

**DYNAMICS OF WEAPONIZED ETHNICITY AND INTERMITTENT
POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA; 1850 - 2022**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History of Masinde Muliro University of Science
and Technology**

November, 2024

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than indicated sources and support and has not been presented elsewhere for any degree or award.

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DEDICATION

I Dedicate this work to my husband Dr. Ahaya for his encouragement. To my family and all women, to realise that once they free their minds, their horizons become limitless.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The completion of this thesis was not only an academic challenge but also a journey of personal and philosophical growth. It is the collective support of people and entities whose academic and personal contributions impacted on this academic voyage.

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1990s, political violence in Kenya has created the impression of an ethnically split nation. This research examines the pre-colonial and post-colonial roots of the weaponization of ethnicity and political violence in the Uasin Gishu district of Kenya. The formation of KANU and KADU bore ideological differences, including the fear of domination of “smaller” ethnic groups by “larger” ethnic groups in Kenya. These actions set the stage for the politicization of ethnicity. This process was further exacerbated in the post-independence period of successive Kenyan leaderships. This foundation of ethnic nationalism in Kenyan Politics has been the precursor to some of the intermittent violence experienced in various parts of Kenya. Since the early 1990s, ethnic clashes in Kenya have been chronic during electioneering times, leaving havoc in its wake. The period 2007-2008 experienced the worst forms of ethnicized political violence since independence, leaving trails of death, destruction, and distrust. Studies on conflict in Kenya have been biased towards ethnicity and political violence without considering how ethnicity has been weaponized. Using Uasin Gishu, the study aimed to assess the dynamics of weaponized ethnicity on intermittent political violence in Kenya since 1850. The study's specific objectives were; to examine the historical background of the Nandi community of Uasin Gishu in relation to ethnic formation and political establishment during the pre-colonial period; to examine the salient features of ethnic relations and political violence in Uasin Gishu in the colonial period, 1895 to 1962; to evaluate the impact of Jomo Kenyatta's reign on weaponized ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu, 1963- 2002; to interrogate the nexus between weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu during President Moi and Kibaki's reign, 1978- 2012; to interrogate the dynamics of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu during Uhuru Kenyatta's rule. The study employed three theories; instrumentalist theory, used to explain that ethnic conflict occurs when ethnic differences are politically charged to garner social-economic benefits for an ethnic group; primordial theory, used in this case to submit that people participate in conflicts due to the relationship that binds them together; as well as the relative deprivation theory, as it holds that conflicts arise when dominant ethnic groups deleteriously control economic resources at the expense of other ethnic groups. The study employed historical research design. The target population included farmers, administrative officials, academicians and business people. The researcher used non-probabilistic sampling, including purposive, snowballing, and convenient sampling techniques. This study used two research instruments: interview schedules and focus group discussions (FDGs). Primary data was derived from oral sources and archival materials that included official government records. Secondary data was derived from relevant books, book chapters, journal articles and periodicals. Data was analyzed thematically and chronologically. The study's major findings indicate that ethnic nationalism, with its roots in the colonial period, was fanned through the formation of early political organizations, entrenched after independence, and has since become a political mantra in the preceding regimes. The overall conclusion of this study is that; some cultural aspects and institutions of ethnicity have been instrumentalised by political elites leading to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. When it suits them, the same cultural aspects and institutions have been used to inculcate peace and ethnic tolerance. Weaponization of ethnicity, when it results in violence, has negatively impacted Uasin Gishu socially, politically, psychologically, and economically. Most of the efforts and gains made against such weaponization of ethnicity have not been effective due to political impunity. The major recommendations of this study are; that Kenyans must disentangle from the grips of ethnic based leadership and instead embrace national unity and ethnic inclusivity; areas prone to weaponization of ethnicity should employ the humane customary modes of justice since these are more venerated, the political elite should use the traditional and cultural institutions as instruments of national intergration, the government should seriously, genuinely, and fairly implement the constitution to address the underlying causes promoting weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence; a lasting solution for the intermittent political violence from weaponized ethnicity might lie in a negotiated democracy in order to equitably accommodate all ethnic groups in the country's leadership.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APP	Africa Peoples Party
COA	Coast African Association
DP	Democratic Party
EAA	East African Association
EU	European Union
GEMA	Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association
GSU	General Service Unit
IBEAC	Imperial British East Africa Company
IDF	Israeli Defence Force
ISIS	Islamic state
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KAMATUSA	Kalenjin Maasai Turkana and Samburu Association
KANU	Kenya Africa National Union
KCA	Kikuyu Central Association
KIM	Kenya Independent Movement
KNCHR	Kenya National Commission of Human Rights.
KNP	Kenya National Party
KPA	Nandi Political Association
KPU	Kenya Peoples Union
KTWA	Kavirondo Taxpayers Welfare Association
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NATO	Nrth Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCCK	National Council for Churches in Kenya
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NKG	New Kenya Group
ODM	Orange Democratic Party

PEV	Post election violence
TJRC	Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission
TPLF	Tigrayan Peoples Liberation Force
UMA	Ukambani Members Association
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNDP	United Nations Development of Programme
UNO	United Nations Organisation
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
YKA	Young Kikuyu Association

GLOSSARY OF VERNACULAR TERMS

Asis- God

Bandek/ Bando- maize

Baraza- community disciplinary committee

Bororiet-region

Busaa- traditional brew

Chitap koret- pasture

Emet-territory

Emotinwek- country

Ibinda- Age-set

Ilat- God of thunder and lightning

Ilwaunsin Kishu -Uasin Gishu Maasai

Jandoni- the initiation process

Kale/ Kole- the permanent marks on the breast or arm of a warriors who had slain an adversary in combat.

Kalenjok- I tell you

Kipande-pass used during the colonial period.

Kipoiis, kipomwi, kipkokos- Nandi sub nationalities

Kiptainik-warrior commanders

Kirwongindet ab oret- Junior clan elder

Kirwongindet Neo- great chief

Kithitu- an oath made by Mau Mau

Kokwet; neighbourhood council of elders

Kuweka blue- Signing of the squatter contract using the thumb

Madoadoa- specks

Mahalange- fermented flour

Maotik- consultant elders within the pororiet or Bororosiek

Mnandi- Cormorant

Murenik- warriors

Ndasiemet- protective traditional medicine

Nduru- Shouts

Nyumba kumi- village elders

Orgoek- Orkoiyot

Pororosiek- Clans

Rabuonik, / rabuon, /mapuoni- sweet potatoes

Remindet- term used to refer to other communities

Saket-ab-peito-the ceremony that was held to mark the end of an age-set

Tuka- family herds

Vunyot- enemies

Wimbi- finger millet

OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Dynamics- As used in this study, the term refers to the patterns, history of growth, and changes in the weaponization of ethnicity in relation to intermittent political violence and the cultural, socio -economic, and political changes that continue to trigger and shape ethnic identities, allegiances, and preferences.

Elder- The elderly men among the Kalenjin and Kikuyu who were respected, and guided their communities in social, economic and political decisions.

Ethnicity- The base feeling of belonging to, identifying with, and the urge to defend one's ethnic group in Uasin Gishu when threatened.

Ethnic Nationalism- The increased ethnic identity and unity in the struggle for political and economic control.

Immigrant settlers- All those other communities who are not Kalenjins, who have migrated, bought large farms and settled in Uasin Gishu.

Intermittent political violence- The episodic violence during electioneering periods that occurs between the inhabitants of Uasin Gishu at the behest of the political elite.

International community- The eminent leaders from Africa and beyond who managed to negotiate for peace between Kibaki and Raila during the Post Election Violence.

Kalenjin- Used to describe the closely related communities in Uasin Gishu which shared similar socio-cultural and political features and were previously referred to as the “Nandi speakers”. In this study they include the Nandi, Keiyo, Kipsigis and other Kalenjin sub groups found in Uasin Gishu.

Kalenjin warriors- Young men who were recruited by the political elite to defend the Kalenjin from immigrants and other foreigners in Uasin Gishu District.

Majimboism-The advocacy for a federal government by politicians during and after independence.

Migrant labourers- All other communities in Uasin Gishu, who are not Kalenjins but came to the area to work for settlers as farm labourers, clerks or perform other menial jobs

Militia- Groups of men who are usually armed and organised by the political elite to attack or harass other people who are regarded as a threat or competition. In this case, refers to the Kalenjin attacks on the Kikuyu and retaliatory attacks by the Kikuyu on the Kalenjin

Nandi; The name used to refer to the dominant Kalenjin sub-group in Uasin Gishu

Nandi speakers; The name used to refer to the Kalenjin in the pre-colonial and colonial period

Nation building- All the socio-economic and political efforts citizens engage in to develop the country

Nationalisation- The efforts made by the government to ensure Kenyans took charge of all the sectors of the economy that were initially under the British

Natives- The Nandi and other Kalenjin inhabitants of Uasin Gishu who regard themselves as the owners of the land in Uasin Gishu.

Political violence – The violent conflict resulting from the struggle to control public affairs and resources through the control of the country's leadership. It mainly occurs during the electioneering period in Uasin Gishu due to incitements by the political elite.

Squatters- Kenyan communities, especially the Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo and other immigrant communities who were given small pieces of land to stay on, on settler farms while they worked for the settlers.

Tribe- The eurocentric title given to African communities by the British

Uncivic nationalism- Refers to Kenyans and leaders who pretend to fight for the good of others yet their actions fuel ethnic animosity.

Violence- The flare-up of deadly physical contests and fights visited upon different ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu mainly due to incitements by the elites.

Warrior tradition- The beliefs, practices, characteristics, duties, responsibilities and hierarchy of warriors in Nandi traditional community.

Warriors- In Kalenjin tradition refers to the community fighters who were used to defend the community in the precolonial period.

Weaponized Ethnicity- It refers to the manipulation of ethnic groups ,their customary beliefs and or practices by the political elites in Uasin Gishu to instigate violence or peaceful tolerance and hence achieve their own selfish ends .

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation of the technical aspects of the study that includes the following sections; background to the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, justification, significance, scope, limitations, thematic literature review, theoretical framework, research methodology, ethical considerations and finally the chapter summary.

1.1 Background to the Study

The conclusion of the Cold War and its patronage system saw an escalation in political violence and ethnic conflicts around the world (Yilmaz 2008, Ogot and Ochieng 1995, Sotiropoulou 2002). Gurr (2015) concurs that trend of ethnic warfare in the 1990s which started in 1950s reached its apex as the cold war was ending. In as much as the number of interstate disputes has decreased, it is unfortunate that conflicts within states have grown, with the majority occurring along ethnic lines (Vayrynen, 2018, 1991; Shoup, 2007). Consequently, ethnic groups that once coexisted peacefully before the emergence of contemporary nation states are now turning on one other and leaving carnage in their wake. In the east of Europe and Africa, the conclusion of the cold war era saw the emergence of democracy a process that appeared to increase racial and ethnic divisions (Yilmaz, 2008). Tambiah (1989) confirms that due to its frequency, ethnic conflict has become a normal occurrence.

Ethnic conflict has continued to hinder peace and security. Reuter (2023) notes that in the modern world, conflicts in places such as; Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Darfur, Sierra Leone in Africa; Iraq, Israel, West Bank and Gaza Strip in the middle East; the

Balkans, Chechnya, and Yugoslavia in Europe; Pakistan and Myanmar in Asia, continue having deadly repercussions. All these ongoing ethnic conflicts have ended up destabilizing these areas. The prevalence of these conflicts validates (Wimmer 2004) observation that conflicts between communities has been the most common form of political violence in the last decades

Some of the most notable politically motivated ethnic conflicts in Europe have occurred in; Chechnya, Bosnia, Yugoslavia in eastern Europe has also experienced politically motivated ethnic violence pitting the former ethnic groups against each other in bloody clashes (Sotiropoulou 2002) The political elite used ethnicity as a tool to peruse territorial, political and economic objectives leading to violent conflicts between the Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. The ethnic polarization occurred towards elections after the fall of communism.

In Asia, ethnic conflicts have occurred in countries such as Myanmar between the Bama and Rohingya; In Myanmar, religious differences and politics have combined with ethnicity resulting in a long running civil war. The majority Bama Buddhist want to dominate the minority non Buddhist ethnics (Albert and Maizland 2020). The Rohingya Muslims are a minority ethnic group in Myanmar in both numbers and religion. They originally immigrated from colonial India and settled in the Racine state. This state is dominated by the Racine Muslims Buddhists who see the Rohingya as a threat. They believe that the Rohingya plan to outbreed them and create a Muslim state. These suspicions have created ethnic animosities, leading to the rise of violent conflicts since 2012 against the Rohingya. This violence has been accompanied with atrocities aimed at the displacing of the Rohingya.

While the origins of exploiting ethnic differences in Africa can be traced back to the colonial legacy, the escalating marginalization of the impoverished has created an environment conducive to individuals using ethnic conflict to maintain their grip on power (Ifeoma, 2011). Consequently, ethnic violence has become ingrained in the fabric of African conflicts. This then could explain why Africa has experienced some prolonged and protracted ethnic-related violent political conflict since the mid-1960s. Testas (2002) notes that in some cases, these conflicts have resulted into civil war affecting many countries in Africa such as Senegal, Morocco, Rwanda, South Sudan, and South Africa among others. Consequently, Ottoh (2018) notes that conflicts became more widespread and in 1990 almost one out of every twenty deaths in Africa were caused by wars which were ethnic based. Perpetrators of violence frequently mobilize support based on ethnic identity and commonly advocate for ethnic goals. (Decalo, 1990: Horowitz, 1985). In Ethiopia's contested region of western Tigray, the Amhara security forces have carried out brutal campaigns of ethnic cleansing against the Tigrayan communities since November 2020 (Human Rights Watch June 16, 2022). The main contestation being that the Amhara were not happy with the formation of Tigray regional government and wanted it to become part of Amhara regional state.

In Darfur, the conflict between rebels and the Sudanese controlled government from 2003 was due to claims of economic and political marginalization of the sedentary Africans by Arab ethnic groups. According to a report by Aljazeera (2023), in response to the rebellion, the government mobilized and armed the Arab groups to fight the rebels. Meanwhile in 2023 ethnic conflicts between Sudanese military leaders and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces reignited in April 2023 and by June 2023, ethnic based violence had intensified such that there were fears that the violence could

transform into genocide as the nomadic communities attacked the non-Arab Masalit community in West Darfur.

On the other hand, South Sudan has also suffered from ethnic based political violence occasioned by political differences between Riek Machar, a Nuer and Salva Kiir, a Dinka over power sharing since 2013 (Malaudzi, 2023). The differences between these two led to violence perpetrated on civilians by soldiers from the Dinka and Nuer communities each attacking the other. In spite of several peace agreements, lasting peace is yet to be established in South Sudan.

In Zimbabwe, the Ndebele suffered politically initiated violence under the operation “Gukurahundi” which began in January 1983 (Cameron, 2023). The operation which took place under the reign of Robert Mugabe was aimed at getting rid of dissidents who were viewed as opposition supporters. The operation, which included rape, and sexual violence, resulted in the death of up to twenty thousand Ndebele. This operation ended in 1987 with the signing of the National Accord.

The Central African Republic has been embroiled in ethnic conflicts since the year 2012. The Lake Chad Basin including Chad has suffered from intercommunal conflicts affecting its neighboring areas as far as Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria. In Zambia, Moono (2019) notes that those in charge of state authority used ethnicity to achieve their political ambitions. These ethnic manipulations were perpetuated through political campaigns and the media, leading to political bloodshed.

Conflicts in places such as; Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Darfur, Sierra –Leone in Africa; Iraq, Israel, West Bank and Gaza Strip in the middle East; the Balkans, Chechnya, and

Yugoslavia in Europe; Pakistan and Myanmar in Asia, continue having deadly repercussions. All these ongoing ethnic conflicts have ended up destabilizing these areas. The restoration of multi-party races led to an upsurge in such violence (Straus, 2012). This is mostly due to the fact that the end of the Cold War shut off financial sources for insurgencies and governments fighting proxy wars. In the early (1990s), this opened windows of opportunity for resolving existing problems and initiating new ones (Straus, 2012). The Soviet Union and the United States were key providers of funding throughout the Cold War. Upon the conclusion of the Cold War, governments like Kenya that had previously received external political and financial backing became vulnerable.

Consequently, the first decade after the conclusion of the Cold War was characterised by an abrupt surge in interstate conflict as leaders fought to bolster themselves against mounting and unfettered opposition (Straus, 2012). According to the sentiments of Nasong'o (2015) the conclusion of the Cold War and the fall of communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s marked a new political era in Kenya, characterized by the reintroduction of multi-party politics and a resurgence in political competition. This shift was accompanied by a significant rise in instances of political violence.

The sentiments of Nasong'o (2015) support the views held by (Straus, 2012; Ogot and Ochieng, 1995) that the period of the 1990s witnessed increased politically based ethnic conflicts in some nations in Africa including Kenya. This study undertook research to establish the dynamics behind this increase of intermittent ethnic conflicts in the same period in Uasin Gishu.

According to Kadima and Owuor (2006), the pursuit of democratic and responsible government, which began shortly after independence, remained throughout the Jomo

Kenyatta administration. Under the rule of Daniel Arap Moi, these endeavors intensified following a worldwide resurgence of democracy in the 1990s, spurred by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the conclusion of the Cold War. It seemed as if a fresh wind was blowing over Africa, igniting long-suppressed internal forces for change. These political changes escalated ethnic violence.

Thus the end of the cold war seemingly set the stage for political violence in some African countries including Kenya due to three main factors; firstly, most of these countries leaders were mainly under the indirect political control of either capitalist powers led by USA, or communist powers led by USSR. The collapse of communism weakened the USSR and hence, reduced the need for political policing of these African countries by the USA; Secondly, the two superpowers used to fund many of these countries for political reasons in order to ensure they remain followers of their ideologies. With the collapse of communism, the ideological competition reduced drastically, and with it the flow of financial assistance which some of these leaders used to maintain their control over their countries. Thirdly, the demise of communism spurred the emergence of a fresh wave of democracy in African countries. This new wave was supported by USA to the chagrin of some of the dictators who used to enjoy the support of USA. The changing political climate forced these leaders to look for new strategies of holding on to power even if it meant inciting their communities to sabotage opposition unity or creating political instability and displacements in order to tilt voting and voting patterns in their favor.

In light of this, it is regrettable that ethnic violence rooted in the political and economic control of resources has been observed in several regions of the world. In some cases, Irobi (2013) notes that ethnic conflicts have been referred to as ethnic cleansing due to

the fact that specific ethnic groups were targeted for elimination in order for their protagonists to access unlimited political and economic control since in most cases these victims were seen as impediments to the control of resources.

Throughout Kenya's history, several forms of political violence have emerged. In 1888, a Kikuyu chief, Waiyaki Wa Hinga was kidnapped and subsequently executed by the British during the acquisition of concessionary rights to the Kenyan coast by the British East Africa Company (BEAC) from the Sultan of Zanzibar (Berman & Lonsdale, 1992). Waiyaki Wa Hinga was a participant in the burning down of Fort Hall, which was BEAC officials' administrative stronghold. Similarly, Kenyan opposition to the construction of the Uganda Railway spurred the British to employ violent measures such as killings to quell African resistance

Kenya's politics has been characterized by subjugation and violent uprising since its emancipation in 1963. After the triumph of KANU in the 1963 elections, Kenya became a one-party nation under Jomo Kenyatta, who prohibited attempts to form any meaningful opposition party. This led to the assumption that Kenyatta, himself a Kikuyu, prioritized Kikuyu matters over country's interests (Human Rights Watch, 1993). After ascending to power, Kenyatta utilized a clique from his ethnic community to centralize power in the presidency and marginalize his former freedom fighting allies, including Odinga (Throup & Hornsby, 1998: pp 12-20). Both the Kenyatta and Moi governments decided to impose a single party government under the premise that it was vital to boost national building and unity, yet it was a subtle way of avoiding opposition

According to Klopp (2001) President Moi adopted policies that favored members of his ethnic community, preventing members of other ethnicities from obtaining access to

government office or government assets. To enable this, political dissent was often repressed. Other repressive techniques included disproportionate use of violence, torturing, and arbitrary imprisonment. These activities and policies deprived other communities of national resources and government services by sidelining them from the same.

After an attempted coup in 1982, the Moi administration changed the Constitution, and Kenya thereafter became an official one-party republic. Security and police officers violently suppressed protests opposing this action (Hansen, 2009). Moi allowed multi-party elections to be conducted in 1992 only after significant foreign duress. The campaign, the poll, and the events that followed were marked by acts of aggression, intimidations, and violent fights among adherents of opposing parties.

Consequently, more than a thousand people died while over three thousand were displaced (Human Rights Watch, 2002). Moi had cautioned that the move back to multi-party politics would lead to ethnic conflict, but certain quarters have observed that, apart from the re-introduction of many parties, there was ample proof that the government was responsible in inciting ethnicity for political gain. That could have been the reason why the government chose not to take sufficient action to prevent the violence from going off the rails (Africa Watch, 1993).

Since the introduction of a multi-party system in 1991, general elections have intermittently seen the increasing weaponization of ethnicity and political violence (Human Right Watch, 2002). Political violence in Kenya is associated with lengthy frustrations and administrative failings that go beyond election politics. While political exploitation of ethnicity in Kenya has been habitual, punishment for those responsible for inciting violent conflicts has been a rare occurrence. Human Right Watch (2002)

notes that the period from 1991 and 1993 was one of the most turbulent in Kenya's post-independence history, when President Moi attempted to stir up resentment against the Kikuyu in the Rift Valley. Khamisi (2011) opines that the objective was to solidify Moi's vote among the Kalenjin in the Rift Valley by pushing out immigrants who were reluctant to vote for him, notably the Kikuyu.

After the exit of Moi, President Kibaki was peacefully elected by majority of the communities in Kenya under a show of political unity. In contrast, the PEV of 2007-2008 shocked and surprised Kenyans and the entire world due to its link to the challenged election outcome, its pace and scope. Violence had already occurred before Kibaki was proclaimed the victor of the election, but it escalated following the announcement. According to the Waki Report (2008), around 1,133 individuals were killed and over 500,000 Kenyans were forced into internal exile as a result of the violence, with a considerable number still residing in internal displacement camps.

Sarah Bayne (2008) outlined four general categories of post-election discord: spontaneous clashes erupting in ODM strongholds immediately following the announcement of the Presidential election results; coordinated assaults within the Rift Valley amid Nandi-Kikuyu tensions; orchestrated retaliatory strikes by criminal factions involving Kikuyu youths, targeting the Luo, Luhya, Nandi, and other communities within agricultural regions like Nakuru and Naivasha; and disproportionate employment of police force resulting in fatalities and injuries among civilians, notably in western Kenya. The focus of this study was on the dynamics behind the violence meted out on the inhabitants of Uasin Gishu in Rift Valley and particularly between the Kikuyu immigrants and the local Kalenjin.

In the region of this research, Uasin Gishu County, the 2007/8 unrest started between Odinga's followers, primarily from the Kalenjin ethnicity, and Kibaki's backers, primarily from the Kikuyu ethnicity, but spread to other groups in the county over time (Hansen, 2009). In an attempt to restore peace, the office of the Prime Minister and a coalition were established in January 2008 through a power-sharing deal.

Could it be that the hitherto peacefully coexisting cosmopolitan population suddenly visited violence upon each other? Could it be that the simmering undercurrents of ethnic inequalities and differences erupted to the surface? Could it be that specific aspects of ethnicity and ethnic differences were manipulated to incite violence to access political power? Could it be that feelings of perceived political and economic deprivation were harnessed into missiles of ethnic animosity? The ferocity of the previously unheard-of violence in Kenya revealed how intense Kenya's power struggles can become. It is obvious from the preceding context that ethnicity has been utilized to fuel and increase political violence in Kenya. It is against this background that this study sought to analyze the weaponization of ethnicity in connection to political violence in Uasin Gishu County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Africa and Kenya, the intermittent political violence that has almost become a normal phenomenon, has been attached to the interplay between Ethnicity and colonial policies. In the case of Kenya, there is a connection between the formation of early political parties, post-independent political alignments, political violence, and weaponization of ethnicity.

In Kenya, ethnicity has often been recklessly invoked and manipulated by the elite with dire consequences, which include; loss of lives, economic destruction, disruption of the

social fabric, thus undermining democracy, a problem that persists to date without a tentative solution. Yet to date, as the elite continue to invoke ethnicity and its aspects for social, economic and political mileage, there is an eminent, underlying, potential danger of exponential ethnic strife of extreme proportions.

Instrumentalisation of ethnicity into a weapon of political violence is a potentially deadly phenomenon which has apparently become endemic as accompanied by its myriad negative and prolific consequences on Kenya's socio-economic and political fabric. The unfolding phenomenon has received measured attention in Kenya often under rubrics like negative ethnicity and ethnic conflicts. How about if what is being witnessed is a well-orchestrated and structured instrumentalisation of cultural aspects of ethnicity into a weapon of political violence in the pursuit of the scarce resources as driven by the global forces of history?

It was in tune with this later question that the main problem of this study was to historically examine the dynamics of weaponized ethnicity and its attendant links to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu county since 1850.

1.3. General Objective

The general objective of the study was to assess the dynamics of weaponized ethnicity and intermittent Political Violence in Kenya since 1850 with specific reference to Uasin Gishu county.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. To examine the historical background of the Nandi community of Uasin Gishu in relation to ethnic formation and political establishment during the pre-colonial period.
- ii. To examine the salient features of ethnic relations and political violence in Uasin Gishu in the colonial period, 1895 to 1962.
- iii. To evaluate the impact of Jomo Kenyatta's reign on weaponized ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu, 1963- 2002.
- iv. To interrogate the nexus between weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu during President Moi and Kibaki's reign, 1978- 2012
- v. To interrogate the dynamics of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu during Uhuru Kenyatta's rule.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How did the historical background of the Nandi community in Uasin Gishu shape their ethnic identity and political organization during the pre-colonial period?
- ii. What were the key features of ethnic relations and political violence in Uasin Gishu during the colonial period (1895-1962)?
- iii. What was the impact of Jomo Kenyatta's reign on the development of weaponized ethnicity and the occurrence of intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu from 1963 to 2002?

- iv. What is the relationship between the weaponization of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu during the reigns of Presidents Moi and Kibaki (1978-2012)?
- v. What were the dynamics of weaponised ethnicity during the Uhuru Kenyatta's era? (2013- 2022)?

1.5 Justification of the Study

This section encompasses the academic, philosophical and policy justifications of the study.

1.5.1 Academic Justification

According to several studies, Vayrynen (2018, 1991); Shoup, (2007); and Gurr (2015) ethnic conflicts have increased globally, especially after the Cold war, affecting countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and America. In most of these countries, ethnic conflicts are due to the struggle for meagre resources and domination of political power. In Africa and particularly in Kenya, studies on ethnic conflicts have been on the interplay between ethnicity and; colonial policies, the formation of early political parties in Kenya, post-independent political alignments, and political violence,

And yet, in Kenya, ethnicity has often been recklessly invoked by politicians with dire consequences. This problem persists to date without a tentative solution. Studies have been done to understand the actors, causes, effects, and factors influencing ethnicity and political violence (Kagwanja 2006; Totolo 2009; Kanyinga 1998; Nyawalo 2011; Mwiandi 2011). Closely related to this study are works on the use of Ethnicity as a political tool in Africa by Etefa (2019), in Kenya by Leleruk (2010), and the politicization of ethnicity (Weber, 2010; Oyugi, 2000; Ahlberg & Njoroge, 2013;

Tarimo, 2010). All these do not, however, elucidate on the weaponization of cultural aspects of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu County.

On the other hand, the concept of weaponization has been explored in a bid to show how some issues, events, circumstances, or fundamentals have been harnessed, turned around, and used to achieve unorthodox results for political expediency. Such has included the Weaponization of the media, (Singer and Brooking 2019), Weaponization of migration, (Steger 2017), Weaponization of refugees, (Kotoulas 2020), Weaponization of Corona Virus, (Diab 2020), Weaponization of slavery and slave trade, Weaponization of Colonialism, Weaponization of trade, (Andaya 2016), Weaponization of rape, (Rolland 2021) Weaponization of economic aid, among others. In all these, none has zeroed in on weaponization of ethnicity in Uasin Gishu. Hence the need to also explore weaponization of ethnicity in Uasin Gishu.

Furthermore, the link between weaponized ethnicity and political violence has not been academically exhausted. Despite numerous publications on ethnicity and political violence, as shown previously, there are still gaps to be filled. These gaps therefore provide the academic justification for this study.

1.5.2 Philosophical Justification

This study was anchored on interpretivism as advanced by Max Weber. Max Weber introduced the term 'Verstehen' (to understand) and argued that in scientific study, the observation of objects alone is not enough. In order to make valuable conclusions, researchers must strive to develop a compassionate comprehension of the motivations and backgrounds of the individuals they investigate (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Ryan (2018) notes that it is on the same vein that Giambattista Vico argued that

Our perceptions of reality and truth are shaped by our social organization and experiences.

In this study the application of Interpretivism was based on the assumption that reality of the historical interaction and relationship between Kalenjin and immigrants in Uasin Gishu as unique ethnic communities was subjective, multiple and socially constructed. In essence the social, political and economic processes and structures that these communities experienced over time are the unique characteristics that shaped and coalesced them primordially. Consequently, the application of interpretivism was important in this study since it enabled the researcher to understand how these circumstances were interpreted by the political elite for and by these communities and consequently how these interpretations were manifested and weaponized leading to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu

Therefore, in this study, in line with Bhattejee (2012), the reality of weaponisation of ethnicity and the experiences of political violence in Uasin Gishu could only be understood by interacting with these communities through interviews, and focus group discussions in order to fully appreciate how their historical and social perspectives shaped their reactions and propelled their political actions. This aspect of interpretivism as applied in this study is further reinforced by Lincoln *et al* (2011) who opine that it is the social, political, and cultural values of communities that shape reality in historical realism.

On the other hand, the fact that not everyone participated in or supported political violence in equal measure in Uasin Gishu, was understood by the fact that it was possible that different people in the same society experienced and understood the circumstances surrounding the relations between the Kalenjin, migrant communities in

Uasin Gishu, and the attendant political violence differently (Alharahshel & Pius, 2020; Bhattacharjee, 2012). Consequently, this study interrogated the role played by cultural beliefs and traditional institutions in influencing how ethnicity was weaponized as well as the changing dynamics of intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. Ryan (2018) implies that the differences in people's reactions to the phenomenon of political violence was because interpretivism posits that the understanding that truth and knowledge are subjective and culturally situated stems from the recognition that they are influenced by individuals' experiences and how these experiences are comprehended. This therefore accounted for the intermittent manifestation of political violence in Uasin Gishu.

In the views of Whitley (1984) Interpretivists seek to uncover the meanings and motivations underlying people's actions, such as their behaviors and interactions within society and culture. Similarly, this study set out to understand the circumstances and factors that prompted the intermittent violent politically motivated acts of the communities in Uasin Gishu. According to Chowdhury (2014), the comprehension of cultures can be achieved by examining people's ideas, thought processes, and the significance they attribute to various meanings. Therefore, in order to comprehend the role played by culture in relation to how ethnicity was weaponised during political violence, this study applied Primordialism theory which was used to examine how the traditional institutions and aspects of Kalenjin and immigrants culture were harnessed in mobilising the communities in Uasin Gishu into violent or tolerant reactions against their neighbours.

In relation to the dynamism of weaponized ethnicity and political violence, the interpretivist tradition emphasizes the dynamic, constructed, and evolving character of social reality. Thus this study applied interpretivism to explain the circumstances

leading to the intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu as well as the factors that contribute to the fluid political and ethnic alignments by querying and seeking the respondents' thoughts and feelings in order to, according to Heath and Devine (1999), grasp social reality from the perspective of the individuals under study.

In line with the ideas of Panya and Nyarwath (2022), the purpose of this study therefore, in tandem with interpretivist research, was to create a new, richer and nuanced understanding, interpretation, and context of how weaponisation of certain cultural ethnic aspects of the Kalenjin and immigrant communities by the political elite, has contributed to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu.

1.5.3 Policy Justification

The study of weaponized ethnicity and political violence is essential for comprehending political violence in Africa and Kenya in particular. Clearly, the role of cultural aspects of ethnicity on intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu has received little attention. This study will provide light on the use of ethnic background as an instrument of political aggression and provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of current measures which have been employed in preventing weaponized ethnicity on political violence. This study therefore, has the potential of benefitting policy makers not only in Uasin Gishu and Kenya as a whole, but even the rest of the world.

Kuhn (1970), Junjie, M., & Yingxin, M. (2022) acknowledges that interpretive research is anchored on the whole process of comprehension and solution of problems. It is with this consideration that the findings in this study can be applied by policy makers in their bid to understand the genesis of Weaponization of ethnicity. By so doing government agencies will be able to have information on the behaviour of some communities in relation to the propensity to violent ethnic clashes. Such information will help such

agencies understand why some communities are more prone to believe that they have a sense of entitlement to national resources more than others, as well as the factors that drive politicians to weaponize ethnicity. With this understanding, government agencies, donors and NGOs will be better equipped to formulate workable solutions which are not just holistic but historically entrenched. This will contribute to formulation of policies which can help eliminate intermittent political violence, while at the same time removing perceptions of ethnic suspicions and stereotypes which contribute to poor ethnic relations.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study's preliminaries are set in the precolonial period from 1850 during which the migration and settlement of the Nandi in particular and Kalenjin in general took place. This epoch is of importance as it unravels the formation of the Nandi group by bringing out their primordial communal, social, economic and political ties. It also brings out the nature of interactions between the Nandi speakers and their neighbours.

The next epoch is the colonial period which plants the seeds of ethnic nationalism and also institutes economic exploitation of the communities in and around Rift Valley by the colonial government setting the stage for perceived ethnic stereotypes' as well as the roots of historical injustices. The end of colonialism ushers in the post-independence era, which paves the way for the emergence and growth of ethnic nationalism as a result of unresolved colonial injustices and the perceived marginalization of particular populations through patronage, clientelism, and rent-seeking. This period is also significant since it lays the ground for the coalition of the all the Nandi speakers into a stronger, more united ethnic group called Kalenjin. The Kalenjin coalesce in a bid to deal with the threatening economic and political challenges.

The independence period saw a split in KANU due to ideological differences underpinned with ethnic concerns and dynamics in the contest for political and economic control of newly independent Kenya; ever since, success in Kenyan politics has been highly based on control of the “large” and “small” ethnicities. Consequently, ethnicity in politics existed at independence and even during the colonial era, when it was weaponized as a tool for presenting grievances to the colonial regime. In 1992, 1997, 2007, 2013, and 2017, ethnicity was weaponized by politicians to mobilize their bases as vehicles for gaining, retaining, and sustaining political, social and financial control of the nation. The study covers up to Uhuru’s tenure in a bid to bring out the dynamism of weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence by the political elite.

The Uasin Gishu County, providing the geo-political scope, was chosen because it has been a hot spot of intermittent political violence which is based on ethnic prejudices. This study’s social scope was the communities in Uasin Gishu made up of; the Kalenjin who are the majority, followed by the immigrant Kikuyu and Abaluhya and other minority communities who inhabit Uasin Gishu since all have been caught up in some form of political violence. Primary data collection was conducted in the period from June 2021 to June 2022 in line with the NACOSTI permit.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study’s findings are significant in the following ways: The stakeholders in Uasin Gishu County can gain knowledge on the dynamics of ethnicity and utilize the results to understand ways of coping with this calibre of political violence. The findings add knowledge to the academic field on the dynamics of weaponised ethnicity and the genesis of political violence in Kenya. The findings also add knowledge to the academic field on the interplay between weaponized ethnicity and political violence. The findings further add to the existing body of knowledge on the nexus between colonialism and

Kenyatta's regime and the origins of ethnic conflicts, Moi-Kibaki eras in relation to the escalation of Weaponization of ethnicity and political violence. The conclusions of the study can benefit governance in general and Uasin Gishu in particular through the formulation of policies that can be effectively applied in ameliorating occasions that may lead to Weaponization of ethnicity and political violence thereby contributing to the general peaceful co-existence of the Kenyan masses.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The respondents were reluctant to give out information about political violence. There were tensions and suspicions from the respondents due to some of the information's sensitive nature and political connotations within the rising political temperatures. To overcome these challenges, the researcher engaged gatekeepers from the indigenous communities such as opinion leaders, church leaders, and village elders in order to address suspicions, create harmony, and build confidence in the respondents. They were also assured that the research was purely for academic purposes and they were also asked for their consent before engagement. Most of the respondents viewed the researcher and the assistant as strangers. To solve this, the researcher established good rapport with the respondents. Some of the areas on the study site were inaccessible due to poor roads. This was solved by using locally available means of transport such as motor cycles in consultation with the local gatekeepers.

1.9 Literature Review

The section is a review of various works done by scholars globally, through books, and theses. It also encompasses review of published and unpublished materials, articles in journals, magazines, and newspapers. This is done thematically based on the specific objectives and include; the concepts of weaponization and ethnicity, ethnic conflicts,

relationship between ethnicity and political violence, migration and settlement of the Nandi, ethnic relations and conflicts during the pre-colonial period, ethnic relations and conflicts during the colonial period, ethnic relations and political violence during Kenyatta, Moi and Kibaki regimes, as well as the dynamics that shaped ethnic political relations during tenure of President Uhuru.

The primary literature reviewed in this study served several purposes. It helped the researcher to have a deeper understanding of political violence, its dynamics, ethnicity, and the concept of weaponisation. It provided the basis for the adaptation of the theoretical frameworks thereby sharpening and deepening the research's theoretical foundations. By contextualizing the study in relation to the current knowledge base, it helped to establish a link between this study and other related studies. It assisted in the refinement of the methodology adopted in this study. It also acquainted the researcher with the available literature on the study and outlined their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, it provided knowledge on the relevant additional data needed in the study and consequently helped to identify the gaps that this study was intended to fill. It also helped develop an analytical framework for data analysis and interpretation. This is supported by (Kumar 2019; Mugenda & Mugenda 1999; Kombo & Tromp 2006).

1.9.1 The Concept Weaponization

Weaponization as an act is the manipulation of an idea, institution, event or situation in order to utilise it as a tool to achieve certain objectives. The term was originally used during the Cold War as military jargon when the US Army added nuclear capabilities to rockets before launching them (Singer & Brooking, 2019). This action changed rockets' main function from launching space crafts to being used as weapons of war. It is common today to describe everything from words to the internet as being weaponized.

Anything can become a tool to be used by an individual, a government, an idea, or a group, for their own purposes.

Several studies and authors have documented weaponization as shown in the following discussions. In their highly acclaimed book “Weaponization of Social Media,” Singer and Brooking (2019), the authors discuss the role of social media as it was used to instigate violence during the Chicago gang war, Russian- Ukraine crisis, Israel- Palestine conflict, Pakistan- India rivalry and even during Colombian civil war. According to them, the internet is altering warfare and politics through social media, much like warfare and politics are altering the internet (Singer & Brooking, 2019). Weaponization referred to the modification of an object so that it might be utilized as a weapon, instrument, base, or tool to produce "military" results. For example, Social media has been used strategically to expose opponents’ wrongdoings or embarrass them to the world. Hence weaken them or make them appear as the aggressors to their disadvantage.

Singer and Brooking (2019) reference the 2006 Lebanon conflict between Hezbollah and Israel, in which Hezbollah outmanoeuvred Israel by utilizing social media to build and sustain global and regional pressure, ultimately forcing Israel to terminate its activities prior to accomplishing its goals and objectives. Hezbollah utilized social platforms to demotivate Israelis, organize domestic, geographic, and worldwide backing, undermine assistance for Israeli policies, indoctrinate, and damage the IDF's legitimacy. This works relevance comes out as it clearly demonstrates the idea of Weaponization through the use of mass media as a tool that can be manipulated to besmirch an opponent, hence satisfying the ulterior motives of a protagonist to the detriment of the opponent. Unfortunately, the authors’ area of concern though sharing

the same idea, is different and does not discuss weaponization of ethnicity hence creating an academic, thematic, social, and regional gap which this study intends to fill.

Von Lossow (2016) discusses the “Rebirth of water as a weapon by The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Syria and Iraq”. This study examines how the Islamic State has utilized water to advance its military and diplomatic goals in Syria and Iraq. ISIS has frequently relocated water, cut off vital supplies, contaminated or flooded large areas in an effort to punish their opponents and force them to capitulate in this water-scarce region. According to Von Lossow (2016), by seizing large dams in the Euphrates and Tigris region, ISIS has been able to frequently, systematically, consistently, and flexibly utilise the water weapon. The use and control of water by ISIS is seen as a tool to manipulate, control, or punish those areas seen as exhibiting hostility or rebellion towards ISIS. Although the author did discuss weaponisation of water by ISIS, he does not mention political violence, nor how ethnicity has been weaponised. The weaponisation of water by ISIS can be related to weaponisation of ethnicity by the political elite in Uasin Gishu County

In Weaponization of migration, Steger (2017) examines migration as an instrument of political war in the twenty-first century. He demonstrates how migration is gradually becoming the next feasible weapon for several government and non-government stakeholders. Migration has been used to pursue unorthodox methods to increase geopolitical dominance and attain their goals: political, economic, or military, such as the forcible displacement of a citizenry to sabotage an adversary operation or weaken oppositional military assistance. This type of armed migration may also involve the incursion of migrants into an intended region or the recruitment of displaced civilian populations for elevated manpower. Migration could also be used to appropriate region or assets from the target population by expelling members of a given group who are

perceived as a communal, diplomatic, or economic threat. In the majority of cases, the protagonist weaponized migration by tactically designing the movement or by utilising migratory events that had already occurred.

Steger (2017) further elaborates on weaponized migration by outlining the different categories and varieties. Coercive, dispossessive, exportive, economic, fifth column, militaristic, and political leverage or propaganda are among the most commonly used. Coercive weaponization refers to a scenario in which the protagonist employs or threatens to utilize migration as a foreign policy tool to prompt behavioral shifts or secure concessions from their target by wielding migration as a weapon of war (Greenhill, 2016). The method of dispossession is prompted by a series of events in which the protagonist exploits migration to seize land or resources from the intended victims.

In contrast, exportive migration occurs when a dissident target group is evacuated to consolidate authority. Politically, the relocation of the group may be utilized to undermine an adversary. However, the use of migrants or displaced people for economic advantage is classified as economic weaponization. The fifth column approach entails a long-term plan in which a contender deploys migrants to a target's territory (or exploits migrants already within a territory) in order to subvert a target government. The challenger may employ its people or sympathizers already residing abroad to combat an opponent.

Militarized weaponization refers to the relocation of a population for the purpose of disrupting enemy operations or reducing the entrance of migrants into a target's area, as well as the forced recruitment of displaced civilians for greater manpower. Propaganda or political Weaponization of migration is the use of migration to boost political

legitimacy, diminish an opponent's influence, or justify future actions. In this instance, the challenger includes migration-related propaganda into their communication operations in an effort to enhance their perceived regional or worldwide legitimacy. Steger (2017) will contribute to this study as it clearly demonstrates the concept of Weaponization, in which migration becomes a tool that can be controlled to achieve a variety of outcomes in connection to a challenger's ambitions or objectives. The same idea is relevant in assessing the various ways in which ethnicity has been manipulated and hence turned into a tool of political violence in the Kenyan situation. In this work, the involvement of government and its machinery in weaponised ethnicity was established through interviews with various respondents.

According to Kotoulas (2020), migration has also been used as a weapon by Turkey to force concessions out of Greece and the European Union (EU). Turkey has orchestrated state-sponsored movement of illegal migrants as part of a coordinated effort by President Erdogan's government to weaponize migrants in order to undermine the sovereignty of the Greek state and impose diplomatic pressure on the European Union. Syria has been encouraging migrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and the countries in the southern part of Africa, most of whom have lived in Turkey for years, to migrate to Greece.

President Erdogan is therefore using migration as a weapon to blackmail the Europeans in order to obtain from the European Union: extra financial support and assistance for his active campaign in Syria. Turkey intends to create instability in border regions and evaluate the tactical preparedness and capabilities of the Greek military and government in the event of a major conflict. The author describes how immigrants have been used for political purposes but does not mention weaponisation of ethnicity. Although this author does not discuss weaponisation of ethnicity, the author clearly describes the

weaponization of migration as a tool in fighting for concessions from a rich country and not as a tool for political violence

Diab (2020), in the article “On weaponizing fear and controlling movement” shows how governments are using the Coronavirus as an instrument to achieve their political, social, and economic goals. The fear of the spread of the Coronavirus has been used to tightly control migration, especially from unwanted areas of the globe to some cities in Europe and America. The stringent procedures implemented to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus are frequently goldmines for greater objectives, like curbing undesired migration and limiting the migrations of refugees, asylees, and migrants equally (Diab, 2020).

Numerous administrations have utilized public health issues to further other agendas. For example, Greece has used concerns about the spreading of the Coronavirus to support its contentious strategy for building isolated facilities for asylum seekers who arrive on its shores. People’s vulnerability to climate change is being used against them as a weapon, therefore, exacerbating their precocity by excluding them from much needed and due assistance while instead directing the required resources to bolster the well-being of those already well-positioned to respond to climate change threats. This work can be use to juxtapose weaponisation of ethnicity.

Apolline Rolland (2021) in ‘Weaponization of the Female Body’ explains how rape has been used as an instrument of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The prevalence of rape in the country, has led it to be labelled the center of rape in the world (Brown, 2011). Most of the rape incidences are conducted by combatants, armed groups, and soldiers. The main factors driving the use of rape as a weapon in DRC are; poverty and patriarchy. Constant war in DRC has led to poverty, and economic

desperation among women who act as breadwinners in the absence of their husbands. These women become vulnerable targets for looting, and sexual violence. Patriarchy on the other hand, makes women subordinate to men in DRC, rape therefore represents the power dynamics between women and men while women's bodies represents another sphere where men can exercise their power. According to the men, the women are seen as the spoils of war and are therefore regarded as commodities and dehumanised.

Men also utilize rape to keep control over areas and assert influence over other men by assaulting the sisters and daughters of their spouses (Csete *et al.*, 2002). The rapists message to these women's husbands, fathers and brothers is that they were not strong enough to protect them (Stark and Wessels 2012). This article is relevant since it shows that those who engage in weaponization of rape do so due to poverty and patriarchy or to exhibit power by their acts. It also lays out the vulnerability of women during Weaponization of both rape and ethnicity. The foregoing can be applied to this study to glean the role played by poverty and patriarchy in weaponisation of ethnicity through acts of political violence as perpetrators attempt to display their power over their victims

Nouri (2021) discusses the forgotten voices of the Yazidi women and shows how ISIS has used rape as weapon of war against the Yazidi in 2014. This was weaponization of the female body by the ISIS militants. The Yazidi women were severely targeted and their abduction was seen as a way of de-masculinising their men who were portrayed as being unable to protect their wives, daughters, and mothers.

Nouri (2021) explains that the sexual violence and enslavement of the Yazidi women went beyond the male sexual pleasure or savagery associated with ISIS, or even the revenue gained through human trafficking of the Yazidi women. Nouri (2021) holds the

view that acts of rape are used to personally attack Yazidi culture. Rape is used by ISIS as a strategy to secure power and validate its authority. Rape then becomes a weapon of war which is methodically and purposely used just like other practices of armed conflict. This work relates to the politicisation of cultural aspects during political contestations in Uasin Gishu.

Lyi (2018) elaborates on Boko Haram's weaponization of women in Nigeria. Boko Haram, according to Lyi, has entirely weaponized women for a myriad of purposes. Women are becoming Boko Haram's primary goals and tools of adaptation and rebirth. Boko Haram routinely employs women to enter public spaces, conduct operations in their towns, and conduct urban attacks. For Boko Haram, women have been mobilized and armed to carry out assaults, in addition to serving as potent emblems of their doctrine (Bloom and Matfess, 2016). These articles inform this study by giving the motives of rape by showing that the use of rape which specifically targets certain communities during political violence; is aimed at preventing these communities from returning to those areas since rape dehumanises them, leads to loss of honor, and humiliates them apart from stigmatising the victims. Since acts of rape are so traumatising, the victims do not wish for the same to recur.

Fields (2018) in "Weaponised Racial Fear" discusses racial fear in America. He argues the presence of a widespread, unconscious, and mainly automatic prejudice towards those with dark complexion. They are perceived to be more antagonistic, criminal, and violent. These long-held prejudices corrupt the lawmakers, law enforcement officers, legal professionals, judges, and jurors of the criminal justice system. Fields investigates the effects of racial anxiety on the civilian complaint. He focuses on the manner in

which bias-motivated people weaponize law enforcement in reaction to their unfounded racial anxieties through misusing and abusing emergency response systems.

In this article, Fields examines why this specific version of weaponized race based dread is occurring with high prevalence, what effect police reaction to complaints have on persons and the societies that are most aimed, how lawmakers and court system condone such behaviour, and how modifying existing law and law enforcement regulations can mitigate the impact of this Weaponization. The author highlights racist fear mongering tactics to instil persistent distrust of the unnamed black male. Fear of African Americans coexisting in public white areas defines this. This work can be used to show how the ethnic biases and suspicions between the communities in Uasin Gishu have been inculcated as well as their impact.

In "Ethnicity and everyday life," Karner (2007) discusses why ethnic origin is an increasing cause of political dispute in the globalised society, through the production and transformation of multidimensional social inequality and dominance. He underlines the double nature of ethnicity as a political tool of discrimination on the one side, and in some settings, a provider of much-needed meaning, unity, and belonging. Karner gives some of the causes of ethnicity that will be used to tackle the objectives but leaves out weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu.

Silaev (2020) investigates ethnicity as an instrument and nationality strategy in actuality. In this study, the author investigates the regional bureaucracy-inspired practice of ethnic group formation. They contend that the ethnic distinctions are created by the administration to make public sphere clearer and more controllable, instead of being inherent to the society. The consequent use of ethnicity as a political tool is restricted to a tiny portion of the population for political ends. Although that is not about

Uasin Gishu, it demonstrates how ethnicity is exploited for the advantage of ruling elites and is thus significant.

The study by Omotosho (2016) titled "Ethnicity as a Tool for Nation Building in Nigeria" illustrates that ethnic origin is a national issue and can be a major hindrance to development of the nation, unity, and incorporation on the one hand, but can also be utilized as an instrument for nation-building by political actors and politicians, thereby becoming a commodity for national greatness. He demonstrates how ethnicity is typically promoted adversely, but how it may be transformed favourably into assets if used as a vehicle for national development, hence the concept of positive ethnicity.

Kiger (2019) discusses how Germany used their grievances over the treaty of Versailles to begin the second world war. Hence to the author, the treaty was weaponised by the Germans. During the signing of the pact, he explains, the Allied forces decided to punish Germany in order to prevent it from becoming a future danger. Sadly, the payment of reparations and the dismantlement of the German Wehrmacht were humiliating for a great number of Germans. These elements eventually led to the growth of populism and nationalism, which in turn led to the emergence of Hitler, who violated the pact by re-arming Germany, one of the primary causes of the first world war. The Germans generally resented the treaty in the following ways; they resented the payment of war reparations, they were frightened because the treaty limited their army, they hated the fact that the treaty reduced their territory by a tenth. Weaponization of the Treaty of Versailles eventually led to conflict between the Germans and the allies since the Germans felt that the treaty deprived them of what rightfully belonged to them, and also led to their economic woes. This can be juxtaposed with Weaponization of ethnicity in Uasin Gishu by the political elite as a result of the historical injustices and yet they were also after political power just like Hitler.

Andaya's (2016) study discusses ethnicity as a tool of trade and demonstrates the dynamics of weaponization of ethnicity as a tool of trade by the various ethnic groups in South East Asia by demonstrating how the communities located on either side of the straits quickly exploited the trading opportunities presented by the situations. Southeast Asia's favourable placement between major civilizations afforded its leaders the luxury of examining, testing, and picking the most suited materials to progress their cultures.

Smaller ethnicities merged with bigger ones and vice versa in order to gain from commerce and changes in trade patterns and to adapt to change. Certain groups in the region of the straits recognized the advantage in distancing themselves from a wider ethnic identity in order to build a smaller and more effective unit. Others, however, saw a greater value in getting linked with a bigger ethnic group in order to profit from commerce. Andaya (2016) uses ethnicity to analyse the group relations in South East Asian History. This work brings out the positive aspects of harnessing ethnicity for the benefit of society and can also be used to assess the changing political alliances of different ethnicities in Uasin Gishu.

Many indigenous people have created new political organizations and refashioned their ethnic or pan-ethnic identities in response to dangers posed by assimilation and industrialization programs (Morin & Anglure, 1997). The author does not discuss how ethnicity has been utilized as a tool for political violence. This work is relevant because it demonstrates how ethnicity may be utilized for constructive community activity.

Mamdani (2002) argues in "Making sense of political violence" that contemporary political violence has historical roots. He also argues that the origins of modern genocide lie in the colonies. For instance, culture and faith can explain the extinction of the San. As an account for political violence, pre - modern civilization is provided. The

Europeans say that communal strife in South Asia and ethnic conflict in Africa are the product of cultural differences or a collision of civilizations.

Modern genocide was fostered in the colonies, including the devastation of the Hottentots and the peaceful Congolese populace. Imperialism was used as an excuse to eradicate inferior races. This nearly led to the extinction of the Tasmanian aborigines by 1869, as well as the Maoris of New Zealand, Native Americans, and San of South West Africa. In the 20th century, Europeans differentiated between civilized and colonial conflicts through the application of laws of war to civilised battles. When it came to colonial wars, they applied the laws of nature. This statute was applied against Russians and Jews by Germany. The genocide was a moment of convergence for two traditions that define contemporary western civilization: the anti-Semitic tradition and the extermination of conquered people. This was then turned and applied to colonial territories (Mamdani 2002). This work can enrich this study by showing how ethnic differences have been used to eliminate certain communities in Uasin Gishu.

Ethnicity existed in Africa as a cultural but not a political identity. During the colonial period, ethnicity was turned into a legal and political identity when the colonial authorities enforced their subjects' identities ethnically and discriminated between them legally. This is relevant in tracing the development of ethnic differences and the role played by colonialism in propagating the same between different ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu. For example, the Belgian rule in Rwanda entrenched the political differences between Tutsi and Hutu by degrading the Hutu as natives and entrenching the Tutsi as privileged. Mamdani (2002) connects the Rwandan genocide to ideological positions that fuelled the violence and the replication of these ideological positions to a certain kind of state. Mamdani (2001) argues in "Beyond settler and native as political

identities" that the process of state development forms political identities that are distinct from both market-based and cultural identities. He contrasts further between cultural and political identities to disprove the rising notion that cultural differences are the primary cause of violence.

Rutten and Owuor (2009) identify land, ethnicity, and the 2007 Kenyan elections as weapons of mass destruction. According to these scholars, the colonial legacy of land alienation and divide and rule established the pattern that post-colonial Kenyan politicians inherited and refined for political convenience. Unfortunately, the rapidly growing population, and the need for land, coupled with unsettled colonial injustices over land, have been politicised during electioneering periods, leading to political violence. The basic arguments herein are of great relevance to this study and will be applied to show the link between colonial legacy, ethnicity and political violence.

Josse-Durant (2018) in his article examines the political role played by cultural entrepreneurs who want to be recognised by banking on the memories of Koitalel Arap Samoei and Nandi heritage in Kenya. The author focusses on the roles played by cultural actors in writing the history of the Nandi through the use of cultural heritage. These political actors have at times managed to realign political contests and make claims to land at the local levels in the pretext of conservation or promotion of cultural heritage. In this article it is seen how socio cultural heritage can be manipulated for economic or political reasons. Thus it will be of benefit in trying to elicit the relationship between ethnicity, cultural heritage and politics in this study.

From the foregoing literature, there are various instances of weaponization, where the media, migration, water, Corona virus, and ethnicity have all been manipulated by those in power for socio-political and economic expediency. However, as much as they shed

light on the concept of weaponization, they have not covered several areas which this study purposes to interrogate. The geographical gap comes out since most of them concentrate on Europe and Asia, while those on Africa do not provide information on the study area of this research. There also exists a subject gap since none of them discusses how ethnicity has been weaponized in Uasin Gishu. None of these studies has applied the methodology adopted in this study, yet methodology is important since different methods produce different results. The changing socio-political and economic dynamics also inform the currency of this study to fill the gap of time lapse between this study and the ones reviewed since knowledge is dynamic. The population gap qualifies this study since most of the reviewed works are about populations in Europe, Asia, parts of Africa and other parts of Kenya and not Uasin Gishu.

1.9.2 The Concept of Ethnicity

Modern African ethnics are the product of colonial-era legislation which, by laying the foundations of ethnic nationalism, enforced group identity onto specific participants. Mamdani (2020) argues that opportunistic elites use ethnicity for economic benefit. The violence in Burundi is the outcome of an increasingly factionalized political elite based on several societal cleavages that mobilized ethnicity in their battle for state power.

In the future, ethnicity, regardless of its outward appearances and the labels attached to it, will become a crucial political asset and a means of fostering community connections. This will prompt social scientists and anthropologists to actively involve themselves in studying it (Lentz, 1995). Lentz and Mamdani accentuate the important role of ethnicity in Africa and that as is also the stance of this study, that ethnicity can be used by the politicians for both political and economic gains.

Lynch's (2011), argument made in "I say to you: Ethnic politics and the Nandi in Kenya" is that political parties in Kenya are often related to political ethnic groupings and elections. Kenya has demonstrated robust racial voting tendencies. The 2007 election violence pitted Mwai Kibaki's Kikuyu against Raila Odinga's Luo, although the epicentre was Rift Valley, where neither the Kikuyu nor the Luo predominated. The Nandi participated in raids against the Kikuyu and other groups, including the Kisii and Luhya. Lynch contends that intercommunal assaults aligned with historical and contemporary ethnic perspectives, widespread political distrust, institutional decline, a climate of impunity, elite exploitation, and associated tactical responses. The author also discusses the ethnic conflicts that occurred between the Nandi and the Kikuyu from 1991 to 1993. Lynch's work will add value to this study by providing information on the formation of Nandi, their relationship with other communities in Uasin Gishu, as well as the intrigues leading to political violence in Rift Valley.

Berman (1998) argues in "Ethnicity patronage and the African state; the politics of uncivil nationalism" that contemporary African ethnic identity is a societal construct of the colonial era resulting from the responses of pre-colonial communities to the socioeconomic, cultural, and political factors of colonialism. Ethnicity is the result of an ongoing historical process, consisting of both old and new grounds in the past and a never-ending creative activity. Although scholars like, (Albiez-Wieck 2015, Waller 2013 and Lentz 2001) suggest that European colonialism in Africa played a significant role in shaping ethnic groups and delineating boundaries that were previously non-existent. Additionally, they acknowledge the presence of certain ethnic identifiers before this colonial period.

The aforementioned studies cover mainly the causes and dynamics of ethnicity, which are relevant for explaining similarities to this study. However, none of them discusses

how ethnicity has been weaponized in political violence in Uasin Gishu, which this study endeavors to examine.

According to Were (1972), ethnic groupings are groups of people who share a similar language and cultural characteristics and practices. Kasfir (1976) contends that most of the characteristics of ethnic identity, like dialect, region, and cultural values, are unbiased, and their impartiality is partly bolstered by the actuality that both insiders and visitors of a specified ethnic background view them as primary determinants of individuality to the degree that they are used as foundations for political mobilization. The work of Were and Kasfir informs the use of primordialism in this investigation.

Jefremovas (1995) discusses ethnicity, ethnography, and history as fables in Rwanda. Rwanda is a hugely interesting instance since the exploitation of these fables has been so obvious and because it has touched the lifestyle of everyone residing in the Great Lakes area. He displays the caricatures of ethnicity, history, and the state in Rwanda and offers an alternate viewpoint on them, demonstrating how successive regimes have distorted various definitions of ethnicity and "history." The author considers the Rwandan genocide in the light of this review. This is relevant in explaining and bringing out how the domination of the political and economic space by some communities has led to ethnic animosities and political violence.

1.9.3 Culture and Political Movements

In his article Zhao (2010) initiates an explanatory analysis of the role of culture in social movements. Zhao proposes that culture influences collective actions through three main mechanisms: as problem-solving tool-kits, as scripts, and as instincts and taken-for-granted routines. While specific collective actions may involve all three mechanisms, their relative significance within a social movement depends on the structural

conditions of the society. Particularly, individuals in poorly organized social movements are more inclined to adhere to cultural scripts or rely on their culturally ingrained emotions and instincts, whereas participants in well-organized movements can utilize cultural resources as tool-kits to pursue targeted objectives. This article contributes to the relationship between Kalenjin culture and ethnic nationalism in Uasin Gishu.

Johnston (2008) examines the divide between strategically employing cultural narratives and a more comprehensive view of culture that sees fundamental texts as shaping social action. Johnston questions whether the predominant focus on strategy in cultural analysis of protests and social movements overlooks the significant impacts that cultural texts may have under specific circumstances. In the context of protest movements and political contention, the paper explores the underlying "deep textual grammar" of conflict, which can heavily influence and guide social actions. Through an examination of the deep cultural text of the Chechen nationalist movement from 1989 to 1999, this study demonstrates that, alongside strategic choices, movement trajectories are sometimes profoundly culturally determined, almost ritualistically so. The paper suggests a shift in understanding the role of culture in social movements and puts forth several propositions derived from the Chechen case regarding the relationship between deep culture and mobilization. By drawing from the relationship and impact of culture on social movements, this can be used to provide parallels on how cultural aspects of ethnicity has been mobilized for political purposes in Uasin Gishu.

Serafim (2005) discusses the cultural aspect of terrorism. The writer observes that various forms of terrorism, including ideological groups like the Red Brigade and the Baader Meinhof Gang in the 1970s and 1980s, nationalist and ethnic grievances, and

religiously motivated terrorism, all have cultural dimensions. The author explores the unique cultural aspects of contemporary global terrorism and considers cultural solutions that could aid in combating terrorism.

The argument of (Jasper and Polletta, 2018) lies in the assertion that culture, defined as the collective understanding of how institutions function and ought to function, plays a pivotal role in the genesis of protest movements. Firstly, it's suggested that when this shared understanding is disrupted or challenged, individuals may find new motivations to engage in protest. Secondly, culture equips movement organizers and participants with the necessary tools and knowledge, including media and symbolic artifacts, to advance their cause. Thirdly, there's an emphasis on the importance of shared perceptions regarding suitable tactics and targets for protest actions. Therefore, while there are explicit discursive opportunities for social movements, cultural meanings underpin all aspects of these opportunities, necessitating interpretation before action can be taken. This work contributes to an understanding on how culture may have influenced the communities in Uasin Gishu to react during instances of political violence

1.9.3.1 Ethnic Conflicts

Ideally, the current study refers to Azar's, (1990) work in various dimensions. Azar argues that a vast number of people were killed, socioeconomic institutions have been destroyed, and health and education resources degraded throughout Africa during the twentieth century due to armed wars, the same scenario as the post election violence 2007-2008. Second, civilians were subjected to severe physical and psychological harm in wars throughout the 20th century, from Nigeria's civil war to Somalia's, which hindered the development of several African states. This is the same environment that

locals are exposed to when there is ethnic conflict in the Rift Valley. Azars work can inform suggestions on how to prevent the the sporadic political violence in Uasin Gishu.

In the analysis of the root causes of ethnic conflicts in Africa, Etefa, (2019) postulates that most arise from deep-seated historical problems. Etefa notes that these historical dilemmas are embedded in political systems that are non-inclusive, manipulation of ethnicity, monopolization of state resources, chronic marginalization and neglect of some constituencies, and exclusion. Matters often come to a head when there is no democratic mechanism to conclusively address such challenges. Etefa's work contributes to a deeper understanding on the causes of intermittent ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu.

After the end of colonial rule, Hubble (2021) provides a chronology of conflicts in West Africa and lists several conflicts in Africa, such as the civil wars in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea- Bissau, and Cote d'Voire. A deep scope into the Nigerian conflicts helped the researcher relate to the various conflicts that happened in Kenya, and most importantly, the conflicts that affected the Uasin Gishu communities. Ideally Hubble, (2021) tried to give a chronology of events which the current study endeavored to do. Thus, the work fashioned and shaped the current study in the chronology of events.

Stremlau (2015), on his account about the conflicts in Nigeria sheds further light in "*The international politics of the Nigerian civil war, 1967-1970.*" In 1960, when Nigeria achieved independence from Britain, the Igbo inhabited the nation's southeast, the Yoruba its southwest, and the Hausa and Fulani its north. When the military took control of Nigeria after its independence, 30,000 Igbo were murdered by Yoruba, escalating tensions. The Republic of Biafra was founded by Ojukwu on May 30, 1967,

when the Igbo area chose to split from the Nigerian government. With British assistance, Nigeria was able to regain control of the oil-rich southeast coast. This conflict resulted in a terrible food scarcity that claimed the lives of over two million citizens and 100,000 soldiers. Ojukwu and his family left the country on January 15, 1970, when Biafran Army Major General Philip Effiong officially assumed leadership of the Biafran government. General Yakubu Gowon, Nigeria's military ruler, was able to secure Effiong's surrender fifteen days later (Stremlau, 2015).

During the Nigerian Civil War, many people were slain, but the war also helped to unite the country's numerous ethnic groupings. During the civil war, stabilizing forces had to determine how to battle while limiting devastation, inflict injury while simultaneously repairing ties, and defeat forces without permanently damaging connections. However, historians contend that although Nigeria's government proclaimed the war "no victor, no defeated," it has had and continues to have an impact on regional politics and governance. The Igbos have been mostly marginalized from leadership, according Stremlau, (2015).

Stremlau's work, contributed to the current study since it focused on the marginalization of other communities. Ideally, this then spurt several interrogations for instance, is marginalization in the Rift Valley the cause of ethnic conflicts experienced? What is the national government's position in the conflicts that happen in the country? What is the direction, destruction and the level of lives lost during the wars that have happened in the Rift Valley since the onset of colonization to date? Has the same scenario played out in Uasin Gishu whereby the affected communities suffer as the political leaders go unscathed?

Hogan (2021) gives an account of Liberia's First and second civil wars. Hogan's (2021) article fitted well in the current study since it focused more on the organization of war. Even though the work was based in Ivory Coast, the current study borrowed the idea and conceptualized the organization of the war, to various conflicts that have happened during the Moi-Kibaki regimes.

Prasojo *et al.*, (2021) worked on Conflict in Sierra Leone between (1991–2002). They state that On March 23, 1991, an attempt to topple the government of President Joseph Saidu Momoh sparked a civil war in Sierra Leone in the name of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). SLA troops were sent by the government of Sierra Leone to handle the crisis and retake territory from the RUF. Captain Valentine Strasser conducted a successful military revolution that removed President Joseph Momoh in 1992. He initiated multi-party democratic elections in the area immediately after Captain Strasser's arrival. Former President Kabbah declared an end to the civil conflict on January 18, 2002. During the 11-year civil war, over 50,000 Sierra Leoneans were slain and 2,000,000 were forced to flee their homes (Prasojo *et al.*, 2021). Ideally, borrowing from Prasojo *et al.*, (2021) work, the current study borrowed the idea of the impacts of violence on economic growth.

Sarró & Temudo, (2021) review the Civil War in Guinea-Bissau in (1998) and 1999. They note that Military Brigadier General Ansumane Mané conducted an attempted coup *d'état* before the civil war. After launching the coup, Mané blamed Guinea Bissau's poverty and corruption on the administration of Joao Bernardo Vieira. Mané was immediately dismissed from his post as Brigadier General by President Vieira, who was in charge of the armed forces. Mane was dismissed because of allegations that he supplied insurgents in Senegal with weapons.

According to the authors, On June 7, 1998, a second coup *d'état* took place and failed. Soon after, the rebels in Senegal and Guinea-Conakry got assistance from their neighbors leading to a civil war. Many troops from Guinea-Bissau's forces joined the rebel cause. In part, this was because the government had not paid the troops. From 1998 to 1999, the insurgents remained at war. On May 7, 1999, President Vieira was deposed. President Vieira signed an unconditional surrender at a Portuguese embassy on May 10, 1999, bringing an end to the conflict. The authors aver that the fighting resulted in the deaths of around 655 people. Thus, Sarró & Temudo's, (2021) work was essential to the current study in that it helped re-examine the conflict in Uasin Gishu in a wider perspective. For instance who are the organizers of the conflicts? Who fights in the conflicts and lastly, who funds them?

Battera, (2021) gives an account of the first and second civil wars in Ivory Coast. Ideally these accounts are linked to the electoral process in the region. Battera confirms that the first civil war in Ivory Coast happened between 2002 and 2007 when Côte d'Ivoire underwent an economic downturn in the early 2000s. The collapse of the preceding economic boom led to recession. As a result of this, the Ivory Coast's north and south were split into two separate political entities. The civil war officially ended on March 4, 2007, when a peace deal was signed (Battera, 2021).

The fact that Battera talks more about the civil wars in context of electoral lacunae as causatives, the work was essential in analyzing the colonial narratives that were used to stereotype different communities in Kenya in their divide and rule strategy. A colonial strategy that has unfortunately persisted and been inherited by some politicians resulting in ethnic conflicts, political violence and dire consequences in Uasin Gishu.

Kusow (1994) elucidates the Civil War in Somalia, that happened in 1991 by informing us that the aftermath of the overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre in a coup in 1991 has been a twenty-plus-year civil war that erupted led to the death of more than one million Somalis. As a result of Barre's ouster, the Somali Democratic Republic split into two rival factions: The North's Somali National Movement and the South's United Somali Congress which have refused to acknowledge each other. In Somalia, however, violent conflict between warlords thwarted the timely delivery of aid from the U.S. government. The current study utilized Kusow's (1994) work to investigate and recommend various way of preventing political violence, and seeking for peaceful coexistence.

Thompson (2007) gives an account on the Rwandan genocide that occurred in 1994. During the 100-day genocide, neighbors were pitted against one another, and in some cases, Hutu husbands were forced to kill their spouses. In Rwanda ethnicity was used as a reason for discrimination and death for Tutsi (Thompson, 2007). Thompson (2007) continues to elucidate that the United Nations did not have the authority to intervene in Rwanda, and the United States government was reluctant to do so for fear of a repeat of the Somalia peace process. Like the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide was caused by state-sponsored hate and dehumanization of the Tutsi ethnic minority. In 2008, Canada's apex court ruled that the portrayal of Tutsi as "other" in Rwanda contributed to an atmosphere of apathy that eventually led to the genocide.

Ideally, Thompson's (2007) work benefited the current study since it gave the researcher a base of historicizing and conceptualizing the marginalization and othering of certain communities which then facilitates weaponization of ethnicity leading to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. Moreover, the researcher got knowledge on how to legally and effectively seek for justice and peace when faced with violence.

Campbell (1971) attempts to examine the Eritrean and Ethiopian wars by suggesting that the two-year struggle between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which was precipitated by a territorial dispute, resulted in the deaths of around 80,000 individuals. He adds that the conflict began on May 6, 1998, when troops and police from both nations exchanged fire in a rural region near the disputed boundary, and concluded in 2000, when the two governments were able to sign the Algiers Peace Treaty, a cease-fire agreement. Campbell (1971) confirms that the Eritrean-Ethiopian issue was only resolved through negotiations, leaving both sides dissatisfied and doing nothing to reduce tensions between the two nations as it was categorized as a "border war."

The current study profited tremendously from Campbell's (1971) work in that it assisted in analyzing the idea of conflict whereby conflict, its causes and solutions are all seen from an ethnic viewpoint. Instead of racial differences, political, economic, social, cultural, or geographical problems are frequently the causes of hostility. The scenario that unfolded in Eritrea may also be partially applied to Kenya and Uasin Gishu.

Inter-ethnic violence is one of the greatest hazards to international peace and security. In the second half of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century, some of the most infamous and terrible wars happened in the Balkans, Rwanda, Chechnya, Iraq, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Darfur, as well as in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Frequently, ethnic conflicts often have the unintended consequence of destabilizing provinces, states, or even entire regions. They commonly lead to violations of human rights, such as genocide and crimes against humanity, alongside economic downturns, state collapse, environmental challenges, and the displacement of refugees. Ethnic violence results in significant human misery.

Concerning the African continent, Giugni (1999) recounts how in the 1960s a greater focus was placed on economic development's broader social problems. Then, economic development became a means of transformation that liberated many from deprivations. The relief or decrease of poverty is one of the primary concerns. The majority of development policies executed in Africa prioritized the construction of infrastructure conducive to economic success, since economic expansion became the primary objective. In a larger picture, Giugni's work benefited the current study in creating a foundation for analyzing the causes of ethnic animosities in Africa during the colonial period.

Adedeji, (1999) evaluates the concept of peace during the two world wars. He points out that this was the period of the establishment of colonial regimes in Africa. During the first two decades following World War II, progress was regarded as a prerequisite for peace in inter-ethnic relations. Melting-pot theorists posited that as impoverished nations progressed, ethnicity would become obsolete, fostering peace. According to the "melting-pot" perspective, industrialization diminishes the political relevance of sub-state ethnic identities over time and is replaced by a cohesive national identity. Consequently, ethnic tensions and violent conflicts are anticipated to diminish as well.

The melting pot theorists of the 1960s believed that conflict is caused by limited resources. Adedeji (1999), for example, contended that economic progress fosters political peace, creates the conditions for subordinate ethnic groups to flourish, and reduces the importance of insular ethnic ties. In contradiction to what 'melting-pot' theorists had previously claimed, 'conflictual modernization' theory arose in the 1970s to argue that development is a source of conflict rather than a facilitator of peace. Insufficient and unequal distribution of resources can lead to feelings of social

exclusion and tensions and even violence between ethnics. This aspect will be interrogated to establish whether development and resources had any role in relation to weaponization of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu

Countries with diverse ethnic compositions have been prominently featured among those that have witnessed civil wars and insurgencies in recent decades. Adeyemo (2000) asserts that ethnic diversity has been the central catalyst behind various conflicts, including the genocide in Rwanda, violent uprisings in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, large-scale civilian massacres in Burundi, military atrocities in Uganda, and persistent hostilities in Chad. These conflicts predominantly occurred during the latter part of the 20th century. Adeyemo's work fitted well in the current study because it invigorates a series of civil wars or insurgency. The current study delves into a series of ethnic violence that happened in the Uasin Gishu and seeks to find a long lasting solution to the problem.

Cobbing *et al.* (2010) theorize that ethnic tensions hinder the provision of public goods and cooperation, thereby presenting a substantial obstacle to development and progress. Modernization theory perceives ethnic diversity as a hindrance to development. Idealistically, this theory was crucial for comprehending the conflicts in the Rift Valley and determining whether these conflicts are the result of suppressed cooperation in the region.

Picciotto (2010) asserts that over the past three decades, over half of all African nations have experienced at least one year of armed conflict. African conflict-related fatalities exceed those of all other regions combined. Approximately one-fifth of Africa's population lives in areas affected by conflict. In Sub-Saharan Africa specifically, 32 out of 47 countries have been impacted by 126 wars since 1980. This renders Sub-Saharan

Africa a region where nearly half of all developing countries contend with conflict. Once they commence, conflicts and wars in Africa typically continue for a number of years before peace is restored. And countries with low incomes that emerge from conflict situations typically struggle to overcome poverty, implement development strategies, and increase economic growth. When interrogating the nexus in the Moi-Kibaki regimes, the current study benefited much from Picciotto's (2010) work because it views conflicts in Africa and more so the "sub-Saharan" countries as a region that has experienced armed conflicts in the past three years. The current study's third specific objective was to interrogate the nexus between ethnic conflicts and political violence in Uasin Gishu during the Moi-Kibaki regimes. Thus, Picciotto's analysis of the past three decades was relevant in analyzing the case of Uasin Gishu.

Conteh (1998) suggests that the notion of ethnic and racial conflict being a major hindrance to development in impoverished nations seems indisputable at first glance. This perspective gains weight when observing the substantial decline in living standards across almost all of Africa and the persistent occurrence of extreme poverty and famine, as evidenced in countries like Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Sudan over the past three decades. In African nations, however, the interrelationship between ethnicity, conflict, and development requires a complex study and discussion. The current study considers this topic significant and pertinent.

Cammack *et al.* (1988) explain that Conflicts in Africa can be attributed to various factors, including colonial-era borders imposed arbitrarily, the diverse ethnic makeup of African nations, ineffective governance, corruption, burdensome foreign debt, and widespread poverty. These elements collectively fuel conflicts. Often, the colonization of Africa by European powers in the 19th century led to the establishment of political

structures that divided ethnic groups. As they are constituted now, the majority of African republics' boundaries were set arbitrarily, with little regard for ethnic or cultural affinities. In certain circumstances, European borders made it impossible for two very distinct cultures to coexist in the same country. These boundaries have different effects on different countries in Africa. Ideally, Cammaack's work was used to reflect on the European colonization and its influence on the Africans and how these have propagated the series of conflicts in Uasin Gishu.

Eminue (2004) submits that among the more than 180 countries in the globe, just a few are racially homogeneous. Multiethnicity will remain a feature of international politics for some time, showing the potential threat of ethnic conflicts to the whole global community, not just Africa. However, it is impossible to ignore the reality that throughout Africa, during the twentieth century, ethnic and political confrontations increased. In many African countries, ethnic variety is a major challenge, and this may be linked to the issue of ethnicity as a consequence. The current study is focused on Uasin Gishu County which is a multi-ethnic society. Therefore, this study investigated whether the lack of homogeneity accounted for the intermittent political violence.

According to Osaghae (1992), ethnic diversity is the most prevalent source of conflict. In Africa, ethnic divisions are already profound and political discrimination against minorities is widespread. Ethnicity has therefore become a major source of separatist activity. A lack of political integration in Africa is no doubt due to a lack of trust and mistrust amongst Africans of different ethnicities. Ideally, Osaghae submitted this based on an inductive reasoning. Thus, the current study interrogated whether ethnic diversity was the major cause of intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu.

Flemes & Wojczewski (2010) in their conclusion reasons that in Africa, political integration and unity have been slowed by ineffective leadership on a continuous basis. The qualities of administrative tact, political tolerance, and social fairness may be especially required in African countries because of their diverse populations. The continent's leaders are responsible for providing these essential ingredients. Most African politicians, however, are weak, corrupt, and disloyal, according to the reality on the ground. As a result of their repressive policies, these leaders have ignited a wave of murderous riots throughout the country. Countries in Africa have few leaders capable of mobilizing, unifying, and inspiring unity in their people. The authors therefore posit that if the integration process is to continue, all members of the community must embrace African leadership. The current study is based at the heart of the ethnic-based conflicts and tries to interrogate their remedies as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the local administration in view of ethnicity and political violence in the study area.

In his article, Bujra (2002) evaluates the causes of African conflicts. According to his sentiments, Africa's internal conflicts are exacerbated by the catastrophic consequences of corruption. Theft and misappropriation of public funds, in addition to other types of corruption, have hindered and even stalled Africa's progress toward economic and political integration. The poor management of Africa's resources over the years has left the populace disgusted with their leaders. This has prompted a reaction against the leaders of the continent. Constant wars and conflicts are the unavoidable consequence throughout Africa.

Bujra's work served as a touchstone for the current investigation since it sheds light on the roots of African wars. However, the current study now wanted to understand

whether corruption and other causes mentioned by Bujra were really the causes of political violence in Uasin Gishu.

1.9.3.1 Relationship between Ethnicity and Political Violence

According to Nnoli (1995), an ethnic group is a social structure characterized by the communal nature of its borders. Nnoli (1995) stressed language is a very significant aspect in ethnic identity. According to Nnoli's theory, an ethnic group consists of individuals who share similar ancestral roots, language, and traditions. Nnoli's work helped in defining ethnicity by outlining the variables shared by ethnic groups.

In their book chapter, Kadima and Owuor (2014) analyse the ethnic dynamics in Kenya and the creation of coalitions. They claim that the pervasiveness and domination of ethnicity in Kenya's political parties has come out as a defining characteristic of coalition politics in the country, and thus worthy of investigation. According to the authors, the reasons for the formation of party coalitions can only be answered through the analysis of ideological viewpoint, the search for political offices, the leaders communal roots and affiliation as well as the political and electoral structure.

Adar and Munyae (2001) in their article discuss the abuse of human rights under Moi's regime. They analyse how Moi institutionalised, centralised and personalised the presidency. Moi, when he assumed presidency, allegedly had a grand plan that incorporated a strategy aimed at achieving specified goals. This encompassed the management of the state, the strengthening of authority, the validation of his leadership, and the broadening of his political constituency and popular backing with minimal regard for human rights. In their article they outline how the politicians participated in inciting their ethnic groups against outsiders and used government machinery to harass

and intimidate the opposition. They also discuss the various incidences of ethnic violence as well the actors, causes, and results which can enrich this study.

Anderson and Lochery (2008) present a preliminary examination of violence and migration in the Rift Valley following the December 2007 national elections. They have shown, arranged, and identified these disputes as well as the causes of the violence. They explore the historical trends of land settlement in the Rift Valley, the repercussions of political violence on significant demographics since the early 1990s, and the current political dynamics related to constitutional reform and regionalism. The authors contend that the unrest in the Rift Valley in 2008 was predicted and could have been avoided since it was comparable to prior bouts of conflict. They further opine that though the December 2007 poll catalysed this violence, its causes were deeply rooted in historical and political conflicts.

Birch (2020) emphasizes the unique nature of electoral violence compared to other forms of organized violence, underscoring its qualitative distinction from nonviolent electoral manipulation. Sarah also surveys the causes and consequences of electoral violence, this work helped this study to define electoral violence, and get more insights on the myriad causes and results of electoral violence

To grasp the origins of post-election violence in Kenya, Oucho (2010) adopts a blend of frameworks utilized in both Guyana (Premdas, 2010) and Kenya (Oucho, 2002). He employs Premdas' theory, which delineates between "predisposing variables" and "triggering-igniting factors" as drivers of ethnic conflict and national progress. Oucho identifies cultural pluralism, lack of cooperation, and divergent communal beliefs as predisposing variables that fuel ethnic discord and perpetuate conflict, often resulting in the displacement of once-coexisting neighboring ethnic groups. Factors such as

colonial manipulation, the emergence of mass democratic politics, disputes over resource allocation, and the adoption of foreign political systems at independence which are cited as triggering elements are also significant in interrogating the root causes of ethnicity.

The Kenya Human Rights Commission, (2008) identified four main causes of post-election violence in Kenya: longstanding disputes over land rights, persistent violence and a culture of impunity, historical violations of economic and social rights, and the presence of vigilante groups. However, a comprehensive examination of the issue indicates that a combination of longstanding issues, ongoing grievances, and election-related tensions contributed to the outbreak of violence. Land emerges as a recurring theme in this analysis due to its pivotal role in Kenya's economy, politics, and history of exploitation, exerting both long-standing and contemporary influences on the country's political landscape.

Majeed (2010) argues that ethnic politics has been seen as a vehicle to attain power in Pakistan and those in power mobilize their people to support them in their ideologies. Pakistan's politics consists mostly of the politics of ethnic groupings. Pakistan is a polyglot state where the identities of the Pakhtuns, Sindhis, Balochis, Punjabis, Mohajirs, and Siraikis are conveyed in Pashto, Sindhi, Balochis, Punjabis, Urdu, and Siraiki languages. It is important to recognize that in Pakistan, ethnic identities often utilized language as a powerful tool to assert their influence and launched language movements to assert their distinct identities. As with other markers of identity, language may be a uniting factor, but it can also reawaken and preserve a community's feeling of its distinct existence. This study benefited from Majeed's insights on the impact of language on mobilizing communities' feelings and its potential to incite violence.

Ukiwo (2005) examines Nigeria's political landscape since independence. He illustrates how ethnic allegiance has significantly influenced the nation's aspiration for democratic governance, alongside persistent military interventions that have hindered the establishment of a democratic political culture in Nigeria. At the time of Nigeria's independence in 1960, its federal structure comprised the North, the East, and the West. The emergence of three regionally-based political parties, each enjoying ethnic support, shortly after independence, further emphasized the divisions among the three regions.

It was against this ethnic backdrop that Nigeria's first effort at democracy ran into trouble. Between 1960 and 1965, the ethnically charged afore mentioned political system, in conjunction with other reasons, posed a danger to the existence of Nigeria as a nation (Ukiwo, 2005). In an effort by these ethnic leaders to gain the most political authority, the situation developed into political rioting, arson, murders, and other acts of destruction, particularly in the west. Since then, Nigerian politics have been characterized by ethnic interests, which have had many detrimental effects on the nation's path towards democratization, to the point that it remains a persistent danger to the institutionalization of democracy in Nigeria. Ukiwo's sentiments can be used to relate to ethnicity and political violence in this study.

According to Babangida (2002), the causes of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria include rivalry for jobs and political exploitation. The former phenomenon is attributable to the growing number of school graduates who increasingly migrate to urban centers seeking employment opportunities, which are often scarce. And if such positions exist, they are distributed based on ethnicity. The latter pertains to politicians that use ethnic loyalty to boost their electoral chances. This feature of Nigerian ethnicity has pitted one ethnic

group against another with unfathomable repercussions with relevant lessons to the current study.

Lange and Dawson (2009) assess claims suggesting that postcolonial civil violence is a prevalent consequence of colonial rule. Specifically, they investigate whether a history of colonialism correlates with indicators of inter-communal conflict, political uprisings, and civil war spanning from 1960 to 1999. Their research reveals that certain forms of colonization increase the probability of specific types of civil unrest. Their findings support the notion that inter-communal violence is a legacy of colonialism, particularly British colonialism and colonization by smaller colonial powers. Moreover, they conclude that the historical legacy of colonialism had a limited impact on political uprisings and civil conflict, a matter of broad interest to this scholarly inquiry.

In the KwaZulu Natal province of South Africa, Various forms of violence, particularly political and electoral violence, have been endemic. The peak of this violence was experienced in the 1980s and early 1990s. Phakathi (2019) observes that even as recently as 2009, the violence continued, with involvement from the African National Congress (ANC), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and their fervent supporters., contributing to the political violence debate in this study. The foregoing shows the adoption of ethnic identity to fight for cultural and political rights. The lacuna exhibited is in weaponized ethnicity as a tool of intermittent political violence. Therefore, basing on the foregoing literature, several nations have pegged their politics on ethnic roots.

On the other hand, Mulubale, (2017) Argues that while ethnic identity cleavages appear divisive among Kenya's elites and spills over to into communities, Zambia shows positive ethnic cohesion trends due to responsible elite conduct. The author argues that politics founded on identity can foster societal stability as opposed to instability.

According to him, politicised identities appear to promote division in multi-ethnic societies only because of instrumentalist causes. Mulubales work adds to the argument that instrumentalism of ethnicity has contributed to political violence in Kenya.

1.9.4 Literature Review on Migration

Yaro (2008) introduces that Intra-regional migration has long been prevalent in West African countries. In the past, people have relocated due to a variety of factors such as international commerce, agriculture, changing weather patterns, and war. In the early days of colonization, traditional patterns of migration were upended. Between the 16th and 19th centuries, between 12 and 15 million individuals from West and Central Africa were enslaved and forcefully transported to the Americas by European merchants. In the nineteenth century, colonial administrations imposed boundaries and restrictions on travel, which reduced intra-regional mobility. Colonial economic policies also impacted migratory patterns. Massive migration began to occur from the Sahelian area, notably Mali and the Upper Volta, to plantations and mines in Ghana and the Ivory Coast as a consequence of both greater recruiting of contract and forced labor and improved transportation facilities.

Ideally, Yaro's work was influential in the current study as it informed on the migrations into Kenya and into the Nandi country in general. Besides, through Yaro's analysis on the migration patterns, the current study was informed on the basis of tracing the migration patterns of the Nandi into the Rift Valley. Lastly, Yaro examines the issues that came along with migrations into West Africa. This ideally helped in evaluating the various challenges in demography that arose from the migration of the Nandi into the Rift Valley.

Aniche *et al* (2021) in their analysis of insecurity levels in West Africa confirm that despite a surge in numbers, the proportion of the migrants to West Africa has fallen from 2.5% in 1990 to 1.9% in 2020. West African migrants in Europe and North America has increased over the years. These increases were driven in part by lingering ties from colonial times and shared languages between the two continents. This work will be of benefit in analyzing the reasons for the migration of the Kalenjin into Uasin Gishu during the colonial period.

Hammer, *et al.* (1997) explains that a major aspect of population dynamics, human migration, has long been recognized as a factor that affects populations in both directions. Migration has had a greater impact on human geography than any other factor. Immigrants and development are intertwined, as shown by the authors, who assert that migration may have a significant influence on both origins and destinations. Thus from Hammer *et al.*'s assertion, the current study interrogated the various trends of migration and related these trends, which Hammer and the colleagues refer to as dynamism, to the settlement of the Nandi in Uasin Gishu between 1800 to 1894.

According to Kivisto and Faist, (2010) immigrants make up a bigger percentage of the population increase in cities and metropolitan regions. More than half of the expansion in metropolitan areas came from migrants. Migration is mostly to blame for the population rise in Ghanaian, Ivorian, and Nigerian cities, according to research. From these authors, it is evident that immigration at any time creates a big percentage in the population. Ideally, the authors review population growth in the cities as one that is caused by the immigrants. It is essential that the current study went ahead and interrogated whether Uasin Gishu as the research area has faced an intensity of immigrants, whether this intensity had an impact on the existing resources in the area,

which in turn may have shaped the nature of relations between the immigrants and the local inhabitants.

Riddell (1980) on the same issue ascertains that in West Africa, rural–urban migration is a common tendency. This suggests that a greater number of individuals are seeking employment outside of rural areas such as farms and other rural economic activities. Migration has grown considerably in recent years. Thus, Ridell’s work informed this study in the following parameters; first, the work broadened the understanding of migration of communities to one place during the colonial period. Thus, while analyzing the arrival of other communities into the Rift Valley, the current study will borrow Ridell’s analysis and submissions that there were communities balkanized and even forced to move to other places amid the colonization period. Secondly, the work helped in understanding the relationship between communities in the colonial period. From these relationships, one may easily understand the origin of squabbles during the colonial period. Lastly, Riddell (1980), helped to draw a roadmap to the various reasons that compel the communities to migrate, and using the same scale, the current study may be able to underpin some of the compelling reasons as to why communities migrated into Uasin Gishu.

According to Riddell (1980), rural regions, which constitute the majority in both population and land area, have experienced either slight growth or adverse impacts due to development occurring elsewhere. Thus, from Ridell’s understanding, the current study endeavored to evaluate the various ethnic relations and conflicts since Ridell brings the concept of divergence into the conceptualization of this study. Thus it is essential to ponder; are these divergences the cause of the ethnic conflicts? Or is the divergence the root of ethnic interrelation?

Adepoju (2005) also elucidated that; Migrating people in pre-colonial periods sought safety, new country that was safe for settlement, and rich land for cultivation. Imposition of varied political and economic systems, taxation, and geographical borders by the colonial regime affected migration's motivations and composition. With the use of economic incentives such as contract and forced labor laws, Ivory Coast was able to bring in workers from Mali, Togo and the Upper Volta area of West Africa. Major rural-to-rural and rural-to-urban migration of farm workers and skilled and unskilled workers and merchants was sparked by improvements in infrastructure, such as rail and road construction, as well as the growth of cities. This work can shed light on the reasons for the immigration of communities into Uasin Gishu

From this the researcher was able to ponder in some of intriguing questions that helped inform the study. Are the reasons that Adepoju (2005) underpins as causatives for migrations in the precolonial period in West Africa same as the reasons for migration of the Nandi in Kenya? What is the relevance of the European trade to the migration of other communities into the Rift Valley? What is the impact of this trade on the Nandi of Rift Valley?

Van Hear (1998) contends that migration to Ghana's mining and cocoa sectors continues to attract individuals from as far as northern Nigeria. During British colonial rule in West Africa, Ghana's mining sector was one of the greatest and provided a vast array of employment opportunities in which indigenous people engaged. As new resource frontiers emerged to boost cocoa production, the central belt and western regions of the nation witnessed significant influxes of migrants from abroad and substantial internal mobility. Additionally, Nigeria became a prominent destination for migration due to the oil boom in the early 1970s. The current study was motivated by these findings to comprehend the economic impact on migration and settlement of

communities in the Rift Valley, and whether this had an impact on how these ethnic groups related.

Posel (2021) on the other hand, analyzes the migration of the Bantu into the South African region. In essence Posel posits that; Bantu migration to South Africa predates the advent of White settlers in 1652, when the country's first wave of immigrants arrived. Scholars generally agree, however, that two events in the nineteenth century marked a watershed: the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley and Gold in the Witwatersrand. Even though Posel sinks deep into the migration patterns of the Bantus, he does not underpin other ethnic communities' entry into South Africa. Learning lessons from Posel (2021) the current study, therefore, goes deep in context of Rift Valley in Kenya to trace the entry of other ethnic groups into the region.

Human migration, according to Awumbila (2017), is the movement of people from one location to another with the intent of creating a new home, either temporarily or permanently. It may need travel over short or long distances, spanning nations or regions. He further explains that; Africa's rural and urban inhabitants have always depended significantly on migration to support their livelihoods and advance their social position, and this has only increased in recent years. Thus, Awumbila's work was essential in the current study as it had a greater scope into the African Migrations. The researcher, therefore, wanted to understand more about how these migrations occurred. Through these migrations, the current study was able to know how other communities entered into the Rift Valley and the nature of their migrations.

Kimambo & Maddox, (2019) introduces their views on patterns of migration into East Africa. The authors underscore how the Bantu, Nilotic, and Cushitic peoples spread throughout Africa and settled in new areas. They traveled to the West African and East

African regions and to the Far East from Africa's north. Over a millennium ago, the Bantu people of “Sub-Saharan” Africa began migrating southward. Agricultural expansion and a rise in people mobility in pursuit of space for settlement and cultivation were both aided by the development of ironworking during this time period. Ideally, this work was an integral contributor to analysis of the findings in the current study because, first, the work talked about three of the major communities that live in Kenya. Second, the work talked about the migration of the Bantu into East Africa. Lastly, the work has a wide scope in conflicts that existed before a given community occupied their so called “Country.” Thus, using this information, the current study was able to understand the original settlement of the different communities that are now living in the Rift Valley. Moreover, using a tentative analysis of the causes of ethnic conflicts that existed before communities occupied their own territory, the current study was able to analyze these conflicts in view of the current causes of conflicts that are happening in Uasin Gishu.

Ndeda (2019) on the other hand analyzes the migration within the African continent comparatively. Ndeda recaps; Throughout history, Eastern Africa has played an essential role in migratory and commercial networks. There is a distinct character to each country's migratory patterns and personality. Thus, Ndeda's work plays an essential role in analyzing the migratory patterns and settlements in Kenya. Using these patterns, the current study interrogated the original occupation of the Rift Valley before the onset of colonialism in the country.

Opongo *et al.*, (2020) on the other hand, views the effects of violence and election related unrest in view of migration. In essence, the authors posit that, “Due to political unrest and election-related violence, over 383,000 Burundians have migrated to neighboring countries since 2015.” Opongo and colleagues' work was essential to the

current study since it provided the base for the analysis of the 2007/2008 post-election violence in Kenya and its effects on the Rift Valley region.

UNHCR (2020) gives a statistical analysis of the effects of violence in Burundi. It notes that there were 104,191 internally displaced individuals as of December 2019. more than 79,720 Tanzanian refugees fled to Burundi, many have returned on their own (UNHCR, 2020). As a result of years of intercommunal warfare, decreasing security, and acute food shortages, the nation had become a key source of refugees for countries in the region. Civil violence and food shortages are major causes in the emigration and influx of people from and to South Sudan. Using this statistical analysis, it was essential for this research to interrogate the following in view of the violence experienced after a series of elections in Kenya; what are the real causes of these ethnic violence? What is their relevance to the economy in the greater Rift Valley regions? Who are the funders of this violence? And lastly, what can the government do to ensure that there are no refugees fleeing to other places due to the inter-ethnic violence?

In the Kenyan Migratory History, Lynch (2011), in his introductory remarks avers that; it is presumed that the early inhabitants of Western Kenya lived as hunters and gatherers, according to archaeological evidence. They were followed by the Bantu, the Southern Cushites, and the Nilotes, who were all descendants of the Khoisan. For their part, the Khoisan were either forced to relocate or were incorporated into the invaders' society over a lengthy period of time. People from Khoisan, Southern Cushitic, Bantu, and Nilotic descent have interbred to form Yimbo, which is an example of a new civilization and language forming as a result of this interbreeding (Lynch, 2011). Ideally this is an authentic introductory remark that helped the current study to review the Nilotic original settlement areas and thus placing the Rift Valley in the larger map as Nandi's original settlement. This analysis, therefore, guided the current study in

interrogating the causes of conflicts in specific context of Uasin Gishu in larger the Rift Valley.

Christensen & Damkjaer, (2010) reveal that the Luo may be traced down to Southern Sudan, where they are known as the Misri, to Uganda, Kenya, and ultimately Tanzania. Between 1650 and 1750, the Luo people traveled from Uganda to Kenya in four waves, each lasting about a month. There were a variety of variables that contributed to their migration, including both natural and human-caused influences. In addition to disease, illness, floods, and drought, there were a variety of natural factors that drove human migration. All of these were instances of human-made forces: witchcraft, power struggles, looting and greed, retribution, and the fear of rivals, to name a few. Bantu waves passed over the area before arriving in Yimbo, originating from the Eastern Uganda and Western Kenya, respectively. In response to the Luo's entry into the country, competition for land and water became more intense. The different nationalities gradually started to adopt the habits and customs of other nationalities, which had an influence on their own culture as a result of this adoption (Christensen & Damkjaer, 2010).

However, this affirmation from Christensen & Damkjaer (2010), made the researcher want to interrogate more; How come there are some Luo in the Rift Valley when in the real sense they settled in the western part of Kenya? Why are there other Luhya in Rift Valley when they passed Luo land to come and settle in their homeland in Western Kenya? Is the entry of the said nationalities into the Rift Valley the reason for ethnic and weaponized violence in the Uasin Gishu as part of the Rift Valley?

1.9.4.1 Migration and Settlement of the Kalenjin speakers, 1800- 1894.

The Kalenjin people, as introduced by KNBS (2019), comprise several southern Nilotic ethnic groups that inhabited the former Rift Valley province of Kenya. According to the Kenyan 2019 census, their estimated number is 6.3 million. The Nandi region is delineated on the east by the steep Mau escarpment and Lake Baringo, and on the west by Mount Elgon, the Nandi escarpment, and the western dip slopes of the Mau ranges in the former Kericho District, where the land slopes down toward Lake Victoria. The width of the region from east to west varies by more than a hundred kilometers, while from north to south, the area is expansive (KNBS, 2019). This data not only provided the current study with the population under investigation but also aided in analyzing the research problem, which involved navigating through the systematic conflicts that occur in the Rift Valley after every election.

Nakitare (1991) informs this study that; The Nandi are classified as Nilotes from the highlands. During their colonization in the Mount Elgon region, the present-day Nandi referred to themselves as the Moit, Mmyoot, and Mnyoot. When they moved and established in their current locations, they acquired or were given the names by which they are now known (Nakitare, 1991). Nakitare (1991) continues to reaffirm that the Kalenjin consist of seven primary groupings with several subgroups. Kispsigis (Lumbwa); Nandi (Chamwel); Tugen (Samorr and Arror); Pokot (Suk); Marakwet (Marakweta, Endo, Almo, Kiptani, Barokot, Sengwer, or Cherangany); Sabaot (Kony, Bok, or pok); Keiyo. Ideally this data helps to dig deep into the question, who are the Kalenjin? By understanding the Kalenjin, the current study can claim knowledge about the original settlers of the Rift Valley. This led the researcher in understanding the conflicts that often happen in the Rift Valley; is this ethnic violence chained to only one ethnic community or was it the way of life of the Kalenjin in the Pre-colonial period?

Kipkorir and Welbourn assert in their book, *The Marakwet people of Kenya* that the seven groups of the Kalenjin have collectively adopted the name Kalenjin as their collective identity. The word Kalenjin is a recent invention since its genesis was humbly contrived and political. Although the Kalenjin as a whole believe themselves to be a single people, it is incorrect to think they are a homogenous community. (Kipkorir & Welbourn, 2008).

Consequently, Kipkorir & Welbourn (2008) helped the current study in the conceptualization of the name Kalenjin and incorporate the name into the attitudes and lifestyles of the Kalenjin in the contemporary society. Is the definition of the Name Kalenjin reflected in the contemporary violence seen in Rift Valley? Can the attitudes of the identity of the Kalenjin be connecte to their current practices?

Anderson (2016) observes in the academic community that there has been a considerable deal of disagreement over the origin and expansion of the contemporary Kalenjin communities. In contrast to the Luo, whose origins can be traced to Bahr-el-ghazal in southern Sudan, from which they went to the Nyanza region via Uganda, the origins of the Kalenjin are more obscure. However, it is widely thought that the proto-birthplace of the Kalenjin was somewhere around the current Ethiopia-Sudan border. From Anderson's (2016) work, it is deducible that there are distinct places where the various Nilotic groups migrated to. The Kalenjin came to occupy the Rift Valley and thus contributed greatly to its general growth in population. Moreover, the data gives the reasons for the migration of these communities. Thus, the current study endeavored to interrogate the trends of migration of the Nandi into the Kenyan Rift Valley.

Jennings (2005) argues that as they migrated southward from the territory east of Lake Turkana, the Loikop people conquered numerous settlements to settle on the plateaus near the Rift Valley. One contingent controlled the plateau along the eastern escarpment, which is now recognized as Laikipia, and the Ogiek people were resettled there under their guardianship. Another contingent advanced even farther south, possibly reaching Mount Kilimanjaro and the southern plateaus. The third group seized control of the western escarpment, subjugating and nearly eradicating the 'Senguer' inhabitants of what is currently known as the Uasin Gishu Plateau (Jennings, 2005).

Some distinct groups emerged among the Loikop as a result of this expansion. The Samburu, who inhabited the 'original' region east of Lake Turkana and the Laikipia plateau and the Guash Ngishu who lived in the Uasin Gishu region (Jennings, 2005). Thus, Jennings' works not only helped in tracing the distribution the Nandi in Kenya, but also helped in historicizing the Loikop Society. With this historicization, the current study, therefore, interrogated the ethnic relations between communities from the pre-colonial to colonial period. This interrogation is aimed at looking at the origin of ethnic conflicts in the Rift Valley.

Lokuruka, (2006) acknowledges that wars occurred between around 1830 and 1880. The author documented instances of conflict between the Turkana and Burkinjeji, or at least in the area remembered as Sampur, which seem to have been influenced by even older demographic pressures. Lokuruka's work was instrumental in aiding the current study to examine ethnic relations and conflicts during the colonial period from 1895 to 1962.

Tarus (1994), writing on the Bantu settlement during this period, determined that Bantu speakers entered East Africa from the north. Prior to crossing into the Rift Valley, their first significant settlements were in the interlucustrine area and the eastern highlands

including the Kipsigis nation. This piece of work, therefore, helped the current study interrogate the arrival of other ethnic groups, and more so the Bantu into the Rift Valley.

Distefano (1990) reveals the language that the Loikop society spoke prior to the year 1800. In essence the author writes that both the language now known as Maa and the language now known as Kalenjin had several dialects when they were spoken by the Loikop and Sirikwa societies, respectively. Numerous folks, particularly around the borders, spoke both languages. The current study was able to use the languages to evaluate the ethnic relations between the communities in Uasin Gishu. In essence, does the language barrier reveal the nexus between Moi-Kibaki eras? Is weaponization in Rift Valley based on the language spoken by some sect of people in the region? Is this linguistic formation having a relevance in the ethnic relations and violence that happened during the colonial period?

According to Thomas (1946), the southern group of proto-Nandi arrived at Mount Elgon, where they encountered the Sirikwa and the Ogiek. As time passed, they liaised with them voluntarily. The Nandi delegation centered in the region between Mount Elgon to the west and the Suk and Chereng'ani hills to the east. It is subject to debate if the first settlement was established on Elgon or the hills to the East, but it appears that there was significant roaming within the region of high concentration before some groups settled completely and others migrated to their current location. Current studies reveal that there are several Proto-Nandi southern groups that are today found in Uasin Gishu. Thus, the current study endeavored to interrogate how these communities entered the Rift Valley. Moreover, this study was established on a basis of evaluating the continued relationship between the proto-Nandi southern group and the Nandi living in Uasin Gishu.

MacArthur (2008) analyzes the merging of the proto-Nandi who settled in Sirikwa and the Sirikwa people. He alludes to the fact that the land where the proto-Nandi settled belonged to the Sirikwa, who appeared to have been agricultural and pastoral Bantu peoples. Gradually, the proto-Nandi and Sirikwa melted into a single people (MacArthur, 2008). Ideally, the merging of the two communities helped the current study to assess the pre-colonial relationship of the Nandi with other communities.

Blackburn (1974) delves into various community aspects of the Kalenjin community. He observes that these settlements exhibited several cultural traits, most notably a similar educational system designed to train young males into a warrior group known as Moran/Muren and, later, community leaders. Additionally, they shared similar initiation rituals and daily cultural practices, including a fondness for beadwork. Each of these societies comprised what could be considered as distinct ethnic groups sharing common cultural traits but also possessing unique cultural customs.

Thus, from the works of Blackburn (1974), the current study endeavored to reveal the possibility of the cultural domain playing part in the ethnic relations and series of conflicts that happens in Uasin Gishu. Some of the questions that the researcher endeavored to ponder about in the field include: What are some of the spiritual rituals that guide the community? Are these rituals the basis of inspiration to the conflicts and relationships that occurs in Uasin Gishu? Are the Morans used in the weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu?

Lamphear (1988) reviews the economic setup of the Chok and Pokot, both communities that are found in the greater Rift Valley region. Lamphear (1988) asserts, "Both cultures embraced a pastoral way of life, although certain segments, like the Chok faction within the re-aculturated Pokot society, depended on both rainfall and elaborate irrigation systems to grow cereals. The researcher utilized Lamphear's work to evaluate the nature

and characteristic of pastoralists. This analysis was meant to answer the questions, are the Kalenjin by nature entirely pastoralists? If that is the case, then can the pastoralists' lifestyle be linked to the series of weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu?

Galaty (2021) discusses the authentic original occupants of Uasin Gishu. The author confirms that prior to the occurrence of the first Mutai, the Sirikwa civilization had extended its borders. The population increase resulted in the establishment of three divisions within the Loikop society. The Samburu occupied both the 'original' land east of Lake Turkana and the Laikipia plateau. The Uasin Gishu inhabited the grassy plateaus of the Uasin Gishu and Mau, while Maasai territory extended from Naivasha to Kilimanjaro. Galaty's (2021) work was used to interrogate the settlement of Nandi in Uasin Gishu. The researcher figured out the area that was later renamed Uasin Gishu even before the arrival of the Nandi. Thus, Galaty's content became useful when placing Rift Valley in its original context.

Kimambo & Maddox (2019) on the other hand, try to review Uasin Gishu in face of colonialism. According to the writers, the majority of the Sirikwa people stayed in the western highlands, where they recultured to establish the new Nandi. Prior to the present-day Nandi and Maasai, the Ogiek (Dorobo) populated the Kenyan highlands, namely, the wooded region. They are referred to as "southern Nandi," and it is evident that the Ogiek have actively contributed to the development of the proto-Nandi into contemporary settlements. The Dorobo (Ogiek) are the most closely related indigenous people to be found in east Africa, and the Nandi group has adopted many of their languages and practices.

Using Kimambo & Maddox (2019) the current study was able to trace the relationship between the communities in Rift Valley and the violence in the Rift Valley during the colonial period.

Ogot (2002) has accepted the proto-Nandi colony on Mount Elgon, stating that: Beginning in the eighteenth century, the second large wave of Luhya people came. They migrated by land and settled in what is now Elgon Nyanza. The most prominent representatives of this group are the Bukusu, who were preceded in the region surrounding Mount Elgon by the Nilo-Hamites, as evidenced by Nandi-origin place names such as Kaimosi, Bungoma, and Elgon. However, by the 18th century, the remnants of the Nilo-Hamites were pushed to the slopes of Mount Elgon by stronger and more numerous Bantu clans. Ogot's findings not only enriched the current study in analyzing the migration patterns of the Nandi into Uasin Gishu but also provided insights into how other ethnic groups entered Uasin Gishu. Through proximity or association, the current study investigated the arrival and settlement of other ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu.

Lynch (2006) evaluates the settling of Proto-Nandi and asserts that the proto-Nandi roamed the Mount Elgon region before settling. When the Nandi inhabited mount Kamalinga, they had already come together. It seems that the Pokot might have diverged from the main group before the Nandi had fully established themselves on Mount Elgon. There are various debates as to whether the initial colony was established on Mount Elgon or the eastern slopes, but it appears that there was extensive traveling within the concentration region before some portions stayed permanently and others relocated to their present sites (Lynch, 2006). Thus, the current study used Lynch's work to evaluate the relationship between the Nandi in Mt. Elgon and the Nandi in Uasin Gishu. Moreover, the work was influential in the current study as it focused more

on wandering of the proto-Nandi people, before settling down. Therefore, using the same context, the current study interrogated whether the other ethnic groups wandered into the Rift Valley and later on settled.

