]

Other Catholic social teachings of the Church, such as the compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (2005), provide a comprehensive compilation of the Catholic Church's teaching and aspirations concerning conflict, peace, poverty, development, justice, minorities, and environmental sustainability. It invites all people of goodwill to be effective agents of peace and development, seeing the reasons and value of dialogue in serving the common good. While according priority the goal of reconciliation in its conflict management initiatives, the Catholic Church proclaims an inseparability of peace, justice, and reconciliation. These aspects are constructive dimensions of the understanding and practice of the mission of the Catholic Church in Africa (Magesa, 2012). Lederach (1995) and Appleby (2020) highlight that the ideals of Catholic Church social teaching are in accord with analytical aspects of conflict theory which address issues of structural violence, conflict management, conflict settlement, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, and reconciliation.

6.10 Theme #3: Conflict, Peace, and Development

Peace and development are intertwined. This is because, without peace, any investor would avoid investing in a conflict zone. The role of the Catholic Church in development as a peace strategy was noted by a participant who claimed that "the Catholic Church has initiated 90% of the development projects in this region. We are forever grateful to the Church for providing us with schools, boreholes, and dispensaries. Without the Catholic Church, we would be living in the 18th century in terms of development". [Participant G, 24th April 2022]

The study established that the two religious leaders initiated various development projects along the conflict corridor to mitigate the conflict. These development projects were aimed

at bringing the warring communities together for a common cause and helping foster the spirit of trust.

Building peace and unity among the Pokot and Turkana communities and Africa, we need what Pope John II called a "civilization of love. "The Pope, in his encyclical, argued that "we must discover a spirit of hope and a spirit of trust. Hope and trust are the premise of responsible activity nurtured in that inner sanctuary of conscience where one is alone with God" (John Paul II, 1995, P.17). He further claimed, "No person, no group is excluded from this mission of unifying love which has now been entrusted to us. We, too, must pray as Jesus did on the eve of His death, with the simple and sublime words, "Father, may they be one in us as you are in me and I am in you" (p. 17). It is evident from the data presented in chapter five that the spirit of trust and mutual love in any warring community can be fostered through connector projects. This was highlighted in the contact theory, where joint projects in the Pokot and Turkana border have promoted trust levels.

One of the concerns Dolan (2007) had regarded the persistence of the conflict, although the Catholic Church has existed for decades, was the capacity of the Church to manage conflicts. He claimed, "the persistence of the Turkana-Pokot conflict raises questions and the technical capacity of the Catholic Church to manage the conflict effectively. Since, over the past 50 years of the Catholic Church's existence in the region, the conflict is still persistent as sporadic cattle stealing is reported" (Dolan 2007, p.13). In response to this claim, this study interrogated some of the strategies that have been put in place by the Catholic Church to authenticate their relevance.

6.10.1 Sub-Theme #1: Catholic Church Programs and Strategies in Conflict

Management

There are linkages between development and peace. Among pastoralists in Kenya, it is evident that peace prevails when there are connector or joint projects that benefit any two neighboring communities. When some of these projects are perceived to benefit one community, conflicts are more likely to escalate. Throughout the interviews, most people living near the border praised the intervention strategy that the late Bishop Korir was using - building schools and dispensaries in areas where peace had prevailed after the conflict. His main aim was to use it as an example to other areas still fighting and calling them to embrace development for a change. Most interviewees did not know that what was informing the bishop's approach were the Catholic social teachings; Pope Paul VI clearly stated the

interdependence between peace and development. In this teaching, there is a consensus that if you want peace, prepare for development, echoing the phrase of Pope Paul VI in 1967 that development is the new name for peace (as cited in Orobator, 2008). In the same vein, Pope John Paul II (2000) asserted that failure awaits every plan, separating two indivisible and interdependent rights: the right to peace and the right to an integral development born of solidarity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2001) declares that injustice, excessive economic or social inequalities, envy, distrust, and pride among people and nations constantly threaten peace and cause wars. Everything done to overcome these disorders contributes to building peace and avoiding war.

6.10.2 Sub-Theme # 2: Monitoring Programs as a Strategy in Conflict Management

The records in the Catholic Diocese of Kitale, Office of Justice and Peace, indicate that the office is responsible for monitoring the programs that provide alternative livelihoods for the conflict-prone areas of Pokot and beyond. Most Church leaders, including the priests working in Kainuk and Sigor parishes at the Pokot-Turkana border, attributed the conflict to a lack of alternative livelihood and dependence on cattle. Most participants claimed that while the population was increasing, it was not commensurate with the constant grazing land. As such, the Church initiated various projects to diversify sources of income/livelihood. The role of the Catholic Church in initiating alternative livelihood was confirmed by Dolan, who argues that in each African country, the Catholic Church, as a Track I and II conflict management actor, utilizes its Catholic justice and peace commissions as the main avenue to monitor and invigorate programs on conflict management, civic peace, justice, educational and medical development and the integrity of creations (Dolan, 2006; CJPC, 2014). This was collaborated by the Director of Justice and Peace in west Pokot County, who narrated how the Catholic Church bought generators and water pumps to help the families along the conflict corridor irrigate their farms and produce food for their families. Since total dependence on livestock has impoverished the people, and during the long dry season, when most of the livestock die, they steal others' animals to re-stock their herds. This is due to a need for more diversification in livelihood. A participant from the religious focus group attested to these claims; “the Church provided the generators as an alternative way of feeding their families” [Research Participant Fr. A-5, Priests and religious FGD, 10th June 2022].

The existence of various programs narrated by the participants is attested to by the Catholic Church's social teaching and activism that Kenya is oriented to the same vision and mission

(Good, 2007; CJPC, 1988; CJPC, 2005; CJPC, 2013; Mwaniki, 2015; Francis, 2015). Through its development programs and justice and peace commissions in each diocese, the reach of the Catholic Church is continually present in the remotest places and engaging with ethnic communities experiencing conflict issues (Dolan, 2006; CJPC, 2013).

It was also evident that peace and development issues, in conjunction with concern for the integrity of creation and the ethical and moral formation of human agency, are fundamental to the Catholic Church's mission and service activity within the Pokot and Turkana communities (SCCRR, 2015). The Catholic Church is a significant institution providing many social, medical, and educational institutions oriented to the human security of the Pokot and Turkana communities, which remain traditional in religious affiliation (Mkutu, 2008).

Marginalization and underdevelopment of the two study locations came out during the interviews, which was linked to conflict, as elaborated in Chapter Five. A participant, Sarah from Turkana South, had claimed that; "Lack of basic infrastructures such as schools, hospitals, and roads has left many young people disillusioned, and cattle stealing was left as a means of survival" These sentiments concur with the observation of Ndegwah (2007, p.21) who held that "while some Christian missionary and development work had commenced among the Pokot from 1930 onwards, nothing substantial had been done among the Turkana until after Kenyan independence, especially with the arrival of the Catholic Church and African inland church" (Daystar communications, 1982). Dolan (2007), who has worked in the Pokot-Turkana conflict environment for almost 20 years, provided a wide-ranging and humane account of the various development and peace initiatives rendered in the region by the Catholic Church and associated NGOs. The study established that this was a strategy for conflict mitigation by the Catholic Church.

Ultimately, all peace and development projects of the Catholic Church in any country are carried out in conjunction with state authorization and regulations. As such, collaboration and cooperation are critical in this process. Presently, the role of the Catholic Church among the Pokot and Turkana peoples, in general, entails the provision of medical and education services intermingled with some peace activities that are expensive in range and substance. (Diocese of Lodwar Pastoral Plan 2007-2012, 2007; Mwaniki, 2015). The activities, according to Good (2007), Mwaniki (2015), and the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar and Kitale

(CJPC, 2015), include preaching, facilitating peace meetings, fostering tolerance, assisting the injured, building educational and health facilities, among other activities.

