

## Nature and Extent of Women's Socioeconomic Conflicts along Lake Victoria, Kisumu County, Kenya

Sheila Atieno Oyatoh<sup>1</sup>,  
Kennedy Onkware<sup>2</sup>  
Ruth N. Simiyu<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>sheilaoyato@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup>konkware@mmust.ac.ke

<sup>3</sup>rsimiyu@mmust.ac.ke

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya

### ABSTRACT

*In recent years, informal peace committees have rapidly made their mark, either as precautionary or as response mechanisms to particular conflicts globally. Their main purpose is to prevent the eruption or escalation of nascent micro-level conflict into violent and more widespread crises. There is an upsurge of women's socioeconomic conflicts despite the conflict prevention initiatives that have been put forward along Lake Victoria shores. The study objective was to examine the nature and extent of informal peace committees along Lake Victoria Shores, Kisumu County. The study was anchored on a conceptual framework and utilised conflict transformation theory and Galtung Peace Theory. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study was conducted in Kisumu County. The study used both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The target population consisted of the following groups of respondents: fishermen and fish traders (3200) from Dunga, Ogal, and Nyamware beaches (men and women), state security officers, 1 county commissioner and county commander (1), sub-county commanders, chiefs (3), assistant chiefs (3), beach managers (3), the county fisheries department (15), victims of socioeconomic conflicts (778), and community members. Findings showed that the magnitude of resource-based conflicts in the area was high. The study also revealed that, despite several challenges faced by informal peace committees, they have demonstrated their ability to prevent the eruption or escalation of nascent micro-level conflict into violent and more widespread women's socioeconomic conflicts along Lake Victoria shores in Kisumu County, Kenya. Lack of legal and policy framework, lack of funds, and illiteracy are serious challenges affecting informal peace committees. The study concluded that informal peace committees are often small and simple initiatives, yet effective and sustainable.*

**Key word:** Informal Peace Committee, Sex for Fish, Socio Economic Conflicts, Women

### I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty and hunger are significant factors contributing to conflict at both domestic and communal levels on a global scale (Vanmeenen, 2010). Conflict is a prevalent risk factor that significantly contributes to the perpetuation of poverty in contemporary society. The occurrence of extensive and prolonged violence, as observed in regions such as Syria, can significantly impede societal functioning by dismantling infrastructure and compelling individuals to escape, frequently devoid of possessions except for the garments they are wearing. After a decade of fighting, Syria's middle class has experienced a significant decline, leading to the near eradication of this socioeconomic group.

The aforementioned variables, in isolation, do not serve as the sole catalysts for the initiation of armed conflicts. The propensity for violence, ranging from terrorism to civil war, is most likely to arise from political grievances and a predisposition towards conflict. This is especially true when poverty and inequality intersect with repression, particularly in regimes that exhibit characteristics of aristocracy, lacking solid democratic foundations while yet not being entirely autocratic (Mousseau *et al.* 2003). However, it is important to note that governance has the potential to alleviate the connection between poverty and war. The control of resources is a crucial factor in determining the economic and structural susceptibility of nations to conflict (Ross, 2004). According to scholarly research conducted by De Ree and Nillesen (2009), Nielsen *et al.* (2011), and Taydas and Peksen (2012), it has been seen that there is a correlation between social welfare spending, specifically in the areas of education and healthcare, as well as consistent aid flows, and a reduction in the risk of war. Conversely, it has been found that sudden changes in aid and excessive military expenditures have the opposite effect, increasing the possibility of war. In a similar vein, it has been observed that economic disturbances, such as the notable surge in global food prices in 2008, have the potential to initiate social turmoil, which may then escalate into armed confrontations within politically susceptible contexts (Lagi *et al.*, 2011). Throughout various communities, women have frequently experienced exclusion,

marginalisation, and discrimination due to the prevalence of patriarchal systems. Women, who are culturally assigned the role of caretakers, face the challenge of providing support for their families and maintaining family stability in situations where the conventional providers, namely husbands and sons, are engaged in conflict and unable to fulfil their financial responsibilities. The increased responsibility of being the major provider exposes numerous women to further instances of abuse.

