THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN PEACE BUILDING:

CASE STUDY OF KENYA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been to any other institution of learning for the award of an academic certificate.

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Dickson N. Thuku   **Date**

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the student supervisor.

....17/12/2017.........................

Prof. Philip O. Nying'uro
Supervisor   **Date**

ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of religion in peace building with the case study of Kenya. The paper examined the role that religious actors including religious individuals, leaders as well as faith based organizations have played in the process of promoting peace among Kenyans. Therefore, in an effort to address the study question and objectives, this paper examined the meaning of religion, peace and peace-building as a concept, how best it can be attained and maintained. The study also examined how religion as a non state actor can be used as a tool to supplement government's effort in an attempt to ensure peace and stability in Kenya.

The study was therefore guided by the following hypothesis: Religion enhances peace among Kenyans and the overall objective of the study was to assess the role of religion in peace building. Secondary data was used during the study where analysis from existing literature including journals, books and other publications were used.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACK – Anglican Church of Kenya

ADRA - The *Adventist* Development and Relief Agency

AU –African Union

CJPC - Catholic Justice and Peace Commission

CSO - Civil Society Organizations

CRS - Catholic Relief Services

DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo

EU – European Union

G8 – Group of 8 most industrialized countries

IPSTC - International Peace Support Training Centre

MCC - Muslim Consultative Council

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MRC – Mombasa Republican Council

NCCK – National Council of Churches of Kenya

NGO's – Non-Governmental Organizations

PFF   - Peace Festival Foundation

PDA - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

SLDF – Sabaot Land Defense Force

SIPRI - Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

SOPA - Seeds of Peace Africa

SUPKEM - Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims

TJRC - Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission

UN – United Nations

UNPBC - United Nations Peace Building Commission

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

It is quite safe to assume that all human beings desire peace. However, it is not clear what different individuals mean by the term peace, how to attain and maintain it still remains a contentious issue in our societies. Kenya as a country has in the recent past recorded incidence of insecurity in different parts of the country ranging from border conflict, cattle rustling, ethnic conflicts, revenge from Al-shabab insurgence, militia groups including Mungiki, Sabaot Land DefenseForce (SLDF), Bagdad Boys, Kamjesh, Talibans, Mombasa Republic Council and inter-communal conflicts that are a threat to the national security (African Press International, June 21 2008).

In 2007/ 2008 post-election skirmishes it is estimated that about 1200 people lost their lives and over 300,000 others were displaced and over 42,000 houses, churches and businesses premises were looted or destroyed (Human Rights Watch, 2012). The movement of KDF to Somalia in a bid to restore peace in the area also initiated several attacks with hundreds of people losing their lives through terrorist attacks in churches, political gatherings, social places and bus terminuses. The attacks in different parts of the country especially Nairobi, Mombasa and the North Eastern parts have been highly attributed to the Alshabaab insurgents who to some extent confirmed these allegations (Human Rights Watch, April 16, 2013). Also attributed to insecurity in the country are the rebel groups like the MRC at the coast, which have killed people in an attempt to call for succession of the Coast region from the motherland Kenya. Other groups include Mungiki in Central Kenya, SLDF in the Mount Elgon region in the late 2000's, SunguSungu in

Kisii, cattle rustling which recently led to the death of 42 police officers in Baragoi area, Samburu, inter-clan uprisings in Tana River and Athi River regions (The Standard, December 6, 2012). These attacks have grabbed our peace and a country which was once considered an island of peace is no more..

1.2   Statement of the Problem

For any government to move forth and experience social-economic and political development, security of its people and stability of the state must remain a key priority. The sate and non state actors should work hand in hand in order to protect peace and stability. The government should also use its resources to protect its sovereignty from external aggression and maintain peace within its boards and by achieving the state most probably attract foreign investors and consequently experience both social political and economic goals. However, without effective steps towards achieving peace, a government will have failed and this will in turn retard the development of the state and nation at large. Therefore, based on the aforementioned trend of insecurity in the country this paper examined the role that religion as a non state actor can play to supplement government's efforts to attain and maintain peace and stability of its people.

1.3   Research objectives

    i.   Assess the role of religion in peace building process.

    ii.   Challenges faced by religious leaders and faith based organization in promoting peace.

    iii.   Give recommendations and the way forward.

1.4 Research Questions

i. Does religion promote peace among Kenyans?

ii. What role does it play as a non state actor?

iii. What challenges does it face?

iv. What approach should it adopt?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

i. Religion enhances peace among Kenyans.

ii. Religion as a non state actor supplements government's effort to ensure peace.

iii. Religion can be used as a tool to fuel conflict.

iv. Religion can be used as a tool to fix warring communities.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Though I was really prepared for this research, I encountered some challenges of which I have to mention.

First, this study has conducted amidst classes and due to short time I had, it wasn't possible for me to carry an in-depth research. It would have been better had there been enough time for full attention. However, an interested scholar can extend the research to come up with alternative solution to the ploblem.

Secondly, I fully relied on secondary data which might not exactly depict what is on the ground. To add on to this, some of the data may be subjective depending on the researcher's perception.

1.7   Justifications of the Study

Some evidence is available in support of this that Kenyans and the international community are scared due to the insecurity in the country and despite the measures that have been employed to mitigate or find a solution to the situation, in some cases, the situations worsened (IPSTC, 2012). (IPSTC,2012) says that incidences like cattle rustling and ethnic clashes have been there ever since. However, this does not mean that they cannot be solved permanently. The failure of the government to create peace in the country and more so in areas of perennial unrest like Turkana, Marakwet and Samburu due to stock theft and in places like Tana River is part of the overall problem which is related to inadequate peace in the country.