The study also established that Catholic social teachings were the basis of the Justice and peace office formation. Referring to Catholic social teachings, which the justice and peace commissions depended on their peacebuilding activities, Pope Benedict VI was categorical while addressing the Diplomatic corps on the issue of conflict; Pope Benedict proclaimed that; "bloodshed does not cry out for revenge but begs for respect for life and peace" (Benedict XVI, 2006 cited in Orobator). It was a call to respect the sanctity and dignity of human life that necessitated the Church to act as claimed by a participant priest;

The killing informed the intervention in the Pokot-Turkana conflict of innocent people. The conflict also left the majority in the region impoverished after their livelihood (livestock) was taken away. [Research Participant Fr. A-4, Priests and religious FGD, 10th June 2022].

The mission and values of the Catholic Church, which advocates for co-existence and a peaceful and safe world for all, informed the Catholic Church's intervention. This was in line with the 2009 Synod for Africa conveners, who once again re-examined the Catholic Church's role as an agent of peace and conflict management actor (Synod of Africa, 2009). While declaring "peace is a universal good," the Synod proclaimed that we should dedicate all our energies to its service. It called for the immediate setting up of an "An African Peace and Solidarity Initiative" to intervene in the act of solidarity and assist the Local Catholic Church in conflict resolution and peacebuilding throughout the continent with its wise counsel on Justice, peace, and reconciliation.

6.10.3 Sub-Theme #3: Workshops and Seminars as a Strategy

Another intervention strategy used by the Catholic Church was grass-root recruitment to train peace agents in every parish in the region. A participant argued that this was in line with the 2009 Synod, which had proposed setting up Diocesan national and regional peacebuilding councils. The councils were well-resourced with personnel and material to train the clergy and laity in peacebuilding councils, dialogue, and Mediation. In addition, monitoring desks were to be established to prevent and resolve conflicts. These monitoring desks gave birth to early warning monitoring systems in the two counties. To prevent conflicts from escalating, there is a need to 'prevent,' 'pre-empt,' and 'manage.' These three strategies work concurrently in different areas of conflict. This study established that in the

Pokot-Turkana conflict, all of them have been used at some point under the early warning and monitoring system.

According to Participant Kimiso, it was the efforts of the two offices of Justice and Peace in the two dioceses to come up with names of the people to be included in the monitoring system. Kimiso argued that;

This was aimed at preventing future conflicts by alerting the relevant authorities when suspicious activities of the raiders are detected. These early warning monitoring systems included the trained peace ambassadors in the region. Most of them were reformed warriors, the area chiefs and sub-chiefs, police, and some NGO employees working in the region with the nerve center at the diocesan offices of Lodwar and Kitale. The communication was purely through cell phones. [Participant Kimiso, 4th April 2021].

According to a participant from Kainuk, the lack of continuity as envisaged by the Synod and the lack of support to grass-root peace agents by the dioceses has contributed to the persistence of the conflict. Thus, it is unbelievable that the Catholic Church has a presence in the remotest villages in the region and well-trained peace agents. However, they need to improve in peace management in terms of consistency. Sometimes the Church only reacts after an attack has happened. It was evident during data collection that many training and workshops aimed at empowering the local community in conflict management are no longer prioritized. On the same note, some members of the Kainuk focus group argued that mediation requires church ministers to be intermediaries between the conflicting parties since peace dialogue facilitates friendly interaction with conflicting communities.

It was established that the Church had previously organized peace workshops and visits. The peace visit involved cross-border exchange visit programs and dialogue over the causes of conflict and how peace can be achieved. The activities included peace races, participating in cultural activities, ball games, and organizing inter-community debates in schools and institutions. All these aimed to foster peace in the region and build trust between the two communities. Intermarriages and holding interdenominational prayers were also cited as approaches used by the Church, as elaborated in Chapter Five.

6.11 Summary

This chapter has engaged the findings that emerged from FGD and the interview data. The theme unpacked reveals the intersection of gender, Religion, and culture when engaging the

conflict between the Pokot and the Turkana communities. At the core of the engagement is the role of the Roman Catholic Church in mitigating the conflict using theological resources such as reconciliation, repentance, contrition, and forgiveness (in biblical verses and Catholic social teachings). In the first section of the analysis, the main themes revolved around conflict and gender. In Section II, the themes discussed emerged from the data on the role of the Catholic Church in mitigating the conflict and how the Church has incorporated the communities' cultural institutions in its efforts to manage the conflict and gender inclusion in those institutions.

The research has established that for the Roman Catholic Church in the region to better include both genders in conflict management, there is a need to examine how religion, gender, and other factors compound together to inform understandings and constructions of masculinities within faith communities. But this has to be done against patriarchy and account of masculinities. Concerning this, I agree with Morrell Robert (2001), who claims that to engage research in masculinity successfully, one needs to address the challenge of identifying what forces operate to effect changes in masculinity, as well as where, when, and how such changes occur what their efforts are. In his article "the mighty men conference as a safe space for born again...." Owino Kennedy (2012) claims though this was a Christian' safe space,' it portrayed seemingly conflicting forms of masculinities. It seeks to reconfigure 'godly manhood' as an archetype of recreated masculinity among born-again Christian men who seek transformative forms of masculinity. However, the same space can challenge men to remove their 'masculine masks' and become human again. When participant Leo claimed that 90% of the women attend small Christian communities-a space where they can discuss peace issues. And in another claim, 'that men come from homes and the assumption that women discuss peace matters before their men attend the council of elders, ' I argue that this is only one path that might not bear a lot of fruits bearing in mind the patriarchal privilege cannot be fully addressed in such a forum. The study established that few men attend such prayer groups (small Christian communities) as opposed to what informed Owino (2012), which was purely a men's conference'. The few men could fall to what Owino (2012, p.78) referred to as 'men's fear of male feminization,' which among the pastoralists' communities is countered by patriarchal re-imposition of male headship thereby re-asserting-conservative ideologies of masculinities (I add through the council of elders). Although there is a saying that 'behind every successful man there is a woman,' Owino claimed that it is crucial to take note of the position of women and as the context suggests, "they should stick to her special

role at the center of the home' (Ibid, p.78). Interpreting this within a conflict context, I view women standing behind men as 'untenable.' The question is, how do we reconcile these seeming conceptions of femininity and masculinity? I argue that such divergent discourses of gender relations eventually construct conflicting perceptions of masculinities. According to Owino (Ibid), many gender scholars claim that notions of male headship promote destructive structures of male dominance that result in domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse, and the oppression of women in faith communities. However, he adds, 'this does not imply that male headships always result in such behaviors, (Ibid, p.79).

The existence of hegemonic masculinity among the Pokot and Turkana communities in their rites of passage to adulthood was established during data collection. The research demonstrated that this was the basis of the compartmentalization of society, where some men are regarded as higher than others. At the same time, men considered of lower ranks for not undergoing the rite of passage are classified together with women. Morrell (2008) uses hegemonic masculinity as an organizing concept for the periodization and analysis of men and masculinity. The concept of hegemonic masculinity' sought to analyze gender power in conjunction with issues of male hierarchy (p. 12), allowing for differentiation between groups of men and where some have more or less power; However, Morrell used this concept to explain nature, form, and dynamics of male power in racial/apartheid south Africa the concept make sense within the male constructions and formations among the communities under study. The concept addresses those who have undergone the sapana rite and those who have not, where one group is perceived as superior while the other is inferior. This classification also gives voice to some while denying space to others in decision-making.