Arguably, local communities residing along Lake Victoria in Kisumu County are currently experiencing fluctuating income sources due to instability in the economic and social sectors. According to the Executive Director and Programmes Coordinator of the Kenya Female Advisory Organisation (KEFEADO), Oketch (2015, p.3) reported that approximately 61% of individuals in these communities face periods without cash, while 36% are forced to skip meals due to insufficient funds or food availability. The author noted that fishing, which forms the basis of food production, especially for the majority of rural people along Lake Victoria, has declined sharply because Lake Victoria, as a shared resource, has undergone substantial changes that have threatened its ecosystem and resources therein.

This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the present state of socioeconomic problems faced by women residing in the vicinity of Lake Victoria, Kisumu County. More specifically, it focuses on the beaches of Nyamware, Ogal, and Dunga. The phenomenon of "fish for sex," which is believed to be influenced by evolving ecological conditions and prevalent socioeconomic and cultural variables, is examined in detail (Mojola, 2014). The gendered dynamics within the fishing industry, characterised by a predominance of men engaged in fish-catching activities and women involved in fish purchasing, processing, and marketing, are believed to contribute to the perpetuation of transnational sexual relationships. These relationships have been linked to a heightened vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (Allison & Seeley, 2004; Merten & Haller, 2007). This situation seems to impose an economic disadvantage on male individuals pursuing a career as fishmongers in the fish-buying industry.

In recent years, informal peace committees have emerged as effective mechanisms for the prevention and management of ongoing disputes among belligerent sides. The transition entails a shift from a state of conflict to a state of peaceful coexistence in the future. The underlying assumption of this argument is that addressing individuals' needs effectively mitigates social unrest and the prevalence of illegal activities resulting from conflicts, thereby averting a recurrence of violence. The utilisation of traditional methods to address inter-community issues is a means of achieving sustained peace within these communities. The concept has garnered significant traction in both wealthy and developing nations (Tache & Oba, 2009). Intellectual property crimes (IPCs) are prevalent in wealthy nations such as the United States of America, many countries in Asia, and the United Kingdom. In the United States, nations such as Peru and Brazil have been documented as having implemented informal peace accords as a means of addressing persistent conflicts within their respective communities (Tavares, 2008). Chinese communities are increasingly adopting indigenous or informal peace committees as a means to achieve sustainable peace by addressing the root causes of conflicts within these communities (Wallenstein, 2015).

Along the Lake Victoria shoreline, socioeconomic disputes are a common occurrence. The combination of diminishing fish populations and the rising worldwide need for fisheries products is exacerbating the likelihood of fisheries conflict (Crona et al., 2016). According to McClanahan et al. (2015), there exists a significant correlation between fisheries and food security. The authors also projected that conflicts related to fisheries will escalate due to an expanding disparity in access to fisheries resources between the northern and southern regions. A significant proportion of individuals engaged in fishing activities reside in developing nations, where fisheries play a crucial role in ensuring food security and, consequently, maintaining social stability (Muawanah et al., 2012; Hendrix & Brinkman, 2013). The aforementioned conflicts resulted in significant population relocations and hindered progress in both economic and human development.

Whereas informal peace committees have been tasked with the responsibility of ensuring mitigation and managing conflicts among the conflicting community members through the use of both traditional and modern means, their role has remained dysfunctional within the community. Despite the fact that steps have been put in place to establish the necessary framework to promote a more sustainable approach to the management of these conflicts, women's socioeconomic conflicts have still manifested along Lake Victoria shores in Kisumu County.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 Theoretical Framework

The research was grounded in Conflict Transformation Theory, which conceptualizes conflict as a protracted phenomenon necessitating modifications in cultural, structural, and personal dimensions of conflict over an extended