The previous governments (not forgetting the government in place) have employed several ways in attempting to solve the issue in vain. However, some of the issues at the heart of such chaos like land, resources amongst others may need us to review the whole process, move away from the conventional diplomatic ways and invent ways of handling the issue. However, we should not forget that some require specific means and there are very many cases which have been solved through diplomacy. The contribution of religion in peace-building in countries like Nigeria and Mozambique justifies the necessity of us reviewing our approaches towards peace-building. Considering the above background, there is necessity and justification for this research study.

1.8   Significance of the Study

This study is of both practical and theoretical importance. Practically, it feeds us with information on why two opposing sides may choose to be peace-builders despite the unwavering environment. Through this, we can develop more efficient strategies within the Muslim and

Christian communities around. On the other hand, this study can also benefit us theoretically by enlightening us on the role played by religion in peace-building.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

Peace-building as a term gained momentum in the year 1992 when Boutros Boutros-Ghali came up with *the agenda for peace*. This was greatly boosted by the formation of Peace Building Commission in 2005. From that time onwards, this term has been largely used and in most cases used wrongly due to the ill-definitions it is given. It has been used to imply those activities which rise above crisis intervention like long-lasting improvement and construction of structures of governance. (Katanga, 2008). (Ronald, 2009) defines peace-building as a complete range of methods, stages and approaches necessary for revolution towards more peaceful relationships that are sustainable as well as structures and modes of governance. Peace-building involves capacity building of NGO's and religious institutions for peace-keeping. However, UN intensifies its definition on structural transformation aiming at reforms in the institutions

According to (UN Report, 2008), peace-building mainly endeavors to steady post-conflict state of affairs by intensification of state-run institutions. It also includes construction of constitutional rights, institutions and conflict-resolution practices and structures. This definition concurs with Lederach (1997). Lederach (1997) also says that efficient peace-building activities require a careful planning and participatory approach, and synchronization of efforts and commitments from both the local and international partners. Lederach says that peace-building requires a long-lasting commitment and involves resource and material gathering, planning, foundation laying, constructions and maintenance of the whole process. Central to the peace-building process is the revolution of cultures and relationships in the societies.

Peace-building can also be defined as interventions intended to put off the start or recommencement of conflict by generating sustainable peace. Therefore, peace-building should address the causes and possible causes of conflicts, build societal prospect for peaceful resolutions and thus stabilize the society economically, politically and socially. In other forums, peace-building has been defined as a conformity that leads to the enhancement of security in the society. Peace-building as a process has many actors which include: the government of the day, the civil societies and the international community. Through their efforts, the civilians will be assured of their freedom from humiliation and fear prior to, during and past skirmishes (Chadwick, 2002).

In addition to these definitions, we should be able to know that peace-building facilitates reconciliations in a way to dissuade direct violence. Peace-building also aims at changing people's attitudes, behaviors and beliefs in order to transform the dynamics amongst the people, both short-term and long-term, and create a peaceful but stable coexistence. In case of a conflict, before it becomes violent, some preventive measures can be taken to help in restoring peace. These may include diplomatic efforts, economic development, social, educational, security and health reforms which will address some possible sources of the conflict. Thus conflict prevention.

2.2 Situation of the Study

This study analyzes the peace building initiatives in Kenya from a perspective of human security. This study is specifically concerned with possibilities of bringing religion into the picture of peace-building in Kenya. This study does not consider religion to be the key player in building peace but recognizes the efforts of all other key players in the field and the ability resolutions

through coexistent efforts. This study therefore recognizes the peace-building initiatives of the United Nations Peace Building Commission (UNPBC). In brief, this study is guided by the key components of the PBC. In its analysis, this study reviews the historical trends in solving conflicts in the African continent with respect to Nigeria, Cameroon, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Mozambique and Sudan which have had the same conflicts. This study therefore provides an entrance for re-examination of peace-building in Kenya.

2.3   Review of Relevant Literature

Peace-building aspects were introduced in Africa when peace in Africa was disrupted by civil wars that caused violence to the citizens, children, soldiers and extensive displacement of people. There were also severe impacts on the structures of governance structurally, socially and on the psychological foundation of the society (Ronald, 2009). Due to peace agreements in most of African countries, several violent conflicts have been put off formally. Nevertheless, one third of such agreements do collapse within a five year period. This has made civil conflicts be a perennial problem in Africa. This has prompted the international communities to unite in peace-building (Roy, 1995). The international community had to re-think on how best to help the sub-Saharan African countries following the release of reports by the British-led Commission for Africa and UN Millennium Project. These reports coerced intergovernmental bodies like the EU and G8 to swiftly re-examine how best to help Africa realize the MDGs. Following the millennium declaration of 2000, individual-rights-based approaches to development and security were ushered in *(SIPRI, 2006)*.

Ronald (2009) records that though peace agreements seem not to be reliable; more efforts in different methods of enhancing peace have been put in place. Often, efforts in peace-building have taken a regional twist in attempts to address the dynamic issues in conflict zones. This was

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evident in Darfur (Sudan) case where the AU came in strongly to resolve the problem but proved woeful when it left the situation worse that it was, due to inadequate equipment, untrained personnel and inadequate resources *(SIPRI, 2006)*. The politics and economies in the war zones have been redesigned by several years of fighting. Power relations that result from the conflicts need for restoring the authority of the state and the rule of law are some of the reasons why peace-building initiatives become preconditions to a long lasting civil peace.