This forms the basis of advocacy for gender justice by Klinken Adrian (2010). According to Klinken, Gender Justice means promoting the humanity of both men and women in the Church and using their gifts as revealed by God. Any form of discrimination and oppression mars the image of God in creation and humanity. (Klinken, p.5). Further, he contends that the fundamental difference is that the Church seeks to transform masculinity within a patriarchal framework. At the same time, theologians envision a transformation of masculinity beyond patriarchy towards a reality called 'gender justice.' Although Klinken (2010, p.10) discusses the concept of gender justice in the context of HIV and Aids, where patriarchal masculinities are believed to be dangerous and deadly, I borrowed this concept to explore and discuss the importance of the idea in the Catholic Church fight against cattle stealing- and by extension conflict between the Pokot and Turkana communities and invite

for a more inclusive approach where the indigenous council of elders is inclusive of both genders. This aimed to transform masculinities to realize 'liberated' or 'redemptive' masculinities (Cf. Chitando and Chirongoma (2007, p.67). As illustrated in Figure 6-1, the analysis, interpretation, and discussion provided in this chapter has interrogated how the Catholic Church has previously dealt with peacebuilding in Pokot and Turkana counties in Kenya. The study has established that although the Church has done much in managing the Pokot-Turkana conflict, there is still room for improvement and areas to be considered, especially gender inclusivity in its approaches. The study has indicated how Religion upholds, reinforces, and bolsters culture. At some point during the data collection, the cultural aspects were characterized by rituals and rites that were difficult to distinguish if they were religious or cultural. This was in line with Kanyoro (2002), who claimed that "there are no distinctions between religion and culture; they are the same."

The figure below provides, in summary, the analysis of both sections I and II.

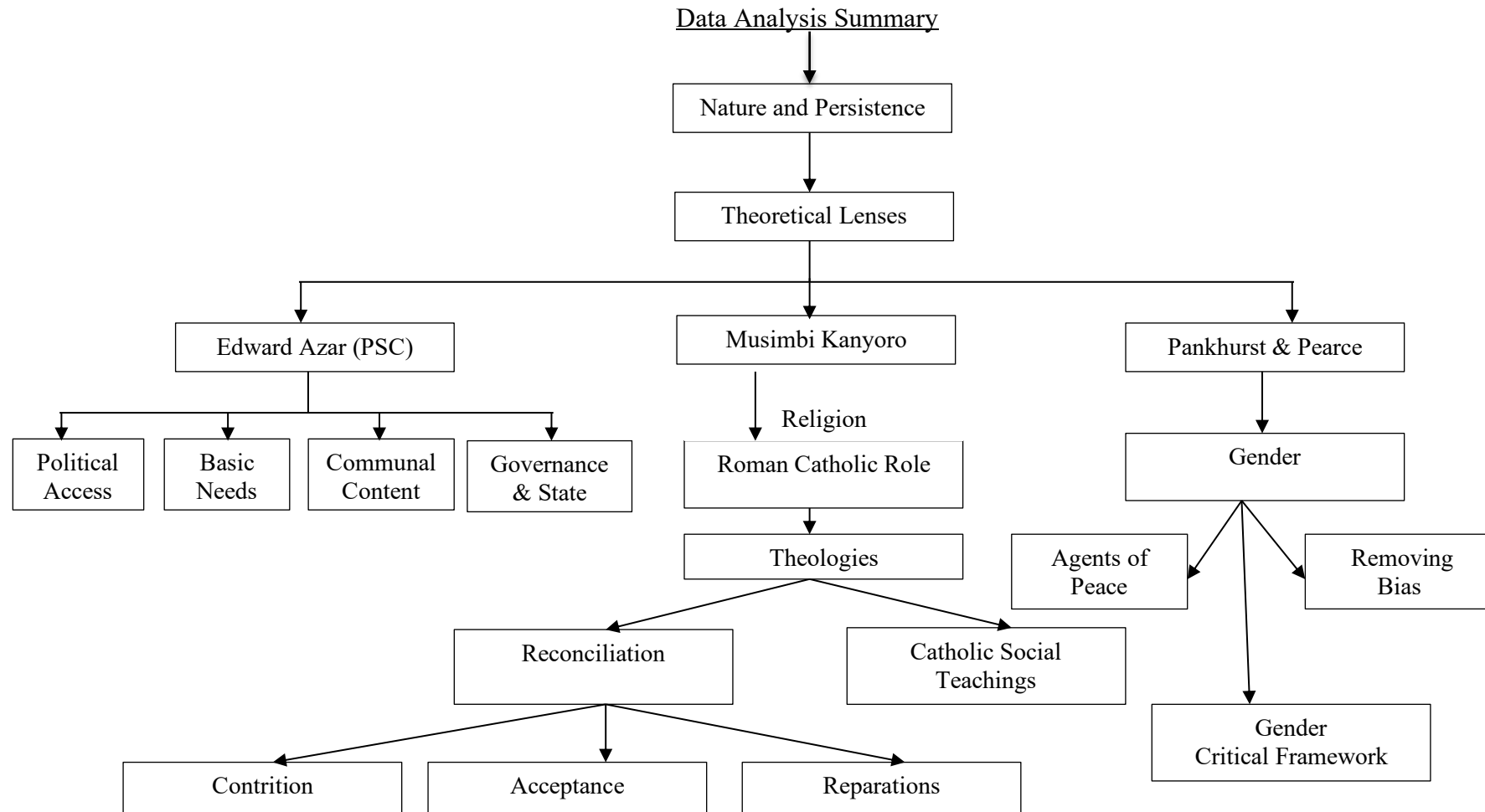


Figure 6-1: Data Analysis Summary

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and quiet resting places
~ Isaiah 32:18, NIV

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the entire research project and the steps undertaken through interviews and focus group discussions. The chapter discloses my positionality in data engagement, analysis, and discussion. This concluding chapter presents some ideological reflections on the role of the Roman Catholic Church in its efforts to mitigate the Pokot-Turkana conflict and how the Catholic Church has tapped into the cultural practices of the two communities that do not contradict the biblical teachings in its approach. The chapter also presents reflections on the role of gender in abetting the conflict. This is in particular reference to the masculinity and femininity formations which begin with early childhood upbringing and socialization and culminates with the cultural rite of passage. This rite of passage is meant to define a male child and his place in society in decision-making institutions, regardless of the faith one professes.

The theoretical frameworks I employed as the researcher in this study were Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) by Azar (1990), Pankhurst and Pearce (2012), and Kanyoro (2002) Feminist Hermeneutic Cultural Interpretation (2002). These theoretical frameworks helped to anchor the study and draw similarities between the study and the theoretical frameworks. Therefore, the objectives and the theoretical frameworks that I used helped the premise and anchored the research study: Exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015.

7.2 The Research Questions

This research was centered on the over-arching research question:

What gender-sensitive ideo-theological resources (social/biblical teachings, structures) could be offered by the Catholic Church in the region in the process of conflict engagement in the Pokot-Turkana conflict?

This study was given further guidance by three research sub-questions that gave it apparent precision. These were as follows:

1. What is the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana border, and why has the conflict persisted?
2. How has the Catholic Church been involved in the conflict management process, and how could it enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution?
3. How could an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions?