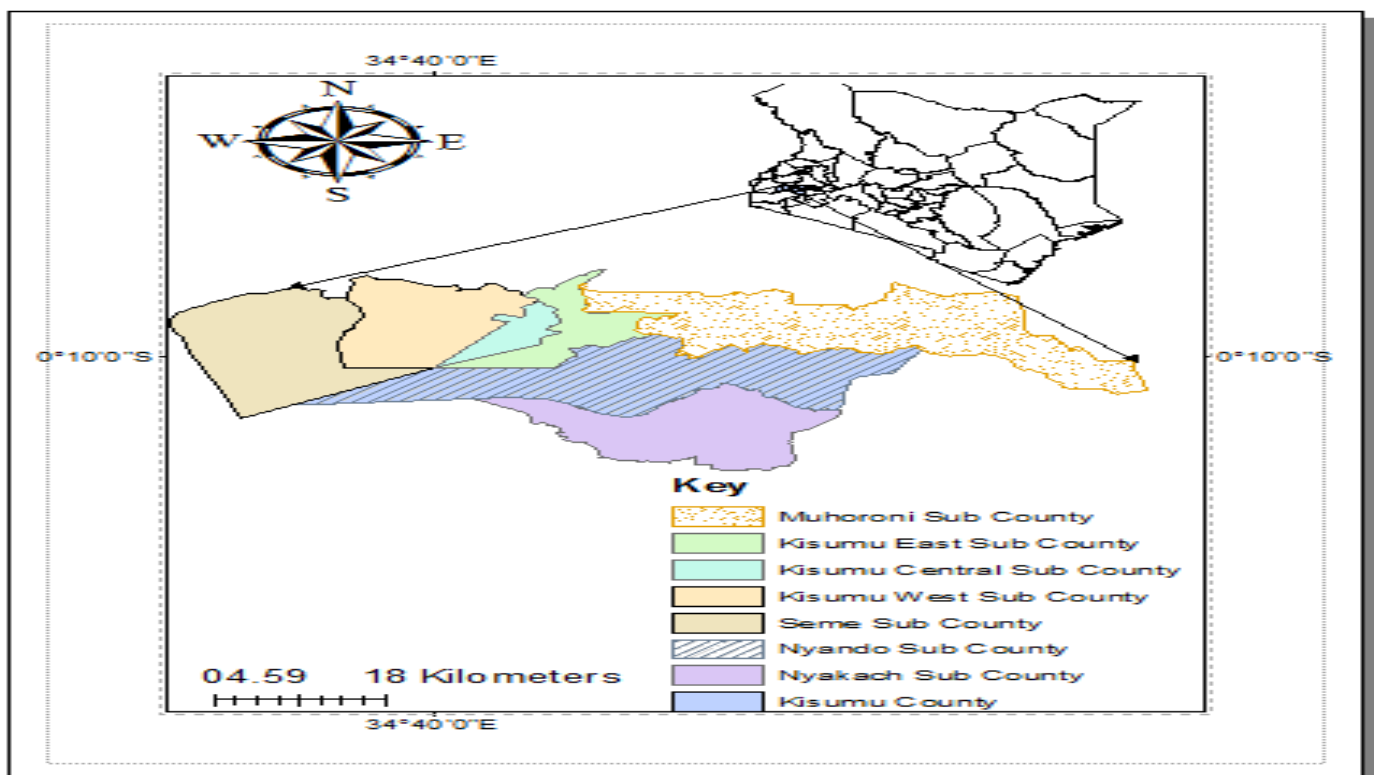
period of time. Conflict transformation does not aim to simply maintain the existing state of affairs but rather encompasses a comprehensive and enduring approach that prioritizes the outcomes, structures, and processes associated with social change and justice. Paffenholz et al. (1997) are recognized as proponents of conflict transformation theory. The theory emphasizes the significance of addressing the unequal distribution of power and cultural disparities among disputing parties in order to achieve durable and sustainable peace. For conflict transformation to provide productive outcomes, it is imperative that it take place across all societal levels in a parallel and interconnected manner. (Buckley-Zistel, 2008)