As they traveled around Mount Elgon, the formerly nomadic pastoralists adapted their way of life to accommodate the growing settlements, ensuring their survival in those areas.

Were (1972) writing on the Abaluyia, the neighbors of the Nandi affirmed that the community emigrated and decided to settle on Mount Elgon, where a second displacement occurred after some time. The current communities of the Nandi groups emerged into existence at the time of the second displacement. The Kipsigis migrated from the concentration area on Mount Elgon to their current location. They relocated to Rongai region. The Kipsigis and the Nandi are said to have lived together for roughly a century, but they soon parted ways due to hostile environmental conditions. The work of Were (1972) was essential in the current study as it helped situate the Nandi people right from the Mt. Elgon area to Rongai and to Uasin Gishu. Thus, Were's work informed the current study regarding the entry of Nandi as well as other communities into the Rift Valley. Ideally, during these migrations, there were interactions and conflicts along the way. Thus, this work also created a base for analysis of such conflicts or interactions.

According to Shanguhya and Koster (2014) The Rift Valley region of Kenya has experienced persistent instability from the pre-colonial era to the present day, with a particular focus on this province compared to other parts of the country. Colonial land policies in this region established a default form of land relations that marginalized indigenous African populations and their traditional modes of production by depriving them of access to land, a crucial resource. This colonial shift led to economic, political,

and social difficulties, resulting in conflicts and intense land disputes between the government, local communities, and among different ethnic groups.

These challenges have persisted into the post-colonial era, with successive regimes facing turbulent times in the nation's history. Since 1963, Kenya has implemented a land reform program, but the agriculturally productive White Highland areas of the Rift Valley have remained contentious zones for land disputes. Shanguhya & Kusters' work aids in analyzing the conflicts and interactions in Kenya's Rift Valley during the colonial period. Moreover, the authors introduce the researcher to the realization of the nexus in the Moi-Kibaki regimes and shade some light in the assessment of the conceptualization of weaponization and ethnic violence in Uasin Gishu.

1.9.4.2 The Social, Political and Economic Organization of the Nandi

Mueller, (2008) reviews the economic organization of the Nandi in the precolonial period by observing that the Nandi, who are semi pastoralists, are a unique people group. Tradition holds that one of their most ancient vocations was cattle herding; this is supported by archaeological evidence. Even while herding is not as economically significant to many Nandi clans as farming is, almost all of them put a high premium on it in terms of culture and emotional attachment to their animals.

Further, Mueller (2008) ascertains that when the country was founded, eleusine was the primary crop, but throughout the colonial era, maize supplanted it. Sorghum is also farmed for subsistence needs in small amounts, as are sweet potatoes and European potatoes, among other crops. When it comes to tilling the ground, plows drawn by oxen or leased tractors are more common nowadays than iron hoes, which were employed in the past. Despite the fact that cash crops vary in importance depending on factors like land availability, soil type, and other variables, they are important to the Nandi and the

Kipsigis peoples. Wheat and pyrethrum are also farmed on Nandi farms on the Uasin Gishu plateau, in addition to a variety of vegetables (Mueller, 2008).

Thus, Mueller's work was significant in this research since it helped the researcher understand the economic organization of the Nandi before and during colonization. This Knowledge, therefore, formed a base of questioning the reasons behind conflicts in the larger Rift Valley region.

Chelimo & Chelelgo (2016) giving an intensive assessment of the economic organization, and having their positionality as insiders to the community, observe that most towns have a modest number of paid citizens as well as self-employed business owners that provide services to the requirements of the local population for the most part. A common occurrence among married men is the pursuit of part-time entrepreneurial opportunities. Women were permitted to legally brew and sell beer until the early 1980s, but the practice was forbidden after that time. Labor migration, on the other hand, is less common in this region of western Kenya than it is in other areas of the country, even among men (Chelimo & Chelelgo, 2016). Using Chelimo and Chelelgo's views as insiders, the current study benefited in both content and tools for analysis. There is a submission that craft specialists were on a full-time basis. Using this submission, the researcher therefore interrogated the conceptualization of weaponization and use of spears and arrows in political ethnic violence experienced in the area.

Sutton (1978) averring to the social organization of the Nandi asserts that traditional practices dictated that women in pastoral and agricultural cultures (often not belonging to the Nandi) sold a few cattle for grain. There were no regular local markets in

existence prior to the colonial era. Women sometimes sold vegetables in sub-location centers of large cities and districts, albeit this is an uncommon occurrence in the country. Sutton further notes that except for the division of labor based on age and gender, there was little institutionalized division of labor. After the field had been cleared by males, it seems that married men and women collaborated to cultivate the area after its clearing. Despite the fact that most children nowadays attend school, the contribution that children make to domestic chores is critical to the success of the family. The work of Sutton (1978), helped the current study since it acted as a precursor to the various roles played by different genders and ages. Thus, the researcher interrogated whether these ages or genders play a role in the weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in the region.

Kipkemei (2020) introduces the concept of the political organization of the Nandi by describing the different levels of councils of elders, the composition as well as the functions of these councils. However, it is important to contemplate, whether or not the political organization of the Nandi was a precursor to the problem being faced in the contemporary society. Thus this research endeavored to interrogate the effectiveness of the local chiefs and their position or rather relevance in the series of conflicts and violence that have happened in the Rift Valley including the Post-Election Violence. One of the attitudes that the current study endeavored to evaluate was that which encompasses cattle raiding. Therefore, understanding this attitude also revealed the nexus between Moi-Kibaki regimes which has a series of weaponized conflicts and ethnic violence.

Gold (1978) delves into the economic and political transformations experienced by the Nandi during the latter half of the 19th century. By the 1880s, they had reached the

pinnacle of their wealth in livestock and military prowess. However, this growth in wealth and power affected the Nandi in varying ways. Within Nandi society, diverse and sometimes conflicting aims and interests emerged, including tensions between pastoralists and cultivators, as well as between elders and warriors.

In the 1880s, the Nandi faced a series of natural disasters, which temporarily disrupted both their economy and internal political cohesion. The British arrival in 1895 was perceived as yet another serious threat to their fragile position, but it also served as a catalyst for greater political unity among the Nandi. The conflict initially began as a series of isolated encounters, with neither side fully understanding their adversary. However, as the British recognized the strategic importance of the Nandi within their broader East African imperial interests, stereotypes portraying the Nandi as warlike, troublesome, and dishonest were used to justify the dismantling of their economy and political structure during the colonial period. Golds insights contributed to a better understanding of the political and economic predicament of the Nandi in the pre-colonial period.

1.9.5 Ethnic Relations and Conflicts During the Colonial Period, 1895-1963

Blanton *et al.* (2001) examine the emergence and evolution of ethnic conflict from a colonial perspective. Even though ethnic fighting in Africa is ubiquitous across the continent, grievance-based techniques have had minimal effectiveness in modelling ethnic conflict in Africa, in their perspective. Drawing on a structural perspective, they argue that the distinct colonial approaches adopted by the British and French resulted in fundamentally different systems of ethnic stratification, leading to contrasting legacies for post-colonial ethnic tensions.

According to their analysis, the British colonial policy of indirect, decentralized control facilitated an unranked system of ethnic stratification, whereas the French colonial legacy tended to create a ranked system. They argue that unranked systems foster competition between ethnic groups, which can easily escalate into violence. As a result, they hypothesize that the British colonial heritage is positively correlated with both the occurrence and severity of ethnic conflict. On the other hand, French colonies were left with a centralized bureaucratic power structure that suppressed ethnic mobilization and subdued peaceful ethnic dissent. Their research findings indicate a positive association between the legacy of British colonialism and ethnic strife. These findings can be used to unravel the connection between colonialism and inter- ethnic violence

Berman (1976) discusses violence during the colonial period with specific reference to the Mau Mau. Berman identifies several factors contributing to conflict in Kenya, including economic progress, widening distributional inequalities, urbanization, Western education, rural stagnation, landlessness, and the erosion of traditional institutions. He argues that socioeconomic variables can elucidate the patterns of cleavage and conflict arising from these transformative processes, while socio-psychological variables can account for the rise of frustrations and tendencies toward violence. However, to comprehend how such tensions and conflicts are actually resolved, it is imperative to analyze the factors shaping the responses of political authorities. This research sheds light on conflicts during the colonial period.

Tarus (1994) examines the manifestation, size, and influence of early colonialism on Keiyo society. He believes that colonialism's entrenchment had a significant impact on the Keiyo. The Keiyo region was placed under the control of the East Africa Protectorate in 1902. And by 1905, a Keiyo reserve had been established to prevent the geographical growth of the Keiyo onto the Uasin Gishu plateau, so impeding the free

movement of people and animals. Infringing upon Keiyo social and economic structures, the colonial authority subjected Keiyo demands such as the expropriation of land, taxes, migrant labour, and the nomination of chiefs, according to Tarus. The Keiyo responded by actively engaging in trade, commerce, cash crop cultivation, and the creation of the African government school Tambach.

The colonial presence had a crucial role in the convergence of the once disparate Keiyo clans. As a result of colonial land expropriation and denial of important grazing pasture, they used other survival chances, such as squatterdom, migration, and the adoption of new agricultural techniques, such as the use of the plough and the linear sowing of seeds rather than random dissemination. Colonialism compelled their indigenous institutions to absorb some elements of change and continuity while maintaining a high degree of social and economic autonomy without offending the colonial authorities. The work will shed light on the relations between the colonial government and Uasin Gishu communities.

Munene (1992) gives a discourse on the growth and development of ethnicity and ethnic animosities from the advent of colonialism as it became one of the colonial strategies to divide and rule the Africans. He notes that prior to colonialism and the establishment of ethnic reserves, Kenyans were not sensitive to their ethnic affiliations or groups, they interacted through trade, warfare, intermarriage with their neighbours. The inklings of ethnicity were inculcated into Africans during colonial conquest in order to prevent them from uniting with each other against the British, the creation of reserves to manipulate them into providing cheap labour and the formation of district political parties all in a bid to ensure they could not unite against their colonizers. The history of Kenyan politics for the past 30 years or more has been dominated by the big metanarrative of the emergence of nationalism.

Brantley Smith (1973) investigate the evolution of Giriama society during a transitional phase in the mid-nineteenth century, focusing on the Giriama uprising of 1913-1914 as a lens through which to understand Giriama politics. This uprising serves as a microcosm, highlighting the challenges and intricacies emerging within Giriama society in the early years of British colonial governance. The Giriama community was structured through loosely organized councils of elders from specific generations. From the mid-19th century, they established an exceedingly dispersed governmental system. The author examines their participation in the uprising of 1914. Smith notes that since they preserved their political and cultural autonomy in the face of colonial and national administrative pressures, they gained a reputation for being resistant to change.

The study focused on field research, historical materials, and extensive interviews with Giriama. His research indicates that the Giriama resistance was supported by a large number of people and that the war was waged without strong leadership. The Giriama joined in the resistance for a variety of reasons: some wished to maintain their property, some refused to serve in the military, and still others disapproved strongly of those Giriama who had been co-opted into British service. At a period when other Africans had to choose the labour market for such freedom, the Giriama shared a great desire for independence that was fuelled by the availability of land. Their resistance was also bolstered by the economic self-sufficiency they achieved via maize cultivation and trading. Despite losing the battle, the Giriama were able to preserve their property, never gave the required labour support, and retained significant political independence throughout the colonial era.

Ellis (1976) analyses the 1923 Nandi uprising within the background of Kenya. The author interprets the protest as a result of the rising demands on Africans at this time, stresses stemming from landlessness, labour, and taxes, which had a noteworthy

outcome on the Nandi and other Kenyans. The Nandi political protest against colonial practices during this time. The period revolved around the traditional leadership of the Nandi Orkoiyot, or ritual expert, and reflected the limited sociocultural changes in Nandi prior to 1923. The Nandi uprising also highlights the enduring strength of the traditional Nandi economy and governance. Squatting, a significant occurrence during this period, is seen as a major factor contributing to this resilience, while also presenting new threats to the economic autonomy of the Nandi, which the political protest led by Orkoiyot Barserion aimed to address. Therefore, an examination of the 1923 Nandi protest provides insights into the Nandi's political expression as part of the emergence of political dissent in Kenya.

Scullin, (2017) in the Mau discussion, posed highly pertinent questions, the majority of which formed the basis of the dispute over the connotation and ownership of the Mau Mau. The author questioned if the Mau Mau experience was a rebellion or a peasant uprising. whether it succeeded or failed? What became of its actors, apostles, and representatives? It remains uncertain whether the uprising was a genuine manifestation of nationalism, belonging to all Kenyans, or if it represented a unique expression of the landless and disenfranchised. Similarly, it's unclear whether it was solely a Kikuyu rebellion or the emergence of a particular faction within Kikuyu society. Since the height of the Mau Mau movement in the 1950s, the most compelling questions in Kenyan political discourse, theater, and literature have centered on understanding what Mau Mau truly was, its significance, how it was experienced both individually and collectively, and whether its ideals and goals have been abandoned or continued in modern political conflicts in Kenya, and by whom.

Mwaniki (2015) investigates the political background of the Embu. The main emphasis is on the evolution and cultural identity development of the Chuka people residing in the

Mount Kenya region. Mwaniki traces their origins back to around 1400, drawing from the earliest documented traditions. The narrative explores the migrations and interactions of three distinct cultural and linguistic groups - Cushites, Paraniotes, and Bantu - whose amalgamation gave rise to the Chuka community. Mwaniki contends that the formation of Chuka ethnicity during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was not purely tribal in nature, nor solely a consequence of extended familial ties.

Ochieng-Opondo (1971) investigates the pre-colonial history of the Gusii people from 1560 to 1914. Attempts have been made to shed light on Gusii's social, political, military, and economic institutions, however the focus is mostly on migrations and settlement. In addition, the research brings the traditional history of the Gusii into the twenty-first century by examining the Gusii's reaction to the establishment of British administration in their territory.

From 1906 to 1963, Arap Lagat (1965) provides an account of the Nandi squatter laborers' history in Kenya's Uasin Gishu region. It delves into the intricacies and tensions of the colonial era, highlighting key figures such as the squatters, the colonial government, and European settlers. The colonial administration disrupted Nandi socioeconomic structures by enforcing specific mandates, such as land expropriation, reserve creation, and tax obligations. The colonial influence was also crucial to the homogenization of the formerly diverse Bororiosiek into the Nandi civilization.

Lagat's argument demonstrates that, although being severely confined, colonial land alienation did not discourage the Nandi. Without access to essential grazing pasture and salt licks, they utilized alternative survival chances like squatting. The various laws aimed at eliminating squatter livestock effectively contributed to the regression of the Nandi squatters, whose cattle represented wealth and progress. The white settlers

exemplified the capitalist growth that impoverished the squatters by destroying their livestock and limited cultivable land. From Arap Lagat's work, this study can establish the impact of loss of economic independence of the Nandi as a result of colonialism and how this contributed to resentment towards other immigrants into Uasin Gishu.

Kandagor (1993) examines and evaluates the economic change of the Tugen between 1895 and 1963. He chronicles the arrival of the Tugen based on oral traditions that indicate they arrived from three different regions: Sumo (the region around Mount Elgon), Koilegen (the region surrounding Mount Kenya), and Suguta (the area around Lake Turkana). In terms of labor patterns, the colonial period witnessed a Tugen migration from their homes to work in government offices, on farms owned by White Settlers, and on railway construction. Famines and other natural calamities finally compelled the Tugen to become wage laborers. Initially, the Tugen were only willing to work long enough to earn enough money to pay their taxes. The study provides a background under which to study the economic activities during the colonial period.

From 1920 to 1946, Nabwera (1987) describes the history of European immigrants in the Trans Nzoia territory. Nabwera begins by establishing the historical issue under investigation and offering a literature review on European settlement in Kenya as well as a discussion of the methodology. Furthermore, he explores the origins of European colonization in the highlands, examining the initial tactics employed by colonial authorities to promote white settlement. It underscores the crucial role played by the collaboration between the government and settler leaders prior to 1914, which facilitated the rapid establishment of European dominance during this era. The subject of the study is the social, political, and economic ramifications of European domination in Trans Nzoia.

Between 1907 and 1939, Atieno-Odhiambo (1973) examines the history, activity, and character of the Executive Council in Kenya. The study was based on archival and library materials in Kenya and the United Kingdom, a small amount of correspondence between the author and certain informants, and oral interviews with additional informants familiar with personalities and events during this time period. The research is situated in the colonial environment of Kenya and is divided into two halves. The first section gives a snapshot of colonial society by examining the beliefs and challenges of the many lobbying groups that demanded participation in the Executive Council at various times. On behalf of the Africans, these are defined as the Europeans, particularly the settlers, the Asians, and the Missionaries. Each of these organizations is discussed in detail, mainly because prior information about them was scattered and, in some cases, it was unknown what they represented. Instances in point are the settlers and the migrants. Insufficient information on their true thoughts, writings, and words has forced unique study into their actions and views. Africans have been included in the research.

Muchoki (1988) examines the structure and growth of Kikuyu agriculture in the Kiambu District from 1880 to 1920. In these years, he explores the internal dynamics and inventive developments that defined Kikuyu agriculture. He investigates the indigenous concepts by which Kikuyu farmers analysed, anticipated, and interfered in their natural surroundings. In addition, he explores the local social organization and foreign political and economic variables that influenced the agricultural system of Kikuyu over these years. Colonialism not only drastically altered the Kikuyu's social and political organization, but also their ecological structure. This study will investigate this reorganization's nature.

Osolo (1974) The Kenya Highlands witnessed intense conflict during the colonial period, as noted by Arap Lagat (1965). The Kenyan Africans involved in the liberation struggle, notably the Mau Mau, had a singular goal: the restitution of all lands seized by European settlers and colonial powers. The ideology of the Mau Mau movement insisted on the complete relinquishment of the Highlands by Europeans, advocating for equitable redistribution among landless Africans. This analysis evaluates the present condition of the Highlands in light of these historical dynamics, particularly considering Kenya's attainment of independence.

Kanogo (1980) scrutinized the development, adjustment, and marginalization of the Kikuyu squatter population in the Nakuru District, once part of Kenya's White Highlands, spanning from 1900 to 1963. The research portrays the tensions and complexities inherent in a colonial context, with key players including squatters, European settlers, the colonial administration, and the nascent leadership of the African national elite. Notably, the bulk of African laborers residing on European settler farms in the White Highlands were Kikuyu squatters.

The colonial regime intended to transform the squatter community into a cheap and malleable labour force through a series of financial and political laws. The thesis illustrates the reaction of the squatters to a hostile capitalist environment. This work will be used to shed light on the connections between initial resistance movements and modern mass nationalism of the Kikuyu.

Parsons (2012) provides information about the formation of reserves and colonial misunderstanding on African ethnic identity during the colonial period. When colonial officials invaded Kenya, he argues, they were forced to reorganize the acquired populace into more manageable administrative districts due to the country's many and

shifting ethnicities. By associating physical area with ethnic identity, they established reservation systems based on the premise that each of these "tribes" had a distinct homeland. However, the reserves in the central Kenyan highlands quickly became overpopulated and socially unrestful due to their inability to handle population expansion and private land claims for commercial agriculture. Although colonial administrators professed themselves to be the guardians of backward tribal peoples, they attempted to solve this issue by providing systems for excess inhabitants to be 'adopted' into "tribes" residing in less densely populated reserves. This essay sheds fresh light on the concept of identity in colonial Kenya by recounting the experiences of two groups of Kikuyu migrants who settled in the Meru Reserve.

Ray (2019) explains how the evolution of precolonial political institutions influences modern ethnic strife. Even if colonial state-building tactics moderate this association, he contends that ethnic groups who were dominated by centralized political institutions in the precolonial period are more likely to be connected with violent conflict in the present. Moreover, he argues that ethnic groups who underwent precolonial centralization were likely under represented in the upper echelons of colonial security forces before independence. This, in turn, enhanced the likelihood that these groups would be excluded from the initial post-independence system and, in the long term, engage in violent confrontation against the state. Moreover, he asserts that colonial security forces had a tendency to over recruit ethnic groups who had not experienced precolonial centralization. This made it more probable that these groups would join the first post-independence administration and less likely that they would engage in long-term military combat against the state. Using a self-compiled dataset on ethnic groupings in former British territories, the author offered solid evidence. The findings

highlight how present ethnic strife is intertwined in longer-term historical processes of state-building.

According to Carotenuto and Shadle (2012), the PEV must be understood in context of Kenya's brutal colonial past. They argue that the post-election violence may be traced back to the colonial era, when public violence was used to impose social and political control. They provide a deeper look at how the colonial encounter affected the meanings and applications of public violence. From the racially motivated settler society and colonial courts to the inhibition of gender based and vibrant dissent in schools and cities, they aim to move Kenyan history beyond the typical conversations of conflict as anti-colonial rebellion and to contest the wider portrayal of violence in colonial Africa's histories. According to Carotenuto and Shadle (2012), the violent struggle for social and political power over the last century of Kenyan history culminated in the 2007/2008 election crisis. However, this study argues that in order to comprehend (and overcome) the contemporary culture of violence, one must look to the colonial past.

In his paper, Tignor (1972) connects the conservatism of the Maasai in the early twentieth century to their social structure, particularly focusing on the warrior (Moran) age-grade. He argues that the concept of modernization held varying significance for different Maasai groups: while some elders saw it as an avenue to enhance political influence and wealth, warriors perceived it as a challenge to their diminishing status, accompanied by additional and onerous duties like road construction.

From the colonial period to the present, Jefremovas (1997) explores how multiple interpretations of ethnicity and statehood in Rwanda have been utilized to develop and justify policies of exclusion, inclusion, and claims to legitimacy. The author contends

that such politics have their origins in the politics of the precolonial state. He examines how colonial and postcolonial regimes have modified, as opposed to creating, them. Regarding the depiction of ethnicity and statehood across time as fictions of ethnicity, ethnography, and history, the author depicts the process of creating and recreating these fictions and their influence on the lives of Rwandans.

Lentz (2000) examines how ethnic categories, boundaries, and institutions were created and continually redefined by colonial officials, missionaries, anthropologists, chiefs, labour migrants, and educated elites in a region that was neither politically centralized nor had distinct 'tribes' during the precolonial period.

Frey & Morris (1991) observe that Kenya had been a British colony since the 19th century, when the British rushed to capture the Nile's headwaters in Uganda. They built the railway from the garrison at Lake Victoria to the British East African Protectorate, which was then named the British East African Protectorate. After the indigenous people were brutally crushed, the colony was built. The British established "indirect rule," a system that relied on local leaders, after subduing the Africans. By taking land, several of these leaders got quite wealthy. The best farmland was taken by the European immigrants for their personal purposes. No Africans were permitted to purchase property in the "white highlands."

According to Harvath (1972), the colonial land history in Kenya has had a significant impact on the distribution of land in post-colonial Kenya. Before colonialism, land tenure was communal, characterized by communal property ownership. While land rights were secure, they were communal rather than individual, and the concept of losing ancestral land was unfamiliar. The sense of belonging individuals felt within their families, clans, and communities, particularly centered around ancestral land

holdings, played a vital role in land ownership and utilization in pre-colonial Kenya. However, colonialism threw a wrench in this way of thinking about land. Land pressure arose as a result of demarcation, consolidation, displacements, and resettlements, causing diverse Africans to overvalue land and revere it

Veit (2019) in recalling the history of land brings out clearly the first category of conflict which was between the Europeans and the Africans. He says that one million acres were transferred from Europeans to Africans as part of a million-acre plan. The accessibility of readily available financing for land acquisition during and following independence allowed a select few affluent Africans to amass vast tracts of land, aligning with the colonial masters' concept of private property. This phenomenon is widely seen as the root cause of the ongoing land disputes in Kenya.

The study by Veit (2019) helped this study in the following ways; first, his work was a base for analysis on the various types of violence that occurred during the colonial period. Second, the fact that his work traces the origin of colonialism, Veit's work traced most of the actors and factors for the disagreements in the Rift Valley region in the colonial period. Third, the work has also helped in coining land as the major factor of violence in the entire Rift Valley region. However, this study endeavoured to evaluate other factors such as the political factors that led to disagreements in the Rift Valley region.

Brock (1952) Brock's work is also of the same idea with Veit when he refers to most of the problems in Rift Valley as being rooted in balkanization of Kenyan communities by the European powers. In tracking some of the perpetrators of violence in the Rift Valley, Brock (1952) reveals that in 1901, the railway was finished all the way to Lake Victoria. The government started a program of European settlement in order to make the railway

profitable leading to massive alienation of supposedly idle African land. Uneven land ownership has been connected to social discontent and violence, as well as lower production (Brock, 1952). As a result, these land reforms are aimed at soothing social discontent and reducing political pressure from peasant organizations. It is recorded that other people, purchased property once originally owned by groups that could not reacquire them owing to economic reasons. This research will also focus on the impact of acquisition of such land by other communities in Uasin Gishu.

Okia (2023) on the other hand, tries to redistribute the occupants of the Rift Valley as per their original migration and settlement schemes. This helps in placing and contextualizing the various ethnic groups into their what was then called their homes. Ethnographers originally classified the Nandi peoples into seven main sections: the Pokot, Marakwet, Keiyo, Kipsigis, Sabaot and Tugen. The Nandi and Kipsigis, inhabited the upland areas west of the Uasin Gishu plateau and behind the Mau Escarpment, respectively. Additionally, Okia notes that the Sebei nationality occupied the eastern slopes of Mount Elgon in Uganda. The wooded regions separating the Tugen and Elgeyo from the Nandi and Kipsigis were regularly utilized by these groups, with small communities of Kalenjin-speaking Ogiek residing there, resulting in a relatively contiguous Nandi-speaking territory stretching from the Pokot in the north to the Kipsigis in the south. Despite the fact that each of them is recognized as a separate nationality, they all have strong cultural and social links.

In the 19th century, the Maasai were neighbors of the Nandi on the plains of the Uasin Gishu plateau and the Rift Valley. It wasn't until British colonization forced the Maasai out of these grazing regions that the Nandi population began to substantially increase. The allocation of western highland territory for European colonization further restricted this growth. The fluctuating pattern of stock theft among the Nandi is significantly

influenced by the level of social connectivity among various Kalenjin sections, as well as by the growth process and the relationship of Nandi lands to European farms Rothschilds was influential as it traced chronologically how these societies settled in Uasin Gishu, and how colonization had an impact on several conflicts in the region. Moreover, citing several examples of conflicts that existed during the colonial period ascertained the relationship between communities and the colonial masters during the colonial period.

Jones (1965) attempts to historicize the inherent hatred between the Nandi and the Kikuyu. He avers that history demonstrates that the Bantu, particularly the Kikuyu, have an inherent hatred towards Nandi which resurfaces occasionally. The Kikuyu have always had a poor opinion of other nationalities and have been proud of it. In response, the Nandi see the Kikuyu as foes, referring to them as '*vunyo*,' or adversary. In relation to ownership of land in the Rift Valley Jones, (1965) states that the Nandi believe that they are sitting on their ancestral territory. The colonizers did not restore this territory when they departed; instead, they relinquished it to other immigrant communities. Therefore, according to them Rift Valley belongs to them. Jones narration informs both the relative deprivation theory in relation to the Kalenjin resentment over unfair loss of land, as well as the precolonial relationships between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin which is of essence in this study.

Hennings (1952) posits that the conflicts in Rift Valley between the Kalenjin and immigrant communities arise from several issues such as; the limited land for pasture, corruption in the lands office which has prevented some natives from acquiring land. Nandi culture of raiding for cattle and the influence of elders who easily convince the warriors to fight for what belongs to them. This study posits that weaponisation of cultural aspects has contributed to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu, hence

the role played by elders and warriors as cultural institutions among the Kalenjin is of utmost importance for this study.

Morgan (1963) affirms the factors leading to the relationship and conflicts between the Nandi and other communities claiming that poor education structures which have led to and caused by poverty was also a factor. For this study it is important to establish whether poverty, augmented by poor education systems contributed in any way to readiness of the youth to engage in political violence since they were paid by politicians, apart from being promised wealth and land.

Kiplagat & Kipkoech (2020) argue that the Kalenjin always complain about not having enough land, despite the fact that others have far more than they require. These are the folks who are readily enticed by politicians to create havoc. The authors partly attribute this situation to Nandi culture which was more keen on pastoralism than schooling.

Kiplagat and Kipkoech's work helped this study unravel several lacunae. First, was the issue of land as a problem prior to the arrival of the colonialists. Why are there internal conflicts among the Nandi? Ideally, from the work, it may be affirmed that there were still conflicts during the colonial period. Thus, Kiplagat and Kipkoech's work helped focus on the question, do the trends of violence have a specific time or season? These questions were essential in analysing the political influence of violence in Rift Valley.

Akiwumi's report also delves deep into the understanding of the conflicts and relationships between communities during the colonial period. The report states that warfare has been prevalent in Kenya's Rift Valley from the early colonial era to the present. Even while such conflict is common throughout Kenya, it has tended to focus on the Rift Valley Province. In this region, more than in other parts of the country, colonial land policies established a default form of land relations that excluded

indigenous African populations and their modes of production by limiting their access to the most essential resource in these processes, land. (Akiwumi, 2001). After the decolonization of the old White Highlands in the 1960s, the agriculturally rich regions of Kenya's Rift Valley have remained a battleground for land rights, ethnic identity, and access to national politics.

Therefore, Akiwumi's report was influential in this work as it contributed to understanding the conflicts in the Nandi nation during the colonial period. However, the report focused more on the colonialists and the locals, who were the Nandi, as the major participants in the war. Besides, the basic factor of their conflict was land. It is from this conceptualization that this study endeavored to evaluate the validity of whether the colonialists and the Nandi were the major participants of in the conflicts during the colonial period. Did other ethnic groups take part or helped the Nandi in their struggle? Was there peace between the Nandi and other ethnic groups during the colonial period? Is the relationship created and the rapport formed between communities in Rift Valley region during the colonial period have an impact in the contemporary systems of conflicts seen today?

Anderson (1993) investigates the history of colonial resistance among the Nandi and Kipsigis of Kenya's Western Highlands. The actions of a group of ceremonial leaders, the Orkoiik of the Talai clan, who were thought to have supernatural abilities of prophesy and divination, were at the center of this anticolonial resistance.

Anderson (1993) The Orkoiyot Koitalel rose to prominence as a leader of resistance to invasion between the late 1890s and 1905. After his defeat, the British temporarily sought to integrate his Talai clansmen into the colonial administration structure by

raising them to the position of chief. This study reflects on the traditional roles of the orkoiyot as religious leaders and how they may have influenced Kalenjin mobilization and resistance in the face of perceived oppression.

1.9.6 Ethnic Relations and Conflicts in Uasin Gishu During Kenyatta's Presidency-1963-1978

Boone (2012) states that in Kenya, unlike many African nations where land politics often revolve around the utilization and exploitation of customary authority, major land disputes often stem from the allocation of land by the central state. Boone analyzes and deliberates on the dominant narratives surrounding land claims in Kenya. Boone also discusses how they have been managed by the political elite, identifies the primary players involved in land conflict, and comprehends the dominant lines of argument about land dispute. Boones work will shed light on land conflicts in Kenya.

Using statistical analysis, Gathogo (2020) presents the migration of other populations into the Rift Valley. Kenya's population consists of around 40 distinct ethnic groups. While no ethnic group represents a majority, the Luhya (14%) are the second most populous after the Kikuyu (22%). The remainder of the population consists of the Luo (13%), Nandi (12%), and Kisii (6%), as well as lesser indigenous nationalities like the Somalis, Maasai, and Turkana. According to Gathogo, numerous peoples migrated to the territory that would become Kenya prior to colonization. He also outlines the demographic movements into and around the Rift Valley and gives reasons for the same. Thus, from Gathogo's work, it is evidently clear that the immigration of other societies into the Rift Valley can be traced from the colonial period. However, whatever Gathogo's work does not put clear and which this study had endeavoured to elucidate is whether the immigrants into the Rift Valley after Kenya's independence were following

their ancestors. There ought to be a well-defined schedule which identifies the population increase in the Rift Valley and be compared against the pasture (*Chitap Koret*).

Roberts (2009) describes the circumstances surrounding the arrival of the Kikuyu into Rift Valley during Kenyatta's reign. It is within the understanding of Roberts' work that this study is built on the following parameters; first, does it mean their arrival into the Rift Valley was catalysed by the first leadership that the Kenyan Government ever received? Did the appointment of Daniel Arap Moi as the vice President influence the relationship between the Kikuyu and the Nandi? Was there an influx of Kikuyu into the Rift Valley after Moi ascended into presidency? How many non-Nandi have migrated into the Rift Valley after independence, and what was the motive of every immigrant?

Veit (2019) responds to the immigration of other nationalities into the Rift Valley by giving an interrogative history to the views of the Nandi. In essence, Veit claims that; according to the Nandi, the Kikuyu and other nationalities are tenants on their land. The other ethnic groups are viewed as visitors in Nandi territory. It makes no difference whether the land these nationalities inhabit was acquired lawfully or illegally, whether it was gifted, purchased from the Nandi or anybody else, or whether it has a legal title and ownership or not. The author posits according to the Nandi, the other nationalities must eventually depart their property that mainly includes land. In the Rift Valley therefore, there will always be mutual distrust between the Kikuyu and Nandi with reference to land among other things.

Thus, Veit's work will provide a historical documentation of immigrations into Rift Valley, and the resultant resentment of these immigrants' presence in Rift Valley.

Chege (2008) demonstrates that as a pastoralist group, the Nandi formed a unique bargain with the settler farmers: in exchange for grazing rights, they provided manual labour on the fields. Midway through the 1940s, however, this arrangement became unstable because the settlement farmers needed additional acreage for income crops. Why, by the end of World War II in 1945, Europe had depleted the majority of its agricultural areas for commercial crop cultivation. In addition, the population of the Nandi people swelled as their cattle increased in number. They also wanted greater grazing pasture for their livestock. This inevitably increased tensions and led to protests from the Nandi. The settlers responded by bringing in the Kikuyu to work on their farms.

Chege's work fitted in this study as it established a channel or rather a doorway to interrogating the various patterns of immigration into the Rift Valley. In the first pattern, Africans were forced into the reserves resulting in the accommodation of people from diverse ethnic groups into the white highlands. The second phase incorporated the relatives and people who came into the Rift Valley under the land settlement schemes while others arrived for political, economic and even socio-cultural reasons.

Nyukuri, (1997) opines that the statist land tenure regime created in the Rift Valley agricultural regions by the colonial state was continued and expanded by the KANU administration following independence. Nyukuri (1997) states that between 1960 and 1975, the government purchased the property from the departing European residents and distributed it to smallholder farmers through settlement programs. The remainder of the land was handed in the form of huge estates to high-ranking officials of the Kenyatta administration, therefore solidifying their position as economic as well as political

elites. When some of the Kalenjin elites protested, they were harassed by the government. This is important in historicising the roots of conflict and the essence of deprivation which has contributed to political violence in Uasin Gishu.

Anderson (2005) examines Majimboism, its historical evolution, and political influence on Kenya's political system and ethnicity under both the Kenyatta and Moi administrations. During the intense political climate of the early 1960s, the rhetoric of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) reinterpreted the federalist principles of Majimboism into a derogatory term. Majimboists were derided as "tribalists" who were portrayed as opposing the broader nationalist goals. This work will provide information on the circumstances surrounding the majimbo debate and how it later influenced the ethnic violence that accompanied calls for multipartism.

Boone (2014) describes how the Kenyatta's government facilitated the creation of settlement schemes for the Kikuyu in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia, and also how other Kikuyus purchased land from other Kalenjins. Boone contends that as these communities were gradually displaced from their ancestral lands to accommodate settled communities like the Kikuyu for agricultural purposes, the loss of land grew increasingly burdensome over time. Boone's works fitted in this work since it involved an analysis of how some communities entered into the Rift Valley. Moreover, with an analysis of the various properties these communities own in the Rift Valley including land, Boone's works helped this study to analyze the core reasons why there are conflicts in the Rift Valley. Moreover, the works have revolved more on political and economic domains as the causatives of the immigrants into the Rift Valley. However, this work supersedes Boone's analysis by interrogating the social underlinings that made other communities to come into the Rift Valley.

According to Oguny and Gillies (2019), land governance remains a topic of great interest among policymakers and academics. The debate over whether and how land institutions should alter national land laws has been contentious. In their study, the authors conduct a literature analysis to explore how, why, and by whom land issues in Kenya are mobilized to incite tension, conflict, and violence. Apart from narratives surrounding the "global land rush," their essay argues that the political framework plays a critical role in organizing land disputes in Kenya. According to the authors, politics shape individuals' connections to land, particularly through institutions that establish, regulate, and oversee land rights. This literature review aims to deepen understanding of the relationship between land, conflict, and ethnopolitical violence in Kenya.

Saruni Kenana (2018) analyses the unstable land situation in the historic white highlands. He notes that in addition to the dispute over vote tallying, the present surge of animosity in the erstwhile White Highlands indicates that pre-independence disputes including population pressure, environmental issues, poverty, and property ownership. The debate over whether and how land institutions should alter national land laws has been contentious. In their study, the authors conduct a literature analysis to explore how, why, and by whom land issues in Kenya are mobilized to incite tension, conflict, and violence. Apart from narratives surrounding the "global land rush," he argues that the political framework plays a critical role in organizing land disputes in Kenya. According to the authors, politics shape individuals' connections to land, particularly through institutions that establish, regulate, and oversee land rights. This literature review aims to deepen understanding of the relationship between land, conflict, and ethno-political violence in Kenya remains unresolved. This work will shed light on the intricacies behind the complaints related to land historical injustices and how the same have affected ethnic relations and political violence in Uasin Gishu.

Okediji and Siguru, (2016) analyse the role played by ethnicity in the formation of political parties in Kenya since 1963. They illustrate how the formation of these political parties were founded on the unequal distribution of land. They posit that these political parties were particularly influenced by the displacement of the Nandi, Luhya, and Maasai from the highland region by the settlers followed by the redistribution of these lands by President Kenyatta's government to the Kikuyu elites at independence. according to the authors, this redistribution informs the entrenchment of ethnicity in Kenya's political parties, an issue which is of significant in understanding the trends and origins of ethnic conflicts for this study.

1.9.7 Ethnicity and Political Violence during Moi-Kibaki Era 1979-2012

Ndege (2018) analyses present day electoral violence and peace building in a historical perspective. The author discusses in details ; constitution making and peace building, with its failures and successes; Britain's colonial conquest and its short and long term consequences on the structure of governance, party and electoral politics; the upsurge of the Mau Mau and the aftermath of the British counterinsurgency; the 1954 Swynnerton plan and the subsequent constitutional reforms on the road to independence in 1963, the constitutional changes in post-independence Kenya, which consolidated Presidential absolutism; the transition to multi-partyism and the resort to violence by the state as a counterpoise; the NARC era and its false promise of hope which culminated in the 2007/2008 post-election violence. This study will benefit a lot from the historical perspective outlined by Ndege which shall be applied in the investigation of weaponized ethnicity and political violence.

Lynch (2011) provides an account of the 2007 PEV by focusing on the Nandi, whom he identifies as the primary culprits. Lynch contends that the 2007 PEV was more notable than many past instances of ethnic violence because the Nandi community is a relatively

new entity, having only formed since the middle of the twentieth century. Lynch analyses the genesis, growth, political importance, and public appeal of the Nandi identity, as well as its violent potential, using extensive archival research and vivid oral evidence. Gabrielle Lynch analyses how ethnic groupings are socially formed and renegotiated over time by tracing the Nandi's origins. Lynch illustrates further how historical narratives of communal accomplishment, migration, injustice, and persecution are in a state of perpetual change. Consequently, ethnic identities facilitate the mobilization of support for politicians and the assertion of space, power, and riches by ordinary individuals. Accordingly, Lynch's work will show how ethnic difference and competitiveness develops into violent conflict and vengeance at the behest of political elite.

Kanyinga (2009) analyzes the land issue and ethnicity as contributing causes to the post-election violence. He notes that, ethnicity and the post-colonial treatment of the land query in the erstwhile White Highlands, particularly in the Rift Valley area, had a significant role in the post-2007 election violence. In his paper, he contends that the changes attempted by successive administrations through settlement plans and the land acquisition program ethnicized the land question and created a basis for political confrontation. Considering Kenya's access politics to the erstwhile white highlands, he believes that this violence is foreseeable. This work answers the question as to why land injustices have persisted in Uasin Gishu.

Furthermore, in his analysis, Kanyinga delves into the characteristics and role of Kenya's land problem in the aftermath of the 2007 election violence, examining its interaction with national politics and its impact on political unrest. Additionally, he explores whether the historical legacy of the former White Highlands is responsible for

this conflict. The author argues that the handling of access to and management of land rights in the former white highlands during the post-colonial era has significantly contributed to the electoral violence witnessed since 2007. He argues that the resolution of the land question is crucial to Kenya's future as a nation-state. Kanyinga's work will inform to a great extent the relationship between land injustices, ethnic resentments, and political conflicts in Uasin Gishu

Rutten and Owuor (2009) concur that the fast expanding population, scarcity of land, and lack of employment have become major concerns. On the other side, multiparty politicians always sense an opening and exploit these demands. During times of probable loss of these resources, political meddling increases, particularly when the leadership position is at issue. Politicians are able to manage and frustrate local events through local power brokers (such as chiefs). In addition, it appears that the constituency system rather than multipartyism itself fuels ethnic conflict. Politicians have a vested interest in stoking mistrust or resorting to violence in order to achieve their objectives and maintain or attain power. In severe circumstances, this entails physically removing individuals from the constituency. When these objectives coincide with the common people's need for land and employment, a potentially hazardous scenario is created. This work will add insights and help to explain why and how the political elite incite their ethnic communities to use violence for their own personal gain.

On the other hand, Oucho (2002) offers his perspective on some of the key players and causes of the intermittent conflict in Kenya by asserting that, despite the fact that land is a necessary starting point for illuminating why ethnic conflict continues to exist in the nation, land cannot account for all the factors that have contributed to ethnic hostilities.

Other difficulties for him include internal migration, which is dominated by rural-rural movement (such as that for agricultural land) and rural-urban migration, which has pitted in-migrants against local residents. Ethnic animosities stemming from unequal distribution of the national pie, land disputes, political squabbling, etc.; political marriages and separations/divorces of convenience between potentially antagonistic ethnic groups; and a lack of inspiring, nationalistic, and neutral political leadership are some of the causes of ethnic animosity and, consequently, political violence. This study will benefit from Oucho's perspective on the roots of ethnic conflicts which is multifaceted.

According to the Africa Policy Institute (2008), it is a crisis of democratic reform that generally affects nations facing contested elections or election disputes. During an interview at the Wilson Center on 10 January 2008, Maina Kiai stated, "This is not an ethnic war; it is a political fight with ethnic undertones" resulting from a lack of electoral openness.

Githinji and Holmquist (2008) say that the crisis is best understood not as ethnic conflict for power, but as a result of increased expectations due to the expansion of democratic space during the past five years, coupled with the frustration of exclusion on the economic and political fronts.

Mueller (2020) examines the issue of ethnic politics: when it becomes important, why, and to what effect. The focus is on post-Independence Kenya, with reference to the colonial period and selected theoretical literature on ethnicity. Ethnic politics is the by-product of historically weak institutions and political parties. When institutions are fragile and geography and ethnicity coincide, politicians generally woo their ethnic base with particularistic promises rather than policies. This is often self-reinforcing; the

more winners and losers fall along ethnic lines, the greater the incentives for non-programmatic ethnic appeals. Accordingly, political trust weakens and ethnic divisions rise, sometimes inviting violence and reinforcing a vicious circle. Ethnic politics in Kenya is traceable to three critical junctures: first, to colonialism, which largely confined Africans to ethnic enclaves and prohibited national associations; second, to Independence in 1963, when the question of who gets what, when, and how became more salient as ethnically designed regions and districts battled for scarce national resources; and third to the return of multi-party politics in 1991, when politicians turned electoral contests for the executive into do-or-die events. This work informed on the dynamics of shifting ethnic political alliances and how they can impact on political violence

Jenkins (2012) posits that indigenous discourses surrounding belonging and exclusion have fostered perceptions of ethnic others as 'immigrants' or 'guests', where narratives of territorial identity not only reinforced elite manipulation but also functioned autonomously from it. Consequently, Kenya's post-election violence can be interpreted as a grassroots manifestation of narratives depicting ethnic territorial exclusion, running parallel to more overt elite engagement, coordination, and provocation. The persistence and adaptability of these narratives carry substantial implications for the likelihood of future violence and the trajectory of democratization efforts.

The historical perspective of Kenya's political violence and disputes, according to Rutten and Owuor (2009), reveals that there is more to the violence than just the purported ethnic struggle. They go on to say that ethnic relations, land ownership, and power from the colonial and post-colonial periods are deeply ingrained in Kenya's issue, including the violence that occurred during the 2007 election. They contend that

this form of violence has existed in Kenyan society before, including the political unrest that followed the 2007 general elections. They said that while election-related violence had existed in Kenya since the early 1960s, it was only with the restoration of multiparty politics in 1992 that it became more pronounced and primarily state-orchestrated. According to Rutten and Owuor (2009), the high hopes among Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) supporters and the rigging of the Presidential election added fuel to a fire that had been sparked out of resentment for decades or possibly a century, particularly in the Rift Valley over the loss of land. This article elucidated on why ethnic related political violence increased after 1990s

In their article, Adar *et al*, (2008) evaluate the democratization process in Kenya following the end of President Moi's regime. According to the source, despite the reintroduction of multiparty elections in 1992, there was minimal change to the authoritarian, one-party system established during Jomo Kenyatta's rule. The author illustrates how Moi's presidency maintained dominance across all branches of government, employing favoritism, coercion, and disregard for the rule of law, which hindered the conduct of free and fair multiparty elections. Adar scrutinizes the official suppression of opposition movements, ensuring President Moi and the ruling party KANU's success in the 1992 and 1997 Presidential and parliamentary elections. The author emphasizes how the manipulation of ethnicity played a central role in maintaining political control during Moi's tenure, providing valuable insights for this study.

In his analysis, Adar (2001) delves into governance, accountability, and human rights practices during the post-1992 and post-1997 multiparty electoral system under Moi's presidency. He argues that between 1982 and 1992, President Daniel Arap Moi presided

over a centralized, authoritarian, and oppressive one-party state, where neopatrimonialism was the guiding principle of his administration. Neopatrimonialism, as defined by Adar, encompasses a system where Presidentialism (centralization of political power in a single ruler) and clientelism (providing economic and political rewards in exchange for loyalty) are the primary mechanisms for sustaining authoritarian one-party states, a characteristic often observed in post-colonial African governance systems.

Lonsdale (1994) indicates that in Kenya as it is for the rest of Africa, existing literature converges on at least five empirical explanations for the salience of ethnicity in politics. These are; ethnicity as a residual category in a modernizing Africa; ethnicity as a form of social resistance to colonial capitalist exploitation; ethnicity as false consciousness that masks class struggle; ethnicity as nationalism or “dissident sub-nationalism”; and ethnicity as an imagined community. This work will shed light on the way ethnicity has been instrumentalised in Kenya.

On the other side, Kwatamba (2008) focuses on how important ethnicity has become in Kenya after the country's restoration to political pluralism in 1991. He contends that the colonial era is when ethnicity first became a factor in Kenya's political processes. He claims that successive administrations, starting with the Jomo Kenyatta state in 1963, mastered the ethnicity-rent-seeking-prebendalism nexus to the detriment of the nation state. In an effort to comprehend the overwhelming impact of ethnicity on Kenya's politics, particularly during the multiparty era, he interacts with the theoretical foundations of ethnicity. The author contends that the nation-building endeavour would remain complicated, difficult, and doomed until there is the political will to re-engineer Kenya's polity both politically and constitutionally. He also contends that ethnicity in

and of itself is not harmful to national unity and cohesiveness, but rather may be advantageous when specific ethnic groups legitimately feel marginalized and use their ethnicity to demand fair treatment from the government. According to Kwatamba, the politicization of ethnicity by cunning and demagogic politicians who stump the nation by stoking ethnic animosity and pandering to stereotypes in an effort to seize or hold onto power is harmful to Kenya's social fabric. Kwatamba's work will be useful in historicizing ethnicity in the post independence era.

In his article, Bedasso (2017) seeks to explore the enduring prevalence of ethnic alliances as the primary mechanism employed by Kenya's elites to mobilize collective action. The author's theoretical framework extensively examines the organizational significance of ethnicity in navigating social hierarchies. Empirically, it has been established that ethnic affiliations in Kenya are deeply rooted in inter-group disparities and historical grievances. Moreover, the allocation of economic benefits has been disproportionately skewed towards group-specific activities and resources, a consequence of the historical economic structure. This study draws insights from Bedasso's research, particularly regarding how the establishment of early institutions ensured that political stability hinged upon the elites' adeptness in leveraging ethnicity as a bargaining tool.

Kibwana (1992) notes that from the early days of colonialism till the present, conflicts have been frequent in Kenya's Rift Valley. Even though there is often unrest across Kenya, it tends to be focused in the Rift Valley Province. Colonial land policies generated a default pattern of land relations in this region more so than in other parts of the nation, which suppressed local African populations and their modes of production by limiting their access to the most crucial resource in these processes, land. This

colonial style, which placed an emphasis on exclusion, produced conflicts in the economic, political, and social sectors, which sparked conflict and violent clashes for territory between the government and the local populations as well as between communities.

Thus, Kibwana (1992) work informed this study in the following domains: First, It helped evaluate whether there really exist ethnic conflicts and violence in the greater Rift Valley region. Second, It helped to analyse the core reasons as to why there exists some conflicts in the Rift Valley region. Third, Kibwana's work was a benchmark to the evaluation of the findings of this. Lastly, Kibwana's work stood as a great watermark in informing the recommendations of this study, because it was rooted to the foundational conflict-based problems that the area faces.

Karrim concurring with Kibwana when he argues that President Moi aggravated the land issue in the 1990s. Moi wanted to depict the opposition as Kikuyu-led because he was a Kalenjin who was scared by multiparty politics. Thousands of Kikuyu were forced from their homes in the Rift Valley as a result of violence that left thousands dead and over 35000 homeless (Karrim, 1978). This in turn intensified unrest in the Rift Valley which started seeing their Nandi counterparts as enemies.

Hornsby (2013) observed that Moi wanted to deconstruct the Mount Kenya elite who had been left behind by Kenyatta. The power brokers had to be replaced by more loyal people. It should be mentioned that the Kikuyu elite had vehemently opposed the ascendance of Moi to presidency with some leading a group that was agitating for a change in a clause constitution that expressly proclaimed that in case of death, incapacitation or any occurrence that would deem it impossible for the President to perform his/her functions the Vice President takes over for 90 days before a fresh

election. Thus Homsby's observation informed this study that the beginning of ethnic violence in the entire Rift Valley region was President Moi's urge to deconstruct the elites from Mount Kenya and stabilize his power.

Rotino (2013) in his doctoral dissertation also averred; after the country's return to a multiparty political system after more than 20 years of one-party control, ethnic tension and violence broke out in the Rift Valley area of Kenya in the early 1990s. The violence and strife have had a significant impact on Kenya's political system. To show the connection between violence, ethnicity, and government, this essay offers a historical and theoretical explanation of the conflict and violence. In their struggle for control of the nation's resources, Kenya's political elite used ethnicity as a political football. This competition was a major cause of conflict, hostility, and violence throughout the nation. The article's conclusion states that given Kenya's ethnic diversity, democracy and multiparty politics actually present better prospects for peace, harmony, and progress. Rotino's work helped this study to interrogate the reasons for intermittent political violence and ethnopolitical violence in the nation.

Osamba (2001) and gives a topology and topography of the Rift Valley region where the conflicts were prevalent during President Moi's tenure of office. In essence, he argues that the Rift Valley region was populated mostly by pastoral cultures like the Maasai and the Nandi before the arrival of colonial administration in Kenya. However, during colonial administration, the government expropriated and reserved the most productive land for European colonization. Thus, changes in the Rift Valley's land ownership brought about social and economic possibilities that significantly altered the Rift Valley's ethnic makeup. The government hired African laborers from the provinces of Nyanza and Central after realizing that the native pastoral societies, including the

Maasai and other Nandi clans, were unable to handle agricultural activities. The colonial authorities established exclusive ethnic reserves for every ethnic group to increase the amount of land open to white colonization. Hundreds of squatters, mostly Kikuyu, who had been driven off their land, established themselves on European farms, where they provided the settlers with free labour in exchange for restricted rights to cultivate and graze.

Osambas work informed this study into historicizing the colonial history of Kenya. The author also contributed towards a clearer understanding of the basis and dynamics of ethnopolitical strife and violence in the Rift Valley area. Furthermore, even as this study acknowledges the wide range of data and information given by Osamba, his work was essential in interrogating and conceptualizing the conflicts in this region. In essence, was this history part of the conflict that was seen during Moi's regime? How can this history be effectively utilized in drawing a blueprint of peaceful coexistence in the region?

Gibson Kamau-Kuria (1994) emphasizes that Kenya's Majimboism is not federalism in his attempts to explain the tensions and the root causes of violence. Power at any cost has been the main concept that its proponents have pushed. The democratic notion of federalism, which shares authority between the centre and the regions, is uninteresting to them. In fact, these proponents of one-party rule backed it and did not become interested in federalism until they saw that the coming of pluralism threatened their ability to maintain power. This work sheds light on the reasons for the ethnic clashes in the 1990's

Akiwumi, (2001). The report gives graphic details on the perpetrators and organisers of ethnic violence in the Rift Valley as well as some of the reasons given by the

perpetrators themselves. This report was essential in helping to interrogate the involvement of political elite as well as the culpability of some government officials in the ethnic clashes. Thus it beefed up the knowledge and helped to establish as to where and how ethnic violence started in Rift Valley. It is from this understanding that the researcher resonated the ideology of whether most of the violence is catalysed by the election standoffs between the top most elective seats.

More noteworthy for examination than the varying degrees of violence during President Kibaki's tenure is a report compiled by the Commission on Post-Election Violence (2008). Of greater immediate significance is the subnational rivalry for the executive governorship of counties established under the devolution system introduced after the 2007 election crisis. The Kenyan constitution of 2010 restructures the government by redistributing authority and resources away from the presidency. Within this new system, 47 counties, governed by governors and county assemblies, receive substantial resources, thereby granting them significant patronage power. The competition for these roles in 2017 is expected to be intense. Given that many Rift Valley counties are divided along ethnic and sub-ethnic lines, this competition could rapidly escalate into intercommunal conflict (Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence, 2008). The report helped this study to situate the intermittent political violence, the mitigating circumstances, and the historical roots.

A study compiled by Social Justice Advocates, showed the Kikuyu were the most affected by the deaths and displacements. Consequently, Tensions escalated between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin communities following the defeat of Moi's long-ruling KANU party in the 2002 elections. Local elites leveled accusations against the incoming President, Mwai Kibaki (a Kikuyu), alleging that he had terminated the

employment of a significant number of Kalenjin state workers during his initial term (2002-2007). In the December 2007 elections, the majority of Nandi voters supported Raila Odinga over Kibaki. When Kibaki was pronounced the winner following a contentious counting procedure, Nandi teenagers attacked their Kikuyu neighbours, murdering hundreds and displacing tens of thousands (Advocates for Social Justice Kenya Domestic Observation Programme, 2002). This work will shed light on why the Kalenjin were very ruthless in their attacks on the Kikuyu during the PEV.

Following the unrest of 2007-2008, both the government and local civil society organizations embarked on reconciliation efforts, primarily focusing on organizing grassroots peace forums in affected areas to ease tensions and rebuild social unity. In Nakuru county, a significant hotspot of violence, a collaborative effort between the government and civil society involved the selection of eighty male elders – forty from each of the Kalenjin and Kikuyu ethnic groups – to participate in a peacebuilding process that spanned sixteen months, ultimately culminating in a local agreement (Advocates for Social Justice Kenya Domestic Observation Programme, 2002).

In examining the role of the church in various categories of violence, Kinas (2018). has a different scope on violence and its causes. In essence he states that; Mixed-ethnicity counties are particularly susceptible to election-related violence. In Nakuru, a 2007-2008 hotspot where the majority Kikuyu and a sizable Kalenjin minority cohabit, a pre-2013 election arrangement may have prevented bloodshed. The election resulted in victory for a Kikuyu governor and his Kipsigis running mate, leading to a proportional distribution of county executive offices between the two communities. However, during the Jubilee Party primaries in April 2017, anonymous individuals allegedly circulated pamphlets threatening to expel the Kikuyu community if the county failed to elect a

governor perceived to have the support of the Kalenjin. In 2013, the Kikuyu community felt marginalized in the neighboring Nandi-majority Uasin Gishu (Eldoret) county, hence this time they are advocating for stronger representation: specifically, the position of deputy governor and/or a member of the national assembly for the Turbo constituency, where they are populous.

Kina's work was used to explain the reasons for increased levels of weaponised ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu compared to other areas in Rift Valley. Kina's work was influential in this study since it helped in tracing the origin of crises in the study area historically and chronologically. Moreover, the work helped the researcher analyze the causes of conflict in the study area. Besides, having a specific scope in Kibaki's era, Kina's work was also essential in this work because it helped to relate the role of politicians in the violence that happens in Rift Valley. Some of the essential questions that Kina's work helped unravel and which this study endeavoured to answer include; what is the position of politics in the violence of the Rift Valley? Why is violence the major problem in Rift Valley Region? What is the relationship between economic development and the series of violence seen in Rift Valley region?

1.9.8 Ethnicity and political violence during Uhuru Era

In their attempt to summarize the events of Kibaki's tenure, Anderson & Lochery (2008) identify the Rift Valley as a focal point of intercommunal violence in Kenya. They highlight it as a frequent battleground for clashes between various ethnic political factions. Despite an electoral alliance uniting the region's two largest ethnic groups, the Kikuyu and the Nandi, which helped mitigate large-scale violence during the 2013 elections, the process of reconciliation remains incomplete. The administration's efforts have been hindered by multiple political massacres and violent land disputes,

exacerbating existing divisions. While a significant Kikuyu-Nandi conflict appears unlikely during the August 2017 elections, the potential for substantial local violence persists, particularly with the emergence of new counties governed by influential locally-elected leaders, intensifying political competition. This analysis aims to provide insights into the ongoing tensions surrounding elections in the Rift Valley, emphasizing how politicians exploit historical grievances regarding land ownership and the reluctance of outsiders to engage in local politics to incite conflict.

Kisaka and Nyadera (2019) in their article examine the manifestation of ethnicity in Kenyan politics and how it has impacted Kenya's democratic path and development. They interrogate the salience of ethnicity in politics by tracing the origin of ethnic consciousness to the colonial period. They argue that successive regimes have failed to advance a national identity. Instead they have entrenched it through its exploitation and politicization. The basis of their argument is that ethnicity has, over time, been used for the self-aggrandizing political elite for self-serving interests. Their article further opines that the handshake between President Uhuru Kenyatta and the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga provided another unique opportunity for de-ethnicising Kenya's politics and strengthening the existing institutions. This work shed light on the impact of the handshake in shaping the ethnic and political dynamics in the run-up to the 2022 elections.

Erlich *et al* (2019). Discuss the use of electoral courts to settle election petitions in Kenya. Their findings indicate that not all the petitioners are genuine. They contend that a significant portion of Kenyan petitioners appear to "weaponize" the judicial process, strategically utilizing it to deflect blame for electoral losses, enhance their chances in future elections, and even negotiate for government positions. In their view, this affects

the role of the judiciary in promoting democratic legitimacy. Their work shed light on the real motive behind the Presidential election petitions in Kenya.

Murison, J. (2013) examines judicial politics in Uganda after the 2011 elections, they focus on the 2001 and 2006 Presidential and parliamentary election petitions. Whereby, they show that the Supreme Court of Uganda which hears Presidential election petitions, acknowledged voting irregularities, yet was unwilling to rule against the incumbent President. This paper enabled this study to compare and contrast election petitions in Kenya and Uganda in a bid to establish whether the same have any impact on political violence.

Maweu (2019) explores the utilization of social media platforms in disseminating disinformation and cyber propaganda during Kenya's 2017 general elections. These elections were marked by intense competition and tension, prompting both political figures and citizens to engage more actively in digital media. As a result, the outcomes of the Presidential elections in August and October were widely distrusted, with many dismissing them as fabricated outcomes generated by computers. This skepticism stemmed from allegations of cyber propaganda and the widespread dissemination of false information. This work helped to elucidate the impact of social media, and helped to answer the question as to whether social media was also used to spread messages which elicited ethnic prejudices which may have contributed to weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence.

Kanyinga and Odote (2019) discuss the legal disputes settled by the Judiciary in 2017. The court rulings sparked controversy as the losing parties vehemently criticized the

judicial decisions. They observed that every ruling made by the courts had the potential to provoke backlash from either the government or the opposition, thereby causing trouble for them. They argue that the courts received an avalanche of petitions due to renewed confidence in the courts as well as the high degree of independence gained by the courts. This work was of benefit by showing the relationship between Presidential petition outcomes political violence

Mutahi and Ruteere (2019). In their article, they delve into the factors contributing to concerns preceding Kenya's 2017 elections regarding the potential for violence to disrupt the polls. They highlight a history of election-related violence, a failure to address underlying causes, a deeply polarized political landscape, and assertions from the opposition about potential election rigging as significant contributors to these concerns. Furthermore, they point out apprehensions regarding ethnic violence between supporters of President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga in the event of a dispute over the Presidential election outcome. They also underscore fears that any demonstrations, particularly those by opposition supporters, would be met with significant police force. Additionally, they emphasize how relative peace was fostered by the stances taken by influential politicians, the broader legal and institutional framework, and institutional norms. This work was of benefit in explaining the many factors that contributed to relative peace during elections after the 2010 constitution, even though the elections were highly contested.

Block (2014). Gives an analysis of the patterns and predictions revolving around the criminal cases of President Uhuru Kenyatta, Deputy President William Ruto, and Joshua Arap Sang at the International Criminal Court (ICC). The author shows how the fame and popularity of Ruto and Uhuru increased as a result of the case brought against

them by the ICC. The thesis helped this work by providing insight into the impact of the ICC case on the candidacy as well as how the ICC case influenced the success of Uhuru and Ruto in the 2013 Presidential elections.

Lockwood, P. (2023). Discusses how William Samoei Ruto, successfully leveraged his 'Hustler Nation' campaign to clinch victory in the 2022 elections. The author notes that Ruto's campaign successfully played on the struggles of the informal economy labourers. Ruto used this rhetoric against the dynastic families and their control of both the economy and politics of the country. Lockwood's views informed this study in terms of understanding how Ruto was able to change the ethnic dominated political campaign narrative to a class struggle in a bid to show how this narrative contributed to relatively peaceful elections in 2022.

Hamasi and Amutabi (2023) denote that in Kenya, ethnic factors influence elections and consequently, undermine democracy. They argue that negative ethnic tensions in the country result from the election cycles. They examine the roles played by Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Moi, Oginga Odinga, and other Kenyan leaders as leaders of their ethnic groups and their role in elections. President Moi's role in promoting ethnicity through "ethnic balancing" is also discussed. The election cycles from the 1990s up to 2017 reveal the escalation of violence when negative ethnicity was at the highest. This book enriches this study by providing a historical analysis of election violence and negative ethnicity. It is also resourceful by laying out the roles played by Kenyan leaders as they ethnicized politics and politicized ethnicity leading to political violence in the periods up to 2008.

Lynch (2013) examines the relationship between democratization and increased criminal violence in Kenya. The paper posits that there are three connections between democratization, and an increase in organised crime. Lynch states that citizens will

be motivated to engage in criminal activities in the following circumstances; in countries where the following exist; political and economic liberalisation in a context of undemocratic state institutions; elite strategies of violence and use of an inherently exclusive politics of belonging; and elusive promises of ‘development’, ‘good governance’ and ‘democratisation’, These situations may lead to organized violence since they provide opportunities and motivations to engage in violence. which together provide both opportunities and motivations for ordinary citizens to engage in ‘criminal’ violence. This paper provided information that was used to question the link between increased election violence and the criminal gangs like Mungiki participation in Kenyan politics

McCrone (2023) emphasise that the shadow of election violence has hung over Kenyan politics since 2008. The PEV led to major political reforms in Kenya including devolution. The main purpose of devolution was to counter ethnic patronage and violence. Consequently, Kenya has not witnessed nationwide violence akin to the PEV. The study focused on Northern Kenya where some election related violence has occurred. The author argues that the governance changes in this region have created opportunities for political elites to mobilise territorial violence for strategic, political ends in advance of elections, including through a previously undocumented practice of “vote shipping”. The impact of devolution in quelling weaponized ethnicity on political violence is a significant way in which this study benefitted from this study.

Brosché *et al*, (2020) explore the factors contributing to violence in the first multiparty elections following authoritarian rule in certain countries. They propose that the legacies of authoritarianism play a crucial role in understanding this phenomenon. Specifically, they argue that authoritarian regimes characterized by exclusionary multi-ethnic coalitions leave behind legacies that heighten the risk of violent elections during

the transition to multiparty politics. Such regimes, through their competitive and fragmented interethnic relations, inhibit the formation of cross-ethnic elite coalitions and make hostile narratives effective tools for political mobilization.

In contrast, regimes with broad-based ethnic support bases foster inclusive inter-elite bargaining, facilitate the formation of cross-ethnic coalitions, and reduce incentives for hostile ethnic mobilization, thereby lowering the risk of violent elections. By comparing the 1991 elections in Zambia and the 1992 elections in Kenya, the authors suggest that the type of authoritarian rule in a country creates political legacies that shape political competition and mobilization during the initial multiparty elections, making violence a more viable electoral strategy in Kenya than in Zambia.

The explanations for ethnicised election violence benefits study since this study can borrow from these authors to try and explain the reasons for the ethnicized political clashes in the 1990s in Kenya.

Yusuf, I., & Mutereko, S. (2019) strongly argue that in Kwa- Zulu Natal Province election violence has been synonymous with almost every election conducted since 1994. At the beginning the elction violence was inter-party, between the members of ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party. However, the violence has recently shifted and is more of intra-party. Several factors contribute to intra-party violence, including factionalism, competition for tenders, political assassinations, and the pursuit of supremacy within political parties. The study on election violence in KwaZulu-Natal serves as a basis for comparing these factors with those leading to election violence in Kenya.

Angerbrandt, H. (2018) examines the 2011 post election violence in Nigeria in a bid to establish whether there is a connection between national electoral processes and the

local social and political disputes. The author argues that in Kaduna State, electoral polarisation aggravated national ethno-religious divisions that corresponded to the dividing line of the conflict. The escalation of violence was facilitated by local social networks nurtured by ethno-religious grievances. This work can be used to inform whether the post election violence in Kenya also affected the manifestation of violence at local levels like counties.

Aditi Malik (2016) explores the reasons behind the relatively peaceful 2013 Presidential elections in Kenya and the factors contributing to the unity of the rival Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities under the Jubilee Party. Malik contends that the formation of a Kikuyu-Kalenjin coalition and the absence of violence in 2013 were not the result of Kenyan elites' genuine commitment to peace but rather stemmed from politicians refraining from exploiting violence due to new institutional arrangements that limited their ability to do so. Additionally, the author illustrates how leaders of the Jubilee party, namely Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto, strategically leveraged the International Criminal Court indictments against them to rally Kikuyu and Kalenjin support behind their coalition.

This article informed the last objective which interrogated the peacefulness of the 2013 to establish whether there was any connection between lack of violence and the coalescing of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin as a result of the ICC case or other factors.

Cheeseman, Lynch and Willis (2014) also debate the peacefulness of the 2013 election despite the surprising Presidential election results. The authors argue that four interconnected processes contributed to the relative peace; The realignment of Uhuru and Ruto which diffused ethnic tensions; The cultivation of a pervasive peace narrative which deligitimized any political activity that threatened political stability; partial democratic reforms which legitimized the electoral and political system; and a

new constitution which ensured that many voters who ‘lost’ nationally in the Presidential election ‘won’ in local contests. This work was used to answer the question as to the factors that contributed to peaceful elections in 2013 as well as 2017

1.9.9 Gaps in Literature Review

From the foregoing thematic literature review, the following gaps have been identified; Knowledge gap on the concept of weaponization of ethnicity, though several literature exists on weaponization as a concept (Singer & Brooking, 2019; weaponization of Social media; Steger 2017, weaponization of migration, Diab (2020) “on weaponizing fear and controlling movement”, Omotosho (2016) titled "Ethnicity as a Tool for Nation Building in Nigeria"), none has touched on weaponization of cultural aspects of ethnicity as it applied on political violence in this study. From the historical development of weaponized ethnicity and political violence, information has concentrated on causes of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts generally, globally, regionally and locally without giving a historical perspective specifically on how ethnicity has been weaponized in political violence. A knowledge gap exists since according to the reviewed literature, a wealth of research exists with regard to political violence in Kenya in general and post-election violence in particular. On the other hand, there remains paucity of comprehensive research and studies regarding how cultural aspects of ethnicity have been weaponised in political violence in Uasin Gishu.

The conceptual gap comes out in light of the reviewed works since most of them have applied either primordialism and or instrumentalism or other theories to explain political violence and ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu. Omondi, J. J. (2023) interrogates the contributions of horizontal inequalities towards intractable conflicts in the post-

colonial period using primordialism, instrumentalism and Ochieng *et al* (2023,) discuss the causes and consequences of post election violence in Kenya. Other authors include. Linke, A. M. (2022), Arusei *et al*, (2019). Chebii *et al*, (2023). This study goes a step further by combining primordialism, relative deprivation and instrumentalism in a bid to bring out all the salient features contributing to weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu.

In terms of population gap, most studies are pinned on other factors when it comes to the communities impacted by political violence in Uasin Gishu; Chepketeney, (2015) discusses the role of women in peacebuilding; Cheserek 2013 analyses the effects of PEV on food production; Arusei *et al*, (2019) on the other hand delve into the structural contexts that led to the PEV; While Chebii *et al*, (2013) interrogate the role of colonialism on inter ethnic conflicts. This study clearly outlines how politicians from the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities have specifically weaponised cultural aspects of these two communities leading to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu.

In relation to time span, most studies have emphasised on ethnicity and political violence during either Moi, Kenyatta, and Kibaki eras; Chebii *et al*, (2013) covers upto 1963; Oyugi, (1997) explains the nature of transactions between electoral politics and ethnicity in relation to 1992 elections; Kemboi and Murumba, (2017) explore how bad governance since the colonial period has contributed to electoral violence in 1992 and the PEV. This study on the other hands, runs through from the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, up to Uhuru Kenyattas era. The gist of this narration, is to bring out the dynamics involved in weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence over time in order to place the changing players and circumstances in this unique phenomenon.

In methodology; through the use of interpretivism, and historical method, the study elucidates the voices of the ordinary citizens as well as other players in an effort to create an understanding of all the nuanced aspects of weaponisation of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. Uasin Gishu as an area has mainly been discussed generally in relation to post election violence of 2007-2008; Arusei, (2019); Arusei *et al* (2019). This then creates an academic gap for this study. That is, the need to establish whether weaponization of ethnicity has had an impact on intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. The following sections inform on the methodology that was applied in the study.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

In this section, the study discusses the theoretical framework, their strengths, limitations and applicability. The study was guided by three theories, namely; primordialism, instrumentalism and relative deprivation theories which were used in reinforcing the objectives of this study

1.10.1 Primordialism Theory

Primordialism may be linked theoretically to the ideals of German Romanticism, especially in the writings of Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Johann Gottlieb Herder. Ethnic conflicts, according to primordialists, result from enduring innate traits that are frequently utilized as the foundation for ethnic groups in pursuit of a shared objective. These linkages include a shared culture, lineage or familial relationships, language, and religion. They are societal "givens" one cannot live without, and they link one to one's family, neighbour, and fellow believer by their very nature (Geertz, 1996). According to this view, people participate in conflict because of the ties that bind them, and they risk their lives for the welfare of the entire community. Here, ethnic battles are conducted on

the basis of "we" and "them" identity. Emotions are a fundamental motivator for members' passion for their organizations and their dislike of other groups (Horowitz, 1985). This aspect is best illustrated by Jonsson (2007) while discussing the conflicts in Northern Ghana when she aptly notes that;

In order to understand the repeated outbreaks of large-scale inter-ethnic violence in the NR which culminated in the 1994-1995 war, group conceptions of history, tradition and ethnic identity must be taken into account as they interact with perceptions of land rights and discrimination. (Jonsson 2007, p.8)

The case of Rwanda is related here for clarity. In the three-month Rwandan genocide of 1994, about 800,000 Rwandans were murdered. Similar to what occurred in Nigeria in 1967, this form of violence may have been caused by ethnicity and disputes between ethnic groupings. The majority Hutu ethnic group in Rwanda felt compelled to murder their ethnic neighbours, the Tutsi, because of their distinct ethnic identities (Joireman 2003). According to historian Sandra Joireman, "this account of the Rwanda genocide and its awful brutality, with its focus on the differences in kinship and beliefs between the two ethnic groups, is a primitive view" (Joireman 2003).

In addition, the fundamental thesis "suggests that irreconcilable cultural differences produce anxiety and conflict that breeds violence" (Sambanis, 2001). Although more recent historical studies assert that the 1994 genocide in Rwanda was caused by disparities in power and wealth between the Tutsi and the Hutu, primordialists argue that the Hutu and Tutsi developed entirely separate cultures and inevitably came into conflict. As Rwanda's primal ethnicity is antiquated, "permanent and unchangeable," cultural integration was described as unattainable (Spencer, 2006).

It has been stated that an appeal to ethnic homelands was prevalent in the genocide, "based on the belief that Rwanda belonged to the Hutu, its original occupants," and that

the Tutsi had invaded this historic, ethnic area. The academic Jefremovas criticizes a foundational perspective of ethnicity in Rwanda, noting that "Tutsi and Hutu live in the same areas, speak the same language, and practice the same faiths" despite the great attention on racial distinctions (Jefremovas 1995). Jefremovas adds further that there is a "huge overlap in physical traits across the groups." As a result of the substantial cultural and physical similarities between the two "ethnicities," a primal explanation for the genocide seems implausible. However, Jefremovas adds that despite the difficulty in defining ethnicity in Rwanda, these designations are acknowledged and have influence.

Primordialism as a theory "is significant in recognizing the persistent strength of ethnic relationships and its members' devotion to it," despite widespread scholarly criticism and the emergence of rival ethnic theories such as constructivism and instrumentalism (Joireman, 2003). Some academics have contended, for instance, that the Cold War inspired and sparked this belief in ethnicity and ethnic strife. Primordialism, on the other hand, contends that ethnicity existed historically long before the Cold War, which only gave place to ideological concerns (Joireman, 2003).

Political scientist Osman (2007) asserts that primordialism, which focuses on sub-national loyalties and solidarities ingrained in the collective consciousness of communities, can serve as an epistemological and conceptual framework for exploration in the social sciences. Despite acknowledging that "primordialism is admittedly not without its flaws and problems," the author suggests that it offers a unique perspective for inquiry, similar to other conceptual and theoretical traditions in the social sciences. The advantage of this idea is that it frequently highlights how senseless ethnic conflict is (Turton, 1997). It also seems to support the notion that barbarous behaviour is caused by genetics (Campbell, 2014). The theory overlooks the

social, economic, and political dynamics within which these conflicts erupt and paints a picture of pessimism by viewing ethnic wars as perpetual and unavoidable. (Pargeter and others, 2016)

Primordialists are unable to see that elites frequently choose to recollect times of ostensibly ancient animosity while dismissing the numerous examples of collaboration and harmony (Varshney, 2007). The majority of the time, interactions between ethnic communities are cooperative and amicable rather than aggressive (Fearon & Laitin 1996). A further reason why the extreme primordial stance that sees ethnic connection as a constant and unchanging entity is incorrect is because this study examines the dynamics of ethnicity. In order to address and demonstrate how and why ethnic affiliations change in Kenya, the instrumentalist theory has been used as well.

Primordialism gives insight into the passionate behaviour of ethnic groups and is valuable in describing the emotional aspect of ethnic conflicts. According to Kataria, (2018) the strength of ethnicity comes in its ability to engender commitment and desire. When this power is abused, however, it may result in violent confrontations. Elite manipulation had a significant role in the Rwandan genocide as the political elites profited from the ethnic divisions (Horowitz, 2000). Ethnicity is integral to political practice and, therefore, manipulable and open to appropriation and reinterpretation by political actors for instrumental reasons. In fact, Klopp notes that it is the experience of cultural difference and how this plays itself out in the political arena that explains the appeal of claims of ethnic grievance Klopp (2002). This adage is affirmed by Steeves (2006) who notes that;

the key to understanding Kenyan politics is that political leadership is grounded in ethnic communities... Aspiring politicians must gain the support of their ethnic community whether at the level of their sub-clan, their clan or the community as a whole. This means that those who have

been elevated as leaders must fight for their community at the center and bring valued resources back home. (Steeves, 2006, p. 4)

Consequently, this study took neither a purely primordialist nor instrumentalist approach in analysing weaponization of ethnicity since on their own the two theories could not fully bring out all the underlying issues or clearly explain how ethnicity was weaponized in Uasin Gishu.

In this study, primordialism was used to explain how the ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu came together to attack their neighbours', turning against them simply because they belonged to a different ethnic group. But since these communities have often lived together in peace, their ethnic affiliation alone cannot lead to animosity. Therefore, this study employed the instrumentalist theory as well to explain how the ethnic identities and bonds were used as a tool to ferment hostility to achieve personal, political, economic and social benefits by the elites.

1.10.2 Instrumentalism Theory

The instrumentalist account, according to Smith (2005), "rose to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States, in the argument over (white) ethnic persistence in what was meant to have been a successful melting pot." This new theory aimed to explain such tenacity as a result of the acts of community leaders "who exploited their cultural groupings as venues of mass mobilization and as constituents in their fight for power and resources because they considered them more successful than social classes." In this concept of ethnic identity, "ethnicity and race are understood as instrumental identities, structured to serve certain objectives. Whether or not ethnicity is a stable impression is irrelevant to instrumentalist explanations. Ethnicity is neither innate to human nature nor essentially beneficial, according to the instrumentalist perspective (Varshney, 2007). For Collier, (2005) Ethnicity thus becomes the strategic

basis for coalitions seeking a bigger share of limited economic or political power and therefore, a tool for limiting resources to a small number of persons.

According to instrumentalists, ethnic conflicts are the result of people or organizations mobilizing ethnic identity for political or economic gain (Berman, 1998:309). Berman *et al.* (2004), who consider political elites as crucial players in mobilizing their fellow ethnic group members who are receptive because of perceived benefits derived to the allegiance in the politics of “Big Man – Small Boy,” are among those who accept this thesis. Similarly, Carment (1993:138-139) persuasively argues that ethnic identity is preserved for collective action in this perspective as long as it results in a competitive advantage; as a result, it is flexible and situationally activated depending on its strategic usefulness.

The instrumentalist perspective views ethnic conflicts as having political overtones and places emphasis on cultural, political, and territorial arguments (Carment, 1993). Studies of social class distinctions and rational choice theory, which give justification for ethnic mobilization, both exhibit instrumentalism (Berman, 1998). Ethnic conflict does not immediately result from disparities in ethnic identity, according to instrumentalist theory. Instead, (Posen, 1993; Ruane & Todd, 2004) argue that ethnic conflict only occurs when ethnic identities are made into a political football or otherwise used to the detriment of other ethnic groups in order to further one’s own political and socioeconomic interests.

As a result, instrumentalists suggest alternative causes beyond ethnic identity to account for ethnic conflicts. Concerns about security, competitiveness, and inequality are a few of these (Posen, 1993). These elements’ underlying discontents imply that, according to

instrumentalism, ethnic conflicts are frequently sparked by complaints or frustration (Ellingsen, 2000).

According to the instrumentalist thesis, it is logical for parties to organize along ethnic lines if doing so provides them with an advantage. Given that many ethnic disputes and civil wars occur in connection to chances for main commodity predation (Collier, 2002:26-27), they believe that greed is more important than grievance as a fundamental driver of ethnic conflict. As a result, rational actors engage in ethnic conflict over finite resources as a result of political leaders' pursuit of political or economic gain or an intentional manipulation based on a rational decision to provoke or promote ethnic violence (Chandra 2004). Ethnic conflict is thus the outcome of an actor's logical pursuit of widespread interests such as wealth, power, and safety.

For instrumentalists, ethnicity is a resource elites utilize to construct group identity, govern group membership and borders, and make claims and extract state resources (Glazer & Moynihan 1976). Ethnic elites are also prone to exaggerate and exploit ethnic distinctions to project potential antagonism resulting from inequalities and power gaps within their community to the elites and subjects of other communities (Nafziger & Auvinen 2002).

The value of this thesis extends beyond the explanation of the function of elite manipulation in ethnic warfare to the explanation of why certain ethnically split communities choose to fight or collaborate rather than fight. It is suggested that this decision hinges on the cost-benefit analysis performed by groups. Consequently, when the cost of collaboration exceeds the perceived individual ethnic advantages, ethnic conflicts are typically inescapable (Denny and Walter, 2014). On the other hand, when

the politicians realise that cooperation with their erstwhile enemies is more beneficial, they consequently change the narrative and convince their communities to collaborate.

Furthermore, instrumentalism explains why some individuals participate in ethnic violence while not being personally convinced but instead follow the mob. In this vein, Denny and Walter (2014) argue that ethnic mobilization is a coordination game in which it is logical to collaborate so long as others are collaborating. Similarly, Collier and Hoeffler (1998) contend that the opportunity costs of participating in a revolt are minimal, although the rewards of obtaining a piece of the booty are frequently large. In this study, political control and land resources appear to be issues that drive the ethnic dynamics.

The violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is frequently attributed to elite manipulation, governmental failure, and illegal mineral extraction (Autesserre, 2012). How can the atrocities committed by the members of various ethnic groups, such as rape, genocide, and torture, contribute to these advantages, if all behaviour in ethnic conflict is explained at the individual level by the desire for individualistic pecuniary gains of a few elites? Some argue that war rape is employed as a political tactic to intimidate, humiliate, and degrade the perceived 'enemy.' For instance, during the Bosnian war, Serb forces aimed to impregnate Bosnian Muslim women to produce offspring of their own ethnicity, referred to as 'Chetniks' (Weitsman, 2008). Similarly, in the Rwandan genocide, elites utilized genocide as a means to secure the loyalty of one group by permitting the extermination of another group.

Even if these arguments are logical, they lack the emotional element that primordialism emphasizes. Why is it simple to effectively organize mass involvement along ethnic lines? When do the political elite realize they can utilize ethnicity to their advantage?

These impulses and mass attitudes connected with ethnic identity are not manufactured by elites; rather, they recognize it and appeal to it (Ruane & Todd, 2004).

This is not to say that elite manipulation or the desire for money advantages are not key causes of ethnic conflicts; rather, logical "power-conserving elite techniques" (Fearon, 2004) are insufficient to explain the complexity of this phenomena.

Instrumentalism looks to be a more sophisticated philosophy. It acknowledges the importance of political and socio-economic structural dynamics in explaining temporal and geographical differences in the incidence of ethnic conflicts. While instrumentalism stresses elite manipulation or politicization of ethnicity as the root cause of grievances that lead to ethnic conflicts, it cannot independently explain why individuals mobilize along ethnic lines so quickly, cooperatively, and successfully (Ruane and Todd 2004). Instrumentalism must acknowledge the ability of ethnicity to preserve a feeling of "common blood," shared ideals, similar interests, shared dangers, and most importantly, the essential sense of solidarity required for collective action.

Instrumentalism's strength resides in its capacity to explain the role of elite influence in ethnic conflicts. It may also be used to explain why certain ethnically split cultures opt to fight rather than cooperate. The hypothesis also explains why some individuals participate in ethnic violence while not being personally convinced, but rather because they follow the pack. On the downside, instrumentalism does not provide the emotional substance of conflicts such as rape and senseless murders, which are not generated by elites, but which they recognize and appeal to (Raune & Todd, 2004). Primordial theory thus supplemented this component.

In this study, instrumentalism was used to show how the elite have weaponized cultural aspects of ethnicity in Uasin Gishu by converting it into a tool to mobilize support for

their selfish interests such as political power, political posts, state resources, economic gain. Since the elite in society are opinion leaders, they use their status to manipulate people by feeding them with information as well as appealing to their community's socio-cultural identity in order to get support from their ethnic group and mobilize them against their perceived protagonists. The rational power conserving elite strategies (Fearon, 2004) alone is not enough to address this phenomenon's complexity. Hence the need to complement these two theories with relative deprivation theory

1.10.3 Relative Deprivation Theory

This study also focused on relative deprivation theory, and how it was applied in explaining causes of conflicts and political protests in Uasin Gishu. The relative deprivation theory was examined as it has been elaborated by different scholars and how it applies in explaining weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu

Robert K. Merton devised the relative deprivation theory, which was later articulated by Walter Runciman and Ted Gurr (Longley, 2021). Ethnic conflict is more likely in states when minorities face economic discrimination, disparities in living standards compared to other ethnic groups, and uneven access to public resources such as land and money. When groups have hostile attitudes towards one another and/or view themselves as victims, the likelihood of conflict increases proportionally. This circumstance stimulates ethnic politics and mobilizes members of an ethnicity. This raises the likelihood that the prevailing ethnic tensions may escalate into war. Briefly, conflict happens when the dominant ethnic community in a country exercises a discriminatory control over all economic prospects, leaving members of other groups disadvantaged. Saleh, (2013) opines that this raises the possibility of political violence, especially in multi-ethnic governments. In Kenya the two communities which have been in political

control are surprisingly, the ones which have adversely been affected by politically instigated ethnic violence.

This theory was applied to account for the deep underlying feelings of perceived exclusion, historical injustices, and marginalisation of certain ethnic groups and how these perceptions have been exploited by the political elite against and for certain ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu therefore driving these communities into committing violent acts for political expediency at the behest of the political elite

The definition of relative deprivation may be obtained from the works of its most accomplished practitioners. Ted Gurr argues in his 1970 book "*Why Men Rebel*" that individuals get unsatisfied when they believe they have less than they might and could. Over time, this discontent evolves to anger and revolt against the (actual or perceived) source of their deprivation. Gurr (2006:20) argues elsewhere that structural poverty and inequality within countries are "breeding grounds for violent political movements in general and terrorism in particular."

According to Gurr (1970), Relative deprivation is the discrepancy between expectation value of an individual and their ability to meet and fulfil this expectation. In this sense expectations includes good and life conditions people see as belonging to them while valued capabilities can be described as goods and life condition they can achieve. Such a discrepancy cannot go on for long without some form of social violence occurring. According to Gurr, "discontent resulting from the impression of relative deprivation is the fundamental, inciting condition for collective violence" (Gurr, 1970).

According to Gurr, there are three distinct patterns of deprivation. The first pattern is decremental deprivation, which happens when an individual's life status declines over time. As a result, they are not able to achieve certain conditions they were able to

achieve in times past. In this study respondents generally felt that at the end of the rule of President Kenyatta many Kikuyu suffered from economic decline as well as did the Nandi at the end of Moi's reign.

The second pattern of deprivation is the aspirational deprivation. According to Milanovic (2007), aspirational deprivation occurs when there is general improvement of economic status of a country that can be attributed to a limited number of elite groups. The rest of the individual have higher expectations due to the standards that has already been set but they are unable to meet themselves (Dzuverovic, 2013). This aspect has been used by the elite in Uasin Gishu to mobilize and convince especially the youth, unemployed and poor people that their woes are the results of a certain communities, threatening, controlling or preventing them from attaining political leadership. Therefore, they must rise up do something especially during the electioneering period, in order to protect, maintain, or acquire their source of power for economic prosperity.

The third pattern is the progressive deprivation which occurs when a sharp decline occurs after a long period of constant increase and progress (Dzuverovic, 2013). This form of deprivation mostly applies in societies where there has been a structural and ideological change. It may not necessarily apply to economic status of an area. In this work, it is noted that after the regime changes of the first two Presidents, their communities generally complained of both economic and political decline as a result of loss of political power. It is also used to explain the instigation of violent ethnic clashes by KANU stalwarts on the advent of multipartism.

Tyler (2012), describes Relative Deprivation as a condition where one feels like he is worse off than the other. As a result, an individual cultivates anger and resentment towards the object he feels is better than him. Relative deprivation can be a useful

predictor of outcomes in instances of collective action, individual achievements, susceptibility to recruitment in terror groups, deviance in the society, attitudes of cultural group and mental health of individuals (Tyler 2015, Walker & Smith, 2002). This work shows how the feelings of resentment and anger towards other communities due to perceived deprivation have been cultivated, directed towards and used against certain communities by the political elite in Uasin Gishu, this especially came out during different regimes as certain communities felt marginalized from the center of political power and hence economic gain.

In trying to explain Relative deprivation, Runciman (1996) uses the prospect X. The first condition in explaining the theory is; suppose an individual wants X but he does not have X. Second to it; he sees another person whom they are within the same duration of time having X (which does not necessarily mean the individual has X). As a result, he sees it feasible that he also should be having X at this particular point in time. In Runciman explanation of relative deprivation, he subdivides them into two i.e., egoistic and fraternal relative deprivation. Fraternal relative deprivation (intrapersonal) involves comparison between groups; a person can compare his ethnic group or religion against another group in terms of development, freedom to worship and other parameters to determine the lack of fairness in his group (Taylor, 2015). Egoistic relative deprivation (inter-personal) happens at an individual level. In Egoistic relative deprivation an individual compares their current situation with the past or with another individual whom they assume the same position in life.

This study focusses mainly on fraternal Relative deprivation where by the socio economic and political disparities as well as injustices are seen as the results of marginalization and exploitation of those communities that are not in political power by the ones in control hence the use of violence.

Williams, (2017) describes relative deprivation as a condition in which people feel like they have been denied a fair share in life. This implies that individuals who are satisfied with life are less likely to join a social movement in an attempt to seek for change. Social movements mushroom as a result of people wanting change due to their dissatisfaction of their current state (Orum, 1974). Discontent arises as a result of people comparing themselves with people they are with in a situation. According to Orum (1974), relative deprivation is an effective predictor of people's commitment to being members of political movement and participating in related political activities therefore. Here relative deprivation is seen as the driving force behind identification with and membership to certain political parties which in essence are some of the tools that members believe will help them recover their social, economic and political losses in Uasin Gishu and in the national cake. Unfortunately, these political parties are then controlled by politicians who easily manipulate their members into believing that other communities who are mostly members of opposing political affiliations are their enemies and should be eliminated for the total recovery or preservation of the threatened social, political and economic benefits.

Relative deprivation has been used to explain poverty and political exclusion as drivers of conflict in Sub-Saharan African. According to Douma (2006), there exists a great difference in political elites from different ethnic communities. In most of the African states, there is a general lack of sufficient resources for the development and stability of an economic system. Instead of creation of a system where the available resources are shared equally most of the resources are lost in corruption. When the general population feel like they are deprived of what is rightfully theirs, often they resort to ethnic conflicts and protests through the dynamism of primordialism and instrumentalism in a bid to get perceived solutions. This aspect of relative deprivation theory is used to give

some answers for the political violence meted on some of the communities in Uasin Gishu during political unrest.

1.10.4 Gaps in the Theoretical Framework

There is a huge difference between theory and actual measurement and application of relative deprivation. The theory has been successful in many areas but it is still ineffective in explaining some of phenomena in a social construct. One of the main gaps is that it involves individuals desiring what 'ought to be' (Runciman,1996). As a result, in relative deprivation, reaction occurs from a feeling of dissatisfaction of the current situation one is in. However, some people believe that some of the negative things happening in their lives are of their own making. As a result, they are less likely to protest or demand to be like their successful counterparts. The theory explains why people may feel deprived but neglects to mention all the emotional reaction that may result from it hence the use of Primordialism. In some cases, there were people who refused to participate in political violence and even protected their neighbors from attackers since they felt that their neighbors were innocent of the accusations leveled against them.

According to Kendal (2010), the main reason why people join a political movement or a protest in relative deprivation, is due to social discontentment. However, the theory does not give an account about individuals who fail to participate in protests or affiliate with a group meant to bring change to their seemingly unfair condition. The feeling of being deprived may be a contributing factor towards development of a political movement but is not a satisfactory explanation as to why political movements mushroom (Orum, 1974). According to Aringo (2018), an individual's emotional state cannot account for coordinated group behavior.

There still exists limited evidence to confirm that relative deprivation plays a key role in occurrence of protests and ethnic clashes. Asingo (2018) suggests that this may be because a lot of scholarly research done has focused on the group perspective rather than individuals within a group. Further studies should therefore be carried out to examine the extent at which relative deprivation influences conflict and violence within a region.

The relative deprivation theory is problematic and not entirely reliable because it tends to over predict instances of civil strife. However, if poverty and deprivation were sufficient to cause people to rebel against their government or fight each other, the entire world would be engulfed in organized violence, which is not the case . This is because the poor frequently lack the necessary means and opportunity to rebel unless politicians and the wealthy offer them at opportune periods. (Eckstein 2004) This shortcoming of the relative deprivation theory in this study is compensated by instrumentalism theory to show how the perceived feelings of deprivation by some communities in Uasin Gishu have been strategically scapegoated on selected communities and then abused by the politicians and elites to fulfil selfish and parochial ambitions. While the primordial theory shows how the emotive ethnic aspects that bind the people are also whipped up and directed towards the other ethnic groups. In the next section the study focuses on the research methodology to be employed in attaining the general and specific objectives.

1.11 Research Methodology

This section presents the methodology that was employed in order to establish how weaponisation of ethnicity has impacted intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. The philosophical paradigm, research design, research methods, sampling, data collection tools, procedures and analysis, as well as the ethical considerations which

aided in achieving the objectives of this study are laid out in detail. Jansen and Warren (2020) affirm that a good research methodology should direct how the study is systematically designed to ensure that the research aims, objectives questions generate valid and reliable outcomes.

The research methodology, being the roadmap of this study, and based on the interpretivist paradigm, was used to decide on the collection of qualitative data. The study therefore adopted a qualitative methodological approach in line with the interpretivist philosophical research paradigm. This was due to the need to closely interact with the respondents in order to get their feelings, opinions, and experiences in relation to the nature and development of political violence, as well as to establish the link between this violence and cultural aspects of ethnicity.

The interpretivist paradigm and the qualitative approach also directed this study in the choice of both primary and secondary sources. This study therefore used oral sources derived from interviews, and FGDs to get qualitative data which included but was not limited to the opinions, feelings, and experiences of the respondents. These sources were useful in elucidating the growth, development and personal reasons for weaponization of ethnicity as well as the individual roles played by different respondents in political violence. Archival sources were especially useful in corroborating the information derived from the respondents' narrations and hence helped in historicising ethnic relations during the pre-colonial and colonial period. Secondary sources which among others, included scholarly books and journal articles were used in triangulation of the oral sources. Arias Valencia (2022) notes that triangulation in qualitative research refers to the practice of corroborating findings from multiple sources or methods to enhance the credibility and validity of the study. Through triangulation, the researcher gained a comprehensive understanding of the

weaponization of ethnicity, reduced the risk of bias and increased the reliability of the results. This process provided multiple and convergent sources of evidence and methods to support the findings and conclusions of this study.

1.11.1 Philosophical research paradigm

A research philosophy represents the researcher's understanding of truth, reality, and knowledge. It delineates the principles and convictions that shape how data is gathered and analyzed in a research investigation (Ryan, 2018).

This study was anchored on the interpretivist research paradigm which posits that reality is socially constructed through experiences and is consequently subjective (Junjie and Yingxin 2022; Jansen 2023; Chon *et al* 2012) as per the interpretations of the researcher. (Nickerson 2022) affirms that interpretivism is an approach to social science that asserts that understanding the beliefs, motivations, reasoning's, subjective, meanings and experiences of individuals in a social situation is essential. Chon *et al* (2012) notes that the goal of research is to understand. Thus the main goal and objective of this study was to understand how weaponisation of ethnicity has impacted on intermittent political violence in Usin Gishu since 1850.

Panya and Nyarwath (2022) maintain that the main theme of interpretivists is related to subjective meanings. In this study the subjective meanings were related to how different elements among the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities understood and interpreted the historical and political events that have occurred within their communities, how they drew inferences from these events led by the political elites, and finally, how their response to these events resulted in political violence Jansen (2023). A researcher's research philosophy embodies their grasp of truth, reality, and knowledge. It articulates the principles and convictions influencing the gathering and analysis of data in a research inquiry (Ryan, 2018).

According to Chon *et al*, (2012) The focus of interest is on what is specific, unique and deviant. The way in which ethnicity has been weaponised by the political elite in Uasin Gishu is unique to the area, thus the need to pursue in depth the circumstances surrounding this phenomenon.

Chon *et al* (2012) reiterates that the relationship between the researcher and the subject is interactive, cooperative, participative, which Klein and Myers (1999) refer to as the Principle of Interaction between the Researchers and the Subjects. Thus this study adopted the use of interviews, and focus group discussions which entailed face to face interactions between the researcher and the respondents.

Tombs & Pugsley (2020) suggests that researchers need to cultivate empathy to comprehend and interpret the diverse meanings individuals and groups attribute to their activities and interactions, enabling a deeper understanding of the occurrences.

In the context of the weaponization of ethnicity, the fundamental assumptions and beliefs center on the notion that valuable insights can be gained by conversing with and delving into the subjective experiences of respondents (Jansen, 2023) amid instances of political violence. In order to understand the people of Uasin Gishu's lived experiences, this study assumed that knowledge can be generated by exploring people's viewpoints on how and why political violence occurs intermittently in Uasin Gishu. The analysis of these insights led to the identification of recurring themes and patterns which enabled the researcher to better understand the experiences of the inhabitants of Uasin Gishu, thereby satisfying the original research objective.

Some of the required information for the study was what the affected communities and actors in weaponisation of ethnicity and intermittent political violence thought and did, what kind of problems they encountered, and how they dealt with these problems (Chon *et al* 2012; Jansen 2023). The adoption of the interpretivism paradigm led to generation

of high-level validity in data since it was based on personal contributions considering the different variables (Myers. 2008).

Embracing an interpretivist philosophy often correlates with the utilization of qualitative methodology, as noted by (Nickerson 2022; Lincoln and Guba 2011; Jansen 2023). In this study, qualitative research methods were employed to explore individuals' beliefs, motivations, and reasoning, aiming to comprehend the socio-political and economic dynamics among the people of Uasin Gishu. This approach illuminated how these interactions occasionally led to episodes of political violence.

Thus, aligning with the interpretivist paradigm as advocated by (Alharahsheh & Pius 2020; Myers 2008; Saunders *et al.* 2012), this study delved into the socio-cultural and political landscapes that shaped the emergence of weaponized ethnicity and sporadic political violence. Through the collection and analysis of qualitative data, it facilitated a profound understanding, yielding insights and conclusions that may diverge from alternative perspectives.

1.11.2 Research Design

This study adopted qualitative approach and the historical method, in order to adequately and deeply assess the attitudes, opinions, feelings, and experiences of the respondents (Kothari 2004) in Uasin Gishu in relation to the circumstances surrounding weaponisation of ethnicity and intermittent political violence since 1850.

The study used a historical research design, which Savitt (1980) characterizes as a methodical strategy wherein a researcher collects data systematically and assesses it by juxtaposing it with previous events. This approach aims to discern the causes, effects, or trends of these events, with the intention of utilizing the data to comprehend and elucidate past, present, and/or anticipated future occurrences. The texts are descriptive

in the historical research design. They begin with an account of events in chronological order, and their analysis deals with issues of justification, connections, and effects of the occurrences (Savitt,1980;53). This study examined the historical development of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu County by studying different eras from the pre-colonial, colonial, Jomo Kenyatta, Moi, Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta's period with a view to establishing the changing political dynamics and how these dynamics impacted on weaponization of ethnicity and the political violence that occasionally accompanied it.

The study followed the three main steps of the historical method; data was collected through primary sources, like oral interviews and archives. Secondary sources, like books, refereed journals, newspaper articles also formed the basis of data for the study. Carr (2003) believes that historians should examine facts and extract coherent narratives from sources that might explain the decisions and processes which have led to modern-day society. This behooved the use of primary data to help establish the roots of ethnicity, and the secondary sources to trace the development of political violence to date as well as the reasons for the shifting dynamics in political re-alignments, and how they affect political relations between different ethnic groups which have sometimes led to political violence.

The internal and external criticism of both secondary and primary data was done in order to establish the validity and genuineness of the gathered information (Sukhia, 1966). This study was also conducted according to the stages outlined by Lewenson and Herrmann (2007), whereby: the area of interest was identified, a title was formulated for the study, research questions were posed, literature was reviewed thematically in order to enrich the study and identify the research gaps, data was collected, analysed and

interpreted, the narrative was written, and lastly the findings of the study have been presented.

1.11.3 Research Methods

Based on interpretivist research paradigm, the study used the qualitative approach that behooved the researcher to actively participate in data collection by interacting with the respondents through interview schedules, and focus group discussions (FGDs). This formed part of the primary data collection methods which included Oral interviews and FGDs from the Uasin Gishu, archival data from the national archives, and secondary data which was composed of academic journals, books, theses and government reports which were used to complement and supplement the primary sources.

1.11.3.1 Study Area

Uasin Gishu County, situated in Kenya's Rift Valley region, shares borders with Trans Nzoia County to the north, Elgeyo Marakwet County to the east, Baringo County to the southeast, Kericho County to the south, Nandi County to the southwest, and Kakamega County to the northwest. Its coordinates range between longitudes 34°50' East and 35°37' West, and latitudes 0°03' South and 0°55' North. The county derives its name from the Ilwuasinkishu Maasai clan, who initially grazed in the area. Notably, it is also the residence of Kenya's fifth President, William Samoei Ruto. Covering an area of 3,345.2 square kilometers, with 476.3 square kilometers of forest cover, the county is diverse in its geography. As per the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census, Eldoret serves as the largest city in Uasin Gishu County and functions as its administrative capital. By 2019, the population was 1,163,186 (The County Government of Uasin Gishu, 2021). The town, situated approximately 330 kilometers northwest of Nairobi, stands out as one of Kenya's rapidly growing urban centers.

The Maasai term "Eldore," which refers to the neighbouring Sosioni River and meaning "a stony river," gave the town its name. Despite the presence of more urban areas, the six largest ones are Burnt Forest, Matunda, Turbo, Moiben, Kesses, and Kapsaret. Six sub-counties make up the County administratively: Turbo, Soy, Ainabkoi, Moiben, Kessess, and Kapseret. Six political constituencies make up the country: Turbo, Moiben, Kapseret, Kesses, Ainabkoi, and Soy. Thirty electoral wards further split these seats.

Uasin Gishu County had a total population of 1,163,186 as per the 2019 Population and Housing Census. It has a 3.8 percent population growth rate, with a population density of 343 people per square kilometre. High and consistent rainfall that is equally distributed throughout the year. The wettest months are between April and May, and the driest months are between January and February. The average rainfall ranges from 624.9mm to 1,560.4mm.

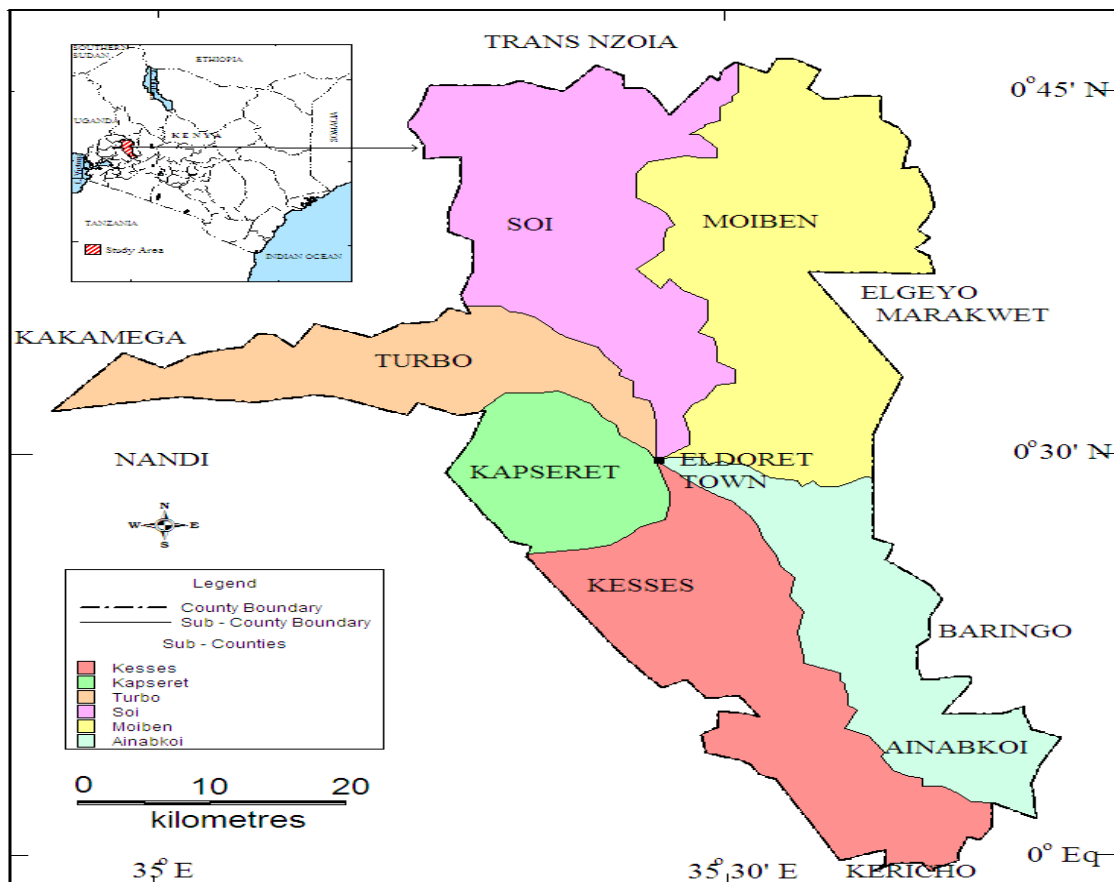


Figure 1: Map of Uasin Gishu County

Source: Moi University GIS Lab, 2020

1.11.4 Target Population

Martínez-Mesa *et al.* (2014) delineates a population as a collective of individuals confined within a specific geographical area (such as a neighborhood, city, state, country, or continent) or particular institutions (like hospitals, schools, or health centers). This encompasses individuals who share at least one common characteristic. In this study the target population was Uasin Gishu County since it was the County that suffered the most as result of ethnically instigated political violence which affected the Kikuyu and Kalenjin who were also the main protagonists. According to Alvi (2016) Uasin Gishu was used to derive the target population since it contained members who met the criteria specified for the research investigation. Creswell (2012), concurs that

the target population is a group of individuals or organizations with some general characteristics that can be identified and studied by researchers.

1.11.5 Sampling Procedure

The researcher used non-probabilistic sampling approach which included snowballing, purposive, and convenient sampling techniques to select the administration officials, village and clan and church elders. These techniques were used because of their ability to offer accuracy of representation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

This method was suitable because it is associated with qualitative research since this study as Yin (2003) opines focussed on a small sample and was intended to examine how ethnicity was weaponised in political violence, a real life phenomenon that occurred in Uasin Gishu. It also offered an efficient technique for capturing in a small group the differences or heterogeneity present in the target population, and as a result, provided reliable information on Uasin Gishu as the sampled area.

Elders were chosen using the approach of purposive selection because they have first hand experiences and information that was used to enrich the research. According to Khan, (2020), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy that enables a research to employ instances with the necessary information on the study's aims. According to the authors, in purposive sampling, instances or subjects are selected by hand because they are instructive or exhibit the necessary features. Moreover, Etikan and Bala (2017) remark that the sample strategy is based on the researcher's assessment of who would give the most useful information for the study's aims. The researcher therefore, focussed on those individuals who experienced weaponization of ethnicity and or political violence in Uasin Gishu and were willing to share the necessary information.

Snowballing was used to find subjects who might have been actors or were victims of weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence. Once the researcher got one informant, they referred the researcher to others who possessed the same information or had undergone the same experiences. This strategy was beneficial since the population that contained the qualities being studied was unknown yet participants had to be found (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Etikan and Bala (2017) reaffirm that this technique is beneficial when the researcher understands little about the group or organization he or she is examining; hence, interaction with a few individuals will lead the researcher to another group. Brewerton and Millward (2001) emphasize that snowballing is relevant to populations that are inaccessible owing to their closed character. The issue of political violence was a sensitive issue therefore it was not easy to easily get respondents due to suspicions among the respondents and especially when it came to talking to strangers about the same.

Convenience sampling, on the other hand, was utilized to recruit conveniently accessible respondents, such as village elders and clan elders and administrative officials. It was also preferred because it was cheaper and helped to overcome several limitations such as unwillingness to be interviewed. According to Ackoff (1953) it helps in selecting participants because they are easily and readily available, and it's also more economical.