7.3 The Objectives of the Study

To address the critical research question and sub-questions, the study was guided by the following three research objectives:

1. Research Objective #1: To trace the nature of the conflict along the Pokot-Turkana in general
2. Research Objective #2: To interrogate how the Catholic Church has been involved in the conflict management process and how it could enhance its engagement with those affected by the Pokot-Turkana conflict when appropriating an intersectional gender-sensitive paradigm for conflict resolution.
3. Research Objective #3: To examine how an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict could contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions.

The following were the key insights from the reviewed literature and theoretical frameworks. The literature reviewed highlighted unequal gender social power relations in the two communities from the indigenous justice systems and Catholic Church intervention strategies. Unequal gender relations led to what Vivienne Jabri refers to as 'hegemonic discourse,' where violent conflict generates the danger of conflict resolution to merely reproducing "the exclusionist, violent discourses and practices which perpetuate it" (Jabri, 1996, p. 181). This was evident in the data presented in chapter five, where some men were considered superior to others after undergoing the rite of passage. The literature reviewed and theoretical frameworks indicated the linkages between masculinity formations and the

persistence of the conflict. The literature pointed out that the dominant patriarchal ideals of masculinity afford power to men and disadvantage women. Thus, men must validate and demonstrate power through cultural practices and rites of passage.

7.4 Summary of the Study's Core Processes and Approach

The study undertook three methodological processes to give insight into the research questions posed:

1. To gain a deeper understanding of the nature and persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict, I employed structured and semi-structured interviews and two focus groups. The focus group is in Kainuk in Turkana south and Kacheliba in Pokot North. The participants answered question#1.
2. In response to question#2, I opted to employ three focus group discussions (FGD). These focus group discussions were gender sensitive as I had both genders equally represented. One FGD comprised priests and nuns working in the Parishes along the conflict corridor. This was collaborated with four interviews from the two religious' leaders from Kitale and Lodwar Dioceses and the two CJPC employees who worked closely with the late Bishop Korir, who was the lead mediator In the Pokot-Turkana conflict.
3. To understand the cultural gender roles in the Pokot-Turkana conflict, I employed question#3. This aimed to look at gender as a cause of the conflict and how it could be used as a resource to manage the conflict.

The interviews were meant to interrogate through the questions to understand the nature and persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict. During the interviews, I divided the questions into simple and direct ones to get maximum responses. The semi-structured questions, such as the causes of the conflict and what they think are the reasons for the persistence of the conflict, helped in the engagement during the focus group discussions. These questions helped probe the participants' experiences in the conflict and encouraged them to share their stories.

In each focus group discussion, I used a scriptural verse: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God"- [Mathew 5:9. NRSV]. This verse was to act as the icebreaker in the discussion. It was surprising that all the participants referred to themselves as Christians; even those who do not profess the Christian faith would claim they were

raised, Christians. This led me to ask them to elaborate on the scriptural meaning of the verse read by one of them. We agreed that, as Christians, we are called to embody peacemaking's qualities, values, and behaviors. Dealing with the FGD, comprised of the priests and nuns working in parishes along the conflict corridor, the discussion concluded that while Peace is a responsibility of all people, we found out that certain people are exceptionally gifted at bringing people together to resolve conflicts.

The study also aimed at revealing that the social teachings of the Catholic Church can shed light on the importance of religion in conflict management. In addition, the study endeavored to explore the possibilities of the Church providing more space for gender consideration in peacebuilding work and specifically the role of women in highly patriarchal communities such as the ones under study. During data analysis, it was clear that the intersectional gender critical analysis of the conflict makes it possible and leads to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible future intervention strategies as recommendations. It engaged this in great depth by unpacking the cultural practices passed on from one generation to the next and have sustained the conflict for years. Some of these traditional teachings and belief systems have continued to look down on women, as elaborated in the masculinity formations that put women at the periphery while male chauvinism is encouraged. This only works to cement male privilege among the Pokot and Turkana communities. Young boys become men while their mothers become 'subordinate' to their sons due to the rite of passage. The study aimed to reveal how the Pokot and Turkana culture renders women second-class citizens regarding decision-making that affects the community. The study showed how religion and culture inform the conflict. It also revealed how religion and culture bolster patriarchy in society.

Undertaking this project was necessary because by interrogating the nature and persistence of the conflict, it was possible to find the root causes of the conflict. It was also possible to locate gender in the conflict as a cause and a resource and the significant role of the Roman Catholic Church in peacebuilding and conflict mitigation. The data collected can be helpful to gender and religion practitioners to create peacebuilding frameworks and policies that are gender sensitive. The data is very informative on the role of the Catholic Church in conflict management, and thus it can inform theory and future scholarship.

The study also revealed the Catholic Church's approach in mitigating the conflict under their lead mediator Bishop Korir. The approach was centered on dialogues. However, the

dialogues were tailored to the local justice system that were patriarchal. Gender consideration in the dialogues was not prioritized. The dialogue and engagement were structured in three different steps, as indicated below, detailed by the respondents in the study;

First Step: Consultative engagement and preparations for conflict management

In this first step, the mediator familiarizes themselves with the communities affected by the conflict. This is in cognizance that these two communities are made up of smaller units (clans) and sub-clans need to be part of the engagement. Each clan lives in a *kraal* (a few family members living in a manyatta/households). As such, they have their leader. This approach ensures everybody is on board after the past conflict resolutions were held for only a short time because aggrieved parties claimed to have been left out. By so doing, it was considered as putting the house in order.

Second Step: Intra-conflict resolution and reconciliation

In this second step, all the *kraal* leaders were invited for a meeting under an acacia tree and near a riverbank for a calm and quiet environment (this was on the advice of a *kraal* leader). The meeting aimed to establish the causes of the conflict, the parties involved, and the way forward to end the hostilities and manage the conflict. The way forward was informed by the fact that homegrown solution is better than cut-and-paste solutions from other parts of the world.

Homegrown solutions are tempered with the cultural factors in the community. At this point, the clans agree to solve their existing internal conflicts, and with a common approach, engage their counterparts in an inter-community discussion. This method is what Bishop Korir would call asking for permission to engage the other side and prepare them for a meeting. Seeking permission was to avoid suspicions of revealing the discussion with their perceived enemies. As a mediator, one has to build trust from the beginning.

Third Step: Inter-community resolution and reconciliation

In this third step, representatives from the Pokot and Turkana communities were invited for a workshop in a safer space within the conflict zone. This meeting was for bilateral engagements. It aimed at discussing the common issues each community had addressed at the clan level. It was agreed with the bishop that there was no need

to take participants far from the conflict environment so that the Church does not replicate the NGO's approach, which took participants away from the conflict to high-end hotels with huge sitting allowances that any participant would not want the conflict to end. It was also agreed that there would be no sitting allowances or transport reimbursement to participants, as Bishop Korir would put it;

Peacebuilding should not be reduced to handouts. Since this could not be sustainable in the long run, and participants must see the bigger picture and the goodness that comes with peace. [Bishop Korir as quoted by Koskei 6/6/2022]

Koskei would claim that people raised significant concerns during these engagements in the last step and suggested a way forward. This was after there were killings on both sides due to counter-revenge; animals were stolen, houses were burnt, and people were displaced. Community warriors from both sides carried guns and terrorized passengers using the inter-county highway. Borrowing from their indigenous conflict management institutions based on the council of elders, the Turkana (tree of men) and the Pokot (Kokwo), they resolved to use the above approach to manage the conflict. This was by having sittings with the parties involved, with the council of elders being part of the resolution team. The council of elders consists of seers, traditional healers, and *kraal* leaders. This became an entry point into serious engagement with the two communities through their three-level conflict model. The bishop had to use cultural resources to localize peace and find a lasting solution.