The UN has tried to fight insecurity and restore peace severally in Africa and by use of various methods. In the year 2005, it deployed over 65 000 personnel in 14 peace mission. This means it employed the use of military in salvaging some tough situations, (SIPRI, 2006). In addition to this, the UN intensified its budgetary allocation for peace restoration in Africa. This also saw the rise in NGO's in Countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, DRC and Rwanda. However, some of these countries like Democratic Republic of Congo have never known peace; Sudan walked into freedom when South Sudan got independence in July 2011. However, still there are some squabbles over resources.

Chadwick (2002) says that the need to address causal social, economic and regional imbalances in countries is at the heart of the solution for conflicts. This prompted some countries to go out of the conventional formal methods of peace-building.

With the devastating impacts of the 2007/2008 skirmishes in Kenya, the UN and AU tried their best to solve the stand-off over the just concluded elections and put to an end the loss of lives and property in Kenya. Amicable solutions had to be reached but future happenings were also to be discouraged. This saw recommendations for rapid transformation of basic institutions in the country (African Press International, 2008). Despite the efforts of the UN, AU and NGO's like SOPAYFWP-*Kenya*, GPFF and PCIA amongst others to restore peace in the country, there are

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some cases that cannot be solved. For instances, there are deeply rooted causes of chaos like the emergence of MRC and Mungiki, which are attributed to land issues. Notably, the Al-shabaab insurgents that are killing people in the country can be put to an end by strict security measures which include being pro active and not reactive. In addition, the clashes at Tana River, Mandera, Wajir and cattle rustling in various parts of the Country can be handled better through repentance and reconciliation which only religion can give best (African Press International, 2008).

Considering these factors surrounding peace-building as a process religion has a role to play in creating and maintaining world peace. It can be an additional force in the process of peace building. The religious approach in peace-building has seen warring communities live harmoniously among them the Nuer, Dinka and the Muerle in Sudan (DW, 2012) and among the south Kaduna communities in Nigeria like the Kurmin, Aduwan, Madakiya, Ayagan and Anfana (Daily Trust, 2013). (Holenstein, 2006) says that though there are some religious traditions that are very destructive; it is dangerous to claim ambiguity in religion without acknowledging the positive roles of religion in our lives. Contributions of religions from the perspective of statecrafts are usually brushed off by the local governments and the international practitioners and yet if properly put into use can be an incentive into the peace-building process. In agreement to this, (Smock,2006) says that it is regrettable that policy makers and politicians fail to acknowledge the roles that religious peacemakers can play especially in facilitating peace-building process and in building trust as well. This has led to the loss of the opportunities to embrace the political and religious virtues which can bring the standstill conflicts to an end. (Marty and Appleby, 1993) say that religion can win the trust of two or more warring sides, at personal level as well as at communal level. Through persuasion especially when those in

conflict get the chance to negotiate their differences out in a mutual dialogue, they can win the trust of either party.

(Smock,2006) says that religion also plays the role of balancing power in the society by simply challenging hegemony of the state, maintaining the identities of the groups, preserving the sanctity of life and providing alternative models of moral formation. (Ronald, 2009) also concurs with Smock by saying that through religion we are able to identify some overlooked social questions and thus pointing out drawbacks in the political framework of governance. Religion can therefore motivate and mobilize the society to focus on immediate issues. In such cases, religions become political in the sense that the religious activities impact people politically. Religion has a prophetic task in the public sphere which includes forming and informing public conscience, encouraging self-criticism and denouncing justice. These religious impacts and functions are intertwined with the ethical motifs which guide the responsibility sense. Through this power of transcendence, religion is able to embrace, refine or reject some aspects of culture. It therefore shapes values, establishes various ideals in people's minds and influences institutions (Rosen, 2005).

Nowadays, very many people, particularly the youth, are skeptical on the scope and role of religious movements in the peace-building process. Little is known to them that some of the most disparaging conflicts in history have been stimulated by people who belong to the same faith or the other. In addition to this bitter truth, most of the religious institutions have failed to sustain their spiritual role. I cannot fail to acknowledge that indeed there are some religious communities which have served as the source of peace and conflict at ago. This leaves no doubt that very many religious movements have the exclusionist attitude which has led to disrespect

for other religions and their traditions and boiling imaginations which limits the people's capacity in encountering and transcending respect fully (Chadwick, 2002).

2.4 Establishing the Gap in Knowledge

Having traversed through the probable causes of instability in Kenya, land issue remains central even in the areas where there is engrossed hatred for a neighboring ethnic community. Cattle raiding are also evidenced especially amongst the Turkana, Samburu and the Pokot communities. It will be very wrong to rule out government attempts to restore peace in these regions. However, there could be a missing link to ensure true renouncements and reconciliations that will last for ages. Despite the governments efforts and the advances from the NGO's and even churches in these lands, minimal and short-lived peace is evidenced. (Berkerly Centre for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, January 1, 2007). All factors constant, we often forget that the participants in these conflicts do partake in some rituals which are aspects of religion. We also forget that these people in the fore-front propagating conflicts are our religious leaders. We do forget that the formal settings for conflict resolutions might force people to hide a lot in their hearts *(Peace Net Kenya,* 2009)

Thus, this missing link is found in religion through which people get social reconciliation. It is through this social reconciliation that people reshape their multicultural expectations that bring peaceful solutions in the society. (Malek, 2004) concurs with this and says that it is possible since it transcends the legal framework for it is necessary to move outside the formal diplomatic channels especially when solving disputes. This could be one of the reasons why traditional conflict resolutions were effective and people lived more peacefully than nowadays. (Marty and Appleby, 1993) categorically puts it that religion allows for a deeper understanding and

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adjustments where possible. Reconciliations through spiritual convictions are critical in inspiring the involved parties to break the urge of revenge. This is what (Rosen, 2005) consents to by saying that religion as a process can cultivate mutuality which is necessary for the common good. It is through the spiritual links that we can establish the ridge between virtue ethics and the emotions and probably fix them.