1.11.5.1 Sample Size

When research is basically qualitative, Mocanasu (2020) justifies the use of small sample sizes. That was the case in this study when it involved interview-based technique that saw each respondent providing voluminous amounts of qualitative data. Given that sample size is frequently adaptive and emergent, and in consideration of the

concept of saturation as applied to qualitative research, Sim *et al.* (2018) have suggested that establishing sample size a priori is intrinsically difficult. In this study the sample size became emergent as saturation point was eventually reached in terms of the responses from the respondents to the research questions.

In the views of (Bosi and Reiter 2014) there is no need to carry out more interviews when the researcher realises that no newer information is coming out of the interviews. According to the authors, the researcher has reached a saturation point and there is no need for more interviews. When additional interviews yield diminishing results, a saturation point has been reached where there is no need to add further interviews (Marshall *et al.*, 2013). Thus estimating the adequate sample size is directly related to the concept of saturation.

Saturation as a concept in data collection was operationalized in this study in terms of the theoretical insights that emerged as data accumulated as O'Reilly and Parker (2013) support. The sample size in this study was thus determined aposteriori in the field in the process of engaging with respondents. (Fusch and Ness 2015; Sim *et al.* 2018) add their voice when they observe that saturation is a crucial aspect of qualitative research, indicating that sample size should always be chosen using this method. Consequently, this study used a sample size of one hundred and sixty-six respondents who were selected non-probabilistically after reaching saturation.

1.11.6 Research Instruments

The study was hinged on the interpretivist philosophy and the qualitative approach. The qualitative research was best suited to examine the historicity of intermittent political violence and its relationship to weaponisation of ethnicity in Uasin Gishu by getting the feelings and ideas of the respondents. Consequently, in order to effectively gather this

information from the respondents, it behooved this study use interview schedules, Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) and archival sources. Panya and Nyarwath (2022) argue that The primary objective of unstructured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) is to establish a rapport with participants and elicit detailed information from them. Felix (2003) asserts that because interpretivist research aims to comprehend and interpret the meanings inherent in human behavior, rather than generalize or predict causes and effects, conclusions are drawn from interpreting data collected directly from participants. Therefore, interviews and focus group discussions were deemed most appropriate for gathering data in this research.

1.11.6.1 Interview Schedule

An interview schedule is a written list of open-ended or closed questions prepared for use during a face-to-face engagement, in-person, by telephone, or via other technological means (Kumar, 2019). In this study, interviews were carried out both face to face and where time or distance could not allow, the respondents were interviewed through telephone. The main objective of the interviews was to get the perspective of the respondents by getting their ideas, experiences and feelings in relation to weaponisation of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. Where their responses were not clear, further probes were used for clarity. Chowdhury, (2014) observes that the goal of the qualitative researchers to try and see things from the perspective of the human actors. The interview Schedule was used to acquire information from administrative officials, village, clan and Church elders, business persons and farmers in Uasin Gishu on ethnic conflicts.

This allowed the researcher to probe further into areas that were not clear in order to generate detailed information as to why and how weaponized ethnicity impacted on political violence. (Jansen 2023; Bhattacharjee 2012) admit that relying on qualitative

data collection methods like interviews, the interpretive researcher is able to question the respondents. It is this questioning and probing that enabled the researcher to discover and generate a rich and deeper understanding on which aspects of ethnicity have been weaponised, how, and why this was done under the leadership of the political elite.

As advised by Wilson (2007), the interviews were conducted in three phases, with the first part encouraged participants to recall and organize their experiences with the weaponisation of ethnicity and its link to political violence. The second part described these events in depth and the environment in which they occurred, whilst the third part analysed the significance of these experiences for the participants. The interview guides are found on page 635.

1.11.6.2 Focus Group Discussion

This strategy was employed extensively to generate data for this investigation. This strategy, according to Hennink and Weber (2013), is excellent for generating data when researching a homogenous group or groups of individuals. Since majority of the respondents were inhabitants of Uasin Gishu, they provided a homogeneous subject for the study. Consequently, FGD became a suitable instrument for this investigation. The use of focus groups allowed for a more in-depth investigation of the weaponization of ethnicity and the preceding political violence than other methods since hearing others speak tended to bring out more emotions, thoughts and experiences on political violence among the respondents that may have not been considered or remembered previously (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Furthermore, it triggered their minds and therefore it became easier for the respondents to remind each other of their experiences. Thus the use of FGDs enriched the findings of this study by providing an environment where their voices could be heard without fear of victimization and also enabled some of them to

express their pent up emotions on political violence, ethnicity, the role played by politicians.

The discussion in the focus group was guided by a structured checklist that allowed for the posing of questions with freedom. The three distinct FGDs were used. (Bryman, 2008). Each group had 6 to 9 people since (Krueger and Casey, 2002; Morgan, 2002) argue that groups with more than 12 members tend to restrict each individual's opportunity to express ideas and observations. According to Kruger, focus groups must be both small enough for everyone's voice to be heard and large enough to capture a variety of voices. On the other hand, Morgan (2002) is of the opinion that three to five focus groups are usually adequate to achieve saturation.

The researcher led the discussion to ensure the participation of each respondent. Simultaneously, an interpreter was employed to translate information from respondents who were not conversant with Kiswahili or English to avoid distortion. In this study, Focus Group Discussion was used on household heads, church elders and (*Nyumba Kumi*) village elders. The researcher selected this technique because it allowed minimum items to leave enough time for in-depth discussion to bring out the experiences and feelings of the respondents on how ethnicity has been weaponised and how this has impacted on intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. This is in agreement with Kruger (2014) who states that the method focuses only on relevant research issues. The depth of the information that was gathered from the focus groups helped the researcher to build a more holistic understanding of the complexities of political violence as well as the role played by ethnicity based on participants' comments and experiences.

1.11.6.3 Archival Sources

Archival information from sources like old newspapers provided first-hand accounts and experiences on, settlements into Uasin Gishu, the precolonial interactions of the different ethnic groups as well as the impact of colonialism on these interactions. Archival records were also an important source of information which ensured that historically significant records on the colonial and precolonial experiences between different ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu were systematically described. Additionally, these archival sources provided evidence of the past thus promoting accountability and transparency of past actions (Redman, 2013). For Dalton and Charnigo (2004), the most frequently used archival sources are archives, manuscripts, special collectors' books, newspapers, and other sources. In this study, archival information was gathered from the Kenya National Archives, and University repositories at Moi, Nairobi, Kenyatta, and Masinde Muliro Universities, and Newspapers. Archival data was used to inform this study in terms of the migration and settlement of the Nandi, ethnic relations during the colonial period, as well as to establish the role played by the colonial government in shaping ethnic identities in the colonial period.

1.11.6.4 Secondary Sources

This study utilized current and historical information relevant to the objectives. Bhattacharjee (2012; p. 116) notes that in interpretivism, various external and internal documents, such as memos, emails, annual reports, financial statements, newspaper articles, and websites, can be utilized to provide additional insights into intermittent political violence or to validate other types of evidence concerning the weaponization of ethnicity. Sources used in this study included but were not limited to; scholarly journals, theses and dissertations, books, periodicals, the internet, and conference papers. These

enriched the study, helped to understand the concepts, and compare them to the data gathered from the field through triangulation.

Information was gathered via papers, records, and images that were made, acquired, or accumulated by people, families, or organizations as a result of their regular activities. Apart from these, biographical materials such as memoirs, personal letters, documents; research studies, original literary works such as poems or short stories; photos, videos, and audio recordings, speeches and government addresses, and newspapers and other gray literature were all used in order to establish the historical trends in intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu.

Adhering to the interpretivist paradigm, we employed a content analysis method to gather secondary data on the historical weaponization of ethnicity since 1850 and its correlation with intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu over time. According to Panya and Nyarwath (2022), content analysis is a widely recognized qualitative research technique known for its flexibility. In this study, content analysis involved collecting qualitative data through a comprehensive literature review of existing sources, including internet searches, to explore various aspects of the study parameters. However, while interpretive research offers valuable contextual insights, its results may sometimes face criticism for lacking reliability. To address this concern, (Silverman and Marvasti, 2004; Hammersle, 2012) recommend triangulation as a method to validate the reliability of gathered data by cross-verifying information from multiple sources. In this research, triangulation was done by relating different and independent sources to see whether they corroborated each other.

1.11.7 Validity of research Instruments

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Dubey and Kothari, 2022). Validity also guaranteed that the outcomes of data analysis accurately reflected the investigated phenomena (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The questions in the interview schedules were derived from and connected to the study's goals in relation to the objectives of the study to ensure that they addressed the full spectrum of the concerns being researched (Kumar, 2019). The research instruments were validated under the careful guidance of the research supervisors.



Plate 1: showing Prof. P.G. Okoth, the main supervisor validating research instruments with the researcher

Source: Field research (2021)

1.11.7.1 Data collection procedure

In order to follow the correct procedure, the researcher first obtained authorization from the university which was used to get research permits from relevant bodies at national level and also from Uasin Gishu. The researcher then embarked on a familiarization

visit to some of the respondents and introduced herself and her purpose in order to create rapport with the respondents and also establish links with gatekeepers for ease during actual collection of data.

Data was collected using interview schedules and focus group discussions. With the help of research assistants and gatekeepers, the researcher also gathered information from other respondents through focus groups and interviews.

1.11.7.2 Data Analysis and processing

Qualitative data analysis involves the systematic classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to discern implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making within the data. This process aims to unveil the representations and insights conveyed within the material. (Mezmir 2020; p 1). The aim of this study was to get more insights and better understand how weaponization of ethnicity has contributed to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. More details on this was collected from the respondents. Since qualitative data analysis involves identifying common patterns in participants' responses and critically analysing them to achieve research aims and objectives (Weber 2017), the data collected from the interviews and focus group discussions was critically analysed in order to; firstly, ensure the respondents voices were heard. Secondly, to establish that the data elucidated how weaponisation of ethnicity has impacted on intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu since 1850.

Once gathered, the data underwent organization and contemplation. This included textual information and verbatim transcriptions from interviews, discussions, field notes, and other written documents. Given the voluminous nature of the field data, Mezmir (2020) advises researchers to impose coherence and structure while preserving the original accounts and observations. Consequently, the field data underwent

transformation through processes such as searching, evaluating, recognizing, coding, mapping, exploring, and describing patterns, trends, themes, and categories. This meticulous approach aimed to maintain the authenticity of the respondents' voices throughout the analysis. Through this rigorous process the researcher was able to interpret the data and provide their underlying meanings (Bannon 2013) in relation to the study objectives. The data from the field was also triangulated and corroborated with secondary sources to ensure content validity. The secondary sources were also complemented using the archival and oral sources to assess their validity and reliability.

Content analysis was used to analyse interviewees' responses which had been documented. Content analysis allowed the researcher to understand the social reality by examining the meanings, themes and patterns that emerged from the oral sources (Mayring 2004). Narrative analysis on the other hand, was used to analyse content from interviews and FGDs. Narrative analysis was of significance in this study since it helped to contextualise the participants in both social and historical terms (Josselson and Hammack 2021). The aim was to understand the beliefs and experiences of the communities in Uasin Gishu that suffered from perceived deprivation through their narratives and stories. From these, the identified patterns were used to shed light on how the respondents eventually rationalised their experiences by engaging in or supporting political violence. This study focused on using respondents' stories and experiences to answer research questions which were derived from the objectives. This analysis resulted in deeper insight, flexibility, contextual understanding, and amplified the participant voices.

Ryan 2018) cautions that researchers can never be completely separate from their own values and beliefs. Therefore, the researcher avoided subjectivism by maintaining

awareness of her values and preferences and by adherence to established techniques for data collection and analysis.

1.12 Ethical considerations

Weber (2017) insists that a researcher must embrace integrity, responsibility, honesty, as values that govern research practices in order to safeguard the quality of knowledge as well as its production. Since the research process demands professional conduct, the researcher abided by the stipulated and expected code of conduct and ethical principles to ethically address the social problems and interpersonal relationships, which are the main concerns of qualitative research. This was done during each stage of the research process. Before performing a study, during data collection and analysis, as well as while reporting, distributing, and preserving data. Creswell (2014) also emphasizes that ethical considerations should be taken into account.

The researcher utilized a letter of recommendation from the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies at MMUST to get a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). To administer the study instruments, the researcher interrogated elders, household heads, village and church elders in Uasin Gishu County. The respondents were given a brief introduction from the researcher which included the personal identification and the title of the research. This was followed by instructions and assurances of confidentiality after which they were given sufficient time to organise themselves before being asked the relevant questions.

Ethical difficulties included, but are not limited to, the protection of research participants and the development of their trust, the promotion of the integrity of research, the prevention of misconduct and impropriety (Israel and Hay, 2006). The

researcher sought permission and direction from gatekeepers and key personnel like elders and opinion shapers in Uasin Gishu for easier access to the relevant respondents. The researcher was careful to assure them of confidentiality in order to get the respondents' confidence on sensitive information. The researcher kept a record of all the respondents' names, location, as well as the interview dates. The researcher sought the consent of interviewees before recording or taking their photos. The researcher also acknowledged the work of other authors to avoid plagiarism and fraud.

1.13 Chapterization

The study is organized into the following areas for academic purposes; the Introduction; it has the background of the study which introduces the study area from global to a local perspective in order to elucidate and ground the research problem.; this part also states the general and specific objectives, from which the research questions are derived. The academic, philosophical, and policy justifications of the study, as well as the significance, scope, and limitations of the study are also part of this section. In the literature review section, relevant literature has been thematically reviewed in line with the studies objectives, and the various gaps identified, setting the need for this study.

The section on methodology detailed the research design, methods, study population and sampling, the research instruments, data collection and analysis, as well as the ethical considerations, and finally, a summary of the chapter.

The theoretical framework has focused on primordialism and instrumentalism and the relative deprivation theories as they applied to the study. The research methodology section has discussed, in details, the paradigm, design, study area and ethical considerations.

The chapters on findings are; the migration and settlement of the Nandi, ethnic relations and conflicts during the colonial period, settlement of other ethnic communities in Uasin Gishu during Jomo Kenyatta's regime, Moi-Kibaki eras, Uhuru Kenyatta era, and weaponization of ethnicity, and finally, the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

1.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter has laid out the background to the study, from which has been derived the problem statement, research objectives and research questions. Both the philosophical, academic, and policy justifications for weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political conflict, are also stipulated. This chapter has also laid out the significance, the geographical, social, economic and periodic scope, as well as the limitations of the study. Additionally, it also tackled a thematic review of literature in line with the specific objectives. The foregoing chapter has outlined therefore, how the descriptive research methodology and the pragmatic paradigm were used in the historical investigation of weaponization of ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu county. The preceding chapters are the findings based on the specific objectives of this study. In chapter two, the foundation of this study is laid by focusing on the migration and settlement of the Nandi, 1800-1894.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE NANDI COMMUNITY OF UASIN GISHU IN RELATION TO ETHNIC FORMATION AND POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT DURING THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD; 1800- 1894

2.0 Introduction

This chapter sought to trace the genesis of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu with specific focus on the nature and trends of the migration and settlement of the Nandi and other immigrant communities into Rift Valley; the pre -colonial state of the Nandi community, their socio-political and economic organization, as well the relations and interactions between them and their neighbors. All these are based on the primordial theory to show the common socio-cultural, traditional, economic and political aspects that identify and bring the Nandi together as an ethnic community as well as the bonds they share as a community. Jenkins (2012) proposal that not all violence is elite-led impacts on this study as this chapter analyses the compelling quality and effects of the cultural aspect.

2.1 Historical origins of the Nandi of Rift Valley.

Uasin Gishu forms part of the North Rift Region in Kenya and is majorly inhabited by the Kalenjin. Kalenjin constitute seven major clans; Marakwet, Kipsigis, Nandi, Keiyo, Pokot, Terik and Sabaot (Chesaina 1991, Lynch 2011, Chelelgo, 2016). These groups have similar customs, traditions and beliefs. There also exists some mutual intelligibility between most of these groups.

The term Nandi which translates to mean “I say to you”, is a recent creation from the middle of the twentieth century after the settlement of the Nandi into their modern homes (Chesaina 1991, Lynch 2011). Oboler (,1985) reiterates Kipkorirs narration that

the name developed during the second world war as a reference to people speaking related languages. The term was coined by a Nandi broadcaster called John Arap Chemallan who frequently used the term *Nandi* or *Kalenjok* to mean “I tell you”. The usage of the term was picked up by Nandi speakers in the armed forces as well as in the multi-ethnic secondary schools to refer to themselves (Kipkorir 1973;72-75). The term Nandi is, therefore, a primordial derivation since it denotes that these people coalesced around common socio-political and economic characteristics. This is consistent with Thompson's (2010) definition of an ethnic group, which is a group of people who believe they share a common identity and fate based on shared origins, kinship ties, traditions, cultural distinctiveness, a shared history, and possibly a shared language, as well as group responsibilities and advantages. According to Sutton (1978) the Nandi developed into a distinct cultural group in their current home in the western Kenyan highlands.

According to Kivoi (2010), ethnicity is intrinsic and natural to humans as a component of their unavoidable character. Humans have a natural tendency to identify with others with whom they have similar interests, backgrounds, or origins. All of these further reiterate the primordial theory of ethnicity, binding the Nandi and in effect, the Nandi community through shared social and cultural aspects since these people are culturally related and inhabit the general area between Kenya's western highlands and the Rift Valley.

It is on the basis of these shared identities, based on origin, kinship, traditions, culture, history, and language, that this chapter focusses on, to show how the same have been used by the political elite to mobilize the Nandi people against other communities resulting into intermittent political violence. It is, therefore, important to establish how these people arrived and settled in the Rift Valley area.

Several myths exist to explain the origin and settlement of the Nandi people into their current habitat in the general Rift Valley areas. These myths were corroborated by some of the respondents who narrated the arrival of the Nandi into Uasin Gishu;

The Nandi came from Sudan, and on the way they left the Elgon people, the Sabaot, they then met the Sudi and Luhya of Bungoma. They also passed through Luo land, Maragoli land, Kakamega, and later settled in their present homeland bordering the Luhya, Luo and other neighbors (FGD1, OI, Besiabor, 21/07/2021, Besiabor).

Gisemba (2008) elucidates that Mt Elgon is the ethnic ancestral land of the Kalenjin i.e., Tugens, Nandi, Keiyo, Marakwet, Pokot and Kipsigis. Were (1972) also concurs that the traditional evidence among the Nandi of the Western Province suggests that before the migration from Mount Elgon, their ancestors comprised a single united community. From Mt Elgon the ancestors of the Kalenjin later split and dispersed in various directions to distant lands. The emigrants became the ancestors of the Nandi, Kipsigis, Tugen, Pokot, Marakwet and Elgeyo. Currently, most of them reside in the Rift Valley Province, although a few may also be found in western Kenya (Were, 1972).

According to Ndeda (2019), the migration of the Kalenjin into western Kenya began in the early seventeenth century. By the late 19th century, Kalenjin immigrants were already residing around Mount Elgon.

Were (1972) further states that the Nandi forefathers landed on Mount Elgon around the end of the sixteenth century. From there, the original core of the Nandi eventually fragmented and scattered in several directions. This was the second significant dispersal following the earlier one from Mount Kamalinga, which occurred around 45 miles to the north-west of Mount Elgon. Traditional evidence among the Nandi of the Western Province suggests that before the migration from Mount Elgon, their ancestors comprised a single united community.

Their subsequent migration from Mount Elgon resulted in the foundation of new settlements in distant lands. The emigrants became the Nandi, Kipsigis, Tugen, Pokot, Marakwet and Elgeyo. They now live in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya. By around 1600-1650, some had settled in modern Nandi land. Their area of primary occupation was most probably in the south around Aldai. Hutingford (2012) theorises the existence of the Nandi as a community in the Aldai area to be as from about the beginning of the seventeenth century A.D, while Matson (1972), argues that it was much earlier in 1600. This was the result of the settlement in Aldai on the escarpment above Kisumu and overlooking Lake Victoria by a man from Elgon named Kakipoch, who was joined by other followers. Hutingford narrates that this group of people, formerly referred to as the Chemwal, were later called the Nandi. Oboler (1985), sheds more light on the origin of the name Nandi by explaining that the name allegedly came from the Kiswahili word for cormorant (*mNandi*), which the Swahili traders used to refer to the people who swooped down from the Nandi and Kakamega escarpments to raid those living below. With time, the name Chemwall was replaced by Nandi (Oboler, 1985; 18)

It has also been commonly argued that Uasin Gishu was first inhabited by the Maasai clan referred to as Illwuasin-kishu leading to the name (Lagat 1965, Gisemba, 2008). Oboler adds that Uasin Gishu was initially the grazing land of the Uasin Gishu Maasai who were decisively defeated by the Nandi in 1880 (Oboler 1985). These arguments expose the fact that originally, the Maasai occupied this particular portion but were later displaced by the Nandi. According to Maasai and Nandi myths, Uasin Gishu was inhabited by a pastoral community referred to as Sirikwa, characterized as "people who were here before us" (KNA DC/UG/2/1 Uasin Gishu District Political record file 1990-1993). The etymology of different places within Uasin Gishu such as Eldoret, effectively demonstrates that the Maasai had settled in the area before the Nandi came

in and dominated Uasin Gishu. According to Lagat (1965), the Sirikwa were dislodged by the Maasai while the Maasai were eventually ousted by the Nandi after a major battle at Kipkaren. According to a respondent:

Uasin Gishu was initially occupied by the Maasai called Uasin Gishu but the Nandi fought them several times over grazing land. After the fight at Lessos, many of the Maasai died, and majority decided to leave and go to Narok, later other remaining Maasais also followed. Eventually, they left the whole of Uasin Gishu to the Nandi (Henry Morei, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/2021).

Matson (1976) also explains that the warriors of the Nandi fought and defeated the Maasai to claim Uasin Gishu plateau in the 1880s in the Kipkaren valley, while the Segelei Maasai were defeated at Lumba. The narrations of these elders are not far from some of the information on the settlement of the Nandi in Uasin Gishu area; according to Lagat (1965), the Uasin Gishu area was initially occupied by the Sirikwa who were dislodged by the Maasai, who in the late 19th century were dislodged by the Nandi after several skirmishes in the struggle to control pastureland and establish themselves as the superior community in the area. One of these major battles was fought at Kipkaren (Ochieng 1997, Mwanzi 1997, Sutton 1986). Oboler (1985) gives the final defeat of the Uasin Gishu by the Nandi to be about 1880 when these Maasai attempted a large scale raid on the Nandi to protect their pasture. Matson (1976) reiterates that Nandi expansion was driven by the need for more pasture for the stock they captured from their neighbors including the Luo.

The Uasin Gishu contained large tracks of arable and fertile land that held chances for prosperity and expansion for the Nandi (Chelelgo, 2016). Due to their semi nomadic and expansionist nature, years of raids and counter raids followed and eventually the Nandi displaced the Maasai. The Nandi continued to spread to other parts of the Rift Valley with the Nandi occupying Uasin Gishu, Nandi region and Trans Nzoia. The

Kipsigis occupied parts of Kericho and Trans Mara. The Pokot settled to the North while Marakwet and Keiyo closely bordered them. (Lagat, 1965).

After settling in Uasin Gishu area, the Nandi population increased due to several reasons, including immigration from some of their neighbors like the Luo, Kisii, Luhya Immigrants from other Luhya nationalities, including Maragoli, Bunyore, and Kabras, also merged with the Moi clan. Gusii immigrants also arrived and were assimilated into the Kipiegan clan. (Ochieng 1971).

In the second part of the seventeenth century, they migrated south and embraced Bantu culture and language, according to Ndeda (2019). Their ancestors eventually evolved into the Tachoni of Ndivisi and North Kabras, the Shieni of Marama, and the Nashieni, Tobe, and Mulembwa of Wanga. The Bongomek, Bok, and Kony are the Nandi of Mount Elgon who maintained their language and culture. These occupied northern Buluyia, while the south remained unoccupied (Were 1967a: 59). After their settlement into these areas, these people developed a unique social, cultural, economic and political system which further enhanced the bonds which united them as a community. A discussion of common characteristics shared by the Nandi follows.

2.2 Nandi Identity, Culture, Traditions, Customs, Practices and Weaponization

Before the 19th Century, The Nandi had an organized political, social and economic system that enabled them to maintain harmony, unity amongst themselves and also survive. There was a systematic procedure on how education, religion and the politics of the community was run. Rotich (2016) observes that within the Kalenjin community, there is a deep-rooted emphasis on collective collaboration in every aspect of their lives. They highly value communal participation over individual endeavors. Whether in language, communication, or cultural narratives, the expectation is for group efforts

rather than individual accomplishments. This communal mindset is considered essential for membership within the Kalenjin community. Their cultural practices and traditions are structured around the principle of teamwork, which is deeply ingrained in their collective identity. As a result, when faced with situations that require collaboration, the Kalenjin readily embrace collective action, drawing upon their cultural heritage as a source of unity and strength.

2.2.1 Religious Beliefs and Practices

They believed in one god called *Asis* – the sun god (Chelelgo, 2016). He was worshiped through the offering of sacrifices and pouring of libations. Besides *Asis*, there existed other deities such as *Ilal* who was associated with thunder and lightning. Prayers and other religious activities were usually carried out on the top of a hill chosen by the elders. Typical Nandi life cycle was marked by a series of religious ceremonies that acted as a sign of gratitude during plenty and an appeasement in the face of natural calamities. This aspect has been used to offer prayers and sacrifices on behalf of politicians when they encountered challenges which these politicians manipulated and turned into communal challenges instead. In regard to societal relations, the most important unit was the local community made up of members of different clans based on several aspects such as ; friendships, voluntary associations, as well as kinships. Nandi interactions are generally characterized by a dense network of affiliational relationships (Oboler, 1985)

2.2.2 Political System

In terms of political organisation, the Nandi were organized according to a territory referred to as (*emet*), clans also referred to as (*pororiosiek*), and age-sets or (*ibinda*). The Nandi had twelve clans namely; Kamelilo, Kapchepkendi, Kakittalam, Koileke, Kakipoch, Kapianga, Kapsile, Tipingot, Cheptol, Kipngoror, Kakimno Murk ApTuk

and Kaptumois Kemboi *et all* (2020)). The most basic political structure within the Nandi community was the family. The first form of leadership was exhibited in a home set up because most families were polygamous in nature. A man's social stature was determined by the number of children and wives he had (Chelelgo, 2016). The man was the final decision maker within the homestead and was in charge of solving any disputes that may arise between the wives and the children of the wives. In addition, he managed all his estate and when the right time came, he had a responsibility to transfer the estate to his sons. Therefore, a married man exercised leadership by performing basic and manly roles within the family.

Following closely was the clan. A clan primarily consisted of individuals who were closely related by blood. This translated to individuals not being able to marry within the clan. Some of the clans that fell under the Nandi sub nationality include the *Kipoiis*, *Kipamwi* and *Kipkokos* (Chelelgo, 2016). Relating clans inhabited similar localities and were free to intermarry. The clan formed the simplest form of political structure after the family and was headed by *Kirwongidet ab Oret*, a junior elder from the clan (Chelelgo, 2016). The junior elder had the responsibility to settle disputes within the clan and also administration of land in instances where the head of the family passed on before performing that duty. The Nandi political structure was egalitarian and acephalous in nature. According to Lagat (1965), they had no centralized form of governance and in cases where decision making was needed, a group of senior clan members of the society had to be convened (Lagat, 1965). One elder affirmed thus:

Each village has its own elders to discuss their own issues. Any time we feel there is something sensitive, we will consult senior elders who are around and one elder is called to chair. There is no election of elders. There are specific people who can be chosen by the rest of the community members to act as elders. We look at your leadership qualities, you must be above 60 years and you must be sharp and a wise

person. Not anyone can become a leader. (OI, Keter Julius, Kamagut,21/07/21)

Kokwet was next in line after the clan in terms of political organization. *Kokwet* implied the neighborhood or a place where the clan elders met for the purpose of administering their duties (Chelelgo, 2016). It consisted of about 15 to 100 families. Only married individuals had a say in the issues presided upon in the *Kokwet*. However, young boys could sit in as a learning process or if the issue being presided upon involved them. The clan elders chose among themselves who was to lead them in the *Kokwet*. They dealt mostly with inter-clan issues and other matters that village elders could not solve. Most of the cases presented in the *Kokwet* were concerning murder, administration of land and witchcraft. In extreme cases administration of oaths were done in order for the culprit to suffer the wrath of the curse based on the crime they had committed. Thus, the Nandi political and social system was closely related though it's the male elders who were based on a strict hierarchy that had authority over most issues and controlled major decision making processes in the community.

2.2.3 Council of Elders

The system of council of elders among the Nandi originated from the highest geographical division within the Nandi community during the precolonial period; the *Emotinwek* (the country). At this level there was a council which acted as the high court for the Nandi community. It was headed by *Kirwogindet neo* who was the great chief. His role was more of a chairman for instance, he could moderate meetings and act as a mouth piece for voicing the decision of the group. A *Bororiet* came above the *Kokwet* and it could be referred to as a region. A person was allowed to move from one region to another, if the elders ascertained that their integrity could be fully vouched for.

The council was composed of individuals from each of the *Kokwet* councils in the Nandi region. As further hypothesized by Arap Ngeny (1967), a *Kokwet* council

discussed the daily affairs of the Koret, adjudicated disputes among Koret members, investigated anti-social behaviors, and regulated some agricultural and pastoral operations among the members, Kemboi *et al* (2020) are in agreement that Nandi community affairs were run through the council of elders in consultation with the seers or prophets. The roles of elders were also reiterated by respondents that:

We also had village elders who settled issues so not all issues went to the Orkoiyot. The Orkoiyot only came in to settle when there was a problem between two clans especially if a clan member was killed because the other clan would be annoyed. All the elders were respected (OI, Thomas Koech, 21/07/21 Chepsaita).

This clan-based system of the Nandi was comparable to that of their pre-colonial neighbors, the Luhya, who primarily had two systems of governance. Common was the Clan-based administration led by elders, who made political, economic, and social choices including warfare, law, and land usage. The clan elders picked a powerful, sage, and unbiased elder to oversee clan affairs. Different Luhya groups referred to this individual as *Omwami*, *Omukali*, *Omukhulundu*, *Omukasa*, or *Weng'oma*. The post of senior elder was not permanent, since he might be dismissed at the request and with the consent of his peers. The hereditary character of such job ensured the position's security (Were 1968). This is similar to the Nandi political system to some extent in that they also had senior elders who held a lot of sway within their communities and next to the Orkoiyot, were regarded as community spokesmen.

In recent political clashes between the Nandi and other communities, these elders who are traditionally revered, have played a forefront role in mobilization and training of warriors used to attack, harass other communities living within and neighboring the Nandi. One respondent was of the opinion that:

Some of the elders are not good people because during the day they pretend to talk about peace. But at night they hold night meetings with

warriors and plan on how to attack other communities. The warriors cannot act without the knowledge and blessings of the elders. (OI, Thomas Koech, 21/07/2021, Chepsaita).

The foregoing sentiments are in line with Tignor (1972) who also observed that elders and soldiers actually held a delicate balance of authority. While warriors had some personal political autonomy and prerogatives for handling their own affairs, it was the elders who had the last word on significant matters in the community. Even though warriors were occasionally permitted to act independently, their actions were strictly within the general rules laid down by elders.

According to Josse -Durand (2020) Elders within the community also wield the responsibility of invoking spells and curses upon individuals considered "undesirable" by the community. This occurred notably when a couple, responsible for managing a tea plantation, was tragically murdered at their residence in August 2013. Subsequently, elders orchestrated a ceremony at the site of the crime, publicly casting a lethal curse upon the perpetrators amidst a sizable audience. This event was documented by Kenya Citizen TV under the title "Nandi Elders perform ceremony to curse family's killers.

Elders are usually older men to whom other family members turn for advice and assistance during marriage, funerals, and anticipated or actual conflicts. The council of elders had many daily responsibilities and duties, including the management of family life, relations with neighbouring communities, and responses to natural disasters such as drought and disease (Nyamweru and Chidongo, 2018). There were some specialists among them who acted as ritual practitioners. These ritual practitioners carried out sacrifices and prayers on behalf of the community. They

held a higher status in the community due to their power to control supernatural agents which could act positively and negatively.

2.2.4 Orkoiyot

The religio-political office of the Orkoiyot among the Nandi seems to have been borrowed from the Maasai as a result of the interaction of these two communities. The initial orkoiyot was a Maasai laibon from Uasin-Gishu who relocated to Nandi during the mid-nineteenth century. Due to the perceived effectiveness of his spiritual assistance in Nandi's cattle raids, he gradually ascended to a position of authority and became a central figure in coordinating the *pororosiek*.

One of the respondents, explained the roles and significance of the Orkoiyot among the Nandi:

It was only a specific clan that produced prophets. They prophesied and they would be given gifts as well as (*mahalange*) fermented flour and *wimbi* that was used to make *Busaa*. The orkoiyot could bless the warriors and tell them whether to go out to fight or not. The Orkoiyot would be consulted in case of a problem in our community. He could tell us the cause of the problem, pray and tell us how things are aligned in the community. (Kiprop Peter, OI ,21/07/22, Chepsaita).

This statement from the respondent is in line with Chelelgo who also concurs that the Nandi had a religio-political leader, Orkoiyot, who came from the Talai clan (Chelelgo, 2016). The Orkoiyot's influence extended deeply into various aspects of the Nandi community's life, wielding significant powers in prophecy, witchfinding, and witchcraft, which greatly impacted the community's health and well-being. Moreover, the Orkoiyot held authority over crucial matters such as rainmaking, ceremonies marking the planting season, fertility rites for women and cattle, the initiation of circumcision festivals, and the convening of the *saket-ab-eito* (Huntingford, 1963: 175-186). According to Kemboi *et al.* (2018: 4), the Orkoiyot also possessed considerable political power, especially in sanctioning or withholding approval for raiding

operations. Notably, the Orkoiyot provided visible protection to warriors through the distribution of a protective medicine known as '*Ndasimiet*,' carried by warrior leaders during raiding expeditions. This intervention in military affairs fostered strong bonds between warriors and the Orkoiyot.

It is also clear that political leaders have utilized the religio-political powers of the Orkoiyot. This could be due to the fact that in traditional Nandi community, the Orkoiyot were feared and despised in equal measures because they were believed to have hereditary powers for divination and witchcraft. Consequently, they were instrumental in issues related to administration of oaths, initiation ceremonies, planning of wars and raids. This aspect was elucidated by the respondents who attested to the involvement of the Orkoiyot and elders in oathing and raids conducted by Kalenjin warriors during election violence.

The position of Orkoiyot was not inherited but rather achieved through powerful spiritual acts and prophecies, as disclosed by Ellis (1976). While all descendants of the original Orkoiyot were believed to possess spiritual powers, becoming the head Orkoiyot required demonstrating exceptional spiritual prowess. Thus, among the Nandi, this position could neither be passed down nor selected. This principle led to the rejection of the colonial government's appointment of Lelimo Arap Samwei as Orkoiyot in 1911, with Arap Kinekat being recognized as Orkoiyot instead (Monckton, NDQR, Dec. 9 in Huntingford, Nandi of Kenya, p. 42).

Despite lacking executive authority, the Orkoiyot's ritual influence could be contested. Despite lacking the power to initiate actions, the Orkoiyot served as a vital coordinator of Nandi military endeavors and a focal point for resistance. Koitalel exemplified this role by providing direction and coordination during the initial Nandi war effort against

the British (Arap Magut, 102-103). Similarly, Barserion played a coordinating role in the Nandi protest in 1923.

It is crucial to emphasize Ellis's assertion that despite the reverence bestowed upon the Orkoiyot, his authority over the murenik or warriors was restricted, as he lacked the prerogative to initiate actions and could only coordinate their endeavors, particularly in cattle raiding. However, in the event of a successful raid, he was entitled to a share of the spoils (Ellis, 1976).

Due to the inherent nature of this position, which derived from spiritual powers capable of both benevolent and malevolent actions, the Orkoiyot existed outside the established hierarchy controlled by the headmen. Consequently, obtaining testimony against an Orkoiyot in court proved exceedingly challenging for the Nandi, as they harbored deep-seated fears of his magical capabilities (Ellis, 1976:86).

There existed a special group of elders referred to as '*maotik*' in the different '*Bororiosiek*'. They were the ones tasked with handling contacts between the '*Bororiet*' council and the 'Orkoiyot', according to Arap Ngeny (1967). These officials frequently accompanied the warrior commanders, "*kiptainik*" (plural *kiptaiyat*), whenever approval from the Orkoiyot was sought for a planned raid. Huntingford (1963:175-186) states that the system of the *maotik*, or consultants within each pororiet was instituted by the first Orkoiyot and that these elders (*maotik*) often asked for the orkoiyot's blessings on all raids. Consequently, after successful raids, they often brought the orkoiyot a part of the spoils.

Thus, in many cases, the institution of Orkoiyot was also used to strengthen the military organization and political cohesion of Nandi society (Huntingford, 2012). According to the responses from the field, the political elite have utilized the office of Orkoiyot for

political objectives in the same way the Nandi relied on the Orkoiyot in the pre-colonial period. In this aspect, this is seen as an extension of the religio-political functions of the Orkoiyot in the pre-colonial period.

2.2.5 Initiation

Some traditions among the Nandi have been manipulated to play a key role in emergence and growth of weaponized ethnicity. Among the Nandi, initiation, warriors and the secrecy in solving the issues affecting the community seem to be embedded on and dictated by culture and traditions. Some of the politicians and elite have actually exploited initiation, and the young initiates in the name of protecting the community.

Nandi did not originally have traditions such as circumcision. It is believed that as they migrated South, they interacted with Cushites from whom they borrowed such tradition (Chelelgo, 2016). After their close interactions with their neighbors over the years during migration and settlement, the Nandi fully adopted and practiced circumcision as one of the perquisites of identity for their men. The circumcision process was intricate, elaborate and sacred. It was a whole package that led to the full integration of young men and women as responsible members of the community. Maua, *et al* (2023) note that the Nandi community is often brought together by different types of rituals. These rituals often brought together people from different areas and were an opportunity to interact and strengthen community ties. Fish (1974), affirms that one of these rituals was the male and female initiation ceremonies which spanned months and were extremely complex. Initiation consisted not only of the process of circumcision, but also of initiation into the clandestine rites of the tribe and instruction in tribal traditions.

Nandi traditions and the seemingly inbuilt tendencies and obligations and duties of the initiates to protect the community seem to have been mobilised and employed against other communities. Circumcision, which was carried out periodically through the age-

set system, played a significant social and political part in Nandi community. Each age-set had a span over a period of 13 years before moving to the next age set. The boys who reached about thirteen years were circumcised together and belonged to an age-set. Kemboi *et al.* (2020) concur that individuals who underwent circumcision simultaneously were considered members of the same age-set, or *Ibinda*. Upon reaching maturity, young men belonging to a specific age-set were assigned the responsibility of safeguarding community lands and the society as a whole. This period during which they assumed the role of protecting the community was referred to as the age of that particular *Ibinda*. According to two elders, Koech and Chuma,

Initiation is held on 11th and 12th December of each year. During that period, when one gets hurt, or feels pain during circumcision, one becomes a man and the heart hardens. That's why when they go for war, they can't turn back. Most of the initiates are usually in form one and two. When they say you are a man, you are really respected since you have come from *Jandoni*. The initiates are secluded for one month near the river, and taught how to become a man and take care of the family. They are told that the community relies on them for security. They are the family's security. They should sleep with one eye open at night. They are taught how to be courageous and defend anything that may attack their family or community. Those circumcised at the same time are blood brothers, they are more than brothers and cannot fight with each other or else they will face a *baraza* and pay a fine of one cow (FGD2, OI, Chepsaita, /21/07/2021).

This component of initiation is also emphasized by Orchardson (1961:58), who states; ... "Before initiation, children were not regarded as Kipsigis, but merely as the children of Kipsigis. During initiation, they are expected to abandon all juvenile behaviours, learn to manage their emotions, and conduct themselves in a manner superior to that of the uninitiated... Possibly, initiation might be viewed as a rebirth for which circumcision is the outward symbol."

Circumcision, a Nandi traditional cultural practice and symbol of identity, has been deployed as a political weapon against those from communities believed to be

uncircumcised and hence not qualified to vote, lead or vie for leadership positions in Uasin Gishu. Furthermore, those from uncircumcised communities have been smoked out, harassed, oppressed, tortured, forcefully circumcised, and even killed during the flare up of political violence. Ahlberg and Njoroge (2013), have highlighted for example that males of the Luo ethnic group were circumcised by force during the post-election violence. Male circumcision is a rite of passage among the Kikuyu and Nandi, but it was also related to occurrences of castration and other types of genital mutilation among the Luo. For political benefit, it appeared that the objective was to humiliate and intimidate not just the individual men, but also their whole communities.

Primordialism is hereby displayed through the use of their rites of passage and symbols of identity to disqualify, disparage and ostracize those from uncircumcised communities who are seen as “others”.

2.2.6 Military Organization

The warrior tradition in Africa was not born on the day the whiteman landed... it was deeply inter-linked with the totality of the cultures of most African societies before the white man came. (Mazrui 1975)

Like in many other pre-colonial African communities, the warrior tradition was a deeply ingrained aspect of the Nandi culture. Consequently, the Nandi were known for the prominent raids they carried out in their quest for cattle in the pre-colonial period (Lagat, 1995). This raiding responsibility rested squarely on the shoulders of young men who had to undergo a rigorous traditional process in order to qualify as a warrior. Mazrui (1975) affirms that a man became a warrior when he was presumed to be capable of guarding cattle, or defending land, or collectively fighting to protect the clan. Accordingly,

In case of a war, there is always a leader among the warriors, from the same age group. The leader is determined by the position of their father at birth (for example even if you are older, you cannot lead if there is a younger boy present, but whose father is older). During war, they are arranged in groups of six, the first and last man in the group are respected (because they protect the rear and front) and they are the ones who give direction (Paul Chuma, OI, Chepsaita, /21/07/2021).

It is, therefore, noted that the institution of warrior-hood among the Nandi was a revered one, well-structured and organised. It is this structure and organisation that has again been used by the political elite to carry out attacks on other communities whenever they have felt that their political power and control is threatened in Uasin Gishu. Apart from the military organisation, other primordial practices such as the rites of passage (circumcision) have also been politicised.

In preparation, they were taken through a series of stages. At the age of seven, young boys were initiated into manhood through circumcision. After initiation, they joined an age set called *Ibinda* which was the beginning of warrior grade (Chelelgo, 2016). Ellis (1976) reinforces that the age-set system was an effective system of Nandi discipline since it organized the men militarily into classes of boys, *murenik* (warriors), and old men. The succession of sets was marked by the circumcision festivals held at the same time throughout Nandi country. At the end of every fifteen years, the *saket-ap-eito* ceremony was held during which the ruling set of *murenik* officially 'handed over' the country to the incoming set.

Age set operations, according to Hutingford (1963), were military, political, and had a significant influence on social behavior and relationships. After fifteen years in power, the warrior age set responsible for all military actions retired to become elders. The age limit regulated both personal and social activities, ensuring the availability of a standing army capable of defending the nation and executing raids (Lagat, 1995). Within the

Nandi community, livestock thefts among squatters were primarily perpetrated by young men, often as displays of courage and in alignment with traditional customs. Historically, the community regarded Luyia and Luo cattle as a rightful acquisition (KNA, DC/NDI/1/2, Nandi District Annual Report 1918-19).

An individual was expected to go through a cycle of seven different age sets in the fullness of their lifetime each lasting an average of fifteen years. An age set difference was expected to be between a son and his father. Life long bonds were created as a result by young boys who shared the same age groups. Once the young men attained warriorhood status, they were expected to be able to protect and even lay down their lives for the community. Mazrui notes that a man became a warrior when he was presumed to be capable of guarding cattle, or defending land, or collectively fighting to defend the clan (Mazrui, 2008).

Tignor (1972) notes that the Nandi and Kipsigis had age-sets that were fundamentally comparable to the Maasai. They were well defined and of considerable military value. However, the male-only parish council in a geographical region also possessed considerable political influence.

Military leadership required skill and experience and thus was entrusted on mature age sets. Individuals rose into military positions based on their knowledge on taboos and their performance in war. The Nandi became one of the most superior and feared communities in the Rift Valley and western Kenya region as a result of their exploits and conquest over their surrounding neighbors whom they raided at will for cattle and women. Some respondents gave information about raiding thus:

The Nandi also liked raiding, not stealing because they believed they were taking back their cows from the Luo, Luhya, Bukusu” (FGD2, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

By this time, the Nandi were the most superior community within Rift Valley and western region of Kenya since they had overpowered all the neighboring communities. Warriors were supposed to be explosive, violent, eager, and prepared to engage in conflict with neighbouring nationalities or with their own age-mates.

It appears that these aggressive, superior and warriorlike characteristics have been harnessed, cultivated, mobilized and utilized to rise up against other communities in Uasin Gishu by the elite among the Nandi for their own political ends.

According to The New York Times, a paramilitary group associated with the Nandi community and its economic and political figures engaged in violent actions in the Rift Valley during 2007 and 2008. This group was commonly known as the "Nandi Warriors" (New York Times, 29 Oct. 2014). Furthermore, as reported by The New York Times in January 2008 regarding the post-election violence, individuals involved in the killings, including members of the Nandi ethnic minority, asserted that the attacks were communal endeavors endorsed by elders and guided by customs that uphold a warrior culture (New York Times, January 21, 2008).

In addition, the 2008 (KNCHR) Kenya National Commission for Human Rights report states that Nandi "raiders were predominantly young males between the ages of 18 and 25" and that their weapons were "traditional Nandi weaponry that every male kid is trained to use following circumcision," such as bows and sharpened sticks (Aug. 2008, 65). According to a 2008 assessment by the International Crisis Group, the Nandi are warriors "Herders, farmers, and merchants who live a sedentary lifestyle and are only mobilized when the community is perceived to be under danger.

Typically, Nandi warriors accepted commands from elders who have significant authority over certain sections or rural villages. Some respondents in the Eldoret area

stated in the research that "Nandi fighters" were supported by "rich athletes" who had invested in rural agriculture and other real estate and utilized Nandi to control property (International Crisis Group 21 Feb. 2008, 12). The article notes that several of these sportsmen had military experience and had trained and commanded the raids on occasions. The primary responsibilities of the warriors are to protect the village from assault, to raid for cattle and other types of riches, to acquire the skills of ruling, which they will need to apply as elders, and to assist with the herding of animals during the dry season (Tignor, 1972).

The training of raiders during political violence is narrated by two respondents who explained that:

Nandi warriors train in the forest. during circumcision, they are taught their traditions in the forest including how to aim arrows and they cannot miss. Training takes about one month in the forest. They train at Sorongai and Lukova river. During that period, they are very fierce and nobody can approach them. (Kopi John, OI, Chepsaita 20/07/2021).

This aspect of warriors and raids existed in the pre-colonial Nandi community.

According to another respondent called Matayo:

The Nandi went to raid to get women and cows not to kill. In fact, whenever they arrived they would tell the owner to come out if they were man enough and share the cattle, and the owner would request them to leave them one for the sake of the children. Then the warriors would leave the animal that has just calved down and go with the others... They believed cows don't belong to our neighbors like the Luhya, if they found one tethered by a Luhya, they would untie it because to them the animal has been imprisoned and is not free to eat, but is in fact dying of hunger. And if they were arrested, they would say they had not stolen, they only untied it to eat, and they would be set free". (Matayo Lel, OI, Besiabor 25/06/21,).

Matayo further narrated that the warriors did not steal because they were not allowed to take anything, they only destroyed other properties as is their culture. During the incidences of political violence witnessed in several areas, many houses and other properties have been destroyed or torched by the raiders. Unfortunately, due to political

incitement the current raiders also end up stealing property killing, maiming and traumatizing the owners whom they have been made to perceive as enemies by the political elite.

Elder Matayo further narrated that:

The Nandi warriors took only cows and girls back home. Girls raided from different communities had different titles; Chebalem from the Luhya, Chebageiyo from the Pokot, Chebagon from Mt Elgon, Chebagosobab from Kisii. From the Luos, we did not take women, only cattle were taken because it was in our culture and tradition ...we were also” advised to be cautious about marrying Luo women due to our traditions and myths that the Luo warrior Lwanda Magere was tricked into revealing the secret of his mysterious powers by a Nandi woman. Therefore, we feared marrying the Luo for fear of revenge” (OI, Matayo, Besiabor 25/06/21).

That could be the reason why there are fewer Luo ladies married among the Nandi compared to the other neighbors like the Luhya, or it could also be the proximity between Nandi and Luo since one of the elders revealed that the Luo lived further away compared to the Luhya. (OI, Paul Chuma, Chepsaita,21/07/21)

The Nandi community were originally pastoralists (Namunyu, 2020). This meant that they kept large herds of cattle and were in need of equally large portions of land for grazing. They also used land for subsistence agriculture. The Nandi male population were divided into age sets in which were trained to be warriors in line with their culture (Chelelgo, 2016). During war a chosen age set had the responsibility for fighting on behalf of the community and offering protection. In the recent conflicts that have been witnessed in Kenya, there have been individuals who identify themselves as warriors. For instance, in the 2007 – 2008 post-election violence, a group of Nandi who played an active role in it identified themselves as the Nandi/Nandi warriors (Hansen, 2009).

While the modern war team has little in common with the traditional age sets, it still performs under the same spirit. In the 2007 - 2008 post-election violence, it was

reported that a group of 2000 youths from the Nandi community mobilized themselves and went on to attack the Kikuyu (Namunyu,2020). The weapons used ranged from clubs, machetes and sometimes even guns.

This information about the initiates, initiation and warriors, and raiding corroborates the explanation given by non-local respondents in Chepsaita who explained that the warriors are trained for a period of time in the forest for seclusion. In view of this, Chelelgo states that the warrior groups form a tight bond and sense of responsibility similar to the one traditional youths in Nandi have (Chelelgo, 2016). One respondent reiterated that:

The Nandi's keep secrets like the Israelis, and once they are attacked, they join forces within a very short time to counter. (Matayo Lel, OI, Besiabor25/06/2021).

Further more in line with the traditions of yore, the warriors who are often used by the elite do not just wake up and go to "war". Because raiding was a tradition and was undertaken since it played several roles; After circumcision one was expected to prove that he was courageous as a man, ready to defend, fight for and even die for his community; one was also expected to contribute to the community's and their own economic prosperity; and raiding put a man to test to prove all these. According to some respondent, raiding is a tradition; "for one to called a man, the moran must raid for cattle" (Mshisa Jacob, OI Chepsaita, 20/07/2021).

In terms of organisation, the warriors, known as *murenik*, were organized into territorial units called pororosiek (singular: pororiet), which served as significant political entities. The inclination towards regional differentiation within the Nandi community was mitigated to some extent by the necessity for military collaboration among the pororosiek, the interconnections between dispersed pororosiek across different regions, the migratory patterns associated with a predominantly pastoral economy, the system of

communal grazing, and the practice of dispersing cattle among friends and relatives in various regions. Consequently, despite the absence of chiefs and the pronounced egalitarian nature of their society, the Nandi maintained a strong collective identity. This identity was rooted in their military prowess against outsiders, their shared social structure, and their resistance to external governance. Additionally, their sense of unity stemmed from a shared ancestry and physical factors such as inhabiting a geographically isolated region and having a relatively small population (Huntingford, 2012, p. 175-186).

Comparably, this aspect of the Nandi in relation to warriorhood and raiding holds some similarity to the Pokot as Bollig (1990) reveals that because the Pokot preferred a pastoral lifestyle, which is generally seen as superior than an agriculturalist lifestyle, they resorted to raiding in order to achieve it. Since the Pokot place a great importance on cattle (Edgerton 1971) they rely on it not just for sustenance, but also for dowry, stock friendships, and ceremonial rites. This makes raiding essential for Pokots. Respected for their raiding prowess and, consequently, community defense, the pastoral Pokot are admired for their raiding prowess. People from the highlands may use heroic language to describe them: "They are the true Pokot. They reside on those plains and guard us." For everyone Pokot, life revolves around cattle, and protecting this vital resource assures the community's existence. According to Pokot custom, it is preferable for a Pokot to die defending the village and its animals against raids than to die of any other reason (Lipale, 2005). De Vries (2012) opines that just like the Nandi, the Pokot raiding parties are primarily determined by ethnicity, and warriors' behaviour based on primordial bonds.

Bolling (1990) observes that among the Pokot, the enormous risks incurred during raids can be explained by the warriors' need to distinguish themselves and maintain their

reputation. Warriorhood is thus related to aggressive and violent behaviour like raiding and murdering adversaries, both of which are believed to increase men's social status (Kangethe, 2023). This is also true of the Nandi warriors typically used to assault non-natives in Uasin Gishu during political violence. The symbolic significance is emphasized by the fact that warriors' names can be altered after they have slain an enemy, and body markings can be applied to demonstrate their valorous deeds (De Vries, 2012).

The valour connected with raiding was also emphasized publicly, for instance through songs and dances that urged soldiers to battle. According to Pokot custom, just like the Nandi, all able-bodied males were warriors responsible for defending the Pokot community, including its land and animals. (De Vries, 2012).

There was a procedure to be followed before raids based on Nandi traditions. This was reiterated by some respondents thus: "The warriors were always blessed by the elders at a place on the way to Songor before they embarked on any raid" (Canon Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/2021). In addition, other respondents reiterated that;

Before going for any raid, they would go to consult the Orkoiyot to ask whether it would be good or bad then they could go for raids or not. In case they were advised not to go and they went, then majority would die during the raid. After a successful raid, they would pass by the Orkoiyot and give him one or two cows depending on the number looted. (FGD2, Chepsaita, 21/07/2021).

The foregoing rendition from the field is in line with the information provided by Chelelgo (2016) who states that traditionally, the youths from the Nandi nationality were sent into war or raids and the elders of the community gave them the guidance and moral support they needed (Chelelgo, 2016). In other words, when the youths entered into a war zone, they represented the interest of the whole community if not a larger

portion of it. This culture has formed a foundation upon which the politicians and elite in the community have manipulated other factors to promote ethnicity as a weapon. This is because traditionally, warriors from the Nandi nationality would fight to defend the community or, they would be instrumental in organizing and executing cattle raids successfully (Chelelgo, 2016). This is in line with the instrumentalist theory that shows how the elite manipulated and politicized aspects of community life.

As the country entered into the colonial era and independence after that, the image of warriors as defenders and protector of community quickly faded into something much more sinister. Instead of protecting their families from cattle raiders, the warriors were convinced to fight against other communities in order to defend their community's land property, and positions from being grabbed by others during the ethnic clashes leading to political violence.

The manipulation and use of young men as warriors by the community leaders was reiterated by several respondents who stated that during incidences of political violence

The elders organised their people to fight and even blessed them to go out and fight. During the ethnic clashes they used warriors from different areas to attack the non-locals who were referred to derogatorily as *Remindet*, to mean "something" or not a person. (FGD3, OI, Turbo, 16/06/2022).

Furthermore, it was the elite in the community that mobilised these young men from other areas so that they might not be known to the inhabitants of the locality. They were also fed and armed and instructed by the elders. This is supported by some respondents who stated:

They are well organised; they could mobilise the warriors and they also cooked from one of the ringleaders houses therefore they got sustenance for the ethnic war against their neighbours. But the Kikuyu could not continue fighting because they were hungry and not organised ... The elders and their leaders as well as part of the government helped to transport arrows, and Administration Police (AP) protected the warriors.

When the non-locals asked for help when they were attacked, the police would arrive but find that the AP, were already present and were of a higher rank. The regular police would just go back, since the higher rank police were the ones protecting the warriors. (FGD3, OI, Turbo,16/12/2021).

These respondents thus insinuated that some of the government security forces that were meant to protect all citizens indiscriminately were in fact assisting the Nandi warriors by turning a blind eye to their activities and at times even indirectly supported them by doing nothing to stop their attacks against non-locals.

At Chepsaita during the 1992 clashes between the Nandi and Luhya , the Nandi warriors attacked and burnt Kabras houses and the Kabras retaliated. The police were also beaten by the Nandi, but the Nandi were also beaten by the police and many of them died. In the course of the war the Kabras realised that the Nandi had also come with some police led by some powerful people in government who supported them.” (Kopi Mswahili, OI, Chepsaita,20/07/2021).

There is always an identifiable pattern with relationship to how violent ethnicity manifest in the Uasin Gishu region. For instance, Nandi are always at odds with the Kikuyu (Hansen, 2009). The strife between the Kikuyu and the Nandi can be pinned on the issues of land acquisition, usage and resource generation in the colonial period and after independence. The administrations before and after independence put in place policies that clearly defined ethnic boundaries and thus built up tension over time (Chelelgo, 2016). Even today, the ancestral ownership and identity of individuals lies unconsciously in Kenyan minds.

Bale and Sang (1996) observe that the Nandi, the primary subgroup of the Kalenjin and often associated with a reputation for being warlike, earned admiration from the British for their demonstrated courage in battle and their resilience and adaptability in the face of superior firepower. Within Nandi society, warriors were highly esteemed and held in great honor. As evidenced during the Nandi rebellion, warriors played a crucial role in defending the community against any external threats. They were also closely linked

with acquiring livestock, particularly through raiding neighboring communities. Additionally, warriors were relied upon as the ultimate line of defense against any form of threat, whether natural or otherwise (Oboler, 1985).

In Kalenjin's patriarchal culture, gender roles are deeply ingrained, with men primarily assigned roles that emphasize strength and protection, both in offense and defense. Warriors embodied qualities of courage, resilience, and reliability when facing danger. Consequently, it was expected that every male youth within the community would eventually assume the role of a warrior.

The fact that the young men were trained to sacrifice their lives for their community as a result of their informal education and the instructions they receive during community initiation is consistent with the primordial theory of ethnic conflicts, according to which individuals engage in conflicts because of the bond that binds them together, and therefore sacrifice their lives for the good of the entire group.

This aspect has been misused for political purposes by convincing the young that they had a responsibility to fight for their community to death in its defense by the elite. The young boys are also instilled with a sense of responsibility and protection of their community from a young age due to the kinship system. This has also played a role in moulding them and hence making them readily responsive to protect their community when called upon.

It is also important to note that the Nandi had a very effective traditional way of alerting the warriors to prepare for and engage in war through war cries as one respondent described:

In case they heard people were invading, an alarm would suddenly be sounded and people would move out of the houses into hiding. The warriors would go to specific places (forest) to await the attacker. The

alarms were sounded through shouts (*nduru*). The women would explain what the problem was as they sent out loud cries and then it would be picked up by the next woman and so on e.g "they have attacked us at Chepsaita." and the warriors will come armed because they know it's not a joke e.g *nduru ya kifo na vita ni tofauti*. The loud cries made sending out information to the community about death and war were different and it would go very far within a very short time. (Paul Chuma, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21)

This method of passing on urgent information on impending attacks was very efficient, enabled the warriors to organize themselves within a very short period of time and often helped them to defeat their enemies.

2.2.7 Oathing

During circumcision, oathing took place as a way of binding the initiates to their cause as well for solidarity amongst themselves. As a respondent reiterated;

The Nandi initiates take an oath during circumcision and that oath is the one that binds them together in unity and helps also to mobilize their people together against other communities whom they see as enemies. If anyone goes against that oath and is seen to be betraying the community, they are dealt with. They can even be killed or sent away. (Munene Paul OI, Turbo, 16/06/2022).

The oaths served to strengthen the commitment to cultural customs and loyalty to community standards among the young initiates. According to Chang'ach (2013), these oaths were employed to prevent members from divulging the details of ritual instructions to non-members, particularly foreigners. The seriousness of these oaths is underscored by the warning given to initiates that disclosing confidential information to outsiders could result in death or severe harm to anyone who breached the community's trust.

2.2.8 Education

Education was informal and the first teacher for a boy and a girl were the parents. However, as the children grew, the roles they had to play differed and thus the need for a

different kind of education was created. Girls were expected to learn home making and grooming skills. Boys on the other hand were expected to learn cattle rearing skills, hunting, and fighting skills which came in handy during wars and raids. They learnt through folk songs, proverbs, legends, riddles, observation and participation in clan activities. (Chelelgo 2017). Lagat (1965) is also in support of the prevalence of informal education by adding that in the pre-colonial period, the girls learnt their responsibilities from their mothers and grand-mothers. Both boys and girls were taught by carefully selected elders who had the skills to train them on their responsibilities as protector of both the family and the community.

It is unfortunate that during the political period, some elders have turned the noble traditional learning process of the Nandi and instead of using it to inculcate positive nation building values in the young boys, used it to inculcate and instill hatred and hence as they teach and train these young people in secluded places as in the old times, it is with the ultimate aim of using them as warriors to fight political wars, by burning houses, killing, maiming, and generally unleashing terror on their neighbours who have already been labeled as political enemies by the political elite.

During the precolonial period, Lagat (1995) notes that the fearlessness and pride of the Nandi were stamped after having conquered their neighbors. For example, in the 1950s, the Sawe age set warriors defeated the Arabs at Kipsoboi in spite of the Arab guns being superior to Nandi weapons. They also raided the Luo and Luhya in the west (Arap lagat1995) In the 1880s they defeated the Maasai and routed them out of Uasin Gishu, this is according to (Matson 1972).

This fearless and courageous characteristics of the Nandi have been exploited in the post-independence period to protect land as a resource against encroachment by their

erstwhile neighbors the Luo, Luhya and Kikuyu. The same has also been used to fight against perceived encroachment as a respondent explained;

Once the Nandi are attacked or threatened, they join forces within a very short time and counter attack. In 1992 when they were threatened by the Kikuyu, they did not wait for the attack, they said it is better they die early instead of waiting because the Kikuyu had hit the beehive and could not survive (Matayo Lel, OI, Besiabor 25/06/2021).

During the pre-colonial era, when large groups of raiders approached the limited pastures, especially along the borders of the Uasin Gishu plateau, a warning system was activated, with signals relayed from ridge to ridge. This allowed the herds to be swiftly gathered and driven to the safety of wooded areas. At these locations, the entrances to the clearings would be guarded by concealed archers, placing the spears of the warriors from the plains at a tactical disadvantage (Spear and Waller, 1993).

It is also notable that the fearless characteristics of the Nandi have also been exploited for political purposes by some leaders in their community in order to seek political protection from political adversaries, political persecution and also to secure Nandi votes from the influence of outsiders who are viewed as political enemies. This is seen by the employment of Nandi warriors to assault, pillage, and destroy their perceived adversaries. The cultural affinity or differences that created ethnocultural enmity and unwarranted categorization between ethnic groups, frequently culminating in ethnic warfare, conflict, and violence.

According to Oucho (2010), the "ethno-conflict theory" considers various factors such as social, political, and economic structures, religion, language, and folk psychology within a cultural system. However, it does not specifically address the sources of conflict. Instead, it identifies variables within this cultural system that can both contribute to conflict and serve as causes of conflict over time (Centre for Conflict Resolution, 2000). In Kenya, key contributors to cultural stereotyping included

vernacular FM radio stations broadcasting news and playing offensive music targeting rival groups, sensationalist publications spreading alarmist information, and politicians from certain communities using inflammatory language against others, exacerbating tensions and fueling conflict.

2.2.9 Pre- colonial nature of Interactions and ethnic relations between the Nandi and their neighbors

The origins of ethnicity in Kenya may be understood in part by examining the nature of ethnic interactions prior to colonization. During this time, Kenyan groups enjoyed an interconnected communal existence marked by interethnic exchanges, intermarriages, barter-trade, and patronage (Lonsdale, 2021; Elkins, 2005; Anderson, 2005). This demonstrates that pre-colonial Kenyan ethnic interactions were mutually beneficial. Ogot (2009) opines that traditional African communities were able to co-exist peacefully because their activities complemented each other's lifestyles. For instance, while the Luhya were farmers, their neighbouring Kalenjin communities were pastoralists. Consequently, the two communities practiced barter trade whereby the Kalenjin women would take milk and animal skins to the market while the Luhya would bring farm products like cassava, sorghum, millet in exchange of milk and skin. Colonialism may, therefore, be viewed as one of the primary causes of interethnic conflict in Kenya (Leys 1975; Berg-Schlosser, 2008; Elkins 2005; Anderson, 2005).

One of the most significant interactions of the Nandi as pointed out by (Hutingford, 2012) were those with their eastern neighbours, the Uasin Gishu Masai, to whom they borrowed several cultural features, including the institution of Orkoiyot or chief ritual expert. Hutingford further reveals that since two peoples shared a common border without any natural boundary, the numerically stronger Masai were able to dominate the Nandi to some extent till their destruction in the middle of the nineteenth century.

During this period, the primary cause of violent conflicts between civilizations was competition over the possession of land for colonization. According to Ndeda (2019), a severe conflict between the Kipsigis and the Gusii occurred in 1892. So many were killed to the extent that the border river became crimson from the large number of dead that were thrown in. Ndeda recounts a severe conflict between the Kipsigis and nearly all Gusii clans (Silberschmidt, 1999). Multiple wars might have occurred between the Gusii and the Kipsigis, with oral traditions indicating a battle in 1881 where the Kipsigis suffered defeat.

Hutingford (2012) also alludes to intermittent conflicts between the Nandi and their neighbours, the Terik, with whom they generally had friendly relations, but having a common frontier, quarrels over grazing rights and boundaries arose from time to time, the more so since the Terik, occupied a smaller territory. Since they were bounded on the west by the Luhya, who were largely sedentary, they were unable to graze their cattle on that side.

There were several such skirmishes between the two groups as Ndeda (2019) elucidates that in the period between 1789 and 1809, the Nandi constantly attacked the Gusii at Kabianga, forcing them to move out further south into Maasai land. They thus gave this location the name Kabianga, which means "nothing could survive here." Moreover, the Kipsigis continually attacked them, forcing them to flee.

The Nandi also interacted with the Luhya groups in the course of their migration. Were (1972) describes this migration and opines that two things happened as a result of interactions between the Luhya and Nandi peoples during the migration and settlement. The first one is that due to the migrations and prolonged contacts with these peoples, there emerged new societies which, though of Nandi origins, were Bantu-speakers. In

other words, many Nandi immigrants abandoned their native culture and language and adopted those of their Bantu neighbours. Were (1972) further states that the transformation was so complete that today their descendants can be identified with their original Nandi forebears. One of the best representatives of this group are the Abatachoni of Ndivisi and Kabras who were originally related to the Bongomek. Others are the Abanashieni, Abatobe, and Abamulembwa of Wanga, and the Abashieni of Marama.

Nandi impact has been felt in many areas among the communities with whom they interacted. One such important area in which the Nandi impact has been felt is circumcision. In many parts of the western Kenya where the custom of circumcision is practised, its origins are connected with the Nandi. Were reiterates that a good example is among the people of Tiriki (not to confused with the Nandi Terik or Nyang'ori) the social organization, which is based on age-grades and groups, was influenced by the Nandi (Were 1972)

Ndeda (2019) also discusses the cordial interactions between the communities around the western and Rift Valley areas. According to her, despite their exchanges, these peoples east of Lake Victoria, have made an attempt to preserve their ethnic characteristics. Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo (1989) reflect the enduring relevance of their identities in the Luo adage "*Kalang'o ok kunie kuon*" ("One cannot be coy or picky when a Nandi exhibits good will or gesture" such as offering you food), which indicates a degree of contact. They emphasize the importance of a positive response to such an act.

It is plausible that during early migrations, the Nandi or another indigenous community might have accommodated outsiders in shared spaces, similar to practices observed

among western Kenya communities. If, for instance, the Luo declined such an offer, as suggested in the earlier Luo adage, the Kalenjin might have relocated them to their detriment. Eventually, the acceptance of cohabiting environments likely led to the recognition of newcomers as brethren (Cohen & Atieno Odhiambo, 1987). This acceptance by the community possibly led to the dissolution of boundaries to integrate individuals or groups until they were fully embraced as members. By accepting the Luo's offer, the Omolo group among the Luo, initially identified as Nandi, eventually assimilated into the DhoLuo-speaking community. Essentially, the manner in which strangers engaged with newly formed groups influenced the breakdown or establishment of borders during population migrations that contributed to the formation of communities east of Lake Victoria in Kenya.

Lonsdale (1977) rules against the possibility that precolonial cultural identities were malleable. The survival strategies of small colonizing groups in the face of uncertain climatic and epizootic environments, as well as the tactics of trade across ecological boundaries, necessitated an easy acceptance of clientele and adoption, sometimes along the lines suggested by a previous cross-cultural marriage. "Communities far smaller than these cultural confederations," ensured the basic necessities of existence.

Carrier and Kochore (2013) on this point report that the Borana and Gabra coexisted peacefully and harmoniously in precolonial times, and were even partners in battles. For instance, they united under the Worr Liban alliance and expelled the Laikipia Maasai by means of military collaboration. This military alliance allowed them to eventually seize the land that would become the Marsabit District (Schlee, 1985). A colonial official concluded that a new nationality had been established due to the frequency of inter-nationality marriages between the two groups (KNA/PC/NFD/1/2/1925), and the two also maintained reciprocal ceremonial links throughout this time period. During the

pre-colonial era, conflicts were triggered not by ethnic identification but by the demand for grazing and agricultural land

2.2.10 Economic activities

The Nandi are primarily a cattle people, and in the past one of their principal occupations and delights was to raid other peoples in order to take their live-stock. Hutingford (2012) reiterates that Nandi life is centred around their cattle, and however much they may have taken to agriculture during the last thirty years, they are a pastoral people who live for their cattle and are absorbed in them.

Nandi culture was, therefore, traditionally marked by values associated with their cattle complex whereby wealth was synonymous with the ownership of cattle. A man who owned many cattle was regarded highly socially while the reverse applied to those who owned no cattle. Obler (1965) validates this value as being the the reason why cattle raiding was an important part of Nandi culture. According to Kemboi *et al* (2018:5),

The Nandi way of life revolved around the prosperity and expansion of family herds, known as 'tuka.' Cattle, goats, and sheep were not only abundant among the Nandi but also central to their existence. Cattle husbandry constituted the primary occupation of men, and the possession of cattle was imperative for full engagement in the tribe's social and political affairs. Indeed, an individual without cattle would hesitate to voice opinions at the Kokwet Council, as their input would likely be disregarded. Furthermore, lacking cattle would diminish one's chances of assuming significant roles in public offices or ceremonies. Consequently, the foremost aspiration of a Nandi boy was to accumulate cattle.'

Ehret (1984) also believes that as early as 1000 AD, both cultivation and pastoralism were important economic activities of the Nandi. Ehret further stipulates that the Nandi probably began practicing cultivation mainly as a result of counter-exchanges from their neighbours as can be seen from similarities in the names of such crops. Crops like sweetpotatoes *rabuonik*, from Luo (*rabuon*) and Luhya (*mapuoni*); while maize, *bandek* (Nandi) was derived from (*bando*) (Luo for maize). The word borrowing

underscores the mutual relationships existing between the Nandi and their neighbours in the pre-colonial period.

2.2.10.1 Land

Majority of Nandi economic and social activities were based on and revolved on land. Land therefore represented not only a source of livelihood, but one that epitomed the communities sense of identity as well as belonging. Traditional ownership of land was communal since the land was utilised not for individual, but communal benefit. Kuba and Lentz (2005) opine that among the Nandi, rights over land were vested and pertained to different economic, social and ritual activities such as hunting, gathering, burial, and circumcision among others. Just like in many other African communities, land rights were tied to communal membership such as the clan family or ethnic group. The control of land was therefore used as a way of defining belonging since land only belonged to the members of that community.

2.2.10.2 Changes in Economic Activities

Alienation of land along the railway line adversely affected the economic lifestyles of communities like Nandi, Kipsigis, and the Akamba of Machakos who ended up losing their lush grazing fields. The colonial regime then encouraged communities like the Nandi to cultivate food and cash crops instead and even distributed maize and bean seeds (Ndege, 1982).

Similar to their Gusii neighbours, who were mostly pastoralists, the Nandi were compelled to undertake new economic pursuits in order to survive. Ndeda (2019) states that the Gusii were primarily pastoralists, but that the novel habitat altered their attitude toward farming, so making agriculture the Gusii's primary economic activity. The chilly, damp highlands were unsuitable for rearing huge cow herds (Ochieng' 1974b, 1974a). Thus, the area in which the Gusii and Nandi resided caused them to

progressively abandon pastoralism in favour of an agricultural lifestyle. These developments eventually led to increased emphasis and reliance on crop cultivation at the expense of pastoralism and animal husbandry (Ndege, 1992).

2.3 Chapter Summary

After some period of migration in the 19th century, the Nandi began coalescing and eventually settled in and around the Rift Valley. During the precolonial period, they developed unique socio-economic and political systems with high similarities between the Nandi communities. They had also proven themselves among their neighbors to be fierce warriors, having conquered most of them including the mighty Maasai and by the fact that they raided these neighbors at will. Hence they were respected and feared with the same measure

The onset of colonialism pitted the Nandi against the Europeans as they clashed in the fight to protect their independence and land. After a protracted war, the Nandi were defeated. These colonial encounters served to unite them further. After independence, the Nandi name adopted a political tone as they were brought together by the elite in order to get a share of the political say during and after the struggle for independence. During the colonial period, massive land alienation coupled with colonial profiling of some communities, set the stage for ethnic differences and grievances which exacerbated differences between the communities in the Rift Valley.

This chapter posits that the Nandi characteristics, traditional set up, customs, and practices which developed in the pre-colonial era have been weaponized and hence used by political elite in the independence and post-independence period, leading to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu as these people try to recover their lost land and defend their hold to political power. The same is seen to have transpired with

some of the Kikuyu community whose leaders are seen to have adopted a blind sense of entitlement in order to monopolize economic resources especially land and government positions by claiming that these are the fruits of the independence for which the Kikuyu shed blood. Hence the relevance of the three theories, namely, the primordial, instrumentalist and relative deprivation theories to the chapter. This leads to an examination of ethnic relations and political violence during the colonial period in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

SALIENT FEATURES OF ETHNIC RELATIONS AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD, 1895- 1963

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the genesis of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu with specific focus on the migration and settlement of the Nandi community, their socio-political and economic organization. It is based on the primordial theory as it explains the common aspects that identify and bring the Nandi together as an ethnic community as well as the bonds they share as a community.

This chapter sought to establish the role played by colonization in increasing ethnic awareness; how its application of divide and rule bred ethnic tensions, the colonizers' belief in the application of violence to enforce and coerce Africans to acquiesce to colonial wishes and demands and how colonial oppression and exploitation of Africans led the development of ethnic nationalism with attendant ethnic competitions, and animosities. It also discussed how ethnic differences were ingrained and exacerbated after the colonial master exited the scene in 1963. The chapter also endeavored to trace the development of weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu by discussing the development of these incidences and their political connotations during the colonial period basing on the instrumentalist theory to establish whether, the ethnicised political violence resulting from manipulations and incitements by political elite are rooted in the colonial regime. The theory, in this way, attempted to show how the genesis of these shared social, cultural, economic and political aspects had been manipulated and politicized by the colonial regime, and later by the bourgeois political elite to gain certain advantages. The relative deprivation theory is employed to establish whether ethnicity had been weaponised for political violence due to

underlying feelings of socio-economic or political exploitation during the colonial period which had bred feelings of deprivation. The theory is used in this sense to show how the traditional feelings of loss of Kalenjin land and other economic resources, as well as the fear of loss of political power, have all been used to mobilize the Kalenjin, Kikuyu and other communities in Uasin Gishu by the political elite against each other. The relative deprivation theory further explains the response of the Kikuyu and Nandi communities to the social, political and economic developments in Uasin Gishu during the colonial period by describing how certain sociopolitical and economic events have been manipulated resulting in weaponization of ethnicity.

The chapter thus examined the effects of colonialism on the ownership of land and movement of other ethnic communities into Uasin Gishu. It also discussed the political associations formed before independence and how these contributed towards the weaponization of ethnic differences in Uasin Gishu and the country at large. The chapter in this endeavor, thus sought to establish the role played by colonization, and how it bred ethnic tensions, and how these ethnic differences were ingrained. Oucho (2010) identifies four parts of the colonial heritage that are essential to this investigation into the core causes of ethnic violence in Kenya. These are; the country's coterminous ethnic-administrative boundaries; the unsolved "land question"; the conflict-prone migrant labour system that produced agricultural laborers and squatters; and an imperial constitution.

3.1 Establishment of colonial administration in Uasin Gishu

The dawn of the 20th century marked the beginning of colonization in Kenya. After colonization of the territory, and construction of the railway, Morgan (1963) avers that the colonial office received several reports about the suitability of the vast lands for European settlement. One such report was from Sir Harry Johnston who was able to

report of a territory (after the construction of the Uganda Railway) that was admirably suitable for a white man's country. Morgan (1963) notes that according to Johnston, the territory was uninhabited for miles while in other areas the inhabitants were wandering hunters who had no settled homes. He was also of the opinion that those Africans in the area who seemed to have permanent residence, were to be found in the lands outside the healthy area suitable for European settlement.

Njenga (2015) highlights that European immigration commenced in the early 1900s, driven by the British government's agenda to establish not only a conventional colonial export economy but also a settler culture characterized by vast estates reliant on forced local labor. This endeavor was facilitated by favorable climatic and geographical conditions: fertile, well-watered uplands, known as the "White Highlands," surrounded by a much larger African area, the majority of which consisted of lower-lying, arid regions, some suitable for grazing and others not, with significant portions infested by tsetse flies, alongside tropical coastal areas. Douglas (1965) echoes similar sentiments regarding this phenomenon.

As a result of these reports on the suitability of climate and the general aptness of these lands for agriculture and European settlement, by 1903, settlers who knew about the agricultural potential of this area like Van Breda, started seeking for leases from the government to enable them settle and begin practicing agriculture. The initial European individual to seek land in the Uasin Gishu plateau was W.F. Van Breda, hailing from South Africa. In 1903, he applied for land on behalf of himself and his two brothers. (1909-1933) Some of the first Europeans to arrive in Uasin Gishu, were the Boers from south Africa led by Van Reinsburg who had previously inspected the plateau. In 1906, he organised the Reinsburg trek which led to the arrival of several Boers into Uasin Gishu. (KNA, DC/UG/2/1- Uasin Gishu District Political Record File, 1909-1933).

Youe (1988) also reiterates that Boers were the first to settle in the Uasin Gishu. For more effective access into the interior, the British then embarked on the improvement of infrastructure, beginning with the construction of the Kenya –Uganda railway.

The British who colonized both Uganda and Kenya needed the Kenya–Ugandan railway for various reasons. Ogonda (1992) gives details as to some of the reasons being: to gain control over the River Nile and increase contact between Africans in the hinterlands. It would also help to end the practice of slave trade, to provide easy transportation for the natives, settlers, traders and missionaries, to carry goods to the markets from the rural areas and the outside world, to give access to the protectorate to the sea, to ensure that the cash crops produced reached the world markets and to strengthen colonial rule over colonies. The colonial administration also realised that the railway was a good way of earning revenue from which colonies could be run and, on this Morgan, (1963) explains that the absence of traffic made it impossible for the railroad to make a profit. As the railway traversed heights deemed appropriate for European occupancy, settlement was encouraged to generate money for the railway and taxes to fund administration.

Munene,(1992) alludes to the fact that the arrival of the British and the construction of the railway through Nandi land led to a protracted war between them and the Nandi led by their Orkoiyot Koitalel Arap Samoei. The challenges posed by Nandi are described in part by Hutingford (2012) who describes the beginning of British administration of Nandi in 1896 as stormy and difficult for the first ten years. The recalcitrant nature of the Nandi , led by their Orkoiyot, forced the British to send several military expeditions against them. After the last expedition sent at the end of 1905, which saw the assassination of Koitalel Arap Samoei, the Nandi submitted to the new conditions, and their land became a Reserve.

The eventual defeat of the Nandi unfortunately led to massive alienation of their land and displacement. Consequently, their protracted resistance cost lives, livestock, and land. They lost ancestral land that was located in the southern Uasin Gishu Plateau. This region was made available for European colonization. Additionally, the land alienation of 1906 robbed the southern Nandi of grazing lands and salt licks for their cattle. Their protracted resistance cost them lives, livestock, and land.

Delivering a discourse on the arrival of the British in Nandi land from 1895, Gold (1978) narrates that this arrival came to be viewed as a serious threat to Nandi position. At the same time this invasion of their territory provided an incentive for greater political unity. With time, as the British came to appreciate the military capabilities of the Nandi, they started developing myths surrounding them. The Nandi were labelled as warlike, truculent and thievish to denigrate them and hence justify the destruction of Nandi economy and political structure.

Some of these colonial labels have lingered on to date and apart from being used by other communities to refer to the Nandi, they also seem to have been adopted by the Nandi as a whole thus reinforcing their culture. The final defeat of the Nandi is mired in British treachery which ended in the death of their prophet and the eventual capitulation of the Nandi warriors.

After the construction of the Kenya –Uganda railway, the colonial administration realized that it would not be profitable or pay for itself unless there were users. This created a need for economic development to pay for the railway and make the venture much more profitable (Veit, 1994). This led to the need for more European settlers who had to be convinced to immigrate to the new protectorate for several reasons one of the major ones being to establish farms due to the vast agricultural land that was available.

Morgan (1963) proposes that land alienation did not occur until after the completion of the Uganda Railway, which reached Nairobi in 1899 and Lake Victoria in 1901 and considerably stimulated settlement, as an explanation for the delay in land alienation. The surrender of the Nandi paved way for the wholesome occupation of their fertile lands, followed by the establishment of reserves into which they were pushed. Hutingford (2012) reports that European settlement, which had begun on a small scale on the Uasin Gishu plateau before 1905, began to increase.

After massive alienation of African land for European settler farming, the colonial regime and settlers realised that they needed labour which they could only get from Africans. Unfortunately for them, most Africans were reluctant to offer their labour on settler farms or to the colonial regime. The colonial regime was, therefore, forced to institute strategies and policies that would ensure the settlers got labour from Africans. The government embarked on approaches of oppressing and exploiting the Africans to ensure they were impoverished to a level that they would seek and even compete for wage labour from settler farms. The strategies included, but were not limited to: creation of reserves, taxation, squatter system, *kipande* system, among others. These colonial strategies led to competition for scarce resources among Africans and in some instances encouraged the development of ethnic animosities and stereotypes which have lingered to date and are also unfortunately used by the political elite to brew intercommunity hatred and political violence.

3.1.1 Land alienation and creation of reserves

Native reserves were introduced by the colonial regime in the year 1902 (Karari, 2018). According to Matson (1972), the Nandi were moved from Uasin Gishu plateau to Nandi reserve as vast areas of their land was alienated for settler occupation. These reserves were ethnically defined as administrative units within which Africans were expected to

stay. Some of the reserves are present day districts and locations. In the view of Lynch (2011:17), These ethnic reserves played the role of exacerbating ethnic cleavages and identities, which only increased ethnic feelings and tendencies after independence. The Reserves were under the administration of the colonial regime. Interestingly, Njenga (2015) observes that the majority of Africans were forced to reside in "reserves" outside the Highland region, which were being steadily destroyed as the population and cattle grew. In addition to serving as zones of distinct existence, the reserves served as labor reservoirs on European property. It should be noted that for Africans, it was the insufficiency of savings coupled with the requirement to work for a living, which forced them to continue providing labor to the Europeans.

After the first world war, there was increased pressure on the regime from both settlers and Africans particularly the Nandi due to the economic depression and land scarcity. Consequently, the colonial regime introduced the Soldier Settlement Scheme (Kipchirchir *et al* 2022). According to oral evidence,

About three wazungus stayed in the big house in Chepsaita but the house belonged to Major Scott. Major Scot was given the land in Chepsaita scheme as a gift by the British government for his work in the British army. They also built the house for him. He was also given more than 500 Boran cattle. These cattle had been confiscated from the people who were resisting British rule as a punishment. Other European settlers were Maxton Milla who was at Chepkemel, J.K Russ at Magut. Major Scott died after an accident at the railway but the wife had left earlier. (Paul Chuma, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21). (Refer to plate 2, in the next page)



Plate 2: Major Scott's House at Chepsaita Scheme.

Source: Field Research (2022).

This plan to settle British ex-soldiers like Major Scott, led to additional land alienation from Africans and the resultant influx of more settlers. Indeed, the colonial regime went ahead and introduced new legislation which, among other things; restricted the mobility of Africans, and reduced their wages, while increasing taxation. The new legislation also empowered the local administrators like chiefs to actively enforce labor laws and consequently, more Africans found themselves seeking for wage labor from the settlers. The house built for major Scott still stands in Chepsaita and is currently a multipurpose building that is sometimes used by the chief for meetings (Refer to plate 2).

According to Veit (1919), the majority of the political unrest in Kenya is the result of protracted land conflicts. Since the beginning of colonization, when the Germans and subsequently the British imposed laws and practices that drove people off their ancestral lands and set one ethnic group against another, Kenya has seen a long history of land disputes. After independence, these practices were simply strengthened and institutionalized. Unfortunately, ethnic leaders used the resulting ethnic differences,

particularly those over customary land, to stir their people for immediate political goals. Land is a common topic since it has historically been the source of Kenya's riches, politics, and exploitation and has long-standing as well as recent political foundations (Oucho, 2010).

According to Kanogo and Ogendo, Land in Kenya perceived as unoccupied by British settlers was designated as Crown land, indicating territory where the Commissioner acted on behalf of the Queen of England, as stipulated by the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902. Additionally, such land was categorized as Trust Land, as noted by Kanogo (1987) and Okoth Ogendo (1989). The most fertile and climatically favorable portions of these lands were designated as the White Highlands, reserved specifically for European settlement and agricultural activities. Africans were confined to reserves, while the Indians were restricted to the urban centers.

In the 1920s, both the settlers, Indians, and Africans raised several social, economic and political complaints and grievances to the colonial regime leading to a meeting in London which culminated in the Devonshire White paper. Hughe (2006) contends that the British government's disparate treatment of European and Indian settlers in Kenya served as a catalyst for the gathering. The already considerable benefits enjoyed by white settlers were further emphasized, while Indian rights were curtailed, segregation was implemented, and Indian immigration was reduced.

It is on the same note that Munene (1992), explains how England found a clever way out of its mess by issuing the Devonshire White Paper. The Paper proclaimed the theoretical supremacy of African interests in cases where, those interests conflicted with those of the immigrant communities. After the Devonshire declaration of 1923, Indians concentrated on commerce and from then on would remain an

economically visible middle lot whose paramount interests appeared to be making money. To the African, the Indian appeared like a short sighted opportunist willing to exploit the African whether in the colonial or the post-colonial period. The antipathy toward Indians, however, was not deep and was confined to urban areas.

3.1.2 Squater System

Many of the settlers who were predominantly from Britain and South Africa practiced large scale farming and fully depended on the Kikuyu, Luo, Nandi, Luhya and Maasai to provide them with the much-needed labor (Karari, 2018). This was also contained in the District commissioners report (1911-1916) who indicated that the main supply of casual labour on the farms came from the North Kavirondo District while Nandi supplied most of the squatters.

Accordingly, one respondent narrated that;

European Settlers from South Africa were found at Mois bridge where there was a settler called *bwana* Hoy, who took many Nandi to help him kill lions which kept on attacking his farm. They were many settlers from South Africa at Ziwa and they really mistreated and beat up the Africans who were working for them (Paul Chuma, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

The white farmers in Kenya recruited inexpensive migrant labor primarily from the Nyanza and Western provinces, along with some individuals from Central Kenya who harbored the dual aspiration of employment and land acquisition. This recruitment practice was particularly prevalent as white farmers initiated commercial farming endeavors across different regions of the country, establishing significant presence in the Rift and Associated Highlands (Ominde, 1968).

As a result of massive land alienation and the pathetic conditions in the native reserves, many Africans sought refuge on settler farms where they were allowed to build small

huts, keep limited cattle, and engage in small subsistence farming. The major condition was that they work on the settler farm for a stipulated number of days.

Veit (1994) gives details that in the squatter system, an individual would live together with his family in a white settlement scheme and offer his labor in return for the land. Following the passage of the 1918 Resident Native Labour Ordinance, resident laborers were required to work for their white employers for 180 days (Kenya Land Commission: Original Evidence: vol. I, Colonial No. 91 (1934), p. 61; Uasin Gishu Annual Report 1933, p. 14, PC/RVP 2/8/7). The squatter were only permitted to reside on the settler's land while they were providing labour for the settler (Veit, 1994). To get land where they could graze and care for their animals, some Nandi, chose to live as squatters rather than on reserves. Since these squatters were grazing at least 150,000 head of cattle by 1947, which would account for 40% of all livestock in the Uasin Gishu region, the Nandi pasture for their animals became one of the key factors promoting squatting (KNA, Nandi Annual Report, 1947, PC/RVP 2/3/3, p. 14). This was based on an estimate provided by R. E. Wainwright, Provincial Commissioner for the Rift Valley Province, in a covert letter dated July 12, 1954, (LAB 9/325), to the Minister of African Affairs. Others opted to live within their reserves because they saw wages were not enough in comparison to the labor they were expected to offer (Lagat,1995). In addition, they hoarded resentment since the land which they were to work on was their ancestral land and it was the most disgraceful thing having to work on it as a slave. This was in tandem with the relative deprivation theory.

The Nandi and Tugen were resident laborers in the Uasin Gishu area who were given access to parcels of land that had been alienated in exchange for a certain number of days of work for their employer in exchange for a meagre cash compensation. Youe (1988) goes on to say that although the white employers occasionally gave their squatter

families meals, the squatters mostly supported themselves. Unfortunately, (Ngeny, 1970) laments that since the labour contract meant continuing access to the means of production, these people, who saw the land as their customary grazing grounds, bore the labour contract with trepidation. According to an oral source,

The Europeans were in charge of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. When they came to Kenya, the Kalenjin refused to provide labor in farms because they were not happy with the Europeans who had taken their land away but still expected them to provide labor (Henry Morei, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21).

Continued pasturage on settler farms was made possible by the availability of land for extra stock in the case of the Nandi and other communities, who provided much of the labour on the Uasin Gishu plateau. Just prior to World War I, an increasing number of the traditionally pastoral Nandi were compelled to sign squatter contracts (*kuweka blue*). According to an oral source,

The Nandi were at Nandi then they came looking for jobs in Uasin Gishu due to loss of land and poverty. They were forced to work for the settlers on contract where they signed an agreement which they called *Kufinya blue* (They were signing for the contract using finger prints because they were illiterate). They agreed to live on the farm of the settlers as squatters and were restricted to five cows only (OI, Henry Morei, 05/05/21, Besiabor).

Thus when Ellis (1976) asserts that this was the only means to enter the vast estates of the western highlands to graze their native zebu cattle, he is in agreement with Ngeny (1970). The 1906 pacification campaign's expropriation of Nandi land and livestock had a role in this, but the main driving force was a desire to evade colonial regulations over cattle raiding (and collective punishment for stock theft) and taxation.

According to Karari (2018), the onset of colonialism affected the socio-economic and political structure of the Nandi and greatly affected how they interacted with their neighbours. The Kikuyu people suffered from land alienation and as a result, many of them found themselves in the Rift Valley as squatters or labourers and made up a large

population of outsiders in this area during the colonial period. Other communities including Luo, Kisii, Luhya, Iteso among others, also arrived in the area at around the same time. By emphasizing that different frontier land-holding units (*mbari*) in Southern Kikuyu land lost 30 to 70 percent of their land to British settlers between 1902 and 1903, Atieno-Odhiambo (2002) elaborates on the plight of the Kikuyu. This led to direct conflict with the alliance of the European settler and the colonial state. Due to this, Kikuyu land hunger was established. It compelled those who had lost their land to relocate to the Rift Valley, where they settled as squatters.

As was already noted, the colonial authority did not only take away the lands of the Nandi nationality. In Kenya, 75% of the entire arable land was under colonial authority by 1934. According to the Minority at Danger Project (2022), the "White Highlands" were created at the expense of thousands of African nomadic communities, including the Nandi, Maasai, Samburu, and Turkana. While the colonial settlers drove out these pastoralists who were unqualified to work in agriculture, they hired inexpensive labour from the surrounding regions (now Central, Nyanza and Western Provinces) KNA DC/UG/1/1/1 Uasin Gishu District Annual Report 1911- 1916. According to oral evidence,

The Nandi men refused to work for them. So then the Europeans brought Kikuyu Luo, Luhya even from Uganda to work for them even kitchen works since Kalenjin men can't because it is against our culture. That is how these other communities started living in Uasin Gishu. The Kikuyu were brought to do farm work and in the kitchen also. (Matthew Mos, OI, Besiabor, 20/07/21)

As a result, in the early 1900s, tens of thousands of Kikuyu, Kisii, Luhya, and Luo squatters were relocated to the Rift Valley region. Veit (1994) concurs, stating that, Kikuyu originally lived in the Central highlands but since these highlands were the first place the Settlers landed in, more than a million Kikuyu living there were displaced

forcing them to move into the Rift Valley region. Therefore, more Kikuyu were settled in the Rift Valley in 1939 according to the Minority at Risk Project (2022), Lagat (1965). The Africa Watch reiterates the fact that in 1939, the colonial regime decided to settle a total number of about 4000 Kikuyu in Olenguruone, land that originally belonged to the Maasai people, but had been under the occupation of the Nandi. This sparked a lot of anger among the Nandi (Africa Watch, 1993).

Eventually, as more European settlers flowed in, they continually displaced the Kikuyu forcing some of them to move to Uasin Gishu in search of places for settlement (Gisemba, 2008). The migration process that led to Kikuyu and Nandi immigration was a forceful ordeal. A lot of ancestral land was lost during these settlements. After independence the land was not returned to the original owners i.e., the Nandi and the Maasai leading to a lot of tension as other ethnic communities were settled on this land, majority of them being the Kikuyu (Mwiandi, 2014)

Thus, the bulk of African immigrants in Uasin Gishu at the end of active European settlement were Kikuyu. According to Leys (1975), the bulk of the resident laborers on settler farms and estates in the white highlands were also Kikuyu squatters. Veit (1994) further notes that, there were three primary reasons why Kikuyu moved to Uasin Gishu: landlessness, avoiding military duty, and escaping the control of chiefs who were nominated by the colonial regime (Veit, 1994). The Kikuyu fled from landlessness, autocratic leaders and their agents, and military service conscription, as stated in Kanogo (1987).

Although the bulk of the squatter laborers on settler estates and plantations in the Rift Valley province of the white highlands were members of the Kikuyu squatter group, there were also Akamba, Marakwet, Keiyo, Luhya, Tugen, Gusii, and Luo squatters

(Leys, 1975). The reason why the bulk of immigrant groups in the Rift Valley were Kikuyu as well as the growing settlement of other communities was due to the squatter system, which was caused by the loss of Kikuyu land. Gisemba underscores the fact that as the colonialist flowed in, they continually displaced the Kikuyu from their homes in the central part of Kenya, forcing some of them to flee to Uasin Gishu in search of places for settlement (Gisemba, 2008). Such situations eventually acted as the breeding grounds for animosity among the Nandi towards other communities seen as being in same league as the European settlers more so when they were perceived to have settled on former Nandi land. The arrival and settlement of other communities as squatters in Nandi land later became a potentially explosive affair and has contributed to ethnic animosities and feelings of deprivation among the Nandi communities in Uasin Gishu hence the relevance of the relative deprivation theory. The advent of Mau Mau movement also had an impact on the relationship between them and the Nandi in Uasin Gishu at that time.

When the Mau Mau uprising started, the colonial authorities launched a brutal assault against the Kikuyu, whom they thought to be the leaders of the Mau Mau. This assault on the Kikuyu increased after the state of emergency was proclaimed in 1952. The colonial authorities perceived Mau Mau as both a civil war among the Kikuyu and a challenge to colonial power, according to the Minority at Risk project (2022). About 13,000 Africans were killed during the ruthless British suppression of the Mau Mau, and more than 100,000 Kikuyu were forced to relocate under terrible conditions to central Kenya.

Many Kikuyu were returned from the snowy highlands to congested emergency communities in the Central Province. The screening of all the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru expedited the process by which terrified European farmers in the White Highlands

started to kick out their Kikuyu squatter laborers. Farmers in Uasin Gishu strongly urged the authorities to expel all Kikuyu from the District linked to Mau Mau. Kikuyu laborers left the District in great numbers as a result (KNA DC/UG/1/2 Uasin Gishu District Annual Report 1953). The request by farmers in Uasin Gishu for the removal of the Kikuyu led to their replacement by many Nandi who moved in to become squatters together with their cattle. The Nandi, even though reluctant to provide labour on settler farms initially, were forced to do so due to the prevailing harsh economic and environmental conditions which had resulted in the depletion of their cattle and poverty.

However, the Mau Mau movement did not receive much support from other Kenyan communities. This was due to the movement being falsely accused as being a Kikuyu matter through aggressive colonial propaganda. The regime allegedly set up a unique information centre in Nakuru for the whole Rift Valley Province, according to Kanogo (1987). For the Nandi people, this department produced news and commentary for transmission. These broadcasts had a vehemently anti-Kikuyu tone and were designed to deter people from associating with the Kikuyu people.

The relations between the two communities worsened at the time because the Nandi were allegedly appalled by the Kikuyu squatters' outrages against cattle in the settled regions, they turned against Mau Mau. Therefore, they made advantage of that as justification to intimidate and steal from Kikuyu squatters who were living in the fields. Due to these animosities, Kikuyu squatters in the Rift Valley were scattered, and some squatters from Western Kenya took up their labour (Ajulu,2002).

In turn, the entry and settlement of individuals from the western part of the nation who took up work as laborers on settler farms were made possible by the forceful eviction of the Kikuyu from the Rift Valley as a result of Mau Mau. The Mau Mau movement and

the negativity implanted in the Nandi by the colonial regime, planted seeds of suspicion against the Kikuyu among the Nandi people.

Oboler (1985) presents an overview of the situation throughout the 1930s and early 1940s by stating that the squatter population in the Uasin Gishu grew faster than the Nandi reserve population, while the reserve devoted more area to maize production. The rivalry for land space in the reserve, for both grazing and soil-degrading corn, increased the reliance on squatter livestock holdings.

In 1957, overpopulation in the reserves and overpopulation among the squatters in Uasin Gishu were so severe that some Nandi opted to immigrate since they were unable to obtain land to dwell. The majority of the squatter families, who had lived on the Uasin Gishu plateau since 1910 and had attempted to get a plot in the Nandi reserve, left the plateau in 1944 and moved to the locations where their ancestors had settled (Lagat 1965). According to a respondent during this period;

The African squatters were allowed to plant small farms but only to plant yellow maize to prevent them from stealing the white maize of the settlers. When Africans were given conditions of (kuweka blue) signing labour contract and keeping five cows only, they refused because to keep five cows only was poverty for them. They started migrating to Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan (Felix Kiptanui, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/2021).

It was during this same time that the District Council officials, after several meetings, also decided on drastic measures to reduce Nandi cattle kept by the squatters to a bare minimum (KNA DC/UG/1/2 - Uasin Gishu District Annual Report 1957).

As reported by Yuoe (1988) Midway through the 1950s, however, settlers and the colonial state began to consider squatting as an impediment to progressive farming. Labour tenancy was tying up the land, prolonging lengthy and inefficient farming, causing harm to the soil, and discouraging Africans from working for their white

employer. The goal was to eradicate squatter livestock, deprive cattle-herders of their land, and compel them to labour for a pay.

During this challenging period for the Nandi, there was a notable resurgence of Kikuyu squatter families returning to the region. These individuals had been displaced from the Uasin Gishu district in 1953 during the State of Emergency due to suspicions of their involvement in Mau Mau activities. Upon their return to the settler farms, the presence of these Kikuyu squatters stirred unrest among the Nandi squatters. Following the formal conclusion of the Emergency in 1960, Kikuyu squatters fiercely reclaimed what they perceived as their rightful home in the Rift Valley (Ajulu, 2002; Lonsdale, 1992).

Unfortunately, the Nandi associated the reappearance of the Kikuyu to the Uasin Gishu District Council's destocking of their livestock. This was because the Nandi believed that the councils' harassment of their livestock was a means of removing them so that they might be replaced with Kikuyu laborers who had no livestock. This and the negativity spread by the colonial regime about the Kikuyu, set the stage for ill feelings, suspicions a burgeoning of ethnic hostilities between these two communities. Later migrations of other communities into Nandi were not welcomed since they were perceived as intruders. These squatters included the Akamba, Marakwet, Keiyo, Luhya, Tugen, Gusii, and Luo (Leys, 1975).

Furthermore, the origins of ethnic consciousness as observed in Kenya's political dynamics can also be attributed, in part, to the arbitrary manner in which British colonialists established administrative boundaries and local governance along cultural and linguistic lines. This decision was rooted in the assumption that Africans were organized into distinct "tribes," leading to the belief that these "tribes" should serve as the foundation for colonial administration (Sandbrook, 1985).

Crown Property policy, which was frequently altered to accommodate new settlers, was founded on the statement that all land belonged to the colonial state, undermining customary land rights and establishing individual freehold title as a legal way of land ownership (Berman, 1990; Okoth-Ogendo, 1989). According to Klopp, “the establishment of individual titles resulted in the remuneration of individuals who were loyal to the colonial regime, while those suspected of connection with Mau Mau were deprived of their land,” (Klopp 2000: 16).

The aim of Kenya's late colonial land reform was to pave the way for an agrarian revolution modeled after pre-industrial European practices. This initiative commenced in central Kenya during the 1950s with the implementation of the Swynnerton Plan (Haugerud, 1989:3). Notably, this plan entailed confining a significant portion of the African population in fortified emergency communities constructed to suppress the Mau Mau insurrection. While these land registration processes enhanced tenure security for many landowners, they also gave rise to new challenges, including disputes over registered land and disagreements concerning land transactions.

Apart from altering land tenure systems, the colonists' inclination towards favoring specific African ethnic groups and endowing them with additional privileges, including land rights, established the groundwork for land-related tensions in regions such as Rift Valley and Central Kenya (Boone, 2011; Mbah, 2016). Oucho (2010) provides an overview of this phenomenon, highlighting that Kenya's colonial history fostered a conflict-prone internal migration system, leading to occasional conflicts between migrant laborers (and squatters) and migrant settlers against "host communities.

To sum up, while a considerable portion of the land-related violence in Kenya may be attributed to cyclical occurrences like elections and the politicization of ethnic

identities. Apart from the squatter system, taxation was another technique implemented to compel Africans to give labour for the Europeans

3.1.3 Taxation

In 1901, the colonial state first instituted taxation. In accordance with a directive issued in 1900, taxes had to be paid in cash. Except for Maasai country, where Tignor explains that the Maasai first paid their portion, collection was delayed everywhere else (Tignor, 1972). Eventually, they found it difficult to pay the tax. Throughout the Great Depression, they were continuously unable to pay their taxes. The financial obligations imposed upon them by the colonial authority, particularly taxes, placed them under the same economic hardship as their neighbours (Tignor, 1972).

In Kenya, the colonial state went even farther and mandated employment with private companies. Elkan, (1961) notes that African males were required to pay a hut tax in cash to the colonial authorities. But since Africans lacked cash, their two options were to cultivate cash crops or to labour for the white man. The prohibitions enforced by the colonial state prevented Africans from cultivating cash crops. The Result was the establishment of a migratory labour force which consisted primarily of men. In order to encourage Africans to provide labour in far off farms, payment in these farms was usually up to three times higher than the farms closer home. This was because Africans were often unwilling to work far from their homes (Elkan, 1961).

Land alienation in both Rift Valley and central Kenya meant that the “natives” lost their cultivating and native land to the colonial state. Later, other communities started flocking into this area especially during the colonial period as a result of colonial suppression and exploitation of Africans through taxation, forced labor, land alienation,

and the creation of reserves, among other reasons. They moved into Rift Valley and Uasin Gishu in the search for jobs and a place to settle.

Thus, the deprivation of the Nandi original land espouses the application of relative deprivation theory since most of the later ethnic conflicts are driven by and resultant of historical injustices originating from the alienation and subsequent loss of communally owned land in Uasin Gishu. The dawn of colonialism brought about a shift in land ownership and inter-ethnic relations among Kenyan communities. The Nandi lost land to the Settlers. A large portion of those lands were given to other communities in the period leading to and after independence. A related historical event that has widely suffered as a scapegoat and hence been weaponized by some communities in Kenya as well, is the Mau Mau insurgency which took place within and around central Kenya as it also led to tensions and conflicts.

3.1.4 Mau Mau Uprising, a sense of entitlement, and ethnic animosities

The Mau Mau uprising against the colonial regime in central Kenya has been interpreted in myriad ways. This study views it and its aftermath as impacting on a sense of entitlement on the AKikuyu communities due to the major role they played in the uprising, as well as the anguish they endured in the hands of the colonial state. The two factors tend to inculcate in them the need to control government as well as the fruits of independence for which they struggled. The Mau Mau experience is also later exhibited in the violent activities of the Mungiki and other Kikuyu members in the defense of their community during various incidences of political violence. On the other hand, the Mau Mau contributed to perceived ethnic animosity between the AKikuyu and Nandi due to the struggle for limited land in Uasin Gishu exacerbated by incitements from the colonial regime.

The Mau Mau was a group formed by ex-world war soldiers together with some nationalists in order to fight against colonial oppression among the AKikuyu. This was due to the fact that the other avenues and or application of diplomacy through political parties, memorandum, and commissions which they had applied in a bid to have the colonial regime to address their grievances were not working. This uprising was spearheaded by the radical Kikuyu nationalists in tandem with the ex-world war soldiers. Massive land extraction by the colonial authorities from Africans was the underlying cause of the Mau Mau insurrection (Archer, 2009). Apart from altering land tenure systems, the colonists' inclination towards favoring specific African ethnic groups and endowing them with additional privileges, including land rights, established the groundwork for land-related tensions in regions such as Rift Valley and Central Kenya (Boone, 2011; Mbah, 2016). Oucho (2010) provides an overview of this phenomenon, highlighting that Kenya's colonial history fostered a conflict-prone internal migration system, leading to occasional conflicts between migrant laborers (and squatters) and migrant settlers against "host communities."

Berman (1976) adds that increased deprivations stemming from fast socioeconomic growth in the colony, which fell disproportionately on the Kikuyu, were among the reasons contributing to the growing militancy of Kikuyu politics in the early post-war period. Berman further suggests that these hardships manifested in three main geographical areas: Firstly, in the established regions of the White Highlands, where agricultural worker wages remained depressed in the post-war period, as an escalating number of Kikuyu squatters and their families were displaced from European-owned properties. Secondly, in the Kikuyu reserves, where rapid population growth exerted immense pressure on land resources, leading to severe soil erosion, diminished agricultural productivity, and a rising population of landless Kikuyu individuals.

Thirdly, in urban centers like Nairobi and Mombasa, where a predominantly Kikuyu workforce grappled with soaring inflation rates for essential goods, residing in impoverished conditions alongside a significant number of unemployed individuals migrating from reserves and settled districts.

Elkins (2005:366) elucidates that the worsening socioeconomic conditions exacerbated existing grievances, including the dispossession of land to European settlers, assaults on Kikuyu traditions by missionaries (such as the 'Female Circumcision Crisis' of 1928-1931), internal disputes regarding the authority of appointed chiefs, the escalating accumulation of land and wealth by chiefs and other members of the colonial elite, and the persecution and oppression faced by the Kikuyu community.

To suppress the Mau Mau rebellion, colonial authorities implemented various measures, including the creation of emergency communities, the relocation of Kikuyu individuals to central Kenya, and the vilification of the Mau Mau movement. More than one million Kikuyu were confined to 800 villages, comprising over 20,000 homes enclosed by barbed wire fences, spiked ditches, and watchtowers as part of the villagization program in central Kenya (French, 2011: 116-37; Elkins, 2005:235-40; Anderson, 2005:294). This strategy aimed to obstruct the supply of resources to the Mau Mau, thus weakening the movement and safeguarding loyalists (Anderson, 2005). The villagization initiative was enforced through surveillance, curfews, collective punishment, and the deprivation of basic necessities such as food, water, and medicine, resulting in widespread hunger, severe malnutrition, and the deaths of approximately 50,000 Kikuyu individuals, half of whom were children under ten and elderly (Elkins, 2005: 260-63).

The period of emergency in Kenya, involved detentions without trial, the establishment of concentration camps, the villagisation programme, intentional starvation, and the torture and massacre of civilians, notably the Mau Mau and their supporters, represented a campaign aimed at eradication, characterized by severe atrocities, human rights violations, and historical injustices inflicted upon a vulnerable populace (French, 2011; Elkins, 2005; Anderson, 2005). It's been suggested that upwards of 50,000 Kenyans lost their lives during this colonial period (Blacker, 2007).