In brief, the study established the following based on the research objectives:

The first objective was to establish the nature and persistence of the conflict. In Chapter Five, the study demonstrated that poverty is one of the reasons why conflict persisted along the counties' borders, herein referred to as conflict corridor. Lack of rain and limited natural resources such as pasture-land and water led to food deficits. Raiding incidences naturally increased as people attempted to cope during lean periods brought about by droughts. Accumulating wealth was also established as a motive for conflict, as given by the respondents of both Turkana and Pokot regions. The conflict was partly caused by the need to pay a high bride price.

Heroism and recognition were established as a factor in the persistence of the conflict. Surprisingly, violence was passed to successive generations through oral narratives such as heroic stories told by grandparents to young children in the form of past stories to instill bravery into them. These oral narratives were passed from one generation to another with specific names of the brave and great men of the community who received recognition through tattooing. The role of mothers in socialization through songs, stories, and induction and community expectations contributed to the protracted and frequent conflict between the two communities.

Revenge and counter revenge, which emanated from constant raids, sustained the cycle of violence. Uneven government disarmament initiatives were also seen as encouraging the acquisition of more and more arms in these two communities. With the neighboring porous borders, the acquisition of arms becomes easy. One of the politicians from Turkana South claimed that the Pokot raid was for territorial expansion, wealth creation, and payment of bride prices, while the Turkana raid was due to drought and hunger.

The study also established that small arms' proliferation and availability in these two regions prolonged and sustained conflict. This was due to the proximity to Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia countries which are frequently at war with arms easily ending up in the hands of civilians after the war. The arms are smuggled into Kenya, where they find their way into pastoralist areas like Turkana and Pokot. Due to availability, these arms are bought with relative ease or exchanged for cattle.

From the findings, it emerged that peacebuilding was just a business like any other for the NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs in the Pokot and Turkana regions. Despite the absence of tangible results, millions of dollars continued to flow into the bank accounts of these peace groups. These groups would then organize meetings and call people from both sides to sign attendance forms for further funding. After that, they disappear, and raiding occurs between the Turkana and the Pokot again.

The emerging theme during the study was the rise of “conflict entrepreneurs”. The findings pointed to the personal interest of the NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs that catalyzed the conflict. The study revealed that some peace workers were the beneficiaries of the conflict since most of the money they got from the donors ended in their administrative work, and a small percentage was spent on peace work. Thus, carrying out peacebuilding activities tailored to

conform with the proposals they wrote to the donors to raise money. Also, it was revealed that the same NGOs, FBOs, and CBOs created a dependence on the community where all the invited members were given 'facilitation money', 'sitting allowances', and by extension, no one wanted to see the end of the conflict as it became the source of their livelihood.

In the same vein, the study revealed that this led to poor conflict resolution strategies, which made it difficult to achieve the intended results of ending the conflict between the Turkana and Pokot. This was because many affiliated researchers could not be given straightforward answers about the causes of raids by the community involved in the conflict. Participants demanded large sums of money before they gave information during interviews. This hampered quality information gathering, where sometimes the participants gave false details depending on the amount of money received. To counteract this, the Catholic Church, through the late bishop Korir used the existing church avenues to select participants trained on voluntary work and the need for peace to avoid extortion.

Marginalization was revealed as another factor sustaining the conflict. The residents of these two communities isolated governance issues to have led to the sustenance of the conflict. This included but was not limited to forceful and indiscriminate government disarmament programs that targeted even the innocent. This led to mistrust between the residents and the government security agents. This was coupled with inadequate security personnel to combat cattle rustlers, insecurity, poor road and communication network, low school enrollment, few medical facilities, and a lack of investments.

This conflict negatively impacted these two communities' traditional institutions and conflict resolution mechanisms. While elders were known to be "coffers of truth," and their word was final, the study revealed that this was being eroded by the loss of cattle which placed elders on a high level due to respect and wealth. The institution of elders between the two communities played a critical role in safeguarding the community's honor, discipline, and pride. However, things had since changed, and the warriors who routinely launched livestock raiding missions did it independently, without reference to the elders.

The second objective of this study was to examine the Roman Catholic Church's role in managing the Pokot-Turkana conflict. The study revealed that the Church has been at the forefront of conflict mitigation. There was a call from some participants for the Church to

re-evaluate her approach, especially the knee-jack method, where the Church is more reactive rather than the previous approach, where it was proactive.

The study also revealed that the Church needs to take more affirmative action on gender roles and sensitize women to take part in mothering their children, as participants picked it as a cause of the persistence of the conflict. Other than their previous concerns of increasing the numerical numbers of the church membership, there is a need to create more awareness of the children's socialization and its role in transforming the conflict. The study also established that there is a need to come up with a common approach by the Church and council of elders where they could collaborate, while at the same time, being inclusive of all genders.

The study also revealed that the CJPC offices in the dioceses of Lodwar and Kitale have been critical in containing and pre-empting the conflict through their conflict monitoring systems where the office could tell when the conflict is about to happen and, therefore, put in place measures to manage the situation.

Referring to the work of Bishop Korir along the conflict corridor, the study revealed that peacebuilding is a process and not an event. Unlike in political gatherings where religious leaders are invited to 'open and close' the gathering with prayers as an 'add-on', the Catholic Church took a leading role in praying for peace and being part of the peace process in the Pokot-Turkana conflict. This was after the reports of killings became a daily occurrence, and the late Bishop Korir could no longer sit and watch. His approach, also called peace in the grassroots model, was a unique model of bottom-up, middle-out, and top-down approach in peacebuilding. He knew that the people at the grassroots are the most affected when there is conflict. However, he also held that those at the top of leadership have the mandate from the people to ensure peace and security for all. He would reach out to them when it was necessary. At the middle level, he would work with county government leaders, non-state agencies, and organizations working for peacebuilding in the region.

Professor Abdul Aziz Said, whom I was his teaching fellow at American University in Washington DC, said that there are five approaches to managing a conflict in what he referred to as peace paradigms. They include peace through: the power of force, power of communication, power of law, power of love and power of non-violence. The study revealed that Bishop Korir opted for peace through the power of communication/dialogue or

roundtable talks. He believed in the power of talking and making meaning in situations he found himself in the Pokot-Turkana conflict. However, at a later stage, he agreed with the warring communities that the power of indigenous law/institutions was necessary to transform the conflict.

The third objective was to examine how an intersectional gender-critical analysis of the conflict could contribute to a better understanding of the Pokot-Turkana conflict and possible interventions. The study revealed that the two communities are patriarchal, and most decisions are made by male institutions, tree of men and Kokwo, for Turkana and Pokot communities, respectively. Though this has kept women out of the decision-making institutions, a participant Aziza claimed that women should cut their niche just as other renowned women in history have done. She gave an example of Dekha Ibrahim, who, despite living among the Muslim community in northern Kenya, got her voice heard by mobilizing women peacebuilders.

The study also revealed that the Church recognizes the role of gender in the Church and has well-established Catholic Men and Women associations. However, the study showed that those associations deal majorly with spiritual issues and not peacebuilding which, in my view, conflicts can lead to loss of trust and faith in God. Most of the decisions made by the Church were made within the patriarchal system.

7.5 Navigating the research

The use of semi-structured questions for interviews and focus group discussions in the study meant having different categories of data collection. This was in addition to personal reflections as a participant observer in some cultural rites intended to enrich the data collected and collaborate with the interviews from my observations. Discussions were significant as they provided space to vent on participants' experiences of the conflict. The focus group was also vital in filling in the gaps that came out of the interviews, and the discussions would lead to points of agreement and divergence, which authenticated my research.

