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Roles of Women and Young People in Initiating Culture of Peace-Building in Kenya

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Abstract

Peace is considered to be an important part of any society as self-determination is not possible without peace. Where conflict arises, it is often grounded in social, structural, cultural, political and economic factors, and depreciation in one increases chances of conflict in a particular society. women and young people can be important drivers and agents of change in the development of their societies; this may be because they demonstrate openness to change, feedback and learning; tend to be more future-oriented; more idealistic and innovative; and more willing to take risks. Recent developments bring home the lesson that to achieve sustainable peace we must all work together in an integrated and coherent way, otherwise the drums of war will drown the music of peace. The role and contributions of women and youth to the Culture of Peace is not only important because women and young people represent the majority of the global population there are 600 million adolescent girls in the developing world and the global population is experiencing a youth bulge. In some parts of Northern Kenya especially among the pastoralist communities, women and youth have been considered agents of both conflicts and peace. This study therefore set out to determine the roles played by women and young people in initiating culture of peace-building in Kenya. The study was a literature based in which literature relevant to the topic were reviewed for the purposes of obtaining study themes. The study found that the youth in Kenya are playing a key role in peace building in a number of ways; school going children are actively involved in peace building through their activities which are meant to, among others, building relationships and reconciliation. These activities range from youth choirs, sports, welfare groupings, and reconstruction and peace think tanks. The study also found that as agents or actors, women have played significant roles in terms of being mothers, educators, mediators, peace activists and community leaders, coping and surviving actors, breadwinners and decision makers. The study therefore concluded that women and young people are a powerful force and an engine that should be tapped for eradicating violence, building democratic and participatory public institutions, particularly during and soon after the post-conflict peace settlement period. The study this recommended that going forward, it would be necessary the local organizations to increase the complexity of pushing for inclusion of more women and young people in peace processes.

Keywords: *Role, Women, Young people, Culture, Peace, Peace-building, Kenya.*

1.1 Background of the Study

Peace is considered to be an important part of any society as self-determination is not possible without peace (Kamola, 2015). Where conflict arises, it is often grounded in social, structural, cultural, political and economic factors, and depreciation in one increases chances of conflict in a particular society (Scheidel, Del Bene, Liu, Navas, Mingorría, Demaria & Martínez-Alier, 2020). According to society Scheidel et al. (2020), women and young people can be important drivers and agents of change in the development of their societies; this may be because they demonstrate openness to change, feedback and learning; tend to be more future-oriented; more idealistic and innovative; and more willing to take risks. Studies have highlighted that a large youth cohort need not be a problem if there are sufficient socioeconomic opportunities for young people and they can be engaged in meaningful, democratic national projects that will unleash their positive potential to contribute to their societies and the national economy (Berents & Mollica, 2020; Lederach, 2020). However, these researchers believe that this demographic dividend only occurs when fertility declines substantially, reducing the number of economic dependents in society. Furthermore, whether countries realize this dividend further depends on the availability of human and financial capital, the structure of the labour market, and on political stability, and how they approach their youth population after conflict (Suleiman, 2019).

According to Genger (2020), peacemaking process is done collaboratively, at local, national, regional and international levels. Individuals, communities, civil society organizations, governments, regional bodies and the private sector all play a role in making peace. Peacemaking is also a long-term process, as it involves changes in attitudes and behaviour, and institutional norms, it has been observed that shared natural resources can provide the basis for dialogue between warring parties, as can common environmental threats that extend across human boundaries and borders (Genger, 2020). Failure to promote such sharing of available natural resources for harmonious existence is a recipe for resource fueled environmental conflicts. Indeed, it has been documented that the current of wealth from the world's abundant natural resources is too often diverted away from populations in need, instead feeding conflicts and corruption, and leading to human rights abuses and environmental damage (Marques & Neto, 2021).

With the horrifying spread of and relapse into conflict in so many countries, from Ukraine to Libya to Central African Republic to Iraq, the principles of the Declaration and Programme of Action, including tolerance, justice, equal rights for women and men, and the right to dialogue and understanding, are as relevant now as they were 15 years ago (Hudson, 2021). Recent developments also bring home the lesson that to achieve sustainable peace we must all work together in an integrated and coherent way, otherwise the drums of war will drown the music of peace. Tickner and True (2018) opine that the role and contributions of women and youth to the Culture of Peace is not only important because women and young people represent the majority of the global population there are 600 million adolescent girls in the developing world and the global population is experiencing a youth bulge. But also because women and young people are key drivers of the radical change of mindsets, institutions and cultures that we seek. The promotion and achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment is both a means and an end for the deconstruction of militarism, negative masculinities and patriarchy which glorifies violence

and aggression, and undergirds the culture of war in all its insanity and senseless assault on humanity that we seek to end (Pathania, 2017).

According to Graff, Kapur and Walters (2019), the feminist movement and global women's movement, as was said by its strong votary Margarita Papandreou, has a vision which understands that we have but one Earth shared by one humanity. So there is a clarion call for a war against the culture of war, such that it will diffuse women-centred values throughout society and the world (Graff et al., 2019). Adeogun and Muthuki (2018) assert that women and their empowerment are crucial to advancing the culture of peace in all its vectors education, sustainable economic and social development, human rights and equality, democratic participation, advocacy based on true knowledge but also wisdom, tolerance and understanding at all levels in the family, community, country, region and globally. As the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 and other Women, Peace and Security resolutions affirm, women must not only be protected from war and the violence unleashed thereby, but they must be seen as agents of conflict prevention, of peacemaking, and as reconcilers in peace building in post-conflict. Many of the conflicts today are as much between States as between State and non-State actors and, increasingly, these non-State actors are claiming the territoriality and legitimacy of governments (Adeogun & Muthuki, 2018). This makes it all the more urgent that the international community support women's role and agency and leadership to rein in the forces of terror and violence, in protecting themselves and the community, bringing their sons and daughters to the peace table, and being there to hold them to the purpose of peace, to rebuild peaceful and sustainable societies and economies (Graff et al., 2019).