The Mau Mau uprising was also weaponized by the colonial regime against the Kikuyu community in order to discredit and alienate them from the rest of the other communities and hence employ divide and rule strategy. According to Munene (1992) the declaration of emergency in October 1952 enabled the regime to isolate the most advanced anti-colonial element in the colony, the Mount Kenya people: Kikuyu, Embu and Meru. Members of other nationalities were recruited into the police force and the military, specifically to fight the Kikuyu. This strategy contributed to the development of suspicions towards the Kikuyu from other communities. As has been seen earlier, the colonial regime specifically used the Mau Mau to demonise the Kikuyu in the minds of the Nandi, thus setting the basis for hatred and animosity of the Nandi towards the Kikuyu especially on the background of limited land, and general economic hardships which in essence, were the results of colonisation and land alienation.

Due to the declaration of the emergency, the Kikuyu were then rounded up from the whole of East Africa and specifically in Kenya, and repatriated back into emergency villages in central province for close monitoring and also to separate them from contaminating other communities (Anderson, 2005). Despite the fact that other communities played a role in Mau Mau, it was the Kikuyu who mainly received the condemnation. French (2011) notes that this condemnation played out in the way they

were kept out of schools, employment and business. Except for the home guards among them (who, received bounty and property confiscated from Mau Mau suspects), the 1950s was a time of horror, suspicion and deep psychological injuries to the Kikuyu.

The colonial regime employed a lot of propaganda against the Kikuyu, therefore, many other communities including the Nandi had no sympathy for them. Mau Mau was branded as a Kikuyu affair by the colonial regime and majority of Kikuyu laborers were removed from Uasin Gishu to central province (Kanogo 1987). In fact, the colonial regime was not shy of applying propaganda to depict them as evil and debased.

In the Rift Valley, the colonial regime set up a department to broadcast anti-Kikuyu propaganda for the Nandi. This was specifically aimed at discouraging any association with the Kikuyu. As a result, the Nandi became anti- Kikuyu and anti-Mau Mau, an attitude that was further reinforced by the fact that initially Kikuyu squatters had slashed Nandi cattle. The Nandi even harassed the Kikuyu squatters in the farms by breaking into their huts and stealing their property (Lagat, 1995). These acts played a role in planting seeds of ethnic animosity and distrust between the two major communities of Uasin Gishu which was further fueled in 1958.

Although some seeds of ethnic suspicion against the Kikuyu had been sown among some communities like the Nandi, the colonial regimes programme of marginalizing the Kikuyu did not gain as much tract because some of the political leaders like Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya who rose to fill the vacuum left by the jailed nationalists, rejected the ethnic narrative against the Kikuyu adopted by the colonial regime. They instead started agitating for the unconditional release of the jailed nationalists who had been labelled as Mau Mau leaders (Anderson, 2005).

The ethnic suspicion implanted among the Nandi against the Kikuyu began playing out in 1957. In that year, the Uasin Gishu district council decided to enforce the 1953 Resident Native labourers' ordinance by getting rid of all excess Nandi livestock (KNA DC/UG/1/2-Uasin Gishu District Annual Report 1957). This led to the auction of a large number of Nandi livestock, while a lot of livestock was illegally moved and hidden in the surrounding forests. Unfortunately, the harassment of Nandi and forceful destocking coincided with the return of Kikuyu squatters who had been expelled during the state of emergency since they had been associated with Mau Mau. The Nandi squatters believed they were being harassed by the colonial regime in order to chase them away and replace them with the Kikuyu labourers who had no livestock (Lagat, 1995). These coinciding events exacerbated the ill feelings that the Nandi already had against the Kikuyu leading to further animosity towards the Kikuyu.

Even as the colonial regime campaigned for the reduction of Nandi squatter's cattle, caution was advised because the Nandi were seemingly more loyal compared to the Kikuyu who were expected to replace them. Officials justified the retention of squatter livestock as a means to ensure loyalty and stability, as indicated in the Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia Intelligence Report (KNA, DC/UG/2/4 October 1948). Another concern expressed was that a decrease in livestock holdings might lead to the departure of the "lovely Nandi" and the potential replacement by "the politically-minded Kikuyu," according to the Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia Annual Report of 1947 (KNA, pp. S4, PC/RVP 2/3/3). In a time marked by increasing political turmoil, maintaining the allegiance of the Nandi, who held significant positions in the security forces and the King's African Rifles, served to temper the challenges posed by squatter issues. District Commissioners even commended them at one point for their "remarkable contribution

to the development of the Uasin Gishu district through their employment as squatters on farms." (KNA, Secret Meeting Record, DC's Office, Eldoret, 7 June 1954, LAB 9/325)

It is unfortunate that it was during this period that both communities were also facing harsh economic times made worse by colonial oppression and exploitation through land alienation, taxation, forced labour, and the extreme poverty faced within the reserves.

The Mau Mau revolt occurred following the conclusion of World War II. Individuals who had served in World War I were encouraged to buy property and given easy access to agricultural instruction at the newly established Egerton School of Agriculture (Lewis, 2000). The white settlers preserved most of the land in order to maintain their cattle herds. With their limited influence, the Kikuyu nobles expanded land rights for their relatives. Another set of Kikuyu who had lost their land in the central region and relocated to the Rift Valley were subsequently forced out of the Rift Valley and, upon returning to their land, discovered it had been stolen by the affluent Kikuyu elites. These landless Kikuyu were compelled to protest their landlessness, although the majority finally settled in various regions of the Rift Valley. Lagat (1995) concurs that the majority of Kikuyu who settled in the Rift Valley as squatters did so for three primary reasons: landlessness, evading conscription into the military, and escaping the harassment of chiefs through forced labor and taxation.

Mazrui and Tidy (1984) agree that Mau Mau played a role in rousing ethnic tensions as a result of the colonial regime's policy of detaining only Kikuyu with a few exceptions, as well as removing Kikuyu from the civil service while replacing them with people from other communities. This divide and rule policy stirred hostility in some Kikuyu to other communities. More ethnic tensions were provoked when rebels among the Mau

Mau assassinated moderates like Tom Mbotela, and Ambrose Ofaa. These murders inflamed inter-ethnic hostilities between the Kikuyu and Luo.

As a result of being deliberately kept out of the political and economic mainstream while other nationalities were being inducted into it, the Kikuyu came to believe that it was their bitter experience during this period that brought about independence (Munene,1992). Ndege (2018) states that although the Mau Mau mainly comprised the Kikuyu Embu and Meru, they were also joined by some Kamba, Nandi and Luo who were mostly squatters. Therefore, the weaponization of Mau Mau by some of the elites and politicians among the Kikuyu to justify grabbing of land and political control of resources from other communities in Uasin Gishu and other parts of the country, is to some extent, a fallacy and in this light, prompted Ochieng to declare that it was an embarrassment. Atieno-Odhiambo (1991; 301) cited Ochieng as saying, "Yes, Mau Mau is an embarrassment for all of us," particularly because the AKikuyu elites want to appropriate it as an exclusively Kikuyu movement, so as to exclude every other Kenyan individual and nationality from the fruits of independence, *matunda ya Uhuru*, which, in their view, must be harvested and consumed by the AKikuyu exclusively.

Sabar Friedman shares the view that the Mau Mau movement would subsequently give a portion of the Kikuyu population with a vocabulary to explain and excuse sole control of the postcolonial state (Friedman,1995). Ocho adds to this by describing how Kenyatta allotted land in the Rift Valley to his alleged landless kinsmen who had fought for Kenya's freedom under the Mau Mau flag and so deserved free land. As Ndege (2018) states, President Jomo Kenyatta was fond of reminding Kenyans during independence day celebrations that they (Kikuyu) fought for independence like lions. However, it is true that these other communities also played a part albeit small in the Mau Mau struggle.

During the Mau Mau insurgency, those that were arrested by the British, underwent extreme methods of torture and inhuman treatment as punishment and also as a way of forcing them to reveal information. Those that cooperated were dealt with leniently unlike those that proved to be difficult. The Mau Mau who admitted to oath taking and surrendered to intelligence requests were deported back to the reserves (Elkins, 2005; Lewis, 2000). *Empire state-building: war & welfare in Kenya, 1925-52*. Ohio State University Press.), whilst the noncompliant ones were flogged, tortured, strangled, or hung, and lastly mangled and their tongues were cut off as a warning to others (Peterson, 2008:75-91). These same violent tactics and atrocities have been used against some perceived enemies of the Kikuyu during political violence at the behest of certain political leaders.

It comes out clearly that the parallels between the type of torture that the Mau Mau underwent under colonialism, are akin to the torture which the retaliating Kikuyu Mungiki gangs used on their opponents during the electoral violence in Uasin Gishu and other different parts of the country. This type of torture could only be applied due to the fact that the opponents had been dehumanised through militant ethnic rhetoric by the political elite just as it had been done to the Kikuyu during the state of emergency.

Berman utilizes Gurr's theory of relative deprivation to argue that the Mau Mau became the reaction of a people whose material situations deteriorated over the colonial period as their ambitions soared. Similarly, the idea may be used to explain the plight of the majority of Rift Valley's Nandi, whose fast economic expansion increased the gap between them and Kenya's richer immigrant populations, according to (Berman, 1976).

3.1.5 Swynnerton Plan of 1954 and Its Reforms

The Swynnerton plan was formulated with the purpose of creating a five-year plan to increase agricultural development and production in African land units within Kenya

(Makana,2009). But in essence, the plan ended up leaving a post-independence legacy which has intertwined land, class, race, ethnicity, region, and party politics. This is because the plan created a class of titled land owners who later inherited political power at the exit of the British (Ndege,2018). The sequence of pre-independence land registration initiatives and the groundwork for the Land Adjudication Act of 1968, enacted five years after independence, was established by key policies such as the 1954 Swynnerton Plan, the 1959 Native Land Registration Ordinance, and the 1963 Registered Land Act (Yamano and Deininger, 2005).

Oboler (1985) has insisted that the Swynnerton plan which initiated the titling and partitioning of land in the fifties led to far reaching social and economic consequences among the Nandi by introducing private ownership of land. After the Mau Mau rebellion, significant actions were taken. In 1959, the administration devised a new policy aimed at abolishing racial barriers in regulations governing agricultural land ownership. Additionally, the colonial government committed to facilitating land acquisition by Africans in line with the Swynnerton plan. Kanyinga (2009) corroborates Wasserman's (1976) assertion that four factors drove the regime to develop a land redistribution policy. Firstly, the government favored European farmers to spearhead land reform initiatives to safeguard their interests. Secondly, there was a necessity to quell unrest among the Kikuyu peasantry and their perceived threat to European farmers. Hence, settlement schemes served the dual purpose of addressing Kikuyu land scarcity and preempting further rebellion. Thirdly, the colonial regime aimed to introduce an African landed elite into the highlands to buffer against peasant agitation (Wasserman, 1976). Believing that landed Africans engaged in large-scale farming would sustain the highland farming system. Finally, international financial institutions had agreed to support the land transfer process (Kanyinga, 2009: 87).

3.2 The formation of early political Associations and Weaponization of ethnicity

Ethnicity's impact on the Kenyan political landscape can be traced back to colonial times when the colonial authorities, employing divide-and-rule strategies, delineated provinces and districts along ethnic lines. Kadima and Owuor (2006) further assert that an analysis of the development of political parties in Kenya from independence to present underscores a significant dependence on and manipulation of ethnic sentiments as a means to secure political power. The foundation of African 'reserves' in 1915, according to Bedasso (2017), is a significant milestone in the establishment of ethnicity as the principal basis for political organization in Kenya. The colonial authority divided the native reserves into a number of homogeneous ethnic groupings.

During the development of early political associations during the colonial era, this administrative framework resulted in the emergence of ethnic identity as the exclusive way of politically mobilizing collective action. Although this tactic was launched by the colonial regime, it was refined by post-independence administrations, as will be seen by the establishment of significant political parties dominated by particular ethnic groupings.

A brief examination of the formation, organization, membership, grievances, and demands of these early political parties shows their common characteristics, the most outstanding being their ethnic orientation. In Kenya, African communities responded to the colonial negation of democracy during the 1920s by initially establishing ethnic associations (Ndege, 2018). Their ethnic foundation, later affected interactions and relations between different ethnic communities after independence. Some of these early political associations included, among others, Kikuyu Association; The East African

Association; The Kikuyu Central Association, Young Kavirondo Tax Payers' Association and Ukamba Members Association. According to Muigai (1995), the absence of other platforms upon which to base political appeal made ethnicity the most natural basis of political organization.

Most of these early political associations were ethnic-based, formed to address their local issues and grievances. According to Atieno-Odhiambo (1985), the early political associations articulated and aggregated grievances against taxation, poor working conditions and land alienation in their specific regions. They included the Kikuyu association, Young Kikuyu Association, East African Association, and Kikuyu Central Association in central Kenya; Young Kavirondo Tax Payers' Association, Kavirondo Tax Payers and Welfare Association, in western Kenya; Ukamba Members' Association, in Ukambani; Coast African Association, and Taita Hills Association, at the coast. Munene (1992) notes that African agitation against grievances had peaked after World War I when various communities came together to complain. During World War I, many Africans had been thrown together as members, of carrier corps with promises of rewards. It was unfortunate that after the war, these Africans witnessed white soldiers being rewarded with land from fellow Africans while to the contrary, the Africans were rewarded with reduction in wages, forced labour, native registration and increased taxes, thus increasing African grievances after the war.

The Young Kikuyu Association was the first political group founded by loyal Kikuyu leaders in 1920 (Bennet, 1957). Their complaints centred on the colonial regime's persistent land grabs and requests for improved working conditions for Africans, the abolition of the *Kipande* system, the restoration of African land, a reduction in taxes, and an increase in pay. They were also against the *Kipande* system that was nothing short of slavery. Singh made a speech on this organization in which he identifies

discrepancies in government behavior, and many of them condemn policies such as the colonial authority's growing alienation, taxes, *Kipande* system, and denial of title deeds. (Olinga, 2010).

As a result of the reduction in wages, forced labour, native registration and increased taxes, Africans, particularly those in the Nairobi area, began to organise protests against these post war conditions. Groups such as the Nairobi Baganda Union arose to protest the attempt to reduce African wages in order to help white farmers at the expense of the “native” because such actions would be contrary to the principles of administration of justice. Colonialists, therefore, according to Ogot (1971), were concerned about how to undermine this emerging and dangerous African unity.

Later the Nairobi Buganda Union and the Young Kikuyu Association under the leadership of Harry Thuku, merged to form the East African Association (EAA). The EAA was founded by Harry Thuku in 1921, accordingly, Bennet (1957) notes that it started off as Young Kikuyu Association (YKA) but its name was later changed to the EAA. Harry Thuku formed this political association out of the dissatisfaction he felt on the non-aggressive nature in which the Kikuyu association approached things. This association became the mouth piece of all African labourers. The demands presented under YKA when the name changed from YKA to EAA, included; removal of Kenya from being a British protectorate, introduction of education facilities for Africans, stopping the compulsory sale of cows, removal of hut tax and introduction of a common roll for all legislative council elections.

In their questioning of colonial policies, they received encouragement from the East African Indian Congress, which was also complaining about discrimination. Munene (1992) notes that they were later joined by the Kavirondo Association which had similar

demands. This show of unity among Africans worried the settlers and the colonial authorities. It forced the colonial authorities to look for ways of destroying the nascent African anti-colonialism by adopting several steps. They began by arresting Harry Thuku the leader of EAA, an act which unfortunately united more Africans into demanding for his release, and the death of more than thirty people in a bid to rescue Harry Thuku. Benet (1957) is of the same opinion that the aggressive approach embraced by Harry Thuku, led to his arrest by the colonial regime which then deported him to Kismayu and banned the EAA. In a bid to scuttle the EAA, the regime declared that in future it would only work with “tribal” associations. Fear of a united African opposition forced the colonial regime to emphasize and force Africans to engage in “tribal” activities (Munene, 1992).

The Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) was started in 1924 by Kang’ethe at Fort Hall (Bennet, 1957). The major grievances of the group included: removal of forced labor, abolishment of the *Kipande* system, provision of free primary education, establishment of high schools and training centers for girls, representation of Africans in the legislative council, removal of all crown land ordinances that led to alienation of Africans from their ancestral land, appointment of well-educated paramount chiefs, and translation of all colonial laws into the Kikuyu language. Membership in the KCA was inclusive of the Kikuyu within the Rift Valley region.

Young Kavirondo Association (YKA) was founded in 1921 with similar grievances as the KCA. Its chairman was Jonathan Okwiri. The association primarily comprised mission educated Luo and Luhya men. In the year 1922, the group was able to present their grievances to the colonial regime. They agreed to close down labor camps and also lower the taxes. The regime feared for the growth of the YKA and as a result it forced the leadership to be shifted to Archbishop Owen. The group’s name was also changed to

Kavirondo Taxpayer Welfare Association (KTWA) to emphasize that the group was not political but rather social. Munene (1992) recognises that the colonial regime also attempted to fragment African unity by reorganising and renaming the Kavirondo Association, and appointing a missionary as its patron. They adopted use of memorandums in trying to put across their grievances (Bullman, 1981). In this new set up, Nyanza chiefs were made vice Presidents of the association. The group later split along ethnic lines in the year 1931. The Luhyia formed the North Kavirondo Central Association that worked very closely with the KCA. Most top leaders of the KTWA organization were made paramount chiefs in an attempt to weaken them. As a result, the group was non-existent by 1944.

Ukamba Members of Association (UMA) was created in 1938 under the leadership of Samuel Muindi Mbingu. This specific organization had strong ties to the EAA. The group's objectives were to oppose taxes and the colonial destocking strategy, which asserted that overpopulation in Kitui and Machakos caused soil degradation, to promote Akamba people's interests, to fight for the rights and independence of Akamba people, and to stop and reclaim confiscated property (Mwiandi, 2017). The complaints of the UMA group were communicated to the colonial authority via memoranda. It also inspired individuals to join petitions in support of their own rights. After the arrest of Muindi Mbingu at the end of World War II in 1945, the association was outlawed.

Coast African Association was founded in 1943 under the leadership of Noah Sele. The members urged, among other things, that Shimo la Tewa be elevated to the status of a high school, that the education provided to Africans be enhanced, and that evening classes be created to provide people of the coast with access to basic Western education. The provision of sufficient healthcare for Africans, the return of land given to Asians and Arabs to the Mijikenda proprietors, and the participation of Africans in the

Legislative council. Their grievances were presented to the regime through the use of memorandums and publications in the newspaper. This enabled the association to survive for a long time without being banned. Other association formed at the coast included the Taita Hills Association (Bullman 1981).

Young Kavirondo and Young Kikuyu relationships cannot be attributed to a feeling of competitive negative ethnicity, according to Bedasso (2017). Rather, they were inspired by the united goal of indigenous emancipation in opposition to colonial domination. Due to administrative constraints imposed by the colonial authorities, these two organizations evolved as independent entities. All of the aforementioned African political groups were outlawed in June 1953 under Emergency restrictions, but the adoption of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 allowed African and Asian involvement in central government through an election system. Political parties were again legalized beginning in June 1955, but only at the district level and at the discretion of colonial administrators who approved party registration.

The brief review of the early political associations formed before 1939 shows a pattern that would influence the political scene once the colonialists left. All the associations formed were ethnic in nature in the sense that their members were all from the same nationality. All the groups also had a common goal, i.e., fair treatment, return of alienated land, representation in the Legislative Council (LEG-CO) and independence (Ajulu, 2002).

The formation of these early associations was due to the need to address the deprivation of their communities' social, economic and political needs. However, the association leaders' demands were specifically for their community and not all communities, despite them suffering the same problem. This in itself caused tension that only

manifested after independence with the formation of ethnic-based political parties which were used by the political elite to whip up ethnic tensions resulting in political violence in their quest to maintain or grab political power. The early political associations played a key role in widening the ethnic gap that was created through activities of the colonial regime. The traditional ethnic cleavages created by colonial regime and later widened by early political associations further led to some of the worst incidences of political violence in Uasin Gishu and the country at large (Berman 1976). Furthermore, some communities believed that their participation in the demand for the redress of African grievances was weightier compared to the contributions made by other ethnic groups.

These processes qualified the theory of relative deprivation since they later led to the development of a feeling of entitlement in some communities especially after independence. Such beliefs were the drivers to weaponized ethnicity, where some communities were later targeted and harassed seemingly because they were reaping and enjoying the fruits of independence without having toiled for it comparatively. At the same time, communities which were at the forefront in the struggle for independence tended to believe that they were entitled to the fruits of independence, hence they justify the spirit of hogging most if not all the social, economic, and political post-independence benefits.

3.2.0 Majimboism and territorialism; the roots of ethnic resentments and insecurities.

Throughout the colonial period, KANU was vilified as the Mau Mau party. This was partially accurate, since a number of former inmates had key positions within the party (Mueller 1984). Although the Mau Mau campaign was often viewed as ethnically exclusive, KANU adopted an inclusive, nationalist ideology that rejected all forms of

ethnic narrowness, including Majimboism, in contrast to KADU during the early days of independence.

In analysing KADU's policy-making and decision-making processes, (Anderson, 2005) has laid out KADU's motivations and organizational structure in its promotion of Majimboism. According to him, KADU was frequently portrayed by its sympathizers inside the British elite as a coalition of the "loyal tribes" who had steadfastly rejected the Mau Mau danger. Later, KADU retreated into the ethnic politics of Majimboism amidst threats of secession and bloodshed (Anderson, 2005). During the pre-independence period, KANU's and KADU's political stances were influenced by a number of factors. Africans were permitted to create district-based political organizations during the last years of the Mau Mau Emergency, between 1955 and 1960. It was during this period that the concept of Majimboism was conceived.

Under the supervision of the colonial authorities, a number of local parties were formed. The Nairobi District African Congress, later known as the Nairobi People's Convention Party, along with the Mombasa African Democratic Union, the Abagusii Association of South Nyanza, the Taita African Democratic Union, the Nakuru African Progressive Party, and the AbaLuhya People's Association were among the initial parties to be registered, with the colonial regime cultivating the majority of them through their district administrations.

Ogot (1995) perceptively observes that the colonial reforms aimed to lay the groundwork for a cooperative African leadership while undermining support for Mau Mau independence fighters. He argues that the British sought to reward their allies and penalize their opponents. In the Central Province, where Mau Mau support was strong, party registration was prohibited to minimize Kikuyu influence. Conversely, in the

remote Maasai and Nandi districts of the Rift Valley and Southern Provinces, colonial officials encouraged a few active politicians to consolidate their support through local party groups. Notable figures such as Taita Arap Towet ole Tamenno, Daniel T. Arap Moi, J.K. ole Tipis, and F.K. Arap Chuma were among them.

These Kalenjin and Maasai leaders were aligned with the political gradualist approach and were associated with the colonial regime's anti-Mau Mau campaign. In 1957, Moi emerged as the sole victor among them, securing a seat on the Legislative Council by defeating Towett and ole Tipis to represent Rift Valley. The colonial authorities supported figures like Moi, Masinde Muliro, and Ronald Ngala to establish local power bases, thereby bolstering and consolidating the influence of non-Kikuyu forces in the region's political landscape.

Morton (1998) discloses that Moi established the Baringo District Independence Party in his own district in 1958 and played a role in organizing similar groups in other Kalenjin districts such as Kipsigis, Kalenjin, and Elgeyo. Over the following two years, he extensively toured the Kalenjin-speaking regions of the Western Highlands in his Land Rover, garnering support through well-attended political rallies and addressing various African District Councils with the assistance of colonial officials.

Moi grew close to ole Tipis and J.K. Seroney, who represented the Kalenjin, and Ronald Ngala, who represented the coast, upon joining the Legislative Council. Eventually, Ngala would command KADU. Moi and his cronies had nothing in common with previous KAU members with an urban bent, such as Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya, and Julius Kiano. The dedication of Moi and his confederates to regional politics lacked nationalist aspiration: "Tribalism will endure for at least another fifty years," Moi told the BBC in an August 1958 interview (Kyle, 1997). Anderson (2005) argues that this

phrase sowed the seeds of Majimboism, which would be nourished by the storm of the first political upheaval in 1961, the multiparty elections in the 1990s and in subsequent elections in Kenya.

In July 1959, eight out of the fourteen African members opted to join the Kenya National Party (KNP): Moi, Towett, ole Tipis, Ngala, Muliro, Khamisi, Nyaga, and Muimi (Mulati and Were 2023). In response, Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya, and Julius Kiano, along with the remaining African members, formed the Kenya Independence Movement (KIM). According to Mulati and Were (2023), this division within African nationalism highlighted a significant contrast in political ideology and approach. Those who aligned with the KNP had embraced regional politics, advocated for gradual political reform, and espoused a generally conservative political ideology. Conversely, those who supported KIM had consistently championed a national perspective, campaigned more assertively for swift political change, and endorsed a more liberal political ideology.

According to Kipkorir and Welbourn (2008), the initial Lancaster House meetings, which were convened to discuss Kenya's path to independence, only served to underscore the growing disparities between the two factions. Following Lancaster House's declaration that independence was the objective of British policy, key figures hastened to consolidate their political support bases. Muliro assumed leadership of the Kenya African People's Party in April 1960, while Moi led Rift Valley politicians in uniting the four district parties of the Western Highlands into the Kalenjin Political Association (Kipkorir & Welbourn, 2008). Muliro and Moi pursued their respective rural political strategies to solidify local power bases, whereas members of the Kenya Independence Movement (KIM) focused on the national arena. In May 1960, the KIM

transformed into the Kenya African National Union (KANU), with James Gichuru serving as interim President until Jomo Kenyatta's release from prison.

In June 1960, following the establishment of KANU, Muliro and Moi orchestrated a significant protest in Kericho. Ronald Ngala, representing the Coastal African People's Union, attended this demonstration, along with delegates from the Maasai Union Front and the Somali National Association (Ajulu 2002). The outcome of negotiations among these three political entities was their amalgamation into KADU. KADU also had ties with smaller district parties such as the North Nyanza District Congress and the Kilifi African People's Union. Each group and coalition advocated for the interests of its respective region and aimed to protect these interests within the framework of the constitution for independence. Consequently, Majimboism served as the common ground between the Rift Valley, the Coast, the Somali National Association, and other minor movements.

Following the Kericho protest, the rhetoric surrounding Majimboism took on a more militant tone, with KADU's "Youth Wingers" expressing readiness to protect their communities' interests through force if necessary. Initially, KADU's Majimboist objectives were defensive, driven by apprehension. Moi and the assertive Kalenjin, in particular, harbored concerns about the potential colonization of the Rift Valley by the Kikuyu (Morton, 1998).

Colonialism instigated the concerns that drove the Majimboist movement. The organization of smaller ethnic groups within KADU served as a safeguard against the dominance of the larger, more affluent, and better-educated Luo and Kikuyu communities, which had enjoyed the benefits of colonial rule earlier and for longer durations. According to Ajulu (2002), KADU's advocacy for Majimboism was a logical

and potentially impactful strategy to counterbalance the significantly influential political and economic sway of the Luo-Kikuyu alliance within KANU.

The fear of Kikuyu dominance was exacerbated by their historical colonization of Kenya's Rift and Western Highlands during more than fifty years of colonial rule. The vilification of the Kikuyu population during the colonial propaganda campaign against Mau Mau from 1952 to 1960 contributed to widespread distrust of all Kikuyu politicians (Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission, 1962). Similarly, in the 1950s, the dominant position of the Luo in the labor market, particularly in skilled employment, was seen as a barrier to the advancement of the AbaLuhya, Kalenjin, and coastal communities, who sought greater participation in the labor force (Morton, 1998). Economic disputes were predominant in Kenya's local politics during the 1950s and played a significant role in shaping the alliances of KANU and KADU. The fear of economic dominance and political marginalization notably fueled the Majimbo movement after 1960.

KANU agreed to prioritize Kenyatta's release as a condition for assuming power and invited KADU to collaborate in pursuing this goal. Wasserman (1976) observes that while KADU's African leadership officially supported the movement for Kenyatta's release, they believed it could be achieved more effectively through an interim African administration. In March 1961, KADU initiated discussions with Governor Renison, much to KANU's dismay. After several weeks of negotiations, Renison announced on 18 April 1961 that KADU would establish a minority coalition government in partnership with the liberal European New Kenya Group (NKG) and the Kenya Asian Party, temporarily sidelining KANU and Kenyatta politically. Wasserman further suggests that European politics played a pivotal role in shaping the consolidation of Majimboist ideology within KADU during this period. The objectives of the NKG

remained narrowly focused and segmented. Blundell adeptly linked European interests with those of 'minority' African groups, bridging racial negotiations aimed at preserving European privilege with the issue of regional autonomy.

Beginning in 1960, the "Majimbo constitution" was first prepared by the New Kenya Group. Protecting European interests, they included a pro-federalist manifesto. By November 1960, Blundell had amassed sufficient African backing to assert that hatred toward Kikuyu and Luo supremacy would 'certainly' result in civil war if the colonial authorities failed to implement a federal structure (Wasserman, 1976). Initially, most European settler farmers did not endorse the NKG. However, by the close of 1960, Majimboism emerged as the sole topic upon which African members of KADU and European supporters could easily find common ground. The results of the February 1961 general election further solidified Europeans' belief that a Majimbo constitution was indispensable for their political viability.

By the time delegates from KADU gathered in London in February 1962 for the Second Lancaster House meeting, KADU was committed to a federal constitution. KADU had hired Dr. Edward Zellweger, a Swiss constitutional lawyer, and Conservative MP Frederic Bennett to push the KADU plans, which intended to give Kenya's politics a "tribal" underpinning (Maxon 2023)

When Michael Blundell directed his dedication to Majimboism towards the African constituents within the KADU coalition, he was addressing their concerns directly. Regionalism, or "Majimbo," was presented as an immediately appealing concept to ethnic groups in rural and remote areas of Kenya, as it granted them control over crucial issues like land, education, law enforcement, and the composition of the Civil Service - matters that deeply troubled them (Blundell, 1964). European minorities shared these

sentiments. When Reginald Maudling visited Kenya in November 1961, just a month after assuming office as Secretary of State, he was profoundly troubled by the intensity of racial tensions among African leaders. Maudling viewed "tribalism" as more volatile than racism and expressed serious concerns about the potential for significant tribal conflicts in the nation if a resolution was not reached (Morton, 1998).

According to Ajulu (2002), Majimboism emerged in 1954 as a response to the white settlers' desire to safeguard the white highlands from African control. KADU only embraced Majimboism in 1961 after recognizing that their coalition with the New Kenya Party and the Kenyan Indian Congress lacked the capability to win the 1961 elections (Ajulu 2002; Oyugi 1997). A faction within KADU, led by the Kalenjin, then championed Majimboism under the slogan "Regionalism or Civil War" (Sanger & Nottingham, 1964). In fact, William Murgor encouraged his Kalenjin tribesmen to prepare their spears and await his signal for the commencement of a war to expel non-Kalenjins from the Rift Valley. Rothchild (1967) echoes this sentiment, stating that it was the 'fear factor' that compelled Muliro, Moi, Ngala, and others to embrace Majimboism initially. As the Second Lancaster House negotiations (scheduled for February to April 1962) approached, KADU officials pressed for federalism as a precondition for their participation, even threatening to quit if their demands were not met.

During this period, certain leaders within KADU began to issue threats against immigrant groups in the Rift Valley who were residing there as squatters or land purchasers. In an October 1961 speech delivered in Iten, KADU's William Murgor expressed outrage about the presence of Kikuyu squatters in the Kapsabet forest and vowed that KADU's "Youth Wingers" would forcibly remove them if the government failed to do so through legislation (Blundell, 1964). At a KADU gathering in Kimilili,

Moi directly addressed concerns about Kikuyu encroachment and emphasized KADU's unwavering commitment to Majimboism: "For there to be peace in Kenya, Her Majesty's administration must validate regionalism by ceding authority to Africans." Moi's sentiments echoed the prevailing discourse of the time, particularly in Kalenjin regions of the Rift Valley where fears of a 'Kikuyu land grab' were most pronounced. These attitudes deepened the divisions between KANU and KADU. Moi would later underscore the warning that "the people of Kalenjin were prepared to fight and die for their land" before the Lancaster House discussions (Morton, 1998).

As a result, starting in 1961, ethnic clashes engulfed the Rift Valley Province. Ethnic groups such as the Kikuyu, Luhya, and others, who had resided in the region for many years, were branded as foreigners. Their houses were burned, and the majority of them were forced to flee, becoming refugees (Ajulu, 2002). On the other hand, during the second Lancaster house conference, KANU's answer to the proclamations of Majimboism was conciliatory, calm, calculated, and long-term. They thought that Majimboism was essentially impossible to implement. KANU consequently intended to amend the constitution and eradicate Majimboism upon assuming power. Odinga (1995) verifies that this is precisely what occurred following independence.

The Kenya Boundaries Commission, chaired by Sir Stafford Foster-Sutton, determined in a report that Kenyans had extremely strong opinions about who they wanted to share their territory with and who they did not (Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission, 1962). The greatest discussions then were about land rights and political legality in the boundaries where different communities intermixed, and particularly in regions where colonial practices had brought new settlements. The history of the afflicted community was used to determine these rights. These towns supported their claims with historical precedent and recognized status. They also used colonial documents as "evidence" of

their domination by confirming their position and rights. The chiefs' ancestry was presented as evidence of the origin of political authority.

Some societies relied on ethnographies authored by Europeans as authoritative sources on ethnicity and cultural affinity. This collection of claims and counterclaims has been referred to by French geographer Claire Medard (1996) as "the politics of territoriality." It's regrettable that many territorial disputes arose when the government and white farmers decided to target the Kikuyu community. This was done both to stem further migration of the Kikuyu into the Rift Valley and to remove them from European-owned farms (Kanyinga, 2009). This focus on the Kikuyu prompted the colonial regime to carve out land in the Rift Valley Province, which was then added to the Central Province to provide enough land for settling the Kikuyu population thus creating protracted land disputes.

According to (Kanyinga, 2009) A significant single settlement area, known as Kinangop or present-day Nyandarua District, was carved out from the Rift Valley to accommodate the Kikuyu population. This decision was made because the Kikuyu had the highest number of squatters in the highlands and a large population of landless peasants in their reserves. However, this resettlement of the Kikuyu stirred up ethnic animosity and tensions between the Kikuyu and other ethnic communities, including the Masai and the Kalenjin, who had inhabited the Rift Valley before it was alienated for white farmers.

As a means of smoothing the transition to a post-colonial regime, KANU, in contrast to KADU, argued for the retention of the present province boundaries. The position of KANU was founded on historical legitimacy, since KANU viewed them as "established limits" within which groups had coexisted peacefully for decades. In contrast, KADU

contested this assertion because the colonial authorities had made several adjustments to the province boundaries throughout the years.

One notable witness was Senior Chief Chemweno Cheboi of the Kalenjin-speaking Marakwet area, who provided an old photograph depicting delegates of the Native Councils attending a conference in Nakuru during the Rift Valley Provincial government of the 1930s. Cheboi recalled a time when regions such as West Pokot, Trans Nzoia, Marakwet, Uasin Gishu, Baringo, Kalenjin, Samburu, Laikipia, and Naivasha were all represented (Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission, 1962: 196-7). In areas of the Rift Valley like the Marmanet forest, where Kikuyu squatters laid claim to land, the situation became even more complex and challenging. Here, the claims of the local Kalenjin, specifically the Tugen, were supported by the administration, which sought to acknowledge their role during the state of emergency. However, the administrators faced opposition from European farmers who advocated for granting smallholdings to their Kikuyu farm laborers.

KADU members held a different viewpoint and asked that all territories in Laikipia, Nanyuki, and Samburu, as well as the Marmanet forest, be given back to the Maasai and their supporters according to their proposals for Majimbo. They were categorical in not accepting the Kikuyu whom they had even threatened out of these areas (Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission, 1962). As a requirement for a unified nation, Mwai Kibaki emphasized the necessity for unity and cultural fusion. Kibaki believed that any amplification of communal divisions over land by means of political empowerment may sow the seeds of future conflict He said, (Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission, 1962; 64).

In spite of KANU's objections, the Foster-Sutton Commission decided to make a number of boundary revisions. This commissioned investigation revealed the "extent of mistrust and hostility" between these populations. It resulted in the escalation of ethnic tensions in the Rift Valley region by providing a place for these communities to voice their anxieties and hostilities publicly (Rothchild, 1967). Unfortunately, it was impossible to reconcile the judgments of the panel with the requests of other communities, and amendments to the limits could not reasonably please everyone. The eventual publishing of the commissions decisions merely increased tensions between indigenous and immigrant Rift Valley groups.

Kitale's status proved to be the most contentious. While the Luhya chiefs, led by Masinde Muliro, wanted Kitale as the headquarters of Western Region, the commissioners chose Rift Valley instead. This resulted in a momentary crisis within KADU and exposed the frailty of its alliance on the basis of ethnicity, when Kalenjin and AbaLuhya members clashed. When Moi decided that KADU would back the AbaLuhya claims, hostility eased. After independence, KADU members reached an agreement that the Rift Valley Regional Assembly would move Kitale to the Western Region using its constitutional authority (Rothchild, 1967). Members of KADU were unaware that KANU would ultimately decide the destiny of Kitale and Majimboism.

By September 1963, when the Third Lancaster House Conference was convened, KADU was already in disarray and some of its members had already defected to KANU. During the convention, Kenyatta mocked the Majimbo constitution and prompted other KANU members to demand significant constitutional amendments (Kyle, 1997). KADU, on the other side, campaigned for the retention of Majimbo's safety measures. As the British grew hesitant to oppose KANU, Ngala vowed to declare

the coast's autonomy and independence if all safeguards were withdrawn (Morton, 1998).

KANU, with the assistance of the British government, obtained a reform that authorized constitutional amendments with a two-thirds House of Representatives majority. KANU therefore, got the leverage it needed to reduce the authority of the regions, managing to put a stop to KADU's Majimboist aspirations.

On the 12th of December, 1963, Kenyatta assumed control of the central government, Moi assumed control of the Rift Valley House of Representatives, and Ngala assumed control of the Coast Province. The central government quickly impeded and weakened these regional assemblies by withholding financial, logistical, and technical support. Moi and Muliro were unable to implement KADU's internal decision when Oginga Odinga declined to endorse the transfer of Kitale from the Rift Valley to the Western Region without consulting the affected people. (Rothchild, 1967). William Murgor, Taita Towett, and others who had been ardent proponents of Majimboism defected to KANU as a result of these difficulties (Kyle, 1999). Moi decided, in response to these defections from KADU, to protect his local support by transferring with them to KANU, from whence he could negotiate a better settlement for his people. Morton (1998) notes that although Moi moved to KANU, he never abandoned his Majimboism convictions

Moi received stronger and more secure regional support from his people, the Kalenjin, than did Ngala and Muliro from their respective peoples. Consequently, he was the only ex-KADU leader to receive a portfolio in Kenyatta's 1964 cabinet. When Joe Murumbi resigned as President in 1966, Moi was named vice President (Morton, 1998).

Moi became the President in 1978 after Kenyatta's death. Once in power, he swiftly transformed KANU into the old KADU which was less nationalist, dependent on a coalition of politicians solidly established in the local politics of patronage, redistribution, and containing Majimboists. Under Moi, KANU would be reincarnated as KADU (Anderson, 2003). These characteristics of Moi and his followers and politicians subsequently became the hallmark of his government and were used to incite ethnic hostility, leading to political bloodshed in the Rift Valley and Uasin Gishu in particular. Ouch (2010) characterizes this colonial legacy a British constitution which Kenya has largely maintained. It has maintained an imperial presidency that is frequently thought to be above the law — an institution that has seized the legislative, executive, and judicial powers of the country with impunity.

3.2.1 KAU, KANU, KADU and Ethnic Suspicions

Colonial education on the other hand brought many Africans from different communities together, and enlightened them. The elites who received missionary education later came together and founded some of the first political associations like KAU whose membership and leadership encompassed different communities. Unfortunately, the colonial regime again used the internal conflict and wrangles within KAU to destabilise it further and divide the Africans.

The post war political associations which later came up, led by KAU, and later on KANU and KADU which led Kenya into independence, though quasi- national in outlook, were also unfortunately not ethnically balanced, hence exacerbating the situation. Kadima and Owuor (2006) indicate that by the time of the country's independence in 1963, the first political parties and pressure organizations had already adopted an ethnic pattern. This ethnic characteristic of Kenya's political parties has persisted.

Nationalist leaders established KAU in 1944 in an effort to aid Eliud Mathu, who had just been chosen to represent Africans in the LegCo. At its formation, more than three quarters of the leaders were from the Kikuyu ethnic group. This ethnic biasness later proved to be a challenge to KAU since it was perceived as a Kikuyu outfit by the other ethnicities. This perception has lingered leading to ethnic animosities (Berman 1976).

In the opinion of (Berman, 1976) the colonial state viewed KAUs opposition and resistance to its development programmes among the Kikuyu as anti-government stupidity. The colonial state was even more persuaded that KAU leaders intended to deceive the naive rural populace into backing them. As a response, the colonial authorities employed a number of strategies to separate Kikuyu politicians from nationalities not yet severely afflicted by the 'disease of politics' and to minimize interaction between these agitators and the rural Kikuyu (Berman, 1976).

The Provincial Administration deliberately aimed to hinder KAU's evolution into a nationwide organization by employing a strategy of divide and conquer, exploiting tensions between different ethnic groups. As an example, in response to a petition submitted by KAU to the United Nations in 1948, colonial administrators identified two Nyanza chiefs who expressed dissatisfaction with the way the memorandum was presented by a select group of Kikuyu politicians claiming to represent all of Kenya's peoples. These chiefs were then instructed to publicly highlight the implications of the memorandum, particularly focusing on the Kikuyu's assertion of speaking for and attempting to dominate the indigenous peoples of Kenya (Berman, 1976).

Under orders from the colonial authorities, the field officers in the Central Province systematically harassed KAU officials and various local Kikuyu groups, imposing progressively stricter limitations on their ability to hold public gatherings or conduct

activities like the collecting funds. Berman (1976) emphasizes that frequent efforts were made to regulate the expanding vernacular press and punish editors and authors for libellous pieces. In addition, administrators' escalating personal animosity against politicians was manifested in vicious attacks on their competence and character before formal barazas and other meetings with Africans in the Kikuyu areas.

The dawn of independence was not fully embraced by some quarters in the colonial regime. They, therefore, embarked on a campaign to derail or scuttle this process in many ways. One way was by introducing the myth of 'big' and 'small' communities in order to cultivate suspicions and mistrust among the African leaders and their followers on the eve of independence. As a result, different communities were forced to strategically position themselves in readiness to ensure that they also got their fair share of the national cake. This was seen in the later splinter and formation of KADU from KANU, which was generally perceived as an alliance of some of the largest ethnic communities in Kenya; the Kikuyu and the Luos. These intrigues contributed to the entrenchment of ethnic suspicions and stereotypes which were basically fabricated by the colonial regime and its agents over time, but later were adopted and came to be part of Kenya's rhetorical political mantra.

Atieno-Odhiambo (2002) contends that following 1959, as the prospect of African political independence in Kenya drew nearer, settlers sought to impede the return of the Kikuyu to their farms by establishing ethnic land rights for previously marginalized communities. The Maasai, who had been displaced from their lands by European colonizers in 1904 and 1911, were encouraged to assert their land claims once again. Similarly, the Ababukusu were convinced to assert their territorial rights in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia, areas previously lost to Boer and British settlers fifty years earlier by the Sabaot. In the central Rift Valley, the Kalenjin were cautioned about the potential

resurgence of the Kikuyu in the former Kaputiei and Laikipia Maasai regions, which had been cultivated by settler leaders Michael Blundell and Bruce Mackenzie. Munene (1992) observes that Ronald Ngala of the Agiriama faction of the Mijikenda was instilled with a fear of anticipated Kikuyu dominance surpassing even the longstanding slave-based Mazrui and Busaidi aristocracies along the Indian Ocean coast. For leaders like Daniel Arap Moi of the Kalenjin, Musa Amalemba of the Luyia, and Ronald Ngala of the Mijikenda, the fear of Kikuyu dominance was deliberately manufactured.

The Kikuyu faced significant class and ethnicity issues in their reserves and in their Rift Valley migration. The settlers' practice of ethnic demonization aimed to uphold both the colonial and settler narratives of racial superiority and the imperial belief in Africans' supposed unpreparedness for independence. Within the discourse surrounding ethnicity, constitutionalism served as the British strategy to preserve control, favoring white settlers as the privileged ethnic group. The British required African collaborators in order for their scheme to work. Therefore, they utilized and subtly applied ethnic hatreds as the panacea to divide and continue ruling the Africans.

Atieno-Odhiambo, (2002) opines that the bait that was used to capture the mind of the Africans was the emotive subject of land. The formation of a class society among the Kikuyu was one of the most blatant features of the Swynnerton land reform project offered in 1954 as a solution to the Mau Mau land-and-freedom movement. The Swynnerton Plan for land consolidation cemented the landed Kikuyu nobility by extending their landholdings at the expense of the Mau Mau captives, who were deprived of their entitlement to family land (Atieno-Odhiambo 1994). This exacerbated intra-Kikuyu tensions and paved the way for greater Kikuyu settlement in the Rift Valley when former Mau Mau liberation warriors vowed to return to the forest to reclaim their stolen territory.

Atieno-Odhiambo (2002) adds that by 1955, the Rift Valley lacked an established communal Kikuyu political presence. With the inevitability and imminence of African political independence in Kenya after 1959, the Kenyan settlers attempted to prevent the Kikuyu from returning to their fields by establishing ethnic land rights for the hitherto submissive "tribes." Consequently, the Kikuyu faced two significant obstacles: class in their reserves and ethnicity in their Rift Valley diaspora.

According to Atieno-Odhiambo (2002), the nationalism and Pan-Africanism ideals expressed by Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya were utilized to fight the ethnicity rhetoric espoused by the settlers and their newly found allies: Daniel Arap Moi, Masinde Muliro, Dr. Julius Gikonyo Kiano, and Jeremiah Nyagah. These African elites opposed quick independence and the reintegration of the Kikuyu into Kenya's mainstream political group. Instead, they insisted on land reforms before independence. In 1960, this group formed the Kenya African Democratic Union, a political "party" (KADU). Moi, Ronald Ngala, Masinde Muliro, and Taita Towett were the key proponents of this group.

According to Atieno-Odhiambo (2002), these leaders feared "Kikuyu-Luo dominance" in a future African state, and in order to fulfill these predictions, they incited ethnic conflict along the Luo-Luyia boundary in eastern Gem and around Maseno. William Murgor, a Kalenjin lawmaker, vowed in 1962 to expel all non-Kalenjin from the Rift Valley. Moi, on the other hand, swore he would shed his blood to ensure that regionalism was enshrined in the independence constitution. The rationale for proposing regionalism in 1962 was the defense of land, whereas the organizing principle was ethnicity. Similarly, in the preceding years and particularly during the electioneering period, the driving forces of political violence have always been targeting the immigrant communities who have supposedly grabbed land in Uasin

Gishu. It is also consequently ironical that Moi was in the forefront of opposing the reintroduction of regionalism through devolution when the new constitution was proposed, yet he was one of the staunch supporters of Regionalism in the pre-independence period. What changed his mind?

In 1962, according to Atieno-Odhiambo (2002), the colonial authority realized by accident that all Kenyan "tribes" had ethnic border issues, and a Boundaries Commission was established. A century and a half earlier, during the 1820s to the 1840s, the Banyore reclaimed territory that had been stolen by Luo invaders (Ogot 1967). In addition, it was recognized that these ethnic distinctions were so ingrained that the country required a regionalist constitution (Majimbo). With the support of the settlers, KADU leaders guaranteed that the post-independence Kenyan constitution of 1963 divided the nation into eight regions, each of which had a regional administration and represented a "tribe" of sorts.

Munene (1992) corroborates the creation of the 'big' 'small' tribe myth by stipulating that, a myth was created that the Luhya (one of the big three tribal groupings in Kenya) constituted a 'small' tribe. Leaders of "small" 'tribes', such as Daniel Arap' Moi, Ronald Ngala and Masinde Muliro, refused to be part of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and formed the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) on the basis of fear of the political future. This fear arose out of the fact that two communities, Luo and Kikuyu, dominated the leadership positions in KANU. Among the founding leaders were Jomo Kenyatta, a Kikuyu, who served as President, Jaramogi Odinga, a Luo, who served as vice President, and Tom Mboya, also a Luo, who served as secretary general.

As Kadima and Owuor (2006) point out, the "minor" ethnic groups feared joining KANU and being controlled, therefore, the colonial authorities helped them organize

their own political party, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), to compete with. The formation of KADU was, therefore, one of the contrary acts to the objectives of KANU during its formation by the nationalist leaders, it also led to the establishment of ethnic suspicions which have been the bane of Kenyan politics to date, and has resulted in ethnic animosities and attendant political violence.

Nyong'o (1989) underscores the sentiments of Kadima and Owuor. According to Nyong'o, the colonial regime had made such great efforts to arouse ethnic fears by early 1960s. Indeed, as the pre-independence elections in the late 1950s approached, and during the Lancaster House Conferences orchestrated by the British government to discuss forthcoming self-governance, two national parties emerged. One represented an alliance of politically and economically powerful nationalities, namely the Kenya African National Union (KANU). The other party, the Kenya Africa Democratic Union (KADU), comprised members from other nationalities who harbored concerns about potential domination by KANU. KADU formed as a defensive coalition led by provincial party leaders who felt endangered by the growing influence of KANU. Due to this perceived danger, these regional leaders adopted a defensive stance as a negotiating position for the distribution of power following independence (Nyong'o, 1989, 234).

The ethnic coalitions further increased in the period leading to the first independence elections. This led to the proliferation of regional ethnic and clan based political organisations resulting in politicization of ethnicity. Therefore, as (Mueller 1984; Ajulu 2002) posit, ethnic identities were constructed as instruments for negotiating access to political power as well as resources like land.

Atieno-Odhiambo (2002) narrates the state of affairs in 1962, and gives an insight into one of the driving forces leading to the avalanche of Kikuyu settlement into the Rift Valley immediately after independence. He argues that when the settlers saw that the transfer of state authority was inevitable, they recaptured Kenyatta and forced him to pledge their safety in the future. This led Kenyatta to reassure the settlers in Nakuru in August of 1963, expressing his commitment to respecting and honoring their land ownership rights. He stated, "If I have wronged you, it is your responsibility to forgive me. If you have wronged me, it is my responsibility to forgive you. We want you to continue farming in our nation" (Ngugi, 1981: 88).

In view of political nationalists like Paul Ngei and Bildad Kaggia, who had been convicted and imprisoned with Jomo Kenyatta as Mau Mau leaders, this was a huge act of treachery and capitulation to the colonial administration. In response, the Mau Mau resumed taking oaths, reconstituted their underground movement, *Kiama kia Muingi*, and returned to the forests under the leadership of Field Marshalls Baimuinge, Mwariama, and Wanjiru, pledging to fight to the very end and never yield to Kenyatta's compromise on land (Omosule, 1976).

Kenyatta, on the other hand, began acquiring the "respect" of the world and settler communities once he acknowledged that Africans would have to acquire settler farms on a willing-buyer-willing-seller basis. The British government and the World Bank loaned Kenyatta's administration funding to buy out the settlers in response to his attitude (Leo, 1984).

Kenyatta then went out to appease the land hunger of the erstwhile Mau Mau by resettling them in the Million-Acre, Haraka, and Harambee settlement plans on lenient loan conditions where they committed to make long-term, friendly payments. As a

result of this arrangement, between 1960 and 1966, the old White Highlands were reforested. The Kikuyu resettled in the Rift Valley, and the Kikuyu reserves of Kiambu, Murang'a, and Nyeri were extended into the Nakuru, Laikipia, and Nyandarua districts, transforming them into predominantly Kikuyu reserves. Furthermore, Kikuyu reserves were established in the Eastern Kalenjin, Eastern Kericho, and Southern Uasin Gishu districts (Leo, 1984).

In the run-up to the 1963 elections, tensions between supporters of KANU and KADU had stoked ethnic animosities in the Rift Valley over a land dispute to the point that certain leaders orchestrated ethnic violence. Munene (1992) claims that, there was a politician, known as Bwana Firimbi, who would blow his whistle after dark and incite his people to start harassing members of other communities, in the vicinity. But this ended after the elections which were won by KANU. Here are, therefore, seen the inklings of ethnic animosities in the Rift Valley area erupting into violence. Unfortunately, such incidences were either not taken seriously, were ignored, or had the blessings of the politicians in the Rift Valley. As a result, ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu has refused to die a natural death since it is always watered down by ethnic sentiments and activities prompted by politicians just like in the pre-independence period

Ultimately, when KANU and KADU joined to form a coalition government, this coalition helped to create a new “tribe” of prominent public officials and political elite who remembered their “biological tribes” normally only when votes were needed or when trying to discredit an opponent (Munene, 1992). This phenomenon eventually set the stage for the intermittent political violence which became recurrent especially in Uasin Gishu.

3.3 The Roots of Ethnic Animosity and Political Violence

In pre-colonial Kenya, where population pressure was not a concern and the village homestead was characterized by a self-sufficient economy, ethnicity was experienced rather than rationalized, according to Bedasso (2017). This alludes to the fact that ethnicity per se was not a factor that was in any way used for social, economic, or political gain, but was a given, a way of identification. Neither were different communities either hated or loved on the basis of their ethnicity until the arrival of colonialism which entrenched ethnicity as the foundation of ethnic and national interactions for and among Africans in Kenya, thus setting the stage for ethnicity and ethnic affiliation as one of the most common origins and agents of political violence in Kenya.

The dislike the Kalenjin had for the Kikuyu emanated from the creation of European settlements in Uasin Gishu and other areas inhabited by the Kalenjin during the colonial period. For the Kalenjin, they had already lost land to the British settlement and life was difficult in their reserves. The creation of more reserves for the Kikuyu in Uasin Gishu meant less land for grazing or farming for the Kalenjin, a predicament which they were not ready for. Consequently, the Kikuyu were not welcome in their land. This general feeling was reiterated in an Annual District Report (1957) which stated that, generally, the Kalenjin peoples disliked the establishment of Kikuyu settlements in their sphere of influence in Uasin Gishu. In spite of this dislike, there was no report of ethnic violence between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin in this period until after the entrenchment of political differences under these two ethnic politicians.

According to Wambua (2017), politically instigated ethnic violence is brought about by three different factors: political competition, deep ethnic cleavage and conflict over land distribution. All these factors have contributed to political violence in Uasin Gishu

whereby ethnicity has been weaponized by the political elite. Political leaders have often exploited ethnicity to achieve their selfish gains. The leaders intentionally create political tension to further their selfish causes by weaponizing ethnicity and ethnic differences among Kenyans. Bush (1997) reiterates that ethnicity neither causes nor adequately describes disputes in the majority of situations. Rather, ethnicity is more mobilized and politicized in violent confrontations of the day.

Kenya suffers from weaponization of ethnicity due to the fact that it is made up of more than forty different communities which act as breeding ground for ethnic-based political violence (Wambua, 2017). According to Field (2018), weaponized ethnicity arises out of the irrational fear of particular people of color, tongue or tradition that can easily be manipulated to affect politics, economic, and social structure of a particular place. Kenya is a country that consists of 42 different communities, majority of them have gone through politically motivated violence as a product of weaponized ethnicity. (Mwiandi, 2011)

This research tried to establish the origins of political violence in Uasin Gishu by examining violence during the colonial period. Violence, according to Abrahams (1979), is a process, not an event. In as much as violence may be instinctive, they are frequently the result of a lengthy chain of political and historical resolutions. All violent acts, regardless of their primary intent, have repercussions, provoke responses, and ultimately alter the behaviour of offenders and victims. This is consistent with Carotenuto and Shadle's (2012) contention that, the culmination of the violent struggle for social and political power in Kenyan history during the 2007/2008 election crisis underscores the importance of examining the colonial era to comprehend and address the contemporary culture of violence.

This research posits that some of the intermittent violence inherent in the political processes in Kenya are rooted partly in the colonial legacy. During the colonial period, the application of violence was normalised as the European settlers and state machineries used it to bend the Africans to bide their wishes and demands. According to Shadle (2012), settlers felt that if they did not beat their workers, Africans would shirk even more than they already did, and that because Africans were infantile, the only punishment they could comprehend was the cane. They utilized whippings to demonstrate the legitimacy and might of colonial control. African males who "insulted" white women were beaten, as were Africans who did not quickly perform their bidding or were a nuisance. During the earliest years of European colonization, the native slave, the rickshaw, and the whip operated in unison.

The main reason for the use of violence on Africans by the settlers, was due to the fear and powerlessness experienced by the settlers in a strange land in which they were the minority hence violence was used as a way of asserting and insulating themselves in the colony and controlling the Africans. Arendt (1970) also concurs that settler violence emerged from fear and powerlessness. This study hypothesizes that the violent subterfuge of the Kalenjin community in Uasin Gishu and other portions of the Rift Valley was a result of the despair and fear perceived by indigenous communities as a result of presumed economic and political setbacks during the colonial and post-colonial eras.

Shadle (2012) argues that early settlers had to discover a mechanism to secure their community's prosperity, if not its sheer survival. On their initial settlement, they were endlessly on the brink of bankruptcy, unable to depend on unwavering state support, and encircled by tens of thousands of "savages"; consequently, the settlers needed to

assert power in order to assert control over an anarchic situation, so they resorted to violence.

As per one settler's elaboration from the *East African Standard* in 1907: As long as the world exists, there will always be those who make a stand against the just punishment of the Native and the application of terse discipline, without which the white man in his tiny minority cannot expect to restrict those he has taken it upon himself to raise out of superstitious beliefs and innate criminal behaviour. ("Panic" *East African Standard* DEC/28/1907). Therefore, apart from using violence to cow the natives, it was also one of the ways in which the settlers asserted their superiority over the 'backward' Africans.

In 1913, the *Standard* published more of the same ideas on the use of violence against Africans, reminding everyone that since the black man is immeasurably more numerous than the white man, the settlers' position in the black man's nation should be considered problematic. Therefore, the rule of the iron was crucial to the very presence of the white man in British East Africa, and the few individual beating transgressions perpetrated against the black man were to be reasonably forgiven in light of the almost intolerable "provocation" that the white man was forced to endure due to the indolence and insolence of the native population ("Coddling the natives" *East African Standard*, March/08/1913)

Shadle (2012) adds that the British settlers thought their use of violence was justifiable since the imposition of suffering was not inherently unlawful. Aggression is, at least temporarily, a cheap and speedy solution to a variety of issues. Violence may quickly compel a person to cease specific acts, while the fear of violence can govern behaviour; its performative features promote hierarchical relationships. Consequently, violence and suffering might be inflicted for required objectives, but only on Africans.

The nature of the violence inflicted on Africans during the colonial period is also of essence in order to relate it to the intermittent political violence experienced in Uasin Gishu and thus establish whether there is any similarity because some of the violence meted out on victims is so horrific and inhuman. Furthermore, it is in line with the belief that the other communities were intruders, and therefore, enemies, that the violence inflicted on them acquired such horrific dimensions. Shadle (2012) offers insight on this violence by describing the nature of colonial-era violence towards Africans. According to her, violence against Africans was racialized throughout the colonial period since all whites assumed the authority to impose violence on any African or Indian. Moreover, regardless of his riches or social standing, every settler asserted the ability to defeat any African. As settlers in Kenya imposed few restrictions on the violence they perpetrated against Africans, settler violence in Kenya was frequently notably violent.

It is also documented that South African settlers were among the most barbaric in their treatment of Africans. President Moi has been quoted as stating, "Kenyans cannot accept the type of prejudice that is practiced in South Africa.... Mrs. Thatcher, the British prime minister, cannot comprehend the racists' actions in South Africa. We are familiar with them since some of them lived in Uasin Gishu, and we know that they used to beat Africans instead of cattle." (*Daily Nation*, Nairobi, July 14, 1961)

In the early years, a significant number of Kenyan settlers originated from South Africa, bringing with them their own distinctive notions of race and brutality, which they inflicted mostly on African labour. In reality, these Afrikaners had the reputation of being Kenya's most violent and quick-tempered settlers. In 1921, Native Punishment Commission members noticed the pervasive use of physical violence by white employers, despite the NLC's warnings and collection of evidence to the contrary. (Native Punishments Commission, KNA/AG/7/2/1924) And in Governor Denham's communication to the secretary of state in 1925 (KNA/AG/7/2/1925). As will be seen later in this study, the violence meted on victims of weaponised ethnicity has often

bordered on sadism including torture, forced circumcision, beatings, and even the beheading of some victims, actions which are reminiscent of the colonial era brutalities which Africans underwent in the hands of some settlers and or colonial administrative machinery.

3.4 Impact of Colonialism on ethnicity in Uasin Gishu

Many communities, notably the Kalenjin, saw a significant transformation in their socioeconomic and political structures when colonization arrived in Kenya. Kalenjin resistance to colonialism under the leadership of their Orkoiyot Koitalel Arap Samoei is legendary. They opposed European conquest of their territory, which resulted in many punitive missions between 1895 and 1905, when they were ultimately vanquished (Matson, 1987). After this loss, the Kalenjin were relocated from the Uasin Gishu plateau to the Kalenjin Reserve, as great tracts of their territory were taken over by settlers (Matson 1987). Since they had utilized the plateau as grazing ground before to the arrival of white settlers and the colonial regime's annexation of their property, making it part of the white highlands, this affected their economic way of life (Lagat, 1995). Due to overgrazing in the reserve, the District Commissioner (DC) stated in the late 1920s that "farming is becoming increasingly popular among the [Kalenjin] tribe" (KNA, Political Record File: Uasin Gishu, 1927-30, DC/UG/2/1).

The economic livelihood of the Kalenjin revolved around the well-being and expansion of their family herds, known as 'tuka'. Cattle, goats, and sheep were not only owned in large numbers by the Kalenjin but also formed the focal point of their entire way of life. Cattle husbandry constituted the primary occupation for men within the community. Possessing cattle was imperative for full engagement in social and political affairs. A man without cattle would hesitate to speak at the Kokwet Council, as he would not command attention. Moreover, he would have little chance of assuming a significant

role in public offices or ceremonies. Consequently, one of the foremost aspirations of a Kalenjin boy was to acquire cattle.

After independence, the land which was under the colonial regime was never recovered., leading to, landlessness and the attendant poverty, and suffering. This became one of the reasons for the formation of a political party that would address their issues. Youe, (1988) refers to KADU as a quasi-federation hurriedly formed in an attempt to over-come Luo-Kikuyu domination after independence. The Kalenjin pre-colonial alliance against the Kikuyu -Luo domination still has hangovers, and this situation has been exploited for political expediency. After independence, some Kalenjin members revisited their precolonial alliances and used it to invoke the precolonial insecurities and hence mobilize the Kalenjin against their neighbors.

Colonial expeditions led to genocide and as a result forced migration of people - some of whom flowed into Uasin Gishu in search for a place to dwell. This put a further strain on the economic capabilities of the Kalenjin. Introduction of western education and civilization in Kalenjin land also impacted on them. Europeans believed in the Christian God and, therefore, European missionaries were used to preach the gospel and convert many Africans from their traditional religious beliefs leading to the erosion of fundamental practices in most African communities. In addition to that, they brought in the formal system of education that was not there within the Kalenjin community. The majority of people embraced this type of education system since it was packaged with a chance to work in the colonial states as clerks and chiefs (Karari, 2018).

Did the Kalenjin in Uasin Gishu feel threatened by the other communities in the enjoyment of missionary benefits since the missionaries must have come with members

of other communities who were friendlier? This is answered by a respondent who stated that:

The Luo came as railway workers and received the education brought by the Europeans. The Kalenjin refused, but the Luo, Maasai, Luhyia, accepted education and they went to school. The Kalenjin were fighting so they rejected European education. They refused and continued grazing their cows. But now the Luo are everywhere, they have gone to school and are everywhere, and the Maragoli also (Magut Samuel, OI, Besiabor,25/06/2021).

The same sentiments were also reiterated by another respondent thus:

The European were in charge of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. When they came to Kenya, the Kalenjin's refused to provide labor in farms because they were not happy with the Europeans who had taken their land away but still expected them to provide labor. They also said they could not dig in farms but only accept to become soldiers (*kukamata bunduki*), drive tractors and look after cows. (Henry Morei, OI, Besiabor,25/06/2021).

This aspect brings out the theory of relative deprivation since the Kalenjin felt entitled to jobs from the missionaries more than the communities who accompanied the missionaries more so since this as their ancestral land. Tignor (1972) reiterates that this aspect was also exhibited among the Maasai, who are also pastoralists and also suffered from massive loss of land just like the Kalenjin. Maasai themselves claimed that colonial education officials were unwilling to provide Maasai kids with the same Western-focused and literary curriculum designed for the Kikuyu and the Luo. Tignor (1972) employs four key techniques to explain the resistance to change exhibited by mostly pastoral civilizations. In contrast to the poorer and more densely packed agricultural communities, one idea indicates that these individuals possessed obscene riches. These riches shielded them from the economic pressures of the colonial regimes and provided them with little motivation to alter. As one of the pastoral groups, the Kalenjin could easily pay their taxes from their considerable riches, and thus found wage labour unappealing. The same economic pressures exerted by the colonial

regimes on agrarian populations resulted in significant social and economic upheaval that transformed these precolonial communities.

Another argument postulates that a paternalistic or terrified administration purposefully insulated pastoral cultures from disruptive development. Either the colonial state administration dreaded them because of their military might, or it held romantic notions of them as heroic savages. In any event, the regime did not impose the same requirements on them as it did on other civilizations. Thirdly, some theories contend that the outside world—African farmers, European colonists, and Western-educated politicians have nothing to give pastoralist communities that is of direct and immediate benefit. According to this argument, outsiders were always attempting to push pastoralists to do things they despised, such as becoming established farmers or sending their children to school. They failed to comprehend their framework and operate within it by proposing adjustments that people may accept without abandoning their fundamental way of life. A fourth group of ideas emphasizes the value system, particularly the attitude of superiority and contempt for other individuals. The Kalenjin have a common proverb: "We are Kalenjin; everyone else is nothing." According to these thinkers, haughtiness, arrogance, and ethnocentrism had the potential of creating barriers between some communities.

One of the major positive impacts colonialism had on the Kalenjin was on the economic activities. The Kalenjin predominantly kept cattle and did farming on a few crops such as coffee, tea, maize, pyrethrum, cotton and most of the exotic vegetables were initially not grown in Kenya on a large scale. According to Youe (1988), crops such as finger millet were predominantly grown within the community. With the white settlers coming in, the area was turned into a commercial maize production. It marked the beginning of capitalism in Kenya. Milk was taken in cooperatives and land became privatized. The

colonial state imposed poll tax and the *kipande* system which forced people to abandon subsistence farming and join wage employment in order to be able to pay the tax (Karari, 2018).

The Kalenjin people were not recruited in large numbers into the colonial police. This was due to the animosity and suspicion between them and the colonial regime resulting from the Kalenjin resistance as well as the killing of the Orkoiyot by the British. Ray (2019) is of the opinion that: inclusion or exclusion in pre-colonial security apparatus had an impact on the society's participation in post-independence political strife. On the brink of independence, the more centralized a group's precolonial political structures, the smaller its proportion of recruitment to the highest ranks of colonial police forces. Similarly, the opposite was also true. The greater a group's over recruitment to the upper levels of colonial police forces on the eve of independence, the greater its likelihood of becoming at least a senior partner in the first post-independence state.

Specifically, it is frequently maintained that European metropolises adopted varied tactics for controlling their foreign dependencies, which had varying effects on later economic growth, democratic survival, coups, and wars (Wucherpfennig *et al* 2016). According to Veit (2019), the majority of commentators feel that the intermittent ethnic violence and displacement witnessed following Kenya's multi-party elections, including during the constitutional referendum campaign, can largely be attributed to unresolved land issues that have been exacerbated by political manipulation. Districts where there has been significant land expropriation by the government or where Trust land is prevalent, such as Kajiado, Laikipia, Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Nakuru, and Kwale, have been the focal points of violence over the past 15 years. Experts have noted that approximately 95% of recent violence in the Rift Valley has occurred in areas where settlement schemes are situated. Merely focusing on facilitating the return of the

displaced without addressing the underlying structural causes risks perpetuating conditions conducive to further cycles of violence and displacement. from their traditional homes

On the eve of colonialism, therefore, various peoples were in a state of movement, of settling, or of expansion. In the process, they interacted in one of two ways: trade or war. This was the dynamic process which colonialism disrupted. Colonialism froze people where they were. In this way, the colonialists helped to create a myth, a myth of traditional homes: Thus, the Luo, the Luhya and Kalenjin, Mijikenda, Kikuyu, Somali and Akamba were made to believe that they belonged to a particular geographical zone only (Munene,1992). This process was reinforced by alienation of huge tracks of land for European use and the creation of native reserves to contain Africans. These reserves were then described as traditional homes. The reason for these reserves was political. It was to keep various Africans, apart and prevent them from coming together against the colonialists. Therefore, the machinated differences between the Luo, Kikuyu, Kamba, Luhya , Kalenjin, were reinforced at each and every opportunity (Munene,1992).

Another impact of colonial administration was that that it ended up labeling certain communities as belonging to certain ethnic groups and went ahead to delimit boundaries accordingly. Sobania (2003) argues that by declaring that certain individuals belonged to specific communities, the colonial regime discouraged peacefull interactions between these communities. Although one of the reasons for the separation was to prevent intercommunity raiding and warfare, inadvertently, the government drastically reduced other intercommunity activities such as trade and marriage ties that had always existed to ameliorate tensions between these communities. Elders in the community were often tasked with the responsibility of limiting execcive interethnic strife. The main reason was that raiding severely limited

opportunities for the trade, as well as intermarriages. Aspects of interaction which were often necessary for a community's economic well-being and also ensured communities received help to cope during times of hardship. Thus in essence, colonialism sharpened the wedge between different communities, a phenomenon that post independence political leaders exarabated for their polical gain.

Job categories were also used to discriminate these communities hence developing a myth about the capabilities of each community whereby the Luo were said to make good fishermen and dockworkers, the Akamba stopped being traders and became good watchmen, while the Kikuyu became tenant farmers, traders and domestic workers. As these Kenyans were forced to move to towns to look for jobs, they interacted and forged a common interest. Labourers from different places were brought together and. treated the same; thereby forging a common bond against colonial rule in the large farms or plantations. Unfortunately, as large towns like Nairobi, Mombasa, and Eldoret emerged, special zones were created for African habitation by the colonial regime. Here people from different nationalities became neighbours and developed a culture that was different from that of the rural areas (Munene,1992).

Equally, while the railroad had been built for strategic reasons, the colonial state believed that its maintenance could only be achieved by an agriculturally productive white settler community. African lands were then set aside for white occupation and Indians were excluded from participating in this agricultural undertaking. The regime ensured that Africans provided labour for these settlers by using several strategies including; taxation, forced labour, *kipande* system, squatter system, creation of reserves and violence (Munene,1992).

Ethnic relations in Kenya, therefore, have been affected by colonial attitudes (Munene, 1992). The myth of tribal homelands, created in the colonial period to serve British interests, is so well entrenched that today it is still possible to hear politicians describing other Kenyans as "foreigners" in supposed "tribal" homelands. A pattern established in colonial times, namely, that of emphasizing "tribal" differences when common grievances against the government 'unites them, has been carried over to the post-independence period. Certainly, the current leaders of Kenya cannot be accused of not learning from history.

3.5 Impact of colonialism on political systems of the Kalenjin

The British strove to maintain precolonial systems of power in respect to African customary systems whenever feasible. British indirect control entrusted local administration to indigenous chiefs, monarchs, or other authority with traditional claims to power, allowing them to rule essentially autonomously so far as they collaborated with colonial authorities (Crowder 1964; Lange 2004). Local agents were permitted a high degree of autonomy, including "executive, parliamentary, and judiciary powers to govern social interactions in their chiefdoms" (Lange 200, 907). Local agents were tasked with collection of taxes for the government and adhering to the parameters established by the British Residents, although they were otherwise essentially independent (Crowder 1968, 221–223). This concentration of power in a single place prompted Mamdani (1996) to refer to the successful form of government that would evolve from British indirect control as "decentralized dictatorship."

This decentralized dictatorship resulted in the creation of a cabal of African chiefs and paramount chiefs who shamelessly abused their position, harassed their peers, and amassed fortune. Their word became law in the villages and they had the powers to give

directives which were often carried out by the locals unquestionably. They also surrounded themselves with like-minded elders whom they were given the powers to appoint by the colonial regime. This colonial system of chiefs and elders has persisted to date and has been exploited by politicians for their own personal gains. These politicians and ethnic elites have often called night meetings attended by elders and they have passed decisions that they believed were for the benefit of the locals against the infringement by immigrants in the areas prone to political violence like Uasin Gishu. This was an abuse of the traditional elders' council among the Kalenjin, which frequently made choices for the greater interest of community. The argument presented by Wucherpfennig *et al* (2016). is that the British policy of backing traditional rulers and allowing them substantial authority led to the formation of networks of powerful rural despots governing ethnically bounded areas. Consequently, by the time of independence, political authority in British colonies was considerably more concentrated in the shape of ethnically circumscribed chiefdoms.

Taking stock of the preceding narrative on ethnicity, inequality, and economic growth in pre- and early post-independence Kenya, Bedasso (2017) asserts that political ethnicity and persistent inequality coexist. Bedasso identifies three significant trends throughout the colonial period. First, he notes that ethnicity helped cement the political objectives on the eve of emancipation due to the need to fortify negotiating power in societies that were already balkanized by the operating administrative system; economic growth occurred concurrently with prolonged inequality all through the early years, although the majority of the advantage seems to have accumulated to labour; and after independence, the majority of social stratification was driven by the Kenyanisation of colonial institutions.

Understanding the ethnic complexities within Kenya's political landscape requires considering the unequal impact of colonial capitalism on different ethnic communities (Kitching 1980, Leys 1975, Swainson 1977). The roots of ethnic consciousness observed in Kenya's political dynamics can be partly traced back to the arbitrary division of borders and local governance along linguistic and cultural lines by British colonialists. This approach was based on the assumption that Africans were organized into "tribes," thus leading colonial authorities to rely on tribal structures (Sandbrook, 1985, pp 49-50).

3.6 Weaponization of Kalenjin as a Community

The arrival of other communities into Rift Valley, coupled with the dwindling of and competition for resources including land slowly made the Kalenjin to coalesce for their survival. This situation, therefore, saw the coming together of the several formerly independent but culturally and linguistically related communities into the Kalenjin in the 1940s. According to Mwanzi (1997), the Kalenjin speaking people did not come from anywhere, therefore, they came together rather than spread. The views of Mwanzi are echoed by Kipkorir (1970), who asserts that the name Kalenjin is not only a recent invention, but is also artificial and political in its roots. The political origin of the Kalenjin is also supported by a respondent, who stated thus:

Kalenjin means I say to you or tell you. They were galvanized and brought together by Moi for political reasons so that they can be a big mighty strong group like the GEMA for the sake of controlling more resources, to have a bigger voice in politics, to have them control the passage of bills in parliament. They have more seats therefore they can get many things done for their people” (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/2021).

The respondent reiterates that the Kalenjin identity has been used by the political elite in the pre-independence period to mobilize them so that they can have a greater political and economic impact.

Opondo (2014) also notes that, in their struggle for a stake in sharing the national resources, politicians often identify ethnicity as handy for bargaining of resource access. This view is shared by Kipkorir (1970) states that the term Kalenjin, in addition to being a recent coinage, is also unpretentiously artificial and political in origin, and that the term currently used to describe a group of related communities can be traced back to World War II.

Jenkins (1996) emphasizes that the Kalenjin groups united in opposition to British colonial dominance. The British interacted with each group separately. The Kalenjin were basically the last ethnic group that the British controlled militarily. And it was as a result of this colonial experience that the different Highland Nilotic peoples gathered to lobby for their concerns before the British colonial authority. According to Atieno-Odhiambo (2002), ethnic identification as a survival strategy in emerging urban social formations has been the bane of conventional anthropological research in colonial Africa. In Kenya, this explains the formation of the Mijikenda as a unique identity from the Swahili community in Mombasa in the 1930s and the Kalenjin as a group conceived by colonial broadcasting services in the 1950s.

In the view of Omosule (1989) the Nandi speakers were not referred to as the Kalenjin until the early 1950s when they emerged as a major ethnic group in Kenya. Until then they were generally referred to by scholars and colonial administration officials as the Nandi Speakers. Some of the Nandi speakers that coalesced between 1940s and 50s to form the larger Kalenjin included the Kipsigis, Terik, Keiyo, Sabaot, Pokot, Marakwet and Nandi.

Weighing in on the debate on the convergence of the Kalenjin, (Krantz 2022; Kipkorir 1982, 1970) argue that Kalenjin political stance first came into focus in the 1940s, in the

form of the Kalenjin Union, an organization of ex- servicemen, and then through the actions of Kalenjin students at Alliance High School like Taaita Towett who formed the Kalenjin club and in the Makerere College. Krantz (2022) notes that the term gained wider currency in the 1950s and became part of an effort to forge a stronger sense of collective cultural identity. Infact, according to the District report (1962), some Kalenjin members of Uasin Gishu district sought a meeting to form a non-political Kalenjin Social Club in April 1962.

According to Lynch's perspective, such developments aided the colonial regime's goal of divide and rule by making administration simpler. As in the instance of the Luhya ethnic group of Western Province, whose collective identity was forged from nine linguistically related nationalities, the colonial authority was involved in some type of ethnic re-engineering. This was accomplished mostly for administrative convenience.

Lynch argues that the persistent restriction of political mobilization to ethnic groups resulted in the emergence of new forms of ethnic identity through fusion. The formation of the 'Kalenjin' ethnic group from several Kalenjin-speaking subgroups throughout the middle of the twentieth century is a prime example. The establishment of the Kalenjin identity was a deliberate effort by prominent local politicians to increase their negotiating leverage in an increasingly ethnicized environment (Lynch 2011; Kipkorir 1982; Omosule 1989). Once the ruling alliance was firmly anchored on ethnic grounds, the Kalenjin-speaking elites were confident that a bigger ethnic base would strengthen their position in the national political arena

The core reasons for the creation of Kalenjin community and its protection, elicited some primordial reactions from Kalenjin elite who on many occasions swore to protect their land and resources even to death. One such political elite was Murgor who as reported by (Korir 2022), was ready to engage ballistic ally for and on behalf of his

community. In 1961 William C Murgor caused a furor when he warned that if Britain did not divide Kenya into six regional governments at the 2nd Lancaster Conference, he would ask his kinsmen to sharpen their spears and poison their arrows for war.

Murgor who was serving as the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Defense and Internal Security, spoke with extreme anger that he hit the dais so hard with his walking stick until it broke. He received loud cheers when he told the crowd of 3,000 that he would personally lead the war. In other words:

A whistle will be blown for the implementation of the KADU master plan and I will lead the war myself. I therefore appeal to you to sharpen your spears in preparation for the fight when we come back from London (Korir 2022; p34).

Thus this study opines that the need to survive against the colonial onslaught and later on the effects of colonialism upon the Kalenjin community, prompted them to come together into an alliance of a unified identity for their survival. This is in agreement with the primordial tendencies of some communities whereby, according to (Bayar 2009; Kaliyev and Ventsel 2021) ethnicity originates out of similarities such as kinship, is fixed after construction, and finally shaped by conflicts with neighbouring communities. The threat faced by the Kalenjin communities on the eve of independence, forced them to coalesce for their political and economic survival.

The instrumentalist theory explains that the political origins of the Kalenjin people as a group was politicized in the wake of independence by the political elite who due to the fear of losing out on the political say due to inferior numbers in the leg-co, marshalled up the related communities for more political muscle. This section, therefore, examined in part the growth of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu during the colonial period, as a result of the effects of colonialism on the ownership of land and movement of other ethnic communities into Uasin Gishu. The section further discussed the political

associations formed and how they contributed toward weaponizing ethnic differences in Uasin Gishu and the country at large, as based on the instrumentalist theory of ethnic conflicts.

The response of the major communities in Uasin Gishu on the other hand, is hinged on all the three theories working in tandem; Primordialism is the glue that binds and identifies them to act together against others, instrumentalism depicts how the politicians and elites manipulate ethnicity for their political ends, while the relative deprivation theory brings out the underlying grievances which have escalated weaponization of ethnicity into violent political conflict.

3.7 The Land quandary in Uasin Gishu

The coming and settlement of the colonial masters had profound effects on ownership of land in Uasin Gishu and Rift Valley at large. It led to the growth of toxic ethnic relations within Rift Valley that were initially nonexistent. The issue of land ownership became complicated as a struggle ensued between the original owners of land such as the Maasai and Kalenjin against other communities who had arrived as the squatters and labourers. (Africa Watch, 1993). Individuals who had lived in the Rift Valley and enjoyed free rights over grazing land were unable to enjoy them since some were forcefully pushed into reserves and lived as squatters within the white men's settlement schemes. The Kalenjin and Maasai who were the original dwellers and tillers of Rift Valley land laid a rightful claim on the land.

On the other hand, squatters such as the Kikuyu who had migrated in and helped the colonial masters use the land in commercial agriculture made a rival claim on the same land. Meanwhile, the Kikuyu who had previously owned land in central Kenya were discontented and this led to the formation of Mau Mau. This uprising threatened to force

the colonial masters out of central Kenya and later, they threatened to invade the white highlands in order to get land for settlement. (Haberson, 1971). The means and ways used by the regime to sort out these scenarios have partly contributed to ethnic animosities founded on land ownership in Uasin Gishu. This colonial legacy is referred to by Oucho (2010) as the internal migration system in Kenya has been characterized by conflict, as it often pits migrant laborers (including squatters) and migrant settlers against "host communities," leading to periodic outbreaks of violence.

When Kenya achieved independence, the land question was not completely resolved. The white settlers had the option of retaining the land they had gained within the colonial period and this left them with the choicest of land within the Rift Valley. Following independence, most of the settlers went back to their own country and had another option of selling their land to the government under President Jomo Kenyatta (Africa Watch, 1993). Individual farmers who were squatters were able to buy for themselves land or collectively via cooperatives and schemes. Many Kikuyu were able to acquire land that had previously belonged to the Kalenjin and the Maasai because they received aid at independence from President Jomo Kenyatta (Africa Watch, 1993). Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's founding President, was the principal architect of land transfers. He took use of his unassailable position to establish his relatives, likely using the constitution that enabled Kenyans to dwell wherever in the country (Oucho, 2010). In the 1960s and 1970s, a huge number of Kikuyu came into the Rift Valley region from the overpopulated Central Province, which was mostly the result of land loss (Kanogo, 1987).

Unlike the Kalenjin and Maasai, Kikuyu were not pastoralists but farming was an established practice within their communities. Kalenjin had not been interested in acquisition of title deeds as they had the communal perception in ownership of land. In

contrast, the Kikuyu were ardent farmers and prior to being marginalized and being pushed into reserves, they had been having a keen interest in the communal ownership of land. Therefore, once they landed in the Uasin Gishu and other areas of the Rift Valley, these immigrants began farming in earnest, while some of the Kalenjin who were the inhabitants of these lands, wallowed in poverty after the loss of their land.

Kenya, like the majority of African colonies, was created by colonialists. This creation was wrong from the start and was thus a catastrophe in the making, as the created region brought together many ethnic groupings, some of whom had little to no cultural links. Other communities were antagonistic to one another. Therefore, cultural uniformity is hardly a panacea for political stability. Depending on a number of factors, culturally varied ethnic populations may conflict unless those in charge make a concerted effort to foster tolerance. As already seen, by the end colonial rule, the Uasin Gishu had already been populated by different communities, thus establishing a potential tinderbox for conflicts.

The establishment of Kenya as a British protectorate played a significant role in altering the social, economic, and political position of the Kalenjin in Uasin Gishu, according to an examination of the repercussions of colonialism in Uasin Gishu and Rift Valley in general. . Further loss of land led to change of lifestyle among the Kalenjin, changes which were forced upon them hence resisted; these included, providing labor on European farms and homes, education, Christianity and the acquisition of land, among others. The rejection by the Kalenjin of European ideals was based on the distrust they had for the Europeans as a result of their earlier encounters, as well as the pride they had as a people. Unfortunately for the Kalenjin, some of these changes, even though they adopted them, were done so too late since other communities had already been engaged by Europeans within Kalenjin land to take various positions. Lynch (2006) contends

that the establishment of strict administrative boundaries, the regulation and supervision of Native Reserves, and the dependence on provincial administrators all served to reinforce macro-ethnic identities and eventually fostered the development of a concept known as ethnic territoriality.

With the development of ethnic territoriality, the introduction of settlement schemes in the 1960s intensified ethno-political tensions which then led to what Adar (2000) refers to as hidden violence. In Rift Valley Province, local communities harbored resentment towards the land redistribution initiative, perceiving it as biased in favor of the Kikuyu community. Land alienation as a result of settlers acquiring land from “natives” acted as a precursor for creating ethnic rifts between different indigenous communities. According to Oucho (2010), the Maasai, Kalenjin, Kikuyu, and Mijikenda, who were the most impacted, have not had their position rectified. The majority of their land has slipped into the hands of greedy Kenyans and unethical land-buying corporations.

3.8 Chapter Summary

The colonial period left hefty imprints on the lives of the Kalenjin people. These imprints were to later on have an impact on the manner in which the Kalenjin lived, as well as their relationships with the immigrant communities. The arrival of settlers and the establishment of colonial rule led to massive land loss due to the colonial land policies which appropriated Kalenjin land for European settlement. The loss of Kalenjin land was historic in many ways; it resulted in loss of livelihood for the Kalenjin who were initially pastoralists, forcing them to start adopting agriculture. Many of them lost their livestock due to colonial destocking policies and lack of pasture. Some Kalenjin communities were forced to immigrate to neighbouring countries and communities. Other Kalenjin people were forced to seek wage labour just like the immigrant communities on settler farms, and yet just before the arrival of the Europeans, the

Kalenjin were reigning supreme and had subjugated most their neighbouring communities. It should be noted that one of the worst calamities that befell them was that the prevailing circumstances forced many of them to swallow their pride as a community as well as the fact that they lost their land which in essence, was their identity as a community. It is noteworthy that the last two factors have continued to have an impact on Kalenjin interactions with other migrant communities.

Some of the early political associations and parties formed during the colonial period, were initially aimed at addressing local issues affecting their communities. Thus, it was only natural that the Kalenjin politicians engaged the colonial regime with a view of seeking solutions to the land question for the Kalenjin. Thus, these politicians were more concerned with resolutions like a constitution that would ensure protection or redress of their people's land problems to prevent further encroachment, and ensure security. In a bid to protect their people, these politicians coalesced all the Kalenjin peoples together, for they realised that by uniting their people, their strength in numbers could be used as a political bargaining chip. In their zeal to protect their people's resources, some of these politicians roused ethnic pride among the Kalenjin while at the same time kindling seeds of ethnic animosity against the immigrants by championing Majimboism and territorialism.

Most of the outsiders who settled in Uasin Gishu during the colonial period, were majorly labourers who came in need of jobs that could be found on the settler farms. The indigenous population were also in need of the same for their survival. This competition for scarce resources eventually played a role in building underlying causes of animosities between the two groups of communities. The deprivation of the Kalenjin original land espoused the application of relative deprivation theory since most of the later ethnic conflicts and political violence are driven by resultant unresolved historical

injustices originating from the alienation and subsequent loss of communally owned land in Uasin Gishu. This then later led to more ethnic animosities between the Kalenjin and these communities especially beginning from the onset of independence since these communities were already better placed than the Kalenjin politically, socially, and economically. This situation was further exacerbated after independence, and therefore in the struggle for political space and recognition, Kalenjin political leaders made it fodder during political campaigns especially amidst settlement of other nationalities into Uasin Gishu during the Kenyatta Government and its impact on weaponized ethnicity and intermittent political violence.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE IMPACT OF JOMO KENYATTAS REIGN ON WEAPONIZED ETHNICITY AND INTERMITTENT POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN UASIN GISHU, 1963- 1978

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the Kenyatta era and the way his government handled the creation, distribution and sale of settlement schemes, the resettling of the landless especially in Rift Valley and how the establishment of these settlement schemes impacted on the relations between the local and immigrant communities. It also analyses the impact of Kenyattas economic and land policies on political relations in post independence period with a view to establishing the interplay between these political differences and ethnic animosities then and in the preceding regimes. The partisanship and biasness were also witnessed in his government whereby his cabinet was mainly from GEMA (Gikuyu, Embu and Meru, Association). These were closely related ethnic groups from around Mt Kenya hence they were nicknamed The Mount Kenya Mafia and they also formed his kitchen cabinet. Kenyatta utilized GEMA to preserve Kikuyu's socioeconomic and political dominance and the status quo, much to the chagrin of other ethnic groups (Wamwere, 2008).

The relative deprivation theory is used to analyse the development of resentment among the Kalenjin as they felt disenfranchised by the colonial regime, a situation that was exacerbated by Kenyatta's government through its political and economic policies which they felt denied them the chance to recoup their losses. The Kalenjin believed that Kenyattas government further marginalised them while at the same time pacifying them by appointing their people like Moi in positions of power.

Over the years, this fostered a sense of discrimination among the Kalenjin as well as other Kenyan ethnic groups, leading to discontent, anger, enmity, and hatred. At the time of his death, Kenyatta left behind a society marked by corruption and impunity, geographical inequality, ethnopolitical patronage, ethnic enmity, stereotyping and hostility. All these set the stage for ingrained ethnic resentment and future conflicts over the control of scarce resources in Uasin Gishu.

4.1 The Establishment of Settlement Schemes, Ethnic Rivalries and the Genesis of Deprivation

Beginning in the early 1960s, the land reform initiative occurred concurrently with ideas of political independence. This meant that both land and political independence negotiations influenced one another. The settlement of one ethnic group inevitably impacted the other, leading to ethnicity becoming a significant factor in political discourse and land settlement issues. This dispute over land for the Kalenjin in Rift Valley was influenced by whether or not Majimbo existed. In 1962, in response to this ethnicization, the Regional Boundaries Commission drew new borders. Depending on the perceived dangers that other ethnic communities brought to their area, many groups attempted to split from or join with others. As has been mentioned earlier, the Kalenjin leaders advocated for Majimboism which they believed would help to protect and restore their land rights.

After the World War two, increased land alienation resulted in the building up of tensions between the settlers and the squatters. This forced the colonial regime to adopt the resettlement scheme approach that saw many of Kikuyu, Maasai and Kalenjin being passed back and forth within the Rift Valley. In a few years, according to Edward Northey's 1919 report, the number of settlers in or around the Kalenjin reserve rose to

the consternation of the Kalenjin. (KNA, Alienation of land from native reserves, Sir Edward Northey (Government of Kenya) to Winston Churchill (Colonial Office) 8th August, 1919 C.O 533/280: S.V MIC Ser.2260).

From one of the respondents, this study rendered an ironical summary of President Kenyatta's reign in regard to the Kalenjin thus:

Kenyatta covered us with a blanket "*Aliweka sisi blanketi, alisema ukipata mtu analala ongeza yeye blanketi alale mzuri*" He found us "sleeping" and added another blanket, but we also accepted the blanket. (OI, Matthew Mos, 20/07/2021. Besiabor).

The Kalenjin community harbors a sense of grievance due to the perceived disdain from other major ethnic groups. According to Nowrojee (1993), there is a prevailing sentiment among the Kalenjin that migrant communities do not hold them in high regard and frequently look down upon them. This perception is believed to have been influenced by the precedence set by President Kenyatta, contributing to a feeling of disrespect and marginalization among the Kalenjin.

At the end of the day, the Kalenjin community felt shortchanged as more and more settlements were created in their lands. Worse still, majority of the new settlers were Kenyatta's people. The Kalenjin had assumed that independence would right the injustices of the colonial regime, but they realized that was not the case, yet there was almost nothing they could do apart from watch helplessly as more reserves were haplessly created in Uasin Gishu for more immigrants. These resentments were to later propel the deadly clashes after the demise of President Kenyatta. A respondent explained the feelings of resentment against Kenyatta's handling of the land issue after independence. In his own words:

The person who brought the problems of land is Kenyatta. At independence the British government gave Kenya a grant to buy land from the willing settlers to settle Kikuyu whose land had been taken away, but what happened is that they

bought land from the Europeans and appropriated themselves that land. then he took the forest declared them settlement schemes and took the Kikuyu from rural areas and settled them there, they settled in this places with their names like Kiambaa. These people were not settled in their former lands but were put elsewhere all over the country like Mpeketoni (Amunga Titus, OI, Kipkaren, 21/07/2021).

Kanyinga (2009) suggests that in the Rift Valley, the government and white farmers opted to focus on the Kikuyu community and relocate them from European farms. The rationale behind this decision was to prevent the influx of land-seeking relatives from central Kenya, which tended to occur the longer the Kikuyu remained on these farms. Additionally, this strategy aimed to diminish the risk of violent seizure of settler farms by the Mau Mau insurgency while simultaneously appeasing the militants. Widner (1993) also notes that immediately after independence, the relationship between the Mau Mau detainees and Kenyatta's government was very shaky due to their grievances on land. This forced Kenyatta to compromise in order to prevent a descent into violence as the militants were threatening.

As a result, the government and white settlers strained relations between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin by focusing on addressing the issue of Kikuyu squatters. This tension arose because the Kalenjin asserted their rights to land in a region they regarded as their ancestral territory, having been established there long before the colonial administration arrived (Kanyinga, 2009). The re-Africanization efforts in the white highlands, with a heightened focus on the Kikuyu community, intensified the ethnic dimension of the land question and set the stage for ethnic mobilization as a means of asserting land rights. Subsequent resettlement initiatives post-independence, such as the One Million Acre Scheme aimed at re-Africanizing the white highlands, further fueled ethnic animosity and laid the groundwork for future violence, particularly in the Rift Valley region and specifically in Uasin Gishu (Kanyinga, 2009).

The aim of the establishment of the One Million Acre Settlement Scheme was to allocate land to smallholders on approximately one million acres of land situated on the peripheries of reserves. Nearly 80,000 hectares (approximately 200,000 acres) were to be acquired annually for a period of five years. Notably, as highlighted by Leo (1989), the selection process for individuals to benefit from these settlement initiatives was based on a system of incentives and penalties. This approach was designed to address the issue of insecurity and fear among European farmers stemming from the presence of ex-Mau Mau fighters (Leo, 1989).

The initial chance to partake in the settlement program was extended to individuals who had served on the property for the longest duration. Given that numerous Kikuyu laborers had continued to work on settlers' farms for decades following land expropriation and tenure alterations, they emerged as the predominant beneficiaries of the program. This aspect on the allocation of settler farms was affirmed by Mzee Chuma in an oral interview thus;

The workers of the settlers were given first priority in being given the farms of the settlers as the settlers were leaving. They paid 525/= per 70 to 50 acres. Some people joined forces to raise the money. From 1968 to 1969 these plots were demarcated and from 1970 to 1971 roads were constructed in these schemes. The first owners majorly were Kalenjin, they started selling the land at around 1967 to mostly Luhya who were the majority in this area at the time (OI, Paul Chuma, 21/07/2021. Chepsaita).

This revelation tallies with the revelation made by Kanyinga (2009), who adds that there was also an ethnic component to the settlement projects. The disproportionate representation of Kikuyu beneficiaries compared to other ethnic groups created the perception that the settlement projects primarily aimed to address land scarcity among the Kikuyu community rather than other populations. The administration justified this preference by pointing to the reorganization of militants under the Land and Freedom

Army, which emphasized the Kikuyu's historical grievances and their claim to land rights in the highlands.

Furthermore, Kenyatta's administration prioritized economic stability over addressing the root causes of the Mau Mau uprising. This approach led to the marginalization of former ex-Mau Mau fighters and other land-hungry ethnic groups. As the new elites sought to acquire more land, public disillusionment with the government grew, and disparities in land ownership structures became increasingly obvious.

4.1.1 Settlement Schemes, Deprivation of Kalenjin Land and Ethnic Resentment

In the 1960s, the introduction of settlement plans and land acquisition programs contributed to the emergence of ethno-political tensions. Additionally, communities in the Rift Valley Province opposed these initiatives because they perceived them as favoring the Kikuyu ethnic group in a region that the Kalenjin considered their home (Kanyinga, 2009).

While Kenya's land settlement program was a crucial aspect of the emancipation process, aimed at rectifying the land expropriation by British settlers during colonial rule, it resulted in inequalities. The wealthy were able to acquire land indiscriminately, often at the expense of the landless. Migrants who had been squatting in the Rift Valley Province took advantage of the limited time allowed to them by white settlers to assert claims on land belonging to the Kalenjin and Maasai communities (Oucho, 2010). This led to the settlement of other communities into areas like Uasin Gishu, as summarized by one respondent:

During the time of Kenyatta, the Kikuyu came to Rift Valley to work on farms, others bought Europeans farms by coming together and pooling their resources. But the Kalenjin did not go to work - they only took care of their cows. Other communities also worked on the farms and when the Europeans left, they gifted good workers with land. Others were bid to pay 10% the cost of the land then pay the balance in instalments, so they

bought the land. The Kalenjin said they could not buy their own land so they did not buy. But when the others started harvesting and progressing, the Kalenjin started feeling bad and talking badly, (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 06/12/21).

In the 1970s, as land pressure intensified, the Kalenjin became increasingly hostile towards the government's efforts. Recognizing that they were lagging behind the Kikuyu, Kisii, Luhya, and others, the Kalenjin established land-purchasing corporations to compete for land. However, they encountered political obstacles. Kanying (2009) attributes these bottlenecks to the fact that the Kikuyu wielded significant influence over the Ministry of Lands and Settlement, as well as the financial institutions providing loans for land acquisition. The Minister for Lands and Settlement was a member of the Kikuyu-related Meru ethnic group, and senior ministry officials were also predominantly Kikuyu.

According to Anderson and Lochery (2008), a land transfer scheme from European to African ownership was developed around the late 1950s. The Million Acre Scheme was established between 1962 and 1967 with the aim of facilitating African settlement on 1.17 million acres of former White Highlands property (Abraham, 1979). Anderson and Lochery (2008) highlight that the Million Acre Scheme intended for settlement areas to be occupied by communities already residing in neighboring regions. This would enable indigenous tribes to "reclaim" territories they had previously inhabited before European colonization. Alternatively, they were also allowed to acquire ownership of land on which they had been "squatting" for many years as laborers on settler farms.

Anderson and Lochery (2008) also narrate, that the transactions under the Million Acre Scheme were conducted on the basis of a willing-buyer-willing-seller principle, which quickly undermined the initial intention to prioritize local communities. As people from other communities, the Kikuyu, who had more money, ended up purchasing the

majority of the land. As a result, throughout the Rift Valley, many sorts of settlement schemes evolved, with only a limited number reserved for indigenous populations and others including a "mix" of people from two or more ethnic groups.

4.1.2 Establishment of More Settlement Schemes in Uasin Gishu, And The Increase of Ethnic Resentments

Abraham (1979) observes that by 1975, there were over 250 government-sponsored settlement programs across Kenya, with the majority situated in the Rift Valley Province or its vicinity. Kanyinga (2009) elaborates on the development of settlement projects in the Uasin Gishu District between 1960 and 1980. During this period, several schemes were established in stages. Between 1962 and 1964, six settlement plans were implemented at Ainabkoi East, Ainabkoi West, Ainabkoi North, Elgeyo Border, Kaptagat, and Sosiani. The settlers comprised a mix of Kalenjin, landless Kikuyu, and a few affluent buyers. It was anticipated that these new arrivals would serve as models of "best agricultural practices" for their less experienced and less affluent neighbors. By 1968, five additional schemes had been initiated at Timboroa, Ndalat, Chapsaita, Tapsogai, and Ngenyilel. Similar to the initial phase, a diverse array of settlers, including impoverished Kikuyu, settled in these projects, with Timboroa being predominantly occupied by them.

Additionally, Anderson and Lochery (2008) observe that the subsequent phase occurred between 1970 and 1975, when smaller systems were established in Burnt Forest, Moiben, and Ex-Caley. In addition to establishing schemes on farms acquired from fleeing Europeans, the government also established Shirika and Haraka. From the early 1970s to the early 1980s, around fourteen of these schemes were instituted, and by the late 1980s, Uasin Gishu had approximately thirty schemes, comprising more than 7,500 plots, encompassing about 16 percent of the district's rural land area. These settlements

provided residences for approximately 60,500 individuals, as per Kanyinga (2009). In the initial phases of these initiatives, local officials, including chiefs and headmen, compiled lists of squatters and the landless, and a lottery system was employed for allocation. There were a few complaints over this system, as the bulk of land recipients were Kalenjin (Anderson and Lochery 2008).

However, Kanyinga explains that beginning in the late 1970s, the apportionment of land parcels on schemes was transferred to the provincial administration and the direct authority of the Office of the President owing to changes in administrative procedures. This increased the level of corruption in the allocations process. As settlers sold their plots, ethnic patterns of occupation on the schemes got rapidly more intricate, (Kanyinga, 2009). The continued sale of land inside these settlement programs has had a profound effect on the ethnic composition of some regions. One of the respondents shed light on the development of ethnic patterns in the settlement schemes by explaining thus:

During those days, some of the Kikuyu people did not have land. But they could join together in groups, collect money, and request people like Kihika Kimani to look for land from settlers who were willing to sell. Kihika Kimani therefore assisted very many Kikuyu by getting the land and negotiating for them. That is how Kikuyu settled in large areas on account of the fact that they ended up buying large pieces of land usually from one settler, (James Macharia, OI. Turbo, 12/12/21).

The Kalenjin communities of the Rift Valley did not welcome the establishment of settlements on their territory since it contradicted their anticipation of receiving their land back unconditionally. As a result, when one of the first settlement plans, the Million Acre Scheme, was suggested, several Kalenjin groups protested the concept that they should pay to reclaim land that they felt was theirs to begin with. They coordinated efforts to boycott the auctions and distribution procedures under the

leadership of KADU, which initially rejected all settlement proposals (Klopp, 2001). The relationship between Majimboism and territorialism has already been examined.

When plots were offered in other regions, Kikuyu, Kisii, and Luhya buyers often outbid the Kalenjin buyers who had been unsuccessful in the first allocations. Particularly problematic were the areas formerly occupied by the Kikuyu forest squatters, who had been in the employment of the forest service. These incidences are backed especially by Anderson and Lochery (2008). It is unfortunate that in an effort to reclaim territory and preserve political power, ethnicity was weaponized in some of these regions where the Kalenjin suffered loss of land, leading to a rise in political violence.

In the late 1970s, with the worsening landlessness among the Kalenjin community and the advocacy of local political leaders for the establishment of new schemes to address the needs of the Kalenjin, tensions escalated, taking on increasingly political dimensions. However, the government did not support these efforts to safeguard local land rights. Kanyinga (2009) reports that in 1982, Kalenjin MP Seroney was imprisoned and charged with incitement for demanding for the preservation of Kalenjin lands against the encroachment of other communities. The combination of the loss of land and the presence of immigrant groups has fostered ethnic animosity and hatred toward these newcomers. Politicians have frequently used and manipulated these two negative emotions, inciting the Kalenjin population to rebel against the immigrant settlers.

4.1.3 Moi Factor and The Influx of The Kikuyu Into The Rift Valley

According to Anderson and Lochery (2008), Moi consistently advocated for the willing-buyer-willing-seller principle throughout the settlement process of the 1960s and 1970s. However, many Kalenjin came to believe that the influx of Kikuyu immigrants into the Rift Valley was the price Moi paid for assuming the position of vice-President under Kenyatta. This rebellious discourse originated in the 1980s, but its

loudness intensified when Moi stood down as President in December 2002, and when Uhuru Kenyatta, Moi's designated successor, lost the Presidential election. Moi had encouraged the Kalenjin to vote for independence. Those who supported a militant Majimboist stance criticized Moi for 'betraying' the Kalenjin by supporting 'foreign' (Kikuyu) colonization in the Rift Valley. One respondent lamented thus; “Those days, we were not happy with Moi. We thought he was going to help us get back our land but he just kept quite. We wondered what had happened to him” (Kosgei Keino, OI, Chepsaita, 16/06/22.)

It is important to note that Moi almost became voiceless in Kenyatta's government due to his precarious position as Kenyatta's deputy. For Kenyatta, the landless became a critical constituency in the quest for political power between various politicians and factions. As Karuga narrates in the Africa Report (30/01/2018) Kenyatta relied on Moi to keep his support base, (the Kalenjin) quiet about his people's demands for the restoration of their communal lands amid the onslaught of Kikuyu settlement into the former White Highlands. Moi was seen as the gatekeeper to the Rift Valley and therefore Kenyatta was sure that the Kikuyu who had been displaced into the Rift Valley were safe and could not return to their homelands. Consequently, Kenyatta and his allies were able to comfortably acquire the settler lands that belonged to the displaced Kikuyu. A respondent narrated how some of the Kikuyu were settled into Uasin Gishu by Kenyatta's Government thus;

During independence, you know the government belonged to them. When they saw land here, Kenyatta would remove people from central, take that land in central and give other people in central, then settle the Kikuyu in Uasin Gishu. He could take like 100 people from central, buy for them 2000 acres and settle them, then take their farms that had remained in central. So he was expanding his farms in central. (Keter Julius, OI, Kamagut, 21/07/21)

Therefore, as more and more Kikuyus were settled in Uasin Gishu, the Kalenjin resented this but could not do anything since their leader Moi was in the same government as Kenyatta but he could not oppose the President. Secondly the Kalenjin communities were still not very comfortable with each other. To this end, Haberson (1973) demonstrates that some factor prevented ethnic animosity for land disputes from escalating into violent ethnic conflict during Kenyatta's presidency; the settlement of the national "political question" which was achieved through the inclusion of KADU leaders in government, which helped to mitigate the risk of ethnic violence. However, suspicion and mistrust persisted among various Kalenjin sub-ethnic groups. Therefore, as long as Moi remained Kenyatta's vice President, the Kalenjin had no option but to live with the immigrants and repress their resentment.

4.1.4 Growth of Violent Groups/ Militias

According to reports, the government's inability to address militant groups, fuelled discontent. Former Mau Mau fighters and other militant organizations regrouped as the Land and Freedom Army due to this resentment. The ex-Mau-Mau combatants agitated for additional territory and threatened to forcibly take settler farms if they were not considered, since they had neither been compensated for their services nor for loss of their land (Leo, 1989). The government's answer was to devise immediate measures to defend the Rift Valley inhabitants against invasion by the Mau Mau. One of these steps involved separating the Kinangop portion of the Nyandarua district in the Rift Valley province and uniting it with the Central Province in order to accommodate the landless Kikuyu, whose population was expanding along with their need for additional land.

In summarizing this development, Chege (1998) describes the government's response to avert violent clashes between leaving white settlers and laborers. The new

administration, which was still under self-rule as of June 1963, mandated the rapid relocation of Kikuyu in Kinangop under the Jet Settlement Scheme, that was a crash program. This was done for political convenience, but it had a significant consequence; it avoided a massive and violent occupation of the settlers' fields in 1963, just prior to independence. Other settlement initiatives, such as Haraka and Shirika, were hastily conceived and implemented around 1965 to settle landless people, the bulk of whom were Kikuyu (Nairobi Government Printers, Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence, 2008). The government's move of removing territory from the Rift Valley and incorporating it into the Central Province has been a source of discontent that politicians have exploited to agitate and weaponize ethnicity, resulting in political bloodshed in the Rift Valley region.

According to some inhabitants of Uasin Gishu, discontent is still there because of the wrong drawing of the boundary by the government;

In the conflicts between Kalenjin other communities, the government is to be blamed because they don't clarify the boundary clearly, the colonial boundary is the one acting so if they are to follow the colonial boundary, Rift Valley is up to Nzoia (hence Kalenjin land) while Uasin Gishu goes to Mt. Elgon. The issue of land boundary is the cause of problems between us and other tribes, otherwise Luhya and Kalenjin area like brothers the Kalenjin's will protect Luhya. Uasin Gishu boundary is Mwamba. The Lugari land, Seroney gave Luhya when he asked for votes since he wanted more votes from the Luhya. His giving out of this land will bring problems in future since it was not shown that it belongs to Kakamega and we know that it is our land.