As a researcher, I had to navigate many challenges before and during data collection. Due to covid-19 restrictions and fear, I had to devise ways to get to the elderly participants and remove them from the focus groups. Some of them could hardly be clear over the phone interviews I had planned to use, and thus in-person interviews had to be scheduled. Others

who were victims of the conflict withdrew from attending the focus groups, especially when they realized there were no handouts, and I had to deal with fewer numbers, while some were postponed to a later date to get a replacement.

West Pokot and Turkana counties are semi-arid, dry, hot, and dusty with horrible terrain, and reaching the places where the focus groups were waiting took longer than expected. This provided me with first-hand experience of the bad roads and authenticated the claim that ‘when cattle are stolen, the police take long to arrive due to bad terrain’.

While I thought women in the focus groups might shy off from discussing the questions on gender and their role in the conflict, I was surprised that they provided more information without fear and even wanted me to use their real names though I decided to use pseudonyms. One participant claimed how they had provoked their husbands for resisting to join raiders and yet cry that their sons and husbands are killed during raids to get money from NGOs. The interviews revealed how the Roman Catholic Church is a voice to reckon with in the region in its efforts in peacebuilding. The participants indicated the Church's various strategies to mitigate the conflict. The implication of this study was thus threefold concerning the research questions, which were aligned with the objectives in my capacity as a religious leader in the region and conflict expert.

It was a very empowering experience for me as an insider (clergy) to take the role of an outsider and critically analyze the ideo-theological resources in our Church and question the patriarchal nature of the Church and its involvement of women in conflict management. Drawing parallelism in indigenous Pokot-Turkana Justice institutions that are male-dominated and the Patriarchal Catholic Church structures and approaches to peacebuilding

As a trained mediator in the conflict, the study opened my eyes to the realities of untold stories of the capacity of Turkana and Pokot women to abet the conflict and how they can be used as a resource in the management of the conflict. The perceived peripheral role of women in indigenous conflict management institutions does not mean women cannot create space for themselves and come up with what can work for peacebuilding.

The study also provoked me to think deeply about the upbringing of children in terms of masculinity and femininity formations and their linkages to the persistence of the conflict and how the Church has turned a blind eye to these cultural rites that have far-reaching implications on gender. This was spurred by Kanyoro (2002, p.8), who argued that “cultural

interpretation is critical in understanding people's way of life". She further claims that African culture is the thread that strings the community beliefs and social setup together.

7.6 Recommendations

The Catholic Church should borrow from the benefits explained in contact theory by initiating joint programs for the Pokot and Turkana communities to encourage intergroup contact. The intergroup contact hypothesis was initially put forth by Allport (1954), who stated that positive effects of intergroup contact occur in contexts characterized by the following essential factors: equality, intergroup collaboration, common goals, and backing from social and institutional authorities. According to Allport, these elements must be at least partially present in the contact situation. These characteristics are significant, as evidenced by the special significance of cross-group friendships in reducing prejudice (Pettigrew, 1998). Most friends are on an equal footing, collaborate to accomplish shared objectives, and are often exempt from severe institutional and cultural restrictions that can significantly restrict laws such as segregation.

Borrowing from this informed thinking, the Catholic Church should actively petition the government to open Arid and Semi-Arid Areas (ASAL), especially in education and health. While there is free and compulsory primary education in Kenya, there must be more proper mechanisms to enforce it. The lack of enforcement from the government has left many pastoralists' children not attending school.

Besides, schools should be built along the borders so children from both communities can intermingle and enhance contact. By so doing, they will learn from each other that they face similar challenges due to the conflict. This will also form a bond of friendship and minimize future disputes. Since both affected Dioceses of Kitale (West Pokot County) and Lodwar (Turkana County) have an education office with an education committee, it is possible to collaborate and establish joint school programs with peace education tailored to the national curriculum. Besides, the two dioceses can benchmark from strategies that have worked in other areas prone to conflict and how their schools enhance contact theory. For example, they could visit Tiaty in East Pokot- Baringo County, and learn their approach. As Koskei, who has worked in Baringo, claims, "children going to the same school interact, play together, make friends, intermarry in future, and this reduces conflict in that generation".

[Participant Koskei 21st June 2022]

In addition, the government, civil society, religious organizations, and the Church should extend educational facilities in these two regions. This way much can be accomplished by implementing a deliberate and systematic approach of allocating adequate resources to construct new schools, expand existing ones, and equip these schools with the required equipment and personnel.

Another area the Church, government, and other peacebuilding agents need to engage in contact theory is enhancing cattle dips along the border. Since the two communities are pastoralists and their lives rotate around livestock, cattle dips serve as a meeting point. Such areas can be used to foster peace between these two communities. This interaction leads to the growth of Peace as continuous contact over time; the people get to understand each other and become the Launchpad for the peace agenda.

According to Samuel, who has worked in the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar (Turkana County) for many years, the conflict in the region is usually sporadic and unpredictable; as such, there should be continuous programs that keep the community together, and these should always be encouraged. Rather than what he termed as a reactionary approach by the government. These include intra and inter Community dialogue forums, annual general conferences, cross border inter-community dialogues, cross-border inter-community prayers, exchange visits between the communities, cultural exchange visits, sports for Peace, community elders' meetings, and connector projects of water to enhance contact between the warring communities.

Increased investment in infrastructure facilities, particularly roads, and the sinking of more bore-holes in most regions of the county, as well as the installation of new irrigation projects and the expansion of existing ones, can make a significant difference in the growth of Pokot North and Turkana south. The Church should not be completely absent from the Turkana and Pokot pastoralists' economy. It should examine livestock trading for pastoralist communities as a conflict resolution and poverty eradication method through the social development office in the Church. A marketing system that allows pastoralists to sell their animals right before a drought and put money aside for food security in the event of drought would go a long way toward eliminating conflicts.

Raiding for restocking purposes would be eliminated if the Church supported restocking schemes that ensured readily accessible animals for purchase following a dry spell. A well-

thought-out pastoral economic management system guided and sponsored jointly by the government and the Catholic Church would end community discord. FBOs and government officials can make a significant difference by assisting victims of livestock theft in tracking their animals and, more broadly, preventing revenge. This means the Church should expand its early warning signs and monitoring systems to cover all the identified hot spots along the borders.

Regarding conflict entrepreneurs, the government should censure briefcase NGOs and other conflict entrepreneurs that are beneficiaries of the conflict. The Catholic Church should be accountable for its money for peacebuilding work and preach moral integrity/ethical values to counter conflict entrepreneurs. This will see the Catholic Church as trustworthy and dependable in conflict management.

Even though the Church has been advocating for the disarmament of the people with illegal firearms, I think the Church needs to go a step higher in petitioning the governments (Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda) to entirely disarm the people and provide security to the communities living at the border areas. This is the only way to have stable and sustainable peace along the conflict zones, which would result in the region's development.

The Church can also partner with well-wishers, non-state agencies, and the government for alternative livelihood programs which will help improve the living conditions of the people; partnership is the sure way of changing the lives of the people living along the borders fighting over the natural resources. Such partnerships should also focus on connecting different communities living side by side to reduce the animosity that has existed for decades.

There was a claim in Chapter Five on data presentation that the gender perspective of conflict mitigation in the region has been missing. The Church has not yet expressly targeted women in the community forums and intercommunity dialogue. The reasons for the Church not targeting women expressly in conflict mitigation of the region have been strongly weakened by the fact that these communities along the borders have remained with their traditional solid practice of separation of gender roles in the community -the two communities are strongly patriarchal. Men and women sitting together to solve issues affecting the communities are still considered to lower men's positions and raise women's status. However, I think the Church has been in the region for decades and should change its

approach by purposely providing more space for women in peacebuilding. This should include and not be limited to funding peace projects initiated by women such as Riam Riam, which is already on the ground.