As stated by the Secretary-General: "Through education, we teach children not to hate, through education, we raise leaders who act with wisdom and compassion. Through education, we establish a true, lasting culture of peace." Women as mothers, grandmothers, and other family members often being the first teachers of children, they can play a vital role in educating young people to value peace and not war (Cromwell, 2019). Peace is not merely an absence of war, it's a nurture of human life and, in time, this nurture will do away with war as a natural process and who can be better at this than women who are natural nurturers, who are better disposed to find solutions through dialogue, are sensitive to human needs and rights and inter-generational perspectives (Cromwell, 2019). The role of women in achieving a culture of peace has also been affirmed in various normative instruments of the United Nations, but perhaps most importantly in the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 on peace and security, which will have its 15-year anniversary next year. In 2018, the Security Council adopted resolution 2122, which reaffirmed the role of women in peace and security, mentioning gender equality as necessary to ensure sustainable peace (Tickner & True, 2019).

Chandler (2017) argue that men tend to dominate the formal roles in a peace building process; there are mainly male peacekeepers, male peace negotiators, male politicians, and male formal leaders. Power is unequally distributed between men and women and the majority of women do not have a voice in local and national decision making processes. However, women do play an important, if largely unrecognized role, in peace building (Chandler, 2017). The underlying assumption is that women involved in these processes will help design a lasting peace that will be advantageous to the empowerment, inclusion and protection of women. Stemming from this theme is the commonly accepted approach of including women in decision-making processes and empowering women as decision makers and actors in all areas of peace building, as well as activities to sensitize male actors in peacekeeping- through gender-focused curriculum and

trainings, codes of conduct, and disciplinary measures for military and peacekeeping actors in response to GBV (Iñiguez de Heredia, 2017).

The international context of peace building policies and, to a lesser extent, programs, has evolved markedly since the mid-1990s (Moe & Stepputat, 2018). This evolution reflects the changing nature of conflict situations and complex emergencies, as well as the way in which nation states and international organizations continue to redefine the roles of various actors engaged in or affected by the conflict. It also coincides with important shifts in thinking directly related to international development. One is a growing understanding of the meaning and role of gender and gender relations in development, reflected in a widely accepted change of focus from women in development (WID) to gender and development (GAD) and the complementary notion of empowerment (Moe & Stepputat, 2018). This gives greater attention to the power relations between men and women in all spheres, from development projects to the workplace and home. It also recognizes that institutions themselves often inadequately represent women's interests, obstructing progress toward gender equality. This was accompanied by the formulation of new policies, and mechanisms that were later the subject of many assessments showing the limits of these approaches.

The International community recognized the importance of women's participation in creating the conditions for permanent peace thus on 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council adopted the landmark resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which acknowledged the critical role women, could play in preventing and resolving conflicts, negotiating peace, participating in peacekeeping and in humanitarian response and post-conflict peace-building (Krause, Krause & Bränfors, 2018). Among other things, the resolution calls for women to participate fully in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security. The resolution also requires the UN to solicit and take into account all viewpoints on gender issues in order to increase the role of women in all peace and security activities. It also requires all parties at war to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse. Despite these requirements, UN Women says the percentage of women in peace talks has stagnated at single digits since the resolution was passed. The results have had a devastating impact on women's lives. Time is up to press for progress to increase women's active participation in peace and security matters (Krause et al., 2018).

Ochieng (2017) argue that the evaluation of past failures has led to the realization that the development process itself needs engendering. Hence, 'welfare-oriented, add women and stir' approaches that treated women as passive recipients of development were replaced by approaches that attempt to engender development, empower women, and perceive women as active agents in their own right (Ochieng, 2017). There has also been an overt recognition that the participation and commitment of men is required to fundamentally alter the social and economic position of women, this recognition led to a shift from an exclusive focus on women to a gender approach that also factors into the equation males and the broader socio-cultural environment (Adeogun & Muthuki, 2018). Some authors have rightly pointed out that peace processes increasingly go beyond outlining cease-fires and dividing territory to incorporate elements that lay the foundations for peace and shape the structures of society. It is for this reason that some authors have argued for the inclusion of all groups in society in peacemaking efforts; some commentators have argued that the participation of women in peace talks is important as they are more likely to raise day-to-day issues such as human rights, citizen security, employment, and health care, which make peace and security plans more relevant and more durable (Högberg, 2019; Iñiguez de Heredia, 2017).

Over the past decade, the involvement of some young people particularly young men, but also increasingly young women in violence and extremist groups has led some to paint youth generally as a threat to global security and stability (Mguzulwa & Gxubane, 2019). But research shows that youth who participate actively in violence are a minority, while the majority of youth despite the injustices, deprivations and abuse they can confront daily, particularly in conflict contexts – are not violent and do not participate in violence. Moreover, a growing body of evidence suggests that young women and men can and do play active roles as agents of positive and constructive change, the recently adopted Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security marks the formal recognition of the positive role young women and men for the maintenance of international peace and security (Adatuu & Apusigah, 2019).