According to Buckley-Zistel (2008), conflict management is based on culturally relevant forms of conflict resolution that seek to empower the affected parties and promote their acknowledgment. Given that the majority of communities possess their own distinct strategies and systems for addressing, handling, and averting conflicts, endeavors aimed at conflict transformation necessitate the inclusion of, and deference to, community-based resources and peace-building initiatives that align with the existing cultural frameworks. The assertion that culture serves as a vital asset in the management of conflicts is an established reality. Numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental entities have actively advocated for the implementation of informal and indigenous conflict management initiatives within African communities.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive research designs in its research. According to Kothari (2004), descriptive research design is a methodology employed to gather information through the means of conducting interviews or delivering questionnaires to a selected group of people. The research primarily focused on gathering quantitative data regarding informal peace committees, as well as information from many relevant stakeholders and existing literature obtained from physical and electronic libraries. This data collection process encompassed considerations of temporal, spatial, and other contextual changes. Orodho and Kombo (2003) assert that the utilization of descriptive survey methodology enables the collection of data pertaining to individuals' attitudes, views, habits, and social issues.

The study was conducted in Kisumu County as presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1**  
*Study Area Map, Kisumu County*  
 Source: GIS expert, 2023

Kisumu County is one of 47 counties in the Republic of Kenya. Its borders follow those of the original Kisumu District, one of the former administrative districts of the former Nyanza Province in western Kenya. Its headquarters are in Kisumu City, which is the third-largest city in Kenya after the capital Nairobi and the coastal city of Mombasa. It has a population of 1,155,574 (according to the 2021 National Census). The land area of Kisumu County totals 2085.9 km<sup>2</sup> (KNBS, 2019).

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 Gender of the respondents

The study sought to ascertain the gender of respondents, that is, fishers and fish mongers/traders along the shores and how impactful it is in economic security. The study found out that, out of 311 respondents, 34 (10.93%) were male and 277 (89.07%) were females. This shows that majority of the respondents were female thus translating that female are the mostly affected in terms of socioeconomic conflicts along the Lake Victoria shores. The results are illustrated in Figure 1.

### 4.2 Age of the respondents

The study also sought to ascertain demographic contribution of age in peace matters and management of women's socioeconomic conflicts. The age profile of the study respondents is presented in Table 1. The study found out that, out of 311 respondents, 4.2% (N=13) were between 18-27 years, 35.7% (N=111) were 28-37 years, 51.1% (N=159) were 38-47 years, 4.5% (N=14) were 48-57 years, 3.5% (N=11) were between 58-67 years, and those above 68 years were 1.0% (N=3).

**Table 1**

*Age of the Respondents*

|                    | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 18-27 Years        | 13        | 4.2     | 4.2                |
| 28-37 Years        | 111       | 35.7    | 39.9               |
| 38-47 Years        | 159       | 51.1    | 91                 |
| 48-57 Years        | 14        | 4.5     | 95.5               |
| 58-67 Years        | 11        | 3.5     | 99                 |
| 68 Years and above | 3         | 1       | 100                |