Seroney also gave out Chemelil to Luo, he said the Luo were being carried away by water but he only wanted votes from Luo. They did not put it in the map as belonging to the Luo. Kalejin believe that their land goes up to the railway at Chemilil and yet that is the area that was given out by Seroney. That will bring problems especially among the children who will come later. When they will realise that their land is being given out to other people e.g. Chemilil and Mwamba. (Matayo Lel, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/2021)

Similarly, Kanyinga (2009) explains that the plan for the settlement plans matched the revised ethnic borders, whose report was presented in December 1962. Based on the newly established limits, Property acquired for the settlement of landless groups was designated for specific ethnic communities, particularly those residing in the purchased region. As part of this policy shift, a sizable settlement area known as Kinangop in the Nyandarua district was separated from the Rift Valley and incorporated into the Central Province. This adjustment aimed to accommodate the settlement of the Kikuyu community, who had the highest number of squatters in the highlands and the largest population of landless peasants in their reserves. Such issues have contributed to increased ethnic tensions

According to Kanyinga (2009), addressing landlessness exacerbated the role of ethnicity in the land crisis and national politics. It heightened interethnic tensions, particularly between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin, who were the main ethnic groups

At the beginning of 1965, a land acquisition initiative was introduced to facilitate the expanded redistribution of land in the highlands. Between 1965 and the 1970s, the government primarily favored the acquisition and transfer of land for those with financial means. Leys (1975) and Leo (1989) attribute much of this push to the growing enthusiasm among the emerging African elite for involvement in commercial farming. To facilitate the transition of land from private ownership to new African farmers, the government established the Agricultural Development Cooperative (Kanyinga, 1998: 175). According to Harbeson (1973), this strategy resulted in the primary beneficiaries of huge property holdings in the former highlands being those with salary and political power. It also led to the development of property purchase firms by various socioeconomic groupings in order to successfully negotiate with financial institutions

and funding sources. To the detriment of the Kalenjin, with whom they had a competition in the race to purchase property in the erstwhile white highlands, the Kikuyu controlled the vast majority of land-buying firms founded during this period. One respondent narrated the general sentiments against Kenyatta's government in handling the land issue. In his own words:

The person who brought the problems of land is Kenyatta at independence the British government gave Kenya a grant to buy land from the willing settlers to settle Kikuyu whose land had been taken away, but what happened is that they bought land from the Europeans and appropriated themselves that land, then he took the forest declared them settlement schemes and took the Kikuyu from rural areas and settled them there, they settled in this places with their names like Kiambaa, Burnt Forrest these people were not settled in their former lands but were put elsewhere all over the country eg Mpeketoni (Amunga Titus, OI, Kipkaren, 21/07/2021).

These developments were disadvantageous to the Kalenjin who had not been keen on education and had thus been generally disempowered and impoverished through further loss of land. Therefore, they could not afford to buy land in the settlement schemes. This scenario set the stage for later conflicts as these potent land grievances among the Kalenjin were exploited by their political leaders becoming the catalyst to weaponization of ethnicity and hence the intermittent political violence experienced in Uasin Gishu during the election periods.

The Agricultural Finance Corporation, established in the early 1960s and later merged with the Land Bank, played a pivotal role in providing financial assistance to farmers by extending loans to both cooperatives and private enterprises that emerged during that period (Okoth-Ogendo, 1981). The settlement farms became focal points for intense competition among various land acquisition groups, predominantly distinguished by their ethnic or social compositions. This rivalry escalated into significant interethnic conflicts as each group endeavored to secure the most desirable and extensive farms

through bidding wars. To gain political leverage over the land control boards responsible for authorizing land transactions, each competing faction mobilized support from their respective followers and ethnic territories (Kanyinga, 2009).

4.1.5 Rivalries Over the Purchase, Distribution, Occupation Of Settlement Schemes And Ethnicity

In the Rift Valley province, as per Kanyinga (2009), intense competition, driven by ethnicity and socioeconomic class, was observed primarily between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin land purchasing groups. Njonjo (1978) illustrates numerous instances of such clashes rooted in ethnic and class divisions. Around 1971, a group of over 300 Kikuyu squatters pooled resources to buy the Ngata farm in Nakuru, where they resided. To their dismay, upon gathering the deposit, they discovered that a Kalenjin-owned enterprise had already committed to purchasing the land and had placed the required deposit. This Kalenjin consortium, notably comprising a Member of Parliament (MP) and five other influential landholders, all harbored interests in expanding their land portfolios. As negotiations proceeded, the Kalenjin entrepreneurs swiftly made a deposit, preempting the Kikuyu from securing the land. Sensing the urgency, a Kikuyu representative from Nakuru raised the matter in parliament, advocating for the protection of the Kikuyu squatters. However, a Kalenjin MP promptly backed the Kalenjin consortium, vehemently asserting, "we will not yield an inch... even if they deposited one million, we will deposit ten million and secure that territory" (Njonjo, 1978: 530). Ultimately, the squatters found themselves outmaneuvered by the Kalenjin entity.

In yet another contest over the acquisition of land highlighted by Njonjo, a conflict unfolded between a group of over 20,000 Kikuyu peasants and the Sinendet Farmers

Firm, a predominantly Kipsigis (Kalenjin) company, over the acquisition of a settler farm in Nakuru and Kericho between 1966 and 1968. Both entities received substantial support from their respective political backers, complicating the decision-making process for local land control authorities. Consequently, the clash between these two factions evolved into a symbol of the broader land dispute between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin, drawing significant public attention. Midway through 1968, to the astonishment of the Kikuyu squatters and their prominent MPs, the cabinet determined that Sinendet should be the one to purchase the farm, so deciding in favor of Sinendet.

Subsequently, the police forcibly removed the Kikuyu squatters from the land. However, the local provincial administration stepped in to assist the displaced Kikuyu squatters in acquiring another 5,281-acre farm in Subukia, Nakuru (Njonjo, 1978: 538-9), temporarily resolving the situation. However, tensions resurfaced between 1991 and 1993, leading to violent land disputes between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin ethnic groups in Subukia. Despite being rightful owners of the farms they had purchased, the Kikuyu families were ultimately evicted from the land. Such evictions have frequently occurred in Uasin Gishu during political violence that has frequently been the consequence of ethnicity being weaponized.

In general, these situations highlight the underlying conflicts of the re-Africanization of the highlands. The initiative transformed the highlands into a battleground for ethnic and class struggles over European-owned properties, igniting competition that later erupted into violent conflicts along class and ethnic lines regarding the ownership of Africanized land (Kanyinga, 2009). The intense competition and rivalry for land ownership in the white highlands, including Uasin Gishu, fueled interethnic tensions that proved resistant to resolution through land reform efforts. Access to and control

over land have remained influential factors in shaping local and global political dynamics in the post-independence era. During this period, peasants served as the labor force for the emerging elite and as crucial "vote banks" for influential politicians like Kihika Kimani.

Similarly, immigrant peasant populations have been perceived as a formidable voting bloc that could undermine local political aspirations in Uasin Gishu. Consequently, the deep-seated tensions between the indigenous Kalenjin and immigrant groups are frequently inflamed by the manipulation of Kalenjin identity and assertions of autochthony by politicians affected by these dynamics. This manipulation often results in political violence directed at immigrant communities for strategic political gain.

As outlined by Kanyinga (2009), the primary outcome of the resettlement efforts was to furnish the state elite with the necessary political and economic circumstances to pacify various factions, including former Mau Mau captives and radical politicians. While this alleviated pressure on the government, it also set the stage for interethnic conflicts that couldn't be resolved solely through land reform initiatives. Control over land, and the rights of ownership associated with it, remained a significant factor shaping local as well as global political dynamics.

The acquisition of property rights in the highlands through the land purchase program wasn't solely responsible for inciting interethnic animosity. Rather, the highlands emerged as a pivotal arena for shaping national politics and determining Kenya's collective destiny (Kanyinga, 2009). The composition of leadership positions in terms of class and the ethnic makeup of land-buying entities became significant factors in fueling interethnic rivalries for control over major agricultural estates in the highlands. Elite figures leveraged these dynamics to wage battles against their competitors,

consolidate their social power bases, and fortify their positions within political and ethnic groups. These maneuvers set the stage for future political interactions and relationships among politicians, their local support networks, immigrant populations, territorial politics, and the manipulation of political violence, particularly in Uasin Gishu.

During the 1970s, Ngwantaniro Company, commonly known as Ngwataniro Mutukanio, emerged as one of the largest and politically influential organizations of its time. Established in 1969, its primary objective was to aid landless Kikuyu individuals in the Rift Valley region by facilitating the acquisition of land for both residential and agricultural purposes. By the beginning of 1979, it had around 30,000 members, most of them were Kikuyu from the diaspora, particularly the Rift Valley. Kanyinga (2009) says that politics and business were intertwined in the Ngwataniro firm. Subsequently, some of the executives within the company capitalized on its platform to secure parliamentary and municipal seats in Nakuru, and to gain access to central state politics. As the company's influence expanded, local land control boards found it challenging to reject its requests for acquiring farmland, regardless of competing interests. The Ngwataniro Company propelled Kihika Kimani into political prominence in Nakuru and adjacent Kikuyu-dominated districts, as well as on the national stage. Kimani's election as the Member of Parliament for Nakuru North empowered him to operate a successful political apparatus in the Rift Valley. His business endeavors garnered him favor among the political elite, including President Kenyatta, and other influential figures within the economically and politically powerful Kikuyu community.

This state of affairs has applied in the recent political scenario in Uasin Gishu whereby some of the most prominent and popular politicians have been the ones articulating the

narrative of loss of land by locals to the immigrant communities. As one of the immigrant respondents narrated that an immigrant politician who was popular with the people and tipped to win the MP's seat lost the elections to a little known local aspirant. The main reason for his loss was due to his appeal that the immigrants should be given title deeds to their land, an issue which the locals felt strongly against since they still regard themselves as owners of all the land even though they had sold part of it more than twenty years ago.

In fact, the title deed issue has become one of the most contentious subjects during electioneering periods in Uasin Gishu. The demand to be issued with title deeds by the buyers has often raised political temperatures leading to weaponised political violence as Kalenjin warriors are used to protect the threatened loss of Kalenjin land. The local Kalenjin have always been made to believe that by issuing title deeds, it will mean they have given out all their land and hence have no say at all on the rest of their land. Coming in the background of loss of land as a result of alienation of Kalenjin land by the British, it was easy for the local politicians to convince their followers that they were at the risk of total loss of land once more once they issued out title deeds to the buyers.

4.1.6 Change the Constitution Movement –Moi Era

As a Member of Parliament, Kihika Kimani wielded significant influence in national politics. In 1976, he rallied prominent figures from the Kikuyu, Meru, and Embu communities, including cabinet ministers, to advocate for a constitutional amendment. This proposed amendment aimed to prevent the automatic succession of the Vice-President to the presidency in the event of the President's death or incapacity. Known as the 'Change the Constitution Movement,' its objective was to block Vice-President Moi from ascending to the presidency and to ensure the continuity of Kikuyu leadership in

the highest office. However, this endeavor faced opposition from the Attorney General, who deemed it illegal (Kanyinga, 2009).

Furthermore, the inclusion of KADU (Kenya African Democratic Union) leaders in the cabinet was crucial in averting ethnic tensions and land disputes from escalating into violence during the period leading up to and immediately following independence. However, with the dissolution of KADU in 1964, there was no unified national leadership to advocate for the land rights of the Kalenjin people in the Rift Valley.

However, Jean Marie Seroney, a member of parliament, emerged as the most vocal proponent for Kalenjin rights and interests. In 1969, Seroney and other Kalenjin leaders openly asserted the need to protect Kalenjin territory from encroachment by other communities. In response, authorities arrested Seroney, charging him with incitement (Kanyinga, 1998). With Moi serving as Vice President under a Kikuyu President, many Kalenjin began to perceive him as a barrier to their cause and as someone who prioritized Kikuyu interests. Despite this, for many Kalenjin, having one of their own as Vice President was deemed necessary to represent their interests in a government perceived as being controlled by the Kikuyu and thus predominantly serving Kikuyu political interests.

4.1.7 Resistance and Ethnic Rivalry Between GEMA and The Kalenjin Over Land Settlements in The Rift Valley

Although ethnic animosity and conflicts over land during the reign of Kenyatta took place, but not as violently or expansively as in the Moi and Kibaki eras; as one of the respondents explained,

When I compare Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki, there has been more problems between us and the Kikuyu during Kibakis time. More people have been killed during fights, more houses have been destroyed, and

more people have run away from their homes because of violence due that came from political fights. (Matayo Lel, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/2021).

It is important to note that just after independence, there were feelings of resentment among the Kalenjin towards the immigrants whom they saw as having taken their land. These underlying feelings of resentment occasionally led to physical conflicts between these communities. However, when there were skirmishes between certain communities, the government came in force and acted decisively to deter such attacks. The decisive action by the government under Kenyatta contributed in a way towards deterring and preventing the escalation of ethnic attacks. Two respondents narrating the same incidences that occurred between 1966 -1967 informed this study that;

During the 1966 clashes there was a problem at Pondi's place. Kalenjin went to raid cattle from Kabras and they were caught then they made the war cry (*nduru ikapigwa*) then more people arrived and war started. When the DC called a meeting, these people were arrested. They were arrested and jailed for seven years at Kodiaga, one of them was mzee Malakwen. The arrest and imprisonment of these people really cautioned and deterred the others after they had been imprisoned for seven years. As a result, we feared and maintained peace (Thomas Koech, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21,).

While the other respondent reiterated that;

Solomon Muyundo who was commander of police stopped another fight between Kabras and Kalenjin in 1967 which had resulted due to a quarrel between a Luhya and Kalenjin. (War is also a tradition of Kalenjins) He came with the *askaris* from Kisumu and Eldoret to try and solve the problem. Kalenjin also participated. They were both asked to come in the morning for a meeting. The Kalenjin came with weapons but the Luhya's did not. When asked why they had come with weapons, they said it was for war since they had been fighting. Seven of them who came with weapons were arrested but others ran away. Those who were arrested were imprisoned for seven years at a prison in Kisumu because they were rude (Jacob Mshisa, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21).

Contrary to the views given by some respondents, Mueller is of the opinion that ethnic violence was uncommon throughout Kenyatta's administration, with the exception of threats of violence by some Kalenjin leaders relating to Majimboism, the murder of

three legislators, and the violence that happened in Kisumu (Mueller, 1984). He states that this was because of state control and Kenyatta's use of provincial administration and preventive detention legislation to suppress opposition politics, as well as the deployment of regular and paramilitary security personnel to disperse student and political protests stemmed violence. On the other hand, this study notes that the few skirmishes that took place between the Kalenjin and the immigrant communities in Uasin Gishu were stemmed due to the quick and stern action from the government of the day.

Thus it is important to note that even though some ethnic related conflicts occurred during Kenyatta's period, the conflict did not escalate due to the prompt action taken by the government to manage the situation and restore order. In as much as the government tried to put a check on certain ethnic conflicts that arose at the time, ethnic animosities were slowly taking root due to perceived feelings of deprivation and marginalization by Kenyatta's government.

4.1.8 Monopolization of Government Positions by GEMA and Ethnic Animosity

The majority of key government officials in Kenyatta's administration were Kikuyu, including those in the ministry of lands and settlement. An examination of the composition of public sector employment during the 1960s and early 1970s indicates that the Kikuyu community held a dominant position in top roles, with a higher representation of cabinet ministers and permanent secretaries compared to other ethnic groups (Nellis, 1974). There were no Kalenjin leaders within these institutions or the government. Despite being Vice-President under President Kenyatta, Moi lacked the necessary influence to effectively counter the powerful factions and individuals who were vying for land rights in the highlands.

Consequently, Kikuyu and Kalenjin colonization initiatives in the Rift Valley inevitably remained places of severe rivalry. When Moi ascended to power, the Kalenjin now had the capability to try and change this situation, hence the rise and increase of land clashes which in essence was calculated weaponization of ethnicity by the politicians leading to intermittent political violence. They could now start to fight back against the injustices they suffered under Kenyatta's regime in land allocations and settlements.

4.1.9 Monopoly of Settlement Schemes by GEMA and Ethnic Animosity

Several settlement programs were intended to appease Kikuyu land hunger so as not to destabilize the system of land ownership in the white highlands and the economy as a whole. An analysis of regional settlement patterns exposes the origins of ethnic tensions that led to intermittent political violence. According to various estimates, Kenya had around 418 settlement projects in 2004, with the Rift Valley accounting for 154 of them (37 percent). The districts of Nakuru and Laikipia, hosting the largest Kikuyu diaspora populations, accounted for approximately one-third of the 154 settlement programs. Put differently, in nearly one-third of the programs in the Rift Valley Province, the Kikuyu outnumbered all other ethnic groups.

Sixty percent of Central Province's initiatives were concentrated in the Nyandarua district (Kanyinga, 2009). These figures illustrate the government's efforts in the 1960s to tackle the land issue through settlement schemes and land purchase programs, aimed at securing the economic stability of the new administration by addressing the sole potential source of political unrest the landless Kikuyu in the Rift Valley. It is regrettable that the government's attempt to handle the issue of landlessness among the Kikuyu caused new social-political problems, intensified ethnic hostility, and

eventually served as the basis for interethnic conflicts in the post-independence era at the demand of politicians.

During the 1970s and 1980s, despite the political tension arising from settlement plans and land acquisition programs, widespread violence did not erupt. The land acquisition initiative provided an avenue for elite interests to converge; both the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin acquired extensive land holdings, uniting their class interests into a cohesive group known as the landed. Concurrently, the land purchase program facilitated the organization of various landless groups into land-buying corporations (Kanyinga, 2009). In central Kenya, this initiative notably eased the strain caused by disparities in land ownership, diverting potential internal conflicts to the highlands. As long as land remained available for sale and the Kalenjin could secure purchases, there was little inclination toward direct violence against the Kikuyu.

As economic conditions worsened, the landless Kalenjin grew increasingly desperate, and their frustrations were manipulated by political elites towards immigrant communities occupying their land. Greiner and Onoma acknowledge that land rights had become instrumental in forging political alliances, connecting privileged "landlords" across different regions to the central state (Greiner, 2013; Onoma, 2010). Boone suggests that the direct relationships between central state agents and land users often endured over time through indebtedness, patron-clientelism, or access to land without official titles. These historical and ongoing connections provided a basis for Rift Valley politicians to assert rights and privileges over land allocation in the present and near future (Boone, 2011: 1313). This highlights why national politicians seeking electoral support leverage land-tenure connections to influence land-related issues in specific regions like the Rift Valley, as seen in the elections in 1992, 1997, and 2007

(Bates, 2005; Boone, 2011; Klopp, 2001). In the view of (Médard, 1996; Oucho, 2002) various national elites have utilized postcolonial land-tenure systems to impact ethnic conflicts

The political strategy in the Rift Valley has often been shaped by the land redistribution program of the 1960s and its outcomes. The repeated occurrence of armed political violence can be traced back to both the formulation of land settlement programs and the evident bias towards specific groups. In Uasin Gishu, a clear correlation exists between land, territory, ethnicity, and instances of political violence.

4.1.10 Political assassinations and ethnic strife

The daylight killing of Tom Mboya in 1969, caused the deepest schism between the Kikuyu and the Luo communities. According to Kahuri & Oduo (2019), Thomas Mboya was the young man Kenya wanted to forget, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga is the old man no one will ever forget. Tom Mboya was the Minister of Economic Planning and Development prior to his killing. According to Goldsworthy (1982), despite the fact that he was a Luo, from the second largest nationality in the country at that time, Tom Mboya was interested in the development of the country as a whole (Goldsworth, 1982). The fact that he was in the front lane pushing for the release of Kenyatta did not mean he never deplored the rampage and the blood shed that was the hallmark of the Mau Mau. Tom Mboya's death led to a lot of suspicion and animosity between the Luo and Kikuyu communities. Kadima and Owuor (2006) concur that this happened after the fallout in 1969 between President Kenyatta and the most important Luo leader, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. Following the assassination of Tom Mboya, KANU's secretary general, the unity of the Kikuyu and the Luo, which had been the main strength of KANU was broken. Tension between the Luo and Kikuyu had been brought on by this event by the

Luo blaming the Kikuyu for Tom Mboya's demise. Tom Mboya's death was immediately blamed on the Kikuyu politicians who felt Tom Mboya was a potential threat to *Mumbis house* and its grip to power. Further more, culturally, Mboya came from an uncircumsied community and was, therefore, a boy, and unqualified to lead in line with Kikuyu customs and traditions. Tom Mboya despite being at logger heads with Jaramogi, was the pinnacle and pride of the Luo community (Truth, 2012). His speeches and achievements gave hope to the community that even they could be named not only in Kenya, but Africa and the world at large. His death unleashed riots and demonstrations by the Luo community (Chrips, 2019).

Kenyatta responded to the political difficulty presented by the Mboyas murder by seeking refuge in the Kikuyu ethnicity. When Kenyatta realised that Tom Mboyas death threatened to unite Oginga Odinga with other ethnic groups against the Kikuyu, Kenyatta and the family used Kikuyu solidarity and organised an oathing campaign. The oath was used to mobilise the Kikuyu behind Kenyatta in order to protect the house of Munmbi (Ajulu 2008; Karimi & Ochieng, 1980). Additionally, the oath was taken to bind the Kikuyu towards commitment to ensure that the presidency does not go out of Kikuyu land.

Additionally, Stubbs (2015) provides a rhetoric that upholds these tense relationships. He said that in 1969, tensions rose after the assassination of Tom Mboya, a well-known Luo leader who had stayed loyal to Kenyatta and KANU, by a small-time thief of Kikuyu ethnicity with ties to the secret agencies. An incident that occurred in Kisumu further showed how much the ethnic tension had brewed as a result of the bad blood between Kenyatta and Oginga (Angelo, 2019). In 1969, President Jomo Kenyatta arrived with his motorcade in Kisumu (the capital of the Luo community) for a purpose of officially opening the Russia General Hospital that had been completed. The building

of the hospital had been funded by the USSR (Karimi, 2013). The event coincided with Kisumu Sports Day which had attracted a lot of youth. Oginga Odinga had been excluded by not being invited to the event. This angered the Luo community by adding into the injury of previous loss of their leader Tom Mboya.

During this event, he was greeted by furious Luo masses who accused him of killing Mboya. The people rioted, and threw stones at Kenyatta's motorcade as they chanted the word *Dume*, which was KPU'S mantra. Kenyatta's security forces, led by the GSU reacted by shooting into the crowd, leaving many people dead and hundreds injured in the rampage. The government seized all the recording of that shooting episode to bury all the evidence on how gruesome the shooting was (Stubs, 2015; Karimi, 2013). Following this event, KPU was prohibited, and central Nyanza was subject to a curfew.

Stubs (2015) notes that this incident made a significant contribution to the growing hostility between the Luo and Kikuyu. As a result, KPU was outlawed and Odinga was given a two-year prison sentence, thereby ushering in Kenya's de facto single-party system. Mboya's passing compelled Kenyatta's administration to react by stepping up Kikuyu dominance and further ethnicizing the government.

Pio Gama Pinto's death occurred in the year 1965 (Truth, 2012). According to a report prepared by National Reconciliation Committee in 2012, Pio Gama Pinto had three goals in life: serving Africa, socialism and serving Jaramogi Oginga. Gama Pinto was an Indian and there was no chance of rebellion from his own kind. His death in 1965 could be directly attributed to the fact that he aligned himself with Jaramogi Oginga and he held communist ideologies.

The same fate later befell J.M. Kariuki who was found dead in 1975. Regarding the assassinated Nyandarua North MP J.M. Kariuki, Kamau Ngotho (2020) notes that G G

Kariuki had once warned J M Kariuki to tone down his criticism against Kenyatta and the family. J M Kariuki was assassinated because he posed a serious political threat to Kenyatta's coalition. After his assassination, Kenyatta faced a lot of criticism and opposition from the Kikuyu of the diaspora, as well as those from Muranga and Nyeri. These Kikuyu and several other MPs strongly supported J M Kariuki. Consequently, J M Kariuki's assassination threatened to isolate the Kiambu Kikuyu from the rest. Kenyatta and the family responded to threat by falling back on Kikuyu primordial oath-taking once again to consolidate his position. According to (Ajulu 2002; Throup 1989) the Kiambu Kikuyu were mobilised to take an oath to protect the presidency from ever crossing River Chania and leaving Kiambu.

These assassinations corroborate the power and extremes to which Kenyatta's kitchen cabinet was willing to go in order to preserve their power and the status quo at the expense of other communities in Kenya. These occurrences played a role in escalating the undercurrents of ethnic animosity against the Kikuyu community by other communities. The weaponization of ethnicity is seen in these cases as the Luo and Kikuyu developed a growing mistrust and hostility for one another. Following Mboya's assassination, some Luo and Kikuyu leaders were at the forefront in hurling ethnic stereotyped epithets at each side. These descriptions were politically, economically and culturally dehumanising, further increasing tensions between these communities. Furthermore, the use of the Kikuyu oath to protect the presidency from perceived enemies, is use of cultural institutions for political expediency and hence, weaponisation of ethnicity.

4.1.11 Kenyatta's presidency, Perceived Kikuyu domination of political and economic aspects of government and ethnic resentment

Omollo (2002) indicates that Kenyatta's initial cabinet comprised politicians from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Jomo Kenyatta, as the cabinet head and President, hailed from the Kikuyu community, while his Vice President was Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a Luo. Some notable cabinet members included Tom Mboya, the Secretary-General of the ruling party, Kenya African National Union (KANU), who was also Luo, alongside Njoroge Mungai and Mbiyu Koinange, both representing the Kikuyu community. Ronald Ngala and Daniel Arap Moi, leaders of the opposition Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) and belonging to the Kalenjin and Giriama ethnic groups respectively, held significant government positions following KADU's dissolution in 1964.

Later, Muriuki (1979) recalls, during Kenyatta's administration, it was thought that the Kikuyu dominated Kenya's political and economic life. The majority of these Kikuyu leaders came from Kenyatta's hometown of Kiambu. James Gichuru, Mbiyu Koinange, Charles Njonjo, and Njoroge Mungai were a few of the most influential cabinet members who were all from Kiambu. Atieno-Odhiambo (2000) emphasizes that the era of independence facilitated the realization of Kikuyu aspirations, as power transitioned from the British to an alliance of tribes under the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which emerged victorious in the 1963 elections and formed the government, with Kenyatta serving as Prime Minister and later President, corroborating this assertion. However, a distinct Kiambu cabal swiftly ascended to influence, comprising Kenyatta, Mbiyu Koinange, Njoroge Mungai, Charles Njonjo, and James Gichuru, forming the inner core known as "the family". Adar and Munyae (2001) echo similar sentiments, stating that a small Kikuyu elite, referred to as the Kiambu mafia,

predominantly from Kenyatta's home region, wielded control over politics throughout his administration. By undermining Kenyatta's nationalist and populist foundations, this faction marginalized other ethnic groups as well as many dissident Kikuyus.

Muriuki, (1979) also notes the visibility in the disproportionate representation at the cabinet level, civil service and parastatal bodies. The Kikuyu of Kiambu, due to their easy access to Kenyatta and his henchmen, were able to gobble up other perquisites, particularly in the economic field. Those that could get access to Kenyatta were assured of acquiring farms, businesses, lucrative import-export agencies or even a loan from a bank. On the other hand, (Oucho, 2010) discusses Kenyatta's land distribution in Nakuru. Kenyatta gave members of his community parcels of land because, in his opinion, they were the landless and deserving of freely allocated land. Meanwhile the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin competed for territory and various ethnic groups engaged in harsh conflicts for parliamentary and local authority seats in Nakuru and its surroundings (Oucho, 2010). One significant outcome of Kenyatta's actions is that Nakuru district eventually became one of Kenya's political flashpoints.

The domination of the civil service is best demonstrated by Stubbs's illustration of how this was achieved within the security forces (Stubbs, 2015). Kenyatta started the *Kikuyuzation* of the military, especially after a regiment based at Lanet in Nakuru staged a mutiny in 1964 which failed. Kenyatta gradually made changes to the ethnic composition of the military. At independence, the military was composed of more officers from Kalenjin, Kamba, Samburu and Somali communities. He changed this composition by recruiting more of the Kikuyu so that by 1966, despite having played a very little role in the armed forces at independence, there were equal numbers of Kikuyu and Kamba officers. As much as these changes ensured the loyalty of the

military to his regime, this strategy of ethnic recruitment and promotion only managed to entrench an ethnically biased state (Lynch 2023). Additionally, Kenyatta created the General Service Unit (GSU), a new paramilitary organization that operated independently from the army and the police and was predominately led by Kikuyu officers.

Omollo gives a summary of Kenyatta's administration in 1969; six years after independence by noting that the Kikuyu had practically colonized governmental power. While Kenyatta held the reins of power, he was surrounded by individuals from his own ethnic group, including Mbiyu Koinange, Njoroge Mungai, James Gichuru, and Charles Njonjo. Despite Moi, a Kalenjin, holding the official position of vice President, it was evident that his role was largely symbolic. It became apparent that Jomo Kenyatta regarded the Kikuyu aristocracy as the rightful inheritors of the state. Key cabinet positions were predominantly filled by Kikuyus; the heads of the central bank, the civil service, the police, and a majority of other significant parastatal roles were typically held by individuals from the Kikuyu community. Equally significant was the fact that the typical Kikuyu was given preference when it came to official employment, as well as access to state loans for private businesses and other forms of government handouts (Omollo, 2002).

The dominance at the institutional level, where Kenyatta purposefully downplayed the significance of the KANU as an organizational platform for politics, is also highlighted by Omollo (2002). Instead, he imposed the Kikuyu Embu Meru Association (GEMA), an ethnic group that rose to prominence as the nation's leading political organization. Himbara (1964) explains that under Kenyatta, political authority was exercised in a way that made the distinction between the dominant party, KANU, and an ethnic group

known as the Kikuyu, Embu, Meru Association (GEMA), invisible. As a result, KANU and GEMA officeholders were interchangeable. In reality, under Kenyatta, KANU was nearly ineffective as a political organization, allowing the GEMA association to replace it as the de facto ruling party and to control Kenya's corporate and political scene with impunity (Throup & Hornsby, 1998).

In the fifteen years of his rule, Kenyatta rallied the Kikuyu elite around him and allied with local and international capitalist friends. The early political objective of Kenyatta's minions was to marginalize the two former Luo friends, Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya. It had the lasting impact of excluding the Luo from the inner sanctums of power. Having achieved their objective, they had to look for new allies, and they settled on the Kalenjin, led by Moi (Rogers, 1979; Clough, 1990). Moi was not safe from the family because after succeeding in sidelining Oginga Odinga, they started planning how to take over from Kenyatta by organizing mass oath-taking in 1969 with the aim of preserving political power.

In the 1960s, the new Kikuyu-Kalenjin coalition created with Moi at the end of 1964 became an absolute need for Kenyatta. Kenyatta had to handle the Kikuyu's recurring agrarian crisis. Rift Valley was, as it had been since the early 1900s, the frontier of opportunity. So, he formed a pragmatic agreement with Moi, a member of the conservative branch of the Kalenjin, to allow the Kikuyu to settle as freeholders in the once White Highlands (Throup and Hornsby, 1998). Kenyatta, therefore, had to find a strategic way of maintaining his grip on the delicate political situation. Kiruga (2018) best explains how Kenyatta solved his conundrum thus: While Odinga's presence within the Kenya African National Union provided Kenyatta with crucial support during the journey to independence, other figures were deemed more influential. For

instance, Daniel arap Moi played a significant role in maintaining support for the government's policies regarding the restitution of tribal lands. Despite hailing from the relatively small Tugen tribe, Moi had gradually established himself as the key figure controlling access to the Rift Valley. With Moi strategically positioned within the ruling party's inner circles, Kenyatta's allies could securely acquire settler lands without apprehension that displaced Kikuyus, who had resettled in the Rift Valley, would reclaim them. (Morris Kiruga. in The Africa Report. Posted on January 30, 2018)

The protection of property necessitated the consolidation of power, which Kenyatta believed was best achieved through the dominance of the Kikuyu nation. Mati (2019) opines that by keeping Odinga, a Luo, at a distance, and appeasing Moi, a Kalenjin, by appointing him as vice President, the social struggle for political dominance underwent a transformation, becoming known as the Kikuyu-Luo conflict. Consequently, the ensuing challenges stemming from these maneuvers were framed as a clash between ethnicity and representation, ethnicity and fair resource distribution, ethnicity and popular participation and legitimacy, or ethnicity and class struggle. Essentially, the resulting socio-economic and political dynamics among various ethnic communities have been rooted in the pursuit of ethno-political control for economic supremacy.

The "Family" also sought to amend the constitution to subtly eliminate potential Presidential contenders. After effectively thwarting Tom Mboya, they turned their attention to Vice-President Moi. In contrast to the influential figures within Kenyatta's inner circle, such as Charles Njonjo (Attorney General), Njoroge Mungai (Minister of Foreign Affairs), and Mbiyu Koinange (Minister of State), who were highly educated and possessed a strong Kikuyu background, Moi was seen as intellectually inferior and lacking in political experience (Kiruga, 2018).

Consequently, Kenyatta's inner circle believed they had little reason to be concerned about his political maneuvering. They were unable to envision Moi's actual potential for succeeding Kenyatta. Mati (2019) gives a brief summation of Kenyatta's consolidation of power and resources by observing that Kenyatta's initial priority upon assuming power was to eradicate the remnants of the Mau Mau rebellion and any other radical elements within the independence movement. Field Marshall Marete was among the first casualties in the wave of assassinations orchestrated by the Kenyatta administration. Subsequently, other notable figures, including freedom fighters Pio Gama Pinto, Tom Mboya, and J.M Kariuki, met similar fates. Following these actions, Kenyatta and his associates believed that consolidating support from his ethnic base was the most effective strategy to maintain power. They formed a coalition of the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru ethnic groups, known as the GEMA tribe, through oath-taking, with the explicit aim of excluding other ethnicities from accessing power (Mati, 2019).

These machinations, namely, the control of public sector, cabinet, economic opportunities, and allocation of prime land, contributed eventually to animosity against the family, and by extension, the Kikuyu by other communities. Therefore, a group of privileged people, with no regard for the ordinary people but their own political and economic ambitions, were responsible for the entrenchment of anti-Kikuyu animosity especially among the Luo and Kalenjin during Kenyatta's rule. It is these same categories of leaders who have, in the preceding governments of Moi and later Kibaki, continued to pit one community against another leading to the exponential growth of ethnic animosities and political violence for their own selfish interests.

As Muruiki (1979) underscores, the patronage system developed in Kenyatta's government ensured that a word from Kenyatta opened all doors. This patronage system was later exploited by his henchmen. As the President advanced in years, important decisions were made on his behalf without his knowledge. This affected the relations between the Kikuyu and other communities in a crucial manner. The non-Kikuyu came to perceive the Kikuyu as a devious, cunning and scheming community out to monopolize state apparatus and institutions for their own interests. According to Oucho (2010), During Kenyatta's leadership the nation evolved into a ruthless capitalist state, where the majority of the population struggled to make ends meet while land was readily allocated to those deemed politically "correct" or well-connected elites would benefit, a situation which was politically untenable. Goldsworth, (1982) reiterates that it was during this time that the seeds of inequality were planted whereby, the country's politics was predominantly community-based, and as President, Kenyatta declared the Kikuyu community pre-eminent. This position was not permitted to continue under Moi's new dictatorship

When the second President of Kenya was sworn in, the balance shifted and more land was given to the Kalenjin. Over the years, this has brewed tension and caused a lot of ethnic clashes that have also been politicized culminating into the worst form of weaponized ethnicity in Kenya in 2007. Therefore, Shilaho (2023) sums up the development of ethnicity during and after Kenyatta's government by opining that: As ethnic consciousness intensified following disagreements among post-colonial elites, the competition to monopolize political power and access national resources intensified. This led to a surge in political assassinations, authoritarianism, and a narrowing of the political arena. Politicians shifted away from policy-focused,

programmatic politics and instead turned to ethnic mobilization in a bid to regain diminishing influence. (Shilaho, July 20th, 2023, The East African)

It is, therefore, worthwhile to note that during the reign of Jomo Kenyatta, the real pillar of political order was repression. Kenyatta achieved this through restrictive rules and laws which he used to limit the activities of politicians who were at logger heads with the “Family” (Widner, 1993). The use of repression as a tactic of political and economic control by Kenyatta, therefore, rendered other tactics like ethnicized political violence unnecessary. Consequently, based on the precedence set by Kenyatta’s patronage and the control of economic resources for the benefit of his ethnic group, Mueller (2020) alludes to the fact that other ethnic groups either saw the presidency as their preserve or felt it was their turn to take power. Citizens, therefore, frequently vote for individuals in the hope of personal gain and out of fear of other ethnic groups excluding them from political power and patronage.

4.2 Chapter Summary

The reign of President Kenyatta as discussed in this chapter represents the initial phases of the post-colonial era when the anticipated reparation from colonial oppression and exploitation visited upon certain areas did not work out according to the expectations of certain communities. The government’s effort to sort out the grievances of some communities, in essence, created more challenges and exacerbated the damage done by the colonial regime. The bungled way in which Kenyatta’s government handled colonial injustices, set the stage for future animosity, suspicions, and feelings of deprivation among the Kalenjin in Uasin Gishu since they felt shortchanged economically through loss of land which was their main livelihood, hence justifying the use of relative deprivation theory in this chapter. The government had attempted to address the land issue in the 1960s through settlement schemes and the land purchase

program with the intention of ensuring the economic stability of the new administration by addressing the only potential source of political unrest, the landless Kikuyu in Rift Valley. It is regrettable that the government's attempt to handle the issue of landlessness among the Kikuyu caused new socio-political problems, intensified ethnic hostility, and eventually served as the basis for interethnic conflicts in the post-Kenyatta era at the behest of politicians

A tiny Kikuyu elite, the so-called Kiambu mafia, from Kenyatta's home area, controlled politics, the most lucrative government positions and economic ventures, prime land, as well as access to the President. This scenario persisted throughout Kenyatta's administration. By undermining Kenyatta's nationalist and populist roots, this faction alienated the Kikuyu from other ethnic groups as well as some Kikuyu rebels setting the stage for the explosion of underlying feelings of deprivation in the subsequent political dispensations of Presidents Moi and Kibaki. Thus, chapter five interrogates the nexus between weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu during the eras of Presidents Moi and Kibaki.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE NEXUS BETWEEN WEAPONISATION OF ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN UASIN GISHU DURING PRESIDENT MOI AND KIBAKIS REIGN, 1978- 2012

5.0 Introduction

This chapter delved into the reigns of Presidents Moi and Kibaki with a view to interrogating their government's policies, political practices, as well as leadership styles in order to establish how these aspects of their leadership affected ethnic relations. It is significant to note that it was during these two leaders' era, that politically instigated ethnic conflicts and violence reared their ugly head, almost in each and every electioneering period. These conflicts and their underlying issues metamorphosed, and culminated into the PEV of 2007/2008 which almost brought Kenya to the brink of a failed state.

In this chapter, the instrumentalist theory is applied in bringing out how politicians and other actors use the perceived feelings of deprivation and inequalities to mobilise their ethnic groups to rise up against other communities perceived to be the cause of these tribulations, albeit for political gain. Finally, the primordial theory brings out the common cultural and salient ethnic aspects which bind members of one community together due to shared practices, beliefs, structures, and identity. These shared political, economic and cultural aspects then make it easy for the politicians to appeal to their communities and direct them against their perceived enemies like was the case of the Kalenjin attacks against the migrant groups in Uasin Gishu culminating in political violence. A respondent, one Mzee Koech summarised the violent conflicts experienced during this period by stating thus:

During Kenyatta's period there was little problem of people fighting. During Moi's period 1992, 1997 we had many problems of fighting, burning houses, killing, and during Kibaki's period, we have also had big problems of fighting, killing, and some people running away from their homes. All these was because of politicians (Thomas Koech, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/2021).

Some of the most pertinent issues and actors that have led to weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence during both Moi and Kibaki's reign were seen to be rooted in: colonial legacies and unresolved injustices, unresolved land grievances, majimbo rhetoric, poverty and marginalisation, fear of domination by some communities as well as electoral competition and malpractices. In an effort to tackle these specific issues affecting their communities, some politicians among the Kalenjin went to the extent of inciting and supporting their communities against other migrant communities who were perceived as enemies. This usually took place with the clandestine support of the elite from the indigenous communities. Water (2009) observes that during Moi's reign, political violence was to end state-backed Kikuyu domination, which had begun with Kenyatta and never ended.

5.1 Moi's Presidency and impact on ethnic relations, 1978-2002

President Moi assumed office following Jomo Kenyatta's death in 1978, in the midst of a general anti-Kikuyu hostility. He relied heavily on Kikuyu functionaries as he systematically placed his men in key positions. The slow but deliberate ostracisation and disenfranchisement of the Mt Kenya communities, set the tone of political control by President Moi especially as it concerned the powerful old guards and close allies of the former President. As this perception of purging the former power brokers and wielders of power proceeded, the affected communities slowly began building resentment against Moi's government which they interpreted as being against them by virtue of mistreating of their leaders. The indigenous communities in the Rift Valley, on the other hand, felt that it was time to right the political and economic wrongs created

and embellished under the colonial era and Jomo Kenyatta's government, especially since their own was in power.

The politicization of land-related complaints by political elites and battles for control of the state apparatus, which, for the most part, regulates institutions of land governance and property access, are the main political processes of conflict and political violence in Kenya (Boone, 2011; Greiner, 2013; Klopp, 2000; Klaus, 2017). This has the effect of giving those in charge of the state apparatus some control over the opportunities related to land ownership.

5.1.1 Moi's rule and dynamics of political violence

Since political leadership acts as "the 'contract' that ties property and authority," having access to senior political leadership is considered as a potential way or source of power to rectify not only the perceived injustices surrounding prior land allocations and/or acquisitions, but also political and economic control. Sikor and Lund (2009) opine that, political elites' politicization of long-standing concerns has been blamed for targeted killings and evictions in places like Uasin Gishu. It is in the same vein that several occurrences taking place during Moi's reign were interpreted and manipulated to rouse animosity towards certain ethnic groups which were seen to be against Moi's presidency. These included but were not limited to; the change the constitution movement that attempted to stop Moi's ascension to the presidency, the attempted coup in 1982, the re-introduction of multiparty movement, the campaign to re-introduce (*majimboism*) regionalism change, and the multiparty elections of 1997.

5.1.2 Moi's ascendancy to power, disenfranchisement of the Kikuyu elite and ethnic animosities

Moi, who ascended to the presidency upon Kenyatta's death in 1978, managed to attain his high position by a mix of good fortune and tenacity. Initially, according to Adar and Munyae (2001), Moi's ascent to the President was severely hampered by internal opposition to his leadership inside the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the country's dominant party. This was the product of the powerful "Kiamba Mafia," who had organized themselves into the Change the Constitution Movement. The movement's principal goal was to prevent Moi from assuming the Presidency. Omollo (2002) affirms that consequently, President Moi survived a concerted effort by the Kikuyu elite in Kenyatta's court to block him from the presidency. The attempt to change the constitution to lock out Moi made the Kalenjin realise how much the Kikuyu felt entitled (Lynch, 2023). This development was not lost on the Kalenjin leading to suspicion and mistrust in their relationship with the Kikuyu early in Moi's rule.

Once in power, Moi wasted little time influencing the political process in favour of certain members of his Kalenjin ethnic group. Consequently, Moi had to contend with a rebellious Kikuyu elite that attempted to depose him before he gained government, as well as Kalenjin followers who wanted to 'eat'. In contrast to Kenyatta, who could give without taking, Thruop (1994) observes that Moi required to take before he could give. Therefore, Moi's methods for consolidating support and controlling his opponents were cruder and more authoritarian. Barkan (1994) notes that, this involved undermining Kikuyu hegemony and deconstructing the economic underpinnings of the Kenyatta state in order to include Kalenjin advantages into the state's structure. This was significant because control of the state was the means to entrench and enhance an ethnically defined elite. He went about this resolve with Machiavellian precision. After

gaining the presidency, Moi started gradually implementing a harsh and autocratic one-man state rule (Adar and Munyae, 2001) A respondent captured Moi's rule by stating that:

The Kalenjin were very good, when I was in primary school we all lived well with them. There was no problem we would visit each other but when Moi came to power, he planted the seeds of hatred. If they did not have food we would give them because they were not farmers of food, they only knew how to keep cows. If the elders saw you with maize, they would ask you for some, we could give them food also. Problem began during the rule of Moi he started planting the seed of hatred. In fact, I prayed to God to forgive him: he was good at saying things with his mouth only. He wanted to protect his community when he took over the presidency. (Priscilla Wangari, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

Okedeji and Siguru (2016) aptly summarise Moi's regime in relation to ethnic relations by opining that Moi's presidency saw the change of power axis from the Kikuyu through the creation of a parallel Kalenjin elite within the ruling military and public service, reorganization of national alliances and patronage networks. Consequently, Moi alienated many Luos and Kikuyu. This is further confirmed by one respondent who lamented:

Even the ministers who were given posts were all told to fix in their people in the civil services for example in *posta* if you called or went for services, you could only hear kalei? These people (Kalenjins) did not know English or Swahili but they had filled these positions and yet those people who had gone to school were missing jobs. Kenyatta said even if some things are painful, remembering is not bad because it is History (Priscilla Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

It was so bad that ghostworkers who had ethnic and political connections to the ruling group were given paid positions in government without ever going to work. Furthermore, many people were employed as bloated staff within the parastatal sector, the major qualification being their connection to the powers that be (Steeves, 2006). Sten *et al* affirm that Moi's tactics included taxing and dismantling Kikuyu agricultural associations, filling the civil service, parastatals, and university with unqualified

members of his own ethnic group, and replacing the elected Nairobi City Council with an appointed Commission to undermine Kikuyu control of the city (Sten *et al*, 1994). Such intricacies contributed to alienation of other communities and the development of seething animosities towards the Kalenjin. In the words of Steeves (2006: 2,23-24):

Upon Kenyatta's death in August 1978, Moi inherited a political alignment which favoured the Kikuyu inner circle and a strong Kikuyu presence within the public service, ... However, Moi moved with deliberate care and shrewd calculation to shift the power base of KANU to Kalenjin ethnic dominance supported by the other key minority tribes... Over the period 1978 to 1992, Moi shifted many of the key functions of government into an expanded and powerful Office of the President (OP). Key members of the OP inner circle shifted dramatically from Kikuyu to Kalenjin backgrounds. Moi also moved Kalenjin appointees into the traditionally strong provincial administration as Provincial Commissioners (PCs) and District Commissioners (DCs).

It is also claimed that Moi took money from the treasury in order to fund a continually shifting inner group, in contrast to Kenyatta's more stable inner circle (Sten *et al*,1994). Steeves (2006:24) further reveals that:

Moi drew heavily on the advice of Nicholas Biwott, a Rift Valley political heavyweight, Hosea Kiplagat, the influential chair of the Co-operative Bank, Joshua Kulei, a former prison warden who rose to wealth and influence under Moi's tutelage, William Ruto, a rising 'young Turk' among the Kalenjin and, his youngest son Gideon. The President's family members and inner circle benefited handsomely from access to state resources.

All these sparked indignations in certain places. Moi replied by having his detractors and even their allies pursued, jailed, tortured, and executed. He employed random violence against regular civilians, especially the impoverished and defenceless (Katumanga, 2005). Omollo (2002) reiterates that where once the Kikuyu held crucial cabinet seats, the Kalenjin now held them. In a similar fashion, the leadership of the civil service and the central bank was captured, and ambassadorial seats in major Western capitals became the exclusive domain of a select minority of ethnically

privileged individuals. Except for the ethnic backgrounds of the favoured few, the racial composition of the state altered, though insignificantly.

Moi's statement that 'horses must be held back to allow slower animals to catch up' was interpreted to mean that the prosperity of the Kikuyu would hence forth not be unfettered at the expense of other communities (Munene, 1992). This statement was followed by several policies which were interpreted as strategies meant to emasculate the Kikuyu community; The introduction of the quota system in education was taken to mean that bright Kikuyu pupils would not be admitted to national schools, even if they deserved to be there. People observed that payments to coffee farmers (the majority of whom were Kikuyu) were delayed for more than a year, despite the fact that farmers were expected to continue caring for the coffee and sending it to manufacturers (Munene, 1992).

Formerly managed by the Kenya Tea Development Authority, road upkeep in the tea zones worsened, making tea distribution problematic (Munene, 1992). Businesses and financial institutions controlled by Kikuyu began experiencing issues for no apparent reason, which were blamed, correctly or incorrectly, on the government. As the economy collapsed, Kikuyu dissatisfaction with the administration increased (Munene, 1992). Moi masterfully used the fact that this disillusionment was mostly restricted to the Kikuyu to create a culture of Kikuyu bashing. It became common to label as a 'tribalist' any Kikuyu who complained of economic and political issues; Hansen and Kagwanja opine that Moi pursued and implemented measures that primarily benefitted his community (Hansen, 2009; Kagwanja, 2003). He deliberately prevented members of ethnic groups other than his own from having access to governmental resources and seats.

There was a general feeling of harassment among the Kikuyu after the ascendancy of Moi to power. This general feeling of persecution was portrayed by some respondents thus:

When Moi became President, he said that he was going to follow the footsteps of Kenyatta, we believed he was going to be a good man. But after some time, he started talking in parables and his people started referring to us as *Sangari*, (a very stubborn weed) he started slowly removing our people from good offices and making our lives difficult. (FGD3,OI,Turbo, 16/06/22)

In the early 1980s, Kenya was suffering from economic decline. Beginning in 1984, there was a widespread belief that the Moi administration purposely mishandled the economy with the intent of impoverishing the Kikuyu (Munene, 1992). Moi seemingly supplanted the economic and political dominance established by the Kikuyu élite during the Kenyatta era with that of his own Kalenjin ethnic group during his tenure as President. President Moi accepted Asian corporate interests with the intention of eliminating Kikuyu supremacy in order to bolster the economic foundation of the Kalenjin and their supporters. Central to these techniques was the question of state control and its inherent economic and political benefits. According to Adar (2000), President Moi practiced neopatrimonialism in which Presidentialism (concentration of political power in the hands of a single ruler) and clientelism (providing economic and political rewards in exchange for loyalty to the patrons) served as the primary mechanisms for the maintenance of an authoritarian one-party states.

5.1.3 The attempted coup in 1982 and feelings of disenfranchisement

The coup attempt in 1982 seemed to harden Moi's resolve to consolidate his political and economic control by embarking on several changes which affected the army, communal organisations, parastatals, and any other entity he could control. One of the respondents lamented:

Immediately after 1982, things became more difficult in Kenya. First of all, anyone who was associated with the coup was either arrested, killed or removed from power. The bad thing is that no one could listen to you or defend you because we feared the government. Nobody could talk freely for fear of government informers. People could not talk loudly about anything bad KANU and the government were doing. You could find yourself arrested any time (FGD3, OI, Turbo, 16/06/22).

This trajectory is in line with Powell *et al* (2019: 20) who posit that;

States that were already liberalizing after a failed coup attempt keep liberalizing, while states that were getting more autocratic go much more authoritarian... Daniel Arap Moi had officially begun to establish a process of consolidating the party state upon assuming the presidency of Kenya, but the failed coup provided the necessary rationale for this move. The ten years that followed this coup d'état would go down in Kenyan political history as the most autocratic period since independence.

After the attempted coup of 1982, Moi embarked on tightening his control over any government institution or organization which he deemed to potentially threaten his political control. These included but were not limited to: the armed forces, political associations and government parastatals. He achieved this by utilizing strategies identical to those of his predecessor: promoting and transferring officers to key posts, and using the GSU as an ethnic balance force. In this method, the steps of "de-Kikuyuization" and "Kalenjinization" were combined. As a first step, Moi reduced the proportion of Kikuyu officers and replaced them with Kalenjin or members of non-contesting ethnic groups such as Kamba, Somali, or Samburu. This was done since the Kikuyu were the most likely to stage a coup.

This was due to their alleged negligence in either thwarting or reporting the coup to the government, despite possessing prior knowledge of its organization. The casualties consisted of high-ranking officials from the air force, police, and paramilitary police. They were apprehended and terminated from their positions after the coup. They were then replaced with individuals who were not of Kikuyu ethnicity, as it was assumed that

they would be loyal to Moi (Hornsby, 2012). The actions resembled those of President Erdogan of Turkey, who, following the failed coup attempt in July 2016, openly stated that "this uprising is a blessing from God for us because it will serve as a justification to purge our military" (Golan *et al*, Reuters 2015). The government's subsequent activities extended far beyond the military. Shortly after the unsuccessful coup attempt, numerous individuals from the military, judicial, and political opposition were swiftly apprehended, while a significant number of university staff were terminated from their positions.

The process of incorporating Kalenjin individuals into the army was successfully finalized by the mid-1990s. In 1996, the military leadership consisted of three Kalenjin chiefs and two chiefs from the Maasai and Mijikenda ethnic groups, respectively. Out of the eighteen generals in the Kenyan army, a proportion of one-third were from the Kalenjin ethnic group, despite the fact that the Kalenjin population accounted for less than one-tenth of the country's total population. According to Stubbs (2015), the ethnic distribution was also evident in the lower levels and the General Service Unit. However, despite being portrayed as the epitome of laziness, destitution, and rebellion, the Luo community continued to face discrimination in the process of military recruitment. In an attempt to gain control of the economy, politics, and military, Widner (1993:100) restates Moi's efforts as follows:

In the 1980s, Moi began the slow process of Kalenjinizing the public and private sectors in order to strengthen his hold on power. He initiated a process of reducing the influence of the Kikuyu ethnic group in the civil service and state-owned industries, which were formerly controlled by them during Kenyatta's reign. He selected individuals from the Kalenjin community for important positions in various organizations, including the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC), Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB), Kenya Posts and Telecommunications (KPT), Central

Bank of Kenya (CBK), Kenya Industrial Estates (KIE), National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB), and the Kenya Grain Growers Cooperative Union (KGCCU). He established Nyayo Tea Zones (NTZ), Nyayo Bus Company (NBC), and Nyayo Tea Zones Development Corporation (NTZDC).

Unfortunately, many of these corporations which were put under the control of the Kalenjin went down due to poor management leading to job losses for many Kenyans who blamed Moi's government for appointing his unqualified community members to lead such organizations. This development also led to simmering disquiet among not only the Kikuyu, but other communities who also felt marginalised by Moi's government. One respondent lamented thus:

When Moi was the President he really removed the Kalenjin's from far, built schools, banned busaa, got them jobs in army, police, AP even parastatals were infact full of Kalenjins but they brought all of them down (Priscilla Wangari, OI, Kesses, 16/12/21).

The situation was made worse when the culprits responsible for the failure of one government parastatals were not punished but awarded by being given leadership of other government entities. Such happenings catalysed ethnic animosity against the Kalenjin from other communities who felt marginalised and exploited by community biased appointments. Unfortunately, as much as Moi wanted to help his people by having them placed in these government parastatals, the end result was mismanagement, and inefficiency accompanied by loss of jobs by more people. As the economic situation became worse, the other ethnic communities piled all the blame for their hardships on poor governance by Moi and his community further raising the ethnic animosities. Some respondents reiterated that:

During Moi's time; Kalenjins worked hard but Moi stayed for too long until he spoiled for example he spoiled Cereals Board, KCC, fertilizers became expensive, prices of maize reduced, Moi spoiled the country and economy for example Chemelil, Rivatex, KCC, Pan Paper, and the sugar factories. As a result, the citizens are suffering. The money from tea is

little. while some people can still sell milk at roadsides but only in areas with high population. (FGD1, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21).

During this precarious time, the Kikuyu commercial elite advocated for more political representation. After a decade of Kalenjinization and de-Kikuyuization, they were suffering from yet another economic depression (Stubbs, 2015). The Luo community, represented by Oginga Odinga of the old guard, needed a lively platform to express their displeasure after decades of marginalization and exclusion from the political arena and the rewards of economic growth (Stubbs, 2015). Despite being a potent instrument for conflict, ethnicity slowly became a lucrative resource for unscrupulous politicians seeking economic stability and opportunity to pillage public resources.

In 1982, ethnic welfare groups were forbidden, most notably the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru Association (GEMA). The writing was on the wall especially for GEMA which had become a threat to Moi. In the 1970s GEMA had started to challenge and undermine KANU. It had become an establishment through which the GEMA politicians were able to mobilise political support. By 1976, some leaders of GEMA were holding political rallies in the Eastern, Central, and Rift Valley provinces aimed at preventing Moi from assuming the presidency upon the demise of Kenyatta (Oloo, 2010). Adar and Munyae (2001) affirm that by 1981 all the ethnic-centered welfare associations had been banned. These included the Luo Union, the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru Association (GEMA), and the AbaLuhya Union. However, (Stubbs, 2015) observes that though one of his first moves as President was to dissolve ethnic-based organizations like GEMA, his action was in essence ironical since most of Moi's actions portended his biasness towards benefitting his ethnic community. The Nairobi University Academic Staff Union (UASU) and the Civil Servants Union (CSU) were both outlawed by the President. Moi instructed the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO), a national non-governmental group for women, to associate with KANU in 1986, and the

organization's name was formally changed to KANU-MYWO in 1987. Lynch affirms that in the 1980s,

Moi's increasing inclination towards authoritarianism became evident. He prohibited the Nairobi University Students' Organisation and revoked the registration of the University Academic Staff Union and Kenya Civil Servants Union. In the sake of promoting "national unity," he also mandated that associations based on ethnicity cease their operations. (Lynch 2023 in "The Conversation" 9/7/23).

Moi's administration, inspired by the Nyayo paradigm, as defined by Oucho (2010), enhanced the process of polarization by implementing the District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) in 1983/84. Regrettably, the DFRD proved to be a total fiasco due to the manipulation of its objectives by the country's political leadership. They directed development resources in a biased manner towards selected districts in Rift Valley Province and other regions where the politicians most loyal to President Moi were situated. It can be argued that Moi was simply copying Kenyatta's approach of limiting development to Central Province, with Kiambu receiving the majority of resources.

Ajulu (2008) states that throughout Moi's rule, patronage and resources were focused on his own ethnic group, the Kalenjin, which coincided with the increase in his coalition's power after the coup attempt. Furthermore, Moi, similar to Kenyatta, utilized political tactics to influence the allocation of public and private funds. The construction of highways, educational institutions, and agricultural projects mostly targeted Moi's political supporters. Consequently, the newly acquired power took on a distinct Kalenjin identity, resulting in the transformation of institutions that were previously controlled by the Kikuyu to reflect the values and interests of the Kalenjin people. Government identification as a member of the 'KANU' was necessary in order to access resources such as university education, state positions, and work in parastatals.

In Uasin Gishu and other parts of Rift Valley, Moi's actions were interpreted to mean that if they could retake control of economic resources, then it was also possible for their people to repossess their lost land under the patronage of their President. On the other hand, the Kikuyu as well as other communities began complaining and slowly developed feelings of resentment against their Kalenjin neighbours due to economic and political marginalisation experienced under the leadership of Moi's government. Mulli, (1999:78) observes that:

Moi's authority flourished within the framework of the personal rule regime. By employing cronyism, he managed to maintain his position of authority by relying on his ethnic community as a loyal support base. The Kalenjin have received resources from the public sector as a return for their cooperation. These encompass high-ranking roles in parastatal organizations and the government, along with tangible financial advantages in the shape of government loans. Therefore, it is not unexpected that Moi's ascent to power resulted in the Kalenjins assuming high positions while the Kikuyu were simultaneously removed from their posts.

Brown (1989), quotes Enloe (1981) further affirming that:

Regimes can strategically exploit ethnicity as a tool to further their own interests, such as legitimizing their authority, increasing their power, bolstering state security, or fostering national unity. The leader achieves this by implementing a strategy of divide and conquer and rallying different social classes around their respective 'ethnic patrons' (Brown, 1989:14).

It is therefore on the basis of resentments caused by economic and political marginalisation of other communities like the Kikuyu by President Moi's administration that Lieberman and Singh's statement sets the stage for the evolution of violent ethnic conflict by positing that;

Exclusion of some ethnic groups from holding positions of power within the state and the fight for resources and benefits from the government lead to the emergence of ethnic strife. When institutions establish or solidify comparisons between different groups, it

indicates the presence of a clear distinction between "us" and "them." This activates worries about our relative standing in respect to others and influences how we are likely to understand future facts within a political framework. Leaders, in contrast, are more adept at effectively rallying supporters to engage in acts of violence against individuals of different ethnic backgrounds. The connection between institutionalization and violence can be divided into two main aspects: firstly, institutionalization leads to an increase in ethnic differentiation; secondly, regardless of power dynamics, ethnic differentiation fosters a competitive environment that raises the probability of escalating aggression (Lieberman and Singh 2012, p.1, 8).

It suffices to say that Moi's reaction to the attempted coup was to entrench himself by incapacitating any elements of political opposition to his rule. To this end, he targeted to emasculate the press, university student leaders and faculty and opposition leaders who demanded for more political freedom (Hornsby, 2012). He also ensured that he surrounded himself and appointed his close friends, mainly from his ethnic community, as top government officials. These actions not only alienated him from the populace, but further entrenched ethnic divisions and bitterness in those who felt politically alienated by his government and policies.

From the foregoing discussion, it can, therefore, be deduced that Moi's rule acted to entrench and build ethnic resentment through his favouritism of his ethnic communities while at the time marginalising, undermining and cutting down to size those that he perceived to be obstacles to his political and economic control. This blatant favoritism exhibited through patronage and clientelism acted as a catalyst which developed animosity from the marginalised communities towards the Kalenjin communities, and the Kalenjin in Uasin Gishu therefore became part of, and suffered the consequences of this hatred and aggression. These developments then set the stage for the response of communities in Kenya in general and Uasin Gishu in particular, when they perceived an opportunity to either protect or change the political status quo. Since Kenyans felt this

was a political challenge, such opportunities could only originate from political engagements like elections and the struggle for multiparty democracy.

5.1.4 The re-introduction of multi-partism/majimbo rhetorics and weaponization of ethnicity

After the introduction of section 2(a) into the constitution in 1982, Kenya became a single party state by law. In essence, it meant that it became unlawful to engage in opposition party activities or form any other party apart from KANU. After the legal proscription of other political parties by section 2(A), Moi put in place measures that eventually turned Kenyan politics into an autocracy. Political freedom was drastically curtailed, rigging of elections went on unquestioned, and as a result, corruption thrived. Eventually, Kenyans rose up against Moi's regime and demanded for change.

Amidst the push for political pluralism, led by the church and civil society, the Government cautioned that the introduction of multiple political parties could lead to confrontations between different ethnic groups, as the people were not yet united enough (Osamba, 2001). Nevertheless, under the influence of foreign funders, churches, political activists, and the world community, Moi's government ultimately succumbed to the pressure and revoked Section 2A of the Constitution. This legislation abolished the prohibition and officially sanctioned the establishment of multiple political parties in Kenya.

It was during the process of the clamour for multipartism and the elections that followed that politically instigated ethnic violence bred by the political protagonists, reared its ugly head in Kenyan politics. Dercon and Gutiérrez-Romero (2010) note that multipartism was reintroduced after incessant pressure from Kenyan activists and the international community. But even after the reintroduction of political parties, KANU

ensured it remained in power by winning the general elections of 1992 and 1997 despite being accused of violence and electoral irregularities.

As Wambua (2017) reiterates, the restoration of the multi-party system in 1991 exacerbated the ethnic cleavages in Kenya. It is important to note that even though both Kenyatta and Moi previously enforced a one-party government at the outset of their reigns under the guise that it was necessary to foster national unity and nation-building, in reality, this was a tactic to thwart opposition (Mutua, 2008: p 40). Anderson and Lochery (2008), are of the opinion that the contentious character of Rift Valley did not lead to violence until the 1990s. Prior to that time, despite the numerous arguments and discussions, there was no attempt to harass immigrant settlers from other communities, or evoke violence as a strategy. In the second decade of the Moi era, things altered as a result of Moi's and KANU's response to the efforts to re-introduce multiparty politics.

According to Omollo (2002), political ethnicity, a key feature of the one-party state in Kenya, contributed in a variety of ways to the democratization process. For instance, for the Kalenjin, Moi's ethnic group, and the privileged community, the call for multipartism coupled with institutional change necessitated by democratization, posed a significant challenge to existing political and economic privileges. On the other hand, the Kikuyu and Luo readily welcomed and supported multipartism. The Kikuyu had fallen out with Moi and were on the lookout for any opportunity to recoup the losses they had incurred under Moisi presidency (Oyugi 2000). The Kikuyu had suffered from Moisi strategies which were aimed at ensuring the Kalenjin benefited from government structures at the expense of the Kikuyu. The Luo were also uneasy having been kept out of government since the 1960s. This predicament and common political interests, made the two communities to naturally join in the struggle for Multi-partism. Oyugi (2000)

notes that in the two communities formed an alliance of convenience to dislodge Moi presidency.

Having benefitted from political patronage, and economic development, the Kalenjin were the least likely to support the political reform efforts. One respondent was also convinced that multipartism was not good as a result of the political rhetoric from Moi and other politicians from the Rift Valley who were against multipartism. according to his sentiments;

The idea of many political parties has brought many problems. During single party rule, things were good. There was no war or conflicts. Moi cautioned that the nation was ill-prepared for the proliferation of political parties. In addition, he cautioned us about the concept of *Soko huru*, or the free market, but his advice was disregarded due to his advanced age. However, the majority of individuals are now experiencing regret while only a few are content. Moi claimed to be a professor of politics and asserted that Kenya was functioning. The warnings he gave us concerning numerous parties have now materialized, and individuals are experiencing the exact consequences he had predicted (Henry Morei, OI, Besiabor 25/06/21).

Ethnic "outgroups," on the other hand, hailed democratization primarily as an opportunity to topple a system commonly seen as hostile to their political and economic goals. As expected, the Kalenjin supported the ruling party, but other ethnic groups, notably the numerically significant Kikuyu, Luo, and Luhya, joyfully welcomed the new opposition parties. The basis for ethnicity had already been laid during the colonial period and as has already been discussed in the previous chapter, the African political parties were also formed along ethnic lines. Furthermore, Kenyan politicians had already experienced the benefits and or marginalisation resulting from patron-client networks during Kenyatta's and Moi's rule. Thus, the political contest was almost a matter of life and death for the political elite. Bjarnesen and Soderberg (2018:7) expound by stating that:

Patron-client networks in multi-party elections often mobilize ethnic or regional votes due to their organization along ethnic lines or geographic constellations. The primary perpetrator of electoral violence typically tends to be the party currently in power. Occasionally, the occurrence of violent mobilization during elections can be traced back to the colonial era or the period of single-party governance, when rival elites fought to gain control over patronage resources. The enduring consequences of this unjust practice influenced the dynamics of elite rivalry and popular voting patterns in the age of competitive party politics.

In a bid to try and stem the tide of opposition, the government started employing various strategies such as denying its opponents' licences to hold rallies on the basis that these rallies would lead to violence. Munene (1992) affirms that in the advent of multi-partism, when the advocates were denied a license to hold a rally at Kamukunji grounds, the reason advanced by the government was that the rally would lead to violence if people attended. While in reality, the government was only using this to deny the proponents of multipartism an opportunity to meet with their followers and articulate their views. Therefore, what followed the attempt to reintroduce multi-partism was strategic manipulation of ethnicity, to instil and perpetuate ethnic animosities by rousing perceived historical injustices in certain communities and especially among the Kalenjin in the Rift Valley (Munene, 1992). This was skilfully done by the government and other politicians for their own political mileage by demonising other communities. When some government officials seemed to instigate violence during public rallies, they ended up giving credence to the fact that the governments warnings of "tribal" conflict were meant to derail political reforms. Basing on these utterances, when later members of the Kalenjin reportedly clashed with the Luo, Luhya, and Kikuyu, the blame was largely laid on the Kalenjin (Munene 1992). These clashes only intensified the call for political change culminating in the repeal of section 2 (A) of the constitution in December:1991.

Omollo (2002) plainly states that a key feature of Kenyan politics is that the representation of multiparty politics, whether via the formation of political parties or informal alliances and lobbying, is exclusively based on ethnic affiliations. Without exception, political parties consistently represent specific ethnic groups. Usually, a political party is guided by an ethnic leader who primarily engages with the voters by recruiting supporters. The parties lack societal appeal because of their limited socio-economic foundations, authoritarian leadership, and unclear political agendas and objectives. These characteristics provide a solid basis for party members and leaders to be easily influenced to prioritize the protection of their community's interests. The ethnic underpinning frequently serves as the impetus for policies and actions within these parties.

In the 1990s, the political elite utilized Majimboism as a means to suggest that "minority groups" once again required safeguarding against the perceived dominance of the Kikuyu in the government. KANU utilized the concept of Majimboism as a means to oppose the notion of multi-partism, portraying it as a project of domination that promotes exclusion (Klopp, 2002). Therefore, the leaders of KANU saw majimboism to be equivalent to federalism, which was being promoted in academic circles as a potential resolution to ethnic conflicts. The Weekly Review criticized Dr. Joseph Misoi, a major advocate of the majimboist movement, for failing to provide a clear explanation of the advantages of federalism as a political system. Instead, he used it as a means to intimidate those who were advocating for political pluralism. In their misrepresentation of Majimbo, the political elite in Rift Valley told the locals that Majimbo meant that immigrant people were to go back where they came from. This deliberate misrepresentation of multipartism was meant to plant seeds of negative perception of

majimboism among the local populace of the Rift Valley. Furthermore, since multipartism was mainly supported by the immigrant communities, they were thus seen as enemies by the locals. These utterances built a lot of tensions among the people of the Rift Valley in general and those living in Uasin Gishu in particular.

5.1.4.1 Multipartism And The Growth of Feelings of Deprivation, Autochthony, Ethnicity and Political Violence, 1990 - 1993

The multiparty debate swiftly assumed ethnic undertones under the guidance of the pro-KANU advocates. The primary factor was the perceived menace presented by the emergence of multiparty politics. Upon realizing his imminent loss of power and the depletion of resources that sustained it, Moi attempted to strengthen his authority by exacerbating ethnic tensions that had resurfaced during the multiparty debate. This was achieved through provoking acts of ethnic violence (Mulli, 1999). The primary catalyst for the outbreak of ethnic conflicts in the 1990s was the desire to uphold economic dominance by means of political dominance.

After ascending to power, Moi had created a new capital base by dissolving the entrenched Kikuyu capital (Ngunyi and Katumanga 2014). Eventually, Moi concentrated resources around his Kalenjin community. Consequently, they could not afford to lose state power since their wealth was mortgaged to financial institutions (Njonjo 1977). One sure way of retaining state power was by ensuring they eliminated any threat to parliamentary control and the presidency. One respondent blamed the aggressive ethnic relations on President Moi thus:

Ethnicity evolved during Moi's time. In 1992 there was ethnic violence, the politicians instigated it they said (*kila mtu arudi kwao*) Everyone must go back to their original homes (Kiprop Nashon, OI, Kipkaren 21,07/21).

Politicians used ethnicity by; addressing their supporters in their mother tongue, inciting them against immigrant communities using derogatory terms, denigrating

them, referring to Kalenjin lost glory, power and resources and by facilitating their communities to attack the immigrants. In reference to this, one respondent remarked:

During multipartism, the Kalenjin felt that the opposition wanted to take away leadership from Moi. Therefore, Moi was supposed to be protected. That is why some of the prominent politicians were inciting the people by telling the Kalenjin that they should uproot the *kwekwe* (weeds from the shamba). This was done during their forums e.g *harambees* and funerals and they were speaking in mother tongue. The police and other government instruments were also used to protect power (Moi's reign) (Amunga Titus, Kipkaren. 21/07/2021).

When eventually section 2(A) was repealed, it did not mark the end of ethnic-based political violence in Kenya. Labelling what were really political fights in ethnic terms, became a deliberate KANU policy of "ethnicizing violence," opposition parties became ethnically balkanized organizations, diminishing their multi-ethnic appeal (Kivoi, 2010). Politicians ensured that ethnicity became the communal mentality making it easy for them to then use ethnic differences for their own myopic political and economic gains (Munene, 1992). The advocates of multi-partism as well as their communities were labelled as anti-government and thus, they were targeted and harassed by government machinery at every opportunity leading to fatal accidents, injuries, death, loss of property, forced migrations, and increased ethnic animosity

Kanyinga (2009) argues that the campaigns brought back the issues and demands around 'territorial domains' that had been prominent during the transition to independence in the early 1963 time frame. Several aristocrats in Moi's circle had acquired extensive farms from departing white immigrants. In order to safeguard Moi, whose economic and political survival was crucial to them, they rallied their constituencies who were eager for land by asserting that their land hunger was a result of the colonial regime and President Kenyatta's initial government favoring Kikuyu squatters over the Kalenjin in resettlement and land acquisition initiatives. They

promoted the idea of "reclaiming" the country from the Kikuyu, whom they perceived as foreigners in the Kalenjin districts. The discussion revolves around the concept of "indigene versus settler rights," as described by Mamdani (2001), and specifically focused on the Rift Valley as the ancestral territory of the Kalenjin and Maasai communities. A respondent described one such incident of conflict in Uasin Gishu between the Luhya and the Kalenjin, thus:

The 1992 clashes brought the problem. A Luhya and Kalenjin fought at Lwandeti Secondary School (Chepsaita) within a short time war cries were made by the Kalenjin (*nduru ikapigwa*) and houses started burning. In the evening, each community was burning the other's houses and looting. Kalenjin came from Chepteruai to steal cows of Luhya. Most of the Luhya settlers were abler (richer) than the Kalenjin and they were also workers. So there was envy and jealousy because we felt they came into our land, bought, built permanent houses. They had taken their children to school compared to the local owners of the land. These people had also fenced their compounds preventing us from grazing our cows freely yet these settlers did not have as many cows as the ours. We felt that that was a waste of land. Our people would go with the iron sheets and the cows of the Luhya after looting. When the fighting became so bad, the refugee camp was at Major Scots house for almost 1 year because people had lost houses which were burnt down and also because people feared being attacked. It was only until President Moi came to Kamaasai to talk to the Kalenjin and Luhya to bring peace and things ended. They even had a police base established at Major Scots house (Thomas Koech, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

According to Adar (2000), one of the biggest obstacles to democratization is the political leaders' encouragement of ethnically-based voting patterns.

Support for the top Presidential candidates was largely concentrated in their ethnic bases in both the 1992 and 1997 elections. Despite experiencing the animosity resulting into ethnic divisions, Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi exploited ethnic divisions to ensure maximum votes were cast on his side in order to stay in power (*Africa Watch*, 1993). Even though KANU won the elections, international election observers reported wide spread disturbance and harassment of some opposition party supporters (*African Watch*, 1993). Moi's new government was dominated by members of the Kalenjin and Maasai

communities. Ethnicity and corruption in his new government became so entrenched that the Luo and Kikuyu who were seen as leaders of the opposition were only given one representative each in his new cabinet. In the meantime, there was increased use of hateful rhetoric by and against both protagonists.

5.1.4.2 Inflammatory rhetorics/ statements

Inflammatory ethnic vitriol also contributed to ethnic tensions and aggression in Uasin Gishu. These incendiary remarks originated from both politicians and ordinary folks. Language, as the means of communication, has the power to incite both negative and positive outcomes by promoting bias and prejudice, which can in turn inspire groups towards violence and significant harm, (Somerville,2011). The deleterious consequences of discourse fueled by hatred have not only resulted in lethal acts of violence in Kenya, but have also afflicted several other regions worldwide that have already endured the adverse ramifications of rhetoric steeped in animosity.

The majority of Kenyan populations, particularly in rural areas, mostly rely on oral communication. Thus, the ability to speak well becomes a crucial factor for the political class in inciting violence. Kiai (2007) contends that in such circumstances, when leaders employ inflammatory language, urging their followers to prepare and ensure that they do not relinquish the presidency, the probability of violence is heightened. Kiai's remark is supported by the findings of Spencer (2017) and Lynch (2023), who share the same viewpoint. During the early 1990s, Moi and his ministers employed fear-based rhetoric to resist the introduction of multi-partyism. Some supporters of the regime even encouraged violence against political dissidents, openly urging citizens to physically harm advocates of multi-partyism and to arm themselves with knobbed sticks and spears to suppress opponents of one-party rule (Somerville, 2011). The channels employed to disseminate such remarks encompassed, among others,

indigenous language radio stations, public gatherings, funeral ceremonies, and community meetings led by local chiefs. Nicholas Biwott, Francis Lotodo, and William Ole Ntimama were prominent leaders in this field. According to Onoma (2008), in 1992, Biwott made a commitment to remove trading licenses for non-Kalenjin individuals, while Lotodo insisted that all Kikuyu people should leave West Pokot (Throup and Horsnby, 1998: 543). Minister of Local Government, William ole Ntimama, made a daring statement in the early 1990s, declaring that land titles were simply insignificant documents. He aimed to assert authority and promote the trade of land for allegiance. He suggested that possessing title deeds did not necessarily ensure that immigrant communities have legal ownership of land.

During the 1992 elections, Ntimama addressed Kikuyu inhabitants from his Narok North Constituency who were believed to be against his parliamentary and Presidential campaigns for the KANU party. In order to secure their political support, he proposed that the Kikuyu community would be allowed to peacefully retain ownership of their lands in exchange for their political compliance and loyalty. He unequivocally asserted to them that he had the authority to decide their tranquil sojourn in Narok North. Therefore, it was his decision, rather than the immigrants' possession of land title deeds, that would ultimately determine who would live in Narok North. Consequently, the forceful removal of numerous Kikuyu individuals who possessed land titles occurred due to the persuasive language and encouragement of prominent politicians such as ole Ntimama and Nicholas Biwott. This was a consequence of the Kikuyu people being regarded as opposing the KANU party during the elections of 1992 and 1997 (The Commission 1999). This was reiterated by one of the respondents thus:

Some of the Kalenjin leaders like Seroney, Bargetuny, Ntimama, Biwott, would openly incite their people and the police could do nothing

because they even controlled the police (Mwangi Peter, OI, Turbo, 30/10/21, Turbo).

While another respondent clarified that the degree of political incitement by local leaders was very high; (*hiyo uko juu sana*) (FGD2,OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21,) meaning that there is very high level of incitement from the local leaders. Osamba (2001) notes that these leaders also called for the expulsion of all non-indigenous ethnic groups from the Rift Valley. Under this ethnic cleansing policy, the Rift Valley Province was supposed to be the preserve of the Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu (KAMATUSA). These communities had held several meetings together as a group. In these meetings they all agreed that they would vote to support President Moi wholesomely. Therefore, they also expected anyone residing within their precincts to follow suit as a show of respect to the inhabitants. One of the most significant indicators of the government's apathy towards these inciters was noted by Mulli (1999:77);

Statements made by ministers in close proximity to the President, William Ole Ntimama, who was serving as the Minister of Local Government at the time, addressed the conflicts between the Kikuyu and Maasai in Enospekia by acknowledging that the Maasai were engaged in a struggle to assert their rights. I was tasked with guiding and advocating for the Maasai people in safeguarding their rights. William Ole Aye, a supporter of Ntimama, expressed in 1996 that the Kikuyu and other tribes had demonstrated disrespect towards their minister (Ntimama) and the Maasai community by voting him out in the previous elections. He emphasized that it was now the Maasai's turn to demand support for their minister or for those who disagreed to depart.

These rhetorics fuelled efforts that characterized KANU's opponents as "settlers and foreigners." In pursuit of this campaign and at Moi's insistence, leading KANU MPs proclaimed the Rift Valley a KANU zone and prohibited opposition organisations from campaigning there. One of the ministers in Moi's government, Ole Ntimama, attributed the bid for multipartism to the Kikuyu. He publicly announced that "a certain ethnic group should be cut down to size in the same manner in which the Ibo of Nigeria were in

the sixties” The fact that the new constitution required the winner in Presidential elections to garner at least 25 percent of votes cast in at least five provinces, contributed to zoning the area for KANU. Kalenjin elites believed that barring opposition parties as well as communities perceived to be opposition supporters from the Rift Valley, would prevent other candidates from meeting this condition.

These strategies of political exclusion were aimed at eliminating the opposition to Moi in these regions which was mainly represented by the Kikuyu. The political elite hoped that they would thus expel the Kikuyu and other opposition communities from these areas whether they had purchased these parcels of land notwithstanding.

Class and ethnicity worked in tandem as the Kalenjin elites wanted to further their class interests by preventing the Moi administration from losing political power through the mobilization of their land-hungry constituents. In October 1991, Majimboists in KANU attacked farms in the Rift Valley to remove non-Kalenjin as the campaign against "foreigners or settlers" grew violent (National Council of Churches of Kenya 1992: Parliamentary Select Committee Report 1992). This pattern was repeated in the run-up to the general election in 1997. According to Kanyinga (2009), Kalenjin elites in KANU mobilized once more around the land issue. They often emphasized that the Kikuyu had not only taken property that belonged to the Kalenjin, but were also increasingly dominating the local economy at the expense of the Kalenjin. It is such sentiments that make the locals believe that even though they have sold some of their land to the immigrants, the land still belongs to them. Such sentiments were posed by respondents from both communities. While the immigrants believed it was their hard work that had enabled them to prosper, the locals on the other hand saw the immigrants as people who had come to their land to exploit them. Accordingly,

The Kikuyu have been demeaning the Kalenjin in business, they believe we cannot do business, that we are lazy people. They are very abusive because they have a lot of businesses and we don't. There is also marginalization when it comes to the side of maize, they come and buy our maize at low prices then come back to sell to us bad maize at very high prices. Also they live on our land and the issue of land has not been resolved (David Kiose, OI, Kipkaren 21/07/21).

On the other hand, the immigrants believe that they have not wronged the locals in any way. They just go about their daily economic activities normally and cordially until electioneering period, then problems and differences between them and locals start arising stated a respondent thus:

politicians are the ones who incite people through using their grievances e.g they are not happy about the land, business, education of our children, houses which we have built. Our Kalenjin neighbours were Jealous since most Kikuyu are hardworking. They give us their farms when we do better, they are not happy after we start prospering e.g one chief asked them why they bought milk from me yet they had huge farms and I did not even have a farm, I only grazed my cow at the Police station. This is what led to animosity between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin between 1988-1991 forcing me to leave because of attacks from the Community. But where were we to go? (James Macharia, OI, Turbo 16/12/21).

During and after the 1997 elections, the ruling party once again provided protection to the war-mongers within the party, who incited violence against opposition supporters. During a KANU event in Narok, pro-Moi members of parliament issued threats of retaliation to DP supporters after Kibaki announced his rejection of the election results (Adar and Munyae 2001). Simon Kiptum Arap Choge, a Minister in the Office of the President, foresaw that Kibaki's petition would result in extensive carnage if it challenged Moi's administration. However, the police did not respond to the warning, which was intended to incite violence against non-locals. It is impossible to disregard the fact that opposition members also encouraged violence through their public statements. For instance, Mwai Kibaki is quoted as stating that "Mr. Moi cannot afford to remain silent as though nothing is happening....when our

countrymen have been murdered for the past two weeks." It is entirely reasonable for the victims to acquire firearms as a means of self-defense. According to Adar and Munyae (2001), this mentality was the consequence of the government's failure to prevent ethnic violence. Opposition leaders, including Stephen Ndicho, were apprehended and charged with inciting violence; however, KANU and its officials were not penalized. In 1997, Minister Francis Lotodo violated the constitution's freedom of movement provisions by requiring all non-Kalenjin to vacate the Rift Valley. In September 1999, President Moi personally recommended that government officials deny "permits" to politicians who use public rallies to disparage other leaders. It was this perilous rhetoric that incited a significant number of individuals who were already dissatisfied with their political and economic circumstances to rise up and assault their neighbors during the presidency of Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi.

5.1.4.3 Reasons for the use of violence

The use of violence during electioneering serves and arises out of several reasons. According to Adar and Munyae (2001), one of Moi's regime's primary goals in initiating ethnic violence was to "show" to Kenyans and the international community that multiparty politics was not fit for a multi ethnic society like Kenya. One of the main reasons for this was because he was not ready to cede power. One of the reasons for Moi's unwillingness to cede power and control over the state was majorly due to his concern about the potential implications of losing power due to the sins and corrupt practices of his administration.

That then could have been the driving force behind the instigation of political violence in the Rift Valley and other parts of Kenya. The threat of power slipping from the hands of President Moi and his cronies was not something they could have accepted. On the

other hand, Osamba (2001) validates this line of thought when he argues that violence and conflicts are fallouts of the unresolved problems of citizenship and statehood in Kenya. For violence to be political, there must be an intention to change the political process. Therefore, when the State feels threatened and resorts to aggression to protect itself, this amounts to State violence. Similarly, when citizens from particular ethnic groups feel oppressed and need to protect their rights, they may also be forced to fight back.

The advent and demand for many political parties posed a looming threat for Moi and his people. On the other hand, other Kenyans saw multipartism as their only saviour from the authoritarianism and dictatorship of Moi. This predicament then set the stage for the use of violence by Moi and his government as a means of maintaining the status quo, while the opposition on the other hand, was forced to protect itself from these strategies by using similar or other subtle means. Unfortunately, in this struggle for political power ethnicity became the basis of operation. Steeves (2006:5) is in agreement when he opines that:

“Following the implementation of multi-party politics in Kenya, political leaders persistently relied on their ethnic communities as the primary foundation of their political backing. In Kenya, the allocation of political power is frequently determined by the electoral influence of different ethnic communities, making it a crucial resource in the pursuit of political dominance.”

Moi had the choice to employ discourse as a means of involving the advocates of multipartism. However, he opted not to pursue that course of action. In contrast, he opted to employ force in order to instigate a political upheaval. Mulli (1999) observes that by instigating such violence, a fabricated state of emergency would be generated, wherein his activities (such as manipulating the polls) would go unopposed due to the prevailing climate of doubt and apprehension. He followed Machiavelli's (1993) advice

by deliberately cultivating some hostility towards oneself, so that by defeating it, one enhances their own authority.

Another factor that may have significantly contributed to the use of violence was the highly competitive and zero-sum structure of Kenyan politics, where the ultimate victor claims all. Therefore, the possibility of experiencing defeat in an election carries significant anxiety and negative consequences. Khadiagala (1995) highlights in the May 2023 edition of "The Conversation" that political mobilizations in Africa tend to exacerbate societal tensions, particularly in cases where ethnic disparities have significant importance. Electoral violence arises when the victors in elections are guaranteed control over all the wealth of the nation. The winner takes all political systems of Ghana, Kenya, and Sierra Leone, among other countries in Africa, are confronted with this dilemma. Consequently, the deprivation of power and the associated economic influence weigh heavily not just on individuals who may lose in the elections, but also on their communities. This is because elections in Kenya are primarily influenced by ethnic factors.

Consequently, the negative consequences of losing an election extend beyond just the candidates themselves, impacting the entire community or communities involved in the coalition. The ethnic dimension facilitates their engagement in acts of violence to promote or safeguard their political leaders. Similarly, Adolfo (2012) argues that because a significant portion of the population has not yet experienced the full socio-economic and political advantages of democracy, the importance of elections increases and the competition is often seen as a situation where one side's gain is another side's loss. Emerging victorious in an election thus becomes a crucial question of survival, not just for the political parties involved, but for the entire communities they represent.

Apart from being used to intimidate immigrants, exclude them from the political process and maintain political power, violence was also used among others as a punishment to those communities that were opposed to the government. Osamba (2001:5) lays this out as well as other motives for violence:

The violence had multiple motives: to demonstrate the government's claim that political pluralism was equivalent to ethnic disorder, to retaliate against ethnic groups believed to be supporting the political opposition, to instill fear and intimidate non-indigenous individuals into leaving the Rift Valley Province, which is Kenya's most fertile region, and to enable the Kalenjin (a loyal ethnic group) to gain control of and settle on the land through intimidation and violence (Africa Watch 1993). Furthermore, this violence was the result of increasing demands by Rift Valley KANU MPs for the implementation of an ethnic-based federal system of governance.

It should also be noted that other reasons for violence was the fact that it can be used to cause fear which can lead to displacement and forced migrations, hence deter outsiders from going to the polls to vote. Adar and Munyae (2001) reported that the repression of voter rights by the government in 1997 distinguished voting in 1992 and 1997. A respondent affirmed that some of the goals of violence were displacement and forced migration for political purposes. In his own words:

They do these things so that we can move away then they take our land, property, businesses also so that we don't vote and then they can continue producing the MPS, MCAs without interference because some of us immigrants are many and may influence the vote pattern and outcome, if we remain and vote in those areas. So they threaten us, kill, burn, destroy our property and eventually, towards elections you will always see people migrating back to their homes. When you remain they ask you what you are still waiting for when others have started going away (Maina David, OI, Huruma, 16/12/21).

Interestingly, the reasons given by the respondents are in a way similar to those posed by Birch *et al* (2020) who believe that violence can be aimed at excluding people from political participation in various ways; attacks on candidates to prevent them from standing for elections, attacking or obstructing opponents' campaigns; preventing the

provision of voter education by attacking media outlets, NGOs , and election observers; intimidation, displacement, and or coercion of voters to prevent them from voting freely.

The infliction or threats of violence are not only aimed at exclusion. It is also used to instil fear and psychological torture. Birch *et al* (2020) affirm that violence induces fear of physical injury and actual loss of life. This may result into psychological effects on individuals and society. State resources were routinely used to administer 'punishment' to opponents, with local police, provincial and district governments collaborating in victimization (Anderson, 2005). Local "Kalenjin Warriors" were recruited and compensated to carry out these actions in the central and northern Rift. Those who engaged in the expulsion of non-Kalenjin settlers from projects were frequently urged to confiscate the property and land of those who fled as a way of rewarding themselves.

It is important to note that the local Kalenjin community were the ones used by politicians to attack their neighbours. The main reason why it was so easy for them to engage in such acts of violence against these immigrants was because they had, for along time, harboured underlying resentment, and anger at the unresolved colonial injustices and other issues which they felt disadvantaged them as far their neighbours were concerned. Especially when even after the attainment of independence, they have not been able to recoup the losses they incurred under colonial rule. To make matters worse, those among them who could not buy land due to impoverishment imposed upon them by the colonial regime had to sit and watch as their land was taken away and sold to outsiders. This deep seated resentment, hopelessness and sense of deprivation was captured from one of the respondent's grievance thus:

Why is it that the Kalenjin should suffer so much, everything faces the Kalenjin e.g. the Luhya or Kikuyu were not chased only the Kalenjin,

Kikuyu did not lose land, they were only captured as slaves. The government has not been serious in looking at the issues of the Kalenjin at all or to settle their problems of land alienation. After independence the government said lease of Kalenjin land to European settlers was to end before we could be given back our land. But the settler is still on these farms where they have planted tea, especially in Kalenjin land. Look at Kitale farm, when the settlers left it was sold to people even Luhya, Kikuyu, Kalenjin etc. But Kalenjin land has not been returned. some tea farms after lease expired the tycoons have bought instead of returning it to Kalenjin. Even my friend Matayo himself was forced to move from Kalenjin hills to Lessos, Chepteruai, and then to Uganda and back, but still he is suffering without land (Henry Morei,OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21).

While at the same time, at the grassroot level, their leaders never tired of reminding them that the foreigners were really benefitting at their expense. One respondent who had relocated due to the clashes vividly remembered one of the local chiefs chiding his people and narrated thus:

The leaders of the Kalenjin were not happy when the immigrants prospered in their land. The leaders would ask the Kalenjin “(*nyinyi hamuwezi pika mandazi, lazima mtu atoke Muranga ndio apike madazi ndio mununue*”) meaning You (Kalenjin) cannot even make madazi for sale the outsiders must come and make it for you to buy. The message was why do you allow even small petty business to be run by other communities. (Amunga Titus, OI,Turbo, 21/07/21)

The foregoing sentiments of deep seated animosity and resentment obviously was the fertile ground awaiting the seeds of hatred spewed by politicians for their own selfish ends.

Political violence can also be visited upon certain ethnic communities as a tool for settling political contests and managing political conflicts (Mwagiru, 2001: 6).

“Political violence refers to acts of violence that occur as a result of political conflict...Political violence fundamentally revolves on the question of the government's legitimacy. It eliminates or breaks political rivalry, and is intended to eliminate or suppress political dissent. The primary method employed by this entity is the use of intimidation and disempowerment against individuals who oppose its political agenda. Election violence occurs not only during the actual election period, but also in the preceding periods leading up to the elections.”(Mwagiru, 2001:6).

Mwagiru further notes that political contest in Kenya has developed a culture of thuggery which generally predisposes the political actors to automatically engage in violence and intimidation during political contest. The intermittent political violence in Kenya in general and Uasin Gishu in particular, can thus be explained as a culture of violence that has developed over time and become engrained into the people as a way of life. It is also mainly instigated by politicians for their own benefits but through the exploitation of underlying ethnic resentments against perceived repression and oppression.

5.1.4.4 Violence in Uasin Gishu

The hatred between Kikuyu and Kalenjin was majorly on the land issues, political and ideological differences. This made it much easier for a politically motivated violence to break out. December 1992 violence broke out in the Burnt Forest region of Eldoret mainly between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin. The Kalenjin looted and killed the Kikuyu justifying the actions with a claim that the Kikuyu community had been putting pressure on them to join the opposition party (Ajulu, 2002). It is these differences and underlying resentments that are hyped and used by politicians leading to intermittent political violence as a respondent explained:

The reason for conflict is political, we fought the Kikuyu, and they revenge and the attacks continue, people have fought in 1992, 1997, 2007. In 1997, the fight was very bad in Turbo, and Eldoret North (Felix Kiptanui, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21).

In December 1992, ethnic clashes broke out between the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu yet again. This particular skirmish occurred within Burnt Forest area in Eldoret. Kalenjin actively involved themselves in looting and burning of houses of both Kikuyu and Luhya s (Hassan, 2016). In defense. The Kalenjin said that the Kikuyu were forcing

them to join the opposition political party yet they had a choice to select where they wanted to be. Due to these skirmishes, many people were not able to cast their votes due to displacement and disruption. As was reiterated by another respondent:

1991-1992 people were harassed and chased away so that they don't vote in the areas they had registered in order to protect Moi's presidency. After the clashes almost all the Kikuyu left their businesses and houses. During market days they would come to sell in the open air market and go away they mostly shifted to Webuye because some of them don't know their homes or don't have land in Central (Amunga Titus, 21/07/2021, Turbo).

Even after election, violence still raged within Uasin Gishu. Most of the attacks were directed to the displaced individuals who wanted to return to the land that they were displaced from. A large proportion of these individuals were Kikuyu. Through violence, some of the settler owned farms were taken by Kalenjin i.e., Rironi farm was possessed by a Kalenjin who renamed it as Kaplelach (Hassan, 2014). Another respondent also affirmed these skirmishes:

when people quarrel during elections in 1992 Kikuyu started the fighting when they said by 8 am they will be taking tea in Kapsabet (the Kikuyu meant that the we will not be there ,the Kikuyu will have pushed us out of the area or finished all of us). But we did not wait for 8 am, we said it's better to die early instead of waiting, so the war started very early in the morning and we took the Kikuyu by surprise. The Kikuyu had hit the bee hive (it was like telling the bee I want to eat your honey) they could not survive when the we attacked. This is because the Kalenjin have secrets like the Israeli, in one second each Kalenjin will know what is happening. Once one Kalenjin is threatened or attacked we join forces within a very short time to counter. Before 8 am the Kikuyu houses had been burnt but later they came back. All these happened during election period. In 1992 other tribes were against the Kalenjin but we defeated all these other tribes who wanted to finish the us. One person said that the Kalenjin should have died until they become part of history (Matayo Lel, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21).

When the day of election came, many Kenyans were not able to turn up for the voting in Uasin Gishu and other parts of Rift Valley because they had been displaced. The

violence did not subside once the election was conducted. Even on the settlement farms in the Burnt Forest region of Uasin Gishu (NEMU, 1993), the Kalenjin continued to assault the Kikuyu. Some of the attacks occurred on the farms of Kondoo, Rukini, and Lokwania (*Africa Watch*, 1997). Attacks still continued in January of 1993 leaving fourteen individuals from the Luhya community dead (*Africa Watch*, 1997). The violence was mainly as a result of political differences, catalysed by underlying feelings of relative deprivation, hence the application of relative deprivation theory in the chapter. Waweru (2009) argues that prolonged violence of this sort which is locally-specific, ethnically-targeted, lethal, and carried out by a number of coordinated small groups, was usually organized and backed by some sort of ideological structure. Admittedly, since this violence seemed to have been organised and funded by politicians for their own political ends, it is important to establish their involvement.

5.1.4.5 Politicians/ Government Involvement in Ethnic Clashes

The ethnic conflicts of 1992, 1997 and 1998 were basically between pro-KANU supporters and ethnic populations perceived to be sympathetic to the opposition. The governments involvement in provoking the violence was politically instigated since the same government made no serious effort to prevent the violence from spiraling out of control (Adar and Munyae 2001, Nowrojee 1993). Furthermore, according to Malik (2018) KANU leaders admitted that election-time violence in 1992 and 1997 was instrumentalised to retain the presidency for Daniel Arap Moi.

The elite were prone to the use of violence and intimidation with the purpose of, silencing, disempowering their critics, and finally, disenfranchising hostile voters in these multi ethnic areas.

Apart from the use of violence, some of the incumbent MPs, ministers and other top government officials, including those in the security dockets, were prone to using their offices and any other opportunity to passively, actively, directly and indirectly attack the opposition. These attacks took the form of verbal attacks and incitements; failure to provide security or lax security to opposition members and their supporters; funding, directing, transporting and training warriors, and militia groups; refusing to grant the opposition licenses to hold rallies; Zoning some areas and preventing the opposition from campaigning in such areas; and influencing the judiciary against the opposition, among other tactics. Birch *et al* (2020) assert that the implementation of voting procedures often motivates elites to use ethnic or religious divisions for political gain. This manipulation can lead to communal violence, which is used to achieve electoral objectives. The electoral end was the disenfranchisement of the immigrant communities in Uasin Gishu. Unfortunately, it seems that the parts of government security agencies selectively provided security and at times even became a security threat to the citizens as illustrated by respondents thus:

They also use policemen who frighten the people by firing their pistols (*Omurundu*), in the air at night. These sounds were heard in 1992, 1993 and 2007, 2017, but 1992 was the worst, when they entered the house they killed you. 1992 was the worst in Chepsaita (Jacob Mshisa, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21)

Another respondent further explained the role played by government security apparatus in the conflict thus:

Kalenjin leaders and part of the Government helped to transport arrows, and some Administration Police, AP protected the warriors. When the non-locals asked for help when being attacked, the police would arrive but find that the AP/Police present is of a higher rank, then they just go back. Yet the higher rank police were protecting the warriors (James Macharia OI, Chimoi, 16/12/21).

Moi's experience as minister of internal security played a significant role in his use of state machinery to deal ruthlessly with perceived enemies of the government. As the

person in control of internal security for fourteen years, he built a network of loyalists among the ranks of the intelligence establishment. Kenya Police included the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), the paramilitary General Service Unit (GSU), and the Directorate of Security and Intelligence (DSI) were all under his authority as minister for home affairs (Adar and Munyae 2001). Before becoming President, Moi had already, therefore, been exposed to the organization and duties of the police force and other security agents for fourteen years.

Following the introduction of multi-partism, Moi started delegating the utilization of violence from state organizations such as the GSU to non-state militia groups. It is interesting to note that even when reports of political violence were made to the relevant security agents, they were not taken seriously, and even when such reports were noted, nothing much was done. In many instances, political violence was witnessed and reported without any expectation of prosecution or other consequences (Landa, 2008, Munene 1992). Furthermore, the opposition advocates as well as their communities were labelled as anti-government and thus, they were targeted and harassed by government machinery at every opportunity leading to fatal accidents, injuries, death, loss of property, forced migrations, and increased ethnic animosity (Munene, 1992). These were not the only instances where the government had been lackluster or partisan. The (*Africa Watch*, 1993) reports that in 1993, a group of Maasai speakers who were dressed in traditional attires directly attacked opposition supporters. Their actions were dismissed under the pretense that they were only acting in self-defense. It was later reported that the group had been hired by KANU stalwarts with the specific intention of disturbing the opposition rally.

According to human rights organizations, the involvement of Provincial Administrators, the GSU, and the police in ethnic clashes implicates the state in the

violence witnessed in Likoni and Kwale at the Kenyan coast (*Africa Watch*, 1993). The Kenya Human Rights Commission's investigation into the August 1997 Likoni-Kwale violence, for instance, concluded that the violence was mostly caused by the politicization of the socioeconomic condition in the region by local politicians who used their power and resources to protect not only their political positions which they felt were being threatened, but also their economic status. It is for the same reason that Mamdani (1996) posits that as these ethnic barons continued acting as ethnic chiefs in rural areas, they spoke the language of custom over land and threatened violence against outsiders. At the same time, in a bid to facilitate their own accumulation, they used liberal rhetoric and portrayed themselves as protectors of private property rights.

It is important to mention that the security forces were also involved in exacerbating the violence, either by intentionally participating in the conflicts or by inadequately responding to requests for protection. Muigai (2001) explains that Security officers watched the attacks unfold without responding to the pleas of the victims for protection. Meanwhile, the Police stood by as the warriors looted, set fire to houses, and destroyed them. In some instances, the arrested perpetrators were released without facing any charges (Muigai, 2001:179). However, the court system was indifferent and hesitant to hold the assailants accountable (HRW/AW November 1993:2; HRW, June 1997:9). The judiciary's response was criticized for its half-hearted and inadequate approach, including the discriminatory application of the law. According to the report, while the majority of the people responsible were from the Kalenjin ethnic group, the majority of those who were detained and faced charges were from other ethnic groups (HRW/AW, November 1993:72).

Indeed, commissioners from a committee of parliament set up to investigate election violence of 1992 heard from eyewitnesses that other communities in Rift Valley were often attacked by disguised junior military police, general service unit officers and former servicemen who were on leave. The report also indicated that these attackers were said to have been trained in camps in Doineet, Nesuit, Marigat and Kerio in Rift Valley (Parliamentary Select Committee 1992). It was impossible under President Moi's watch and particularly given his vast experience in the security docket as vice President, that these trainings and the involvement of security officers in ethnic attacks could have taken place without his government's notice. Thus, the only other viable conclusion was that the government was aware or turned a blind eye since the ethnic attacks were deemed to indirectly benefit Moi's government. The parliamentary report (1992) pointed out that;

“The assailants demonstrated a high level of organization and adhered to given directives. The individuals displayed a high level of regimented discipline, typically observed in individuals who have undergone intense military training. Additionally, evidence presented to the committee suggests that the fighters were hired and received varying amounts of payment. This payment ranged from Kshs500 for safely returning from the conflicts, Kshs1000-2000 for killing an individual or burning a thatched house, and Kshs10000 for each permanent house burned.” (Parliamentary Select Committee 1992).

Furthermore, Adar and Munyae (2001) report that, a group of Catholic priests and nuns, foreign journalists, and around thirty-eight police officers saw a Kalenjin attack on a Kikuyu farmhouse near the intersection of Njoro and Molo in the Rift Valley Province on January 27, 1998. The cops did not intervene until the nuns chased the intruders. On the same note, in May of 1998 when thirty armed attackers assaulted an opposition rally, the police did nothing to stop the invaders. It should further be noted that in 1997 the opposition members tried to search for redress against the government, following the 1997 elections which were marred by violence and irregularities. Kibaki, therefore,

filed an election petition to oppose the results. Klopp (2002) notes that consequently, the political leaders around Moi used it as an opportunity to disparage Kibaki and the Kikuyu community in Rift Valley. They held several rallies where they threatened violence against the Kikuyu, arguing that Kibaki's actions were tantamount to an affront to the Kalenjin community. Furthermore, they vowed to collectively respond by dealing with the Kikuyu farmers and traders in Rift Valley. Consequently, Kikuyu farmers and their families were attacked leading to death and displacement of hundreds of people.

Having discussed the role of government in the political violence, it is imperative to establish some of the catalysing factors that made the Kalenjin to easily believe these political rhetoric, and bid the instructions of the political elite.

5.1.9.2 Moi's Patronage, Clientelism and Feelings of Deprivation

The general political climate of the time was made up of discontented citizens due to the increased benefits afforded to the Kalenjin community. Moi's regime was characterized by political patronage, killings and detention of people. Just like Jomo Kenyatta, President Moi used his political influence to ensure that the Kalenjin community obtained favors unlike any other nationality within the country. KANU was turned into a vehicle for Kalenjin political sentiments.

According to African Watch (1993), by 1990, all the key positions in the administration were held solely by individuals from the Kalenjin community. These positions encompassed roles in the military, security, and state-owned companies. The selection of specific individuals from a hypothetical "ethnic community" for influential positions, particularly prestigious positions linked to high-ranking politicians, is often seen as providing advantages to various clients and sub-clients within that "community" as well

as the community as a whole (Anderson 1983). During an election, individuals may employ appeals to ethnic unity in order to gain support, so establishing broader or more exclusive boundaries around their "community" based on the effectiveness of uniting or splitting people as a political tactic. Subordinates also assert their rights over those in positions of power, recognizing them as part of their "community" in order to get state resources, security, and representation at the national level (Benedict Anderson, 1983).

A major difference between Kenyatta and Moi's era was the way of dealing with opposition. Kenyatta was much more tolerant to criticism while Moi treated any perceived threat on his leadership as treason. As a result, the number of human rights discriminations was at its peak during Moi's regime. Moi's ascension into power only worsened the state of ethnicity within the country (Ajulu, 1998). Under his rule, he entrenched his community into political and economic control and also ethnicized the electoral process. Despite all these, the issues of land had not been fully settled according to the general feeling of most Kalenjin. Some of the land that had been grabbed by the colonialists from the Kalenjin community had ended up in Kikuyu ownership.

The uncompromising nature of Moi's administration in handling perceived threats and the evident imbalance in the distribution of public resources generated significant conflict (Africa, Watch, 1997). The most egregious manifestation of weaponized ethnicity occurred in and around the general elections. While other nationalities were resolute in their efforts to remove Moi from power, he had a strategy to retain his position. Oucho (2010) highlights the fact that Kenyans experienced a continuous decline in their economic status as the Moi era advanced. Despite promises of salary increases during elections, workers never actually received them. Additionally, districts

that were established through Presidential proclamation lacked proper infrastructure and failed to benefit the intended recipients. Furthermore, institutions that had been a source of national pride for many years deteriorated significantly. Josse-Durand (2018) explains that the local dignitaries mostly exploited the narrative of relative scarcity by leveraging the current political and economic arguments made on behalf of the Kalenjin community and culture. These cultural entrepreneurs utilized the promotion of cultural heritage as a means to advance their personal and group objectives within their communities. This included advocating for issues such as land distribution, safeguarding political influence, and rectifying historical injustices against their communities.

Having discussed the dynamics of ethnicity and political violence, it is imperative to then see how different aspects of ethnicity were applied in the political violence in Uasin Gishu. These aspects of ethnicity are glimpsed from Kalenjin cultural traditions and beliefs. They are what identifies the Kalenjin as a community, what they hold dear and what unites them as a community; these are aspects such as use of mother tongue, land, initiation, warrior tradition, Kalenjin traditional religion, traditional rulers, social roles, among others. In chapter two of this study, the pre-colonial socio-political and economic organisation of the Kalenjin was discussed with a view to historically understand the formation of this community, their settlement in Rift Valley and what they hold dear. It has also already been discussed how the politicians incited the different communities in Uasin Gishu and hence made and even went ahead to engineer the political violence. It is also important to note that the response of some communities like the Kikuyu to the violence was also rooted or driven by their cultural traditions and religion.

This part aims at bringing out how these politicians manipulated different aspects of the Kalenjin culture, traditions, practices and beliefs and used them to engineer attacks against other communities in Uasin Gishu.

5.2 Weaponized aspects of ethnicity during political violence in Uasin Gishu

Ethnic mobilisation can be very dangerous when unscrupulous leaders organise and exploit it for narrow political interests. Kasfir (1976) argue that the attributes of ethnic groups like territory, culture, and language are salient markers of identity which are often used as pedestals for political mobilization. Ethnic mobilisation can end in “uncivic nationalism” by excluding minority “outsiders” and exhibiting illiberal tendencies against these “outsiders” (Berman 1998). Berman’s sentiments on ethnic mobilisation reiterated the gist of this study as it factored in the impact of the exploitation of aspects of ethnicity and how this fuelled intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu.

Since the early 1990s, Kenyans in Rift Valley in General and Uasin Gishu in particular, have become accustomed to ethnicized political violence, which has almost become an accepted component of politics. This is mainly due to the ethnic dynamic nature of politics in Kenya. The two major ethnic groups in Kenya which have been in power since independence have always formed alliances to win elections. These ethnic-based political alliances always determine in a way whether the elections will be peaceful or not. Thus, it becomes easy for the political elite to do their calculations and determine which strategies they need to put in place in order to win votes in particular areas which they consider as their zones. In Uasin Gishu, this translated into a policy of political exclusion and the violent elimination of political opponents, transforming the province into a "KANU zone " in the 1990s (Anderson and Lochey, 2008). In practice, this resulted in the targeting of settlement schemes, which housed concentrations of non-

Kalenjin voters who were more inclined to oppose KANU but ready to support opposition parties. On the same note, KANU had to ensure that these zones were protected from the influence of their opponents. Unfortunately, due to the cosmopolitan nature of the Rift Valley and Uasin Gishu in particular, KANU could not get one hundred percent of votes cast going their way. Therefore, the use of threats and violence became necessary to prevent other ethnic groups in this area from either voting against KANU or voting at all.