Throughout the world today, more than 600 million young people live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts (UN, 2019). They are among the most affected by the multiple and often interlinked forms of violence from political violence and criminal gangs to organized crime and terrorist attacks that plague their countries and communities, bearing enormous and long-lasting human, social and economic costs. Young men aged 15 to 29 account for the majority of casualties of lethal armed violence; while young women (as well as young men) are at heightened risk of physical and sexual abuse and exploitation (Vos, Jackson, James & Sánchez, 2020). Lack of access to education, basic social services, economic opportunities, grievance over injustices, and a generalized distrust in the capacity of the state to account for its citizens are fueling a cycle of poverty, hopelessness and frustration. Over the past decade, the involvement of some young people particularly young men, but also increasingly young women in violence and extremist groups has led some to paint youth generally as a threat to global security and stability (Vos et al. 2020). But research shows that youth who participate actively in violence are a minority, while the majority of youth despite the injustices, deprivations and abuse they can confront daily, particularly in conflict contexts are not violent and do not participate in violence; moreover, a growing body of evidence suggests that young women and men can and do play active and valuable roles as agents of positive and constructive change (Kallon & Kallon, 2021). Youth-led social and political movements, peace building and conflict-prevention interventions, and taking place at the local and national level, help build more peaceful societies and catalyze more democratic, inclusive governance (Kallon et al., 2021).

In the Africa, Women taught their daughters and sons, proper behavior and the ethics of society, and impressed on them the importance of such values as honesty, uprightness and the necessity to compromise (Sharland, 2021). As such, women have always been active promoters of harmony in the community, which can be referred to as a “culture of peace”. This natural role of women is not unique to any particular ethnic group, but rather is generalized throughout the African continent (Sharland, 2021). A similar trend of emphasis on the role of ‘mother as peace builder’ is also noted among women who have displayed the zeal to prepare and train the young boys who are one day going to be adult men of the society; they teach the boys the rules of leadership, particularly norms relating to the human relations and conflict resolution thus women remain a rich reservoir of knowledge to tap while engaging in peace agreements in times of conflict (Karbo & Virk, 2018).

Several African countries have embraced resolution 1325, and 16 states now have relevant national action plans in place (Ilesanmi, 2020). The African Union (AU) has also made significant efforts to integrate commitments to the idea of women, peace and security into its own security, crisis-response, human rights and peace-building efforts. The organization trains women as peace mediators, election observers and gender advisers, also, a number of centers of excellence, training

centers, and research institutes have been established, or added WPS initiatives to their programming (Ilesanmi, 2020). These entities, and both national and regional level, have been involved in WPS research, capacity building, and documentation; the Pan Africa Centre for Gender and Development in Senegal, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre's Women, Peace, and Security Institute in Ghana are examples of institutions which may or may not have a formalized or systematic partnership with government and RECs, but nevertheless have a critical contribution to make in the promotion of the agenda (Galdino et al., 2018).

The subject of women in peace building has received much attention in research. For example, Agbalajobi (2019) has done research that focuses on women's roles in peace building in Africa in which she is doing a case study of Burundi. The author outlines the common understanding that women are often seen as victims in conflict-areas. Agbalajobi (2019), however wants to outline the other roles women can play in conflicts they may also be part of, for example as soldiers, supporters, informants and so on, where women rather should be perceived as agents in conflict and peace making than as victims. Discussing these issues further are Schirch and Sewak (2015) who argue that since women so far, have had little participation in peace negotiations and peace building, women's interests have been ignored often based on the perception that women's role is that of the victim. The authors also discuss the sociological theory about sex and gender that we are not born into men and women but masculinity and femininity is socially constructed and taught during childhood and throughout life, a theory that will be developed in the section below and used in this research. Schirch and Sewak (2015) also underline the need to adapt to an intersectional perspective where more than just being a woman or a man determines on how you are going to act.

In Libya, women have been excluded from the formal work in the peace process and especially the mediation and reconciliation part (Alunni, Calder & Kappler, 2017). The organizations that work with mediation in the area state that the inclusion of women is difficult as the male elders who are the ones who usually take part in the mediations would not allow for women to participate. In some cases, there have been separate meetings for women and men, where the group of women share their strategies with the men and thus influencing the mediation (Larsson & Mannergren, 2014). One of these meetings where women met to discuss peace took place in November in 2017. Women from the major cities in Libya came to participate in a workshop set up by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and during these days the women discussed the issue of how to create a sustainable peace in the region. The women participating found that even though they were of different tribes and with different political belongings their goals were similar and decided to work together by influencing their societies and start the reconciliation process between their different tribes (UNDP, 2017).

In Kenya, women are still subjugated when it comes to peacemaking efforts due to poverty, discriminatory cultural norms and traditions and lack of education (Konde, 2019). This is despite the ongoing national and international efforts geared towards empowering women. According to Mutua (2020), the process of peace building generally ought to go beyond conflict management measures, as it involves developing institutional capacities that alter the situations that lead to violent conflicts. In traditional African societies, people engaged in activities that promoted peace through the various activities they engaged in. Resort to courts searching for justice when peace is what is needed may thus destroy relationships rather than build and foster them in the Kenyan case. In such cases, reconciliation, negotiation, mediation and other traditional mechanisms would

be the better option. There is a need to ensure that these processes include women and young people as active players.