The Church should also set up peace committees that are gender sensitive to educate people on cultural gender roles that lead to conflict while encouraging functions that can be used to manage the conflict. The Church should deliberately target women to be ambassadors of Peace and change tactics by avoiding over-reliance on men as people who can help mitigate conflict.

The Church should encourage its clergy to take up the role of peacebuilding and lead from the front rather than leaving it to the CJPC office, which does not get 100% support from the government and even from some members of the clergy. Clergy should use various platforms to pass peace messages, such as funerals, weddings, and other gatherings. This should be done in collaboration with other faith-based organizations and religious affiliations in the region.

Among the strategies that have borne fruits in the past, new ones should be encouraged, including the use of religious scriptures – which touch on reconciliation and forgiveness, encouragement of living Christian values such as good neighborhood, and traditional means of conflict resolution from the conflict communities, the use of community dialogue forums which brought together the elders as well the warriors and use of the community gatekeeper or community game-changers to persuade the community to shun violence. Non-violence and nonpartisan approaches to conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, and multi-sectorial approach – the involvement of the government personnel, security organs, religious leaders, community elders, community youth, and young warriors in the peace process.

In terms of policy, the government should consider the three-level pillar model this study has come up with. The model is generated from the data collected and is referred to as a three-level model. The "three-level pillar model" has three levels of engagement, a three-tier approach based on the two-tier governments in Kenya: the national level and county level government. This model can be applied in other parts of the country or the world with similar setups.

Among the pastoralist communities such as the Pokot and the Turkana, any meaningful engagement and consultations are done at various levels depending on the magnitude of the

issues discussed, especially if an inter-community conflict involves more than one community: Lower Level (I); Middle Level (II) and ---Upper Level (III).

Level I: Identify the local indigenous institutions' leadership

At the lower level, the consultations and engagement involve the seers (*Werkoyon*), those who foresee disasters/calamities that might befall the community, the traditional healers (*Kapolok*) who perform religious rituals to protect the community, and the *Kraal* leaders who take back the resolutions to the people in those *Kraals* or households.

Level II: Involvement of local political/opinion leaders

Since these communities have their political leaders who are very influential and other opinion leaders, the peace process must take into account their roles in society. As one politician in the meeting claimed, "we create problems, and people elect us hoping to end the very problems we created. People are conditioned to think that way".

Level III: Engage the National government

At this level, the national government must be involved in conflicts of enormous magnitude. The provincial administration, which falls under the national government, has administrative structures from the grassroots (villages) to the presidency. It is engaged to offer political solutions or ways forward. This includes appointed village elders, assistant chiefs, chiefs, deputy county commissioners, county commissioners, and regional commissioners. This is the government command structure. In their structures, there are district peace committees. They are critical in the mobilization for peace meetings called for by the area chiefs and are responsible for monitoring regional conflicts.

The Amani machining model by Bishop Korir informed the three levels of pastoralists' engagement in peacebuilding. Besides, his approach was anchored on ideo-theological resources from the bible and catholic social teachings. Korir argued that "there is a clear intersection between culture and religion, and the good aspect of a given culture that can enrich people's efforts in peacebuilding and do not contradict sacred teachings of the Church was allowed in peacebuilding frameworks. At each level, gender balance MUST be considered to make it more effective.

7.7 Recommendations for Future Research

The data presented and the findings in this research have opened up a new area that requires further study. The discovery of oil in Turkana County and the Pokot community's claim over expanding their territorial border is a recipe for conflict. With the current insecurity situations along the counties' border, there is a need for research on two areas;

1. Intersection of social development projects and religious dialogues while exploring the Pokot-Turkana cross-border conflict.
2. The impact of conflict beneficiaries on the persistence of the Pokot-Turkana conflict.

7.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study focused on three objectives: to elaborate on the nature and persistence of the conflict, the gender role in the conflict, and the role of the Catholic Church in conflict mitigation. These three objectives were helpful in the actual research work, guiding the researcher to arrive at the study's findings.

The underlying natural causes of the conflict were identified and explained through data analysis. The data findings indicated that capacity building and awareness under the Catholic Church Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) had done much in conflict management in the region with very little funding. As such, there is a need for the Catholic Church to increase funding to the commission and collaborate more with other FBOs in the region to manage the conflict better. Besides, the findings indicated that the patriarchal approach in conflict management was similar to the indigenous justice systems anchored on the council of elders. Over-reliance on the council of elders, which is male dominating, has been a possible undermining of the Church's efforts. It was an eye-opener for me as a researcher on the linkages between masculinity formations among the two communities through the rite of passage to adulthood - *Sapana*, male privilege, decision-making institutions, and the peripheral role of women in the communities under study. It is my informed observation that the Catholic Church needs to step up and create more space for women to ventilate on their contributions in these closed societies if proper conflict management is to be realized.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Date: 1st November 2021

Dear Most, Rev. Bishop, Maurice Crowley,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER TO LOCAL ORDINARY /BISHOP

I am a Post Graduate Student at the University of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa undertaking a study on “*Exploring the Intersection of Gender, Religion and Culture when engaging the Pokot–Turkana Conflict in Kenya Between 1963 – 2015*”.

As the Local Bishop and In-charge of Justice and Peace in the Diocese, the purpose of this letter is to let you know that I will be carrying out research along the Kainuk– Kasei conflict corridor on the above subject between February to May 2022.

Please note that the information I will gather in this research will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose of this study. No names will be mentioned in this report.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

DANIEL NGANGA

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Introduction

The questions in this instrument were divided into three sections. Each section is based on a given objective and research question, as indicated below.

In general, these questions targeted the government security agents in the conflict corridor, such as the area chief/assistant chiefs, County commissioners, village elders, NGOs, -based organizations (CBOs), Catholic Church leadership, and personnel working with the catholic church in the region.

PART I

This section will address the nature of the conflict, causes and actors in the conflict, and structures that sustain protracted violent ethnic conflict between the Pokot and Turkana.

1. What are the causes of the Pokot-Turkana conflict? Whom are the parties/actors involved?
2. Why is this conflict persistent along the Kainuk-Kasei corridor?
3. Are there established social or cultural structures sustaining the Turkana-Pokot conflict? If yes, which ones? Who are the leaders? If yes, why? Furthermore, what do you think should be done?
4. Explain how these structures have sustained the conflict along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor.

PART II: THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF GENDER AND CULTURE IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

(Questions for women leaders in the government, NGO, CBO, And FBO focus group and also were used for interviews)

- a) What approaches do you have for conflict management in your community? If yes, how do they work?
- b) What are the socially assigned gender roles in these approaches? Is there gender consideration?
- c) Do you think these approaches have worked to reduce the conflict? If yes, why do you think so?
- d) To what extent are women involved in these conflict management approaches?
- e) If not, how should they be more involved?

- f) Who are the decision-makers in your community? Are women and men involved equally? If not, how does this affect conflict management (if at all it does)?
- g) What role do the religious leaders play in the interventions in the conflict? What tangible ways have they helped manage the conflict, if any?

PART III: CATHOLIC CHURCH ENGAGEMENTS IN THE CONFLICT

(Questions for Catholic Church leadership, Bishops, priests, and lay leaders, personnel explicitly working in the office of justice and peace in the dioceses of Turkana and Kitale, which includes Pokot County)

- 1) How has the Catholic Church been engaging in this conflict? What has it done to intervene? (What specific things has the church done?)
- 2) How has the church navigated the gendered dimension of the conflict? Do their intervention strategies (if any) include gender diversity?
- 3) In your opinion, do you think the church has done enough to mitigate the conflict? If not, what do you think the church should consider as its strategy in this conflict?
- 4) What resources does the church have to use in this conflict management?