This was achieved by convincing their ethnic group that their neighbours were a political, social, and economic threat to their existence and prosperity. Jonsson (2007) affirms that at times perceptions of ethnic identity have proved powerful in mobilising individuals into organised group violence. This is one of the main reasons why from 1992 to 2007, violence has been an intermittent feature of election campaigns in Kenya, thus, making Rift Valley one of the most politically unstable provinces (Anderson and Lochey, 2008). In 1992 and 1997, KANU and Moi supporters used state resources to incite violence in the Uasin Gishu against their opponents, who were primarily immigrant communities who had settled in the region since the 1960s (Landa, 2008). The main agenda for this violence was to ensure that Moi preserved his presidency and KANU preserved its majority lead in parliament. This was utterly necessary since as Steeves (2006) expounds,

Capturing the most coveted prize, the presidency, involves assembling a coalition of ethnic leaders who use their community's support to leverage positions of power and influence inside the ruling group (Steeves 2006:5)

Thus, discontent within the Rift Valley settlement schemes as expressed in local politics as early as the 1960s, grew steadily over time. This was more pronounced in Uasin Gishu as the Kalenjin population grew and land-hunger grew more severe in the late 1970s and 1980s. This discontentment only escalated to violence as a result of political

instrumentalisation in the 1990s (Lochery and Anderson, 2008). A respondent best explains this situation thus:

Our communities always fight because of land, politicians and elections, then we have revenge attacks due to political incitement, also social media increases conflict when people see what has been posted or written... From 1960 to 1991 there was peace and harmony between us the Kikuyu. But Kenyatta did not treat us well, so the conflict from 1992 is a spillover from the politics of Kenyatta because the Kikuyu think that they own Kenya. (Felix Kiptanui, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21)

Anderson and Lochery (2008) state that violence has been a consistent feature of every election campaign in Kenya since 1992. Additionally, in the past four national elections, Rift Valley has consistently been the province with the highest level of political instability. During the years 1992 and 1997, followers of the political party KANU and its leader Moi utilized government resources to deliberately provoke acts of violence in the Rift Valley region. The targets of this violence were mainly immigrant communities that had relocated to the area during the 1960s. The violence that occurred in the early 1990s led to the loss of more than a thousand lives and the forced displacement of over 250,000 individuals in the Rift Valley. Violence has become deeply embedded in the politics of the Rift Valley. One respondent, narrating the clashes in his village in 1992 remembered thus:

The war started at Kamaasai, one Kalenjin and a Luhya fought and the Kalenjin's burnt the house of the Luhya at the end of the fight. Kalenjin attacked and burnt houses then the Luhya retaliated until Yusuf Haji had to come to quell the war. Kalenjin's were at the hill they formed two lines and they were followed. At Pondi's place one Kalenjin child was shot by the arrow and was taken to hospital. The police were also beaten by the Kalenjin. As a result, they were shot by the police and many of them died. The Kalenjin had also come with the police led by some powerful people from the government who supported them. Mswahili almost died but one of the Kalenjin, a former student saved him and told him to run away. The two groups fought the whole day. The Next day we found a new way of fighting and we finished the war with the new fighting tactic (Jacob Mshisa, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21).

It is, indeed, clear that violence instigated by politicians specifically against certain ethnic communities took place in Uasin Gishu. It has also clearly come out that the Kalenjin were incited against the immigrant communities by politicians who were after protecting their political and economic interests at the altar of Kalenjin traditions and culture. These politicians, therefore, mobilized certain aspects of Kalenjin Culture to convince their people to fight their neighbors. The mobilization and utilization of aspects of Kalenjin culture brings out the primordial tendencies since these are the same aspects that identify, are shared by and unite the Kalenjin as one community, hence the application of primordial theory in this chapter. These aspects of Kalenjin traditions and culture included, but were not limited to: mother tongue, warriors, elders, oathing, initiation, land, among others.

5.2.1 Use of mother tongue

One of the natural means of communication used effectively by the politicians to drum up support and mobilize their people was mother tongue. Mother tongue was used on specific occasions like public rallies, on FM radio stations, and during secret night meetings to mobilise, cajole, and incite the local Kalenjin to rise up against their immigrant neighbors.

Mother tongue is what identifies most Africans with their communities. The same can be said with Kenyan Communities. There is a way in which it makes one feel grounded, feel and have a sense of belonging and identity. It gives one some deep feeling of fulfillment and achievement. In short the experience one gets from interacting, discussing, or engaging with others of the same tongue cannot really be put into words since it is more of an emotion that is so fulfilling and gratifying. Ricks (2020) established that when politicians use their ethnic tongue during campaigns, it signals kinship ties to listeners, and has a much more profound effect. The results of a survey by

Ricks, (2020) shows that an ethnic overture has greater electoral appeal than formal speech. Wanjohi Githinji (2022) affirms that mother tongue has several advantages; since it gives a sense of belonging, politicians like Ruto, Raila, and Uhuru have often used their mother tongues to woo their ethnic communities. He further notes that it is the use of mother tongue that has really endeared them to their supporters.

Ricks, (2020:10) clarifies that ethnic speech may captivate audiences, convincing them that the speaker shares their beliefs, ideas, and attitudes. Therefore, a speaker of the local language is seen to be significantly more credible than those who use Kiswahili or English. Ethnic language was, therefore, used by politicians to establish a perception of shared identity. This shared identity was not only in terms of being one people but also in the challenges experienced, as well as possible solutions to these challenges. Thus, when these politicians addressed their people about their problems in their own language, it acted as a strong bond and elicited strong emotive feelings of belonging.

Politicians in various parts of Africa frequently utilize their mother tongue to effectively communicate with their constituents. According to Ansah and Darko (2019), voters in Ghana had a greater appreciation for messages that were conveyed in their own language. This appreciation arises from the absence of the necessity for translation, since the contents are conveyed effortlessly, especially when fragments of proverbs are incorporated into these messages. In addition, it is important to note that not all members of the public, particularly those living in rural areas where the bulk of voters are located, may fully comprehend the messages communicated in English. The native language, as a result, became a potent instrument for rallying one's ethnic group for political objectives. Ricks (2020:6) proposes that in cultures with several languages, the use of language has historically been a means to rally ethnic groupings. Repeatedly during the pre-campaign phase and throughout the campaigns, the local population was

urged and persuaded by the political leaders to come together and stand against the unappreciative immigrants. Alexander and Koffi (2019:4) argue that the influence of the mother tongue on voters in Ghana is evident in the way emotions, such as fear, joy, pride, anger, and hope, strongly shape voter behavior. Hence, the kind of language employed can significantly influence voter behavior.

But why should the use of mother tongue have such a great impact. The answer could lie in the raw emotions it invokes in the listeners and hence the primordial aspect of mother tongue. According to Wanjohi Githinji (2022), campaigners employ idioms, proverbs, and other forms of figurative language such as music and poetry to persuade their constituents. The political elite frequently employed metaphorical language to dehumanize immigrants. They were frequently labeled as nuisances, creatures, or undesirable plants that were deemed unfit to be in the company of other human beings and hence required elimination by whatever means necessary. One respondent explained the disparaging remarks that were made in reference to them by the locals thus:

They started by telling their people that they should uproot all the *sangari, madoadoa*, weeds from their farms so that the farms are clean. (Moi) Also said that if you cut down one tree you should plant two. It was their way of saying that if you remove one Kikuyu, you replace with two Kalenjin (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21)

There is no other symbol that can represent the culture and traditions of a community more than the use of mother tongue. Its use becomes more graphic and emotive. Ansah (2019) notes that unarguably, most Ghanaian languages constitute the bedrock of cultural manifestations of the people. The use of mother tongue was a symbol of unity and solidarity. Some of the most inflammatory statements and rhetoric were made using mother tongue for effect. The use of mother tongue was applied by several political

elites even in public as they tried to pass across the magnitude of their message to their people, to ensure that they really understood the gravity of the message. Ricks (2020:23) explains that the use of mother tongue and its impact cannot be compared to formal languages like English which creates substantial social distance between the speaker and respondents. Mother tongue in many situations in Africa, is often used for emphasis, to give communication black out to others who do not share the same tongue. Furthermore, by using mother tongue in public places, it was a significant way of showing the immigrants in Uasin Gishu that they did not belong there. It was also used as a way of mocking these other communities. A respondent affirmed:

The Kalenjin mainly speak their language because they do not want other communities to hear them. Even during public meetings and campaigns, they do that (John Kopi, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21).

It is, therefore, these qualities of mother tongue, which qualified it to be extensively used in Uasin Gishu to incite the local Kalenjin to rise up against the immigrants leading to political violence. According to Wanjohi Githinji (2022), Kenyan ethnic communities were instigated against each other using their native languages, even during the 2007/2008 post-election violence. Additionally, he observes that certain videos depicting individuals who are not indigenous or immigrants from certain groups being subjected to threats in their own language have been shared on social media platforms in the Rift Valley and Nairobi regions.

Furthermore, it is the use of mother tongue that really binds these people as one community. In the traditional African set up, the aspect of individualism did not exist. people existed as communities with shared challenges or achievements. Sobania (2011) observes that in previous times, depending just on one's own abilities or even those of one's own family was insufficient for survival. The extended family, friends, and

community played a crucial role in the whole endeavor of existence. Therefore, the mother language rapidly galvanized the society by fostering a shared identity and a strong sense of belonging, resulting in a profound communal obligation.

5.2.2 Use of Militia /Warriors

One common characteristic of the electioneering period in Kenya since the advent of multipartism in the 1990s has been politically instigated violence. The violence is instigated by the political elite as a method of ensuring they retain political and economic power. The main instruments used to mete out this violence are usually young men from these politicians' communities. For the warriors to engage in acts of violence against these perceived threats to their community, they must be convinced that their community is at fundamental risk. Kalenjin traditions bestow the burden of community protection on its warriors. Therefore, the young men have no alternative but to heed the call to perform their traditional duty to their community. This warrior tradition is inborn in many African communities since time immemorial. Mazrui (1975:68), opines that,

African warrior culture did not begin the moment Europeans set foot on African soil. It wasn't a tactic thrown together in the heat of battle to defeat an enemy force. Contrarily, it was intricately related to every aspect of most African civilizations' cultures before to European contact.

During the previous political violence that has occurred in Uasin Gishu, it has always been alleged that warriors have been involved in meting out violence to those perceived to be non-indigenous, or politically un-cooperative. The Akiwumi report (1999) reiterates that in November 1991, policemen intercepted a gang of slightly over one thousand Kalenjin raiders who were armed with bows and arrows on their way to Londiani and Ainabkoi from Tinderet. There was general consensus that other communities in Uasin Gishu adversely suffered from physical violence, burning of their

houses, and general destruction of property from these raiders. In one of the FGDs, a member explained how they were attacked:

The warriors start attacking at night, they burn the houses at night so that you can run away, they tell you to come out of their way and they burn everything in the house. This is done so that you can run away. When you run away, this ensures that you don't vote, that is their main agenda (FGD2, OI, Chepsaita, 21/17/21).

The Kalenjin are known historically for the fierceness of their warriors during the pre-colonial period as they fought and defeated some of their neighbours. In the colonial period, their warriors engaged in a fierce and protracted resistance against British rule under the leadership of their religio-political leader Koitalel Arap Samoei. Thus, whenever called upon, the young men are pressured and they feel beholden to respond since they have a legacy to uphold. A respondent clarified thus:

Hey, even me, if called upon now, I cannot wait. What will I be waiting for and yet that is our duty as young men? That is what we are taught at *jandoni*. When you go to *jandoni*, you cannot come out as a coward. We are taught many things that we are to do as men like protecting our community. It is better die to outside like a man and not hide in the house like a woman (Lelei Samuel, OI, Kamagut, 21/07/21).

One contributing element to the occurrence of attacks by young Kalenjin males is from the traditional role of warriors in the Kalenjin culture. According to this tradition, boys who undergo circumcision together are considered to be part of the same *Ibinda*. Kemboi *et al* (2018) argue that when young males reached adulthood in a certain *ibinda*, their responsibility was to safeguard the territorial areas and the community. The era during which they assumed responsibility for safeguarding the community was referred to as the age of that *ibinda*. Thus, it was traditionally incumbent upon the young men of a particular age to protect the community. Since circumcision currently takes place periodically among the Kalenjin, these young men who have been circumcised, still have the duty to offer communal protection.

One question that must be asked is why neighbors who have lived together in harmony

for several years, develop enmity during electioneering period. The answer lies in the poisonous rhetoric from the local elites and politicians who somehow convince their followers that their political and economic maladies can only be solved by chasing away the non-locals from their midst. The fact that these attacks often take place just around and during elections, shows that they are mainly politically driven. Those outsiders who fail to move out are then physically attacked to force them out to ensure that there will be no specks (*madoadoa*) in the votes cast in the area.

Lieberman and Singh (2012) note that

The state's institutionalization of ethnic categories offers a simple system of labels and corresponding sets of facts for information brokers to report on "unfair" resource distributions and discriminatory laws and practices. Furthermore, the state's utilization of categories can aid in the articulation of complaints, the enlistment of individuals, and the organization of activities. The recruited fighters are more inclined to make physical sacrifices because they see a danger to their dignity and want to display their moral superiority among people of the same ethnicity. Group membership alone has the potential to inspire group mobilization, but the inclusion of relative deprivation can significantly enhance this effect.

The youths who were normally referred to as Kalenjin warriors were responsible for most of the attacks in Rift Valley including Uasin Gishu. They maimed, killed, and raped the immigrants ruthlessly (*Africa Watch* 1993). In their ruthlessness, they also destroyed these peoples' property by burning down farms and houses, killing or taking away the livestock using traditional and rudimentary weapons like machetes, knives, spears, bows and arrows. Some of the arrows used by these warriors were supplied by the political elite as Adar and Munyae (2001) confirm that the political elite used "Kalenjin warriors" dressed in traditional garb and utilized arrows delivered by helicopter from South Korea to attack the opposition.

The Akiwumi report (1999) further points out that these warriors referred to their victims as foreigners and intruders thus their actions were aimed at ensuring these foreigners were evicted from Kalenjin land. The warriors were usually in simple red or black shorts and t-shirts when they attacked at night. In case they attacked during the day, they usually smeared clay on their whole body and faces so that they could not be recognized (*Africa watch* 1993). This information was corroborated by a respondent who explained that “the warriors put on t-shirts and shorts and you cannot know them at night (OI, John Kopi, 20/07/21. Chepsaita).

Just before the warriors engage in attacks, the Kalenjin have their traditional way of alerting members of their community for the need to rise up and defend themselves. This is a type of cry that is made signaling war has started and people should come out prepared to fight. One respondent revealed:

For example, during the 1992 clashes, the Kalenjin were told that the Luhya had said they would be having tea at Chepteruai at 6 am in the morning. The Kalenjin's had to do something. The message was passed across very fast about the coming attack by the Luhya. It was done through cries by the women as the woman is screaming, they have to explain why. The warriors will then come already armed for the war because they can differentiate the screams (Thomas Koech, OI, 21/07/21, Chepsaita).

During the attacks, the youth who attacked the local area could not come from within. They were often sourced from other areas such as Keiyo so that the residents may not recognize them and also because of the need for more reinforcement when the immigrants rose up to defend themselves. Similarly, Hundie (2010) notes the need for cooperation at inter-clan level when conflicts erupt between Afar clans and the neighbouring ethnic groups in Ethiopia. In such instances, when one clan feels overwhelmed, it is forced to request for warriors from their neighbouring clans to help them. Thus the operations of institutions of violence are observed at the clan level

because these clan members share common ancestors, territory, as well as political leadership. It is significant to note that the traditional warrior role of defending and protecting the Kalenjin community has been misused severally by politicians who often incite, organize and sponsor the Kalenjin youth to attack the immigrants. One respondent noted:

The Kalenjin were well organized for example, they could get warriors and organize to cook for them from some of their leaders houses to feed them but the Kikuyu could not continue fighting because they were hungry and were not well organized (OI, Canon James Macharia, 16/12/21. Chimoi).

Klopp (2002) clarifies that in the bid to expel Kikuyu from the Rift Valley, the local politicians organized Kalenjin militia through the use of money, threats of noncompliance, and an ideology of intra-ethnic unity and inter-ethnic enmity. Organised political violence also occurred in Maasai regions. Klopp (2002) notes that in these areas, it was the local politicians who enabled the recruitment and deployment of violent gangs. Consequently, these politicians were rewarded and elevated in their communities. By the time of the 1997 election, those complicit in this violence dominated KANU's structure throughout the country with the most affected areas being the Coast, Rift Valley, as well as Kalenjin and Maasai politics as a whole.

The coastal area of Kenya also experienced political violence in the years, 1992, 1993, 1997, and 1998. The mode of operation as well as the reasons behind these attacks bore a lot of semblance to those that took place in Uasin Gishu. *The Human Rights Watch* (1997) describes these attacks noting that the raiders, who were mostly young men, were organized in a military command structure of sorts. They were led by some seniors from whom they received orders. They attacked using both traditional as well as sophisticated weapons. Their main targets were the non-locals who were unable to reply to them in the local dialect when addressed. Similarly, the major motives of the

raiders were to regain their ancestral land, property and jobs. It is interesting to note that these raiders were also supported and manipulated by politicians whose main intention was to retain and win their electoral seats.

Birch *et al* (2020) argue that political leaders frequently depend on violence specialists, such as militia organizations or criminal gangs, to ensure their security and delegate the use of force to these groups. Adolfo (2012) affirms that the likelihood of electoral violence is greater in conditions characterized by genuine political struggle among several parties and real opportunities to alter existing power dynamics. However, Kagwanja (2003) contends that the Kenyan elite, in their efforts to suppress opposition political parties, also enlisted and supported 'tribal militias' and gangs to intimidate and incite ethnic violence, similar to the practices observed in other African nations like Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, and Sudan.

Certain African leaders exhibit a tendency to utilize State power and institutions to advance their personal interests or the interests of their ethnic groupings (Osamba, 2001). Typically, the political elite exploit their ethnic communities by persuading them that their actions are necessary for the survival or well-being of the community. However, in reality, the violence often serves as a deceptive tactic to advance the politicians' political strategies. Political mileage is frequently obtained by employing many techniques and means that involve the use of intimidation, violence, and other types of fear against both actual and perceived adversaries.

These arguments confirm the findings of this study on the inclination for the use of violence by Moi's government to threaten, instil fear, and hence curb opposition attempts that were against his continued stay in power. It is also significant to note that among the Kalenjin, the local politicians sourced this violence from young Kalenjin

“warriors” who had to obey their elders as prescribed by their traditions as well as their role in society.

Unfortunately, the political violence meted out on the immigrant communities in Uasin Gishu begot more violence as these communities and their leaders tried to protect themselves leading to revenge attacks and escalation of violence. Landa (2008) elucidates this phenomenon by asserting that political candidates universally enlist the services of henchmen to act as their proxies, with the aim of safeguarding themselves against the henchmen acting on behalf of their adversaries. During Moi's leadership, Kenya's political scene was characterized by the widespread occurrence of political violence and the complete lack of accountability for those who used violence as a means of achieving political goals. Impunity emerged as a result of the overt utilization of state machinery and resources to enable violence and shield wrongdoers, while simultaneously disregarding severe transgressions and the pleas for assistance from the victims.

President Moi and his government deliberately and recklessly established extremely high levels of violence against individuals who opposed them, which went beyond the control of the state (Mueller 2008). Over time, these sources of violence, some of which were initially established to serve the state, gradually developed their own autonomy, and the state often struggled to exert control over them. Thus, the state eventually started to surrender its exclusive control. According to Mueller (2008), the violence caused by the Moi regime was always on the verge of breaking out, even in the absence of a crisis, regardless of the state's endorsement.

According to Mueller (2008), various forms of violence outside the control of the state were observed during Moi's regime. These included politicians having personal

bodyguards and hired thugs, groups of young criminals who were employed by the government and politicians to harm and displace supporters of the opposition, violent gangs that acted as unofficial governing bodies in different regions of the country and supported specific politicians, and a widespread increase in crime and violence that affected ordinary citizens starting from the 1980s. This situation led to the proliferation of militia gangs formed by various organizations, which intensified political bloodshed in numerous regions of the country. In his definition and description of militias, Raleigh (2016) refers to them as

Armed factions employing force or the prospect of force to manipulate a prompt political procedure. These groups are seldom structured in a formal or inflexible hierarchy, but they have strong connections with a political elite patron or community who determine the objectives of their violent actions. They function at the subnational level, typically within a specific geographical region. Membership is frequently determined by factors like as ethnicity, geographical location, and other forms of identity expression. (Raleigh, 2016:285).

The utilization of militias in Kenya appears to be deeply ingrained in the postcolonial power of African states, as argued by Mueller (2008). This strength was built upon the government's ability to co-opt elites for the sake of gaining legitimacy and exerting control over local regions, as previously described during Kenyatta's rule. As a result, every electoral process motivates individuals to employ militias to challenge opposing forces anytime they see a threat to their dominance. Raleigh (2016) categorizes the militias in Kenya as "Competition Militias" because they arise in Kenya during times of political competition, when the ruling class competes for authority, influence, and state resources. He asserts that their activities reach their peak during occasions of national elite competition, such as elections. Additionally, he observes that private armies can serve as a means of power for political elites, parties, or interest groups. The organization comprises several militias such as Boko Haram in Nigeria, Mungiki in

Kenya, the young patriots in Ivory Coast, Janjaweed in Sudan, and the Pokot militias in Kenya and Uganda. Raleigh (2016) contends that politicians primarily employ these militias to vie for control over authority, resolve territory and resource conflicts, reinforce local power imbalances, and perpetuate longstanding problems. This argument remains valid regarding the causes of political violence that immigrants in Uasin Gishu experienced in the 1990s, as well as the retaliatory attacks undertaken in response.

According to Chabal and Daloz (1999), these militias arise when political elites in competition with each other aim to win control at the local, regional, or national level. They are willing to create illegal groups and resort to violence in order to secure power and benefits. Given that elections are ongoing political competitions throughout the year, militias have emerged as significant catalysts of political violence in Africa, responsible for around one-third of recent conflicts on the continent. Raleigh (2016) ascribes militia violence to cultural responses to chaos, dysfunctional and exploitative governments, and internal divisions that arise during civil conflicts. Sambanis (2004) concurs that the repeated utilization of militias as personal military forces by the political ruling class has been prompted by the rise of democratization, which has fostered rivalry and division within regimes and among adversaries. According to Waweru (2009), Moi's decision to outsource violence in the 1990s was justified because the utilization of irregular gangs and militias made it difficult to pinpoint the source of the violence. The political elite employed these militias to indirectly enable unlawful coercion while reducing their own vulnerability. Therefore, one of the primary motivations for its utilization was to ensure the politicians' personal safety and convenience. As no specific politician wanted to be directly associated with or

connected to this bloodshed, they protected themselves by employing militias that could not be easily traced back to them.

In the 1992 general elections, militias and vigilante organizations like *Baghdad boys*, *Angola Musumbiji*, and *jeshi la mzee* terrorized those who opposed KANU government with impunity. Unfortunately, due to the involvement of their sponsors, none of them were arrested, and even when such arrests were made, they were eventually acquitted. Adar and Munyae (2001) state that the use of militia to incite violence on behalf of KANU and the government began with the 1991-1993 ethnic conflicts. One such militia Mungiki, arose in the 1990s and countered attacks against the Kikuyu in Rift Valley.

Mungiki was a religio-political movement composed mainly of the youth with a few middle aged members who acted as its leaders. Initially, most of its members were the victims of the land clashes which occurred from 1990s. It began administering oaths to its members in a bid to unite its members to counter ethnic attacks by Kalenjin warriors against the Kikuyu in various areas of the Rift Valley. Wamue (2001) explains that Mungiki started giving oaths to members at the beginning of the clashes in 1992 in order to unite them to retaliate against political violence. Such incidences led to an escalation of political violence in Uasin Gishu and other areas. Furthermore, the violence escalated because, Mungiki was also supported by some politicians who felt that their people needed to be protected from the violent attacks orchestrated by their contenders.

While all elections inherently contain some level of uncertainty, the winner-takes-all system in democracy comes with significant costs. Consequently, numerous politicians employ unlawful electoral tactics and utilize militant youth factions, militias, or state security forces to either secure victory in the election or enhance their position in post-election negotiations. According to Wahman & Goldring (2020), parties employ violence against minorities and voters who strongly oppose them in their own strongholds as a strategy to uphold their supremacy. They argue that in Zambia, places where the incumbent and opposition have considerable support are more prone to violence than other areas. Undeniably, this reasoning holds true when applied to the

regions most severely affected by political violence in Kenya. The primary players and their supporters in the elections originated from these regions..

It is worthy to note that the majority of participants in political violence were the youth and specifically the young men. A respondent affirmed that; “Youths came from Selia, Cheplaskei, Chepkemel, Sendakwanza, Kaplemur, they attacked the immigrants and burnt houses. The second day there were so many GSU sent by the government” (Felix Kiptanui, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21). The prevalent participation of the Kalenjin youth can be attributed to the age group system which places the young circumcised men at the centre of such incidences due to their traditionally prescribed role as defenders of their community. Apart from this factor, most youth are often unemployed, idle, and hence open to opportunities that seem to offer them money and excitement. Bjarnesen and Soderberg M (2018) acknowledges that a significant aspect that benefits the privileged class in numerous African nations is the substantial population of unemployed young men who serve as both a valuable and easily replaceable labor force, particularly in the context of engaging in electoral violence. Additionally, he observes that in Sierra Leone, individuals who were previously involved in armed conflict during the civil war, as well as other young people in metropolitan areas, are frequently targeted by influential figures who seek to enlist their violent assistance during elections in return for immediate advantages. In the 2015 elections in Burundi, the ruling party provided training and weapons to its youth militia with the intention of intimidating individuals who were seen as opposing President Pierre Nkurunziza's attempt to secure a third term as President.

5.2.3 Ruthlessness of warriors and significance of violence

Violence, seen as a characteristic of men since manhood was associated with both sexual vigor and bravery in battle. The ability to make ruthless decisions or do severe damage when necessary became linked to a sense of strong masculinity (Mazrui, 2008). The Kalenjin culture instills ruthlessness and manliness in young men through the practice of circumcision. This is a transitional phase during which adolescent boys undergo a process of maturation, becoming prepared to assume the altruistic duty of safeguarding the society. It was anticipated that one would not display any signs of fear or weakness, but rather emphasize their masculinity in order to inspire fear and respect from their peers and especially from potential adversaries. In describing the values that made a man, Mazrui affirms that

“Bravery, in essence, was occasionally described as the ability to carry out brutal deeds when they were required. However, there is also an inherent connection between masculinity and the qualities of a warrior. Across diverse communities, a consistent element persists - it was a male individual who engaged in combat to defend the society. Attributes such as bravery, resilience, and even mercilessness were considered to be strong masculine traits. The phrase 'he is a true man' can be interpreted to suggest that he possesses either strong sexual potency or displays qualities of toughness and bravery.” (Mazrui 1975:6)

During the instances of political violence in Uasin Gishu, there were several reports and accounts of the ruthlessness in the way in which certain communities were attacked by the Kalenjin warriors. In fact, a respondent reported that;

When the warriors attacked, they even raped some women, killed people, burnt and destroyed property. Some men and women were tortured as they are abused and asked why they cannot go back where they came from, whether they do not have homes. Many people suffered from psychological torture, some could not talk to people, others just looked like they were confused for a long time. Many got very bad injuries and some even became disabled and could not provide for their families (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

Undoubtedly, the forgoing narration is a clear demonstration that electoral violence in Kenya played out in the form of ruthless attacks, including widespread rape and sexual

violence (González-Ocantos *et al* 2020). The ruthlessness meted out on the immigrant communities was aimed at cowering them such that they stop supporting the opposition, to make them not to even think of voting for the opposition if they remained in the area, or to make them abandon their homes in fear of further brutality. Many of the immigrants who faced violence ended up leaving their farms and becoming internal refugees, while some were forced to later sell these farms and property at throw away prices. Consequently, “during the fights, people died, hatred between the Kalenjin and Kikuyu increased, some people were forced to migrate especially the Kikuyu in Uasin Gishu and many houses were burnt” (Felix Kiptanui , OI, 25/06/21. Besiabor) One of the most significant impacts of the brutality has been the ingrained suspicion and hatred that were cultivated between the communities of Kalenjin and Kikuyu, especially those who were directly involved in the political violence.

5.2.4 Role of elders

Elders are a prominent characteristic in virtually all African communities. According to Keulder (2010:165), these persons are known as "individuals who are chosen by members of a particular community with a specific ethnic identity, using the prevailing customs of that time, to lead and govern that community." Similar to other African communities, the governance of the Kalenjin community was conducted by the council of elders in collaboration with the seers or prophets (Kemboi *et al* 2018).

These elders play different roles during a time of crisis among the Kalenjin. Whenever the Kalenjin perceive that they are prone to be attacked by enemies from without or within, or in case of any crisis in the community, chosen elders in specific areas meet to discuss and chart the way forward. “when the Kalenjin are planning ethnic clashes, they don’t allow young people around them only the elders are allowed. These meetings are held at night and they are very secretive. The attacks could start anywhere because of

disappointment from other sectors” (Kopi Mswahili, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21). These meetings are always held at night and are very secretive. One Respondent reiterated that “the Kalenjins are very secretive. Whenever they are planning on anything to happen, you will not know until it is too late” (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

This is mainly because apart from such meetings being secretly held, and the members being bound by secrecy oaths, the meetings are also held at night as one respondent affirmed. “But some of the Kalenjin elders are very bad, they pretend that they are helping but at night they go back to their people and talk a different language inciting the locals against non-locals” (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

It is during such meetings, that the elders agree on the course of action to take and also apportion responsibilities to different elders. This characteristic is in line with the Kalenjin culture which placed a lot of reverence on elders and the role they played as guardians of Kalenjin traditions and protectors of their communities’ values. Sobania (2003) refers to this system of governance as gerontocracy, whereby the elders in the community ruled by consensus. She notes that traditionally, decision-making processes have been based on consensus. It was the responsibility of the communities’ elders to build consensus by persuading their communities. Certain elders, who were highly regarded due to their wealth of wise counsel usually made decisions during the elder’s meetings by reiterating the majority elders sentiments. By so doing, the elders agreed on issues through consensus. Once reached, such consensus was binding on everyone since it had the force of law.

This role of elders as guardians of societal values is also practiced in several African communities and consequently, elders are held in high esteem in many African communities as Chigwata (2016:11) opines;

Traditional leaders, in their role as the head of the community, carry out many responsibilities associated with culture, customs, and traditions... Traditional authorities have the responsibility of ensuring that traditional norms are upheld when it comes to burial preparations, marriage, and sacred shrines. Therefore, the significance of traditional leaders as guardians of societal values is widely acknowledged in Zimbabwe.

It is, therefore, important to note that generally in Africa, and specifically among the Kalenjin, elders are respected not only by the ordinary citizens, but also by the political leaders. That is why whenever the elders implore upon the leaders to act in support of dealing with perceived threats to their community, the political class has no option but to do so. This is due to the significant role played by these elders in ensuring that the politicians maintain support from their ethnic base and hence play a significant role in determining the possibility for re-election. Steeves (2006:4) maintains that “leadership must secure ethnic support from their community which comes from electoral success and the endorsement of councils of elders or cultural leaders”.

Rotich (2016) states that the Kalenjin people have a long-standing tendency to be strongly influenced by and listen to the advice of their elders. These seniors typically do not hold formal leadership positions in the political sense, but rather emerge as leaders through informal means. The Kalenjin people have a longstanding tendency to seek the guidance of emerging leaders. The Kalenjin people did not easily accept the authority of colonial-installed chiefs due to their lack of respect for the assigned leadership. During the resistance war, they adhered to the leadership of Koitalel Samoei, who, although not a recognized chief of the Kalenjin, was a seer. Koitalel rose to leadership without a specific title, yet he possessed considerable authority and a loyal following.

Respondents recognized the importance of the political influence exerted by traditional leaders within the Kalenjin community. The blessings and approval of these traditional

elders hold significant importance, prompting politicians to actively seek their endorsement in their political pursuits. Therefore, the Orkoiyot known as *Orgoek* were exclusively members of the Talai clan. Ruto recently visited the orkoiyot to seek their blessings for his political endeavors, in order to establish himself as our leader. In order to get acceptance from the Kalenjin people, it is necessary for leadership within their community to be endorsed by the custodians of Kalenjin traditional values and religion. Once a leader receives the endorsement and permission from the traditional leaders, they gain respect and acceptance throughout the community because of the high regard given to Kalenjin culture and its traditional leaders.

Apart from the influence held by the traditional religious leaders, the local traditional leaders also play an important political role. Among the Kalenjin in Turbo constituency, there is a powerful group of elders who must be consulted by politicians. They give direction on behalf of the community, and make all major decisions which are binding not only to the community members, but also to the politicians in that vicinity. From one of the focus groups, a respondent explained how these elders function:

G7 is a group of Kalenjin elders who sit as a committee and what they decide is what happens in this area. Then they inform Farouk and other government leaders. The G7 is a silent group that incites their people silently. They make decisions, influence and implement things, they just inform Farouk of their decisions and he cannot prevent them. They are very powerful sometimes they quarrel with Farouk. They are the ones who form the special teams to send people away by forced migration (OI, FGD2, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

In other words, the decisions of the clan elders are weighty and members of the community are behooved to take such decisions seriously since they are made for and on behalf of the community's welfare. Once such decisions are made, the Kalenjin have no choice but to adhere to the recommendations of the elders as one of the respondents

reiterated: “Once they agree on something or refuse something you cannot change their mind. They don’t reason individually but believe in groups actions” (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21). Another respondent, noted the impact of elders’ decisions thus:

The Kalenjin parents were told by the elders to allow their children to go and work, (to be trained and carry out attacks) and they could not prevent their children from going for training because they feared to be victimized by their community (Priscilla Wangari, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

These statements validate the political involvement and participation of Kalenjin traditional leaders in political violence in Uasin Gishu. Additionally, elders and the politicians also participated in organising the areas from which the warriors would operate from, blessed and encouraged them. But first and foremost, before engaging in any war, the Kalenjin had to consult their traditional religious leader, the orkoiyot in order to get permission. Accordingly, “They would consult the Orkoiyot to ask whether going for the raid would be good or bad then they would decide whether or not they should go ahead with the raid” (Paul Chuma OI, Chepsaita, 21/7/21).

Although the permission to engage in war was sought by the elders who represented different clans, it was usually at the conviction of the political elite. That is why “During war, the politicians bless the youth in River Sossian. The elders are also there, they are told to be strong and not fear because they must defend the community from enemies” (Felix Kiptanui, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21). The elders were not only involved in planning attacks, but were also strategically placed to direct and give the warriors moral and tactical support from the surrounding caves and forests. While Oyugi (2000) reports that the raiders had established a hiding place in a nearby forest and caves from where they launched attacks, one of the respondents describes what was discovered in these places as well as the involvement of elders thus:

Some of my items which were taken during the 1992-1991clashes were found at Nandi Hills caves where the warriors operated from. When the police arrived at those caves, there they found elders in the caves sleeping on such expensive mattresses, they were surprised. When I was called in there because I was one of the people who had complained of losing my property, I identified my belt and other things that had been taken away from our home by warriors. I was able to identify my belt because it was made in a special way (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21).

Similarly, speaking of the use of militia in Northern Kenya, *Human Rights Watch*, (2013) notes that elders are allegedly in charge of the armed militia whose main role is the provision of security. In this area, their usage is viewed as justifiable, particularly in light of the unpredictable security. Thus, there is almost similar role played by elders in Northern Kenya and Uasin Gishu in terms of directing the forces that offer protection to their respective communities.

It is, therefore, important to note that traditional authorities played vital roles in local trajectories of electoral violence in Uasin Gishu. The role they played is mainly based on their traditional role as the customary leaders, guardians and protectors of their communities. Even in Sierra Leone, elders are one of the most important political intermediaries between the political elites and people in rural areas (Bjarnesen and Soderberg, 2018). Political elites depend on local leaders to mobilise voters because they have great influence in the countryside. On the other hand, most of these traditional leaders also have vested interests. By maintaining favourable connections with the political elite, they stand a higher chance of securing favours for themselves and their communities such as contracts and development projects.

In the same vein, Chigwata (2016) reiterates that in Zimbabwe, the rural communities have great respect for their traditional leaders and treat them with considerable esteem. These traditional leaders are physically the closest to the people and thus, have the most interactions with the citizens in rural areas. Furthermore, the basis of their authority and

legitimacy stems from an unwritten body of local customary law and practice. Consequently, traditional leaders will continue to provide “spiritual” and cultural leadership to their respective communities over a multi-generational period (Dodo, 2013).

In addition to serving as the custodians, defenders, and conservators of their community's customs and culture, traditional leaders in many regions of Africa have historically been involved in the distribution and administration of local resources (Keulder, 2010). Keulder (2010) highlights the significance of elders in Namibia by emphasizing that their authority over rural communities is what makes them important in the postcolonial political system and State-craft. Traditional leaders exert significant power over key rural survival methods, including the distribution of land, management of natural resources, implementation of communal labor practices, and, in certain cases, maintenance of law and order. Their efficacy as rural leaders stems not just from their authority over their people, but is also deeply ingrained in the colonial practice of indirect governance. Traditional leaders were often granted significant authority, particularly in terms of coercion. They assumed roles as local-level legislators, revenue officers, law enforcement commissioners, and judicial officials. Respondents decried the recurring dominance of elders in many sections of Uasin Gishu.

Elders called G7 are very powerful and they influence many things. In politics, once they decide on who we can vote for, that is the person that will be elected (FGD2, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

The Kalenjin frequently exhibit a preference for leaders who lack formal ranks. Curiously, they submit to the impact of such leaders in profound manners. According to Rotich (2016), it was feasible for someone to lead the Kalenjin community if they possessed certain qualities that were deemed heroic and highly respected by the

community. These patterns are highly conspicuous in the Kalenjin community today, as emerging leaders with heroic qualities have a significant influence on the present and future generations. When these leaders talk, individuals will not only pay attention to their words, but also take their advice seriously and act upon their guidance (Rotich, 2016).

5.2.5 Oathing

The ritual oath was administered by people believed to be spiritual leaders, only to those youths who had been recruited to be raiders. The report of the *Human Rights Watch* (1993) enlightened this aspect by explaining that among some of the reasons why the oath is important is because it makes the warriors strong and helps them to take action. During these times, instructions are given on what to do and what to refrain from. It is believed that when the warriors take the oath, it protects and prevents them from being caught by making them invincible. Furthermore, it also acted as a shield and protected them from being hurt. The effects of the oath usually lasted as long as its purpose was upheld obediently. Norwrojee 1993 observes that in 1990s, Kalenjin warriors were given an oath to help them evict the immigrants from Kalenjin land. A respondent explained:

It is known that the elders usually blessed the warriors before they go for raiding. They are called by elders to those caves at Songor where they also eat (*kiapo*) oath, are prayed for, and also given instructions. Some of the raided items, including mine were found in these caves. It was a well-known cave which acted as their hide out (James Macharia, OI, Turbo, 16/12/21)

There were instances of oathing within the Kikuyu community, aimed at protecting themselves from attacks by the Kalenjin and ensuring the preservation of their land. Nowrojee (1993) reported that this oath allowed adherents to retaliate against fellow Kikuyus who either left or sold their land in the Rift Valley. The primary intention

behind these oaths among the Kikuyu was defensive, with no intention of inciting violence against the Kalenjin community. However, Nowrojee also issued a cautionary note, suggesting that these oaths among the Kikuyu could potentially escalate into attacks against the Kalenjin if clashes persisted.

Oaths were also taken by raiders during the political violence at the coast. In 1997, the Digo youths who orchestrated the violence in Likoni were also referred to as raiders. Before embarking on raiding activities, they received military training as well as traditional oathing (Akiwumi Report, 2001). Apart from enhancing solidarity, they believed that they would also become bullet proof after taking the oath.

Swearing an oath holds significant historical significance in the context of resistance movements in Kenya. During the colonial era, members of the Mau Mau movement also administered oaths as part of their resistance against the British confiscation of their land. The fighters pledged solemn oaths that obligated them to combat British colonial rule till their demise. Even regular civilians who offered food and shelter to the Mau Mau warriors also took these oaths, resulting in the British colonial authorities being unable to infiltrate the Mau Mau movement. Anyone who violates such a solemn pledge, which is carried out with utmost confidentiality, is executed. Several individuals were apprehended by the government on grounds of suspected involvement in the same activities. Leakey reports:

Ten Kikuyu, two of whom are alleged to have administered the Mau, Mau oath, were arrested at Mariashoni, near Molo, by the Molo special branch police. Another four of the group are alleged to have taken the oath (Leakey in *The East African Standard* Newspaper; 3rd /feb /1954).

Hudson-Koster (2010) contends that the Mau Mau oath was a highly developed, intricate, and contemporary framework of significances, configurations, and connections. The traditions were based on the old *kithitu oathing*, which was revived in

order to bring together, seek revenge, and struggle for their land and freedom. The oaths administered by the Mau Mau demonstrated the cohesion, structure, and solidarity among Africans. Moreover, these oaths utilized Agikuyu power structures to confront European authority and control in Kenya. In a similar manner, the Kalenjin drew upon their customary rituals by employing the oath as a means to resist and combat the immigrants whom they regarded as adversaries in Uasin Gishu.

Gathogo (2017:4-5) provides a more vivid portrayal of the Mau Mau oaths. In order to completely engage the marginalized black population, the leadership of the elite initiated the practice of delivering different forms of oaths to new members in the late 1940s. During these ceremonial oathing meetings, an individual was formally compelled to pledge their obedience to the directives of the Mau-Mau war council, regardless of whether it involved engaging in acts of violence or joining fellow combatants in guerrilla warfare. It was anticipated that one would maintain the confidentiality of the Mau-Mau secrets, even if it meant sacrificing one's life. Both the Kikuyu and Kalenjin Oaths were characterized by a strict commitment and loyalty to the oath and its teachings. Non-compliance with the oath might result in severe consequences, including the possibility of death for the violator. Gathogo (2017) emphasizes that the Kikuyu people were compelled to participate in the Mau-Mau ritualistic oath during the Mau Mau uprising. Failure to comply would have resulted in suspicion, mistrust, and potential harm from either the rebels or the wider society. The same also applied to the Kalenjin warriors and elders who partook of the oath as a sign of solidarity, respect and submission to their community and its protection.

5.2.6 Leadership positions

The issue of leadership has also been one of the factors that has caused strained relations between the Kalenjin and the immigrants in Uasin Gishu. Some of them thought that the Kikuyu or Luhya would ultimately rule the Kalenjin in local politics as well. The idea of non-locals vying for electoral seats and to make matters worse, winning at the detriment of the indigenous thus became a thorny issue. The immigrants were not supposed to vote contrary to the wishes of the locals, otherwise it was interpreted as great disrespect to the hospitality shown to them by the locals.

These sentiments were gathered from FGD 2:

The Kalenjin want only their people. They want other peoples to leave so that voting takes place as a block and when people vote, they *get all* the votes and seats. They do not want to get any outsider as a contestant here. They say that if the Luhya and other outsiders are left to be free (allowed political freedom), other people will vie for the same seats, and defeat them (*kabila ingine itokeye isimame hapa alafu tutanyanganywa.*). They want all the leadership. If they propose someone, all the outsiders must support and not oppose or bring another person, or someone different from another “tribe”. If you bring your own person, problems arrive, they refuse that the opposition cannot come to their area. They force people to vote for their proposed candidate. In Chepsaita, someone sits at the place of voting (polling booth) to see who you are voting for. We are warned in advance that they do not expect to see any (*madoadoa*) specks in the votes (FGD2, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

Therefore, while the attacks on non-indigenous communities played several roles, they were also meant to ensure that immigrants did not get access to leadership since they were regarded as unwanted enemies and strangers. The catalyzing issues during each electioneering period, on the other hand, were orchestrated by the political elite. Thus One of the driving issues behind attacks was the need to ensure that the outsiders did not vote on election day. This is often done by threatening them at the beginning of the electioneering period as one respondent explained:

Kalenjin want to dominate in politics. They don't want another tribe to stand for elections, when nonlocals stand, they feel threatened and start telling the others that they should remove the nonlocals (*toa kwekwe, ngoa sangari*) so that they don't vote. Kalenjins also complain that non locals don't vote for them (Kopi Mswahili, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21).

Hence, even though the Kalenjin have traditionally welcomed strangers into their land, there are unspoken rules which have been laid down for peaceful co-existence with these strangers. A respondent narrated that they often say that;

Non-locals should concern themselves with land only, that's what brought them, we are told to concentrate on assignments as village elders, eating chicken, and sleeping a (*Wazee wa mtaa, kukula kuku na kulala*). We should not seek any other position as chiefs, or Assistant chiefs, or MP because this area is not ours we cannot rule them in their land, if we want leadership, we should go back to our land. There are godfathers when one of non-locals went to their houses to ask for the chance of Asst chief, he was told not to ask for that, you can only ask for food, kuku and whatever, but leadership, forget it leave it alone. (*Aliambiwa; usijaribu kuuliza iyo kitu, wewe uliza tu ukule, na yenye unataka upewe lakini uongozi wachana nayo*) Kipkemel, Magut, Kipkaren River, Musembe, upto Chimoi, is a very large area yet the chief and Assistant chief is only one because if they split, the non-locals will become chiefs and assistant chiefs. The whole area has 4 sub locations but they can't give out the other three because the population of non-locals is higher and all the three assistant chiefs will be non-locals. It has remained like that because it's only the outsiders who have better academic qualifications (FGD 2, OI, Chepsaita, 20/07/21).

One of the basis of not allowing outsiders to vote is that they might sway the elections and hence favor one of their own to win and hence rule the indigenes. Furthermore, the Kalenjin traditionally are not comfortable being ruled by outsiders. This can be seen by the way they aggressively resisted colonial rule at the behest of their religio-political traditional ruler, Koitalel Arap Samoei in 1893-1906, and Barserion Arap Manyei, in 1923. Kemboi *et al* (2018) note that; the institution of the 'Orkoiyot' played an important role during the Kalenjin resistance against the British in 1893-1906. The Kalenjin 'Bororiosiek' rallied to the then 'Orkoiyot', Koitalel Arap Samoei, hoping for a strong and successful combination of forces of the nationality to drive out the invaders.

Thus, according to the locals, anyone who wants to participate in local decision making processes or in national politics must be able to point out their homeland or home village for them to be accepted as a candidate. Consequentially, immigrants can use land in order to become sons of the soil while on the hand, the locals can struggle to exclude newcomers from future control of the land in order to reduce their political rights in the community (Kuba and Lentz, 2005). In multi-ethnic areas with large immigrant groups, democracy has led to fears among the fewer autochthones that they are at a risk of being marginalised by strangers. In such instances, the ruling elite often exploit such fears in order to discredit the opposition. In these areas, the immigrants are often referred to as strangers even by themselves.

5.3 Land

Ownership and usage of land have become a longstanding source of conflict between the Kalenjin and the immigrants in Uasin Gishu. For Africans in general, land is sacred since it is the source of sustenance and enjoyment of life, Mother land incarnates the spirituality of a people as it hosts the spirits of the ancestors. Gatheru (2005) argues that the spirituality of land in Africa generally is seen in the fact that swearing by the land is second only to swearing by God the creator of the universe. The importance of land thus applies to all communities and its ownership in the Uasin Gishu has been a bone of contention between the locals and immigrant communities since independence.

While the immigrants maintain that since they bought the land, they are the rightful owners. The Kalenjin maintain that the immigrants are only guests on Kalenjin land who can be made to leave any time since they do not really belong to Kalenjin land but to their original homelands from where they came. The Kalenjin believe that everyone has his/her ancestral home, the place where one comes from. Kuba and Lentz (2005) convincingly argue out this general aspect of land ownership by explaining that land

ownership in Africa is socially and politically embedded. As such, it determines relationships between and among persons. Land rights in any place in Africa are, therefore, tied to membership to specific communities. These communities can be families, clans or an ethnic group. On the other hand, membership to these groups is not a given and can be contested, negotiated or can even change with time. Therefore, in Africa, control over land can be used as a way of defining belonging. It is this belief of the Kalenjin in land ownership that has led to resentment among the immigrants, some of who complained:

We bought from Kalenjin but buyers are not given the title deeds, they don't go to the board; they are not giving them title deeds. The big people and politicians tell their fellow Kalenjin not to give the buyers titles. Therefore, people are staying like squatters yet they have bought land. As Luhya we feel pained and harbour ill feelings because of the land that we paid for but they have not given us title deeds. "if you hustle and sacrifice to get money to buy land and someone refuses to give the title deed you will feel pained". The Kalenjin cannot allow us to go through at the land board, therefore we can't be given the titles. Telephone calls are usually made to the land boards by their leaders to inform them not to issue us with title deeds because we are non-locals (FGD3, OI, Turbo, 16/06/22, Kapkorios).

Land in Uasin Gishu has therefore become both a social, economic, and political capital to be manipulated by the politicians. Consequently, the locals on the other hand, also believe that the immigrants are their tenants at will. This is because traditionally, access to land was mediated by membership to a specific community or groups based on descent, shared histories of migration, physical proximity and political allegiance (Kuba and Lentz, 2005). Interestingly, since the Kalenjin believe that the Kikuyu and other immigrants are strangers to them, they therefore have no right to land ownership and their boundaries are frequently trespassed while they watch helplessly as one lamented:

Kalenjin and other communities frequently quarrel because of Kalenjin cattle eating other peoples' food i.e maize. The Kalenjin just leave their cows to eat our maize because the farms are theirs while we usually tell them the farms belonged to wazungus not Kalenjin. When their cows eat our maize, the Kalenjin do not pay instead, they said that the cows had eaten *majani* (grass) not maize and we should not ask but when our cows eat Kalenjin maize, it becomes a very big conflict. They still have that issue to date they don't respect other peoples' property, they can even cut the fences and tell us to allow the cows eat grass unapologetically. This issue has become a big challenge to date, they also say that this is not our land because, other communities are grazing cows on Kalenjin land, they say the cows have only eaten grass. These quarrels of overgrazing bring grudges which are not sorted out (FGD3, OI, Turbo,16/06/22).

The hostility against immigrants ownership of land stems from the fear that immigrants can use land to gain access to the Kalenjin community and become sons of the soil. Therefore, the locals struggle to exclude newcomers from further control over land in order to minimise their political rights in the community (Kuba and Lentz, 2005). The immigrant communities in Uasin Gishu have therefore always suffered and tolerated acts of indifference and subtle exclusion from the locals.

In multi-ethnic rural areas with large immigrant groups such as Uasin Gishu, democracy has led to fears among the less numerous locals that they could be marginalised by the strangers. Consequently, Kuba and Lentz (2005) note that the ruling political elite often exploit such fears in order to discredit the opposition and their followers who are majorly the immigrant communities. In the 1990s, Okediji and Siguru (2016) opine that the Kalenjin leaders used the emotive subject of discontentment over land to mobilise ethnic support leading to violence. The political elite warned those demanding for multi partism to desist or move out since they were living on land meant for the Kalenjin in the Rift Valley who had historical and territorial claims. The fragile relationship between the immigrants and the locals is unfortunately transformed into full blown violence during electioneering periods any time political leaders feel that the

immigrants pose a threat to or may hinder their political positions. The worst of such violence was experienced during Kibaki's reign.

After the peaceful hand over of power to the President elect Mr Emilio Mwai Kibaki. Moi exited the political scene because the constitution mandated him to do so after finalising his second term in office having successfully served two terms.

5.3.1 Kibaki era dynamics of political violence, 2002-2008

The transition from Moi to Kibaki after elections in 2002 was unexpectedly smooth. There was no incidence of rigging, bribing or use of one ethnic community to intimidate the other. According to Mwiandi (2011), the possible reasons for this were: KANU was rapidly experiencing declining popularity hence the ruling party had no problem with Kibaki getting into power; the unity of all the major opposition political parties for the first time enabled them to easily win the polls by a clear majority. Dercon and Gutiérrez-Romero (2010) affirm that in the general elections of 2002, all the opposition parties for the first time united under the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) and behind a single Presidential candidate, Mwai Kibaki. Consequently, Kibaki won the Presidential elections by defeating KANU's Presidential candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta.

During the 2002 election and the 2005 referendum, Kenyans rested from political violence. Kanyinga (2009) attributes the peace to several reasons: one being that in the Rift Valley, there were no dangers for the Kikuyu since Moi was no longer a contender after serving the maximum number of terms authorized by the constitution. Thus, there was no pressure on the elite Kalenjin to fight for him. Secondly, Moi had already selected as his successor, Uhuru Kenyatta, who was a Kikuyu, as the KANU Presidential candidate. This tactic confused the privileged interests of Kikuyu as well as the Kalenjin. Moi's and the Kalenjin's interests would be protected by Uhuru Kenyatta

after his retirement from politics, while the Kikuyu's interests would be protected by a Kikuyu presidency and KANU leadership.

However, KANU lost the election. National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC), a coalition of political parties, won on a platform of extensive reforms, particularly those pertaining to land and the constitution. Consequently, Kanyinga (2009) submits that a new administration was created under the leadership of Kikuyu President Mwai Kibaki.

One major reform that NARC promised during campaigns was the introduction of a prime minister position with the sole purpose of limiting the powers of the President (Kimenyi & Shugart, 2008). Kibaki got in power with the full support of Raila Amollo Odinga. This meant that he had the full support of the Luo community. However, after successfully being elected as President, Kibaki failed to honour the pre-election agreement set in 2001 leading to a lot of acrimony between the two principals.

Unfortunately, in Kenyan politics, any political difference between major players, often reflects in the ethnic communities of the erstwhile political leaders as well as their supporters, translating into frosty relations between the affected communities. Kanyinga (2009) affirms that whenever national politicians in the coalition government disagree on significant political issues, the disagreement trickles down to the local level. In Uasin Gishu and many other parts of Rift Valley, this disagreement took the form of leaflets warning the Kikuyu to prepare for expulsion from Kalenjin territory. Due to these dynamics, Kanyinga (2009) notes that in 2004, the coalition split due to differences on the distribution of political power between Kibaki and Raila's group. These conflicts permeated the process of constitution-making. In November 2005, a vote rejected a new draft of the constitution that would have established a framework for land administration and access to or control over land. In 2005 the bill to place a

position of prime minister was put in place but he had to be appointed by the President, and his powers were also curtailed since he could only be assigned major duties by the President. This situation further strained political relations between not only Kibaki and Raila, but also their supporters due to the trickle down effects.

As time went by, Mwai Kibaki was accused of favouring his community in state positions on several occasions. His Mount Kenya area and the Kikuyu community held the majority of government employment. He appointed the Kikuyu in most of the important government ministries, such as those of Finance, Trade, energy, and Provincial Administration (Kivoi, 2010). As a result of this tendency to favour their community in government (Shilaho 2023) convincingly argues that ethnicity has increased with each preceding government in Kenya. Kwatemba (2008), on the other hand, notes with a lot of concern that, by choosing a disproportionate number of Kikuyu and Meru community members to significant posts in the Cabinet, state companies, and public service, Kibaki was accused of preserving ethnicity as the focal point of government in Kenya. Kibaki's presidency, therefore, wasted a chance to debunk the impression held by the majority of ethnic groupings that the Kikuyu elite were incurably dishonest and had little regard for the country's ethnic diversity. On the contrary, his biasness towards his ethnic group only acted to entrench the feelings of marginalisation and frustrations of other ethnic communities led by their leaders who felt left out of government and its attendant benefits.

Kibaki's actions, just like those of Moi and Kenyatta before him, vindicate the fact that the political elite understand that ethnicity determines access to the benefits of modernity. Thus, it becomes the vehicle through which they tend to advance their political and economic interests. Therefore, it is the political elite who are fixated on ethnicity and not the masses. The masses are only the vehicle through which they can

acquire political mileage. These dynamics, therefore, set the stage for hostility against the Kikuyu on behalf of Kibaki's administration and that may have contributed to the way other communities and their leaders reacted during and after the 2007 elections. These feelings were echoed by one village elder who explained:

In 2007, a person from another community (Kikuyu) stood for elections in Kenya, the politicians told the Kalenjin not to allow a stranger to lead them in their land. Because everything, all other resources will disappear to other areas, we were told we will not get anything if we vote for him. (OI, Ali Kibor, 29/05/21)

From the foregoing statement, it was interpreted by the opposition leaders that if one voted for any candidate from PNU (Kibaki's party), one was voting for Kibaki. Therefore, things could only get worse having experienced the disappointing way in which Kibaki treated them after getting into office.

5.3.2 Referendum, The New Constitution, Devolution and Weaponization of Ethnicity

Anderson and Lochey (2008) contend that politicians' calls for Majimboism during the referendum campaigns contributed to the weaponization of ethnicity, leading to political violence in the Rift Valley in general and Uasin Gishu in particular.

In 2007, Raila campaigned for votes in the Rift Valley under the banner of constitutional reform and Majimboism. Odinga never advocated expulsions when taking a pro-Majimbo stance, but he was consistently ambiguous in describing what his policy would entail. His Rift Valley backers, led by William Ruto, Henry Kosgey, and Sally Kosgey, performed poorly. Anderson and Lochey (2008) posit that Raila and his political group, majority of whom traced their historical ties to militant Majimboists led to the idea that ODM would accept an extreme version of the Majimbo agenda

When the draft constitution was taken for a vote in 2005, Kibaki and his supporters were defeated. The policy areas addressed in the referendum included the resolution of land rights, the allocation of political power among ethnic groups, potentially through the establishment of both a President and a Prime Minister, and the decentralization of resources across different areas. The unsuccessful referendum also divided Kibaki's administration. Raila Odinga, the Minister of Roads, and Kalonzo Musyoka, the Minister of Environment, who were in the forefront of the group opposing the passage of the referendum, established a new political party called the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM).

Apart from leading to the split of the cabinet, Kibaki's actions of failing to honour the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) revived anti-Kikuyu animosity. It bolstered a dividing ethnic narrative among the opposition leaders and their supporters, whereby the general feeling towards Kibaki's action was that the Kikuyu were seen as "behaving as expected" and "doing exactly what Jomo Kenyatta did to Oginga Odinga" (Stubbs, 2015). In order to confront Kibaki and his renamed Party of National Unity (PNU) in the 2007 election, Raila Odinga and his LDP allies formed the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). William Ruto, a controversial political figure and former protégé of Moi who represented Kalenjin interests, also joined ODM to create what was effectively an anti-Kikuyu coalition. Prior to the election, the ODM's campaign slogan was "Kenya versus the Kikuyu." The Kikuyu were seen as synonymous with Kibaki and the PNU, and they were held responsible for a variety of social, political, and economic issues that have afflicted Kenyan society since independence.

Conflict over land recurred after the coalition's dissolution because the coalition's dissolution represented a missed chance to address the issue of land rights that is

inherent in these regions. The opportunity to resolve land issues was lost when the draft constitution was defeated in the referendum (Kanyinga, 2009). Lynch (2023) argues that the success of the process of the referendum did several things for the opposition and its followers; it was seen as a sign of relief to Kenyans' frustrated hopes, it showed many Kenyans how the Kikuyu were not ready to relinquish their hold on government, it increased confidence in the electoral commission considering that majority of Kenyans got their expected results, thus the referendum ended up fostering a sense that the opposition would win the 2007 election unless it was rigged.

The proposed constitution was rumored to have failed due to the reluctance of the Kikuyu political elite, who held important government positions, to share political power with other ethnic groups. The views were encouraged by land disputes and the predominance of the Kikuyu in colonization activities in the Rift Valley. The subsequent conflicts arose due to discontentment with the unfair treatment and handling of land issues.

In 2006, the breakup of the national coalition and the rejection of the proposed new constitution led to violent land disputes in various regions (Kanyinga, 2009). In the weeks leading up to the December 2007 election in the multiethnic Kuresoi parliamentary constituency, there was ongoing violence that may have been aimed at decreasing voter turnout (Kanyinga, 2009). The conflict in Kuresoi revolved around disputes between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin regarding land ownership, specifically around certain farms that were acquired by different groups from the departing settlers. Auma and Campbell (2022) express significant apprehension on the fact that the 2007 elections occurred after a polarizing constitutional referendum in 2005. The referendum was a competition for dominance between Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga, who was previously his rival and the leader of the opposition. As a result of the ethnic dynamics

of Kenyan politics, different ethnic groupings naturally aligned themselves into competing factions supporting the two main political figures.

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5.3.3 Resurrection of Majimbo Debate, Ethnicity and Political Violence in 2007

Land disputes consistently influence Kenya's local and national politics whenever there is a change in the political environment (Kanyinga, 2009). This statement accurately applies to the general election that took place in December 2007. Prior to the upcoming general election, the Majimboists rekindled the debate surrounding federalism and the issue of land. The residents of the Rift Valley had developed a connection between Majimbo and the removal of immigrant communities that had settled in the area during and after the colonial era. Kanyinga (2009) contends that for these indigenous groups, the concept of Majimbo signified the "recovery" of their pre-colonial territories that had been lost. The primary opposition party, the Orange Democratic Movement, endorsed the Majimbo system and advocated for devolution to empower individuals in making socio-political and economic determinations pertaining to their respective regions.

The concept resonated with the Kalenjin and other communities in the Rift Valley, as they contended that it would grant them autonomy over their land. Conversely, the government's Party of National Unity, under the leadership of Kibaki, expressed opposition to Majimbo, contending that it would undermine national unity and so harm the country. The party said that implementing Majimbo would lead to the displacement of individuals from particular regions, based on their historical land rights. The argument stemmed from the fact that the Kikuyu community is one of the most widely spread communities in Kenya. Consequently, the leaders were exercising caution in

response to the hyperbole propagated by certain opposition members concerning the consequences of Majimbo. In September 2007, President Kibaki, who was seventy-five years old at the time, announced his intention to run for re-election in the Presidential elections. He received support from a newly formed political alliance called the Party of National Unity (PNU). Upon Mwai Kibaki's declaration of his intention to seek re-election, a significant number of individuals expressed discontent, perceiving it as a perpetuation of Kikuyu hegemony.

5.3.4 Fear of Kikuyu domination in Kibaki's Tenure

While the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru ethnic groupings dominated the ministerial positions in finance, defense, justice, and security, the cabinet had greater racial and geographical diversity compared to the previous administration under Moi. However, ethnic conflicts resurfaced rapidly as a new historical phase of Kikuyuization emerged in the public service, top military, and GSU positions, sometimes at the detriment of the Kalenjin. A number of prominent Kalenjin individuals left the military and often took up appointed roles as heads of parastatals, while the representation of the Kikuyu and Kamba communities increased. Before Kibaki's victory in 2002, there were no Kikuyu individuals holding top military roles. However, by 2005, four out of the six highest-ranking military positions were filled by Kikuyu personnel (Stubbs, 2015). Hence, the capacity to acquire and wield political authority can potentially result in resorting to violence, along with any other available methods, in order to obtain and retain political power. This phenomenon might be attributed to the prevailing conviction in Kenya that the presence of individuals from the same ethnic background in positions of authority will inherently lead to betterment of the community (Kivoi, 2010). This phenomenon can be attributed to the practice where an individual, upon

winning an election, whether through legitimate means or by engaging in fraudulent activities, channels a substantial portion of governmental resources towards their own region, in contrast to the other parts of the country. As a result, the rest of the country will have to wait for a period of five years until the next election in order to have an opportunity to elect representatives from their region and benefit from the unfair distribution of state resources.

Furthermore, Okediji and Siguru (2016) elucidate the substantial impact of ethnicity and socio-economic differences on the political landscape of Kenya. It is duly noted that in Kenya, there is a clear pattern of the ethnic group of the President having a strong influence in political appointments and cabinet seats in subsequent governments. Consequently, the political power dynamics have compelled Presidents Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki to address the power structures established by their predecessors by modifying political appointments. Each President has utilized ethnic allegiance to consolidate their influence. As each President perpetuates this bias, the marginalized communities grow resentful and harbor animosity towards the current President and their community.

The simmering resentment against Kikuyu control of the economic resources through political control was captured from one of the respondents who lamented:

The Kikuyu think that they own Kenya. Everything is controlled by the Kikuyu, when the President Kibaki appointed people, he only thought of Kikuyu, when you look at all the important ministers, they were all Kikuyu, even our land, they have taken, do they know that we live in Kenya? Or This Kenya is for only one community to enjoy when others suffer? (Felix Kiptanui, OI, Besiabor. 25/06/21).

There was a general resentment in Rift Valley for many years that outsiders who were mainly the Kikuyu had wrongly and disproportionately acquired land and political power in the territories of the indigenous Kalenjin ethnic groups like the Kalenjin since independence (Jenkins 2012). It was the political power of Kenyatta that was used to protect the Kikuyu, instead of trying to redress the underlying issues. Jenkins further notes that sometimes, tensions arising from distorted or skewed structures of land ownership may lead governments to undertake redistributive measures to address these tensions. Unfortunately, when such tensions are not well addressed, they may lead to major political upheaval as the PEV in 2007/2008.

Gettleman (2008) opines that although Kenya has more than 40 nationalities, the Kikuyu have almost always been on top of the economic chain; they have continued to monopolize both major and minor economic ventures like; shops, restaurants, banks and factories across many parts the country. Consequently, the other communities thought that they might get some economic benefits from the government through a fairer distribution of government appointments. Unfortunately, that was not to be as Kibaki's regime once again embarked on appointments which were seen as skewed towards the Kikuyu community. One reason Kibaki's government earned a lot of resentment from other ethnic groups and more so when many of the top government officials such as the ministers of defense, justice, finance and internal security were Kikuyu.

After Moi's long-ruling KANU party lost elections in 2002, local elites accused the incoming President, Mwai Kibaki (a Kikuyu), of dismissing a large number of Kalenjin state employees during his first term (2002-2007). In the December 2007 elections, the majority of Kalenjin voters supported Raila Odinga over Kibaki. When Kibaki was

pronounced the winner following a contentious counting procedure, Kalenjin teenagers went on their Kikuyu neighbours, murdering hundreds and displacing tens of thousands (Advocates for Social Justice Kenya Domestic Observation Programme, 2002).

On the same note, Anderson and Lochev (2008) conclude that although the December 2007 election was the catalyst for violence, the conflicts that followed the poll had little to do with the election itself and should be viewed as a product of politics in which violence has become normalized, legitimizing militant politics in the Rift Valley. Anderson and Lynch (2008) assert that the highly ethnicized language of persecution and prejudice was intertwined with themes of past injustice. For him, local understandings and interpretations of the past and present should provide the necessary background for comprehending the violence and attacks on the Kikuyu people.

The 2007 elections were used as a platform by the politicians to convince other communities who had felt disenfranchised by Kikuyu dominance in economic affairs that it was now their opportunity to access and control state resources. Consequently, the main opposition party, ODM's campaign against that of the incumbent President Mwai Kibaki of PNU was based on illustrating that the elections were a contest between the Kikuyu and the other communities in Kenya. Okediji and Siguru (2016) describe ODM's campaign as accusing the Kikuyu of controlling and dominating government as well as trade by marginalising other communities. Through such tactics, these political elites reverted to politics of populism. They manipulated economic grievances and disaffection to win votes from other ethnic communities.

In the overall results of the 2007 elections, ODM won the majority of legislative seats, but Kibaki was proclaimed the winner despite significant evidence of voting irregularities and electoral fraud in the Presidential race. Kibaki's victory announcement

sparked massive civil violence (Stubbs, 2015). In the Rift Valley, Kalenjin militia assaulted Kikuyu and anybody else suspected of supporting the ruling party. In metropolitan centres, individuals protesting the election result faced violence from competing militias and the police. It is believed that the political elites of the Kalenjin, Luo, and Kikuyu nationalities orchestrated outbreaks of violence in 2007/2008. On the basis of these suspicions, William Ruto and Uhuru Kenyatta were tried by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for their alleged participation in arranging the violence. Infact, Gettleman (2008) alluding to the involvement of the political elites in orchestrating the violence claims that, Kalenjin militias, were stirred up by politicians who told them that Rift Valley was Kalenjin ancestral land. As a result, these warriors massacred hundreds of Kikuyu in order to take back these farms.

Unfortunately, as all these took place, the government was not pro-active in helping the non-Kalenjin forcing them to revert to self-defence in the form of local vigilante groups. Gettleman (2008) attributes the PEV to simmering ethnic resentments between the locals and immigrant communities in the Rift Valley coupled with political incitement. The last time the Rift Valley experienced such proportion of violence was in 1992, another election year in Kenya and a time of turbulent transition between dictatorship and democracy.

5.4 Nature of Political Violence in 2007

The general electioneering atmosphere of the 2007 elections was rife with undertones of ethnic polarization. This ethnic polarity had been effected by the political misunderstandings among the former NARC members who had parted ways due to political differences and consequently formed the opposing political parties PNU and ODM. It is these differences that became the basis of campaigns and eventually created deep ethnic animosities which blew up into the post election violence. The violence

which began spontaneously eventually took on a life of its own, had catastrophic consequences, and eventually changed Kenya's political landscape. A respondent affirmed the spontaneity as well as the alleged involvement of politicians in the PEV thus:

The 2007/2008 clashes started like a joke people said Ruto was given spears with helicopters which is lies. Ruto was in ODM and was fighting for Raila. It was also due to politics. There are many tribes now staying in this area, e.g. Luhya but during politics things become bad and some of these communities usually take off. As a result, people get hurt, property is destroyed some people steal property (Henry Morei, OI, BESIABOR, 25/06/21).

Shortly after declaring Mwai Kibaki as the winner of the disputed Presidential election, unrest erupted in areas of Nairobi, the Rift Valley, the Coast, Western, and Nyanza provinces that are known to support the opposition. In Rift Valley province, numerous Kikuyu households were forcibly evicted from their land holdings (Kanyinga, 2009). Furthermore, individuals belonging to the Kisii ethnic community, who were reported to have shown their support for Mwai Kibaki, the Kikuyu candidate, were also expelled. The Kalenjin forcibly removed the Kikuyu population, assumed authority over their former territories, and, in certain instances, renamed these locations with local Kalenjin names as a means of eradicating the Kikuyu cultural identity (Kanyinga, 2009). One respondent described what happened by narrating that

In 2007 our people were voting for Raila and the Kikuyu were voting for Kibaki. We knew that Raila will win. We nick named him Arap Mibei. Raila won but the votes were stolen. Then people started burning houses immediately after the results (Felix Kiptanui, OI, BESIABOR, 25/06/21)

Each occurrence of violence in the Rift Valley was consistently discussed in relation to the territorial disputes of the Kalenjin people over the Rift Valley and the individual ownership rights of the Kikuyu. A significant number of Kikuyu individuals who were forcibly removed from the area have legal documents proving their ownership of properties. However, they were under the impression that their title certificates granted

them complete ownership of the land they possessed. The dispute rapidly intensified due to the combination of individual property rights and collective territorial and political ambitions. Birch *et al* (2020:3) argue that violence poses a significant risk for political leaders as it is a challenging tool to control once it is released. The dynamics of revenge and counter-attacks can escalate the violence, leading to a loss of control. A respondent reiterated that

In 2007 again there were political problems between Kibaki and Raila. When they started counting votes, Raila was almost winning. But in the morning, Kibaki had stolen votes. The violence was all over. All the communities were not happy with the results. Kikuyu were so happy they could even abuse the Kalenjin. Houses were burnt, some people had to go to IDP camps. Most of the Kikuyu have never come back to Turbo. They feared to be attacked again because of politics. When the Kikuyu ran away to Othaya, they were compensated, but we and other tribes have not been compensated even though we also lost people and property and some of our homes were also destroyed (David Kiose, 29/06/21, Tapsagoi).

The main contestation among ODM supporters was that in the beginning of vote counting, Raila's ODM seemed to be winning with a landslide but the narration changed on the last day of vote tallying. This led to many of his supporters alleging that rigging went on. Two days after election date President Mwai Kibaki was announced the winner (Mwiandi, 2011). ODM members' suspicions were further cemented by the fact that there was power blackout that prevented everyone in the country from viewing live votes. Unfortunately, Raila seemed to have incited the rest of the communities in Kenya against the Kikuyu when he pointed out that Kibaki was keen to rig the elections because being in power meant that he would be in a position to protect the interest of the Kikuyu elite community

According to Maupeau (2008), a review of the tensions at the start of 2008 would demonstrate that certain disputes were reignited during the elections, despite the fact that the issues had nothing to do with the elections. The violence was specifically

targeted on places where communities felt that there was a form of rigging. In the Rift Valley area especially around Eldoret and Nakuru, Kikuyu and Kisii were specifically targeted due to the perceived association with the PNU party. The same case applied to Kisii and Kikuyu at the coast (CSIS, 2009). Violence that broke in Western and Nyanza province was not targeted on ethnic communities. Rather demonstrators targeted government facilities because they felt the government had let them down. They also looted from people's businesses.

Kanyinga (2009) observes that many forms of post-election violence were observed, such as impromptu violence, violence perpetrated by institutions, violence sponsored by external actors, and retaliatory violence. At first, the violence occurred spontaneously and manifested as protests in reaction to the belief of electoral fraud and the announcement of results after a failed vote tally. The second form of violence was institutional, characterized by the deployment of security personnel to disperse demonstrators by force in their respective strongholds. Politicians and businessmen collaborated with criminal organizations to execute planned and synchronized assaults. The violence had clear ethnic bias, specifically targeting the Kikuyu and Kisii communities in the Rift Valley, as stated by the Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence in 2008. Despite being in the Kalenjin territory, they cast their votes in favor of the government and a Kikuyu candidate. The fourth pattern involved retaliation attacks. The Kikuyu deliberately orchestrated these events to forcefully evict the Kalenjin, Luo, and Luhya populations from their rented residences in some parts of Nairobi, as well as from Naivasha and Nakuru in the eastern Rift Valley region. This was done since the Kikuyu outnumbered these other communities in these areas.

In general, Mwagiru (2001) argues that political violence encompasses a range of malicious acts, including but not limited to battery, assassinations and attempted assassinations, destruction, looting and damage of property, arson, threats of violence, violent or physical disruption of public meetings and campaign rallies, political thuggery, torture, hijacking and confinement, rape and other forms of sexual harassment, hate speeches, defamation, insults, closure of party and campaign offices or premises, economic repression, sabotage, eviction, and displacement. Various manifestations of violence were encountered in different locations that emerged as focal points in the political conflict between the Kikuyu and other communities. At first, the violence was a form of protest against Kibaki's victory and may have been intended to hinder his assumption of office. While the violence initially occurred without prior planning, it is crucial to acknowledge that violence can be employed to accomplish many objectives. Birch *et al* (2020) observe that violence can be employed to hinder electoral success. This can be accomplished by targeting polling stations and poll workers, as well as by destroying polling materials. Violence can also be utilized to prevent individuals from assuming power by instigating post-electoral protests that challenge the election's outcome. Simultaneously, violence can also achieve unintended objectives. An example of an effect was the retribution inflicted against the Kikuyu people as a result of their affiliation with Kibaki. An additional pernicious consequence was the widespread dissemination of violence throughout major urban areas, reaching a point where it became nearly uncontrollable. Unlike the disturbances observed in other regions, the incidents of looting and violence in Eldoret rapidly intensified, with the primary objective being the targeted slaughter of the Kikuyu community (Linke 2019). The sentiment of forcibly removing Kikuyu people was widespread across Kenya

during the Post-Election Violence (PEV), but the level of violence in Uasin Gishu, the central region of the Kalenjin community, was unparalleled.

In contrast, the government provided its own rationale for the violence. According to Dercon and Gutiérrez-Romero (2010), the government characterized the violence as racially driven conflicts that arose suddenly due to the presence of multiple political parties. The government reiterated that it was the politicians who incited the violence as a means to secure victory in the elections. However, several politicians took advantage of people's want for land to incite violence, particularly in the Rift Valley. Dercon and Gutiérrez-Romero (2010) argue that the validity of this thesis might be supported by the fact that the Kalenjin and Maasai ethnic groups were given permission to settle on land that had been abandoned by displaced communities. One respondent noted that

In 2007, the main cause was politicians and political incitement. They said Kikuyu should not be seen in Turbo. Even the Luhya were not exceptional. The DC came in 2007 to mitigate. By 2007 they people were already divided. PNU ethnic group became the one against others in ODM, then Kibaki took over. The communities were wondering who had won, Kivuitu was the head of the election commission. Voting was peaceful, it is the results that lead to most election violence. It was not planned, it was a matter of screaming when people heard the results had been announced and that Kibaki was announced as the winner (Saleh, Kimeli, Arap Samoei, 25/06/21, Besiabor).

In essence, the PEV was the worst form of political violence in terms of ruthlessness and intensity. It is important to note that the violence could not have escalated if the security forces had been forceful, and fair. The immigrant communities in Uasin Gishu, one of the hotspots of ethnic based intermittent political violence, had suffered for a long time due to the complicity of the security forces some of whom were controlled by the political elite. Lynch (2008) and Ashforth (2009) argue that for about 20 years, immigrant communities in Uasin Gishu have suffered from intermittent ethnicised political violence. Unfortunately, however, there has been minimal or no consequences

at all as far as punishment of the perpetrators is concerned. Additionally, the Kalenjin political elite seem to be in support of the violence which though spontaneous, was eventually approved and supported by their communities.

As narrated by Ngotho, a news reporter:

I had a chat with a senior member of "the system" some time ago. In the weeks surrounding the 2007 elections, he provided me with a fascinating assessment of the situation in Eldoret. This was the general course of events. A subset of politicians "sold fear" by claiming there would be carnage if neither Presidential contender won the election. Then, members of groups who were not "qualified" to reside in the region were instructed to avoid social establishments. Next, they were instructed to return "their" women and children to where they came from, as men and men would soon be "facing" each other. Then, two days before the election, "strange" customers purchased gasoline. I questioned if the substantial evidence had been provided to Moreno Ocampo (the ICC chief prosecutor at the time). His response was, "Moreno Ocampo? The man spent all of his time in Kenya exploring wildlife reserves!" (Kamau Ngotho, *The Daily Nation*, 24/03/2020)

Thus, it is obvious that once again, similar to the ethnic violence during Moi's time, the Kalenjin elders had a role to play in the PEV during Kibaki's reign. Admittedly, on their own, the political bigwigs among the Kalenjin could not go to the field to fight. Thus, the Kalenjin warriors, through the mobilisation of the political elite, and instructions of their elders, once again had the duty of defending their community's interests.

5.5 Role of Kalenjin warriors

In tandem with Kalenjin traditions, the community's defense lies in the strength of its warriors. This task usually falls upon the young men of the latest age-grade. Bicknell (2010) corroborates this study's findings in chapter two that the history of the Kalenjin people provides an available tradition of violence. It is this tradition that its community leaders turned to in 2007 to manufacture war. The period of the post-election violence fell under the guard of the Kaplelach age set who had no choice but to rise up and defend the interests of their community. Seemingly, this age- set gave such a sterling

performance that they are currently the most respected among the Kalenjin according to one respondent:

The age set that is the fiercest is Kaplelach because of the war that they fought. when they were in the war, they really killed so many of the enemy, that is why they were the most hostile, so fierce and feared. Ruto's group is the Kaplelach age group. they were born from 1960 to around 1969 (OI, Keter Julius, OI, Kamagut, 21/07/21/).

Thus, it comes out clearly that the Kaplelach age set is seemingly the one that had the onus of performing the duty of warrior hood for the Kalenjin in Rift Valley generally and in Uasin Gishu in particular since they were the ones culturally in charge. They had formed the warrior class having been the current age set. An elder explained that;

We organize for circumcision and it is done for the whole of Kalenjin sub tribes. All the Kalenjin clans hold the same ceremonies. So it is done per village, all the boys who have reached circumcision age are all brought together for the same ceremony at the same time for all the Kalenjin sub tribes because the rituals for the ceremony are the same, for example the Tugen, Keiyo, Marakwet, have the same ceremonies as the ones we have (Keter Julius, OI, Kamagut, 21/07/21/).

Thus, the term Kalenjin warriors makes sense because this was a group of young Kalenjin men circumcised at almost the same time, went through all the traditional rituals, and were also instructed on their responsibilities men to their family and community. Apart from that, this group also shared a deep sense of unity having bonded during the initiation process which is done in seclusion. It also explains why most of them easily identified with and easily followed one of their own as their leader.

It is again significant to note that in the course of war between the Kalenjin and other communities, different people played different roles akin to their traditional roles in the community. Hence each individual automatically took up their place. Bicknell (2010) alludes to some of these roles. He notes that as the older men provided guidance, the

women cooked and provided for the warriors. On the other hand, Gettleman (2008) describes how local elders organized young men to raid Kikuyu areas and kill people in a bid to drive the Kikuyu off their land. At the same time, local politicians also mobilised the warriors by making them promises of land and property. As Baldauf (2010) points out, some firebrand leaders of the Kalenjin community, promised voters free land, land that would be made available because the Kalenjin would push out the current ethnic Kikuyu owners whom they viewed as foreign invaders. the same rhetoric was repeated by ODM campaigners who talked openly of pushing Kikuyu and other foreigners out of the Rift Valley. To lock out the immigrants, these statements were made in mother tongue during their political campaigns.

The rich and slightly well-endowed in the community were also given some duty. They donated transportation and supplies for the warriors as well as the weapons and loot. Baldauf (2010) affirms that some party agents gave out trucks, and the money to buy weapons – mainly machetes, hatchets, and spears. These weapons were to be delivered to the youths who had been recruited to fight for their cause against the invaders because “tradition demands that those who go and do the fighting are the young men of the society” (Bicknell, 2010: 28) The duty that tradition placed on the warriors and to which they were reminded insistently by the elders, forced some of them to commit many atrocious acts.

After receiving an oath given by their traditional leaders and other respected elders in the community, they were ready and were often sent out with instructions to deal with the enemy severely. The enemy here represented the Kikuyu who had not only stolen their land, oppressed them economically and looked down upon them, but now also wanted to steal their political victory and hence continue oppressing them. The warriors

attacked in gangs, often under a leader. They used crude weapons such as bows and arrows, stones, iron bars and machetes. Wangui (2013) in her report on ICC proceedings, narrates how the bows and arrows used in the PEV in Eldoret were assembled at the Kapsaret Forest by Kalenjin youths.

Kalenjin gangs stormed Kikuyu farms and massacred many of the Kikuyu. In one harrowing incidence, up to fifty women and children hiding in a church in Kiambaa were burnt alive (Gettleman, 2008). Once the Kikuyu heard the Kalenjin war cries and screams, they knew that danger in the form of attacks from the warriors was imminent. The war cries and screams were traditional ways of communicating among the Kalenjin as one respondent narrated:

(nduru ikipigwa, kila mtu anajitayarisha kwa vita) When we hear the war cries, everybody gets ready for war. It is the work of the women in each village to pass over the cry and within a short time, everybody is aware of what is happening and what to do (Henry Morei, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/21).

The warriors set up roadblocks to fish out non-Kalenjin; they blocked these roads with trees, lamp-posts and burning tyres (Baldauf, 2010). Armed with crude weapons, they scrutinized people's identity cards to ascertain the community one belonged to. Anyone who belonged to the "wrong" community was beaten and others even died due to the injuries they sustained.

5.6 The use of media

The role played by different media platforms in spreading propaganda about certain ethnic groups, political personalities, and their political parties during and just before political violence cannot be taken for granted. Some media platforms like TV, Radio, and the occasional leaflets became partisan weapons spewing forth dangerous ethnic

rhetorics aimed at inciting and demeaning certain communities which were believed to be a threat.

This was the recommendation made to the communications commission of Kenya and the media council in the wake of the awaited publication of the proposed constitution which would then set the date for the referendum. The government feared that they could be used just like in 2005 to spread ethnic prejudiced political propaganda to their listeners. Since most of them are privately owned, they can easily be used to spread the skewed political opinions of the owners. If unchecked, they can generate appalling hate speech through their phone ins and talk shows (*Daily Nation*; 5th May 2010).

The Media played a significant role in the PEV. It was used as a conduit for disseminating inflammatory statements. One of the respondents described the impact of the media on people's perception about the political happenings in 2007/2008 thus:

Immediately they announced Eldoret and many other towns erupted and it sparked off because people were under tension waiting for the results. People believed the government was manipulating the votes when they delayed at announcements, the programs in the television and radio that were updating also stopped and the people could not say what was happening. There was a lot of things being passed on in the media, maybe some of it was not true but it built more tensions. 7pm is when Kibaki was sworn in at 7.00 pm. People were asking why he should be sworn in like a thief, that maybe because he stole votes. The swearing in of Kibaki at night only made things worse and increased the violence (Amunga Tito, OI, Turbo, 21/07/2021).

The Media significantly contributed to the dissemination of disinformation and misleading narratives. Due to the heightened emotional state of individuals, a significant portion of this material could not be substantiated. Consequently, an increasing number of individuals engaged in aggressive acts against their neighbors. Mercy Corps (2019) media has altered the dynamics of disinformation, hate speech, and the recruitment of individuals into violent groups. Social media platforms enhance the capacity for communication. Due of its global reach and accessibility, a larger quantity

of weaponized information may be sent to a wider audience more quickly, utilizing many communication channels.

The media tutor's information to individual preferences, the individual eventually receives topics and points that confirm to reinforcement of one another. Baldauf (2010) argues that the situation was made worse due to some local radio stations like the Kalenjin-language radio stations which whipped up anti-Kikuyu sentiments. As a result of such sentiments, Communities began to slaughter their animals, a common practice for Kalenjin who are preparing for war.

International bodies like the United Nation is worried that the unabated use of hate speech against certain communities by the political elite in Kenya and other countries may lead to violence of genocide proportion in some areas as was the case in the holocaust, Cambodian genocide, Rwanda genocide, Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or the Rohingya refugee crisis in Myanmar (UN Report 2019). A campaign of hate and misinformation loaded with derogatory and dehumanizing language against these communities was linked to the commission of grave human rights violations

Undoubtedly, some media platforms were used by various groups to incite violence by spreading hate speech against certain communities. Nabea, W. (2010) reveals one such example which was unquestionably, one of the most chilling messages on leaflets during the PEV and which was used to force the Kalenjin into action. One such long message stated:

“Never before has the life and survival of the Kalenjin people been as endangered as it is under the Kibaki administration, compared to the time of the colonialists, the Kenyatta government, and Moi's misrule. We must revive and transmit the essence of our esteemed warrior and leader to all our fellow Kalenjin people. We must assert and safeguard our rights, emulating the leadership of Koitalel in his battle against the British a century ago. The Kenyatta and Moi administrations relocated Kikuyu settlers to the Rift Valley, which is our territory. Our ancestors

sacrificed their tears and blood to preserve this inheritance for future generations (Kamatusa). There was a migration of Kikuyu people from Central Province to Rift Valley. The Kenyatta government provided them with interest-free loans to acquire significant portions of our property, disregarding the concerns of the original landowners. At the time of independence, it was intended that this land would be returned to its legitimate ancestral owners, the Kamatusa. This event did not occur. This event marked the beginning of the second group of people that occupied our land. Moi was complicit in this act of injustice. During the 1960s and 1970s, he refrained from speaking up while our people were being deprived of what properly belongs to them. In the Rift Valley, we initially received the occupiers with hospitality. However, their rule resulted in significant deforestation. They selfishly appropriated valuable land, disregarding the well-being of our fellow citizens. Furthermore, they demeaned us by referring to us as "Lumbwa" (dogs). Tragically, they have caused the loss of lives within our community. Additionally, they forcibly displaced our people from areas such as Mau and Likia. Dear fellow members, it is time to take action and bring this situation to a close. Kotalel arap Samoei has been reincarnated and it is our duty to reclaim what is properly ours, either by coercion or diplomacy. The principle of "an eye for an eye" has been adopted. Retaliation in kind: a punch for a punch, a kick for a kick...Upon gaining independence, the Kalenjins experienced deliberate marginalization in the realm of education. All the resources were directed towards the Central province. The exclusive authority of the Kikuyu in this nation can only be counteracted by the Kalenjins. We must not tolerate being oppressed like other tribes. We must assert ourselves and assume the role of leadership in freeing our nation from the dominance of the Kikuyu community...If equality is a fundamental principle in our country, why is it that only individuals from a specific region are exclusively selected for recruitment? Are we considered inferior Kenyans? The user's text is already straightforward and precise. All the resources in the roads, telecommunication, energy, and water sectors have been directed towards the Mt. Kenya region. In the unfortunate event that any member of our group (referred to as "gotab Kalenjin") were to betray our cause, we would not only remove that individual from our midst, but also take action against their entire lineage. We will also invoke a curse from the Kalenjin tribe to ensure that the individual and all their descendants will not survive. We commenced by aligning our tenacity with the indomitable spirit of Koitalel ara Samoei (may his soul rest in eternal peace). This spirit continues to exist in the present. This essence encapsulates the unwavering determination of the Kalenjin people to persevere in the face of challenges. Our deity will transport us to Canaan from our present oppression. We must maintain our direction and be steadfast in our objectives. We refuse to be part of the passive and obedient individuals in our nation simply because Kibaki has stated so. One hundred years after the death of our esteemed Orkoiyot, a remarkable Kalenjin individual has been born among us. Interestingly, he shares the same name as the esteemed leader: Samoei. This exceptional individual is a member of the Kaplelach age group. Our

ancestors prophesied that in this era, the planet will either endure or succumb. This prophecy must be fulfilled. This particular age group will save our people from the clutches of the python (Kibaki). The article titled "Why Kalenjins are killing Kikuyu" was published by African Press International on January 28, 2008.

This message that was circulated among the Kalenjin brings out several aspects that were coalesced to instigate political violence specifically against the Kikuyu. It crudely reminded the Kalenjin of their history of resistance against colonial invasion and oppression and rallied them to once again rise up under their new Samoei and fight.

Oywa (2008) of the standard also reported on some of the widespread rumors that some of the texts disseminated just prior to the outbreak of violence between 25 and 27 January in Nakuru and Naivasha another of such messages alerted the Kalenjin on attacks from Mungiki:

“Alert! Mungiki r hitting back n slaughtering our pple. Uhuru n chris kirubi av bn tasked 2 bankroll them dis wk. Githahi da Nation CEO has offered 2 ferry guns in nation vans! Da 1st batch of Guns destined for elburgon, molo, eldy, bg, k, coast n ksm will be leaving 2night 4 dis destinations. Sambaza 2 scuttle!”

According to Osborn (2008) and in relation to the foregoing, by the end of January, a plethora of rumors circulated regarding the intended "slaughter" of ODM supporters by Mungiki throughout Rift Valley, Nyanza, and Western regions, as well as in Nairobi's slums. Such messages tended to be easily believed by the intended audience since they seemed authoritative, and could be easily interpreted to contain the truth as they seemingly outlined the historical injustices against the Kalenjin in general, pandered to their historical legacy of rebellion and called them to action against oppression from one community.

5.7 Mungiki and Retaliatory Attacks by the Kikuyu

Mungiki trace their roots to fights over access to land, albeit its leaders express this sentiment less frequently than in the past (Anderson and Lechery, 2008). Mungiki originated from the farms and settlement plans of Rift Valley's Laikipia area, from where many were displaced during the early 1990s' conflict (Anderson and lechery 2008). On the other hand, Kagwanja, (2003) traces Mungikis evolution to the ethnic clashes of the early 1990s. Mungiki therefore arose out of the need to mobilise its members for security against the government which they accused of starting and fueling ethnic related clashes in Uasin Gishu and other environs in the Rift Valley. Kagwanja (2003) further observes that it was an assertion of the rights of part of the Kikuyu social class which felt deprived and marginalized. Mungiki was mostly supported by the landless who had been displaced from Njoro, Laikipia, Molo, Elburgon, Rongai, Eldoret by ethnic clashes of 1991 to 1998.

Thus it was ironical that the landless and land-hungry Kikuyu, whom Mungiki ostensibly "represents," engaged in conflict with their Majimboist adversaries, the landless and land-hungry Kalenjin (Anderson, 2002). Both were mercilessly exploited by the political elite. Consequently, while members of the Kalenjin elite financed the Majimboists, members of the Kikuyu elite collected monies to pay for Mungiki's 'protection' of the Kikuyu. (*Daily Nation*, February 27, 2008).

Based on Kikuyu traditional religion and culture, Mungiki mobilised masses to protect their oppressed Kikuyu kinsmen and women against the brutal attacks from the Kalenjin warriors and protect their property. Wamue (2001) notes that Mungiki signified the resurgence of a Kikuyu identity, traditional culture, religion, and a sense of belonging. This line of thought was due to the way Mungiki operated, its practices as well as the characteristics shared by its members. To become a member, one had to

undergo an initiation process that involved rituals, oath taking, and baptism by Mungiki elders (Kiruthu, 2016). Mungiki, therefore, borrowed a lot from the Kikuyu traditional beliefs and cultural practices.

The ability to mobilise the masses and the brutality in which they operated, led some politicians to use Mungiki to counter attacks on the Kikuyu in Rift Valley. One respondent from Turbo confirmed that the Mungiki were called to save the Kikuyu in Uasin Gishu from the Kalenjin attacks;

When the Kikuyu saw that they were overwhelmed, they contacted Mungiki. Mungiki came and started killing the Kalenjin, Luhya, and Luo. Places like Langas was a battleground. So many Kalenjin were killed because when they came with arrows, the Mungiki made shields of iron sheets and they also had pangas. So they protected themselves from the Kalenjin arrows and really slashed the Kalenjin using the pangas. The Mungiki also attacked the Kalenjin in Burnt Forest. (Zipporah Mulama, OI, Turbo, 16/6/22,)

Mungiki, a religio-cultural group composed mainly of the Kikuyu, therefore, came up as a militia due to the land-related violence in the Rift Valley. This violence had notably targeted the Kikuyu, following electoral cycles resulting into evictions of the Kikuyu peasantry. Groups of Kalenjin teenagers organized as Kalenjin warriors and supervised by senior and local officials, who also sponsored their operations, were involved in these cycles of violence (Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence, 2008). Therefore, even though Mungiki was initially a religious sect, it rose up to counter the attacks levelled by the Kalenjin warriors against their people just like many other militia groups came up to protect different interests by 2002.

Upon assuming power in 2002, Kibaki inherited a situation where violence outside the control of the state had proliferated among the general population and was poised to be utilized in various ways, similar to what occurred after the 2007 election. In the end, there was a rapid escalation of criminal violence that rapidly assumed a social

stratification element. Many instances of violence were carried out by groups of young individuals who received financial support from their ethnic leaders and entrepreneurs (Kanyinga, 2009). For instance, among the Kikuyu community, there exists an unlawful organization called Mungiki. This organization originated from the initial wave of political violence in 1991. It was supported to carry out retaliatory attacks in some areas of the Rift Valley, including Uasin Gishu. According to Stubbs (2015), the Kalenjin, who were warriors, along with many other militia organizations, were formed to combat the Kikuyu in the Rift Valley. In response, rival militias funded by different parties, such as the Mungiki, also created to help the Kikuyu. Between 24 and 28 January, there was a surge of retaliatory violence by the Kikuyu community in the cities of Nakuru and Naivasha in the Rift Valley. The violence specifically targeted and expelled individuals from the Luo, Luhya, and Kalenjin communities from business districts, residential areas, and labor housing communities associated with industry and large-scale farming companies (Landa, 2008). The attacks were coordinated and led by individuals belonging to the Mungiki criminal organization, which engages in activities such as protection and extortion schemes in Nairobi, specifically targeting retail and transportation businesses. However, they disguise themselves as a cultural movement dedicated to preserving and promoting the interests of the Kikuyu people (ICG, 2008). Moreover, the ICC pre-trial proceedings provided evidence illustrating how the political elite on both sides orchestrated the mobilization of their respective local factions, primarily consisting of young men, to carry out attacks (Ahlberg and Njoroge, 2013). The youthful Kalenjin factions launched an assault and forcibly expelled the Kikuyu community, who were perceived as loyalists of the PNU political party, from the Rift Valley region. According to Callas (2008), the wars were predominantly

instigated by the Kalenjin people, particularly the Kalenjin and Kipsigis ethnic groups. As a response, the Mungiki group was organized and funded by influential Kikuyu politicians to carry out assaults on communities in Nairobi, Eldoret, Naivasha, and Nakuru that were believed to be aligned with ODM.

These militias sporadically attacked communities, like as Eldoret, where the people they were targeting sought refuge in police stations, schools, and churches (Calas, 2008). The general patterns of displacements can be discovered by geographical analysis. The majority of internally displaced individuals come from villages located around the western borders of the Rift Valley, Uasin Gishu, and Kalenjin districts. These areas are home to agricultural workers who live in Naivasha, Nakuru, and Thika. The displaced population included of small-scale farmers, primarily of Kikuyu and Kamba ethnicities, and occasionally Kisii. Additionally, agricultural laborers and junior Luo or Luhya public officers who had settled in the dynamic areas of Central Province and eastern Rift Valley were also affected. Each individual expressed a desire to go back to their "village of origin" or "ancestral land". Those from western Kenya were resolute in their decision to never return, whilst those who held title deeds, largely of Kikuyu ethnicity, were unwavering in their determination to reclaim the land they considered their own. This situation led to a process of "Kikuyunization" among the lower-ranking employees working on horticulture farms in the Naivasha and Central Province regions. The Kikuyu people, who were ejected from Maasai land, specifically in the Narok District to the south, replaced the migrants of Luo, Luhya, and Kalenjin ethnic groups (Calas, 2008). The sentiment of animosity against the Kikuyu community served as a significant impetus for the perpetrated assaults against them.

The Kikuyu people were confronted due to their association with Kibaki, who is a member of the Kikuyu ethnic group. The perception was that all Kikuyu individuals supported Kibaki, thus necessitating the struggle against them in order to exert pressure on Kibaki. We will not passively observe one tribe assume leadership in Kenya; instead, we will actively resist. This is a conflict that we are prepared to initiate and engage in... Currently, we are engaged in a struggle for authority. We will prohibit their return as they are known to engage in theft. Their reentry will be strictly forbidden. The Kikuyu ethnic group should have their own separate entity, leading to the division of Kenya. (BBC, 2008, in *Human Rights Watch*, 2008).

Between Nakuru and Eldoret, particularly around Turbo and Timboroa, and the rural districts inside the Eldoret-Nairobi-Kericho triangle, the violence took the guise of a peasant rebellion, which was definitely orchestrated by local politicians and notable persons (*Human Rights Watch*, 2008). The violence initially targeted Kikuyu minority. In some areas, pogroms and uprisings were accompanied by violent fatalities. An example in point is the arson assault on a church in Eldoret's Kiambaa neighbourhood, in which thirty people perished (HRW, 2008). Although international intervention restored peace to these regions, the relationship of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin in the Rift Valley is nevertheless marked by mistrust and suspicion (Kanyinga, 2009).

The dynamics of these ethnic-instigated political violence comes out clearly. In the 1990s, political violence was driven and supported by the politicians using state machinery and hence it didn't require mass mobilisation. In the 2007/2008 conflict, there seems to have been a departure. Waweru (2018) observes that the extent and intensity of political violence during this period demonstrated that communal mobilisation for violence is an effective substitute for state support. Apart from this, the state seemed to rather turn a blind eye in some instances when some communities were attacked. While at the same time seeming to abet and even participate in some political violence attacks against certain communities. This scenario left some communities with no option but to look for ways of defending themselves by either quickly establishing

their own militia, or using their existing socio- political structures to provide security for their communities.

5.8 Circumcision, ethnicity and Mungiki

According to Atieno- Odhiambo (2000) the death of Tom Mboya in July 1969, the banning of the Kenyan People's Union (KPU), and the arrest of Oginga Odinga signified the dominance of Kenyatta's hegemonic project. Kenyatta was now able to pursue his own agenda after being liberated from both policy and power rivals. In a bid to emphasise political dominance over the Luo after the death of Tom Mboya and the emasculation of Jaramogi Odinga, Kenyatta's dictatorship accentuated obvious cultural differences between the local Kikuyu, (*Mundu Wa Mucii*), and the Luo, *waruguru* (person from the north) the regime's political "other" par excellence. Specifically, Kenyatta decided to isolate the Luo as a cultural "other" in comparison to the Kikuyu.

This degradation was achieved through the use of village-degrading expressions that "animalized the Luo in their midst" (Werbner and Ranger, 1996:20), as the Luo were commonly referred to as *kinyamu giiki* or *kihii giiki* — small beasts or little lads. Unfortunately, the state became the major locus for the planning of these "othering" procedures. Kenyatta's regime, therefore, began politically weaponizing the cultural differences between the Luo and Kikuyu by animalising the Luo for not being circumcised. By so doing, he used the Kikuyu cultural yardstick of measuring the qualifications to manhood to dehumanise and emasculate the Luo, whose culture did not recognise circumcision. Auchter (2017) confirms that unlike the Kikuyu, the Luo do not traditionally practise male circumcision. For the Kikuyu, on the other hand, circumcision is an essential cultural ritual and rite of passage which marks the transition to manhood, as well as membership of the political community. This cultural othering

of the Luo and other Nilotes who traditionally did not practice circumcision became fashionable during political contests in later years, albeit with calamitous consequences for these communities.

During the 1992 elections, two Kikuyu barons, Kenneth Matiba and Mwai Kibaki, ran against Odinga Odinga for the presidency. According to Atieno- Odhiambo (2000), it was commonly believed that because Odinga, being a Luo, was not circumcised, he should not be elected. This forced, Odinga to bring it up as a debate topic at a rally in Kiambu later in 1992 because he was aware of the potential harm of such sentiments on his political prospects.

When Raila Odinga, as the NDP Presidential candidate, faced the subject of circumcision again in central Kenya in 1997, he dismissed it by joking that the women were not complaining and instead he encouraged his fellow contenders to focus on the genuine concerns of the campaign. However, Ndegwa (1997) notes that the issue was not forgotten because state politics had become ritualized around an exclusive rite. He reiterates that; "Such rituals build a power hierarchy within the society, which, when joined with other symbols of power and status in the contemporary state, enables elites to mobilize within the ethnic group for the secular state's objectives" (Ndegwa, 1997: 602).

These utterances by politicians made their supporters to develop ethnic resentment as well as feelings of superiority, and a condescending attitude against those communities that did not practice circumcision. Such feelings, only kept on taking root in subsequent election years and in 2007, they led not only to violence against these "othered" communities, but also forced circumcision. A respondent noted that, "the Mungiki were

very bad, in Langas, they even circumcised some Luo men by force”. (Neson Ochola, OI, Lamgas, 20/6/22)

During the 2007 election campaigns, the issue of circumcision was again brought up and in fact became one of the major campaign points in central Kenya and other areas dominated by the Kikuyu. The political elite campaigned against Raila Odinga by reminding the Kikuyu that culturally, they can never allow a boy like Raila Odinga to rule them. Dixon (2008) expounds that, the fact that Odinga was uncircumcised became an issue: “He was seen by some Kikuyu as a “child” unfit to rule because he had not passed through circumcision and initiation” (Dixon Robin, *Los Angeles Times*). For the many communities that circumcise, it is an abomination for one not to be circumcised. Therefore, it is very easy for them to abuse others for not circumcising. In fact, they believe that without being circumcised, one cannot become a leader (IRIN, 25, April, 2011). The concept that certain cultural customs shape boys into men and hence make them valuable members, and even leaders, of a political society is closely linked to the influence exhibited by males over other men during instances of political aggression (Forgey, 2012:76-94).

The practice of mandatory male circumcision in Kenya was implemented with the purpose of asserting political and ethnic dominance of one group over another, and aimed to undermine the traditional identity of Luo men Wanyeki (2008). The practice of circumcision has been exploited by ethnic demagogues in Kenya as a means to scare and emasculate those who are not circumcised. This strategic use of language is commonly referred to as the politics of foreskin (Lamont, 2018). Undoubtedly, the post-election violence of 2007 entailed the coerced circumcision of Luo boys and men.

Auchter (2017) argues that forcibly circumcising Luo males by Kikuyu men as an act of sexual violence was intended to degrade and highlight the inferior status of Luo men. However, when circumcision was performed as a customary communal ritual, it was regarded as a means of elevation and masculinization. When it was imposed on victims without their will, it became demeaning, emasculating, and dehumanizing. Forced circumcision in Kenya was a kind of violence that demonstrated the ethnic divisions within the country, which were also evident in the political tensions during the 2007 election. Callas (2008) highlights the prevalence of rumors suggesting that Mungiki were performing circumcision on Luo males in Kibera. The purported act of violence was in line with SMS text messages received before the elections, urging Kenyans not to support Odinga due to the belief that Kenya should not be governed by a Luo, an ethnic group whose males do not undergo circumcision. Thus, these stories possessed a significant political and ethnic significance.

Interestingly, Sandesh Sivakumaran (2010) also notes that apart from Kenya, sexual violence, such as genital beating and forced castration, and circumcision has recently taken place in Bosnia, Kosovo, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Central African Republic, Chechnya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, India, Iraq, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sudan and the Balkans between 2007 and 2009 during conflicts between different groups and communities.

Unquestionably, politics of the foreskin became an aspect that was practiced physically during the PEV. by forcefully and brutally circumcising Luo men and boys contrary to their traditions and customs. Some of the Kikuyu men led by Mungiki forcefully used initiation, a mandatory cultural practice among their community to punish the

uncircumcised Luo. Many of the victims of forced circumcision were cut brutally, some of them were even castrated. As soon as the task of “making” these Luo men was completed, they were abandoned, many left to bleed to death. The fact that the political leaders had animalised the Luo men, made it easy for them to be brutalised since they were regarded as lesser men.

5.8.1 Immigrant Guest Interpretation

During periods of political transition or tension in Kenya, the immigrant communities are often conceptualised as a guests. This narrative is often played upon by the political elite especially when the immigrants are seen to support the opposing political side to the one supported by the locals. The situation becomes worse especially in Uasin Gishu where grievances of economic oppression and domination by the immigrants is already cause for frictious relations between the visitors and the indigenes. The immigrants are therefore regarded as going against the courtesy of being accommodated as extended by the indigenes. The locals usually believe that they have only “welcomed” other ethnic groups into their homelands or territories therefore these immigrants are, in essence, guests.

On the same note, Jenkins (2012:8) argues that as guests, immigrants,

One is required to adhere to specific nuanced guidelines of hospitality, and failing to do so will result in consequences. The suspicion arises when guests are perceived to be attempting to exert political or economic control over the space, with the aim of gaining an unfair advantage from resources that are not really theirs. This situation often leads to heightened tensions and resentments.

This tensions and resentments then became political fodder culminating into political violence. According to one of the respondents on politicization of devolution in terms of guest immigrant: “the issue of devolution is good, we feel that other communities like

the Kikuyu should also go back to their county in central” (OI, David Kiose, Tapsagoi, 29/05/21). Jenkins (2012:9) describes that incorporated within the pervasive immigrant metaphor is the conception about Burial. The act of burying in one's native place is a component of a broader set of customs that reflect the enduring ties between urban and rural areas among migrants, as well as the cultural links with certain locations. Regardless of the duration of your absence from your ancestral land, it continues to be the place where you rightfully belong. Hence, after death, the body ought to be repatriated to its 'authentic abode' for interment. Amidst the challenges of mobility and the inherent dangers of traveling through territories belonging to different ethnic groups, numerous individuals in Kenya made determined efforts to transport the remains of their deceased family members back to their rural residences during the period of post-election violence. The matter of burial place is frequently cited as a method of verifying indigenous assertions of ownership and rationalizing the denial of citizenship to certain individuals.

The presence of immigrants in the political realm is seldom seen as an abuse of hospitality that must be accepted. Instead, it is their participation in opposition to the political inclinations of the host community that is considered problematic. There is a prevalent belief that the indigenous people should have more influence in choices that affect the region, and that visitors are expected to comply with their political desires. Undoubtedly, the act of settling and acquiring land in someone else's domain is perceived as acknowledging a lower social position. Therefore, if the immigrant population is perceived as being politically opposed to the native community, their perception can shift from being tolerated guests to being unwelcome occupiers.

Therefore, when immigrants align themselves with the "opposing" political faction, it not only increases tensions but also gives the idea that they are misusing the hospitality

they have received, thereby implying that immigrants or minority groups are attempting to gain dominance over a specific territory. The host local community finds it particularly frustrating when they see that these immigrants have their own remote residence where they may exert control. The host local community perceives it as unfair that the "guests" should want to claim a portion of the resources that are designated for others.

Political factors frequently determine ethnic ties, establishing distinctions between individuals as either siblings or cousins, friends or allies, and strangers or enemies. These relationships undergo constant reformulation in response to local and national political circumstances. The shifting narratives play a crucial role in empowering and facilitating the mobilization and acceptance of the elite at the community level (Johnston, 2008: 322).

5.8.2 Social Fragmentation, Politicized Ethnicity and Partisan Politics

Ethnicity still plays a key factor in modern day politics. According to Scott Villers *et al* (2014), ethnic communities affect the balance of power and thus the distribution of resources across the country. The main dynamics to weaponization of ethnicity in Kenya are driven by the initiation of ethnic violence to; shift voter constituencies, rectify perceived colonial injustices and postcolonial marginalisation, prevent rival communities from gaining advantage in terms of gaining access to government resources and create an ethnic identity in the economy through clientelism and the scramble for the fruits of devolution. Therefore, it is clear that some events and ethnic dynamics are manipulated by different players and politicians in order to gain advantage for themselves through the indigenous communities in Uasin Gishu.