Laura Shepherd (2016) discusses women as agents of change rather than victims of violence. She argues that previously many scholars argue that men are the perpetrators while women are the victims of violence in conflicts. However, Shepard means that the masculinized story of war does not describe the complexity of men's and women's role in war. Further, she means that by only letting women be represented as victims of violence undermines their agency and thus the development of peace building activities, in which women can participate and all their experiences of conflict is addressed is undermined. Another scholar who have used the concept of women as agents in conflict is Rita Manchanda (2015). She, as Shepherd (2016) want to change the way women are perpetuated in conflicts, where women are solely seen as victims, which she means is not the truth. Women in conflicts often take part as decision makers, negotiators, and peace activists and participating in the military struggle, the struggle she means is to start identifying women as agents instead of victims and strengthen their roles as agents for social transformation (Kokeno, Lutomia & Lutomia, 2020).

Justino, Mitchell and Müller (2018) argue that the importance of women in peace building should not consist of women being seen as more naturally peaceful and thus being abler to create a sustainable peace, instead women need to be part of the peace building for the simple reason that they are approximately half of the population. Furthermore, Justino et al (2018) consider the different activities women do in peace building which include; waging conflict non-violently, building capacity, reducing direct violence and transforming relationships. The authors outline that women especially engage in four kinds of peace building, for example they work as advocates and activists for peace, they pursue democracy and human rights, and they are peacekeepers, relief aid workers and work as mediators, counsellors and policymakers and in education.

According to Enzmann et al. (2017), in conflict- and violence-affected contexts, young people are commonly perceived as either perpetrators or victims of violence with young men usually assumed to be the primary perpetrators and young women the primary victims, especially of sexual and gender-based violence. Yet the lived realities of young people in these contexts are much more complex than these stereotypes suggest; some young people may be both direct victims and perpetrators of violence; others may be neither, but instead have to use their skills and resources to survive and support themselves and their families (Enzmann et al., 2017). Most mainstream approaches to youth and conflict over the last two decades have been preponderantly informed by "youth bulge" theories. These theories have been propagated in popular literature and the media with warnings that a "surging" male youth population combined with unemployment and urbanization is leading to increased violence and insecurity.¹¹ The world's youth population has certainly been on the rise there are currently 1.2 billion youth (aged 15- 24) in the world, the largest number of youth ever to have existed (18 per cent of the world's population) and there will be 72 million more youth by 2025.¹² Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa have very high youth populations relative to their total populations.

First research from development psychology, criminology and sociology (2019) suggests that some adolescents may be more vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups due to their transitional stage of biological, psychological and social development, although this is by no means deterministic. Second, material and non-material incentives can play a role in motivating young people to engage in violence. In some circumstances, some young people join an armed group because they conclude that it offers those better options whether access to income, resources,

protection or social status; however, research is showing that “greed” is rarely a motivating factor in its own right and that various forms of “grievances” are more or just as important (Cromwell, 2019). There is a growing body of research that demonstrates the link between significant levels of social, economic and political exclusion and lack of opportunities faced by young people, with the result that their transition to adulthood is blocked or prolonged. In certain contexts, these grievances and the associated frustrations can lead some young people to engage in violence. Profound social factors influence the behaviour of youth and particularly young men. Youth and young men are particularly idealistic and have a strong sense of justice. Yet where young men are not able to fulfill traditional and socially expected male roles (such as marriage, property ownership or employment), some may engage in violence against men and women to assert their masculinity. Equally, some young women may engage in violence to challenge predominant gender norms, gain status, access resources or as a means of protection from violence (Cromwell, 2019).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to a recent study of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR, 2017), women are rarely included in peace negotiations. In the peace negotiations from 1990-2017 women represented 2% of the mediators, 5% of the witnesses and signatories and 8% of the negotiators. Of the 1.187 peace agreements during the same time, 19% mentioned and made references to women, 5% made references to gender based violence. Experts on the area of creating lasting peace stress the need to include women in the peace negotiations since women’s needs are different to those of the men and they are often more vulnerable which is overlooked or forgotten in the negotiation process. This in turn leads to the peace agreements being less effective and less likely to be sustainable since the humanitarian responses are limited (CFR, 2017).

In some parts of Northern Kenya especially among the pastoralist communities, women and youth have been considered agents of both conflicts and peace (Schilling, Locham & Scheffran, 2018). For instance, it has been observed that among the communities of Nawuiyapong in West Pokot County and Lorengippi in Turkana County, Northern Kenya, women have now taken an initiative to attend meetings between the community elders, so as to exert pressure on the elders towards making peaceful resolutions. Furthermore, in contrast to the practice among pastoralist communities where women have in the past motivated young men to participate in raids, the women crusaders are now acting as change agents and discouraging their young men from such activities (Schilling et al., 2018). In these two communities, there are a group of women popularly referred to as the women crusaders, and they have been instrumental in pushing men (elders and youth-warriors) into committing themselves to resolutions reached during peace dialogues. Kenya has on several occasions witnessed violence erupting in the Rift valley as a result of pastoralists and farmers competing over the same land use or for vastly different uses (Muigua, 2020). Increasingly, stakeholders and leaders world over have agreed that ‘women’s participation in peace negotiations contributes to the quality and durability of peace after civil war’. This assertion holds true especially in relation to environmental and natural resource related conflicts. This is because of the important role that women play as far as nurturing and providing for their families is concerned.