PART IV: QUESTIONNAIRE

WHY GENDER CONSIDERATION AND CHURCH INTERVENTION ARE KEY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE POKOT-TURKANA CONFLICT

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this questionnaire will be sent to a limited number of people, specifically those who might not be willing to have a one-on-one interview.

- a) Explain how the involvement of both men and women in conflict management between the Pokot and Turkana communities is essential?

- b) As a representative of your people, do you think the involvement of women in conflict management will reduce the conflict? If yes/no, why do you think so?

c). Suggest concrete ways women can be used in Turkana and Pokot conflict management

d). Explain some of the efforts (success stories) in conflict management that can be attributed purely to men or women in your area.

b) What interventions has the Catholic Church implemented to mitigate this conflict? If any

c) What resources (e.g., teachings, structures) does the Catholic Church have that can be used in conflict management?

d) How are women perceived in this conflict? Are there any cultural barriers in Conflict Management?

d) What are the approaches that have been used in the past in conflict management in your area?

e) Have these approaches yielded the expected results? If yes/no, why do you think so?

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX III: STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS|FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Interview Schedule

	Participant	Date	Venue
1	Religious Leader of Kitale Diocese	4/3/2022	Office Kitale- Pokot
2	Religious leader of Lodwar-Turkana	4/3/2022	Phone interview
3	Linus	19/4/2022	Kacheliba-Pokot North
4	Samuel	16/4/2022	Phone interview-Turkana
5	Patrick	24/4/2022	Phone interview-Pokot south
6	Koskei	28/4/2022	Eldoret CJPC office
7	Kimisoi	28/4/2022	Eldoret CJPC office
8	Lopetakou	20/4/2022	Kapenguria-Pokot
9	Aziza	30/4/2022	Pride inn Hotel-Eldoret
10	Madam Chief	24/4/2022	Chepareria-Turkana south
11	Kassim	15/4/2022	Kanyerus-Pokot north
12	Paul	17/4/2022	Kainuk-Turkana south
13	Leo	16/4/2022	Kitale-Pokot central
14	Rosanna	2/4/2022	Kacheliba Pokot-North
15	Sarah	22/4/2022	Sigor Pokot-Central
16	Christine	23/4/2022	Amakuriat in Pokot-North

Focus Discussion Group Schedule

Kacheliba Focus Group Discussion 6th June, 2022

NAME	AGE	EDUCATION LEVEL	PROFESSION	Gender
Participant A	50	High School	Riam Riam: NGO	Female
Participant B	55	College	Sikom Ngo	Male
Participant C	76	College	Retired chief	Female
Participant D	50	High school	District committee	Female
Participant E	25	University student	Volunteer Sikom	Male
Participant F	26	Primary school	Reformed warrior	Male

Focus Group Discussion II: Kainuk FGD 8th June, 2022

NAME	AGE	EDUCATION LEVEL	PROFESSION	Gender
Participant G	52 Years	College	Senior chief	Female
Participant H	68	High school	Village elder	Male
Participant J	59	Primary	Kraal leader	Male
Participant K	61	College	Assistant chief	Male
Participant L	57	High school	Business	Female
Participant M	43	University	Nun	Female

Focus Group Discussion II; Kapenguria FGD [7th July, 2022]

NAME	AGE	Gender	EDUCATION LEVEL	Profession
Participant N	38	Male	University	Director CJPC Turkana
Participant P	33	Female	University	Disaster office Pokot
Participant Q	42	Female	MA-University	Disaster office Pokot
Participant R	32	Male	University	Assistant C. commissioner
Participant S	35	Male	University	Director CJPC Eldoret
Participant T	69	Female	University	CJPC Eldoret

Masol Focus Group Discussion [5/5/2022]

NAME	AGE	EDUCATION LEVEL	PROFESSION	Gender
Participant U	48 Years	Primary	Reformed warrior	Male
Participant V	37	Primary	Reformed warrior	Male
Participant W	30	Primary	Reformed warrior	Male
Participant Y	61	High School	Area Chief	Female
Participant Z	57	High school	Business	Female
Participant Z1	43	University	Catholic Nun	Female

Priest, Religious Focus Group Discussion - Zoom 10th June, 2022

Participant Fr. A1	38	University	Kainuk Turkana south	Male
Participant Sr. A2	33	University	“ “ “	Female
Participant Fr. A3	42	University	Pokot North	Male
Participant Sr. A4	38	University	Kacheliba Pokot south	Female
Participant Fr. A5	35	University	Kacheliba Pokot North	Male
Participant Fr. A6	64	University	Nakwamoru Turkana South	Male
Participant Sr. A7	32	University	Sigor Pokot Central	Female

APPENDIX IV: RESEARCH PERMIT



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Ref No: 966578



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Date of Issue: 25/February/2022

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Rev.. Daniel Muchungu Nganga of University of KwaZulu-Natal, has been licensed to conduct research in Turkana, Westpokot on the topic: Exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and, culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015. for the period ending : 25/February/2023.

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APPENDIX V: APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: -----

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Muchungu Daniel Nganga, a Ph.D. student at the UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL School of Religion Philosophy and Classics

My contact address;

Researcher: Muchungu Daniel Nganga (+254-728686565) email: ngashdm@yahoo.com

Supervisor: Prof. Charlene van der Walt (+27 83 693 8686)

You are being invited to consider participating in a study project entitled: **“Exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015.**

This study aims to explore the intersection of gender, religion, and culture in the process of conflict engagement. Through your participation, I hope to understand how the intersection of gender, religion, and culture is key when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya. The results of this research are intended to contribute to the completion of my doctoral degree. I will be carrying out research along the Kainuk-Kasei conflict corridor, which is Turkana and West Pokot counties' border. Focus discussion group will take at most two hours. The interview will take approximately thirty minutes while the questionnaire will require a maximum of 15 minutes to complete. I hope you will take your time to be part of this study.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number-----).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at contacts provided above or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
 Govan Mbeki Building
 Private Bag X 54001
 Durban
 4000
 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
 Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the School of Religion, Philosophy, and Classics, UKZN.

CONSENT

I ----- have been informed about the study entitled: **“Exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015”**, by Muchungu Daniel Nganga a PhD student at University of KwaZulu Natal.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed that there will be no monetary benefits from participating in this project. Besides, I have been informed that since it is a conflict zone incase I have traumatic experiences associated with the conflict during my participation in this project the researcher will make referral to Ortum Mission hospital where I will receive counseling at no cost.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher: Muchungu Daniel Nganga (cell phone+254-728686565) email: ngashdm@yahoo.com

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researcher then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
 Govan Mbeki Building
 Private Bag X 54001
 Durban
 4000
 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
 Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609
 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby also provide consent to:

Video-record my interview	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

_____	_____
Signature of Participant	Date

_____	_____
Signature of Witness (Where applicable)	Date

_____	_____
Signature of Translator (Where applicable)	Date

APPENDIX VI: ETHICAL APPROVAL



18 November 2022

Rev Daniel Muchungu Nganga (220112111)
School of Rel Phil & Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Rev Nganga,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003700/2021

Project title: Exploring the intersections of gender, religion, and, culture when engaging the Pokot-Turkana conflict in Kenya between 1963 and 2015.

Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 18 November 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 18 November 2023.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

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