Politics in Kenya has traditionally been characterized by a high level of ethnic exploitation and opportunism. Frequently, Kenyan politicians base their political campaigns on “tribal” anxieties, prejudices, and ethnic expectations (Kivoi, 2010). Kenyans vote in ethnic blocs, in part, because the country's economic disparities have caused widespread poverty and political ignorance (Kivoi, 2010).

The 2008 political settlement that led to the creation of a coalition government did not resolve the land issue, according to Kanyinga (2009). As they have in the past, political leaders continue to avoid discussing land rights. The land issue in Uasin Gishu continues to be a potential flashpoint for more political violence and remains one of the major factors hindering peaceful coexistence and political intergration.

Whenever different ethnic groups take up arms against each other on the basis of ethnicity, state rebuilding often becomes a daunting task. Malaudzi, (2023) notes that as was the case in South Sudan, the formation of the new state did not manage to heal the historical tensions between these ethnic groups. The underlying ethnic tensions in Uasin Gishu have the potential to translate into the implosion of fueds and politically instigated ethnic violence.

Lynch (2011) argues that the tragedy of ethnicity in the Rift Valley is a result of several factors. Firstly, political elites have exploited ethnic differences for their own gain during elections. Secondly, democratic institutions have intentionally been weakened, and violence has been used to protect the interests of those in power. Thirdly, the defensive politics of ethnic belonging have combined with marketization and unfulfilled promises of development, creating moments of uncertainty. Additionally, opportunistic leaders, state repression, institutional decay, and a spread of violence have all contributed to periods of intense and widespread violence.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the Moi-Kibaki eras with a view to establish whether their socio-economic and political policies in any way impacted upon the inter-ethnic relations between the Kalenjin and other immigrant communities that resided in Uasin Gishu. In this chapter the three theories were utilised to show the course of weaponization of ethnicity on intermittent political violence during both Presidents Moi and Kibaki regimes. The relative deprivation theory was applied to show how the underlying feelings of political and economic deprivation bred resentment against other communities and hence catalysed acts of violence against these perceived other ethnic enemies. Primordialism is applied to show how the socio-cultural and traditional features which bind these communities with special reference to the Kalenjin are manipulated to whip up their emotions against other communities in Uasin Gishu. It is these ethnic characteristics which are then mobilised and utilised in organising and implementing acts of violence. The instrumentalist theory on the other hand finally brought out the role played by political elite in harnessing both the primordial aspects of the Kalenjin as well as playing upon their feelings of deprivation to convince them to rise up and fight against their neighbors albeit at the altar of political expediency.

This chapter has also discussed Moi's ascendancy to the presidency inspite of heavy opposition from the Kiambu Mafia. This opposition set the stage for the suspicion and mistrust that hovered as a dark cloud in the interactions between the two ethnic groups of Kikuyu and Kalenjin during both Moi and Kibaki regimes. In the next chapter, the study examines the dynamics of weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu during Uhuru Kenyatta era, 2012-2022.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DYNAMICS OF WEAPONIZED ETHNICITY IN UASIN GISHU DURING UHURU KENYATTA RULE; 2012- 2022

6.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the study focussed on dynamics of weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu by elucidating the impact that weaponised ethnicity had on influencing political violence during both President Moi and Kibakis tenure. In this chapter the study set out to establish connections between political violence and weaponised ethnicity during President Uhurus' reign as well as the 2022 elections which ended Uhurus term and ushered in a new political dispensation under President William Samoei Ruto. The theory in operation remains instrumentalism whereby the political elite led by Ruto and Uhuru came together and convinced their communities, the Kalenjin and Kikuyu, to unite for the purposes of winning the 2013 elections. The politicians managed to bring these two communities together inspite of the deep seated suspicions and hatred between the two communities that previously resulted in the PEV, culminating to the much touted ICC trials at Hague involving the two. The primordialist theory was also used to bring out how some Kalenjin and Kikuyu traditional structures, with special reference to the institution of elders and youth were used in the efforts to preach peace, mobilize, and convince both the Kalenjin and Kikuyu to support and eventually vote for Uhuru and Ruto Presidential ticket. The chapter also discussed the changing dynamics which impacted on the shifts in ethnic alliances as occasioned by the emerging political directions.

6.1 The Dynamics of the 2013 elections

The 2013 elections in Kenya stood out as a remarkable departure from the violence and turmoil that marred previous electoral cycles. Despite deep-seated ethnic tensions and

historical grievances, which were used to enhance weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence in previous elections, the nation witnessed a largely peaceful transition of power, defying expectations and inspiring hope for a more stable and inclusive democratic future. Even though the political elite mobilized their ethnic communities for political support, the country did not experience large scale political violence akin to the preceding electioneering periods. To comprehend this significant shift, it is imperative to analyze the various factors that contributed to the drastic reduction in instances of weaponization of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu during the 2013 elections.

The study thus analysed the role of the post-election violence and its accompanying constitutional and electoral reforms; the impact of the ICC case, civil society, the media, the political elite, the communities, political elite, traditional leaders, the church, and the international and donor community in fostering a peaceful electoral process. Cheeseman *et al* (2014) concurs that some of these factors were intertwined but that they ended up working together for peaceful elections in 2013. He notes that although there was great concern both locally and internationally that political competition could once again result in violence, this was not the case. Malik (2016) concurs that some of the factors that set the 2013 election apart from the previous one was the comparative lack of electoral violence.

Fortunately, a myriad of interconnected processes combined to bring relative peace and calm during and leading to the 2013 elections. The basis of these factors were rooted in the factors leading to and the aftermath of the 2007 -2008 Post Election Violence. One key respondent observed that;

Several factors were at play and affected the peacefulness of the 2013 elections. The fear of the ICC discussions which was still fresh in the

minds of the people, the new constitution also played a role. It provided solutions to most of the challenges raised in 2007/2008 like dispute resolution. It had one of the best chief justices in Africa, Willy Mutunga and there was a lot of faith that Mutunga was going to be able to rule fairly in case of an election petition for the disgruntled. Therefore, Raila was abit comfortable going to the Mutunga court. (Osogo Ambani, OI, 19/06/22, Kakamega)

Therefore, this study behooved to interrogate the looming threat of ICC charges which brought about a dramatic political realignment of former rivals Uhuru Kenyatta and Ruto. Also interrogated in this respect is the resultant alliance of strange bedfellows that was closely followed by the need to mobilise the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities to support the duo in their quest for votes to clinch the topmost seat in the country; the role played by constitutional reforms of 2010 together with those implemented after the PEV; the role of the media, NGOs, and the church in sanitizing the two and advocating for reconciliation.

6.1.1 Role of Post-Election Violence (PEV)

The post-election violence (PEV) that gripped Kenya in 2007-2008 was a stark reminder of the destructive power of political turmoil and ethnic conflict. The violence, which erupted in the wake of disputed elections, resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, displaced thousands more, and left scars that continue to haunt the nation's collective memory. Yet, amidst the tragedy and devastation, the events of 2007-2008 PEV also yielded important political lessons that shaped Kenya's democratic journey and informed efforts to prevent recurrence of such violence. On this, Cheeseman *et al.* (2014) concur that the 2013 elections can therefore among others, be understood as one of the most impactful consequences of the multiple mistakes and problems of 2007/08 PEV. Sithole and Asuelime (2017) reiterate that the PEV served as a wake-up call for Kenya's political leadership, highlighting the urgent need for greater accountability and responsible governance.

The failure of political leaders to address the grievances of their constituents, to uphold the rule of law, and to promote peaceful coexistence laid bare the shortcomings of Kenya's political system and the urgent need for reform. In the years following the PEV, Kenya's political leaders sought to rebuild public trust and confidence through efforts to promote good governance, transparency, and accountability, and to address the root causes of political instability and violence. One respondent commented on the harrowing experiences;

“The PEV was very bad. Nobody ever wants to experience the things that happened again. You see this Kenya was almost destroyed because of politics and nobody wanted that again” (Ali Kemboi, OI, 25/06/21. Besiabor)

It should be noted that both the two communities held harrowing memories of the PEV and were therefore extremely apprehensive of a repeat as one of the respondents reiterated

Many of those boys (warriors) died and their parents are still looking for their children, waiting for them to come back. In Eldoret when so many people died, dogs and pigs would eat the bodies because they were too many and no one to collect. So they would identify you using your clothing. They did very bad bad dirty things only God will help us so that our country may not go back there (Priscilla Wangari, OI,16/12/21, Turbo)

Thus the PEV left such a negative impact and traumatizing memories that nobody that experienced it at first hand wished for a repeat. The political violence that was exhibited in Kenya during the period of PEV, became of great concern to the international community which was worried of the chaos spilling past Kenya's border and therefore leading to instability in east Africa, and the horn of Africa region. Consequently, the international community began to send emissaries to both Kibaki and Raila, in a bid to broker a peaceful settlement of the political stalemate.

6.1.2 Role of the international community

After long and tedious negotiations, the two political contenders, Kibaki of Party of National Unity (PNU) and Raila of Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) finally reached an agreement which ended the acrimonious and violent political engagements between their supporters. The body that succeeded in arranging the mediation was the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, headed by Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations and the Panel's chairman. A respondent remembered how difficult it was to bring the two leaders together;

“I remember many important leaders came from the neighbouring countries, when they saw we had a problem. But Raila and Kibaki refused to listen to them. Only Koffi Annan was able to make them sit down and talk. Then the war ended and there was peace as people waited for Koffi Annan to say something” (Julius Sawe, OI, Turbo, 16/06/22,)

Koffi Anan and his team of mediators established the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation (KNDR) committee (Tsuda, 2013). The negotiations with stakeholders in 2008 were spearheaded by foreign actors. The negotiations concluded on 28 February 2008 with an agreement to establish a coalition government. The establishment of the coalition government, in accordance with the KNDR agreement, resulted in the formation of a government that shares power among many parties. According to Haberson (2014), the panel believed that this setup would guarantee a fair, efficient, and prompt investigation of serious and widespread human rights breaches, as well as ensuring that those responsible would be held accountable in a court of law. The coalition government consisted primarily of the PNU and ODM parties. In addition, they reached a consensus to implement other essential political reforms, such as modifying the Constitution to enable the formation of a coalition government and simplifying the electoral process.

Numerous agreements were reached between Kibaki's Party of National Unity (PNU) and Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). On March 4, 2008. These included the requirement for an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the allegations of vote manipulation in the 2007 Presidential election, the necessity for extensive changes to the electoral system, the need for a comprehensive review of the Constitution, and the call for a thorough inquiry into the post-election violence, along with recommendations for addressing those responsible for the violence. Additionally, it was decided that a Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission should be established (Tsuda, 2013). It is crucial to acknowledge that the "National Dialogue and Reconciliation" agreement not only focused on resolving the causes of the post-election violence (PEV), but also emphasized the need to address the longstanding concerns that were discovered during the negotiations. Primarily, the KNDR highlighted the imperative requirement to devise and execute constitutional modifications to effectively and permanently resolve the majority of the raised concerns. The KNDR's Agenda consists of four long-term commitments: constitutional reform, poverty reduction, addressing inequality and development disparities between regions, reducing youth unemployment, promoting national cohesion and unity, addressing transparency, accountability, and impunity, and implementing land reform. According to the Kenyan political elite, the most important aspect of the program to resolve the 2008 crisis was the creation of a national unity government that allowed for power sharing

Maupeau (2014).

The peace solutions in the 2000s were distinguished by the evolving methods of warfare and a significant surge in democratization. In order to resolve the conflict, advocates of 'peace building' suggested the advancement of democratic principles. Maupeau (2014) highlights the intention behind these democratic practices, which was to enhance the

capacity of institutions prior to conducting elections. In addition, the 2010 enacted constitution aimed to establish a harmonious relationship between different authorities and secure the autonomy of specific institutions, particularly the Electoral Commission, in order to ensure the conduct of impartial elections.

The 2013 election seemed to deviate from the expected outcome predicted by the world community and Kenya's media, making it an uncommon event. (Thibon *et al* 2014, Haberson 2014). This election demonstrated the political maturation and advancement towards democratization of Kenyan society.

Despite the desperate situation of the post-election violence (PEV), hope sprang from the efforts of ordinary residents, civil society, and the international community who were motivated by the need for justice and responsibility. Consequently, their actions resulted in the creation of the Waki Commission and the participation of the International Criminal Court. This demonstrated a dedication to seeking the truth and achieving peace, while also setting the foundation for a more inclusive and transparent democratic system. Therefore, drawing from the knowledge gained from previous experiences, Kenya initiated a process of transformation and rejuvenation. It implemented extensive modifications to its electoral legislation and institutions in order to guarantee an electoral process that is unbiased, equitable, and devoid of violence.

6.1.3 Formation of Commissions

The Kenyan Dialogue and Reconciliation summit, led by Kofi Annan, focused on resolving the political crisis and addressing its underlying causes. The gathering established four key topics for discussion. The necessary actions to be taken include promptly halting violence and reinstating fundamental rights and liberties, implementing immediate measures to tackle the humanitarian crisis, fostering reconciliation, healing, and restoration, devising strategies to overcome the ongoing political crisis, and ultimately addressing longstanding issues such as constitutional

reform and inequalities within the nation. On 4th March, 2008, the parties reached an agreement to establish two commissions: The Independent Review Committee (IREC) and the Commission of Inquiry on Post-Election Violence (CIPEV). The two non-judicial bodies were assigned the task of investigating and reporting on various elements of the serious situations in the crisis.

The Independent Review Commission (IREC) thoroughly examined all facets of the 2007 Presidential elections and provided conclusions and suggestions to enhance the electoral procedure. The report was presented as the Kreigler report. CIPEV was assigned the responsibility of examining all the details and conditions associated with the violence that occurred after the elections, and providing suggestions to prevent any future reoccurrence of such violence. The report in question is commonly referred to as the Waki report.

In addition, the government established additional commissions, including the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) in 2008, as well as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC). According to Merino (2014), the primary objective of these two commissions was to establish formal systems for preventing violence and enforcing penalties. NCIC possesses the legal jurisdiction to identify and pursue legal measures against instances of ethnic and racial discrimination (NCIC, 2008). Currently, the NCIC is actively engaged in efforts to eliminate the divisions among Kenyans. The primary recommendation of NCIC is to guarantee that all stakeholders implement policies to address economic equality and opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their tribal connections, in order to establish a more integrated society. On the same vein NCIC has applied the law and its mandate to crack down on;

hateful acts and speech “toward any group of people based on their color, race, nationality, ethnicity or origin”, acts that had contributed

widely to spreading violence after the 2007-2008 election (NCIC, 2008; p 10)

Another committee established to tackle the PEV was the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, led by Ambassador Bethwell Kiplagat. It was founded in 2008 following the post-election violence (PEV). The primary finding of the study was that ethnic conflicts were mostly caused by disparities in land ownership and regional imbalances (Merino 2014). The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) was established by Parliament under the Truth Justice and Reconciliation (TJR) Act of 2008. The objective of the initiative was to foster peace, justice, national unity, healing, and reconciliation among the people of Kenya. This was achieved through the investigation and documentation of human rights violations committed by the State from Kenya's independence in 1963 to 2008. The initiative also aimed to identify the root causes of these violations and make recommendations for the prosecution of those responsible and the provision of reparations to the victims (TJRC 2013).

In its findings, the TJRC (2013) reported that the causes of ethnic tensions included, but were not limited to, the occupation of places by individuals considered 'outsiders' with non-local names, such as Kiambaa in Eldoret. During electoral processes, the local communities expected these outsiders to vote for the preferred political candidate of the local community. For instance, in Rift Valley, non-Kalenjins were expected to vote according to the preferences of the Kalenjin community. Additionally, cultural ethnic stereotypes led to exclusion, political discreditation, economic marginalization, and violence against members of stigmatized ethnic communities. Additional official investigations of ethnic conflicts have been carried out, specifically the Akiwumi, Kiliku, and KNCHR reports titled "On the Brink of the Precipice" in 2008. The TJRC study suggests that the criminals should face adequate judicial consequences.

The commissions, such as Akiwumi, Kiliku, and KNCHR, that were founded in 2008 had a significant influence on electoral procedures, the judiciary, and the behavior of politicians both during and prior to elections. Despite incomplete implementation, their recommendations have partially succeeded in regulating and curbing impunity among both the political elite and certain civilians. As a result, they also had a role in creating a calmer election environment leading up to, during, and after the 2013 general elections.

6.1.4 The peace narrative

Following the post-election violence (PEV), a peace narrative campaign was initiated by the clergy, politicians, and civil society, with the judiciary closely monitoring the situation. Cheeseman *et al* (2014) argue that following the PEV, a widespread 'peace narrative' undermined the legitimacy of any political actions that could potentially result in political instability. According to Merino (2014), the cries for peace were the most important aspect of the 2013 elections, even before the campaign formally started. One participant highlighted that in 2013, there was no conflict in Uasin Gishu due to effective community awareness campaigns conducted through chief's barazas. These campaigns helped people understand that engaging in fights ultimately leads to their own losses.

Hence, the appeals for tranquility appeared to be a component of a broader movement that emerged subsequent to the 2007-2008 post-election turmoil. Prior to the 2013 elections, the main contenders for the presidency made a coordinated effort to promote peace and increased their advocacy for tolerance. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), both secular and religious, initiated initiatives for civic education and peace that strongly emphasized the prevention of violence. They also participated in monitoring the elections and managing conflicts

(Thibon *et al*, 2014). One respondent, summarised that one of the major factors for lack of violence was;

Because the people who had been fighting, the Kikuyu and Kalenjin came together. When the leaders came together, they made the people to come together. Therefore, there was no fighting. So the problem ended with the leaders when they brought the Kikuyu and Kalenjin together (Hellen Chesang, Huruma, 21/10/21) .

Furthermore, the experience of the 2007-2008 post-election violence served as a sobering reminder of the devastating consequences of political violence, fostering a collective determination to avoid a recurrence. Political leaders, civil society actors, and ordinary citizens alike were acutely aware of the need to prioritize peace and stability, leading to a greater willingness to engage in dialogue, compromise, and conflict resolution. At the same time, public speeches encouraged support of peaceful elections bellied by strong pressure from the international community (Maupeau, 2014). The gradual increase in awareness, maturity, enlightenment, globalization of the Kenyan populace coupled with access to media, played a significant role in fomenting the desire for peace after the 2007-2008 PEV

Accordingly, in line with the 2010 constitution, in a bid to sustain peaceful elections and end the culture of impunity among the political elites, the International Criminal Court (ICC) came in to indict several political leaders accused of the greatest culpability in the PEV.

6.1.5 Role of the constitution and judiciary

The successful conduct of peaceful elections in 2013 was largely attributed to the effective execution of significant electoral changes, which intended to tackle the underlying factors that had previously led to political violence. These reforms were carried out in accordance with the provisions of the 2010 constitution (Haberson, 2014). The enactment of the 2010 Constitution demonstrated that the process of establishing

the state and promoting democratization can be achieved even after experiencing significant electoral violence. However, in this particular situation, international mediation in the shape of the Kenya National Development and Reconciliation (KNDR) program played a crucial role.

The enactment of a new constitution in 2010, which implemented measures such as the transfer of power and the creation of autonomous electoral institutions, contributed to the improvement of the legitimacy and openness of the electoral procedure, thereby decreasing the probability of conflicts that could potentially escalate into acts of violence. According to Malik (2018), Kenya's new constitution was a direct result of the post-election turmoil that occurred in 2007-2008. This crisis ultimately led to the adoption of the 2010 constitution. This event became a pivotal moment in Kenya's history as it brought about significant transformations in the country's political terrain.

The new legal framework of the 2010 constitution proposed radical changes in the socio-economic and political fabric of Kenya. Among other things, it greatly limited Presidential powers, revolutionized land ownership, introduced an improved bill of rights, devolved government functions and resources to the counties, improved public expenditure and budgeting, revamped the judiciary and security. Changes in the legislature led to better public participation and representation at both the national and county levels through a bicameral parliament, as well as the regional county assemblies (Hope, 2015). These organs also allowed for more in depth scrutiny of public resources and the national government. In essence, all these institutional changes provided necessary checks and balances required for a democratic environment which was one of the major goals of the new constitution.

6.1.6 Judiciary

The recommendations made by the various commissions contained certain implementation matrices which were mandated on the three organs of government as a way of improving relations between different communities in Kenya, building back citizens loss of confidence in Government apparatus, and improving the electoral process. The judiciary stands out as the mediator and interpreter, of the new constitutional dispensation. The manner in which the judiciary played its role as an equalizer and guardian of the constitution had a big impact on calibrating the political temperatures and by effect cautioning the political elite, regulating the political field, and enhancing peaceful elections in 2013. Okoth and Omenyo, (2015) emphasize that the new constitution adopted in 2010 had one main agendum; to prevent the recurrence of another PEV or any such electoral violence. This it could only achieve by strengthening accountability and enhancing the independence of the Judiciary.

The new constitutional dispensation was midwived amid an atmosphere that was already permeated with habits beliefs and peoples steeped in their old social and political ways of operating. Chabal and Daloz (1999) outlines their driving characteristics as primordial, instrumental and clientelistic solidarities based on corruption, ethnicity and disorder as instruments of violence. In order for the new constitution and the institutions therein to succeed, it was imperative that they go out of their way and ensure they overhaul these entrenched albeit atavistic practices.

Therefore, it is crucial to have a proficient judicial system, which is considered by Hope (2015) to be a fundamental element of the rule of law. He defines the rule of law as a system that ensures that no entity, including the government, is exempt from the law. It guarantees that laws safeguard basic rights and that justice is available to everyone. The judiciary has a crucial role in fostering public trust and maintaining social order by

assuring impartial settlement of disputes, safeguarding individual rights, and holding wrongdoers accountable. In pursuit of this objective, the justice system carries out its duty of dispensing justice with autonomy, fairness, openness, reliability, effectiveness, and punctuality (Gathara 2021). Unfortunately, prior to PEV, the judiciary had lost the trust of majority of the Kenyan citizens due to rampant corruption, interference by other organs of government such as the executive and legislature, as well the rampant impunity displayed by political elite, but which went unpunished.

The reaction of Kenyans to Raila's decision to go to court to petition the election results of President Uhuru Kenyatta was therefore a valediction to the general belief and little faith Kenyans had before the 2010 constitution. The question to be answered here is why did Kenyans not react by "fighting" for justice the way they had done in 2000-2008? The answer lies in the transformations effected in the judiciary through the 2010 constitution. Hope (2015) opines that this was mainly due to the revampment of the judiciary under the 2010 constitution. These amendments contributed to the observance of the rule of law as the aggrieved parties were sure they could seek and get justice. This was unlike the old constitution where the judiciary operated under the ominous shadow of executive and specifically Presidential control. As a result of this control, other related institutions like the police, attorney general, prosecutor general and the judiciary in general were subjected to rampant interference and through influence from the presidency. Consequently, for those that were politically well connected, observance of the rule of law was optional as impunity reigned supreme. The 2010 constitution however, rectified this situation by drastically curtailing the powers of the President and executive over the judiciary, and consequently leading to a more independent judiciary, free to dispense justice without the encumbrance of an all-powerful presidency.

The 2010 constitution includes several elements that promote the autonomy and responsibility of the judiciary (Hope, 2015). As a result, the President's authority to nominate judicial officers, including the chief Justice and deputy chief justice, in a random or arbitrary manner has been limited by Articles 166–168. Thus, the President is limited to appointing the Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice based on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission and with the agreement of the National Assembly. In early 2011, President Mwai Kibaki attempted to select a Chief Justice, Attorney General, and a Director of Public Prosecutions without adhering to the provisions outlined in the 2010 constitution. The President's excessive actions were a manifestation of the prevailing culture of impunity in Kenyan politics (Mwangi, 2014), where individuals frequently employ tactics such as threats, intimidation, and manipulation of institutions to safeguard their own interests.

Fortunately, the courts, the Speaker of the National Assembly, and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) promptly declared and determined the President's acts to be unconstitutional within the new constitutional framework. The President was compelled to end an apparent audacious effort to violate the constitution. The President appoints all other judges based on the recommendations of the Judicial Service Commission. Consequently, this grants the judicial independence from the executive branch. The Judicial Service Commission consists of a specific membership, with only two individuals (one male and one female) who are not lawyers, serving as representatives of the public. The individuals are designated by the President, however, their appointment is contingent upon receiving approval from the National Assembly (Republic of Kenya 2010).

As a result, the executive branch no longer possesses authority over the judiciary. Furthermore, the allocation of judicial authority has been decentralized, resulting in the

Chief Justice no longer possessing extensive and uncontrolled powers. While the Chief Justice remains the leader of the judiciary and will oversee the Supreme Court as well as the lower courts, there are now two additional higher courts in addition to the Supreme Court, resulting in a total of three superior courts (Hope, 2015). Judges now enjoy enhanced security of tenure, as their dismissal or removal from office must adhere to a transparent, fair, and unbiased procedure. The initiation of this process rests exclusively with the Judicial Service Commission.

The presidency's efforts to meddle with judicial mandates demonstrate that a direct adherence to the Constitution is arguably the most effective and enduring foundation for national unity and integration, which should govern the relationships not only between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities, but also between all other communities in Kenya (Mwangi, 2014). Nevertheless, this dependable basis is still in its early stages and requires careful cultivation, by guaranteeing that both the government and parliament uphold the autonomy of the court.

6.1.7 Electoral changes

The failure of Kenya's electoral institutions to effectively manage the 2007 elections, coupled with allegations of widespread fraud and manipulation, fueled public mistrust and resentment, and laid the groundwork for weaponization of ethnicity and political violence. After investigating the PEV, and subsequently noting the gross failures of the electoral commission of the time, the Kriegler Commission recommended the wholesale reorganization of the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK), (Tsuda ,2013). These recommendations were included in the new constitution. Sithole and Asuelime (2017) remind us that, in response, the country embarked on a process of electoral

reform aimed at strengthening the independence and credibility of its electoral institutions, enhancing transparency and accountability in the electoral process, and promoting a culture of peaceful dispute resolution. Several mechanisms were thus put in place to ensure the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) functions in a transparent and accountable manner in the way it conducted the electoral process henceforth.

The changes contributed in a major way to the absence of political violence by restraining politicians from weaponizing ethnicity or inflaming ethnic hatred. Recognizing the need to address the root causes of past conflicts, the establishment of a new electoral management body, was done in order to address the root causes of past conflicts by introducing mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability in the electoral process. Okoth and Omenyo 2014) observe that a new and independently nominated electoral board referred to as the independent electoral and boundaries commission, was established in the constitution as a result of the recommendations of the Kriegler report. This is because, the PEV had underscored the importance of electoral integrity and the need for robust mechanisms to prevent and resolve disputes in a timely and transparent manner.

The new constitution also modified the electoral threshold from simply winning the Presidential elections to requiring one to get fifty percent plus one of the total votes cast (Malik, 2016). This meant that all Presidential candidates could not afford to relax but look for votes from all over the country to meet the new threshold. Moreover, the Presidential candidate was also required to obtain at least 25 % of the votes cast in at least 24 out of the 47 counties in order to avoid a run-off. This amendment forced candidates to look for votes by campaigning all over the country and ensuring that they got votes from all the counties in order to avoid run offs which are very expensive.

Consequently, there is no candidate who could be comfortable with the support of one or three communities. In essence these aspects of the constitution worked in favor of de-ethnicizing political campaigns and in the long run, discouraging the weaponization of ethnicity by the political elite which had previously been the bane of political violence in Uasin Gishu and other parts of the country.

In addition, there were strict deadlines to be adhered to for those who wished to form coalitions and subsequently present their documents to the registrar of political parties. All political parties were therefore required to hand in their papers three months prior to the elections in order to be eligible. According to Cheeseman *et al*, (2014) other new amendments which transformed the operations of the IEBC included; biometric voter registration, electronic results transmission, voter education and civic engagement, electoral dispute resolution mechanisms. international observers and monitoring.

The Biometric Voter Registration was introduced to enhance the credibility of the electoral process, the major aim of the introduction of this technology was to eliminate voter fraud and ensure accurate voter registration. Electronic transmission of election results aimed to improve the efficiency and transparency of the electoral process by providing real-time transmission of election results from polling stations to the central tallying center. Voter education and civic engagement was launched through various initiatives to educate voters about their rights and responsibilities and promote civic engagement. This included voter education campaigns, civic education programs, and outreach efforts targeting marginalized communities. Electoral dispute resolution mechanisms were established for the timely resolution of electoral disputes, including the creation of specialized courts to handle election-related cases. This aimed to address grievances and disputes promptly to prevent escalation into violence. Kenya invited international observers and monitoring missions to oversee the electoral process, ensure

transparency, and provide recommendations for improvement. These observers played a crucial role in the electoral process.

Fortunately, the courts, the Speaker of the National Assembly, and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) promptly declared the President's acts unconstitutional under the new constitutional framework. The President was compelled to end what seemed to be a bold effort to violate the constitution. The appointment of all other judges is made by the President in accordance with established procedures. In general, these electoral reforms were designed to bolster democratic institutions, improve transparency and accountability, and regain public trust in the electoral process, all while reducing the chances for manipulation and conflicts. Nevertheless, there are still obstacles that need to be overcome, and ongoing endeavors are required to tackle problems such as ethnic divisiveness, corruption, and political violence. Despite these problems, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) managed to successfully conduct the 2013 elections in accordance with the procedures outlined in the 2010 constitution. Hope (2015) supports this assertion by reaffirming that in March 2013, foreign observers determined that the election was predominantly free, fair, and credible. This was due to the fact that the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) performed its operations in a transparent and open way, meeting numerous criteria for democratic elections. The Supreme Court, in reality, endorsed the election results following Raila Odinga's petition, in accordance with the recommendations of the Judicial Service Commission. Consequently, this grants the judicial independence from the executive branch. The Judicial Service Commission consists of a specific membership, with only two individuals (one male and one female) who are not lawyers, serving as representatives of the public. The individuals are designated by the President, however, their appointment is contingent upon receiving

approval from the National Assembly (Republic of Kenya 2010). As a result, the executive branch no longer possesses authority over the judiciary. Furthermore, the allocation of judicial authority has been decentralized, resulting in the Chief Justice no longer possessing extensive and uncontrolled powers. While the Chief Justice remains the leader of the judiciary and will oversee the Supreme Court as well as the lower courts, there are now two additional higher courts in addition to the Supreme Court, resulting in a total of three superior courts (Hope, 2015). Judges now enjoy enhanced security of tenure, as their dismissal or removal from office must adhere to a transparent, fair, and unbiased procedure. The commencement of this process rests solely with the Judicial Service Commission.

The presidency's efforts to meddle with judicial mandates demonstrate that a clear adherence to the Constitution is arguably the most effective and enduring foundation for national unity and integration, governing not only the relationship between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities but also all other communities in Kenya (Mwangi, 2014). Nevertheless, this dependable basis is still in its early stages and requires cultivation, by guaranteeing that both the government and parliament uphold the autonomy of the court.

Notwithstanding the few challenges faced by IEBC, it seems the Strengthening of electoral institutions and mechanisms for dispute resolution fostered confidence among political stakeholders and minimized the likelihood of violence stemming from contested election outcomes as had happened in 2008-2007.

6.1.8 Devolution

Generally speaking, the nature of political reforms can positively affect both the national and or the local level politics. In Kenya's case, the reforms which effected

devolution acted as pacifiers on the local level and thus diffused the bitterness and by extent the chances of violence from those who lost at the local levels. Malik, (2018) corroborates this idea by further explaining that constitutional reforms can affect the incentives of politicians at two different levels. Reforms such as decentralisation may lead to political contestations at the sub national level. Other reforms like changing the eligibility of Presidential candidates may most likely affect electoral competition at the national level. Similarly, when electoral reforms touch on the revision of existing electoral rules, the consequences may be experienced at the sub national or national level depending on the targeted elections

The new constitution promulgated in 2010 instituted a myriad of changes. According to Malik (2016), one of the most important changes was devolution, which resulted in the substitution of a unitary administration with a decentralized county system. Devolution resulted in the country being divided into forty-seven counties, each having its own governor as the chief executive and its own county legislature. Haberson (2014) asserts that the new constitution's primary and most significant accomplishment was not only its central focus, but also its sole one. The constitution effectively curtailed executive authority by decentralizing certain executive and legislative duties to the county governments.

The elections fulfilled the primary and possibly the most crucial goal of Kenya's initial constitution since gaining independence in 1963: restraining governmental authority, particularly by transferring certain administrative and legislative powers to forty-seven county administrations.

Devolution had significant public support as it directly addressed the concerns of individuals who felt marginalized or neglected by various government programs or initiatives. According to Hope (2015), the Kenyans overwhelmingly supported the 2010

constitution mainly because of its significant emphasis on devolution. The Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC) observed that citizens had a prevailing sense of alienation from the central government due to the concentration of power in the national government and the President, resulting in limited accessibility. According to Ghai (2008), a large portion of the population experienced feelings of marginalization, neglect, and resource deprivation. However, once they voiced their concerns, they were subjected to victimization based on their political or ethnic affiliations.

Furthermore, majority of the population were of the opinion that their problems were due to government policies which they could not control since decisions were made far away and without their participation or consultation. Most of the decisions made on their behalf were neither reflective of their reality nor hardships. Devolution was therefore welcomed by many since it was regarded as the vehicle to help them get out of the vicious cycle of ethnicization of the state, state power and resources (Ghai, 2008). To a large extent, devolution also curtailed the enormous Presidential powers through certain communities benefited from patronage politics, lack of accountability, and impunity. One respondent noted that;

Devolution played a role by distributing power across the nation so that the forces that would usually have been disgruntled, had vied either for senator or governor so they did not have the pressure to be in government. This reduced tensions (Osogo Ambani, OI, Kakamega, 19/06/22).

Owing to the changes in the constitution, devolution therefore worked to reduce political tensions and ethnic hostility at the local levels since; many voters who felt that they had lost at the national level, also had their preferred candidates who won at the local levels. Cheeseman (2014) concedes that the creation of a new constitution with 47 new county governments meant that, while parties lost nationally, they often won

locally, softening the blow of the controversial Presidential elections. It is important to note that the new constitution, made the Presidential election less decisive by establishing a high degree of decentralization (Maupeau 2014). It therefore, follows that even those whose candidates lose at the national level could still control entire regions (counties) and hence still be able to access the state. The significance of devolution in the new constitution was that it ameliorated the pain that accompanied the winner takes it all nature of the old constitution.

6.1.9 The Presidency

The 2010 constitution replaced the imperial presidency with checks and balances that run horizontally, vertically, and normatively, as opposed to the prior constitution's imperial system. An autonomous and empowered bicameral parliament, a court that is both legally and administratively empowered, commissions, and independent offices all serve as horizontal checks. The decentralization of power to county governments, the reformation of the public service, and the empowerment of civil society all serve as vertical checks. In carrying out their constitutional, legislative, and administrative public power, the President and the entire public service have been held to normative standards (Sihanya, 2011, p.11). The fact that the President's powers were reduced in the 2010 constitution helped level the playing field, since a sitting President would be more careful with their public statements now that they could be easily held accountable.

Additionally, the judiciary can declare a sitting President to have acted unconstitutionally. Such a pronouncement can have catastrophic repercussions. In essence, since the President is no longer an imperial entity, they can no longer act with impunity. Since the electoral laws requires a Presidential candidate to secure at least 25

percent of votes from 24 counties, they must be careful to be seen to be balanced in the distribution of resources to all regions of the country. Furthermore, the need to garner fifty plus votes to be pronounced as a winner in the Presidential elections, would also force the President to become more balanced as they allocate national resources

Ghai (2008) argues that devolution is a significant factor in the eradication of impunity in Kenya. Devolution decentralized governmental authority across the country, resulting in a decrease in the ethnicization of the state. Moreover, it indicated a transition from a presidency with extensive powers that had resulted in a lack of transparency, favoritism in politics, and arbitrary actions carried out to favor specific ethnic groups, to the detriment of national cohesion.

6.2 Analysis of the dynamics of Kikuyu Kalenjin Ethno-political relationships

Periodically, elections in Kenya had been accompanied by violent inter-communal clashes. During the general elections in 1992, 1997 and 2007 Kenyans witnessed politically motivated electoral violence which resulted in loss of lives, property and trauma (Malik 2016). This has been covered widely in the previous chapters. The Rift Valley region including Uasin Gishu was unfortunately the epicenter of these episodic political violence majorly between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin. Interestingly, the violence between these two ethnic groups has always occurred only when they have supported opposing teams. Remarkably, the 2013 election was quite tranquil in contrast to the earlier 2007 election, which had divided the two communities into competing political factions. According to Linke (2022), Kenya's 2013 election was relatively peaceful when compared to the 2007-08 crises. Since the first multiparty election in 1992 under President Daniel Arap Moi and the Kenya African National Union (KANU), there has

been a consistent pattern of electoral violence. However, this recent change of events is seen as a positive development.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the political society in Kenya and the associated political parties have consistently been organized based on ethnic affiliations. The two most prominent ethnic divisions are the Luo-Kikuyu and Kalenjin-Kikuyu divisions (Elischer 2008). At the overall level of political parties, two of the main ethnic differences in the country are between the Luo and Kikuyu groups, and between the Kalenjin and Kikuyu groups.

Consequently, in the Kenya's political landscape, division rather than unity had generally characterized the way that long-time ethnic antagonists had voted during elections. An analysis of the following dyads—Kikuyu-Kalenjin, Kikuyu-Luo, and Kikuyu-Mijikenda shows that these groups voted for diametrically opposed parties or coalitions in the 1992, 1997, and 2007 Presidential contests (Malik 2016). In 1992, for instance, the vast majority of Kalenjin and Mijikenda voters fully supported the Kalenjin incumbent Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya African National Union (KANU), whereas Luos supported Oginga Odinga of FORD-Kenya and Kikuyus split their votes between co-ethnic leaders Kenneth Matiba of the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD)-Asili party and Mwai Kibaki of the Democratic Party (DP).

With regard to the Kikuyu-Kalenjin cleavage in particular, (Malik 2016) insists that as part of broader accommodationist tactics, Kenyan elites often unite these groups in instances where they find themselves confronted by a set of revised institutional arrangements. Situations which prevent them from systematically fomenting inter-ethnic grievances and instrumentalizing election-time violence is where they encounter conditions such as term limits or new electoral thresholds. Malik's point is that the

political elite will always analyse the situation to assess whether to instigate ethnic violence for political gain or not. A respondent vindicated this role of the elite by stating that;

The alliance of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin does not exist. It is Kalenjin leaders supporting Kikuyu leaders when it is convenient and vice versa. When they feel it is not convenient, there will be another arrangement altogether. Therefore, it is a matter of convenience and the leaders of the two communities mobilizing in one direction. So long as the leaders speak one language and their interests match, the alliances remain. (Osogo Ambani, OI, Kakamega 19/06/22).

The above trajectory has played out since independence with different political alignments based either on class, or ethnicity in a bid to win or retain political power and hence retain or ascend to power. However, Mwangi (2014) emphasizes that ethnicity though unfixed and often contested, has and continues to be the greatest vehicle through which people and communities are mobilized. Unfortunately, during elections, ethnicity also becomes the preferred tool in the interrogation of identities as the political elite battle it out during campaigns. According to Shilaho (2023), voting in Kenya is essentially an ethnic census, with only a few exceptions. Typically, Presidential candidates that are frontrunners come from the more populous ethnic groupings. Out of the five Presidents of Kenya, three have belonged to the Kikuyu ethnic group, while two have come from the Kalenjin ethnic group, which are two of the largest ethnic populations in the country. Thus, in Kenya, ethnicity plays a pivotal role in political power, establishing a mutually beneficial link between the two.

In an ethnically divided society, inter-communal electoral violence will stem from the deliberate politicization of long-standing grievances held by rival communities. Malik (2016) demonstrates that the reason that divisive tactics of this nature are likely to give rise to conflict is because elections are key focal points around which citizens seek to

define their access to the state. Thus, if one is interested in understanding when rather than at what intensity ethnic violence is likely to occur in association with a particular election, the most direct clue can be gleaned by looking at whether or not political elites are driving wedges in the electorate. The severity at which violence occurs, in contrast, turns on a different set of variables. Stated specifically, when politicization is compounded by an ethnically divided electorate in which historically rival groups are voting in opposing camps, then it is expected that election-related conflict will take place at a high intensity.

This is because in such circumstances, voters are likely to perceive elections as zero-sum games. Malik (2016) further maintains that, when ethnic rivals are yoked in an alliance, then politicization will either amount to no violence at all or, at worst, to mild levels of electoral violence. On the contrary, strong theoretical reasons suggest that politicians will steer clear of emphasizing differences between groups that comprise an electoral alliance. This was the situation that played out in the alliance between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin in the run up to the 2013 elections. Furthermore, he reminds us that elites will only act contrary to such expectations when they miscalculate the payoffs of politicization or when they are keen on breaking up a coalition of their competitors.

During the electioneering period, in ethnically divided societies, rival groups are more likely to be antagonists rather than allies. Studies on political behavior have shown this to be the case in a number of different countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Malawi, Nigeria, and Zambia (Bah 2005; Ferree andowitz 2007; Posner 2005; Sisk 2013). In line with an instrumentalist orientation, (Eifert, Miguel, and Posner 2010) also report that ethnic identities tend to become stronger when they are exposed to political competition. It is this ethnic support that was mobilized by the Uhuru Kenyatta and

William Ruto to shield them from ICC prosecution, and thus enable them to “protect” their communities by ascending to the leadership of Kenya as President and deputy President respectively

The relationship between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities in Kenya has been influenced by historical, political, economic, and social dynamics. On the other hand, their political relationships has been characterized by cooperation, competition, and occasional tensions (Wanyeki 2008). Both ethnic groups are among the largest and most politically influential in Kenya, and their interactions have shaped the country's political landscape in significant ways. Some key dynamics that have influenced their relationships over the years can be attributed to; historical alliances and rivalries during Jomo Kenyatta and Moi eras, intermarriage and social integration between the two communities, role of political elites in mobilizing their communities for political expediency, resource distribution, land issues and coalition politics. Occasionally their relationship has been shaped by alliances of convenience.

One such necessary political alliance led to the formation of the Jubilee political alliance. This party brought the two communities together at the behest of their political leaders; Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto at a crucial time when the two really needed their communities' support to get to the highest office in the land and therefore escape from the ICC case that had been raised against them. There was therefore no room to revisit the deadly political altercations of 2007/2008 but heal those wounds and embark on a new journey together. Thus as one respondent explained;

In 2013 there was no violence because the people who had been fighting; the Kikuyu and Kalenjin came together. When the leaders made the people to come together, there was no fighting. So the problem ended with the leaders when they brought the Kalenjin and Kikuyu together (OI, Eliud Chomba, Besiebor 20/07/21).

Remarkably, in 2013, the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities coalesced and supported the Jubilee coalition in the first national election to be held after the promulgation of Kenya's new constitution in 2010. Lynch (2013) also observes that the Jubilee alliance helped to bring the two communities together. However, the inter-communal narratives of injustice, mistrust and stereotypes seem to have remained at the local level despite this unity. In essence, this study posits that the political relationships between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities in Kenya are characterized by a complex interplay of historical, social, and economic factors. While political alliances have often been formed between the two communities, underlying tensions and competition for resources continue to shape their interactions in Kenya's political arena. This dynamic relationship between the two communities is discussed through the lens of primordialism and instrumentalism to show how the two leaders coalesced their communities together through different strategies and pleaded with them to forgive and forget their previous conflicts, in order to help them to ascend to the highest political offices.

6.2.1 Role of community elders in Mobilising the Kikuyu and Kalenjin during the 2013 elections

In Kenya, the period leading up to the election was marked by a notable participation of councils of elders in disseminating messages of peace and advocating for "good leadership." This is in contrast to the 2007 election, when these councils actively mobilized Kenyans to engage in post-electoral violence. These leaders were involved in various activities such as public advocacy, mobilizing resources, educating voters, mediating and resolving conflicts, engaging with the community, exerting cultural and traditional influence, endorsing causes, and gathering support.

Communal and village elders have been known to play a very important role in influencing politics at the grassroots levels in Kenya as one respondent explained.

Before Ruto and Uhuru came together, the elders sat down in a meeting with the leaders from both sides. The people were then told by the elders that the two communities had fought by mistake, yet the issue had been between Raila and Kibaki. They resolved that since the people accused by ICC- Ruto and Uhuru were not involved in elections, yet they had been left in the middle as if it was them who were asking for the seat of presidency. For example, in your house, do you accuse the father and leave the child when it is the father who has created a problem? So there were wide consultations between both sides. Finally, the elders discussed and an agreement was made that we have to come together. (Julius Logot, OI, Turbo ,16/06/22,)

Many local communities value the wisdom of their older members and frequently follow their guidance. According to Were (Nairobi Law Monthly 2024), village elders have always played a vital role in grassroots administration throughout the history of Kenya. The selection of these elders, commonly referred to as headmen or 'wazee wa mtaa', is based on their long-standing presence in the community, extensive knowledge and understanding of the locality, uprightness, and expertise. Consequently, many communities will generally take their advice because as Onyango (2023) denotes the elders were made of respected and incorruptible members of the community, be they the shuka-draped Maasai elders, spear and shield holding elderly Luos, the Kaya elders from the coastal region or the no-nonsense *Njuri Ncheke* from Meru. To date these elders play a pivotal role in decisions that affect all aspects of the lives of Kenyans right from the the rural areas and urban settings, upto the the national level.

It is these elders who were pivotal in the process uniting Ruto and Uhuru especially after the horrors of the PEV. After the formation of the coalition government of national unity, the relationship between Ruto and Raila began to deteriorate. Consequently, suspicions about Raila's intentions toward Ruto began to arise among the Kalenjin community. According to the Kalenjin community, their son Ruto had worked so hard

to ensure ODM got where it was by ensuring that almost all the Kalenjin voted for ODM. Therefore, they could not understand why Raila was frustrating their son Ruto. One respondent narrated the general feeling of the Kalenjin towards this situation by stating that;

In URP, elders had agreed that Ruto should join with Raila, so for the community, the elders had already given direction. When Ruto went to Raila, he did a lot of campaigning. Infact, he had refused to join Raila but the elders convinced him. We told him, we have already reached Kiboswa, we have tried Kikuyu, now let's try the Luo. When he refused, we told him we have already reached Kiboswa and you must follow us. He said he accepted but his heart was not there at the beginning. He told me he sees they will not go far with Raila. Then he was given agriculture, Raila chased him. In education again he was removed and yet he was the chief campaigner. We even gave Raila a name, Arap Mibei, the person of the water. It was like you have given your child out to help someone, then that person beats your child. To make matters worse, Raila talked badly, he said it was the people and not Ruto who voted for him. So from there, he never got anymore votes from the Kalenjin. And anyone who stood on ODM failed very badly because we were not happy with Raila (Julius Logot, 16/06/22, Kamagut).

The changing dynamics in the relationship between Ruto and Raila impacted on the Kalenjin and made its way to the elders of the community who in turn started to think seriously about how best they could secure the “future of the Kalenjin people” in the next election (Malik 2016). To this end, and especially given the recurring rounds of violence they had suffered since the 1990s, the idea of forming a union with a Kikuyu politician emerged as an attractive but intricate option. At the beginning, not everyone welcomed the idea. As one elder put it; “at the beginning, many people did not understand what was goin on, later on about 20 percent were against while 80 percent supported” (Kibet Elphas, OI, Huruma, 21/10/21)

Even though there was some resistance towards supporting Ruto, eventually, the Kalenjin elders came to an agreement after rigorous meetings. On the other hand, the Kikuyu community had also weighed their options and tentatively realized that there

was a reasonable chance in working together with the Kalenjin. It was for this reason that as early as January 2011, Lynch (2014) notes that Uhuru had been advised to get together with Ruto and talk. Given the fact that neither Ruto nor Kenyatta were the undisputed kingpins of their respective ethnic groups, ignoring the advice of Kalenjin and Kikuyu elders would have been tantamount to political suicide.

Both Kenyatta and Ruto had to seek the approval and backing of the elders in their respective communities in order to gain consent and support for their candidacy for the positions of President and deputy President in the elections. According to Orina (2022), it is widely known in Kenya that obtaining support from the elders is a necessary prerequisite for political success. An illustrative example may be found in the Meru ethnic community, where all the local members of parliament and important politicians in Meru County are affiliated with Njuri Ncheke. Membership in the Njuri Ncheke within the Meru community confers a favorable status for anyone with political aspirations. Since the colonial era, the District Commissioner Lambert mandated that any Meru elders seeking positions in the local administration must be members of Njuri Ncheke. Uhuru and Ruto had the awkward and almost impossible onus of bringing former erstwhile and dangerously antagonistic communities together for political purposes. This was the main reason the two groups needed their respective elders to meet, strategize and agree on the cause of action. The role the Kalenjin elders had to play before the 2013 election was in contrast to what they had done in 2007-2008 when they had mobilised their people against the Kikuyu. The role of elders during the PEV has already been discussed in previous chapters.

The elders had an uphill task not only due to their role in PEV but also because some of them came to be seen as political brokers, selling their people by convincing them to support or vote for the highest political bidder. Were (2024) deplores the elders'

tendency to hobnob with politicians particularly ahead of the general elections making it difficult for communities to rely on the elders for guidance on culture and traditions as they increasingly involve themselves in divisive political issues. As a result of political involvement, some of these elders often found themselves on the receiving end after being associated with dirty political schemes and taking sides in feuds they are supposed to arbitrate. As a result, this aspect made it difficult for some elders to promote or support the Jubilee alliance due to uncertainties as well as fear of backlash from the communities. It is the fear of backlash from the community that forced Ruto to request for a meeting of all the Kalenjin elders because the community often make decisions together after consultations. An elder discussed this aspect thus;

Kalenjin have unity, when we decide to go on one side, we all go. Even the Kikuyu and Luo are the same. Among the Kalenjin, one must call a meeting before a major decision concerning the people is made. Even Ruto called leaders about 30,000 elders from all the Kalenjin to discuss and at the end, there was one resolution binding all the people together (Kibet Elphas, OI, Huruma, 21/10/21).

This statement reinforces the power the elders still have to drive the political narrative and hence the future of the Kalenjin community. That is why it behoves any individual seeking political office to get the tacit approval of elders.

Despite the denials of many community leaders who claimed not to be merchants employed for political tasks, it proved challenging to shake off the political label. The Kikuyu Council of Elders acknowledged the potential danger of politicians diluting their customary responsibility of providing guidance to the community. The secretary general of the council referred to the political hierarchy inside the Kikuyu society, where elders are regarded as the proprietors and politicians as the administrators. Several political centers harbored envy towards the stratification of Kikuyu society and would have welcomed its dismantlement through internal conflicts among the three

tiers of leaders, the affluent class, and the laborers. The Kikuyu elders serve as custodians of cultural consciousness and dignity, as well as overseeing economic empowerment and cultural guidance. In addition, the elders also advocate for social and political consciousness and engagement, but politicians seek to seize these responsibilities for their own self-serving motives (The Standard E-Paper 2022). The council of elders' leadership maintains that although the Kikuyu elders refrain from active political engagement, their objective is to establish a cooperative alliance among the three community strata and steer the region towards optimal integration within the Kenyan political system, which is composed of regional ethnic states. This conflict of interest and ambiguity was not just observed in central Kenya, but also in other regions.

At the coast, some politicians claimed that the *Kaya* elders were involved in showbiz and instead of working in the *Kaya*, they were being misused by politicians. Political influence had made some of them to take non-Mijikendas to the *Kaya* and anoint them as leaders in violation of Mijikenda traditions (The Standard E- Paper 2022). According to Mijikenda traditions, one cannot be taken to the *Kaya*, unless they fulfill certain traditions; one must be a Mijikenda, buy food, clothes and offer a goat and cockerel. Beja *et al* in The Standard E- Paper (2022) opine that there was a general feeling among the people that for the *Kaya* elders to remain relevant and respected, they should contain themselves to operations within *Kaya* instead of engaging in other activities for the sake of money.

The tensions and debates among the Kalenjin community posed a significant difficulty in fully embracing Ruto's candidacy, both for the common people and certain elders. Two weeks before Joshua Sang was appointed as the chairman of the Kalenjin Council of Elders, the council had rejected the idea of supporting William Ruto as the preferred

candidate of the Kalenjin community for the Presidential elections. This decision was based on the fact that Ruto had been found guilty of crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Some individuals criticized it as a betrayal of kinship, as they attempted to reshape the perceived togetherness of the Kalenjin community around William Ruto, with the aim of mobilizing Kalenjin people to wholeheartedly support the United Republican Party (URP).

This confusion undermined the role of the *Talai* elders among the Kalenjin since they were drawn into the conflict for political supremacy between the Moi group and William Ruto who was establishing himself as the rising star to carry the Kalenjin flag. This battle for supremacy led to the *Talai* blessing Ruto as well as Gideon Moi as the Leaders of the Kalenjin. One respondent narrated this unfortunate incidence; “The elders of the Kalenjin used to come from the *Talai* Clan. We believed they had powers to foresee. But some people do not believe the *Talai* have powers because they have commercialised these things. One time a group of the *Talai* blessed Ruto and another blessed Gideon. So it brought confusion” (Joseph Koech, OI, 16/06/2022, Magut). It is this confusion that forced the *Myoot* council to act and replace the *Myoot* chairman who was inclined towards Moi family. As one elder narrated;

Within the community, some leaders were not supporting Ruto. Seii, the chairman of the overall Kalenjin council of elders (*Myoot*), was initially against the support of Ruto because he had been accused in the PEV. But Seii was inclined towards Moi family and Moi family was against Ruto. So Moi and friends influenced Seii against Ruto. Therefore, a meeting was held, and Sang was chosen by the elders as the new chairman of *Myoot* (, Lelei Julius, OI, Magut 16/06/22,).

Fortunately for Ruto, Joshua Sang ended the debate when he declared the Council of Elders to be a neutral institution. Furthermore, he stated that the council of elders would commit itself to work hand in hand with the National Cohesion and Integration

Commission (NCIC) in order to maintain peace in the region during the electoral campaign. Consequently, after the mobilisation of the Kalenjin behind their candidates, the Kalenjin came up with a memorandum; the Kalenjin County Political Code of Conduct (KCPCC) (Josse-Durand 2020). In April 2012, more than a year before Kenya's 2013 elections. The *Kaburwo* Council of Elders was tasked with finalising the operational framework.

The KCPCC primarily focused on local candidates, their followers, and political organizations. The regulations were designed to facilitate the transition of Kalenjin County into a thriving region, characterized by a new political landscape devoid of political chaos. (Josse-Durand, 2020, p. 3). The elders derived inspiration from traditional concepts regarding renowned pre-colonial Kalenjin leaders, namely Kimnyolei and Koitalel Samoei (Josse-Durand 2020). The code of conduct ultimately revealed the cultural, social, economic, and political forces that were activated by elders, politicians, civilians, and NGOs in order to ensure peaceful elections. The *Kaburwo* code posits that the economic progress of the Kalenjin region was considerably hindered by the post-election violence in 2007-2008, which had a profound impact on a region that was considered a "hot-spot" at the time (Thibon *et al* 2014). The tea business experienced a decline in activity due to the departure of migrant workers from the Luhya, Luo, and Kisii ethnic groups, as well as some private investors. A significant number of Council of Elders members are investors who occupy influential positions in the local government, media sector, and particularly in the agri-food industry. Therefore, the council assumed responsibility for both the socio-political and economic welfare of the town. One may argue that the council of elders, albeit being modernized in its activities, nonetheless maintained the original functions of the precolonial council of elders.

It was not only the Kalenjin council of elders that found itself in this crossroad, the same predicament was being experienced by other councils of elders. In their bid to remain relevant, these councils had to quickly adapt their roles to the changing circumstances in order to continue giving guidance to their communities. It is obvious that when the majority of the council members realized that one of them was pulling in the opposite direction, they quickly removed him in order to achieve the political objective of ensuring Ruto stood and was supported by the whole Kalenjin community. Infact, the Kalenjin community was so organized from the grass root level just like they were in the precolonial period as they tried to garner support for Ruto's cause because at the village level there were elders referred to as *wazee wa mtaa* whose duty it was to ensure that there was peace law and order at the household levels. There were also appointed *wazee wa Amani* who were peace loving men to help in ensuring everybody preached peace (Kosgei Peter, OI, Huruma, 20/12/23). All these elders were utilized for the political function of ensuring enough political support for URP.

Furthermore, it is important to note in this study that even though the primordial roles of Kalenjin council elders have been retained, its structure has been modernized to cope with the changing times. They maintain their original functions of giving social, economic and political directions for the good of the community. In view of this, one FGD described the new structure thus;

The hierarchy of elders is not the way it used to be before. It has been modernized according to the new administrative units. The elders begin from the villages, subcounty, county upto the region. The regional council of elders is called *Myoot*. The members come from all the Kalenjin sub groups therefore it is for all the Kalenjin sub groups. Then each sub group like Elgeyo Marakwet, Kipsigis, Tugen has its own council. For example, the Nandi also have their own council called *Kaburwo* which deals with issues to do with all the Nandi of Uasin Gishu, Kalenjin and Trans Nzoia. When *Myoot* calls a meeting, the leaders of all the other councils attend to represent their communities

because it is the overall council. When *Myoot* decides on something, nobody can go against because it contains all elders. So when *Myoot* decides it is peace, it is peace. When they decide it is war, it is war, we follow in its footsteps. (FGD I, Besiabor, 25/06/21, Turbo)

In the final analysis, the elder's role in bringing together not only Ruto and Uhuru, but also their communities was imperatively based on the primordial function elders played in traditional Kalenjin and Kikuyu societies whereby they were the main guiding authority. For this reason, the elders from both the two sides therefore worked very hard to convince their communities that it was not only their sons who were at risk but their communities as well as one respondent reiterated;

There were wide consultations from both sides, meetings were held, and these people realised that once they came together, there was possibility of winning because they are the majority. Our people have been voting as a block, once our leader says we are heading in this direction, then all the community will follow that. Once Ruto and Uhuru came together, the community made a decision that is where we need to go, (Julius Lelei, OI, Kamagut, 20/12/23.).

They urged their communities and convinced them to come together and support Ruto and Kenyatta for the highest land in the office in order to secure a peaceful environment for development, but also to create more opportunities for the progress of both communities. They explained the importance of controlling political power since there is a trickle down effect for the communities whose person holds office.

The political organisation of the Kalenjin for the purposes of helping Ruto was right from the grassroots with the elders leading at the forefront. An elder elaborated on this organisation;

Uhuru and Ruto could not just come together. There was a leadership and reconciliation committee involved. For example in Chepsaita, we had a chairman of peace, who was chosen by elders from every one of the Kalenjin communities right from the sublocation, location, upto the county (Kiprop Peter, OI, Chepsaita, 21/07/21).

Eventually, these persuasions resulted in the signing of several negotiated pacts in 2012 and 2013 (Mwangi, 2014). In the year 2012 and 2013 these agreements were signed and adopted between Kalenjin and Kikuyu elders in public meetings as a show of commitment to unity between the two communities.

In the 2013 elections in Kenya, both the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities played significant roles, particularly through their elders. Kikuyu elders, being influential figures within the community, endorsed and campaigned for Kenyatta's candidacy. The elders also played a role in mobilizing support for the Jubilee Coalition at the grassroots level. They leveraged their influence to rally community members behind Kenyatta's candidacy and to ensure a high voter turnout in Kikuyu-dominated areas. The Kalenjin community, played a crucial role through their elders, particularly in supporting William Ruto's candidacy for the deputy President position. Kalenjin elders endorsed and campaigned for Ruto, emphasizing his leadership qualities and the importance of the Jubilee Coalition's agenda for the country. Like the Kikuyu elders, Kalenjin elders also worked to mobilize support for the Jubilee Coalition within their community, ensuring a strong voter turnout in Kalenjin-dominated areas.

Overall, the roles played by Kikuyu and Kalenjin elders in the 2013 elections were instrumental in shaping the outcome of the election, particularly in rallying support for the Jubilee Coalition and its candidates. The endorsement by Kalenjin elders helped to solidify Ruto's support within his community and also fostered the coalition between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities, which historically had tensions dating back to previous elections. Both sets of elders, therefore, played instrumental roles in consolidating political support within their respective communities and in forging alliances that were central to the outcome of the 2013 elections. It is also important to establish the methods and avenues that were used to mobilise such huge support that

eventually translated into the large voter turnout that assured the Jubilee coalition of victory in the 2013 elections.

6.2.2 Mobilisation of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin ethnic and cultural support for the Uhuru/ Ruto ticket

The Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities have cultivated robust ethnic nationalisms that are consistently updated, enabling their mobilization during elections. This is particularly facilitated by the fact that both communities have leaders who can ascend to the highest level of government or exert influence on the newly elected head of state during each general election. During the elections of 2002, 2007, and 2013, the Kalenjin community did not put forward any candidates. However, they had a significant role in influencing the outcome of these elections and were seen as kingmakers.

The study has already discussed the role played by elders on the basis that both the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities have strong traditions of respect for elders and community leaders. Traditional elders played a significant role in endorsing candidates and rallying support for them within their communities.



Plate 3: Researcher during an interview session with the chief and an assistant chief of chepsaita in Magut. From left to right; Hellen Cherono (assistant chief) Joseph Koech (Chief), Georgine Onyango (researcher)

Source: Field Research (2022)

Their endorsements carried weight and influenced the voting behavior of community members. Apart from using elders to mobilise support for their political cause, Jubilee Alliance also used; ethnic media outlets, ethnic language and symbols, historical

narratives and grievances, social networks and community structures, promises of ethnic representation and empowerment, cultural events and ceremonies, and appeals to ethnic solidarity. All these strategies were ethnic based. The decision to appeal to their people through ethnic based strategies was due to the fact that it was the only way they could easily attract and keep the attention of their members since ethnic symbols, speeches and other such elements have the tendency to dig deep, arouse and engage primordial tendencies. Once politicians achieve this attention from their members, the members will willingly and sometimes blindly follow these politicians' directives.

Due to the absence of a dominant ethnic group with sufficient population, successful Presidential candidates must form coalitions with other ethnic groups in order to exert political influence. The political elites have deliberately incorporated ethnicity into the system of governance and administration. A respondent outlined the significance of ethnic alliances thus;

You know in today's politics, you must be careful with the three most populous communities; the Luhya, Kikuyu and Kalenjin because they have the numbers. So the Kalenjin do not want the Kikuyu to join with the Luhya without them because their numbers can make someone to win the presidency (Joseph Koech, OI, 16/06/22, Magut).

Moreover, party loyalty is determined by one's ethnicity. Hence, individuals typically establish political parties with the expectation that fellow members of their ethnic group will unite in support of them (Shilaho, 2023). In addition, following independence, governmental offices and other resources have frequently come under the influence of individuals from the same ethnic group as the President. The establishment of the Jubilee political party served as a means for Ruto and Uhuru to mobilize their respective ethnic groupings, the Kikuyu and Kalenjin, in order to obtain political backing. According to Ndungu (2023), powerful people in politics exploit their ethnic groups to establish political parties and rise to positions of leadership within those groups. Once

in office, these elites claim to be fighting for the political interests of their ethnic group, but in reality, they are only interested in forming governments and consolidating their power.

The 2013 elections in Kenya saw a significant use of cultural and ethnic identities to rally support from the Kikuyu and Kalenjin populations. This was a typical example of utilizing ethnic identification indicators rooted in primordialism for political advantage. These ethnic identities were utilized in the following manners: Various groups made appeals to ethnic solidarity on different platforms. The Kikuyu and Kalenjin populations possess robust ethnic identities characterized by deeply ingrained cultural practices and customs. Political leaders and parties used this feeling of identity, highlighting the significance of voting based on ethnic affiliations to safeguard and promote the interests of their respective groups. Eifert *et al.* (2010) contend that ethnic identities serve as strategic instruments for individuals to gain political influence. Consequently, these identities tend to become particularly prominent when political power is being contested, a scenario that frequently occurs during elections. Consequently, it is inherent for individuals to have stronger ethnic affiliations during the time around national elections, especially Presidential elections. Furthermore, when ethnicity is utilized to get an upper hand in the power struggle, it is more likely to be advantageous and prominent as a social identity during fiercely contested elections. Consequently, we anticipate that ethnic affiliations will be most intense not only when elections are imminent, but also when they are fiercely contested.

Kenyatta and Ruto joined forces not out of a desire for peace, but for political purposes focused on obtaining the presidency (Eifert *et al* 2010). Put simply, the new election law required winning 50 percent plus one votes and 25 percent of the votes in 24 or more counties to gain the national office. This criterion made forming a cross-ethnic alliance

between historically antagonistic populations very appealing. After the new constitution was announced, the elites understood that the 2013 election would heavily depend on the strategic combination of ethnic groups. As a result, Maupeau (2014) acknowledges that in the autumn of 2012, when the campaign officially commenced with several primary elections, Jubilee ceased their attacks, so contributing to the unification of the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin. Subsequently, they assumed the role as peace pilgrims, pledging to alleviate the tensions in the villages that had been afflicted by post-election violence in 2008. This was done in order to broaden the appeal outside the Central Province and the Rift Valley region, with the aim of increasing the number of votes required to secure a comfortable victory in the elections.

Maupeau (2014) argues that both Uhuru and Ruto's speech not only appealed to the past but also served as a re-evaluation of the historical narrative of the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu. Among the Kalenjin people, Ruto's battle was perceived as a reflection of Koitalel Samoei's resistance against the British during the early 1900s. Similarly, Uhuru's struggle was reminiscent of his father, Jomo Kenyatta, who was imprisoned following a notorious trial that was manipulated (1952-1953). Consequently, they presented the elections as pivotal for the progress and safeguarding of Kalenjin and Kikuyu interests, appealing to a shared sense of identity and shared ancestry.

6.2.3 Endorsements by Cultural and Elders' Councils

Cultural and elders' councils within the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities played significant roles in endorsing political candidates. These endorsements carried considerable weight among community members who revered their elders and cultural leaders. Endorsements were often accompanied by rituals and ceremonies.

These rituals and ceremonies further reinforced the connection between cultural identity and political allegiance. Political leaders sought endorsements from these elders, leveraging their influence and authority to mobilize support. The endorsements were often accompanied by appeals to cultural values and traditions, reinforcing the idea that voting for a particular candidate or party was in alignment with the community's cultural norms and aspirations.

An example of the influence of the Kalenjin council of elders was demonstrated through their endorsement and support of Bethuel Kiplagat in 2010. Bethuel Kiplagat, a prominent Kalenjin figure in Kenyan politics, was found guilty of his participation in the Wagalla Massacre and was removed from his position as the head of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC). The Kalenjin Council of Elders, known as Myoot, which has jurisdiction over the Kalenjin Kaburwo Council of Elders, defended him by appointing Joshua Sang, the chairman of the Kalenjin council of elders, as his representative. The Kalenjin Kaburwo Council of Elders functioned as an exclusive organization of influential individuals within the Kalenjin community. Membership in this group was limited and required approval from existing members, which was typically debated during regular monthly or annual meetings.

Both Kikuyu and Kalenjin councils of elders engaged in carrying out ceremonies to cement the relationship between the two communities and the new found peace, ensure the two communities forgave each other of the atrocities each did to the other, and to bless their two leaders and clear them for the highest office of the land. While some respondents denied the performance of such rituals under the claim that Christianity does not allow, others agreed that such rituals took place;

After the PEV, rituals were held. They had to perform a ritual, They slaughtered an animal, spilled over the blood, and a declaration was made (we are now coming together and we shall never fight again). The

ritual for peace was done in Nakuru. The main representatives, the old men, the council of elders, that is their role. They did it with a few people who were there. The ritual was done in 2012. It is usually not meant for everybody and must be done at a specific place. The *Myoot* council participated and they represented us (Lelei Julius, OI, Magut, 16/06/22)

On the other hand, Kenya News (03/06/2019) reported that the *Myoot* council was the one that usually had the final say on political issues in Uasin Gishu. They directed people on which direction to take politically. In 2013, it is the one that organized for the ceremonies where Ruto and Uhuru were blessed, and proclaimed as the representatives of the Kalenjin and Kikuyu respectively, it was also during the same ceremony that the two communities had agreed to forgive each other and work together (Matoke Tom sept/02/2022 Nation Media). It is thus clear that the primordial structures of the Kalenjin as well as the Kikuyu were still used for political purposes such as blessing and endorsing political leaders for political offices for the 2013 elections. On the same note, ceremonies were also performed to bring the two communities together akin to the ceremonies performed in the pre-colonial period to end war between different communities and to ensure that each upheld peace.

Myoot council brings all the elders from all the Kalenjins together for major decisions or for traditional occasions. They know how to deal with blessings and cleansings. They are the ones who gave directions on the Uhuru/ Ruto case. (Logot Keter, OI, 16/06/2022, Turbo).

Such ceremonies were done for the benefit of the communities involved and were usually led by the traditional councils of elders.

6.2.4 Promises of Development and Empowerment

Ensuing political parties tailored their manifestos to address specific needs and aspirations of the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities. Promises of infrastructure development, job creation, and socio-economic empowerment were made, tapping into the desire for improved living standards and opportunities among community members.

The Kalenjin elders were at the forefront of supporting and mobilising support for Ruto for political purposes because they knew there would be benefits of supporting Jubilee party. They knew that;

Even if we begin at vice President, one day we will get the presidency and get something. Therefore, politics is good in this way, now we have good tarmac roads because of good leadership. We also got a lot of money for infrastructure development for all our schools; like Soin was given 10 million and Chepsaita 68 million. Our schools like Soin and Silungai have also been promised buses (Keter Julius, OI, Kamagut, 22/07/21)

Consequently, the idea that allying with the correct community (Kikuyu) can bear fruits for one's community (Kalenjin), is a major factor of persuasion as used as a bargaining chip by politicians who then use the elders to realise this political agenda.

6.2.5 Cultural Events, Ceremonies and traditions

Traditional cultural events and ceremonies were used as platforms for political campaigning and mobilization. Candidates and political leaders participated in these events, where they addressed community members and sought their support by aligning their political agendas with cultural values and aspirations. During ceremonies like funerals or weddings, if the *Mzee wa Amani* was present, he would be given an opportunity to talk to people about the union between Ruto and Uhuru, the reasons why the two came together, the need to maintain peace between the two communities, and support the two leaders. They insisted on the need for peace and that no one should destroy other people's property again (Kiplagat Martin, OI, Soin, 20/12/23).

Kalenjin and Kikuyu elders sometimes organized cultural ceremonies and events where endorsements for specific candidates were made. These ceremonies, deeply rooted in tradition, served to legitimize the chosen candidates within the communities and foster a sense of cultural pride and belonging among voters.

The council of elders have the power to even invoke curses on those who refuse to heed their advice and especially when it came to the political direction their community was to take.

Among the Kalenjin, once the old men take a decision, and say that this is the route we are taking, we must follow. If you refuse, you are going against the community and people will really punish you. They will curse you, infact, one can be cursed forever (Lagat David ,OI, Kamagut, 21/07/21)

Rituals were also performed specially to bring about forgiveness and create a bond of friendship between Uhuru and Ruto as well the two communities after the PEV. Kalenjins had rituals.

They had to perform a ritual for peace. They would slaughter an animal, then the blood is spilled over them, then they drink some and make a solemn vow and say we are now coming together and we shall never fight again. The ritual for peace was done somewhere in Nakuru. We were represented by the old men of *Myoot* (Lelei Julius OI, Magut, 16/06/22).

These peace rituals embedded in the traditional African beliefs, worked to enhance the solemnity of the pact between not only Uhuru and Ruto, but also the two communities. They laid emphasis on the significance of maintaining peace, cooperation and good neighbourliness

According to Orina (2022), the Meru council of elders, known as Njuri Ncheke, has maintained its power and authority due to its exclusive role in performing significant traditional functions and rituals. Specifically, only Njuri Ncheke elders, not priests or pastors, have the ability to conduct cleansing rituals. Additionally, the removal of curses can only be achieved through the spoken words of Njuri Ncheke elders at the sacred location of Nchiru, referred to by the Meru people as 'Kurumuka'. The council's sacred tasks could not be transferred. According to Orina (2022), elders in African religion were considered integral to the invisible realm and were classified as the least

prominent religious experts within the African conceptualization of the spiritual cosmos. The Njuri Ncheke elders maintained a strong connection with their ancestors, not just through familial ties but also through regular rites and ceremonies aimed at preserving this relationship. Historically, Njuri Ncheke, along with other councils of elders among the Kikuyu and Kalenjin, exerted their influence over the political, economic, and social matters of the Meru community through the execution of their religious and sacred responsibilities.

It was the recognition of the potency of the power of the traditional elders that drove many politicians to seek their blessings in their bid to capture political power. The elders held not only the power to bless, but also the ability to sanitize these political leaders through traditional ceremonies and consequently sanitize them for public office. That was why before the 2013 elections Mwangi (2023) reported that Kenyan leaders nationwide were vying for the support of the *Talai* elders. The main reason being this group of traditional kingmakers, were renowned for their historical heritage and supposed mystical powers.

The Meru community in central Kenya faced a similar situation when politicians sought electoral endorsements from its traditional councils of elders. Orina (2022) criticizes the dispersion of Njuri Ncheke elders throughout the county, as they are being exploited by politicians to gain electoral support. Nevertheless, the Njuri Ncheke elders vehemently denied the assertion that they are utilized to advocate for politicians. They emphasized that their role as elders and counselors was solely to protect the community from choosing poor leaders. This elucidated the reason behind Njuri Ncheke's burgeoning popularity among the affluent and influential individuals who had ambitions of attaining governmental posts.

6.2.6 Use of Ethnic Language and Symbols

Specific to the Kikuyu and Kalenjin cultures, language and symbols were employed in campaign materials, speeches, and slogans to resonate with community members. This linguistic and symbolic connection reinforced the idea of shared identity and common interests, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among voters. Campaign messages were often delivered in the languages spoken by the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities, making them more relatable and resonant. Language plays a significant role in shaping identity, and campaign messages were crafted in Kikuyu and Kalenjin languages to establish rapport and convey authenticity. On the same note, one respondent reiterated the role of mother tongue during electioneering;

Mother tongue was not used in joint meetings with other communities. It was only used if the Kalenjin are on their own and if they want to caution on traditional things, they must say it in Kalenjin. If there is something they do not like, they say it in Kalenjin (Keter Julius, OI, Kamagut, 21/07/2021,).

The use of vernacular language played a crucial role in mobilizing people and disseminating propaganda with the intention of achieving nefarious objectives (Lisege *et al.*, 2019). There is a propensity for voters belonging to ethnic minority groups to have a higher likelihood of voting for a candidate who shares their ethnic background (Philpot & Walton, 2007). Vernacular language was primarily employed to elucidate enigmatic puzzles and metaphors, as well as to explicate forbidden ideas. However, in the 2013 elections, politicians were very careful and cautious in using inflammatory rhetoric due to the NCIC which was very keen on monitoring politicians in a bid to prevent the use of inflammatory language that could have incited ethnic related violence. It was used cautiously for mobilisation. One FGD noted that;

Mother tongue was used during political rallies. When they hear mother tongue, they are very happy and they clap. There is a difference when a politician addresses people in the same language. Local languages were used during campaigns but in cosmopolitan areas, only Kiswahili was used. (Zipporah Mulama, OI, Turbo, 16/06/22,)

Therefore, even though vernacular was used, it was for the mobilization and convincing the electorate in Uasin Gishu to vote for these candidates. The use of vernacular appealed more to their primordial senses, enabled the candidates to identify with the electorate, bond, therefore ensure that their message was communicated more effectively.

Additionally, symbols and imagery associated with Kikuyu and Kalenjin culture were used in campaign materials to evoke a sense of pride and belonging among community members. The URP election symbol was the horn. Among the Kalenjin, the horn was symbolic in a sense that it was used to mobilise them towards the new party. A respondent explained that;

among the Kalenjin, the horn was used for communication. When someone blows the horn, you can tell where people are going. It was a sign of direction, danger, or good things (Julius Logot, OI, Turbo, 16/06/2022).

Such symbolic elements from the respective cultures were incorporated into campaign materials and rhetoric to evoke emotional connections and foster a sense of identity-based loyalty.

6.2.7 Cultural Narratives and Historical Grievances.

The ensuing political narratives often invoked historical grievances or shared experiences of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities, emphasizing the need to elect leaders who would address these issues. Political leaders framed the elections as an opportunity to correct past wrongs and secure a better future for their respective ethnic groups. Thibon, *et al* (2014) states that the ethnic vote, which demonstrates the importance of competing, strategic multi-ethnic alliances that exploit ethnic

advantages, is not a recent phenomenon. He additionally observes that it is a component of a political culture or political syntax upheld for five decades by various political generations in order to achieve and retain power. Implicit mobilization is the foundation of this phenomenon, which operates through two distinct dimensions: the silent ethnic element that capitalizes on accumulated conflicts and grievances, and moral ethnicity, which encompasses a feeling of honor linked to territorial and cultural identity.

Past cultural heroes like Koitalel Arap Samoei and Dedan Kimathi were also evoked and used to mobilise the two communities. The figure of Koitalel Samoei became more popular because of vernacular radio stations like Kass FM. Kalenjin politicians used his heroism and resistance to colonialism and compared it to resistance against the ICC which was also seen as way of European domination and interference in the political affairs (Maupeau, 2014). During campaigns, Ruto claimed this legacy since he is also called William Samoei Ruto.

Ruto was equated with Samoei, whereas Kenyatta was compared to Dedan Kimathi, who sacrificed his life for the Kikuyu people during the fight for independence. As a result, the narratives of victimhood and the allusions to a fictional history played a significant role in establishing Uhuru and Ruto as heroic figures. They were considered to be legendary figures, destined to lead their people (Maupeau 2014). By electing these heroes, the two communities may envision a shared future of prosperity and prestige, even in times of uncertainty and doubt. Consequently, it became the responsibility of their communities to exert maximum effort in ensuring that the two individuals assume the positions of President and deputy President of the country.

However, Martha Karua and Peter Kenneth, both of Kikuyu ethnicity, faced scrutiny about their strong identification with the Kikuyu community when running for the

presidency of the Republic (Thibon 2014). It was contended that they did not conform to the authentic Kikuyu identity, resulting in a smaller number of Kikuyu individuals voting for them in comparison to those who voted for Uhuru.

References to past historical injustices, struggles, or perceived marginalization of the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities were also invoked by politicians during the campaigns. These served to galvanize support and create a sense of collective purpose among the voters.

6.2.8 Social Networks and Community Structures

Both Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities have well-established social networks and community structures that were effectively utilized for political mobilization. These networks, which include family ties, clan associations, and religious institutions, served as channels for disseminating campaign messages, organizing rallies, and mobilizing voters at the grassroots level. Grassroots mobilization efforts were organized within Kalenjin and Kikuyu-dominated areas, leveraging existing social networks and community structures. Religious leaders, local chiefs, and influential community members played crucial roles in rallying support and disseminating campaign message. The most widely used mode was the social media since majority of the voters could easily access mobile phones.

6.2.9 Promises of Ethnic Representation and Empowerment:

Political parties made promises of ethnic representation and empowerment tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities. Candidates pledged to prioritize the interests of their respective ethnic groups in matters such as resource allocation, political appointments, and development projects, thereby

garnering support based on ethnic identity. Political parties made efforts to ensure that Kalenjin and Kikuyu candidates were prominently represented in their ranks, particularly in leadership positions. This strategy aimed to instil confidence among community members that their interests would be adequately represented in the government if their preferred candidates were elected (Lisege *et al*, (2019). The masses followed their leaders because of the lingering belief that only 'one of your own' can best serve communal interest if placed in a position of power.

In the 2013 elections in Kenya, cultural and ethnic identities played a significant role in political mobilization techniques. This had a strong influence on how voters saw the candidates, formed alliances, and ultimately affected the election results within the Kikuyu and Kalenjin groups. In the 2007 election, Ruto's alliance with Odinga and ODM resulted in 88% of Kalenjin voters supporting him, even though former President Daniel Arap Moi had endorsed Kibaki (Feree *et al* 2014). This demonstrates that there is a correlation between ethnicity and the behavior of certain voters, however it does not apply to all voters. The mobilization and voting behavior of the ethnic community are contingent upon the presence of candidates from various groups, their electability, and the support of influential individuals who align themselves with political parties. In addition, the leadership of ethnic communities can also change based on how the community assesses the capabilities of the primary ethnic mobilizer. Therefore, as the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu had already designated Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto as their future political leaders, they were prepared to support and defend them through any means necessary.

As per Mueller's research in 2022, communities where people of the same ethnic background hold positions of power at all levels tend to receive a greater amount of public goods compared to areas where people of different ethnic backgrounds hold such

positions. Hence, individuals promote their own interests partly for this purpose and to prevent losses such as land, trade licenses, and life. Due to historical instances of political vengeance and violence targeting individuals from different ethnic backgrounds, voters tend to feel more secure when choosing someone from their own ethnic group or at least aligning themselves with a winning coalition that offers protection. Leaders, on the other hand, are afraid of losing power and have been inclined to resort to violence in order to acquire or maintain it, rather than surrendering it to ethnic groups different from their own. The outcome of the Presidential election holds significant importance. Kenya exhibits a statist approach, characterized by a significant degree of economic and political reliance on the state (Mueller, 2022). Even Presidential candidates from the two communities who ran outside of the Jubilee alliance were affected in a manner that exemplified how ethnicity was used by the Tutsi and Hutu populations in Rwanda.

Furthermore, the fortitude and resolve exhibited by the Kenyan populace must not be disregarded when considering the absence of political unrest during the 2013 elections. In spite of the historical repercussions of previous hostilities and the possibility of aggression, the people of Kenya have exhibited a steadfast dedication to harmonious cohabitation and the fundamental tenets of democracy. By actively engaging in the electoral process and firmly rejecting violence as a method of political communication, ordinary Kenyans performed a vital role in protecting the honesty of the polls and maintaining the principles of democracy.

Overall, the strategic utilization of cultural and ethnic identities played a significant role in mobilizing the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities during the 2013 elections in Kenya. By appealing to shared cultural values, traditions, and historical narratives, political leaders sought to strengthen their support base and secure victory at the polls.

6.3 The nexus between the church and Weaponization of political violence

The 2013 elections witnessed the use of religion by politicians as an avenue to the hearts of their constituents. Religion was used to cleanse them, mellow the hearts of their communities to forgive each other, unite the two communities, and make Ruto and Uhuru acceptable in the eyes of their potential voters. In this case, according to Thibon *et al* (2014) religion was used not only as a belief but also as a political resource. Consequently, religion became one of the most important political strategies for gaining legitimacy and political power. During discussions, one FGD also noted the significant role played by the church;

the church played a big role through the NCCCK to bring the Kikuyu and Kalenjin together. Many meetings were held in the North Rift. At one hotel in Kerio Valley, they called at least four meetings and talked about peace with the members of the two parties. The church also stood with the citizens. After the PEV, many churches hosted the PEV victims. NCCCK also helped to bring the principals together. They ensured the principals agreed and after that, the church started spreading the message of peace which reached the citizens on the ground (FGD 3, OI, Turbo 16/06/2022).

In 2012, the inauguration events for the election campaign of Kenyatta and Ruto were likewise conducted within a religious context (Maupeau, 2014). The Deputy Prime Minister, Uhuru Kenyatta, made his candidacy announcement at the NCCCK offices in Limuru. The NCCCK is the primary federation of Protestant churches in Kenya. Anglican Bishop Emeritus Peter Njenga and Methodist Bishop Emeritus Lawi Imathiui have urged the GEMA people (Gikuyu, Embu, Meru) to unite against unfounded allegations made by both internal and external adversaries. The rendezvous of William

Ruto took place at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, where Bishop Korir personally extended his greetings to the attendees. Several pastors, notably Rev. Murupus, addressed the issue and asserted that the Kalenjin community did not plan the 2008 violence. They placed the blame for the conflict solely on Raila Odinga, who refused to accept the election results (Maupeau, 2014). During the election campaign, the Uhuru/Ruto ticket utilized a political strategy that incorporated Christianity. Their goal was to promote the pentecostalization of the national Christian philosophy, demonstrate forgiveness towards their opponents, and pray for peace in the country. Their ultimate objective was to soothe these groups and get their endorsement and votes in order to attain the highest political post in the country.

The effectiveness of the victimization trial and the glorification strategy of Uhuru/Ruto stemmed from the utilization of religious rhetoric by these politicians to express and rally support (Maupeau 2014). In the beginning of 2011, these two lawmakers traveled across the country and participated in "prayer meetings". The group was accompanied by high-ranking religious officials who led prayers, as well as numerous members of parliament, so setting the stage for a potential Uhuru-Ruto partnership. The prayer meetings fostered unity among the Kalenjin and facilitated the Kikuyu in overcoming their social divisions that fragment them (Maupeau 2014). Through the organization of prayer gatherings, Uhuru/Ruto introduced a novel political discourse that merged elements of prophetic teachings with the concept of salvation. Both the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu ethnic groups possess cultural traditions associated with prophetic practices (Anderson, 1995). During periods of ambiguity and vulnerability, spiritual and other prophetic figures arise to elucidate the novel challenges, regulations, and principles that must be adhered to in order to adapt and manage. By beseeching divine intervention to deliver the leaders who have been wrongly convicted, the citizens

themselves are likewise rescued, so addressing their concerns of material, social, and moral uncertainty. Thus, the Jubilee political campaign emerged as a manifestation of prophetic leadership and the deliverance of both the leader and their constituents. Some Kenyans are compelled by the horrific circumstances they encounter to seek solace in public, communal, and familial moralization. Typically, these commitments receive backing from religious organizations, educational establishments, and esteemed figures like elders. During political campaigns, the concept of moralization was expressed through speeches emphasizing the importance of honesty, the candidates' efforts to redeem themselves, and the promotion of desired social behaviors. These ideas were elevated and given a sacred quality through collective prayers and blessings bestowed upon the candidates. Additionally, elders and councils of wisdom in each community would often request highly ceremonial performances to further emphasize these values.

The possibility of peace education was enhanced by the fact that the historically most violent groups, namely the Kikuyu and Kalenjin, were together in the same political alliance, Jubilee. The alliance functioned as a commitment that the militant protocol of the Jubilee coalition was committed to upholding, with a familial balance between the two candidates, as symbolized by the merger of their names in the phrase "Uhuruto" and the logo of a dove with a powerful, underlying meaning. Therefore, by 2011, the duo's moralization resulted in the initiation of unofficial campaigns portraying them as victims of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The prayer campaigns commenced earnestly following the state's submission of the sought documents to the ICC (Thibon, 2014). During these sessions, the leaders utilized adept discourse that did not overtly question international involvement but instead adopted a redemptive theological approach, seeking pardon during each field visit. In addition, they beseeched divine

intervention.

The Jubilee politicians actively engaged in the process of justifying and legitimizing their actions, resulting in a transformation in the political culture. Therefore, the victorious leaders in the political competition are those who were supported by God (Maupeau, 2014). In order to shield themselves from legal action, Kenyan officials sought divine intervention. The concept of invoking God for assistance is rooted in the traditional African religion and, specifically, the Kalenjin faith in an all-powerful supreme being. Hence, in a similar manner to how they sought divine intervention from God in times of great difficulty under the guidance of traditional leaders, they sought divine intervention through the church, firmly believing in the omnipotence of God to assist them in overcoming the hurdles presented by the ICC case and their pursuit of the presidency.

6.3.1 The impact of the ICC case

The 2013 elections in Kenya were characterized by widespread concerns over the weaponization of ethnicity especially in the background of the PEV wherein political actors exploited ethnic identities to garner support and secure power. The International Criminal Court (ICC) case significantly influenced the political landscape in particular regarding the manipulation of ethnic identities. According to Smith (2015), the looming ICC indictments intensified ethnic divisions as political elites mobilized their respective ethnic groups in defense of accused leaders. This resulted in heightened ethnic rhetoric and polarization within the electorate. Johnson (2017) suggests that the ICC case created uncertainty and fear among ethnic communities, leading to increased ethnocentric voting patterns.

Contrary to these arguments, Jones *et al* (2018) argue that the ICC case prompted a degree of moderation in ethnic politics. They contend that the threat of international intervention incentivized political actors to downplay ethnic mobilization tactics and instead focus on broader coalition-building strategies to secure electoral support. By so doing, the case helped to reduce ethnic tensions and polarization between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin to some extent.

This study established that the ICC case acted as sword, cutting on both sides. On one side, just the idea of the case itself acted as a deterrent to politicians and forced them to become very cautious in their political rhetoric as well as their actions, for fear of becoming victims of the ICC. On the other hand, it created ethnic animosity between those communities that were perceived to have sold out the victims of the ICC while protecting their own leaders who were also believed to have been the political roots of the PEV.

The ICC played a very important role in fully coalescing and mobilising the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities to fully support their sons to ensure they ascended to the office of President and deputy President, as one key respondent narrated;

The ICC case united both Ruto and Uhuru as well as their two communities. They knew that if they did not come together, their political survival was at risk. If they were not going to win the elections, they would not have escaped the ICC (Osogo Ambani, OI, 19 Kakamega, 19/06/2022, Kakamega).

These communities were graphically explained to that the only protection for their sons from the Hague depended on their election into the highest offices of the land. Therefore, the involvement of the ICC in Kenya significantly influenced the political landscape. According to Cheeseman and Lynch (2014), the ICC indictments heightened political elites' fears of prosecution, leading them to rally their ethnic bases for protection. This heightened sense of vulnerability, amplified ethnic tensions, as

political leaders framed the ICC as a threat to their respective communities (Cheeseman & Lynch, 2014). Therefore, the 2013 elections in Kenya witnessed a resurgence of ethnic mobilization, largely fueled by the ICC case. This instrumentalization of ethnicity contributed to polarization and violence in some regions, as communities perceived the electoral contest as a zero-sum game (Kanyinga, 2014).

To this end, the weaponization of ethnicity during the 2013 elections was influenced by various factors, with the ICC case playing a significant role in shaping political and ethnic dynamics. The ICC case had a profound impact on the weaponization of ethnicity in the 2013 elections in Kenya. By exacerbating ethnic tensions and providing political elites with a rallying point against perceived external threats, the ICC proceedings reinforced the instrumentalization of ethnicity for political gain.

6.3.1 Role of civil society

The role played by civil society organizations and other non-governmental actors was instrumental in promoting peace and reconciliation in the lead-up to the 2013 elections. Recognizing the potential for violence and conflict, civil society organizations mobilized efforts to promote voter education, peacebuilding, and dialogue among different ethnic and political groups. By fostering inclusive and constructive dialogue, these organizations helped to defuse tensions and build bridges between communities, reducing the likelihood of violence erupting along ethnic lines. Civil society played a crucial role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and fair electoral processes.

One of the primary roles of civil society in the 2013 elections was to monitor and observe the electoral process. Organizations such as the Election Observation Group (ELOG) and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) deployed observers across the country to assess the conduct of elections (Ndung'u, 2014). Their

presence helped to deter electoral malpractices and provided independent assessments of the electoral process.

Civil society organizations played a crucial role in voter education and mobilization efforts. Groups like the Kenya Civil Society Platform on Oil and Gas conducted voter education programs to empower citizens with knowledge about their rights and responsibilities during elections (Afande & Mberia, 2013). These efforts aimed to increase voter turnout and ensure that citizens made informed choices at the ballot box.

Leading up to the 2013 elections, civil society organizations advocated for electoral reforms to address previous shortcomings and enhance the credibility of the electoral process. Organizations such as the Institute for Education in Democracy (IED) engaged in advocacy campaigns for legal and institutional reforms to promote free and fair elections (Mwakio, 2015). Their efforts contributed to the passage of electoral laws aimed at improving the electoral system's integrity. The 2013 elections in Kenya demonstrated the indispensable role of civil society in promoting democratic governance and ensuring credible electoral processes. Through monitoring, voter education, advocacy, and dispute resolution efforts, civil society organizations contributed significantly to the transparency and integrity of the electoral process

6.3.3 Role of media

The media collaborated with government agencies to disseminate messages promoting peace and suppress instances of "hate speech," which had previously played a significant role in inciting violence and unrest. The ruling class effectively organized themselves through the use of "democratic" persuasion, particularly through the media. This allowed them to counter the use of violence or appeals to ethnic identity, which were no longer sufficient to secure victory in elections when former adversaries had formed close alliances (Thibon *et al*, 2014). The utilization of information and

communication technology, supported by the new constitution, played a crucial role in preventing conflicts and maintaining control over the political environment. This led to the alleviation of tensions before, during, and after the elections (Malik 2016; Merino 2014). The media collaborated with government agencies to disseminate messages promoting peace and suppress incendiary speeches. Several radio frequencies were inundated with requests for tolerance, with local radio becoming the primary medium for broadcasting. Ramogi FM, a Luo-language radio station, hosted a peace rally in Mombasa in February 2013. Prior to Election Day, there was a significant increase in the dissemination of messages advocating for tolerance, as seen by Merino (2014). Mainstream stations typically aired music that celebrated nationalistic fervor and promoted harmony amongst different communities. Kameme FM, a prominent radio station that broadcasts in the Kikuyu language, aired a song that implored God for peace among Kenyans, urging them not to engage in conflict with one another. Kass FM, a radio station broadcasting in the Kalenjin language, aired songs promoting the values of neighborly love and forgiveness, even in cases where it may not be reciprocated. In response to the persistent apprehension of violence, various precautionary measures were implemented during the campaign, namely targeting mobile telephone, radio, and social media network operators. These entities had previously disseminated remarks that significantly fueled violence during the 2007 elections. The National Communications Commission of Kenya (NCKK) implemented measures to regulate political communications transmitted over mobile phones. This included mandating network operators to screen and remove content that had the potential to incite violent behavior (Merino 2014). The commission mandated that political parties restrict their text messaging (SMS) to either English or Swahili, effectively excluding numerous

local languages. Focusing on individuals that use social networking platforms, (Ombati, 2013). It is important to be aware that the Kenyan government has declared its intention to monitor the internet and apprehend anyone who disseminate hate speech targeting different communities. These attempts did have a certain influence in tempering the utilization of social media.

Social media has provided political politicians with opportunities to directly interact with voters, which is a departure from typical campaign methods like rallies, billboard advertising, and traditional media outlets. Social media facilitated the exchange of information between candidates and voters (John 2020). It was employed on a broader scale to effectively target a larger number of voters. Certain social media platforms specialize on facilitating communication in users' native languages, particularly within group settings. These communications have the capacity to rapidly disseminate and so reach the intended local recipients. These slogans were employed to rally voters, particularly on election days, in order to ensure that all elements of the community participated in voting.

6.3.4 Land

The unforeseen amalgamation of William Ruto's URP party and Uhuru Kenyatta's TNA party in late 2012 resulted in a significant transformation of the relationship between the two communities. Both individuals redefined their identities by appealing to their respective communities to disregard their disparities and collaborate towards a more prosperous Kenya. Instead of perceiving each other as adversaries, as they had previously done, the pragmatic utilization of ethnicity, which involves leveraging ethnic mobilization for tangible or psychological benefits, proved to be advantageous.

The issue of land remained crucial throughout the campaign period. The majority of individuals from both communities were swept up in a state of intense excitement and openly conveyed their optimism that the political merger of the two communities signaled positive developments, specifically a long-term resolution to the land dispute and the restoration of harmonious relations between the two groups. A significant number of Kikuyu people viewed this as a favorable chance to reclaim their ancestral lands in the expansive Rift Valley and thereby reestablish their status as rightful landowners. (Mwangi, 2014). The Kalenjin viewed this as a favorable occasion for their leader and political representative in the area, Ruto, to persuade Uhuru to engage in negotiations to reclaim their previously lost land from the Kikuyu, without resorting to the use of force.

There is a widespread belief that the UhuRuto 'union' was contingent upon certain conditions. The outcome relied on the adept management of intricate interests and expectations. Initially, there is a belief that Uhuru and Ruto individually shouldered the aspirations, dangers, and anxieties of their own communities. If the two communities stayed unified, they would maintain peace. This presupposition is risky as it assumes that if the two communities were to be in conflict, peace might not be assured. This study may not provide a comprehensive solution to this issue as it is a forecast, which is not the primary focus of historical research.

6.3.5 Role of the elite

Furthermore, the significance of leadership in advocating for a message of peace and healing cannot be emphasized enough. Political leaders from many political ideologies made deliberate steps to moderate inflammatory language and advocate for a message of unity and inclusiveness, indicating a shift away from the competitive and polarizing

politics of previous times. Through their dedication to nonviolent engagement and willingness to embrace the results of the electoral procedure, they established a constructive atmosphere for the country and fostered trust in the democratic system. According to a prominent participant, in 2013, all politicians reached a consensus during a meeting to acknowledge the election results and refrain from inciting violence throughout their campaigns. The statement was made by Osogo Ambani, an individual affiliated with OI, Kakamega, on 19/06/2022.

In 2013, following the occurrence of the post-election violence in 2007-2008, all candidates participating in the 2013 election agreed to a new code of conduct. This code explicitly prohibited acts of violence and fraud. Additionally, the candidates made a solemn pledge to accept the outcome of the election if they were to be defeated (Rawlence, 2013). Almost all candidates participated in a significant gathering at Uhuru Park in the heart of Nairobi, advocating for peaceful elections (Opiyo, 2013. Mwangi, 2014). Their objective was to proactively prevent any recurrence of the violence and to refrain from exacerbating the wounds caused by the recent election. The moderation and caution exhibited by political leaders contributed to the self-control and relaxed mood observed during the national campaign. The determination of political leaders to maintain democratic values and adhere to the rule of law was a crucial factor in ensuring calm behavior during the 2013 elections. In order to acknowledge the possible repercussions of instigating violence and causing instability inside the country, prominent political figures made a public declaration denouncing violence and committing to honor the outcomes of the elections, irrespective of the outcome (Thibon, 2014). The demonstration of diplomatic skill and self-control served to alleviate tensions and establish a favorable atmosphere for peaceful political rivalry.

The active involvement of political leaders in national dialogue programs, which were designed to promote reconciliation and peaceful cohabitation, played a vital role in reducing tensions and minimizing the likelihood of bloodshed. Political leaders participated in productive discussions and actively worked together to resolve fundamental concerns, promoting a sense of collaboration and agreement. Moreover, the active involvement of political leaders in advocating for peace and reconciliation was crucial in diffusing tensions and cultivating a sense of collective harmony. Politicians from many political backgrounds made deliberate efforts to encourage conversation and consensus-building before the elections, acknowledging the destructive effects of political violence on the country's social structure and economic potential.

Regrettably, the international crisis group predicts that the current situation in Kenya may just be a temporary calm before the arrival of the next political upheaval. The absence of a sincere post-election violence (PEV) reconciliation process following the 2007-2008 unrest may have contributed to this, as stated by the International Crisis Group (2022). The Kikuyu and Kalenjin formed an alliance after Jubilee's victory in the 2013 election, which led many to believe that long-standing enemies were on a path towards permanently resolving their conflicts. However, the process of reconciling the Rift Valley region is still only surface-level and lacks depth. The group additionally cautions that the current state is characterized by negative serenity or tranquility. The scars from the past are still far from being fully healed, and the situation in numerous villages with diverse ethnic populations remains highly unstable. The study of the group emphasizes that in certain areas of Uasin Gishu, those who were previously displaced and have since returned to their farms still have concerns about violence associated to elections. Additionally, some of them have made plans to relocate as a precaution.

6.3.6 The 2013 Presidential election petition

According to Okoth and Omenyo (2014), the 2010 constitution included certain election process measures that were based on the recommendations of the Kriegler Report. These encompassed a judicial body known as the supreme court, consisting of seven judges who were authorized to settle disputes pertaining to Presidential elections. In 2011, the selection procedure for the seven judge bench was conducted with an unprecedented level of transparency. The five-member Judicial Service Commission conducted auditions for them and subsequently forwarded their nominations to outgoing President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga. As per the coalition agreement, Kibaki and Odinga were required to reach a consensus on the candidates, and Parliament ultimately approved their choices. The new constitution establishes a rigorous procedure aimed at preventing any allegations of nepotism or favoritism in relation to the nominations for the Supreme Court. Following the declaration of the Presidential election results, CORD lodged a formal protest regarding the outcome with the Supreme Court on 17 March. According to Okoth and Omenyo (2014), Raila delivered a speech on the same day, urging his followers to await the decision of the supreme court. Raila and CORD expressed confidence in the recently established judiciary. CORD was prepared to comply with the belief that it would uphold the rule of law. The recently reestablished Kenya Supreme Court, led by the esteemed attorney Willy Mutunga, considered Odinga's appeal asserting that the election was severely compromised not just by potential corruption, but also by the malfunctioning of the advanced electoral technology that Kenya had implemented (Haberson, 2014). Following four days of vigorous debates, the Court delivered its ruling on 30 March.

Willy Mutunga, the chief justice and President of the supreme court, succinctly and without providing any further details, declared the panel's unanimous decision to uphold Kenyatta's close victory (Thibon, 2014). On March 30, 2013, the Supreme Court affirmed the official results by dismissing the appeal made by CORD. The Supreme Court's decision incited discontent among certain individuals, leading to protests in Kisumu and the Kawangware slum in Nairobi. However, the presence of a robust police force effectively stopped these demonstrations from escalating (Okoth and Omenyo, 2014). Raila Odinga stated that he will acknowledge and accept the judges' verdict, despite expressing his unhappiness with their ruling. He argued that the ruling deprived Kenyans of their right to know the truth about what occurred. The ruling of the supreme court resulted in only sporadic incidents of violence, primarily in Nyanza Province and Nairobi. This was largely due to the calming speeches delivered by Odinga and his political allies after the court's decision, as well as the deterrent atmosphere created by the security forces and the judiciary. Apparently, the modest democratic reforms that were put into place before the election had the effect of weakening Odinga's position. Cheeseman (2014) argues that Odinga faced immense pressure to accept the conclusion of the 2013 process, despite its notable flaws, because numerous crucial democratic institutions had been restructured to align with his specific demands in the preceding years. Merino (2014) agrees that the constitutional reforms made since 2008 played a role in the calm nature of the 2013 elections.

In addition, the endeavors of the political elite also had a role in fostering a peaceful electoral process. Prior to the 2013 elections, the primary contenders for the presidency consistently and collaboratively advocated for peace and intensified their pleas for tolerance throughout the campaigns. Consequently, the 2013 elections concluded with a

state of relative tranquility. In the upcoming election, Uhuru and Raila were the main contenders. The upcoming discussion aims to analyze the factors that influence the political climate and alliances in Kenya. However, it is important to note that these dynamics are subject to change at any time, based on the preferences of the political elite.

6.4 The 2017 elections, political dynamics, and election violence.

The 2017 elections in Kenya were a momentous occasion that attracted significant national and international interest. During this period, the electoral environment in Kenya was shaped by a combination of circumstances and traits, including a history of controversial elections and political upheaval. This portion of the study examined the various complex aspects that influenced the 2017 elections, encompassing historical, socio-economic, political, and technological elements. Additionally, it analyzed the factors that shaped the political dynamics following these elections. The purpose of this section was to clarify how politicians influence their followers to either adopt peaceful or violent reactions by their acts or lack thereof, using the instrumentalist theory. The 2017 elections in Kenya were of great importance, characterized by fierce political rivalry and close examination, both within the country and beyond. In his paper, Maweu (2019) described the 2017 election as remarkable because of its exceptional characteristics and dynamics, which this study also examines. The dynamics and characteristics associated with this election had similarities to the events of 2007, encompassing, among other factors, the advantage enjoyed by incumbents. The Presidential election between President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga was highly competitive and posed significant challenges for stakeholders including as the media, election monitors, and even the IBEAC.

Prior to the 2017 elections, Odinga's ODM party and the other parties that were previously members of the CORD coalition joined up with additional parties to become the National Super Alliance (NASA). The newly formed coalition endorsed Odinga as the Presidential candidate and Musyoka as the candidate for deputy President. President Uhuru Kenyatta, being the current officeholder, had the privilege of seeking re-election for a second and last term in accordance with the constitution. Uhuru represented the Jubilee party, serving as the deputy to William Ruto, with whom he had a successful campaign in 2013. Existing officeholders frequently possess an edge in electoral contests as a result of their familiarity to the public, ability to utilize resources, and authority over governmental institutions. Cheeseman *et al* (2019) criticizes the tendency of the current officeholder to exploit state resources, authorities, and media restrictions for personal gain during election campaigns. The Kenyatta government promoted its achievements in infrastructural development and economic growth during its campaign.

Raila Odinga contested the presidency for the fourth time, spearheading the National Super Alliance (NASA). Raila Odinga was widely seen as making his final and most determined effort to win the presidency, following three previous unsuccessful efforts. Odinga's campaign centered on key concerns including corruption, inequality, and the cost of living. The elections were of such great significance that Maweu (2019) described them as a matter of utmost importance and urgency for the two candidates who had a long-standing history of rivalry.

The alliance between President Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto, played a crucial role in ensuring peace between the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities in the Rift Valley. This was particularly significant in Uasin Gishu, which had been the center of post-election violence in 2007/8 and earlier instances of election-related violence in the

1990s (Mutahi and Ruteere, 2019). According to Linke (2019), the decrease in violent disputes in Kenya can be attributed to a process that determines where and when violence occurs.

Communities such as the Luo and others who have not held governmental office have, in many cases, less incentive to gain from violence than do communities like the Kikuyu and Kalenjin. As a result, when the previous leaders Kenyatta and Ruto formed an alliance, the intense political tensions in Kenya decreased significantly. Another participant concurred when he elucidated the causes behind the absence of violence: "There was a dearth of violence due to our elation over our electoral victory." According to Joseph Koech, a source from OI on June 16, 2023, there was no need for violence because the number of people supporting Raila was small. Thus, based on this assertion, the Kalenjin community was satisfied because Ruto, their fellow member, remained in the administration as a potential President, eliminating the need for any violent actions.

The influence of ethnic and regional dynamics has consistently been prominent in Kenyan politics, and this was again the case in the 2017 elections. Both Kenyatta and Odinga garnered support from their respective ethnic constituencies. While Kenyatta and Ruto were targeting the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities for support, Odinga and Kalonzo relied on the backing of the Luo community and other communities within their coalition. Abomo (2021) recognizes that ethnicity is a highly influential factor in predicting voter behavior in Kenya. Therefore, the leading candidates, Kenyatta and Raila, were guaranteed to receive a minimum of 80 percent of votes from their respective communities.

Prior to the 2017 elections, there were demands for electoral reforms to tackle concerns over transparency and equity. Nevertheless, disagreements emerged over the trustworthiness of the election procedure, encompassing accusations of voter fraud and abnormalities in the electronic voting system (Kanyinga and Odote 2019). Prior to the announcement of the results, Odinga and other members of NASA had consistently voiced their concerns about electoral fraud. The (Carter Report 2018; Mutahi and Ruteere (2019) indicate that the pre-election period involved a voter registration process that was reasonably sufficient but had certain flaws. The opposition readily exploited these streams to persuade their supporters that the elections would not be conducted in a free and fair manner. The period leading up to the elections was consequently characterized by tension and intense rhetoric, especially from NASA and President Kenyatta's Jubilee Party. NASA often asserted that the Jubilee-led administration had intentions to manipulate the polls.

In contrast to the overall absence of significant political violence during the 2017 elections, there were isolated incidents of unrest in Nairobi and Uasin Gishu. Prior to the voting date, several individuals residing in diverse regions like as Nairobi, Uasin Gishu, Eldoret, Nakuru, and other cosmopolitan towns in the Rift Valley region started to vacate their homes in order to settle in areas where their ethnic group constituted the majority (Mutahi and Ruteere 2019; Kahura in "The Elephant" 2017). In reality, certain voters relocated their voting locations in order to cast their votes in their respective ethnic residences. The return to ancestral houses was prompted by the apprehension of encountering election-related violence reminiscent of the incidents that occurred in the 1990s, 2007, and 2008. Politicians often incite political tensions by exploiting historical grievances regarding land ownership and by excluding "outsiders" (i.e., members of ethnic groups not native to the region) from participating in local politics. These

tensions can escalate into violence. This was best illustrated by one respondent who stated that;

In 2017 one Luhya stood for elections as MP in Turbo. He was a Luhya but people liked him. The politicians told us not to allow a stranger to lead us in our land because everything, all the resources will disappear to other areas, and we will not get anything if we vote for him. So we were told it is better we even vote for our own even if it was a woman, and she passed (Ali Kemboi, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/2021).

In Uasin Gishu, several leaders issued threats against individuals they believed to be "aliens" and suspected of intending to vote for candidates who had not received the endorsement of the local community. In "The Elephant" (2017), Kahura states that following the chaotic and intense Jubilee Party nominations in April, the competition for the Uasin Gishu County governor's position narrowed down to a clash between Jackson Mandago and Zedekiah Bundotich Kiprop, also known as Buzeki, who posed a threat to Mandago's hold on the seat. Mandago criticized the Buzekis supporters, who were mostly outsiders like the Kikuyu. In "The Elephant" (2017), Kahura recognizes that Mandago employed the tactic of framing the situation as a "us versus them" narrative in order to defend against Buzeki, referring to Buzeki's supporters as "aliens". Mandago and his supporters initiated a campaign of intimidation and issued a warning to anyone not affiliated with them, stating that they must either comply by voting for Mandago or leave the county (Kahura in "The Elephant" 2017). The majority of the aliens in Eldoret town and its surrounding satellites, such as Turbo, were primarily the Kikuyu people.