In many parts of Kenya, the resource based conflicts have been worsened by diminishing pasture and water resources, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, disputes over land and ethnic boundaries, the absence of adequate state security, and the commercialization of cattle rustling (Mutta, 2020). Environmental conflicts have been perceived as a symptomatic

manifestation of global model of economic development based on the exploitation of natural resources, disregard for people's rights and lack of social justice. Furthermore, it has been suggested that there are about four key factors that contribute in the creation of environmental conflict: poverty, vulnerable livelihoods, migration and weak state institutions all problems that are present at the local level (Mutta, 2020). Despite this, a critical look at the cultures of most of the other Kenyan communities reveals that the role of women as compared to men in conflict management activities was and is still negligible. For instance, among the Pokot and the Marakwet, women traditionally act as reference resource people but cannot challenge or influence decisions adopted by the male dominated council of elders, the Kokwo. Among the Samburu, women are supposed to merely convey their suggestions through their male relatives. Such information may or may not be conveyed at all to the council of elders.

Inter-communal violence in Kenya relates to violent conflicts between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal identity (Omuse, 2018). Such conflicts may revolve around issues such as access and ownership of land or water resources, cattle raiding, or support for opposing political parties. The scale of inter-communal violence in Kenya has risen and intensified since the advent of multi-party politics in 1992. Inter-communal violence has produced visible internal and cross-border impacts such as the loss of lives and properties; the displacement of persons and communities; rise in inter-group tensions and distrust; and destruction of socio-economic infrastructures and processes (Omuse, 2018). The specific triggers of inter-communal violence in Kenya vary across regions and counties, however the underlying dynamic is often similar, specifically contestations over access to resources. The superimposition of ethno-religious identities of communities on inter-communal violence tend to colour and misinform the causes and character of most inter-communal conflicts in Kenya. In virtually all cases, the ethno-religious identities of communities are only mobilized and instrumentalized in the intense competition for resources (Malik, 2018).

Consequently, traditions, cultural norms and practices that may be considered repugnant and contrary to written laws and that hinder the participation of young people and women in conflict management, should be discarded (Konde, 2019). Women empowerment is essential to enable them participate in the various conflict resolution fora as they are the majority of the victims of conflicts. Their role as carriers of life and agents of peace has not changed in modern Kenya. As such their participation in conflict resolution and peace-building activities should not be curtailed by the adoption of formal dispute resolution mechanisms or adherence to traditions hindering their role on the same (Konde, 2019). Most of the studies have focused either on the role of women in peace-building or role of young people in peace-building, but none has researched on the roles of women and young people in peace building in Kenya. This hence created literature gap which the current study sought to address by seeking to determine the roles played by women and young people in initiating culture of peace-building in Kenya.

1.3 Research Objectives

- i. To understand roles of Women and Young People in initiating culture of peace-building in Kenya.
- ii. To investigate whether there are social, economic and ideological barriers on women and young people's initiative towards culture of peace in Kenya.

1.4 Research Question

- i. What roles do Women and Young People have in building culture of peace in Kenya?

- ii. What impede Women and Young People to create more effective and skilled agents of culture of peace in Kenya?

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Feminist Theory

This study was anchored on Feminist Theory. There are multiple feminist theories; one of the common grounds for all feminist theories are to highlight the gender roles. Gender roles are the basic way of how society is symbolically divided (Vaaitinen et al., 2019). Gender can be explained as how the society reproduce the individuals raised to be masculine or feminine. In different countries, what is feminine and what is masculine can be different from one another and thus one explanation is not universal for all societies. However, the understanding that femininity is constructed from masculinity, to where the two are opposites, the woman is what the man is not, is a basic understanding for how the gender roles are constructed. For example, if the man is active, the woman is passive, if the man is rational the woman is emotional (Hjälmeskog, 1999). Feminist theory is to identify these roles and question these by the consequences they may arise.

Pateman and Grosz's (2013) understanding of the feminist theory, namely of the patriarchal society will help to analyses the findings in this research. The authors argue that in the existing society, only people with male attributes can engage in masculine activities. A woman, who does not have the male attributes can thus not engage in the same activities and never as an equal. This since the patriarchal society does not have the place for women in the normative role of women. Powell (1885) cites Sir Henry Maine's work from 1861, where he argues that the eldest male in the family were the supreme power over the rest of the family. Judith Butler (1988) consider the difference between sex and gender and the psychological explanation to women's social existence. The psychological reasoning to women's subordination to men can be explained through the so-called gender schema. Gender schema is the way people address the incoming information and select how we react and act on certain information. Through this selective intake of information the individual can impose the current structures of the society. All this is learned from childhood, where the society teach girls and boys the gender roles that are associated with their sex. For example, boys are taught to be strong and powerful while girls are taught to be nurturing and caring. This results in that there is an internalized motivation to why women and men behave in different ways and how they regulate their behaviour to adapt to their gender schemas and the gender roles that are existent in the structure of a society (Bem, 1981).

By understanding the psychological explanation to how gender is taught, Judith Butler (1988) argues that gender is something we do rather than who we are, meaning that by accepting and acting in a gender appropriate way, we become women and men. Butler argues that with the help of feminist theory we can begin to understand the structural ways that culture and politics are constructed and reproduced. To be able to explore women's role in peace-building and in which areas they are included a feminist theory is applied. The gender roles present in the societies in the cases examined help in the analysis to outline the underlying reasons for why women are not represented in peace process at the same level as men. By applying the feminist theory on gender roles and the assumption that conflict and violence are masculine attributes this will seek to explain the findings of why women are excluded from formal peace processes but take large part in the peace building work since the peaceful work is considered to be a role that fall under the female gender.