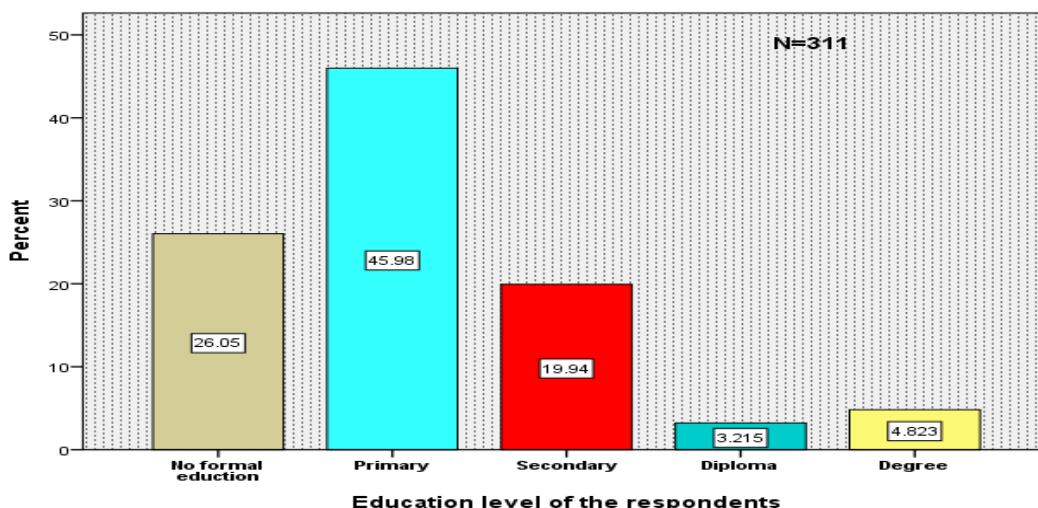
The respondents felt that their role in informal peace committees was significant and, in some cases, innovative. On the other hand, other peace builders remain skeptical about the value of women in informal peace committees;

*Some women who are parents fail to discipline their children. Parents fail to take their responsibilities as parents, they are busy searching for money and forget about their children and that is why if someone dies, their children sell all their properties and, in the end, they end up being criminals* (FGD with village elders, Nyamware, October, 28, 2022).

The role of youth and their contribution to peace efforts have been examined by many students, for example, del Felice and Wisler (2007) and Erdogan et al. (2021). In the work done by Erdogan et al. (2021), various youth-led peacebuilding initiatives across the world are highlighted. For example, the Rwandan youth-led project titled *Never Again Rwanda* (NAR) has established platforms to engage youth to promote peace in post-genocide Rwanda. NAR focuses on youth engagement within the community to create spaces for peace. The project creates works specifically with youth from Genocide Survival, ex-perpetrator, and returnee backgrounds. This platform has greatly increased youth participation in peacebuilding in Rwanda (Erdogan et al., 2021).

### 4.3 Education levels of the respondents

The study also sought to examine the levels of education of the respondents. Out of the total respondents, 81 (26.05%) had no formal education, 143 (45.965%) had attained primary education, 62 (19.94%) had attained secondary education, 10 (3.2%) had diploma education while 15 (4.8%) had attained university education. The results are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2**  
*Education Levels of The Respondents*

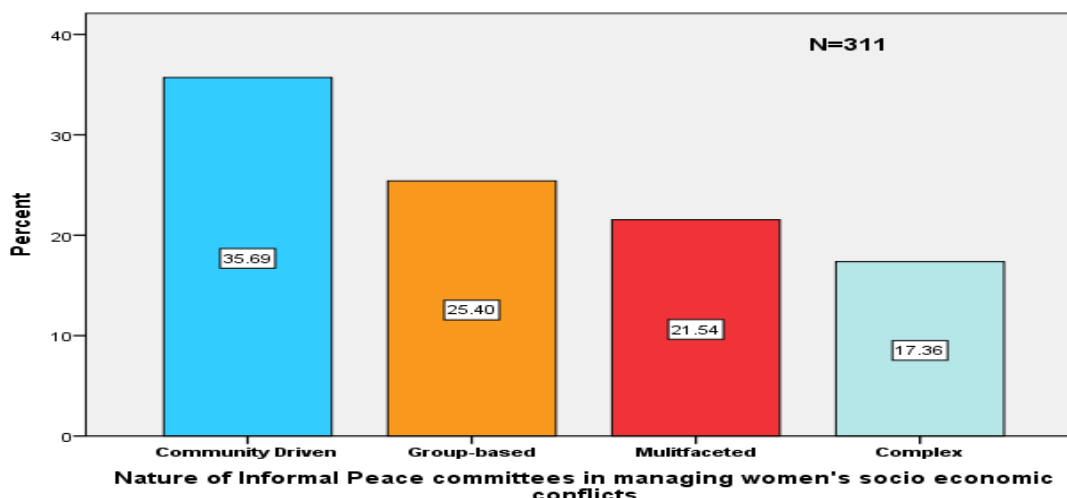
This was confirmed by a key informant, who said that;