2.5 Conflict Theory

This study is based on conflict theory. The chief proponent of this theory is Karl Marx. According to Karl Marx, there are two social groups in the stratified societies: a ruling class and a subject class. The ruling class derives its power from the ownership and control of the forces of production. The ruling class exploits and oppresses the subject class and a result there is a basic conflict of interest between the two. According to Karl Marx various institutions of societies such as legal and political system, are instruments of ruling class domination and serve to further there interest. (Machira Apollos,2011)

Religion according to Karl Marx is a tool utilized by the ruling classes whereby the masses can shortly relieve their suffering via an act of experiencing religious emotions. Therefore, as long as the public believes in religion they will not make any genuine effort to understand and overcome the real source of their suffering. Therefore, the ruling class majority whom are the elite have exploit religion as a tool to oppress the poor and even capitalize on there situation to radicalize and use them to further their social political and economic gains.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the overall methodology that was used to carry out this study. It outlines research design, data collection methods, data analysis and presentation.

3.1   Research Design

The study employed qualitative approach to establish if there is any relationship between religion and peace as well as the role of religion in peace building. Data obtained was analyzed to establish if there is any relationship between the two variables. This was prompted by its flexibility and the fact that quantitative data was of minimal use.

3.2   Data Collection Techniques

The study is totally based on secondary data. Therefore, it fully relied on the researches, articles, publications and journals relevant to it. The reliance on secondary data was due to insufficient time and inadequate finances to traverse the country to get firsthand information.

3.3   Data Analysis

The study heavily depended on content analysis where work published by various researchers, journals and books by various writers ware subjected to critical analysis to draw conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Data

The data used in this paper was retrieved from several researches, articles, publications and journals that are relevant to the topic. The data was then subjected to critical analysis to draw conclusions and recommendations.

4.2 Descriptive Analyses

Historically, Kenya has had varied problems which are the precursors of the perennial insecurity in the country. Kenya has for decades been a nation whereby communities are divided based on their regional and ethnic lines. Communities are distrustful and are always suspicious of one another. Feelings of inter-community hatred and distrust have aggravated for decades mainly due to the fact that a myriad of issues that form the core of nation-building have largely remained unresolved. These issues include access to land, inequality and regional imbalances, and impunity combined with a lack of transparency and accountability. These issues have eroded a sense of belonging, nationhood, and public trust in political and governance institutions (TJRC Report Vol. 1V, 2013). Others include cattle rustling in Samburu, Pokot and Turkana, ethnic clashes in Tana River, Athi River, Borabu and Kisii border, amongst other reasons which in one way or the other impact negatively on ethnicity. Of all these, land injustices come out clearly to be the major cause of insecurity in areas where there are militia groups like the MRC from Coast Province, Mungiki from Central Province, SLDF from Western Province and even amongst the nomads where they scramble for grazing lands. All these are attributed to scarcity of land and commercialization of agriculture which has increased land value as well as individualization of

land rights. In Nyanza and Western Provinces however, there are very few cases of land injustices. (TJRC Report Vol. 1V, 2013).

Nevertheless, there are several politically instigated causes of insecurity in the country. Some of these are directly linked to the politics of the time for instance the post-election skirmishes of 2007/2008 which created the worst situation in the country in its entire history. Some insecurity cases that are attributed to politics include the Baragoi killings, the formation of some of the millitia groups like MRC, Mungiki, Baghdad boys and SLDF. Most of the ethnic clashes are blamed on politics which is said to be drawing people apart thus creating the tension and finally the fight. The ethnic clashes in Athi River and Tana River have been there for ages but the worst bit was evidenced in the year 2012 and 2013 in which over 200 people were reportedly killed. Several people pointed fingers at some of the prominent politicians in the areas, and some of them were even interrogated by the NSIS. Also, in this category are the frequent attacks by the Al-shabaab insurgents in the country. Since Kenyan troops went to Somalia for peacekeeping, there have been attacks in the country, the most recent being the Westgate attack which the Al-shabaab militia has claimed responsibility.

Though this has been the situation, there have been attempts from all corners to broke peace in the country and especially in the affected areas. This has seen the employment of different approaches in handling the conflict-related issues. The following are some of the employed steps in history of the nation. The structural approach has been embraced in the country to help address the perennial issues especially in areas where there have been chaos for long. The structural approach is said to rely specifically on the social conditions that are likely to cause conflicts amongst people. This concurs with the public opinion that a long-lasting peace must be built on economic, political and social foundations which serve the needs of the general public.In

most cases, in embracing such an approach, there are cases of environmental degradation, skewed land distribution as well as unequal political representation. In case these social injustices are not addressed, long-lasting peace can never be known (Chadwick, 2002).

The Relational approach has also been employed in an attempt to realize peace in the country. This includes reduction of the hostilities that are war-related by transforming strained relationships. This saw the formation of squaring off, amnesty, trust building as well as future imagining. In this sense, the country struggles to minimize the poorly functioning communication with an aim of maximizing mutual understanding amongst people.(*SIPRI, 2006*).