By trying to understand women's gender roles, this helped the researcher to understand what women can actually do and to what extent they are recognized. When evaluating these structures and making them visible this can help to empower women and their roles in peace building. When viewing femininity as the opposite to masculinity where women are what men are not, this can work as an explanatory factor to why women are excluded from certain parts within the peace building area (Premaratna & Rajkopal, 2021). The concept of agency and the feminist theory of gender roles was adopted in this study as complimentary to each other, since this study considered two aspects to study women and the role they have in the peace building process in Kenya and if the roles follows normative roles that exist in the society. These two aspects were considered relevant since they would help to understand if the young people and women are only participating in the areas by which they are placed in for the peace agreement or if women are participating in more areas and if these are limited to areas that are normative to women's roles in Kenya.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Roles of Women and Young People in Initiating Culture of Peace-Building

Villelas (2017) examined the role of women in peace building while focusing on proposals for the implementation of 1325 Resolution. The study found that peace building processes that incorporate the gender perspective must necessarily tackle sexual violence as a weapon of war, given that it is, at present, one of the main impacts of armed conflict with respect to gender. The researcher argued that efforts solely focusing on the fight against sexual violence may result in other issues being overlooked, such as the presence of women in peace negotiations, drafting gender agendas for these negotiations and designing post-war peace building processes with a gender perspective. The study indicated that resolution 1325 represented an important step forward, given that it tackles both the impact of armed conflict and women's ability to become agents of peace and to overcome the reductionist view of women as victims of war. However, an analysis of sexual violence without the broader framework that is provided by 1325 may lead, once again, to this victimized view of women. The study further found that in the case of peace deal in Nepal, although women were absent from the process, and did not participate directly in the negotiations and signing of the agreements reached between the Maoists and government in 2006, the existence of Resolution 1325 was used by women's organizations to back up their claims for greater presence of women in the political sphere, and also to create gender agendas of a transversal nature. It was concluded that together with this absence of women in decision-making, there is a distinct lack of men in the forums and initiatives that have arisen as a result of Resolution 1325. As a result, the implementation of 1325 has been left almost exclusively in the hands of women, a fact that reinforces the vicious circle of the absence of women in decision-making on peace and security and the lack of men in the 1325 forums.

Ismail (2017) conducted a study dubbed 'Youth, Peace and Security in Kenya'. The study was a case study meant to assess the drivers of youth's participation in peace building activities by providing concrete empirical examples (through case studies) of youth-led peace building interventions. Thus the exploration of the contributions of youth to peace and security in Kenya transcends the orthodox "victim and perpetrator" stereotypes to include how young people actively contribute to the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts. The study was a qualitative inquiry and used a case study approach. It used a theme-based approach to interrogate the role and contributions of young Kenyans to peace and security. The study found that youth occupy multiple roles in inter-communal violence: as belligerents, victims and targets of violence, and as actors for peace. According to the study, the culture of 'Moranism' in some parts of Northern Kenya means

that young men can be more easily mobilized to engage in violent confrontation either as a source of pride and/or in defense of their community. Age sets are a key component of the social and political life of pastoralist communities in the North Rift. They can be found among the Samburu, Turkana, and Kalenjin sub-groups. Men in these communities are delineated into a number of age sets with a cyclical pattern. Of these different age sets, the warrior set (comprising of young males from late teenage years up to age 25 years) is one of the most important.

However, Ismail (2017) found that Youth are also actively involved in various initiatives as actors for peace including: peace brigades, Youth for Peace, Tuelewane and the Tegla Laroupe foundation, etc. some of which are explored in subsequent sections of this report. Even in that complex web of inter-communal violence, the agency of the young people that participate can hardly be denied. Many young people in their respective roles as perpetrators and victims of violence, and as arrowheads of peace and reconciliation have their motivations and interests linked to their individual and collective socio-economic, cultural, civic and ideological agendas. In most cases, youth participation in inter-communal violence, even in the context of structural determinants such as ‘moranism’, is linked to their awareness of their socioeconomic and political marginalization and vulnerabilities with violence largely seen as means to ends such as recognition, status enhancement, wealth accumulation, and influence in community decision-making structures. The scant extant literature on alternative spaces occupied and used by youth to contribute to peace building and broader social change processes in Kenya include the use of language, music and art that were particularly pronounced in the streets of Nairobi post 2007. Kenyan youth have been known to respond and relate to local music as it often speaks directly to their lived marginal socioeconomic and political experiences that are often left out in broader national governance processes. Some of the few documented cases of youth using art and entertainment highlight the role of Hip Hop in addressing memory and empowerment in informal settlements in Kenya.

According to King (2018), the use of Sheng in crafting most of the lyrics further adds to this appeal as it unites youth despite their ethnic make-up. Sheng is a Swahili-based slang, with bits of English thrown in alongside other Kenyan and non-Kenyan languages that is spoken largely by young people in Nairobi and its suburbs. Beyond some of the individualized use of art, music and entertainment for peace building by young people in Kenya, there are also large-scale, organization-based instances, such as Picha Mtaani which means ‘street exhibition’ in Swahili, a youth-led national reconciliation initiative formed with the support of UNDP Kenya for the purpose of engaging Kenyan youth in finding lasting solutions to attaining peace and reconciliation, and healing the nation (King, 2018). The project created a platform for peace building and national healing in the wake of the 2007/8 post-election violence through street picture exhibitions and galleries as well as public dialogues and discussions. Further, there was Maisha Initiative Kenya, a Nakuru-based youth-led organization founded in 2013 following the scale of violence and losses experienced in the Rift Valley (Nakuru) as a result of the post-election violence of 2007/8. It has a diversified membership base made up of young males and females age 20- 29 years and from different ethnic backgrounds working towards obtaining a lasting solution to conflicts in Kenya. Finally, there was Kibera Hamlets and Kibera Walls for Peace, an art-based youth peace building initiative in Kibera, a settlement that is infamously known as Nairobi’s largest slums and one of the major hotspot during the 2007/8 post-election violence. The KHKWP is made up of artists that use public murals and performance art throughout Kibera to facilitate communication and peaceful exchanges, and build unity between ethnic and political groups ahead of elections (starting with the 2013 elections) in Kenya.