*Women have been spreading peace messages in the community most of the time they walk from village to village preaching peace during various activities, fishing, crop-cultivation., herding and even during elections period. That is what mostly what they were doing before corona came but now they have started doing that again (FGD with Women’s Group, Nyamware, November 26, 2022).*

Jenkins (2013) posits that peace processes require competency in necessary in order for peace to take root in a society. These competencies include; analysis, responsiveness, prevention, envisioning and transformation (Jenkins, 2013). From a competency perspective, the Informal Peace Committees seem to have members who have the basic education that can enable them grasp the needs of informal peace building.

**4.4 Nature of Informal Peace Committees and women’s socioeconomic conflicts**

The study sought to examine the nature of Informal peace Committees in managing women’s socioeconomic conflicts. Out of 311 respondents, 111 (35.69%) stated that the nature of IPCs were community driven, 79 (25.40%) stated that it is grouped based, 67(21.54%) reasoned that the nature of IPCs was multifaceted and 54 (17.36%) stated that the nature of IPCs was complex. This shows that most of women’s socioeconomic conflicts emanates from community driven factors. Thus, the community has an influence on the nature of women’s socioeconomic conflicts along Lake Victoria shores. The results are illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3**  
*Nature of IPCs in Managing Women’s Socio-Economic Conflicts*

In view of the antecedent findings, one of the key informants argued that:

*The informal peace committees we have are a community initiative. The community feels the need to promote peace in all ways, especially when dealing with women issues. Women form the larger percentage of our community. They work extra hard especially in families where men are not working. They wake up early and go to buy fish sold to them by the fishermen. The community has come up with structures to address the concern of women and militate against conflicts meted against them by men (Interview with Key informant at Nyamware Beach, Kisumu County, 26/10/2022).*

Additionally, discussants in FGD adduced that:

*The informal peace committees are also group-based as part of the structure. Women have small groups through which they articulate their grievances. There is no doubt we as women experience socio-economic conflicts due to the inequalities in our community. Through the groups we are able to talk about peace issues, peace initiatives among families who are affected by conflict. For instance, Nyamware Women Group engages in women's peace by advocating for their rights along the beach (FGD at Nyamware Beach, Kisumu County, 26/10/2022).*

In view of the foregoing most were quick to point to community dialogue;

*We have community dialogue before implementation of Informal peace committees' recommendation. Also, women to women dialogues, where parental dialogues, and also forums where we mainly focus on women who have been affected by violence, we go around school talk to the head teacher and get to know the challenges children face while in schools and give them recommendations. We also do one on one counseling to parents who feel they have too much concerning parental responsibility, we also have Barazas, we also do civic education, we also do awareness on equitable sharing of resources, and we also promote cohesion between police and youth through tournaments. We also take youth to do general clean up exercise at the police station (FGD) session with Women leaders ,at Ogal, December 2 2022).*