Another way of peace-building is the personal approach. This move is geared at changing individuals. It allows specific people to undergo the healing process which will create a very big political, social and economic impact on them. This is because, some people are too influential and whenever they are hurt; a very big group will feel it. Thus, the destructive impacts of conflicts have to be reduced through whichever means available that will as well encourage personal growth to the maximum level. In peace-building and reconstruction, we must give priority to possible mental problems then integrate with rehabilitation efforts and peace efforts (Ronald, 2009).

Lastly, another means of peace-building that has been put to use is the use of Peace-building agents. This refers to the use of civil society in the post- conflict strategies. This entails including the whole members of the society i.e. from the leadership to the grassroots level. This is what Lederach refers to as the hierarchical intervention in making sense in peace-building.

4.3 Application of religion in peace-building

Despite the different approaches that have been used ever since, there has been an alternative way of tackling the perennial insecurity issue in the country. This has seen the use of religion to be used as a tool for peace-building. This is due to the significant role that the religious leaders have done in the past; in solving conflicts between warring communities. Appelby (1999) says that religion has the ability to influence conflict and also counteract the conflict with the same impressive power as a tool for peace. He tries to elaborate what causes these two opposing groups to take different paths and yet they confess the same faith. However, (Johnston and Sampson, 1994) on the other hand say that the differences in religion have been used before to cause wars. They point out that whatever has been hidden from the people are the actions of very many religious leaders and religious communities which points in different directions. In all these, they demonstrate how religion can be a powerful force in finding amicable solutions during conflicts. Thus, this leads us to the first research question: **What is the role of religion in peace building in Kenya?** Could there be some religious practices that can reinforce initiatives that can promote peace?

The constructive role of religion

Religions may have traditions that can be very destructive. It is however dangerous to claim ambiguity in religion without acknowledging its positive roles in our lives(Holenstein, 2006). He also says that contributions of religions from the perspective of statecrafts are usually brushed off by the local governments and the international practitioners and yet if properly put into use can be an incentive into the peace-building process. According to HAKIMANI NO 01/2013 *"Religion and politics are twoimportant institutions that need to coexist, as theycontribute to the well-being of the individual."* It also says that it is very unfortunate that policymakers and

politicians fail to acknowledge the roles that religious peacemakers can play especially in facilitating peace-building process and building trust as well. This has led to the loss of the opportunities to embrace the political and religious virtues which can bring the standstill conflicts to an end. In concurrence with this, Smock (2006) says that since time immemorial, we have seen faith-based organizations and individuals of different religious traditions very active attempting to end conflicts as well foster reconciliation between warring parties in different parts of the world. (Haynes, 2005) also says that for decades, religious individuals who represent different faith based organizations, have mediated in helping solve conflicts. Violence that is religiously instigated gets a boost from the daily social injustices, the never-ending sufferings of the people, hopelessness, frustrations and powerlessness (Gopin, 2000). In Kenya, the Muslim community feels that they have been sidelined on national issues. The tension between Muslims and Christian in Kenya was well evident when a Muslim cleric, Sheikh Aboud Rogo was killed. This incident sparked protests on the streets of Mombasa and destructions of property: mainly churches. In calming the situation, several religious leaders both Christians and Muslims beseeched people to maintain peace. The NCCK led by Canon Peter Karanja, Muslim Consultative Council (MCC), and SUPKEM leaders together condemned the acts and asked the government to thoroughly investigate on the issue (The Standard, 24th October 2012). Similar, incidents have also taken place in Garissa and Moyale towns where Christians were the main targets. Churches have been burnt in these areas and these leaves no doubts that there is a rift between the Christian community and the Muslims. In analyzing the situations, political scientists say that the marginalization of these areas fuels the hatred that is harboredby the two extremist communities (The Star, August 30, 2012). To add onto these, politicization of some religious issues can also throw in some weight on the inferiority feelings of the groups. For

instance the inclusion of Kadhi's courts for judging Muslims in Kenya was seriously criticized by Christian Members of National Assembly. Muslims in the land felt that they were being denied their right due to their faith and yet Kenya is not a single religious state to favor Christians only. (Kurtz, 1995) says that such situations lead to the weird feelings of hatred, prejudice, desire for revenge and hopelessness amongst people. With such feelings, hatred is built for ages and can easily cause violence among people. When injustice prevails for long, there comes hatred that is built among people which acts as the sources of violence. Though this refutes the notion that the rationale of violence is defeating an enemy is in order, for violence can be established to bring publicity and psychological victory (Kurtz, 1995). In attempts to resolve such conflicts, (Gopin, 2000), (TJRC Report, Vol. 1V, 2013) says that the government of the day must be inclusive and try to better the lives of all people across the board. Then, the respective religious leaders must also be involved in formulation of policies of national interest.

Though religion has its weaknesses, it is difficult to establish a long-lasting peace in the society minus involving religion constructively. All religions have their specific religious voices which must be accorded the same respect. (Ellis&terHaar,2005) Thus, religion is a crucial part of the available creed in the political, economic and cultural domination in pursuit of maximum profits. Absolute peace can be achieved when there is a sense of respect for spiritual values and human rights and responsibility (Malek, 2004). This cannot happen when there is a secular order. During the PEV in Kenya, 2007/2008, most religious organizations stood together in condemning the devilish acts. Organizations such as ADRA-Kenya, CRS, PDA and The ACK stood firm in condemning the butchering of people and were on the fore front in asking the two main parties, ODM and PNU to abandon their selfish desires of power and think of Kenyans too (Reliefweb report, 2008). The oppressive structures in nature can only be challenged by the

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prophetic voice of religion. It is only in religion that we talk of mercifulness, compassion, forgiveness and repentance. For this reason, believers and non-believers turn to religion in order to find effectiveness of social transformational models.