According to the International Crisis Group (2022), countries that have a diverse ethnic composition are particularly susceptible to election-related incidents. In Nakuru, a significant hotspot during the 2007-2008 period where the overwhelming Kikuyu population coexists with a substantial Kalenjin minority, a pre-2013 election agreement

potentially prevented a confrontation. A Kikuyu governor and his Kipsigis running mate became victorious in the election, with the two communities proportionately sharing county executive roles. However, during the Jubilee Party primaries in April 2017, it was reported that unknown individuals circulated fliers that contained threats of eviction against the Kikuyu community if the county did not elect a governor who was believed to have the backing of the Kalenjin community. In 2013, the Kikuyu community perceived that they were not treated fairly in Uasin Gishu, where the Kalenjin community held the majority. As a result, they made the decision to demand improved representation in Uasin Gishu through the position of deputy governor and/or a national assembly member for the Turbo constituency, where they had a sizable population; but, as one respondent informed this study, this was not feasible;

Non Kalenjins cannot be voted for unless its an MCAs seat. To become a governor, senator, women representative, or member of parliament you cannot go through unless you are a Kalenjin. Infact, for governor, senator, and women rep, you must be a Kalenjin from Uasin Gishu. They say if elected, other people may take the resources away from the Kalenjin yet the Kalenjin are the majority (Zipporah Wapukha.OI,20/06/2022, Turbo)

According to the International Crisis Group (2022), there was a significant risk of unrest in counties where local communities expressed grievances over the presence of "non-locals," referring to ethnic groups who settled in regions already claimed by a dominant local population, during the 2017 election. An illustrative instance occurred in Narok, where the elections of 1992 and 1997 were tainted by acts of violence with the intention of forcibly removing the Kikuyu community. Prior to the 2017 elections, the Maasai community expressed their concerns regarding the Kipsigis group, which constitutes a significant minority in the area. The Kipsigis were perceived as supporting a gubernatorial candidate who was believed by many residents to not prioritize Maasai

interests.

While devolution successfully mitigated the excessive consolidation of power in the presidency, the International Crisis Group (2022) argues that it inadvertently led to unforeseen repercussions that could escalate ethnic conflicts. One such consequence is the heightened competition among local communities, resulting in some feeling disadvantaged. Furthermore, as the importance of municipal roles grew, electoral competitions became more intense and polarizing. Overall, there was an increase in competitiveness between different ethnic groups within counties, as well as between other counties, for resources and political representation leading up to the August 2017 elections. This heightened competition posed a risk of renewed local instability and bloodshed. Thankfully, the majority of these sensitive issues were resolved by assemblies of experienced individuals.

In several multi-ethnic counties, like as Uasin Gishu, which faced the risk of inter-ethnic conflicts, the councils of elders played a crucial role in mitigating ethnic tensions. Following a political elite's derogatory comments about individuals from outside the region, hate fliers were subsequently distributed in Uasin Gishu. In order to mitigate the situation, the leaders of all the communities in Uasin Gishu, headed by the chairman of the Kalenjin council of elders, made a concerted effort to condemn the act and alleviate the heightened ethnic tensions. The elders emphasized the necessity of instilling peaceful cohabitation among all communities. Additionally, they emphasized to the citizens of Uasin Gishu that they own the entitlement to dwell in the county and endorse any political party without facing any form of persecution. The Uasin Gishu council of elders made significant efforts to promote peaceful coexistence despite various hurdles presented by the ruling elite. According to a report from Kenyan news on 21 August 2018, the Kalenjin council of elders expressed strong

disapproval of the current Uasin Gishu governor for organizing a traditional war ritual in Eldoret. The governor led a group of young people in this ritual as a form of protest against the failed Jubilee Party primaries. The battle ritual consisted of the participants repeatedly crouching and standing up, while vocalizing an oath that was supposed to function as a war cry. The war cry's performance had inspired terror in residents of other villages, causing some to prepare to flee due to concerns for their safety. Individuals in the general population who perceived and comprehended the distress signal hastily departed due to apprehension of potential civil disorder.

On August 8, 2017, Kenyans participated in an election to choose new leaders for the upcoming five years, ranging from the President to the member of county assembly. The Carter Report 2018 concludes that inter-ethnic violence levels were generally low throughout the country, except for significant levels of police violence observed in the opposition districts of Nyanza, Nairobi, and Western. As a result, the elections conducted on August 8, 2017, were predominantly calm. While the overall assessment of the election day was calm, the aftermath was marked by tensions stemming from Raila's reluctance to accept the election results due to allegations of electoral fraud. From an economic standpoint, the post-election deadlock and political maneuvering nearly caused the country to collapse. Raila's rejection of the elections appears to be primarily rooted in what (Maweu 2019) describes as propaganda, deception, misinformation, and other similar narratives that had been circulating for a considerable period of time, particularly in the months leading up to the polls. The dissemination of false information escalated during and after the elections and was amplified by both political factions. Maweu (2019) agrees that the time leading up to, during, and following the 2017 general elections in Kenya saw a rise in individuals generating false information, who were hired by the primary political

alliances, Jubilee and NASA.

Disinformation refers to the deliberate dissemination of incorrect information with the intention of causing harm. Misinformation refers to the sharing of erroneous information without any intention to cause harm, while mal-information is the deliberate sharing of true information with the intention to cause harm, generally by disclosing private information to the public. Mutahi (2020) highlights that social media played a dual role during the elections. On one hand, it facilitated the dissemination of crucial information. On the other hand, it was utilized to propagate false information with the primary aim of influencing voters, instilling fear and panic, and occasionally undermining the credibility of the independent institutions responsible for overseeing the elections. In the 2017 elections, the peril of false information resided in the phenomenon of social media magnifying human intention, encompassing both positive and negative aspects. At its optimal state, it enables individuals to articulate their thoughts and engage in proactive measures, while at its most detrimental state, it facilitates the dissemination of false or misleading information and undermines democratic principles (Bagade *et al.*, 2020). Truth was the initial victim in this era characterized by widespread distortion and misdirection.

Mutahi (2020) posits that the dissemination of false information during the 2017 elections had three primary purposes, given the significant consequences associated with the electoral process. Firstly, to exert an impact on voter choices. Furthermore, the objective is to tarnish the reputation of the judiciary, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), and its important individuals. Furthermore, to intensify the level of anxiety, uncertainty, and aggression throughout the electoral period. Even if the information was later proven to be false, it nonetheless increased

tensions and confusion among the population, and posed a threat to the country's internal security. The electorate readily succumbed to some information due to its skillful presentation. Nanjira (2017) observes that the counterfeit news stories and videos displayed CNN, BBC, and even NTV Kenya logos. Subsequently, this material was widely distributed and circulated on many social media sites. Hence, the pre-election and post-election atmosphere had already been tainted to a certain degree by the dissemination of false information, resulting in heightened anxiety and uncertainty, particularly in areas where the opposition had strong support. This was primarily due to the proliferation of misleading narratives on social media, which claimed the occurrence of election irregularities and presented unofficial election results that differed from the official ones.

This scenario could have contributed to nationwide political violence but fortunately the violent protests witnessed during the 2017 elections were mainly localized to few opposition strongholds, and parts of the capital city. It is therefore important to discuss why the tensions experienced in the aftermath of the 2017 elections, never transformed into full-blown political violence.

6.4.1 Factors and dynamics that quelled political and ethnic tensions in the aftermath of 2017 elections.

The nature of political violence witnessed in 2017 was not ethnicized or akin to the weaponisation of ethnicity which resulted in dire political violence in the 1990s or 2007/2008. This was due to a few dynamics which had either changed, came into play, or were taken into account by the political elite. Some of these circumstances included but were not limited to; Odinga's decision to petition the results, maintenance of the Jubilee alliance, the impact of devolution, lessons learnt from the ICC, national and local peace efforts, the role of the constitution, and the post-election handshake between

Uhuru and Raila. Of these factors, the previous section of this study had already discussed the roles of devolution, ICC, peace efforts and the constitution.

After the declaration of Presidential results for the elections which were cast on eighth of August 2017, different parts of the country and communities received and reacted diversely based on their political inclinations. The supporters of the incumbent, Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto his deputy were ecstatic while those of the Opposition leader Raila Odinga and his deputy Kalonzo Musyoka were visibly disappointed. One respondent from Turbo stated that;

When other people in Nyanza were disappointed, in Uasin Gishu majority of our people, infact, ninety percent were all out in the streets celebrating. We were very happy because our people had won the elections. We were now going to have a big say in government and also benefit for voting well (Keter Julius, OI, Turbo, 21/07/2021)

As Uhurus supporters went out to the street to celebrate, those of Raila kept indoors but few went out to the streets to protest against the same results. *The Human Rights Watch* (2017) reported the fact that three days after the announcement of Uhuru's victory, opposition supporters in parts of western Kenya, Nairobi, Nyanza, and Coast protested calling out for the removal of President Uhuru. These protesters were ruthlessly dealt with by the police leading to the death of 24 people.

The violence mostly impacted opposition areas and did not involve retaliatory attacks on neighboring towns. Contrary to past elections, Mutahi and Ruteere (2019) assert that inter-ethnic violence did not pose a substantial issue, despite the divided atmosphere and concerns that politicians would manipulate gangs and militias to incite bloodshed. Moreover, the International Criminal Court's engagement between 2009 and 2016 seemed to have made politicians more careful, fearing that the Court may initiate new investigations in case of any violent incidents.

Surprisingly it was the police who were implicated in deadly attacks against opposition protesters. A respondent reiterated that “in that election, there was no violence but police brutality mostly in Western and Nyanza” (Osogo Ambani, OI,20/06/2022, Kakamega). The Human Rights Watch (2017) further reported that the police responded to opposition protests with high levels of violence and repression, sometimes firing live ammunition at unarmed protesters. The political protests could have continued for some time had Raila and his NASA brigade not made the decision to petition the Presidential elections.

Odinga and NASA lodged an election petition in the supreme court on August 18th, urging for the annulment of the Presidential election due to numerous irregularities (Human Rights Watch 2017; Human Rights Watch 2018; Cheeseman *et al* 2019; Kanyinga and Odote 2019; Maweu 2019; Githigaro 2023). The Supreme Court, through a majority judgment, declared the Presidential elections null and void. The Supreme Court's ruling, declared on September 1, concurred with Odinga and NASA's assertion that the Presidential election was tainted by irregularities. The court further decreed that a fresh election must be conducted within a period of 60 days. The ruling was perceived as a triumph for Odinga, leading to celebrations among him and his followers (Cheeseman *et al* 2019). Odinga commended the Supreme Court's ruling as a groundbreaking event, being the first instance in Africa when a court invalidated a Presidential election. The decision came as a surprise to many.

During the whole process of the petition, Raila's supporters stopped the violent protests and calmly awaited the decision of the supreme court. This was due to the address Raila had given to the Nation (Cheeseman *et al* 2019). In the address, he implored his followers to give the judicial system a chance so solve the electoral dispute. He also

assured them that he had confidence of getting a fair judgement from the judiciary. Therefore, the decision by Odinga and NASA to petition the elections, and the Supreme Court's subsequent nullification of the Presidential vote, played a role and temporarily reduced tensions that had built up after the opposition rejected the 8th August elections. Unfortunately, after the nullification of the Presidential election, NASA, led by Raila boycotted the repeat elections, an action that led to the buildup of political tensions and anxiety in the country once more.

6.4.2 The aftermath of the election petition ruling

In as much NASA accepted and lauded the nullification of the 2017 Presidential elections, they also set up conditions to be met by both the government and IEBC for them to participate in the repeat Presidential elections which were to take place within 60 days as per the orders of the supreme court. These new demands by the NASA brigade, their call for civil disobedience, frequent protests and Odinga's swearing in as the peoples President resulted into a second political impasse that was only alleviated through the famous handshake between Uhuru and Raila.

On September 12th NASA had issued a list of what it deemed to be "irreducible minimums." These were purported issues from the previous election that the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) had to rectify in order for the National Super Alliance (NASA) to partake in the upcoming election. NASA conducted frequent rallies in front of the IEBC offices and other locations to exert pressure on the organization to implement the desired modifications (Namwaya 2018). On October 10th, Odinga declared his withdrawal from the October 26 election re-run due to his lack of confidence in the IEBC's efforts to adequately resolve NASA's

concerns regarding the next poll. Odinga ultimately decided to abstain from participating in the re-run election due to doubts over the reliability of the electoral procedure and advocating for improvements in the electoral system. The question at hand was to the underlying factors that led to Odinga's decision to boycott. A key respondent opined that;

By that time, Raila was already talking to Uhuru even before the election petition. He was petitioning to strengthen his bargaining power. Therefore, he was not actually interested in the re-run. Secondly, Raila did not have money to campaign a second time because campaigns are costly. Thirdly, he might have thought he did not have the numbers. Fourthly, he did not trust the IEBC and that if there was no reform of IEBC, there was no need for re-election. Fifth, Raila wanted to discredit the President and the elections by swearing himself in and engaging in demonstrations. His plan was to ensure the President did not have legitimacy and would always be a lame duck or a weak President. This will make the President want to negotiate or help him get some form of agreement. That is what Raila was banking on (Osogo Ambani, OI, Kakamega 19/06/2022,).

Essentially, the respondent proposed that Raila's election petition and the events leading up to it were carefully planned to ensure that even if he lost the elections, he would still be included in the administration. Despite Raila's reluctance to participate in the re-run, the elections proceeded and Kenyatta emerged as the victor, securing almost 98 percent of the vote. Regrettably, Odinga's decision to boycott the elections tarnished this triumph.

Prior to the re-run, there was a notable increase in political tensions and occurrences of violence, particularly in areas where the opposition had considerable support. Namwaya (2018) emphasizes that, just like the August elections, the repeat elections were characterized by violent demonstrations, fatalities, and physical assaults in significant opposition strongholds located along the coast, as well as in the western and eastern regions of Kenya. Police in these regions once again employed disproportionate force on demonstrators in places known for their strong opposition, leading to multiple

fatalities and injuries. According to Laakso & Kariuki (2023), the continuous protests and conflicts between opposition supporters and security personnel have caused worries about the stability of the country. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Zimbabwe and Sierra Leone, among other African countries, have also encountered fatal electoral violence.

Despite Kenyatta's successful re-election, the political schisms and resentments resulting from the election continued. Regrettably, Odinga declared the election to be fraudulent and reiterated his demand for a new election to take place within a period of 90 days. In addition, he unveiled a range of prospective initiatives, such as implementing economic boycotts and organizing peaceful demonstrations, to advocate for a new election (Cheeseman *et al.*, 2019). These statements put him and his followers on a direct collision course with the administration. A significant confrontation between the government and Odinga was about to take place.

According to NASA's interpretation of the election results, which indicated that Raila had emerged as the winner, Odinga was inaugurated as the "people's President" of Kenya on January 30th, 2018, during a large gathering of NASA supporters. Subsequently, the government officially classified the National Resistance Movement (NRM), which is the resistance arm of NASA, as a criminal organization. The NRM, which would spearhead the campaign of civil disobedience and economic boycotts, was initiated on the day preceding the October 2017 election (Namwaya 2018; Cheeseman and Kanyinga 2019). Subsequent to the establishment of NRM, there was a severe suppression of politicians and attorneys who participated in Odinga's swearing-in event. In addition, there were also fatal clashes between NASA supporters and the police in the subsequent days.

Omulo (2023) demonstrates that both sides came up with strategies in this contestation. In their bid to win in this contest for power, the Odinga's side did the following; created the National Resistance Movement and the People's Assembly; increased secessionist calls; and even made Raila the peoples President in a mock swearing-in. The government on the other hand, engaged in efforts to frustrate the oppositions plans by; using the security forces who ruthlessly tried to disperse opposition supporters in any gathering whether peaceful or not; harassing the media and even shutting down TV stations for almost a week and blatantly disregarding court orders. The country was therefore on the brink of an economic standstill, and the situation impacted negatively on the government. Therefore, something had to be done to bring back normalcy.

Efforts were made to initiate political dialogue and reconciliation to address the underlying issues and prevent future electoral crises to no avail. Overall, the 2017 elections in Kenya reflected the complex political landscape of the country, with deep-seated ethnic and regional divisions, contested electoral processes, and challenges to democratic governance.

The fact that NASA boycotted the elections after the landmark ruling begged the question as to the real motive of the petition. Erlich *et al* (2019) question the motives of election petitioners such as NASA and its leader Raila Odinga. In fact, Erlich *et al* argue that not all petitioners are genuine in their desire to remedy perceived electoral fraud and irregularities. The reasons for petitioning elections might range from using the courts to strategically shift blame for electoral defeat, to bolstering future electoral prospects, or even negotiating for government jobs. The handshake between Raila and Uhuru could be interrogated in this light.

6.5 How the Handshake and BBI, re-shaped ethnic relations and political alignments in the run up to 2022 elections.

The period following the repeat election was characterised by a state where some of the most crucial social, economic and political institutions and organs were either fractured, or greatly impeded. This situation had been brought about by incessant political confrontations. The unending street protests, and political unrest threatened crucial actors in the democratic process including the courts, civil society, journalists, NGOs among others. By impairing Kenya's crucial democratic institutions, these incidences resulted into a deeply fractured country. The Carter Center Report (2018) expressed regret for the current situation and emphasized that the political leaders of Kenya must have the guts and the foresight to put genuine dialogue and reconciliation first, prioritize these actions, and take decisive action to advance Kenyans' collective interest in inclusive governance, putting aside narrow and partisan interests. The two former leaders replied by participating in covert negotiations, which ultimately resulted in the "handshake" - an event that held immense importance during that period. The "handshake" refers to the political accord and symbolic act of reconciliation that took place in March 2018 between President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga. The handshake was a significant occurrence (Abade *et al* 2022). In what ways was the handshake such a grand gesture in relation to political violence, and weaponisation of ethnicity? Although the general feeling was that the handshake healed the divided Kenya, and created peace and unity (FGD3, OI,Turbo,16/06/22). There were also some different perceptions from some communities;

Uhuru benefitted, because he realised Raila had disturbed him for so long, so many things had stagnated. So Uhuru realised that for him to leave a good legacy, since it was his last term in office, he should call Raila, so that they discuss a few things. Bringing in Raila hurt Ruto and brought hatred between them and Ruto. But Ruto had already organised himself. He had already gotten hold of Central and all the MPs. Therefore, everyone was against the President. So the people just

listened to Raila but they knew that in two years' time, Uhuru will exit and they will elect the person they wanted; Ruto (FGD3, OI, Turbo, 16/06/22).

The handshake had several impacts on shaping political dynamics in the country and caused political realignments. Kisaka and Nyadera (2019) reiterate that the historic handshake provided another unique opportunity for de-ethnicising Kenya's politics and strengthening the existing institutions. The handshake effectively diffused political tensions that had escalated after the contentious 2017 elections. It signaled a willingness on both sides to move past the acrimony of the electoral process and pursue a more cooperative approach to governance as well the shiftiness of political alliances and ethnic dynamics in Kenyan politics.

The electoral competition in the country has typically been characterized by loose coalitions that are centered around individual political leaders. These leaders have pledged to deliver votes from their respective ethno-regional strongholds in exchange for political positions and access to state resources since the country's transition to multiparty democracy in the early 1990s (Brechenmacher & Sambuli 2022). Due to the absence of any ethnic group having a majority in national elections and the lack of strong organizational structure in Kenyan political parties, political leaders frequently attain power by making personal agreements in private. These politically expedient marriages often disintegrate once they have fulfilled their electoral objectives, as evidenced by the recent dissolution of the Jubilee Party. During periods of political turmoil, this form of negotiation has been effective in mitigating polarization. The Jubilee alliance, formed in 2013, successfully united the two opposing communities that were at the heart of the electoral turmoil in 2007-2008. Similarly, the recent agreement between Kenyatta and Odinga resolved the division caused by the 2017 election.

The "handshake" in March 2018, which concluded months of political brinksmanship, appears to have stemmed from a longstanding trend of elite negotiations, a characteristic often observed in Raila Odinga and other African political leaders, as argued by Cheeseman *et al.* (2019). According to some individuals, the handshake portrayed President Uhuru and ODM leader Raila as accountable and devoted leaders who were willing to take decisive actions to avert the turmoil that may have resulted in a state of lawlessness in the country (Omulo 2023). By exchanging handshakes, they symbolized their willingness to sacrifice their individual interests in order to promote peace and serve the nation.

The handshake helped tone down political activities and pacified political differences between Kenyans (*Horn Policy Brief*, May 2018) and resulted in restoring a peaceful environment (KHCR 5/3/2021). The handshake also played a crucial role in resolving the political animosity that had plagued the country before the handshake. The handshake had a beneficial effect on the perception of Kenyans. Kenyans started to view their former political adversaries in a positive light once more. They also valued the change brought about by the occurrence. The political animosity between the two leaders and their supporters ceased to exist as they started viewing each other as friends. The strong relations were further solidified when the two leaders committed to collaborating in order to tackle issues related to ethnic division, corruption, and historical injustices.

Kenyatta and Odinga conveyed a strong message of national unity and reconciliation by uniting despite their political disagreements. The handshake was perceived as a symbolic gesture with the intention of promoting unity among Kenya's heterogeneous ethnic and political factions. According to the Horn Policy brief (2018), President Kenyatta and Hon. Raila Odinga publicly apologized and sought forgiveness from each

other during a meeting of political, business, and religious leaders from all over the country. They also reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate in order to reconcile a divided Kenya. As reported by the BBC on July 28, 2022, the handshake between the Luo and Kikuyu communities helped reduce tensions. However, it had a significant impact on the relations between the Kalenjin and Luo communities. The Kalenjin perceived the Luo as disruptors for their attempts to prevent Ruto from becoming the next President.

Consequently, the act of shaking hands resulted in a reconfiguration of political and ethnic affiliations and interactions in Kenya. It resulted in the emergence of a novel political terrain where long-standing opponents discovered shared interests, while simultaneously giving rise to divisions within established political alliances and parties. A critic expressed disapproval of the handshake, stating that it had a negative impact on Ruto, as he was displeased with Uhuru for including Raila in the government. Uhuru and Ruto's relationship deteriorated due to Raila's interference. An important consequence of the handshake was the improvement of relations between the President and his deputy, William Ruto, who first opposed it (People Daily, 9th March 2022). The deputy President appeared to be the most significant victim of the handshake (Lang'at, 2020). Ruto perceived it as a strategy to impede his candidacy for the Presidential election in 2022 (KHCR 5/3/2021). As a result, it seemed that Raila and Ruto switched positions, with Raila, previously a dedicated opponent of the government, now defending it, while Ruto, who was meant to be the President's main assistant, became a champion of the opposition. Therefore, the act of shaking hands had both positive and negative consequences for politicians. It negatively affected the success of certain politicians and caused harm to other individuals, while simultaneously propelling others to achieve greater success in their political careers.

These conditions raised the question of who, amongst the politicians and the population, were the intended beneficiaries of the handshake. Why did the handshake, which aimed to restore a favorable socioeconomic environment for citizens to carry out their daily activities without security threats and political instability, cause conflict between the President and his deputy and become a source of discord for certain politicians? The solution can be found in the political ramifications of the handshake and the utilitarian characteristics of the political ruling class. Observers note that Uhuru benefited from a conducive working environment, which prevented the country from facing an economic crisis. This also earned him international recognition for successfully avoiding a potentially dangerous situation after the election. On the other hand, Raila has been seen as a major beneficiary who effectively utilized this environment to advance his Presidential aspirations. Conversely, William Ruto perceived the handshake as a threat to his political aspiration of becoming the President, since it united Uhuru with Raila. The handshake also attracted global attention and was widely embraced by the international community as a favorable advancement for Kenya's political stability and democracy. However, the BBC story on April 9, 2018 did not dispute the good features of the handshake. Instead, it raised concerns about how individuals who had losses, property devastation, death, or injury in past political violence should respond to the handshake. Due to the lack of justice or recompense, it may have been difficult for these victims to accept the handshake, as they saw it as advantageous for the leaders. Overall, the handshake between Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga concluded a period of ambiguity and turmoil. Furthermore, this event held great importance for a nation that had actively tried to distance itself from the prevalent inter-ethnic conflicts. It

played a crucial part in influencing the political landscape of Kenya by fostering a sense of national cohesion, encouraging open discussions, implementing reforms to tackle long-standing grievances, and enhancing democratic governance.

The handshake resulted in the foundation of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), a task force with the purpose of resolving fundamental challenges of governance, inclusion, and decentralization in Kenya. The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) introduced constitutional modifications and policy measures to tackle enduring political grievances and foster national unity.

6.5.1 The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) and its implications on the ethnic and political dynamics

Following the 9th of March 2018 “handshake” between President Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, the President appointed a task force to document and recommend policy reforms on the core challenges threatening Kenya’s national unity (*Aljazeera* 30 Nov 2019; Onguny 2020). Omulo (2023) reiterates that the BBI was tasked with inquiring into and making recommendations about nine areas that Kenyatta and Odinga had perceived to be crucial to the effort to “create a united nation for current and future generations. Consequently, the members of the task force met with citizens from all over the country in the bid to identify some of the country’s greatest political challenges and recommend solutions.

During the launch of BBI, the President admitted that all Kenyans have the tendency to be ethnic based. Infact, he further explained that all leaders, including himself, used nationalist rhetoric in the advancement of individual political interests (*The East African* 5/11/2022). By this admission the President spoke out against one of Kenyans

greatest anathema, and a vice that has also become a conundrum since independence; ethnicity.

The BBI report contained the alleged main challenges that bedevilled Kenyans and also offered tentative resolutions. These included; lack of a national ethos; responsibilities and rights of citizenship; ethnic antagonism and competition; divisive elections; inclusivity; shared prosperity; corruption; devolution; and safety and security (Building Bridges Initiative 2019; Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHCR) 5/3/2021). Of these, lack of inclusivity, divisive elections, and ethnic antagonism were considered of more significance to this study in that they had an impact on weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence. But, how did the BBI affect the political and ethnic dynamics leading to the 2022 elections?

Ethnic division has been noted as one of the biggest challenges in Kenya since independence (KHCR 5/3/2021). The relationship between various communities seems to deteriorate with time and has always been a narrative of us against them; (Building Bridges Initiative 2019). Communities have antagonized one another and are often in unhealthy competition. Therefore, President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga sought to urge Kenyans to engage in healthy competition devoid of ethnic profiling. The gist of Ogun's (2020) argument was that in the vote-rich regions of Kenya, ethnicity had always played important political role during elections. Regions such as Luo Nyanza, Kalenjin Rift Valley, Kikuyu Central and Luhya Western have suffered from the whims of the political elite who seem to have the power to sway these vote rich regions according to their political whims by calling upon the ethnic card.

In fact, according to the BBI report, Kenyans feel Kenyan in between elections when political competition and the use of ethnicity as an organizing tool are at rest (Obiero,

Tuko News ,2019; Building Bridges Initiative 2019). Regarding ethnic antagonism and competition, BBI recommended that a winner-take-all model of the Presidency should be replaced with a more consociation model that works best for ethnically divided societies (Building Bridges Initiative 2019). Oguny (2022) therefore, envisages the BBI as a potential solution to ethnic rivalries and electoral clientelism often at the center of political campaigns.

On divisive elections, the report indicates that in the rush to adopt, and even mimic, foreign models, particularly from the democratic West, Kenyans had forged politics that were a Contest of us versus them. Ultimately, Kenyans had always been wired to choose our 'us' and 'them' on an ethnic basis, especially in competing for the Presidency, which is the highest office in Kenyan politics (Building Bridges Initiative 2019). Elections had become emotive affairs due to ethnic polarization. Consequently, the cycle of elections had unfortunately tended to be accompanied by violence. In corroborating the link between emotive elections and ethnicity, Oguny (2020) notes that once ethnicity became more than an expression of cultural identity and got connected to social status, it determined people's fortunes in life and became politicized with grave consequences. The country gets almost crippled during campaigns and even long after the election exercise is completed. This had periodically threatened investments, economic activities as well as human life. Divisive elections had cost Kenyans their jobs and livelihoods, and the ethnic polarization was not suitable for development. With the help of BBI, Kenya was to be able to overcome the negative cycle by understanding that in itself, an election was not the solution to the national challenges (Obiero, Tuko News ,2019). Most importantly, adherence to the constitution and the laws of the land would go a long way in bringing an end to ethnic antagonism and profiling while promoting inclusivity, devolution, and transparency.

On inclusivity, “the Taskforce found that Kenyans, at core, interpreted inclusivity in very political terms as ‘who gets what, when and how,’ and focused on the authoritative allocation of resources and values” (Obiero, Tuko News ,2019). Inclusivity had been identified as one of the biggest challenges Kenyans faced. Diversity had been used to divide the country instead of uniting it. Kenyans were separated by geographical location, language, and religion, among other things. Many parts of Kenya felt left out and alienated by the significant communities, especially those that had been in leadership positions. BBI was tasked to ensure that public institutions were accountable and impactful to all Kenyans at the national and county levels.

The BBI was touted as a pro-peace political settlement that would end the cyclic pattern of election violence. The BBI proponents contended that the prevailing political setup promoted the “winner-takes-all” rationality that had increased electoral stakes, political competition and inter-ethnic antagonisms (Oguny 2020). Regarded as a structural solution to the sources of economic marginalisation, ethnic clientelism and rent-seeking practices, the BBI was envisioned as a response to historical injustices that had characterised Kenya’s socio-economic structures because “no country had progressed based on such disparities – including corruption, exclusion, increasing poverty, hunger, unemployment and persistent inequalities, while lacking a common national character” (Building Bridges Initiative 2019,13). On the other hand, some organizations, individuals and communities viewed the BBI in a different light and did not see it as the panacea to Kenyas political conundrum in relation to politicised ethnicity, ethnic politics, and political violence.

In opposing the BBI, one respondent was categorical that;

It was like changing the constitution. During the referendum Ruto had said the 2010 constitution should have been changed first before it was

passed. So it became a problem later. So Ruto asked himself, when he was outside of government, they did not change the constitution. So why should they change it when he is in Government? So he was against the BBI and we supported him (Joseph Koech, OI, Turbo, 16/06/2022,).

Essentially the respondent projected the views of majority of the Kalenjin community that the BBI had a sinister agenda aimed at either preventing Ruto from ascending to presidency, or reducing his powers drastically in case he becomes the next President.

The Kenya Human Rights Commission, was also emphatically against the spirit of BBI. It questioned how a state that refused and failed to remedy ethnic antagonism and ethnic favouritism in the allocation of public resources, could manage to do the same due to new amendments (KHRC 5 MARCH 2021). It is on the same light that Oguny (2022) raised several concerns with the BBI including the facts that; the BBI proposed short-term tendencies of election strategies rather than durable political agreements; it did not inform Kenyans of anything they did not already know; it regurgitated the findings and recommendations of commissions that had previously inquired and documented such issues; it was unclear how it would address rent-seeking behaviours of the elites, which are often at the centre of political instability in the country; and it was not clear how the introduction of new executive posts, such as prime minister and leader of the opposition, would address the sponsorship of violence during elections.

Consequently, (Oguny 2020) argues that the BBI was a political-ordering mechanism fronted by Uhuru Kenyatta to manage state bureaucrats and rival elites in order to restructure political institutions and the balance of power ahead of the 2022 elections. Having so far discussed the BBI in details, it is important to interrogate whether it impacted ethno-political relations prior to the 2022 elections in Uasin Gishu.

According to one respondent;

BBI had political effects; The support Ruto got from the government was diluted. The support he could have been given went to the opponents including state structures, finances, and resources which are usually very vital in Kenyan politics. A lot of strategies, and policies were invested by the state on Raila's side. (Osogo Ambani, OI, Kakamega, 19/06/22).

In as much as the BBI was introduced as the solution to the ethnicity and political violence in Kenya, its reception seemed to have evoked ethnic cleavages due to its different interpretation by different political camps. Surprisingly, though the BBI was supposed to foster national unity through inclusivity, it ended up deeply fracturing the nation politically into those for BBI led by Raila (*Kileweke* group) and those against (*Tangataंगा* group) led by the deputy President, William Ruto. Omulo (2023) opines that the conciliatory move itself served to destabilise the country in some ways for it led to the emergence of “two political factions within the then ruling Jubilee party; The *Tanga Tanga* faction, perceived as [Deputy President] Ruto-leaning rebels, and the *Kileweke* camp, supporting the President and the ‘handshake’ that established the BBI.

These deep cleavages in the wake of general elections had always not portended well for Kenya since political leaders often swayed their ethnic communities into their political camps and whipped up support by appealing to ethnic emotions. In the run up to the 2022 general elections, the most antagonistic communities belonged to the two topmost contenders to the presidency; William Ruto and Raila Odinga. Each community aggressively defended their political leader while at the same time blamed the opponent for responsibility for the political and economic problems that the country faced. Despite the potential for violence with reference to 2022 general elections, only few areas actually experienced ethnically driven political violence. Infact, a report by Raleigh (2022) noted that although there was little evidence of concerted

political violence by specific parties in the pre-election period, many active gangs were available and could have been repurposed for violence if necessary.

6.5.2 Potential drivers of political violence in the 2022 elections and their dynamics

Elections in Kenya are often read through the prism of recurrent ethnic based violence and antagonisms. As Josse-Durand (2023) puts it, this can be explained by the fact that Kenyan politics since independence had been characterized by ethnic tensions between three of the larger ethnic groups; the Kikuyu, Luo and Kalenjin. In Kenya, ethnic alliances within the political parties and coalitions were relatively flexible depending on the context of each election. We have already documented how Kenyatta and Ruto won the 2013 elections and neutralized the International Criminal Court (ICC) accusations made against them (Josse- Durand 2023). The 2022 election campaigns on the other hand, was mainly shaped by the takeover of the State by the elites and buttressed by other factors which affected political and economic trends such as the increase of public debt and the impoverishment of youth.

One of the most prominent potential driver of violence in the 2022 elections was elite polarisation. When relations between President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto, broke down, it trickled down to their supporters in some areas including Uasin Gishu (International Crisis Group, 2022). This political deal-making yielded a welcome albeit superficial calm. The resultant transactional electoral pact was a fragile base upon which to build a lasting peace. Kalenjin politicians repeatedly warned that Kikuyu elites planned to stop Ruto from ascending to power by backing a Kikuyu candidate in 2022. Failure by the Kikuyu side of the Jubilee coalition to endorse Ruto in 2022 almost inevitably would trigger major instability in the Rift Valley.

Both Kenyatta and Ruto commanded substantial voter bases, and the disillusionment in Ruto's camp which had expected Kenyatta's automatic endorsement but was bitterly disappointed not to receive it. The political elite who supported Ruto, were not only disappointed at the beginning, but also jittery since they saw a win by Ruto as essential for their political and economic survival. Due to these dynamics, some elites in Uasin Gishu were quick to censure communities whom they perceived as supporting Raila. A respondent narrated the predicament they faced at that time;

We were told to be carefull because our man (Raila) was greedy and a chameleone. If we continued talking loudly, they would deal with us or send us back to our homes (Phibi Akinyi, OI, 16/06/2022, Turbo).

Such censure had the potential of spiraling into fullblown ethnicized political violence. But the political situation in Uasin Gishu remained relatively calm. Another respondent commented on the political calm by stating that; Politics was like a wave because politicians were different. Some politicians preach peace and others not. Some said whoever would not listen (support us politically), send them away (Ali Kemboi, OI, Besiabor, 25/06/2021). Therefore, it looked like the then prevailing political truce between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin could only hold and translate to peacefull coexistence in Uasin Gishu as long as the Kikuyu supported the Kalenjin political interests and vice versa. In other words, as long as the political elites of the two communities were reading from the same script, peace would prevail.

That is why the the International Crisis Group (2022) noted that the falling-out between Kenyatta and Ruto was experienced in the Mount Kenya region, the country's most populous electoral constituency and Kenyatta's political base. In one of the more confounding features of the 2022 electoral cycle, Ruto, an ethnic Kalenjin, brought many of Kenyatta's traditional Kikuyu supporters onto his side through his spirited campaign The International Crisis Group (2022) pointed out that while in the past,

acrimony between national politicians had stoked inter-ethnic tensions and election-related violence, the Kikuyus' surprising embrace of Ruto in both Mount Kenya and the Rift Valley meant that tensions between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin were diffused.

This diffusion of tensions led to more cordial cooperation between the two communities since they needed to get to power through their leaders who were contesting for elections; Ruto and his deputy, Gachagua.

On the other hand, the enmity between Kenyatta and Ruto left Odinga in an awkward position in his new position as an establishment candidate with the endorsement of Uhuru having previously always been on an opposition anti-incumbent ticket. To improve his chances of winning the elections, he established an alliance made up with other opposition parties, and picked a Kikuyu running mate. Martha Karua was picked as a running mate in a bid to woo back some Kikuyu votes since Ruto had also picked a Kikuyu running mate Rigathi Gachagua.

Regional observers viewed 2022 elections with considerable trepidation. Given the country's position as East Africa's main transport and commercial hub, violence tended to have a ripple effect across much of the region (International Crisis Group 2022; Wainaina 2022). Fortunately, Kenya did not experience any ethnic motivated violence. Over the next three years, the Crisis Group established that most Kenyans were not in support of ethnic violence. The new political alignments which placed the Kikuyu and Kalenjin on the same side, played a big role in dissipating ethnic tensions and hostilities due to the need to reclaim political power which Linke (2019) refers to status reversal crisis. Thus the political temperatures were not as high as in the months preceding the 2007 or 2013 elections.

Incitement and use of abusive and derogatory statements by politicians in election campaign rallies often helped to fuel election offences and crimes such as violence and fighting (Muteti, 2016). On the contrary, the International Crisis Group (2022) argued that divisive, ethnically laced narratives were not as prevalent in 2022 as in previous electoral cycles, with a few exceptions. Although national politicians continued to attack one another with barbed comments, they showed a welcome reticence to use hateful rhetoric as a campaign tool. It was the same politicians who now acted as their own policemen, and cautioned their fellow colleagues to beware of rhetoric that could incite to ethnic animosities. Moreover, all the politicians needed votes from all over. Therefore, none could afford to alienate any community through careless demeaning ethnic rhetorics.

The fact the 2022 elections lacked a major Kikuyu candidate in the Presidential race for the first time since 1992 may also have contributed to lowering political tensions in Uasin Gishu. Among other things it played a role in dampening public perceptions of Kikuyu dominance in Kenyan politics and Kikuyu elite control of the economy, which Kenyatta's opponents exploited to whip up grievance in prior elections (International Crisis Group, 2022). In a new development, rather than appealing to ethnic allegiances, Odinga and Ruto banked on bagging support from all the ethnic groups. Odinga by positioning himself as a mellowed father figure who could be a safe pair of hands and Ruto by branding himself as a champion of the downtrodden. Moreover, both candidates had chosen Kikuyu running mates, making it more difficult for either to play the anti-Kikuyu card against the other.

The electoral body IEBC, charged with managing elections had not sufficiently prepared for the polls and therefore could not be fully relied upon. It was important that people have total faith in the ability of the IEBC to professionally handle the elections.

Lack of confidence could easily lead to disputed election with high chances of election violence which could easily morph into political violence. Fortunately, even though some IEBC officials were censured for incompetence, this did not contribute to major political disturbances in Uasin Gishu. The main reason being that the county was behind the winners of the election hence no reason to complain.

High levels of Poverty bred bitterness about income inequality. Kenya's deteriorating economy made it potentially easier to mobilise frustrated crowds in the streets who engaged the police in deadly protests but specifically in opposition areas. The harsh economic environment also created the risk that unemployed youth could be recruited into gangs to commit violence during the electioneering period (International CrisisGroup 2022). The high cost of living consistently ranked as a priority concern for Kenyans, many of whom accused the government of profligacy during the past decade. Poverty therefore enhanced the proclivity of the youth to engage in acts of violence at the behest of the political elite.

The closely contested nature of the elections in relation to several opinion polls predicted that the election was likely to swing in favour of one candidate or the other at the last moment. This had the potential of increasing the risk that the losing side would feel something untoward had occurred (International Crisis Group. 2022). Most of the Public opinion polls showed a tight race between Ruto and Odinga with slight percentage differences. All in all, although the 2022 campaigns were hotly contested, the country somehow overcame the factors that could have propagated ethnic profiling and political violence especially in cosmopolitan areas such as Uasin Gishu.

The positive role of media in mitigating political violence cannot be taken for granted. Another mitigating factor was the growing awareness on the part of government,

corporate and multilateral actors of the expanding role of social media in electoral politics and the potential for online platforms to catalyse violence (International Crisis Group, 2022). Politicians increasingly used social platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to reach millions of Kenyans who follow social media. Politicians were able to enhance their reach through social media campaigns. Social media also created a mechanism for the public, who increasingly mistrusted the traditional press, to obtain information from what many regarded as a more reliable source. The danger in social media information however, was that it was always biased. This increased the chances of dangerous, inflammatory, and ethnicised messages being spread.

The governments awareness of the potential dangers of social media opportunities for spreading misinformation or inflammatory language, enabled it to put in place mechanisms to monitor and regulate many platforms that could have been used to spread inflammatory messages. In particular, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission and criminal investigation service had formed a unit to monitor and deter hate speech online (International Crisis Group, 2022). The government also cooperated with other service providers such as Safaricom, to help it monitor facebook and whatsapp in order to control hate speech during the election period.

The judiciary also had emerged as a credible arbiter of electoral disputes. The courts showed willingness to challenge the executive branch on its view of the constitution, by asking for a re-run of the vote in 2017 and most recently by rejecting the BBI, even in the face of an effort to intimidate judges including through an online campaign of slander against jurists in the weeks ahead of the delivery of the BBI judgment (International Crisis Group, 2022). That the judges stood up to these imprecations, their place as credible arbiters of major electoral disputes, should they arise in future,

was strengthened. That in itself was a major statement that henceforth, the public could rely on the Judiciary to deliver justice fairly in case of election petitions. This confidence in the judiciary played a big role in abating cases of political violence where ethnicity may have been weaponized due to frustrations from judicial judgements. Having seen the role played by politicians and other players who impact on, or mitigate elections, it was also imperative to see how traditional institutions might have had a role in either abetting or abating intermittent political violence through weaponization of ethnicity.

Despite the introduction of devolution in 2013, voting patterns based on ethnic considerations remained common in the Presidential election. This was particularly strong in cosmopolitan counties and in constituencies where political divisions were aligned with sub-ethnic divisions like at the clan level (Josse-Durand 2023). If the logic of political representation cannot be disconnected totally from ethnic affiliations, the opposite is also true: the candidate's party alignments were crucial to determine where and how ethnic divisions were politicized during elections. The heads of these clans were often the village and clan elders. Therefore, these elders played a very significant role in mobilising their members to vote for their communities preferred candidate.

6.5.3 The weaponisation of ethnicity in the run up to 2022 elections

One of the most outstanding traditional institutions that played a significant role in shaping the directions of almost all elections in Kenya is that of council of elders. Each community in Kenya has councils who are often revered and their word respected by all and sundry, including the political elite. The elders performed different functions such as; endorsing and blessing political leaders, birthing negotiated democracy, protecting politicians and maintaining peace among others.

Unlike the PEV, during the run up to the 2022 elections, these councils again played a role in agreeing on the candidates to represent them on different seats, as well as calming nerves whenever ethnic tensions heightened in Uasin Gishu.

In the months preceding the elections, there were several incidences that had the potential to threaten peace in Uasin Gishu. In one such incidence hate messages were circulated through leaflets. The Star (01/08/2022) reported that it came across images of posters pinned on trees containing inciting writings. Social media images of the leaflets showed that one of the areas affected was Uasin Gishu county. The hate messages were against the Kikuyu and other immigrant non-Kalenjin communities in Uasin Gishu. The councils of elders of the communities in Uasin Gishu came out strongly and castigated that action. (Kenya News 2/08/2022) reported that about three hundred elders from the Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luo, Kisii and Somali called for a press conference where they declared that they would not tolerate any person who threatened the peaceful coexistence between the communities in Uasin Gishu. They noted that all residents of Uasin Gishu had the right to live within the county and the freedom to support any political party.

To maintain peace and balance representation, the elders were crucial in ensuring negotiated democracy succeeded. Kenya News (03/06/2019) reported that during the Madaraka day, The *Myoot* Council of Elders' Chairman, Major (Rtd) John Seii had cautioned the Kalenjin community to be patient as the council made wide consultations on the political future of the community. It is important to note that Seii was also a member of the BBI. He assured the gathering that *Myoot* council of elders would ensure they take a political direction that benefitted both the Kalenjin as well as the non-Kalenjins. On the other hand, he also decried the decision made by a section of the Keiyo council of elders to endorse one of their own Zedekiah Kiprop Bundotich

“Buzeki” to vie for the governors seat and act as their spokesman (Kenya news, Beatrice Jerono 4/08/ 2018). He was not Happy that “Buzeki” had ditched their preferred political party. Buzeki represented the Keiyo who are less compared to the Kipsigis in UasinGishu. Seii lamented that such decisions may lead to disunity among the Kalenjijn

Seii had previously played a similar role in sharing the political seats in Uasin Gishu in the 2017 elections. In the 2017 formula, the elders had advised that the governor be reserved for a candidate from the county’s northern region, senator for the eastern region and Woman rep for southern (Hivisasa.com 17/03/2017). Although the formula was largely criticized, it was followed at the end as governor Jackson Mandago from the north, majorly inhabited by the Nandi community retained the seat with the Senate and Woman Rep seat also being won by individuals from areas suggested by the elders. the elders said they had made the proposal after locals asked for their opinion on the matter. The Keiyo community is the majority in the eastern part of Uasin Gishu while the southern is largely cosmopolitan with Nandi and Keiyo making a bigger part of the population. The advice of elders in that election was therefore important in shaping the opinion of the voters. In the 2022 elections, through negotiated democracy, the elders had proposed that the governor should be picked from the former Eldoret North region, senator from Eldoret East and Women Representative from Eldoret South. Currently all those positions are being held by individuals from the Eldoret North. By so doing the traditional political role of the council of elders had been modernized and subsequently used to solve prevailing political challenges. This was reminiscent of the role played by the *Orkoiyot* in conjunction with his supreme council elders in the pre-colonial period.

On the other hand, there have sometimes arisen dissenting voices from some elders. Jerono Beatrice 09/05/ 2022 demonstrates this dissent by describing how elders from

Kalenjin, Uasin Gishu, and Elgeyo Marakwet counties had insisted on fronting Gideon Moi instead of William Ruto as the flag bearer of the Kalenjin. This decision went against the endorsement of the majority of the Kalenjin. Eventually Seii the chairman of *Myoot* council of elders was replaced by Sang. The reason for Seii's replacement according to one respondent, was because "a group of the elders realized that what Seii was doing was not genuine and it was not for the interest of the majority of the people because he was under the influence of the Moi family. So they decided to change him." (Julius Lelei, OI, Magut, 16/06/22). Finally, those against Ruto could not succeed. Almost all the candidates who vied outside UDA party failed while William Ruto got more than eighty percent of Kalenjin votes based on an earlier agreement and endorsement by the *Myoot* council of elders.

In the run up to the 2022 elections, deputy President William Ruto was again blessed by the *Myoot* elders in preparation for vying for the presidency. Inside politics (08/01/22) and Tuko News (08/01/2022) reported that the deputy President was to be endorsed by both Kalenjin and Kikuyu elders as their preferred Presidential candidate in Eldoret. It was in the same venue that Ruto had been endorsed as the community spokesperson by the Kalenjin ahead of the 2013 elections. The endorsements were in tandem with Kalenjin culture whereby when one is embarking on an important journey, they must be "blessed, given some words of encouragement, to set them off" (Henry Morei, OI, 25/06/21, Besiabor). On that day, the Kikuyu elders expressed their confidence in Ruto on whose head they laid hands as a symbol of passing their blessings. They revisited President Uhuru Kenyatta's sentiments in 2013 when he stood at Nakuru's Afraha Stadium to woo supporters, stating that he would be supporting his deputy after the lapse of his (Uhuru's) two, five-year terms.

6.5.4 Maintenance of peace

Akin to 2013 and 2017, majority of the politicians in Uasin Gishu were very cautious not to be perceived as war mongers. Led by the Governor of Uasin Gishu, (UGC Press 30/11/2020) who hosted elders from different communities living in the county so as to discuss a variety of issues, among them the need to maintain peace and unity. During the meeting held at the county hall in Eldoret town, Governor Mandago reaffirmed his administration's commitment to ensuring peace and cohesion among all the communities that live in the Uasin Gishu County (Capital FM News 5/4/2022 NAIROBI). It is equally noted that Kalenjin elders apologized to Azimio Presidential candidate Raila Odinga over an incident in Soy where his helicopter was stoned and destroyed. The elders said they were planning a prayer and a cleansing ceremony to apologise to Raila after 40 days. They apologized for the incidence but noted that as per Kalenjin traditions they had to wait for forty days since, the family of Jackson Kibor (a respected elder) was still mourning. This decision by the elders to take charge and quell a potentially explosive incidence, shows that the elders were committed to ensuring peaceful elections in Uasin Gishu and could not allow anything that threatened peace to go unresolved.

6.5.5 Protecting politicians

The council of elders also went out of their way to protect political leaders from those that were attacking them. The North Rift Mirror (9th March 12, 2020) reported that a section of Kalenjin, Kikuyu and Somali elders from Uasin Gishu criticised trade Unionist Francis Atwoli over his disrespectful utterances on Deputy President William Ruto. They noted that Atwoli's utterance were likely to polarize the nation and derail peace.

During the run up to the 2022 elections, several politicians used their mothertongue to woo voters. But they were very careful not to incite the electorate during campaigns. This was due to several reasons; first; they had been cautioned by the elders on the need for maintaining peace, secondly, they were sure of getting all the votes they needed to win since UDA was the most preferred party in Uasin Gishu, further more, it was the party of their Presidential candidate.

6.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter sets out to establish connections between political violence and weaponised ethnicity during President Uhuru Kenyatta's reign as well as the 2022 elections which ended Uhuru's second Presidential term and ushered in a new political dispensation under President William Samoei Ruto. Instrumentalism, and primordialist theories found relevance in Ruto and Uhuru coming together and convincing their communities to unite, and in explaining how traditional structures, with special reference to the institution of elders and youth were used in the efforts to preach peace, mobilize, and convince both the Kalenjin and Kikuyu to support and eventually vote for Uhuru and Ruto Presidential tickets respectively.

The 2013 elections in Kenya that ushered in President Uhuru stood out as remarkable departure from the violence and turmoil that marred previous electoral cycles. The study attributed this to the role of the post-election violence of 2007/2008 and its accompanying constitutional and electoral reforms; the impact of the ICC case, civil society, the media, the political elite, the communities, traditional leaders, the church, and the international and donor community in fostering a peaceful electoral process. It is noteworthy that relationship between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities in Kenya had been influenced by historical, political, economic, and social dynamics. At times their political relationships had been characterized by cooperation, competition, and at

times occasional tensions. One such moment of political alliance led to the formation of the Jubilee political alliance bringing the two communities together at the behest of their political leaders; Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto. The two desperately needed their communities' support to get to the highest office in the land and escape from the ICC case raised against them. This period witnessed significant involvement of councils of elders in spreading messages of peace and promoting "good leadership," unlike 2007 when these councils of elders played an active role in mobilizing Kenyans to take part in the post-electoral violence. These elders in peaceful ventures were engaged in; public advocacy, resource mobilization, voter education, mediation and conflict resolution, community engagement, cultural and traditional influence, endorsements and rallying support. It was an open secret that both Kenyatta and Ruto had to appeal to the elders' primordial reverence in order to rally ethnic based political support. The two also got inspiration from oral narratives with primordial reverence as was seen for example in the comparison of Ruto with iconic pre-colonial Nandi leaders such as Kimnyolei and Koitalel Samoei.

Ultimately, the code of conduct elicited the desired cultural, social, economic and political dynamics mobilized by elders, politicians, civilians and NGOS for peaceful elections. Apart from using elders Jubilee Alliance also used; ethnic media outlets, ethnic language and symbols, historical narratives and grievances, social networks and community structures, promises of ethnic representation and empowerment, cultural events and ceremonies, and appeals to ethnic solidarity.

The new electoral rule requiring that 50 per cent plus 1 votes and 25 percent of the votes in 24 or more counties had to be won to secure the national office, made cross-ethnic alliances between previously historical rival communities attractive. The elites came to realize that perhaps more than ever before, the 2013 and future elections would turn on

‘the mathematics of combining ethnic groups. Equally, culture specific to the Kikuyu and Kalenjin were employed in campaign materials, speeches, and slogans to resonate with community members. This linguistic and symbolic connection reinforced the idea of shared identity and common interests, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among voters. The 2013 and successive campaign messages were delivered in the languages spoken by the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities, making them more relatable and resonant. Language thus played a significant role in shaping identity, and campaign messages to establish rapport and convey authenticity. Additionally, symbols and imagery associated with Kikuyu and Kalenjin culture were used in campaign materials to evoke a sense of pride and belonging among community members. It is no surprise for example that URP’s (Ruto’s party) election symbol was the horn. Among the Kalenjin, the horn was symbolic in a traditional sense in that it was used to mobilise people. The 2013 and subsequent elections witnessed the use of religion by politicians as an avenue to the hearts of their constituents in terms of cleansing them, mellowing the hearts of their communities to forgive each other, uniting the two communities, and making Ruto and Uhuru acceptable in the eyes of their potential voters.

UhuRuto ticket invented a new political language that combined prophetism and redemption. Both the Kalenjin like the Kikuyu have cultures of prophetism. In times of uncertainty and insecurity, spiritual and other prophet figures, emerge to explain the new issues, rules and principles to observe in order to cope. The Jubilee electoral campaign in 2013 appeared as prophetism or the redemption of leaders and their people as a result of this influence.

The 2017 elections in Kenya were highly anticipated events that garnered both national and international attention due to a history of contentious elections and political turbulence. The multifaceted influences that impacted the 2017 elections included

historical, socio-economic, political, and technological factors as well as the factors that shaped the political dynamics later after these elections. These elections in Kenya were highly significant, marked by intense political competition and scrutiny, both domestically and internationally as they were reminiscent to the events of 2007 that included but not limited to; Incumbency Advantage, and close contest between President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga. The 2017 elections had been preceded by calls for electoral reforms to address issues of transparency and fairness. Disputes also arose over the integrity of the electoral process, including allegations of voter fraud and irregularities in the electronic voting system.

Multi-ethnic counties like Uasin Gishu were threatened by inter-ethnic flare ups. The councils of elders however, played an important role in diffusing ethnic tensions. The elders of all the communities in Uasin Gishu, for example, led by the chairman of the Kalenjin council of elders had to come out strongly against the incitement incidences in order to cool down the ethnic temperatures. The 2017 elections saw weaponization of ethnicity get complicated by the fake content shared. The fake content aimed at influencing voter decisions, damaging the reputation of the Judiciary and IEBC and its key personnel, as well as heightening tensions, instability and violence during the election period. Such information, even when it turned out to be untrue, heightened tensions and uncertainty among the public and also threatened internal security of the country. The electorate easily fell for some of this fake information because of the way it was packaged.

The nature of political violence witnessed in 2017 elections however, was not ethnicized or akin to the weaponisation of ethnicity which resulted in dire political violence in the 1990s or 2007/2008. This was due to a few dynamics which had either changed, came into play, or were taken into account by the political elite. Such included

Odinga's decision to petition the results, maintenance of the Jubilee Alliance, the impact of devolution, lessons learnt from the ICC, national and local peace efforts, the role of the constitution, and the post-election handshake between Uhuru and Raila.

The two erstwhile leaders responded by engaging in secret meetings which eventually culminated into the "handshake;" an event which was of such huge significance at that time. The handshake; was the controversial political agreement and symbol of reconciliation between President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga, in March 2018. Although the general feeling was that the handshake healed the divided Kenyans, and brought them together by creating peace and unity, there were also some different perceptions from some communities. For the positivist view, the historic handshake provided another unique opportunity for de-ethnicising Kenya's politics and strengthening the existing institutions. The handshake effectively diffused political tensions that had escalated after the contentious 2017 elections. It signaled a willingness on both sides to move past the acrimony of the electoral process and pursue a more cooperative approach to governance as well the shiftiness of political alliances and ethnic dynamics in Kenyan politics.

One of the key outcomes of the handshake was the establishment of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI); a task force which was aimed at addressing underlying issues of governance, inclusivity, and devolution in Kenya. The BBI proposed constitutional amendments and policy reforms to address longstanding political grievances and promote national cohesion. The BBI report indicated that main challenges that be devilled Kenyans included; lack of a national ethos; responsibilities and rights of citizenship; ethnic antagonism and competition; divisive elections; inclusivity; shared prosperity; corruption; devolution; and safety and security. Of these, lack of inclusivity, divisive elections, and ethnic antagonism were of more significance to this study in that

they had an impact on weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence. BBI was however, conceived by some as more of a political-ordering mechanism fronted by Uhuru Kenyatta to manage state bureaucrats and rival elites in order to restructure political institutions and the balance of power ahead of the 2022 elections.

In as much as the BBI was introduced as the solution to the ethnicity and political violence in Kenya, its reception seemed to have evoked ethnic cleavages due to its various interpretation by different political camps. Surprisingly, although the BBI was supposed to foster national unity through inclusivity, it ended up deeply fracturing the nation politically. One of the most prominent potential driver of violence in the 2022 elections was elite polarization hinging on BBI. When relations between President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto, broke down, it trickled down to their supporters in some areas like Uasin Gishu. BBI as a political deal-making yielded a welcome albeit superficial calm since a transactional electoral pact as BBI, was a fragile foundation upon which to build a lasting peace. With regard to BBI, Kalenjin politicians repeatedly warned that Kikuyu elites planned to stop Ruto from ascending to power by backing a Kikuyu candidate in 2022 elections. Consequently, failure by the Kikuyu side of the Jubilee coalition to endorse Ruto in 2022 election almost inevitably triggered major instability in Uasin Gishu.

On the contrary though, it is argued that divisive, ethnically laced narratives were not as prevalent in 2022 as in previous electoral cycles, with a few exceptions. Although national politicians continued to attack one another with barbed comments, they showed a welcome reticence to use hateful rhetoric as a campaign tool. It was the same politicians who now acted as their own policemen, and cautioned their fellow colleagues to beware of rhetoric that could incite ethnic animosities. During the run up to the 2022 elections, the council of elders in Uasin Gishu again played a role in

agreeing on the candidates to represent people on different seats, as well as calming nerves whenever ethnic tensions heightened.

In conclusion, it was clear that the political reactions of the Kalenjin community in Uasin Gishu were the result of a unique combination of historical processes with roots in colonialism, other factors such as capitalism, pre-existing social, cultural, economic and ecological conditions that have only exacerbated their reactions. The absence of political violence in Kenya in 2013 elections carries important implications for the country and its democratic trajectory. By demonstrating that peaceful transitions of power are possible, even in contexts marked by deep-seated ethnic divisions and historical grievances like in Uasin Gishu. The 2013 elections have helped consolidate Kenya's democratic gains and fostered a sense of confidence in the country's democratic institutions. Moreover, the success of the 2013 elections served as a powerful reminder of the importance of inclusive governance, political dialogue, and respect for the rule of law in preventing violence and promoting stability in electoral processes. Despite the politically charged atmosphere, Kenyans once again held relatively peaceful elections and there was no major politically motivated election violence. As Kenya continues its democratic journey, the lessons learned from the peaceful conduct of the elections remain relevant. By building on the gains made in electoral reform, strengthening democratic institutions, and fostering a culture of tolerance and inclusivity, Kenya can further consolidate its democratic gains and ensure that future electoral processes are characterized by peace, transparency, and respect for the will of the people. In all these, it remains that weaponization of ethnicity holds the potential for both peace and violence as the case of Uasin Gishu during the electoral moments exemplify.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This is the final chapter of this study. This study set out to analyse the dynamics of weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. This was carried out thematically and chronologically from the the pre-colonial period up to Uhuru Kenyattas presidency based on stated specific objectives and research questions. The chapter commences with summary of findings as arranged chapter by chapter upon which conclusions are drawn, recommendations are advanced and suggestions for further research made.

7.1 Summary of Findings

This study set out to analyse the dynamics of weaponised ethnicity on intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu. The task was carried out thematically from the precolonial period up to the year 2022 based on the following six specific objectives; Tracing the chronological formation of the Nandi as a major ethnic group into Uasin-Gishu in the precolonial period (1800 to 1894); Examining the salient features of ethnic relations on political violence in the colonial period (1895 to 1962); Evaluating the nature of weaponized ethnicity on political violence in Uasin Gishu District in the post-independence period (1963 to 1978); Interrogating the nature of Weaponized ethnicity on political violence from 1979 to 2012; Examining the dynamics of weaponised ethnicity and intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu during Uhuru Kenyatta era, 2012-2022.

Chapter one of this study constituted a presentation of the technical aspects that included the following sections; background to the study, problem statement,

objectives, research questions, justification, significance, scope, limitations, thematic literature review, theoretical framework, research methodology, and the ethical considerations. The introductory background to this study acknowledged that since the 1990s, political violence in Kenya had created the impression of an ethnically split nation. This research examined the pre-colonial and post-colonial roots of weaponization of ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu county of Kenya. The pre-independence formation of KANU and later KADU elicited ideological differences, including the fear of domination of “smaller” ethnic groups by “larger” ethnic groups in Kenya. These actions seemingly set the stage for the politicization and eventual weaponization of ethnicity in the history of politics in Kenya. The process was further exacerbated in the post-independence period of successive Kenyan leaderships. This foundation of ethnicity in Kenyan Politics has been the precursor to some of the intermittent violence experienced in various parts of Kenya. Since the early 1990s, ethnic warfare in Kenya has been chronic during electioneering times, leaving havoc in its wake. The years 2007-2008 experienced the worst forms of ethnicized intermittent political violence since independence, leaving trails of death, destruction, and ethnic distrust.

The literature review was done thematically with the aim of sharpening and deepening the research’s theoretical foundations, giving insights into what has already been done in this field and outlining strengths and weaknesses, hence providing knowledge on the relevant additional data needed for the study. The study was guided by three theories, namely; Primordialism, instrumentalism and relative deprivation theories which were used in interrogating the objectives of this study.

Primordialism was used to explain how the ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu came together to attack their neighbours’, turning against them simply because they belonged to a

different ethnic group. But since these communities have often lived together in peace, ethnic affiliation alone could not lead to animosity. Therefore, the study employed the instrumentalist theory as well to explain how the ethnic identities and bonds were used as a tool to ferment hostility to achieve personal, political, economic and social benefits by the political elite. Thus, instrumentalism as a theory was used to show how the elite have weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu by converting it into a tool to mobilize support for their selfish interests such as political power, political posts, state resources, economic gain. The rational power conserving elite strategies alone was not enough to address this complex phenomenon hence the need to complement the two theories with the relative deprivation theory.

Relative deprivation theory was used to explain poverty, historical injustices and political exclusion as drivers of conflict in Sub-Saharan African in general and Uasin Gishu in particular. In most of the African states, there was a general lack of sufficient resources for the development and stability of an economic system as most of the resources were often lost in corruption. When general population feel deprived, they often resort to ethnic conflicts and protests through the combined effect of Primordialism and instrumentalism as perceived solutions.

At this point however, the study acknowledged that often there is a huge difference between theory and actual measurement and application of theories with particular reference to relative deprivation. The theory has been successful in many areas but is still ineffective in explaining some of phenomena in a social construct. One of the main gaps in this respect was that it involved individuals desiring what 'ought to be,' yet sometimes some of the negative things happening in their lives were of own making. The deprivation theory thus explained why people felt deprived but still did not explain all the resultant emotional reaction hence the use of Primordialism. The relative

deprivation theory thus was problematic and not entirely reliable as it tended to over predict instances of civil strife. This shortcoming of the relative deprivation theory was compensated by instrumentalism theory to show how the perceived feelings of deprivation by some communities in Uasin Gishu had been strategically scapegoated on selected communities and then used by the politicians and elites to fulfil selfish and parochial ambitions. Meanwhile the primordial theory explained how the emotive ethnic aspects that bound the people were whipped up and directed towards the other ethnic groups.

In all these, the study applied qualitative design that employed historical methods in pursuit of the study objectives. The succeeding chapters were derived from the main themes as contained in the specific objectives. Chapter two was under the title; The Migration and Settlement of the Kalenjin; 1800- 1894. The chapter sought to explore the genesis of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu with specific focus on the nature and trends of the migration and settlement of the Kalenjin and other immigrant communities into Rift Valley; the pre -colonial state of the Kalenjin community, their socio-political and economic organization, as well the relations and interactions between them and their neighbors. All these were analysed based on the primordial theory to show the common socio-cultural, traditional, economic and political aspects that identify and bring the Kalenjin together as an ethnic community as well as the bonds they share. It was noted at this point that not all violence was elite-led as the chapter analysed the compelling quality and effect of the cultural aspect. It was clear from the study that after some period of migration in the 19th century the Kalenjin began coalescing and eventually settled in and around the Rift Valley. During that period, they developed unique socio-economic and political systems with high similarities between the Kalenjin communities. They had also presented themselves to neighbors as fierce

warriors having conquered most of them and by the fact that they raided these neighbors at will. Hence they were respected and feared with the same measure.

The onset of colonialism thus pitted the Kalenjin against the Europeans as they clashed in the fight to protect their independence and land. These colonial encounters served to unite them further. During the colonial period, massive land alienation coupled with colonial profiling of some communities, set the stage for ethnic differences and grievances which exacerbated differences between the communities in rift the valley. After independence the Kalenjin name adapted a political tone as they were brought together by the elite in order to get a share of the political say during and after the struggle for independence. This study explored the genesis of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu with specific focus on pre-colonial state of the Kalenjin community, their socio-political and economic organization with a view to establishing how these unique features identified and coalesced the Kalenjin community. These aspects were analysed based on the primordial theory to show the features which bound the Kalenjin people. Kalenjin traditional society held and cherished certain aspects dearly. Such aspects as; traditional religion and religious leaders, their elders and their roles, rites of passage, the military organization, their attachment to and ownership of land as an economic resource and other economic activities, the handling of sojourners, as well as their interaction with their neighbors. It is some of these shared aspects that set the stage for manipulation by appealing to their deep-seated communal beliefs and practices for politico-economic expediency.

The main argument in the chapter was that the Kalenjin characteristics, traditional set up, customs, and practices which developed in the pre-colonial era had been weaponized and used by political elite in the independence and post-independence period, leading to political violence in Uasin Gishu. This ensued as these people tried to

recover their lost land and defend their hold to political and hence economic power. The same Primordialism to some extent explained why some of the Kikuyu community leaders are seen to have adopted a blind sense of entitlement in order to monopolize economic resources especially land and government positions by claiming that these are the fruits of the independence for which the Kikuyu shed blood.

Chapter three examined ethnic relations during the colonial period between 1895 and 1962. The chapter sought to establish the role played by colonization in breeding ethnicity and ethnic awareness, its application of divide and rule breeding ethnic tensions, its belief in the application of violence to enforce and coerce Africans to acquiesce to colonial wishes and demands, and how colonial oppression and exploitation of Africans evolved ethnic competitions and animosities. The chapter also discussed how ethnic differences were ingrained and exacerbated after the colonial master exited the scene. The chapter traced the development of weaponised ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu by looking at the development of these incidences and their political connotations during the colonial period basing on the instrumentalist theory. The theory is employed to establish whether, the ethnicized political violence resulting from manipulations and incitements by bourgeoisie political elite were rooted in the colonial regime. The relative deprivation theory was also employed in the chapter to establish whether ethnicity had been weaponised for political violence due to underlying feelings of socio-economic or political exploitation during the colonial period which had bred feelings of deprivation. The theory is used to show how the traditional feelings of loss of Kalenjin land and other economic resources, as well as the fear of loss of political power, had all been used to mobilize the Kalenjin and other communities in Uasin Gishu by the political elite against each other.

The chapter through the two theoretical lenses examined the effect of colonialism on the ownership of land and movement of other ethnic communities into Uasin Gishu, as well as discussing the political associations formed before and after independence and how these contributed towards exacerbating ethnic differences in Uasin Gishu and the country at large. The chapter in this endeavor thus establishes the role played by colonization, and how it bred ethnic tensions, and how these ethnic differences were ingrained and exacerbated after the colonial master exited the scene.

It is clear in this chapter that the colonial period left hefty imprints on the lives of the Kalenjin people and later on had impact on the manner in which the Kalenjin lived, as well as their relationships with the other immigrant communities. The arrival of settlers and the establishment of colonial rule led to massive land loss due to the colonial land policies which appropriated Kalenjin land for European settlement. The loss of Kalenjin land was historic in many ways; it resulted in loss of livelihood for the Kalenjin who were initially pastoralists, forcing them to start adopting agriculture. Many of them lost their livestock due to colonial destocking policies and lack of pasture. Some Kalenjin communities were forced to immigrate to neighbouring countries and communities. Other Kalenjin people were forced to seek wage labour just like the immigrant communities on settler farms, and yet just before the arrival of the Europeans, the Kalenjin were reigning supreme and had subjugated most their neighbouring communities. This situation was denigrating, unacceptable to the Kalenjin community, and slowly fomented resentment.

This explained why the early political associations and parties formed during the colonial period, were often initially aimed at addressing local issues affecting their communities. Thus it was only natural that the Kalenjin politicians engaged the colonial regime with a view of seeking solutions to the land question for the Kalenjin. These

politicians were more concerned with resolutions like a constitution that would ensure protection or redress of their people's land problems to prevent further encroachment, and ensure security. In a bid to protect their people, these politicians coalesced all the Kalenjin peoples together, for they realised that by uniting their people, their strength in numbers could be used as a political bargaining chip. In their zeal to protect their people's resources, some of these politicians roused ethnic pride among the Kalenjin while at the same time kindling seeds of ethnic animosity against the immigrants by championing Majimboism and territorialism.

Most of the outsiders who settled in Uasin Gishu during the colonial period, were majorly labourers who came in need of jobs that could be found on the settler farms. The indigenous population were also in need of the same for their survival. This competition for scarce resources eventually played a role in building underlying causes of animosities between the two groups of communities. The deprivation of the Kalenjin original land espoused the application of relative deprivation theory since most of the later ethnic conflicts and political violence were driven by and resultant of unresolved historical injustices originating from the alienation and subsequent loss of communally owned land in Uasin Gishu. This then later led to more ethnic animosities between the Kalenjin and these communities especially beginning from the onset of independence since these communities were already better placed than the Kalenjin politically, socially, and economically. This situation was further exacerbated after independence, and therefore in the struggle for political space and recognition, Kalenjin political leaders made it fodder during political campaigns.

Chapter four examined settlement of other ethnic groups into Uasin Gishu during Kenyatta regime between 1963 and 1978. The chapter discussed the Kenyatta era and the way this government handled the creation, distribution and sale of settlement

schemes, the resettling of the landless especially in Rift Valley and how the establishment of these settlement schemes impacted on the relations between the local and immigrant ethnic communities. It also analysed the impact of Kenyatta's economic and land policies on political relations in post independence period with a view to establishing the interplay between these political differences and ethnic animosities then and in the successive regimes. The relative deprivation theory is used to analyse the development of resentment among the Kalenjin as they felt disenfranchised by the colonial regime; a situation that was exacerbated by Kenyatta's government through its political and economic policies which they felt denied them the chance to recoup their losses. The Kalenjin believed that Kenyatta's government further marginalised them while at the same time pacifying them by appointing their people like Moi in positions of power. In essence, Moi's appointment placated the Kalenjin and contributed to the appearance of peaceful coexistence between the communities in Uasin Gishu during Kenyatta's reign. This was because as a good vice-President, Moi had to ensure he supported government policies and kept his people in line.

Over the years, this fostered a sense of discrimination among the Kalenjin as well as other Kenyan ethnic groups, leading to discontent, anger, enmity, and hatred. At the time of his death, Kenyatta left behind a society marked by corruption and impunity, geographical inequality, ethno-political patronage, ethnic enmity, stereotyping and hostility. All these set the stage for ingrained ethnic resentment and future conflicts over the control of scarce resources in Uasin Gishu. The government's effort to sort out the grievances of some communities in essence created more challenges and exacerbated the damage done by the colonial regime. The bungled way in which Kenyatta's government handled colonial injustices, set the stage for future animosity, suspicions, and feelings of deprivation among the Kalenjin in Uasin Gishu since they felt

shortchanged economically through loss of land which was their main livelihood. For example, the government had attempted to address the land issue in the 1960s through settlement schemes and the land purchase program with the intention of ensuring the economic stability of the new administration by addressing the only potential source of political unrest, the landless Kikuyu in Rift Valley. It is regrettable that the government's attempt to handle the issue of landlessness among the Kikuyu caused new social-political problems, intensified ethnic hostility, and eventually served as the basis for inter-ethnic conflicts in the post-Kenyatta era at the behest of politicians.

A tiny Kikuyu elite, the so-called “Kiambu mafia” or “the family” from Kenyatta's home area, controlled politics, the most lucrative government positions and economic ventures, prime land, as well as access to the President. This scenario persisted throughout Kenyatta's administration. By undermining Kenyatta's nationalist and populist roots, this faction alienated the Kikuyu from other ethnic groups as well as some Kikuyu rebels setting the stage for the explosion of underlying feelings of deprivation in the subsequent political dispensations of Presidents Moi and Kibaki.

Chapter five examined the Moi – Kibaki eras and weaponization of ethnicity; 1978 to 2007. The chapter delved into the reigns of Presidents Moi and Kibaki with a view to interrogating their governments policies, political practices, as well as leadership styles in order to establish how these aspects of their leadership affected ethnic relations. It was significant to note that it was during these two leader's era that politically instigated ethnic conflicts and violence was witnessed almost in each and every electioneering period. These conflicts and their underlying issues metamorphosed, and culminated into the PEV of 2007/2008 which almost brought Kenya to the brink of a failed state.

The chapter employed the instrumentalist theory to bring out how politicians and other actors use the perceived feelings of deprivation and inequalities to mobilise their ethnic groups to rise up against other communities perceived to be the cause of these tribulations, albeit for political gain. Primordial theory too finds application when the chapter brings out the common cultural and salient ethnic aspects which bind members of one community together due to shared practices, beliefs, structures, identity and history. These shared political, economic and cultural aspects through history conduce for the politicians to appeal to their communities and direct them against their perceived enemies like was the case of the Kalenjin attacks against the migrant groups in Uasin Gishu culminating in intermittent political violence. A respondent, one Mzee Koech summarised the violent conflicts experienced during this period by stating that,

During Kenyatta's period there was little problem of people fighting. During Moi's period 1992, 1997 we had many problems of fighting, burning houses, killing, and during Kibaki's period, we have also had big problems of fighting, killing, and some people running away from their homes. All these was because of politicians (OI, Thomas Koech, 21/07/2021, Chepsaita).

Some of the most pertinent issues and actors that have led to weaponised political violence during both Moi and Kibaki's reign were seen to be rooted in; colonial legacies and unresolved injustices, unresolved land grievances, Majimbo rhetoric, poverty and marginalisation, fear of domination by some communities as well as electoral competition and malpractices. In an effort to tackle these specific issues affecting their communities, some politicians among the Kalenjin went to the extent of inciting and supporting their communities against other migrant communities who were perceived as enemies. This usually took place with the clandestine support of the elite from the indigenous communities.

On ascending the Presidency, Moi slowly but surely began to replace majority of the Kikuyu in powerful positions with his Kalenjin or other ethnic communities. He was seen to use patronage, political manipulation, and divide and rule tactics to control those seen to be undermining his rule. The Kalenjin, were seen to ascend to positions of power. Moi developed infrastructure, schools, hospitals, and offered them employment in the security forces and other government parastatals. Unfortunately, as the Nandi and other Kalenjin groups started to appreciate their person being in power, the Kikuyu and other communities started to complain that they have been left out of government. In fact, the Kikuyu were not happy due to the loss of both economic and political control. Consequently, these complaints later led to the rise of conflicts between these two groups, conflicts which were hyped by the political elite rousing their people into political violence against their perceived neighbors turned enemies.

The advent of multi-party democracy and the need to win political mileage did provide opportunities where politicians in Uasin Gishu manipulated some of the traditional ethnic aspects like; initiation, warrior-hood, land, treatment of strangers, and other cultural issues which their people held dear, for political gain leading to intermittent political violence in the form of ethnic clashes. Thus we see tensions building between the different communities in the larger Rift Valley and particularly Uasin Gishu. It is these social, political and economic tensions in Uasin Gishu, some founded on historical precedence, that are weaponized into political violence.

The chapter six sets out to establish connections between political violence and weaponised ethnicity during President Uhuru Kenyatta's reign as well as the 2022 elections which ended Uhuru's second Presidential term and ushered in a new political dispensation under President William Samoei Ruto. Instrumentalism theory explains the relevance in Ruto and Uhuru coming together and convincing their communities to

unite. Primordial theory also finds relevance by explaining how traditional structures, with special reference to the institution of elders and youth were used in the efforts to preach peace, mobilize, and convince both the Kalenjin and Kikuyu to support and eventually vote for Uhuru and Ruto Presidential tickets respectively.

The 2013 elections in Kenya that ushered in President Uhuru stood out as remarkable departure from the violence and turmoil that marred previous electoral cycles. The study attributed this to the role of the post-election violence of 2007/2008 and its accompanying constitutional and electoral reforms; the impact of the ICC case, civil society, the media, the political elite, the communities, traditional leaders, the church, and the international and donor community in fostering a peaceful electoral process. It is noteworthy that relationship between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities in Kenya had been influenced by historical, political, economic, and social dynamics. At times this political relations had been characterized by cooperation, competition, and at times occasional tensions. Jubilee political alliance brought together the two communities together when Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto desperately needed their communities' support to get to the highest office in the land and escape from the ICC case raised against them.

This period 2013 to 2022 witnessed significant involvement of councils of elders in spreading mainly messages of peace and promoting "good leadership," unlike 2007 when these councils of elders played an active role in mobilizing Kenyans to take part in the post-electoral violence. These elders in peaceful ventures were mainly engaged in; public advocacy, resource mobilization, voter education, mediation and conflict resolution, community engagement, cultural and traditional influence, endorsements and rallying support. It was an open secret that both Kenyatta and Ruto had to appeal to the elders' primordial reverence in order to rally ethnic based political support. The two

also got inspiration from oral narratives with primordial reverence as was seen for example in the comparison of Ruto with iconic pre-colonial Nandi leaders such as Kimnyolei and Koitalel Samoei. Apart from using elders Jubilee alliance also used; ethnic media outlets, ethnic language and symbols, historical narratives and grievances, social networks and community structures, promises of ethnic representation and empowerment, cultural events and ceremonies, and appeals to ethnic solidarity.

Equally, culture specific to the Kikuyu and Kalenjin were employed in campaign materials, speeches, and slogans to resonate with community members. This linguistic and symbolic connection reinforced the idea of shared identity and common interests, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among voters. Language as used played a significant role in shaping identity, and campaign messages to establish rapport and convey authenticity. Additionally, symbols and imagery associated with Kikuyu and Kalenjin culture were used in campaign materials to evoke a sense of pride and belonging among community members. It is no surprise for example that URP's (Ruto's party) election symbol was the horn. This was because among the Kalenjin, the horn was symbolic in a traditional sense mobilising people.

The 2013 and subsequent elections also witnessed the use of religion by politicians as an avenue to the hearts of their constituents in terms of cleansing them, mellowing the hearts of their communities to forgive each other, uniting the two communities, and making Ruto and Uhuru acceptable in the eyes of their potential voters. Traditional religious practices were also applied in a bid to mobilise the communities and bring out the gravity of the issues at hand.

The 2017 elections in Kenya were highly anticipated events that garnered both national and international attention due to a history of contentious elections and political

turbulence. These elections in Kenya were highly significant, marked by intense political competition and scrutiny, both domestically and internationally as they were reminiscent to the events of 2007 that included but not limited to; incumbency advantage, and close contest between President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, Multi ethnic counties like Uasin Gishu were threatened by inter-ethnic flare ups. The councils of elders however, played an important role in diffusing ethnic tensions and preaching peace.

The 2017 elections saw weaponization of ethnicity get complicated by the fake content shared that aimed at influencing voter decisions, damaging the reputation of the Judiciary and IEBC and its key personnel, as well as heightening tensions, instability and violence during the election period. Such information, even when it turned out to be untrue, heightened tensions and uncertainty among the public and also threatened internal security of the country. The nature of political violence witnessed in 2017 elections however, was not ethnicized or akin to the weaponisation of ethnicity which resulted in dire political violence in the 1990s or 2007/2008. This was due to a few dynamics which had either changed, came into play, or were taken into account by the political elite. Such included Odinga's decision to petition the results, maintenance of the Jubilee alliance, the impact of devolution, lessons learnt from the ICC, national and local peace efforts, the role of the constitution, and the post-election handshake between Uhuru and Raila.

The "handshake;" an event which was of such huge significant at that time was the controversial political agreement and symbol of reconciliation between President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga, in March 2018. Although the general feeling was that the handshake healed the divided Kenyans, and brought them together by creating peace and unity, there were also some different perceptions from

some communities. For the positivist view, the historic handshake provided another unique opportunity for de-ethnicising Kenya's politics and strengthening the existing institutions. The handshake effectively diffused political tensions that had escalated after the contentious 2017 elections. It signaled a willingness on both sides to move past the acrimony of the electoral process and pursue a more cooperative approach to governance as well the shiftiness of political alliances and ethnic dynamics in Kenyan politics.

One of the key outcomes of the handshake was the establishment of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI); a task force which was aimed at addressing underlying issues of governance, inclusivity, and devolution in Kenya. The BBI proposed constitutional amendments and policy reforms to address longstanding political grievances and promote national cohesion. The BBI report indicated that main challenges that be devilled Kenyans included; lack of a national ethos; responsibilities and rights of citizenship; ethnic antagonism and competition; divisive elections; inclusivity; shared prosperity; corruption; devolution; and safety and security. BBI was however, conceived by some as more of a political-ordering mechanism fronted by Uhuru Kenyatta to manage state bureaucrats and rival elites in order to restructure political institutions and the balance of power ahead of the 2022 elections.

In as much as the BBI was introduced as the solution to the ethnicity and political violence in Kenya, its reception seemed to have evoked ethnic cleavages due to its various interpretation by different political camps. Surprisingly, although the BBI was supposed to foster national unity through inclusivity, it ended up deeply fracturing the nation politically. One of the most prominent potential driver of violence in the 2022 elections was elite polarization hinging on BBI. When relations between President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto, broke down, it trickled down to their

supporters in some areas like Uasin Gishu. BBI as a political deal-making yielded a welcome albeit superficial calm since a transactional electoral pact as BBI, was a fragile base upon which to build a lasting peace. With regard to BBI, Kalenjin politicians repeatedly warned that Kikuyu elites planned to stop Ruto from ascending to power by backing a Kikuyu candidate in 2022 elections. Consequently, failure by the Kikuyu side of the Jubilee coalition to endorse Ruto in 2022 election almost inevitably triggered major instability in Uasin Gishu.

On the contrary though, it is argued that divisive, ethnically laced narratives were not as prevalent in 2022 as in previous electoral cycles, with a few exceptions. Although national politicians continued to attack one another with barbed comments, they showed a welcome reticence to use hateful rhetoric as a campaign tool. It was the same politicians who now acted as their own policemen, and cautioned their fellow colleagues to beware of rhetoric that could incite ethnic animosities. During the run up to the 2022 elections, the council of elders in Uasin Gishu again played a role in agreeing on the candidates to represent people on different seats, as well as calming nerves whenever ethnic tensions heightened.

In summary, it was clear that the political reactions of the Kalenjin community in Uasin Gishu were the result of a unique combination of historical processes with roots in colonialism, other factors such as capitalism, pre-existing social, cultural, economic and ecological conditions that have only exacerbated their reactions. The absence of political violence in Kenya in 2013 elections carries important implications for the country and its democratic trajectory. By demonstrating that peaceful transitions of power were possible, even in contexts marked by deep-seated ethnic divisions and historical grievances like in Uasin Gishu. Moreover, the success of the 2013 elections served as a powerful reminder of the importance of inclusive governance, political

dialogue, and respect for the rule of law in preventing violence and promoting stability in electoral processes. Despite the politically charged atmosphere, Kenyans once again held relatively peaceful elections and there was no major politically motivated election violence in 2017.

As Kenya continues its democratic journey, the lessons learned from the peaceful conduct of the elections remain relevant. By building on the gains made in electoral reform, strengthening democratic institutions, and fostering a culture of tolerance and inclusivity, Kenya can further consolidate its democratic gains and ensure that future electoral processes are characterized by peace, transparency, and respect for the will of the people. In all these, it remains that weaponization of ethnicity holds the potential for both peace and violence as the case of Uasin Gishu during the electoral moments exemplify.

7.2 Conclusions

In Kenya, political leaders have often exploited ethnicity to achieve their selfish gains through violence. This has been achieved by playing upon deep-rooted ethnic prejudices and suspicions, most of which emanate from the legacy of colonialism. Coupled with specific cultural beliefs and practices, traditional and ethnic biasness towards certain ethnic communities' and the feelings of deprivation by communities which feel left out of political power, a recipe for political violence is readily available. This violence is compounded by different factors; political competition, deep ethnic cleavages, historical injustices, conflict over the control of resources and power all of which have built up into ethnic nationalism. In fact, the early political parties before and after independence, were formed along ethnic lines, thus entrenching ethnic differences, animosities due to economic deprivations, and making worse ethnic suspicions and stereotypes. After independence, Kenya's leaders only exacerbated the

ethnic differences through, unequal distribution of resources, and failure to deal fairly with historical grievances.

It was clear in this study that some political leaders and the elite in Uasin Gishu intentionally created ethnic tensions by playing upon underlying and pre-existing circumstances which were prone to evoke emotive feelings of ethnic unity and economic and political deprivation to further their own personal interests. Often, they weaponized ethnicity by using the traditional institutions of the Kalenjin, as well as economic, and political differences to incite the Kalenjin community in Uasin Gishu into visiting political violence upon their neighbors.

The government of Kenya has instituted several commissions and recommendations, with a view to finding workable and lasting solutions to the endemic political violence which results from weaponized ethnicity. Unfortunately, the various agents tasked with the onus of executing the myriad recommendations and laws, have not been effective as a result of lack of cooperation and commitment from the political wing, coupled with rampant impunity, and the tendency to hide within their ethnic cocoons when threatened with legal action. What is seldom appreciated is the complication provided by the historical nature of the conflicts as explained through the theories of Primordialism, Instrumentalism and Relative deprivation.

An investigation at some of the drastic effects of weaponized ethnicity in Uasin Gishu and Rift Valley at large, shows that the declaration of Kenya as a British protectorate played a key role in changing the social, economic and political status of the Kalenjin in Uasin Gishu. The colonial regime also played a role through their divide and rule tactics which acted as the breeding grounds for ethnic animosity.

At its inception, the main problem of this study was to look into the dynamics of weaponized ethnicity and its attendant links to intermittent political violence in Uasin Gishu District of Kenya since 1850. To this end the study submits a view of politics in Kenya as an ethnically driven competition for resources, and a survival of the fittest where the prize is control of the resources of the Kenyan state. This was built into the country from independence and was clearly further reinforced by almost every act of Presidents Kenyatta, Moi, Kibaki and Uhuru each seeking to rule a fractious community of sub-nationalities by a combination of patronage, incorporation and reliance on their own ethnic community for their security. It is therefore unfortunate that one of the most consequential principal fundamentals of the Kenyan society is that ethnicity is a typical mode of thought in everyday life and social interaction.

This may explain why the core areas of conflict in Kenya are never fully resolved. On the inter-elite conflicts, political leaders change their policy positions constantly guided by contingent political realignments. Therefore, as long as exclusionary ethnic territoriality persists in Kenyan society and consciousness as discussed in this study, the potential for violent confrontation between groups remains high, so is the potential for peace. The fault lines may often change significantly depending on the context when previously unwelcome occupiers become allies and friends, and vice versa, as political boundaries are continuously renegotiated by the political elite.

However, the entrenched territorialization of ethnicity as dictated by the political history of nation building, its association with economic prosperity and affective feelings of self-worth, along with the mutually reinforcing manipulation of the immigrant metaphor by political elites, means that ethnic violence remains a strong possibility and raises serious questions over the future of Kenyan democracy. Its

embedded narratives and cultural texts through time can significantly influence involvement in, and dynamics of, violence at the local level. As Jenkins (2012) supports, this argument does not preclude elite mobilization, but rather suggests a model of ethnic violence that operates alongside it and, to an extent, explains its resonance on the ground. The top-down incitement and bottom-up understandings of ethnicity, territory, and politics in Uasin Gishu in Kenya can therefore be interpreted as mutually reinforcing through weaponization of ethnicity during electioneering period. These research findings therefore, transcend simplistic perspectives on ethnic manipulation by elites, instead, focusing on the intricate cultural elements through which such manipulation occurs.

The main submission of this study is that certain unique cultural elements and features of some communities like the Kalenjin are entrenched historically. Such cultural aspects have been assigned negative or positive interpretations depending on the political circumstances for the benefit of politicians. The political elite have therefore become adept at manipulating these unique cultural facets during political contestations. Occasionally, such manipulations result into weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence.

To this regard, this study is original and different from previous studies on ethnicity and political violence and, therefore, is new in the sense that it extends the frontiers of historical knowledge production thereby adding to the growing literature on Kenyan historiography.

7.3 Recommendations

In the traditional set up of most African communities, elders were held in very high esteem and their word was always interpreted as law. In view of this high regard for

elders, they are, therefore, best placed in playing the role of preaching peaceful coexistence, tolerance, and harmonious interactions between the different communities in Uasin Gishu.

As the custodians and executors of their communities' customs, traditions and culture, elders should ensure that the same is used to promote and not to undermine peace between the different communities in Uasin Gishu. In fact, they can use their traditional ceremonies as platforms to preach and educate these communities on the need for, benefits, and importance of peaceful coexistence. Care needs to be taken though as the functions of elders among Kenyan communities in the colonial and postcolonial period seems to have somehow mutated and their authority of yore, can be utilised for other purposes other than the traditional maintenance of law and order, or the preservation of the community.

Among the Kalenjin as well as the Kikuyu, the elders usually play a great role in the selection of their peoples' leaders including the final say on the candidates for political office at different levels in their localities. These elders should, therefore, use this opportunity to only endorse and propose those leaders who promote peace through their words, actions, and in spirit. At the same time, since the elders also hold sway over the youth, who are oftenly used in violent confrontations, they should preach tolerance and acceptance of other communities among these youths.

A fragile peace currently exists between the Kalenjin and Kikuyu based on the whims and interests of their political elite. Having seen the role of their traditional institutions in midwifing this tentative peace, there is need to use the same institutions to try and find ways of settling the historical injustices which have become an impediment to

peacefull coexistence not only in Uasin Gishu, but the Rift Valley and many other parts of the country.

The government of Kenya should totally empower the agencies tasked with the mandate to curtail actions and utterances with ethnic connotations. All suspects of ethnic profiling, hate speech, and ethnic incitement should face the law indiscriminately in order to deal with impunity. Equally, the government agencies and individuals at the grass roots level should ensure that the grievances of non-local and local communities are not only listened to as is often done, but also seen to be acted upon in order to reduce chances and levels of repetition of the same during the electioneering period.

It was clear in this study that the colonial and postcolonial periods in Kenya have been rife with social, economic and political injustices that cannot just be wished away. It is high time Kenya woke up to a new political reality that the existence of several ethnic groups should not be a stumbling block to national cohesion and progressive development and as a matter of fact, it could serve to the advantage of the nation if these groups held the government accountable and demanded enhanced quality and efficiency with regards to service delivery. Multi-ethnicity only becomes a bane when there is wilful marginalization of certain ethnic groups due to the politicization of ethnicity by self-aggrandizing political elites who stir up ethnic emotions in a bid to capture political power as this tends to be self-reinforcing, both weakening institutions and under certain circumstances inviting the use of violence to gain power. Politicization, therefore, must avoid self aggrandizing politics that stir up ethnic emotions negatively.

Alternatively, Kenyans can also try the practice of negotiated democracy which has worked in some constituencies and counties, at the National level in order to root out the

feelings of political exclusion which breeds resentment among some ethnic groups.

Use of culture to bring people together is incumbent on both the past and the present, and such celebrations as *Utamaduni* day national holiday must uphold the good values while at the same time, confronting negative national cultures such as corruption, personalization of public institutions, and negative ethnicity. As such *Utamaduni* Day should become a true moment for “national introspection” on the Kenyan journey as a nation. For this to happen, Kenyans may have to acknowledge that cultural heritage can be used for national advancement.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Mungiki movement is a movement also captured partially in this study. The movement has a predictable tendency to be active when the presidency is not in the hands of Gikuyu, or is so threatened. The study however could not deal with this movement in depth. Is it possible that Mungiki presents the Gikuyu form of weaponized ethnicity in relation to the political landscape of Kenya as viewed from the lens of history? To this end the study recommends a historical study of the Mungiki movement from the perspective of weaponized ethnicity in the part of the Kikuyu ethnic community in the political history of the country.

There is need for further research on rape as a weapon of war during ethnic conflicts since it was one of the hidden effects of weaponized ethnicity and intermittent political violence. However, stigmatization remains a stumbling block in realizing the success of such a project hence a research problem for historians to engage in.

There is also need to shed more light on the efficacy of the application of the traditional justice system in combating weaponization of ethnicity and political violence. This is due to the fact that in the pre- colonial period, many Kalenjin and other communities

freely moved and could even settle among their neighbors peacefully as long as they respected the traditions of their benefactors. Hence these communities were bound to and regulated by their culture and tradition.

Weaponization of the church would also be a virgin research arena. A divide that is characteristic between the mainstream churches, many of whose leaders stood against autocracy, and the evangelical churches that did not, saying that they were committed to “praying for the Government in obedience to the word of God and praying for those in authority”. This is an area that requires more scholarly historical engagement especially given the ascendancy of evangelical Christianity in Kenya.

Not much study on oathing among the Kalenjin has been pursued by historians. There is need to do a historical analysis on the Kalenjin Oath and the way it has shaped the social, economic, and political life of the Kalenjin. This therefore is a gray area for historical interrogation.

Though the ICC case managed reduce ethnic tensions and strife by hanging as a colossal threat on agents of ethnicized political violence, there is need to carry out research on the long term impact of the ICC on the weaponisation of ethnicity and political violence.

Negotiated democracy was seen to have worked to resolve some potential political flareups due to perceived feelings of marginalization in some communities at the county and constituency levels. There is need for historical investigation into the use and impact of this political aspect on Kenyan societies based on the council of elders’ decision making model which worked so well for majority of Kenyan communities in the pre-colonial era.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Respondents,

My name is Georgine Anyango Onyango pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in History at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirement of the degree on, "*Dynamics of Weaponized ethnicity and political violence in Uasin Gishu District, Kenya; 1850 - 2022*" The purpose of this study is to obtain your opinion in the mentioned area. Your view and those of all other respondents will provide valuable input and insight on how to improve academic performance through a positive culture. The feedback will be available to the schools at the request. Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Thanks in advance.

Yours sincerely

Georgine Anyango Onyango

APPENDIX 2 CONSENT FORM

To be filled in duplicate

Title of Research; Dynamics of Weaponized Ethnicity and Intermittent Political Violence in Uasin Gishu District, Kenya Kenya, 1850 – 2022

Name of Researcher: Onyango Georgine Anyango

Supervisors: 1 Prof. Pontian Godfrey Okoth Phd

2. Dr Paul Opondo Phd

I confirm that I have read and understood the purpose of this study and had the opportunity to ask for clarifications on areas I did not understand.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time, without giving reasons.

I freely consent/ do not consent (delete as appropriate) that my name, photographs and any information provided by me in the interview, including names and dates may be used in this study.

I acknowledge that in case I have any questions or comments regarding my rights as a participant and the ethical conducts of this research project, I can contact the Director, Department of Post Graduate Studies at +254-0572505222 for more information.

Therefore, I agree/ do not agree (tick as applicable)

Name

of participant.....Sign.....Date.....

Name of Researcher.....Sign.....

Date.....

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview guide on objective one

Which was the first Kalenjin community to settle in Uasin Gishu?

Where did they come from?

How did they eventually find themselves in Uasin Gishu?

When they arrived in Uasin Gishu, did they encounter any other community?

Have you always lived in Uasin Gishu? If not where was your original home?

Kindly describe the political, social and economic organization of the Nandi during the precolonial period.

How important was land and livestock to the Nandi?

What role did the following have in the community; the elders, warriors, women, council of elders, youth?

How did the Nandi relate with other communities before the arrival of Europeans?

In case of disputes with other communities, how was it solved?

How did the arrival of Europeans affect the Nandi peoples social, economic and political systems?

Interview Guide on specific objective two

Describe how the colonial policies affected your ethnic community in terms of :

Land alienation

Squatter system

Taxation

Do you think colonialism contributed to ethnicity? Why and how?

Did the Mau Mau affect the relationship between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin? How?

Do you think the formation of early political parties contributed to ethnicity? How?

What were the differences between KANU and KADU?

Why do you think the Kalenjin leaders formed KADU?

Why did they leave KADU for KANU later on?

Do you remember any instance of political violence or ethnic conflicts before independence?

What was the problem and how was it solved?

When did the Nandi speakers come together as the Kalenjin? Why?

Do you think the land problems in Uasin Gishu were brought about by colonialism? Why?

Interview Guide on Specific Objective three

How can you assess Kenyatta's government and leadership?

How long have you stayed in Uasin Gishu?

How did you acquire the land you are living on?

Why do you think the government established settlement schemes in Uasin Gishu?

What was the reaction of the Kalenjins towards the formation of settlement schemes by the Kenyatta's government?

Did the Kalenjins encounter any conflicts with communities that settled in the schemes?

When Moi became vice President, did it have any impact on the Kalenjin?

When Kenyatta died how did the Kikuyu and Kalenjin react?

Interview guide for specific objective four

How can you assess Moi's rule, what were the advantages and disadvantages of his rule?

What were the effects of Moi's rule on the way Uasin Gishu people related to each other?

When Moi came into power was your community happy, why?

After Moi had been in power did your community benefit? How?
How did the attempted coup in 1982 affect Moi's rule?
How did multi-partyism affect Moi's rule?
Do you think multi-partyism contributed to violence in Uasin Gishu? Why?
How were the communities in Uasin Gishu affected?
Do you think politicians played any role in ethnic clashes? Why?
How did your community protect itself during the clashes? Why?
Did you experience the ethnic clashes? How?
In your view what role did the following play in the ethnic clashes? How?

Use of mother tongue

Warriors

Militia

Elders

Oathing

Land

The Majimbo debate

Politicians

KIBAKI ERA

Why do you think Kibaki won the elections in 2002?
How did the ethnic communities in Uasin Gishu vote in 2002? Why?
Did the referendum in 2002 affect the relationship between ethnic communities in Uasin Gishu? Why?
Has devolution affected the relationship between communities in Uasin Gishu? How?
Did Kibaki's government help to improve the relationship between communities in Uasin Gishu? How?
Why do you think there was violence after the 2007 elections?
Were you affected by the violence in any way? How?
In your view What role did the following contribute to the violence in 2007 and how?

Warriors

Elders

Administration

Social media

Mungiki

Circumcision

Land

Politicians

Why do you think Uasin Gishu always experiences ethnic conflict between the Kalenjin and other communities?

Interview guide on specific objective five

Why do you think Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto united in 2013 ?

How did they manage to bring their communities together ?

Why do you think their communities supported them ?

Do you think alliances like the Kikuyu/Kalenjin alliance will last? YES/NO and why ?

What were the responses of the post-election violence victims?

Do you think the Kikuyu and Kalenjin will ever fight again? YES/NO and why?

Why do you think the 2013 elections were more peaceful as compared to 2007 elections?

What role did the following play in the 2013 elections?

- ICC
- Cnstitution
- Media
- Church
- Elders
- Judidciary
- PEV

In your view, which one of the above do you think played the most important role. Why?

How can you explain the situation in Uasin Gishu after the 2017 election?

Was there violence in Uasin Gishu after the 2017 elections? YES/NO why?

Why was the violence not widespread in Uasain Gishu in 2013,2017 and 2022?

Do you think the 'Handshake' was a good thing? YES/NO and why?

What is your perception of the BBI?

Did the BBI affect the relationship between the communities in Usain Gishu? How?
In your view, was the BBI good for the country? YES / NO. Why?

Appendix 5, ORAL INTERVIEWS

FGD1 AT Besiaor on 25/06/2021

NAME	AGE
Henry Morei	72
Matayo Lel	78
Matthew Mos	80
Rop Nelson	79
John Ruto	53
Eliud Chomba	81
Felix Kiptanui	80
Kipketer Dominic	72
Tanui obadia	69

FGD 2 at Chepsaita on 21/07/2021

NAME	AGE
Peter Chisika Shichenga	60
Isaac Kipkemboi	65
Patrick Kogo	67
Charlse Otanga	71
Samwel K. Singoei	59
Jacob Mshisa	81
Joshua wangwe marindi	79
Kopi Mswahili	77
John Kopi	74

FGD 3 at Turbo on 16/06/2022

NAME	AGE
Maina Daniel	64
Phibi Isaya	73
Thumbi James	60
Munene Paul	70
Macharia James	78
Wangari Priscilla	72
James Maina	69
Zipporah Mulama	59

ORAL INTERVIEWS

Albert Kirwa	51	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village Elder
Andrew Sugut	70	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village Elder
David Rop	42	Turbo	16/06/2022	Farmer
Faith Cheron	65	Turbo	16/06/2022	Villager elder
Fibi Isiah	56	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village Elder
Fred Wanja	60	Turbo	16/06/2022	Businessman
Hellen Cheron	40	Magut	16/06/2022	Ass. Chief
Isaac Shaloh	48	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village elder
Joan Jepakogei	67	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village Elder
Joseph Koech	49	Magut	16/06/2022	Area Chief
Joyce Nasiche	58	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village elder
Nicholas Arusei	49	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village Elder
Patrick Kogo	62	Turbo	16/06/2022	Farmer
Tunai Naliaka	70	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village
William Kipkorir	59	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village elder
Wilson Tenai	69	Turbo	16/06/2022	Village Elder
Zippora Sawe	59	Turbo	16/06/2022	Farmer
Zipporah Mulama	63	Turbo	16/06/2022	Retired Nurse

Njenga Gaitho	81	16/06/22	Turbo	Farmer

Ali Kibor Kemboi	54	25/06/2021	Besiebor	Assistant chief
Amunga Titus	65	21/07/21	Kipkaren	Retired teacher
Birech Eliud	74	20/07/21	Soin	Farmer
Birech Mabie	67	16/06/22	Kamagut	Farmer
Biwott Shadrack	85	21/10/22	Huruma	Farmer
Boit Mary	78	20/07/21	Chepsaita	Farmer
Bungei Thomas	74	16/06/22	Kamagut	Farmer
Bushenei Matthew	65	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Retired teacher
Canon Mcharia	78	16-12-2021	Chimoi	Retired canon
Chelugui Victor	63	20/07/21	Soin	Farmer
Chemiron Ezra	73	21/10/22	Sugoi	Farmer
Chepturgut Cornelius	69	20/07/21	Chepkemoi	Farmer
Cherono Barnabas	74	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Farmer
Cheruiyot Susan	73	16/06/22	Kamagut	Farmer
David Kiose	66	29-5-2021	Tapsogoi	Business man
Lagat David	82	20/07/21	Kamagut	Farmer
Eliud Chomba	81	25/06/21	Besiebor	Retired teacher
Felix Kiptanui	67	25/06/2021	Besiebor	Farmer

Hellen Chesang	71	21/10/22	Huruma	Farmer
Henry Morei	72	25/06/2021	Besiebor	Farmer
Hosea Lagat	73	20/07/21	Huruma	Farmer
Jacob Mshisa	73	20-7-2021	Chepsaita	Farmer
John Kopi	69	20-7-2021	Chepsaita	Retired Teacher
John Ruto	53	25/06/21	Besiebor	Farmer
Joshhua wangwe Marindi	79	21/07/21	Chepsaita	Farmer
Julius Logot	77	16/06/22	turbo	Farmer
Julius Sawa	62	16/06/22	Turbo	Farmer
Kamau Felix	90	16/06/22	Turbo	Business man
Karriuki Joseph	65	16/06/22	Turbo	Business man
Kemboi Elphas	72	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Farmer
Kemboi Shaddy	81	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Businessman
Kemboi Stanley	69	29/07/22	Kosichai	Farmer
Kerich Solomon	77	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Businessman
Kerin Pamela	67	20/07/21	Ngenyilel	Businesslady
Keter Julius	72	21-7-2021	Kamagut	Opinion leader

Kibet Elphas	74	21/10/22	Huruma	Retired teacher
Kimutai Isaac	87	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Farmer
Kipchirchir Isa	67	20/07/21	Soin	Farmer
Kipkerer Edwin	60	20/07/21	chepkemel	Farmer
Kipketem dominic	72	20/07/21	Besiebor	Retired chatechist
Kipkorir Elicana	57	29/07/22	Kosichai	Businessman
Kiplagat John	69	20/07/21	Soin	Farmer
Kiprono Juma	79	16/06/22	Kamagut	Farmer
Kiprono Soli	61	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Farmer
Kiprop Nashon	65	21/07/21	kipkaren	Farmer
Kiprop Peter	70	20/07/21	Chepsaita	Farmer
Kiptoo Sheila	70	16/06/22	Sigowet	Farmer
Kirwa Hillary	75	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Farmer
Koech Evans	85	29/07/21	Chemalal	Shopkeeper
Kosgei Keino	76	20/07/21	Chepsaita	Farmer
Kosgei peter	57	21/10/21	huruma	Businessman
Kurgat Nancy	81	16/06/22	Sembut	Pastor
Lagat Nashon	80	20/07/21	Soin	Pastor
Lelei Julius	45	16/06/22	Magut	teacher
Lelei Samwel	45	21-7-2021	Kamagut	Farmer
Machari p Kimani	84	16/06/22	Turbo	Catechist

Magut Samwel	59	25/06/21	Besiebor	Farmer
Maina Daniel	79	16/06/22	Turbo	Farmer
Maina david	65	21/10/21	Huruma	Farmer
Maiyo Elphas	59	16/06/22	Sembut	Farmer
Kiplagat Martin	68	21/07/21	Soin	Farmer
Matayo Lel	78	25/06/21	Besiabor	Farmer
Mathew Mos	75	20/07/2021	Besiebor	Farmer
Michael Ngeno	69	20/07/21	Kapkechui	Farmer
Moses Chelagoi	64	20/07/21	Ngenyilel	Farmer
Mswahili William	74	20-7-2021	Chepsaita	Farmer
Munene wachira Paul	43	16/06/22	Turbo	Business man
Muthiora Patrick	89	16/06/22	Turbo	Business man
Mwangi peter	76	16/06/22	Turbo	Business man
Osogo Ambani	49	19/06/22	kakamega	Proffesor
Paul Chuma	79	21/07/2021	Chepsaita	Farmer
Peter Kosgei	71	21/10/21	Huruma	Farmer
Philemon Chirie	68	20/07/2021	Sosion	Farmer
Priscila Wangari	72	16-12-2021	Turbo	Business lady

Rop Barack	67	29/07/22	Emgoin	Farmer
Rop Nelson	79	20/07/2021	Besiebor	Farmer
Rotich Meshack	79		Chepkemel	Farmer
Saleh Kimeli Arap Samoei	81	25/06/2021	Nandi central	Farmer
Samoei Nelson	90	20/07/21	Sosion	Retired Teacher
Sangok Abby	56	16/06/22	Kamagut	Shopkeeper
Sawe Isaac	86	16/06/22	Kamagut	Retired chief
Silas Maiyo	84	16/06/22	Kamagut	Farmer
Tanui Obadia	69	21/07/21	kipkaren	Farmer
Thomas Koech	68	21/07/2021	Chepsaita	Business man
Wamua George	68	16/06/22	Turbo	Business man

Appendix 6: MMUST DPS Approval of proposal

Appendix 7: NACOSTI Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA Ref No: 769003	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION Date of Issue: 21/June/2021
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms.. GEORGINE ANYANGO ONYANGO of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research in Uasin-Gishu on the topic: DYNAMICS OF WEAPONIZED ETHNICITY IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE: A CASE STUDY OF UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA, 1919-2008 for the period ending : 21/June/2022.	
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Appendix 8: Archival ID

Permit No. 31081

Name:..... GEDRINE

..... АНГЛО БИЛГО

Address: P.O. Box 190

..... KAKAMEGA

.....

.....

Valid from..... 7/6/2021 to..... 7/6/2022

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Issued by..... 
for Director

RENEWALS DATES:

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2

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