National and Regional Networks and Peace Platforms (2019) established by Civil society and women's groups in Africa have demonstrated that they can convene, mobilize, and organize to ensure their active participation in a wide range of conflict prevention, resolution, and peace-building activities. This recognition of the importance of strategic and collective agency has resulted in the formation of more permanent and formal platforms for promoting women's participation in the process of preventing and managing conflicts, at various levels. For example, in 2000, the Mano River Women's Peace Network was launched to complement nationally-driven activities to consolidate peace in the sub-region. COCAFEM also established in 2000, is a regional coalition of women's groups and associations in the Great Lakes that was borne out of the acknowledgement of the regional cause and consequences of conflict in the region, and the desire of women in the sub-region to play a visible role in conflict management and advocate with national and sub-regional policy makers to address the impact of insecurity on women.

2.2.2 Impediments to Women and Young People Being Agents of Culture of Peace

A study by Cromwell (2019) indicated that around the world, youth are driving change and claiming respect for fundamental freedoms and rights, improved conditions for them and their communities, together with opportunities to learn, work and participate in decisions that affect them. At the same time, due to persistent crises, many young women and men are disengaged, at the extreme margins of society and have lost hope in the future. More than ever, it is now time to improve investment in research, policies and programmes to create an enabling environment for youth to prosper, exercise rights, regain hope and a sense of community and engage as responsible social actors (Cromwell, 2019). The researcher suggested that it is vital that women and the youth are fully engaged in social change, their energy, creativity and critical spirit in identifying innovative solutions and building bridges and networks across groups have been demonstrated in several regions. If empowered and provided with an enabling environment, women and the youth can channel this energy into efforts that will benefit sustainable development, democratic consolidation and a culture of peace, for both present and future generations.

Kamola (2015) while examining the contributions of women to peace building in Kibra Constituency, Nairobi City County, indicated that violence against women influences their participation in sustainable peace building in Kibra region; Nairobi, Kenya. The wild scale of discrimination, violence against women and the impunity with which it continues to be perpetuated remain the central obstacles to disseminating the good work being done by women peace builders in Kibra-Nairobi. The study reviewed literature on peace building in general, global situation of women in peace building, women's contribution in peace building, challenges facing women in peace building and theoretical framework. The study employed descriptive research design and the target population was members of women's groups, women's group leaders, and women leaders in the local administration. The study found that some of the challenges faced by women during peace building include lack of education, lack of participation in politics and their attitude. Those same sentiments were echoed by Thompson and Eade (2012) when they observed that male roles undermine women's participation in peace building. For instance, men are usually the politicians, diplomats or even the soldiers and do the talking; strategizing and the fighting hence they are perceived as the "doers" and the most suitable agents for peace building, conflict prevention and management. The study concluded that

According to Oosterom (2018), youth are one of the main victims of exclusion around the world, both in fragile and developed contexts. Ethnic diversity, as well as religious, economic, social and political differences, create multiple barriers within societies, which most often fail to respond to

the needs of young people. Oosterom (2018) believes that in this absence of opportunities and participation, youth become vulnerable and many times stay caught in a vicious cycle of violence and stigmatization. But as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon once said, “Youth are more than victims of poverty and economic downturn they can be agents of change. Inter-peace recognizes that marginalization and disengagement can lead to devastating effects in the lives of young adults. But if they are given the opportunity, youth have an invaluable role in the contribution of building more inclusive and peaceful societies. For this reason, in the past 22 years, Inter-peace has engaged youth in a wide range of peace building initiatives, where they have become powerful leaders of positive transformations in their communities. According to Cante (2020), working with youth has been at the heart of many programmes developed in West Africa; In Abidjan, Inter-peace and its partner organization Indigo Côte d’Ivoire work specifically with youth engaged in organized crime. Through a process of interactive dialogue, the project seeks to reconnect at risk youth with their respective communities. And in Mali, with its partner organization the Malian Institute of Action Research for Peace (IMRAP), programmes have focused on providing spaces for dialogue to promote trust and social cohesion by encouraging cultural exchange between young Malians.

The daily struggle for survival greatly limits the number of women who would otherwise want to become peace activists and builders. Notwithstanding, their skills and potentials and capabilities are quite significant. However, since those who are courageous and capable of involving themselves as catalysts in peace building are an endangered minority, they should be supported, safeguarded and strengthened with regular funding, training and capacity building in peace activities. Women should also be meaningfully included in peace assessment missions, conflict prevention and resolution as well as other decision-making forums and mechanisms that shape the most fundamental questions of peace, human security, harmonious human co-existence and survival. The study concluded that there is a great potential in achieving women’s full participation in sustainable peace building. Harnessing this potential requires cushioning recognition for women, commitment, leadership and integrity, transparency and accountability, improving institutional capacity and increasing the financial and human resources in the formal, informal peace and the human security sectors.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study determined the roles of women and young people in initiating culture of peace-building in Kenya. The paper used a desk study review methodology where relevant empirical literature was reviewed to identify main themes. A critical review of empirical literature was conducted to determine the roles of women and young people in initiating culture of peace-building in Kenya. The study targeted every corner of Kenya that has been embroiled in inter-communal conflicts in which women and young people have been fully involved in peace building.