(Marty and Appleby, 1993) say that religion can win the trust of two or more warring sides, at personal level as well as at communal level. Through persuasion especially when those in conflict get the chance to negotiate their differences out in a mutual dialogue, they can win the trust of either party. In Mt. Elgon region, the PCEA helped solve a conflict between the Soi and Ndorobo communities over land. The CRS and the ADRA Kenya have also done wonders by reconciling the Kisii and the Kalenjin community. Together, these relief agencies provided relief items to over 6000 people and also lobbied for the two warring communities to cease fighting. They also lobbied for people from both communities to attend the reconciliatory meeting held on different places in the Borabu-Sotik border (Reliefweb, November 2008).In this sense, religion has the role of bridging social groups and thus supporting the mutual care and the social interactions amongst people. These leaders worked with the people at the grassroots level by encouraging them to support the peace-building process (The Star, 28th November 2008). Through the leaders initiatives, solidarity and friendship amongst people particularly from the warring communities like Kalenjins and Kisiis, Kalenjinsand Kikuyus, the Orma and the Pokomo, the Samburu and the Rendile amongst other groups can be enhanced. This takes place through interactive processes in which ideas are shared and substitute solutions are provided to the societal problems of the ethnic groups. Through religious motivation, communal identity has been nurtured via facilitation of these interactive processes. The application of alternatives in solving the social problems is a good indicator of the total commitment from either partyMalek, (2004). Religion therefore plays a major role by providing an alternative resource in moral

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discourse. It also encourages people to participate in these processes thus giving a platform for self-expression and direct communication. This space also necessitates an informal networking, flexibility and dialogue.

(Malek, 2004), says that religion has a constructive role in shaping the conscience of the public. Through religious virtues which are passed in form of civic virtues, religionsinstill solidarity, the common good and personal commitment. Nevertheless, the values that are religiously inspired go beyond self-interests.Through religious initiatives, religion collaborates the people with virtues and what is good to the society, a situation I can refer to as religious diplomacy. Religion therefore permits a paradigm shift in the way people relate hence reconstructing our social relationships (Ostien, 2009).

(Chadwick,2002) recognizes that religion also has a role in social reconciliation this refers to the reshaping of the multicultural expectations that bring peaceful solutions in the society. This is possible for it transcends the legal framework necessary for it to move outside the formal diplomatic channels especially when solving disputes (Rosen, 2005).With CJPC (Catholic Justice and Peace Commission) being in place several land disputes have been resolved in Mt Elgon region since 2008 to date. Some of these disputes had been in place for ages. However, CJPC as a religion allowed the disclosure of the essential hidden factors that were necessary for amicable solutions. It also allows for a deeper understanding and adjustments where possible. This is where religion finds its role. Reconciliations through spiritual convictions are critical in inspiring the involved parties to break the urge of revenge. This process can cultivate mutuality which is necessary for the common good. It is through the spiritual links that we can establish the ridge between virtue ethics and the emotions and probably fix them (Rosen, 2005).

The spirituality dynamics come up with specific ways of worship which deepens the engagement of the community with God. These practices or ways of worship in one way or the other do train and re-orient our imaginations and emotions in a manner that life that is in harmony with sound morality is produced. Social transformation cannot be realized deeply engaged at the character and attitude level (Osteen, 2009). (Ellis&terHaar2005)say that religion does not just give pronouncements publicly but also fully participate in the development of the public conscience as it aims at effecting social practice. Formation of public conscience clearly draws religion in the picture of peace-building. This role does not stop here; rather it extends to the task of influencing the policies to be rich in religious virtues. Through a religious contribution, the political discourse becomes very flexible and able to respond to the complexities in the social relationships. Religious involvement in formation of the public conscience therefore should be seen as a major contribution to the political process which is contributed to by almost all institutions. (Rosen, 2005).

(Kamrava, 1993) says that when people rediscover their religious traditions, they often strengthen their identity. This happens when these people engage in the renewal process. It is through this process that you find a local parish becoming a zone of sensitization and free speech. By preaching about the righteousness of God, people are prepared for the social change. This social transformation is an indicator that religion can be engaged politically though it has no political power. The sharing sessions in each faith is kind of political activities. Through the power of religion we find that all kinds of injustices are challenged against forgiveness, reconciliation and repentance. It is through this process that the dynamics of religion become a force in transforming the social life of the people (Smock, 2006).

While promoting a deeper understanding of life, religion does strengthen personal identity and consequently reinforcing solidarity amongst the groups through religious practices. Though religion reveals discordant tendencies, it does advocate for inclusive understanding of the civic life and the values required in enhancing the common good. Chadwick (2002)

It is also not in order to proclaim that all religious activities do suppress the ideals of freedom, pluralism and democracy. It has been noticed that there are a number of religious activities that strengthen some virtues like the virtue of participation for the common good. This can be achieved through mobilization and creating the spirit of mutual concern amongst people.

According to Smock (2006), religion also plays the role of balancing power in the society by simply challenging hegemony of the state, maintaining the identities of the groups, preserving the sanctity of life and providing alternative models of moral formation. This is what Ronald(2009) concurs with by saying that through religion, we are able to identify some overlooked social questions and thus pointing out drawbacks in the political framework of governance. Religion can therefore motivate and mobilize the society to focus on immediate issues. In such cases, religions become political in the sense that the religious activities impact people politically.

Religion has a prophetic task in the public sphere which includes forming and informing public conscience, encouraging self-criticism and denouncing injustice. These religious impacts and functions are intertwined with the ethical motifs which guide the responsibility sense. Through this power of transcendence, religion is able to embrace, refine or reject some aspects of culture. It therefore shapes values, establishes various ideals in people's minds and influencing institutions (Haynes, 1996).

Challenges facing religious institutions in peace-building process

It is the desire of every human being that they live peacefully with the rest of the world. However, there must be conflicts in the societies. This prompts effective measures to be employed in order to realize peaceful coexistence in the society. Though different measures are put in place, peace-building is not an easy task. It needs the strong to withstand the challenges met. Some of these challenges are so discouraging that not any ordinary heart can succeed in building peace.

In peace-building, there is the superiority and inferiority complex amongst different religious movements. Some religious movements are strongly grounded and thus feel so superior. Contrary to this, there are some movements that feel despised by other religious movements thus does not see the need of working together. Every religious institution would prefer working alone than toeing to the demands of a major denomination. This rivalry occurs amongst different religious institutions like the SUPKEM versus MCC, Christians versus the Muslims, and Catholics versus the Protestants. In this sense, these seeds of discord and favoritism are transferred to the respective followers. This rivalry cannot be easily noticed but it can also take place within a denomination. For instance, in 2001, rival groups of the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa clashed in Nyeri. These two groups are aligned to two feuding archbishops. In January 2002, over 500 squatters were forcefully dispersed in Nyeri district from Othaya PCEA from the church compound where they had assembled to pray. During this incident, very many people includinga Priest, wereinjured. Both the squatters and the worshippers claimed the ownership of the church property. Also in January 2002, in Marakwet, many people including a PAGminister were injured during a land dispute betweenmembers of a

Catholic church and the PAG. The dispute reportedly began when Catholic worshippers accused PAG members of making too much noise while praying in a building adjacent to the Catholic Church.

Inadequate financial resources are another great challenge to the religious movements that do take part in peace-building. Very many faith-based organizations do rely on the contribution of their members. To some movements, it is hectic since they might be willing to participate in the process but due to meager financial resources, they don't bother much. The CRS is better placed because the Catholic Church in Kenya has very many followers, well organized and is all over. However, there are some churches like the Friends Church (the Quakers) that is majorly in Western Province and some parts of Central Kenya, Seventh Day Adventist church is also coming up but it has a large following in Nyanza and Nairobi provinces. The population of a faith directly reflects its economic power and their ability to get involved in this charity work. In helping restore hope to the affected, these faith-based organizations are forced to provide items like food, blankets, tents/housing, clothes, amongst other necessities. Furthermore, they move from one place to the other as they try to reach people. All these activities need money and because most of the organizations depend on the offerings of their faithful, they strain. For instance, the PresbyterianDisaster Assistance Western Kenya region had it rough in Mt Elgon in 2008 when the SLDF were causing insecurity in the land due to insufficient funds to provide adequately for the affected. The Salvation Army churches in Kipkelion werealso forced to call for a fund raising mid 2008 after realizing that their estimated expenditure was strained.

Lack of good will from the government is also another challenge to these faith-based organizations. Just as HAKIMANI NO. 01/2013 puts it, for the society to move forward peacefully, religion and politics need to coexist for the well-being of all the individuals. The

policymakers and politicians however, fail to acknowledge the role played by religion and religious peace makers in peace-building. Though, there are some cases in which the government has been open on her willingness to work with the organizations, it is not enough either. It should be constitutional zed, just like TJRC Report puts it that no commission of national concern should be formed without fair religious representation. It should be known that most of the religions if not all, should be included in policy making and implementation of these security policies. Notably, favoritism from the government deteriorates the initiatives from these faith-based organizations in building peace. The Muslims sometimes feel shortchanged in these committees and occasionally the SUPKEM and MCC have challenged some of the government initiatives. Some protestant churches especially the Pentecostal churches sometimes feel undermined when the main stream churches are given positions or sponsored and yet they aren't. In most cases, religion is sidelined by the lay community, forgetting that the religious communities have in their possessions, enormous ability that can be fruitful in peace-building process through the religious communities' churches, mosques and temples which are virtually located almost everywhere in the country designed for worship. These structures act as the basic signs for those who love education, communication and health for people assemble in such places to worship. We find that religions possess some spiritual ingredients which are necessary for peace-building. These ingredients when properly organized through the religious communities, arenas for promoting peace, education and participatory governance need not be a real issue. In addition to this, religious leaders are strategically placed and use their influence and moral stature in advocating for justice and peace in the society. This takes place through initiation of rehabilitation centers, guidance and counseling, establishment of children's homes amongst other activities. In doing so, religion will also be helping in controlling social vices and

instead instilling virtues in people's lives. This perspective builds a strong base for peace promotion in the society (Crawley, 2003).