4.0 Discussions and Conclusion

Based on the reviewed literature, the youth in Kenya are playing a key role in peace building in a number of ways. In Kenya School going children are actively involved in peace building through their activities which are meant to, among others, building relationships and reconciliation. These activities range from youth choirs, sports, welfare groupings, and reconstruction and peace think tanks. Another significant element of youth involvement in peace-building that the study brings on board is the military youths. The study reckons that most of the military who were involved in reconstruction in Burnt Forest are Youths. Reconstruction activities of roads, bridges and medical campaign were significant in peace-building. Furthermore the military operations in the entire

region of North rift pacified the region for peace building. The study concludes that youth involvement in peace building is sine-qua-non in the entire spectrum of peace studies.

Based on the reviewed literature, it is high time society started to treat women and young people as change agents in the peace process and not merely as victims who are vulnerable. Women are not merely passive victims, but also are important agents and actors in the peace building processes in Africa. As agents or actors, women have played significant roles in terms of being mothers, educators, mediators, peace activists and community leaders, coping and surviving actors, breadwinners and decision makers. As peace activists and community leaders, women have played a variety of roles and have been engaged in various activities, yet their role and participation tends to be ‘invisible’ in the context of the formal peace building processes. Most peace building activities conducted and initiated by women peace activists and community leaders have been carried out outside of the official and formal peace building processes.

Based on these studies, there should be a change in attitudes and behaviour and individuals should learn that women are effective and they should be incorporated fully. Africa has made progressive and significant normative strides with regards to the WPS agenda, at continental and regional levels. There have also been other regional efforts through various country consortia within a sub-region or efforts through regional civil society and centers of excellence in Kenya. Women and young people are a powerful force and an engine that should be tapped for eradicating violence, building democratic and participatory public institutions, particularly during and soon after the post-conflict peace settlement period. Women organizations should be identified at the onset of peacemaking processes and helped to work within the broader peace initiatives and to communicate their peace messages to both the residents of the Kibra community and the Kenyan universe.

Many young people in their respective roles as perpetrators and victims of violence, and as arrowheads of peace and reconciliation have their motivations and interests linked to their individual and collective socio-economic, cultural, civic and ideological agendas. In most cases, youth participation in inter-communal violence, even in the context of structural determinants such as ‘moranism’, is linked to their awareness of their socioeconomic and political marginalization and vulnerabilities with violence largely seen as means to ends such as recognition, status enhancement, wealth accumulation, and influence in community decision-making structures. The scant extant literature on alternative spaces occupied and used by youth to contribute to peace building and broader social change processes in Kenya include the use of language, music and art that were particularly pronounced in the streets of Nairobi post 2007.

Based on the findings, there is a great potential in achieving women’s full participation in sustainable peace building. Harnessing this potential requires cushioning recognition for women, commitment, leadership and integrity, transparency and accountability, improving institutional capacity and increasing the financial and human resources in the formal, informal peace and the human security sectors. Further, collaboration and team-spirit is particularly needed in preventing and fighting sexual violence against women. This includes working with parties to conflict, conflict resolution and prevention not to mention, enhancing early warning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms both locally and regionally.

5.0 Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions, this study recommends that going forward, it would be necessary the local organizations to increase the complexity of pushing for inclusion of more

women and young people in peace processes. Beyond the individual initiative of a mediator, a clear term of reference for mediators around women and young people's participation and inclusion is then critical. Beyond the lead up to the signing of the agreement, women's and young people's participation and inclusion in implementation and monitoring of the agreement post-agreement should also be encouraged. Increase in the number of qualified women and youth to complement a number of capacity building measures for women in leadership, mediation, negotiation, and election observation will also promote women contribution to peace and security. Rosters should be developed at national level to ensure that there is access to qualified women that they can deploy as part of their conflict prevention, management, and resolution efforts.

The African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS) is also urging countries to create national action plans on implementing 1325. This call comes as a result of the slow adoption and implementation of the 1325 by countries like Kenya. So far only 16 countries have action plans. There is the need to regularly remind countries of their commitments and accountability in the monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the resolution. African countries especially Kenya can also look into information sharing and documenting good practices, regional training, as well as monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of the resolution. The study also recommends that government of Kenya can also support national statistical bodies in incorporating WPS agenda into existing national surveys or data collection mechanisms, providing wider national-level data for monitoring and reporting purposes. This would allow for streamlining and harmonization of data for various national reporting requirements as well as assessing impact of interventions. Increase documentation of good practice on WPS nationally will also promote women and young people participation in promoting peace & security in other parts of Kenya.

Further the study recommends that supporting the development of national plans which not only mainstream gender internally within the national organization's peace and security architecture but also emphasize coherence and synergy with National Action Plans, and implement regional level programming through identification of high impact flagship projects to increase women and young people involvement in peace-building. The study further suggest that government should involve women and young people in peace building as they would be more unlikely to send their children out to kill other people's children unlike their male counterparts. Women are also more predisposed to peace. The findings established that women were grossly underrepresented and excluded in peace forums. By identifying their needs and concerns, establishing organizations, developing political platforms and lobbying for increased representation, women were able to achieve relative successes and laid the foundation for continued action that may encourage women's efforts and participation in the future especially with the inclusion of women representatives in the National Assembly. Finally, the study recommends that government of Kenya through relevant agencies should sign national level peace contracts and commitments. This could include National Peace Action Plans with specified time lines to guarantee and to ensure support for women's and youth's full participation in positions of leadership and the peace process. These commitments should be fully resourced, they should be developed and implemented in collaboration with civil society, be systematic, inclusive and also should embrace regular reviews and evaluation.

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