Alternative approach in conflict resolution and peace-building

This study would like to propose a new approach to peace-building which would better the results. This study has found out that almost all cases where religion was involved in conflict resolution, the results were impressive. For instance, in Mt Elgon where there was a serious land problem, the stakeholders had given up and it was rendered as the most insecure place in Western Kenya. The government of Kenya gave an amnesty to the SLDF members and any other member of the community who possessed any illegal weapon to surrender with no success. However, there are almost 50 members who secretly surrender guns to the area Bishops and Pastors (Peace-tree.net)

In addition to this, recently, the then internal security minister, Prof. George Saitoti involved Muslim clerics in Garissa and Moyale in a government strategy to curb insecurity in those areas. The government had given the first call for amnesty but there was no good response. However, when the clerics were involved in the second call, many people voluntarily surrendered guns to them citing that they don't trust the government (The standard, January 21st).

Lastly, the senator of Nairobi County recently asked members of Nairobi County to surrender illegal guns to him in exchange for Ksh. 50,000. It is reported that around ten people surrendered their guns and vowed to abandon banditry (Daily Post, 13th September 2013).

The Tana River area has been chaotic for quite some time and over 200 people have lost their lives. In late 2012, over 100 people were killed in Tana delta and the government moved in very

swiftly to quell the killings. However, this was met with instant rebellion and after some time, there were other similar killings in the area. Without the intervention of the religious leaders, the NCCK, the Catholic Church and the SUPKEM, the situation there would have been chaotic to date (Peace-tree.net).

All these accounts taken into place tell us one major thing; politics and religion goes hand in hand. There is no way that politicians will come up with policies and expect these policies to be implemented fully without the backing of the religious leaders. In all these, it must be known to all that the government is not well trusted by the ordinary citizens on some of the security secrets. In such cases, when the government will feel to be on the losing side then, it will use force which will be creating more harm than good.

For that reason, in coming up with a new approach, this study proposes an open and sober approach whereby all the stakeholders are involved. However, in this approach, the government and the religious leaders should be at the fore-front in calling for policy making and implementation of these policies. In this way, we will succeed as a country. From the discussion in this study, politics shapes life but cannot succeed without religion. This means that religion and politics complement each other in shaping the society.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

This study has found out that religion has numerous roles to play as far as peace-building is concerned. These roles are very essential to the realization of peace but are often taken for granted. Thus, the study finds it necessary to acknowledge this.

This study also finds it so difficult to go for the peace-building agenda fully without a back-up. This is due to the necessities involved in the whole process; finances, personnel, material resources required among others. So this study finds it challenging to blame religion for some of the unresolved conflicts/disputes in the society. Instead, the study gives them a pat on the back for the part that it plays. .

This study proposes a new dimension in solving conflicts whereby religion should be an integral part in conflict resolution. Sometimes, religion can be allowed to go for it alone; especially where truth and reconciliation is required. This is so because some people may not be comfortable sharing some of the atrocities due to the personalities present but religion offers a neutral ground for all.

5.2 Recommendations

With this experience, one can argue that religion influences social relationships in different ways depending on how it is practiced. For effective use of religion as a transformational tool in peace-building, this study recommends:

Exclusion of religion from the public. Scholars argue that religion is a private affair for it is something irrational and can't have a place in the public sphere.

We should embrace the dynamics of religion. We should therefore desist from creating theocratic states i.e. states that do not want to hear of pluralism of religion. The second position is found among those who enforce the idea of forming theocratic states. Such states do not recognize the freedom of worship nor do they understand the diversity of peoples' culture. This perspective of imposing on people certain religious beliefs will always cause chaos and especially in Kenya where there are very many ethnic tribes and different cultural backgrounds. Such states will worsen the conflicts in the country. There is freedom of worship in Kenya, let us all know that without respecting this, no peace will be available. We cannot claim to be having freedom of worship when Christians are favored than Muslims or the Sikhs. We cannot boast of freedom of worship when the government has a soft spot for the mainstream churches like the Catholic Church, Anglican or the Seventh day Adventist churches.

We should try the best we can to use religion in achieving our political goals. However, we should be very cautious in order to prevent hijacking of the religious cause in order to serve the interests of politics. In this state we should encourage a state that will accommodate all religions. Thus, there must be a mutual relationship between the state and the religions.

I. We should use our religious institutions in developing frameworks that will guide citizens in participating in governance, especially at county level. The structures will help in mitigating conflicts and provide forums for social dialogue.

II. There is need to have a national forum for religious leaders where they can deliberate on peace and reconciliation. This forum will be composed of the heads of religious groups and CSO and faith-based institutions representatives from all the 47 counties. Afterwards, organize a county level forum to engage with all communities healing and reconciliation.

III.   Religious leaders should hold common interfaith initiatives in the entire country where leaders discuss the need for national reconciliation and launch activities to foster healing.

5.3 Conclusion

Due to the fact that mutual care and social interaction need individual commitment, religious values cannot be separated from the public life. Peace-building processes and reconciliation will be better placed in religion where there is spirituality that brings restoration as well as social love and not political interest. Efforts of peace-building and reconciliation therefore requires conscious goal of promoting basic values that are dialogue based. For this approach to work, it should be established on the transformation dynamics. All this has to take place knowing that the peace building process basically requires character and attitude transformation. Thus religion dynamics plays an important role in promoting peace.

There is a feeling that religious leaders should be actively involved inessential issues like peace-building whereby they can be used in guiding people on political decisionsi.e. by choosing good leaders who are objective and interested in the common good .

Reconciliation is also essential for peaceful living. For the reconciliation to be rooted well, we need transformation of basic structures in the society. However, this is a delicate issue that should be addressed with great care to avoid creation of more conflicts in future. It is wise acknowledging that religion touches very sensitive issues of people's lives and probably, this can explain the reason why people trust the involvement of religious institutions in these tasks.

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