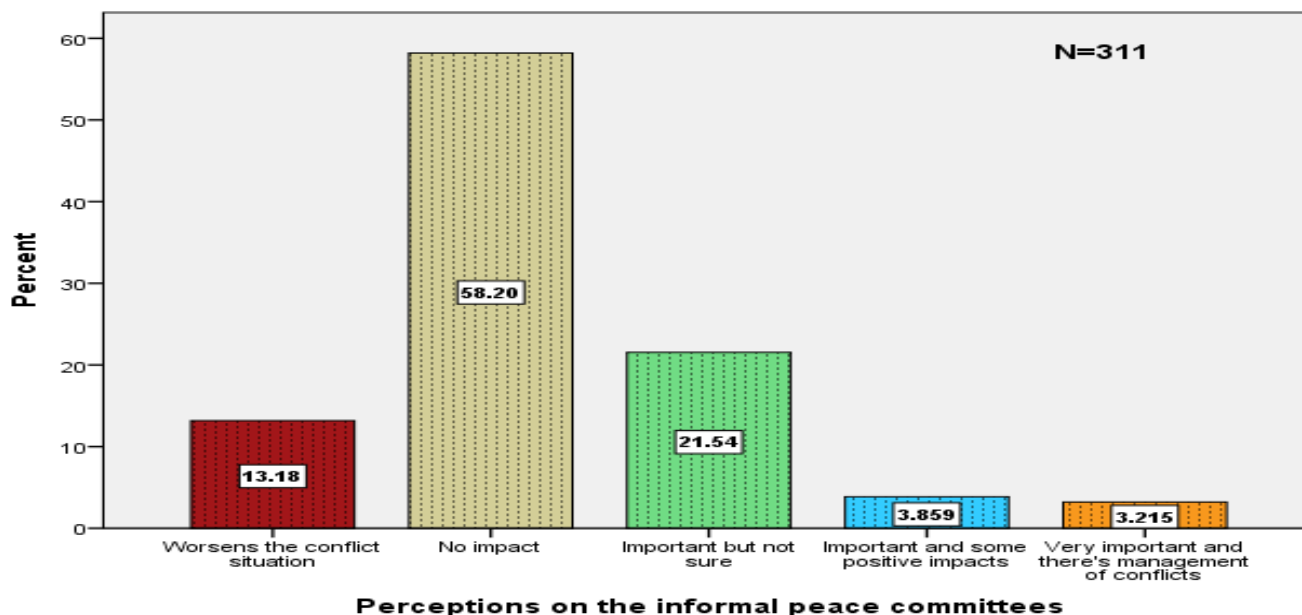
The preceding statement aligns with the findings of (Jeffrey, 2001), who emphasize the importance of peace committees and emphasize that representation is crucial for establishing credibility in their communal roles. The Peace Committees are institutions that represent the community and are established at different administrative levels. This approach combines traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, which involve traditional elders, women, and religious leaders, with formal mechanisms for conflict resolution. The formal mechanisms include those provided by Government administrative and security agencies, as well as initiatives by non-Governmental organizations. Jeffrey (2001) emphasizes the significance of peace committees, emphasizing that representation plays a crucial role in establishing the credibility of their activities within the community. The Peace Committees are institutions comprised of community representatives that are established at different administrative levels. This approach amalgamates conventional methods of resolving disputes, which involve the participation of traditional elders, women, and religious leaders, with formal mechanisms for conflict resolution.

Öjendal et al. (2021) argue that peace building has been in a state of permanent reinvention and re-introduction because of the many failures it has had. This is coupled with the fact that conflicts have increased, rather than reduce since the adoption of peace building as a concept by the UN in 1992. This means that peace building has taken place even in contexts of socioeconomic conflicts, hence the need to constantly review what the initial objective was how it can be used to effectively reduce and eliminate these conflicts. Data on the global trend of conflict point to increased rather than reduced conflict. Using data from the, Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Cederman and Pengl (2019) note that from the 2000s, armed rebellions by non-state actors, and internal strife challenging established authority has been on the rise.

According to Patel (2006), the Peace Committees in Malawi mostly fostered dialogues that were focused on resolving specific issues. The improved mutual understanding observed in the context of the local level Multi-Party Liaison Committees in Malawi can be seen as an additional benefit, exemplified by the development of cordiality and increased trust among political parties.

#### **4.5 Awareness of Informal Peace Committees Impact**

The study sought to examine whether respondents were aware of the importance of peace committees along Lake Victoria shores. Out of 311 respondents, 181 (58.20%) stated that no impact, 41(13.18%) stated that it worsen the conflict situation, 67(21.54%) reasoned that important but not sure, 12(3.859%) stated that important and have some positive impact and 10 (3.215%) stated that very important and there is management of conflicts. This shows that majority of the respondents agree that informal peace committees has no impact in managing women's socioeconomic conflicts along Lake Victoria shores. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.



**Figure 4**  
*Awareness about Informal Peace Committees*

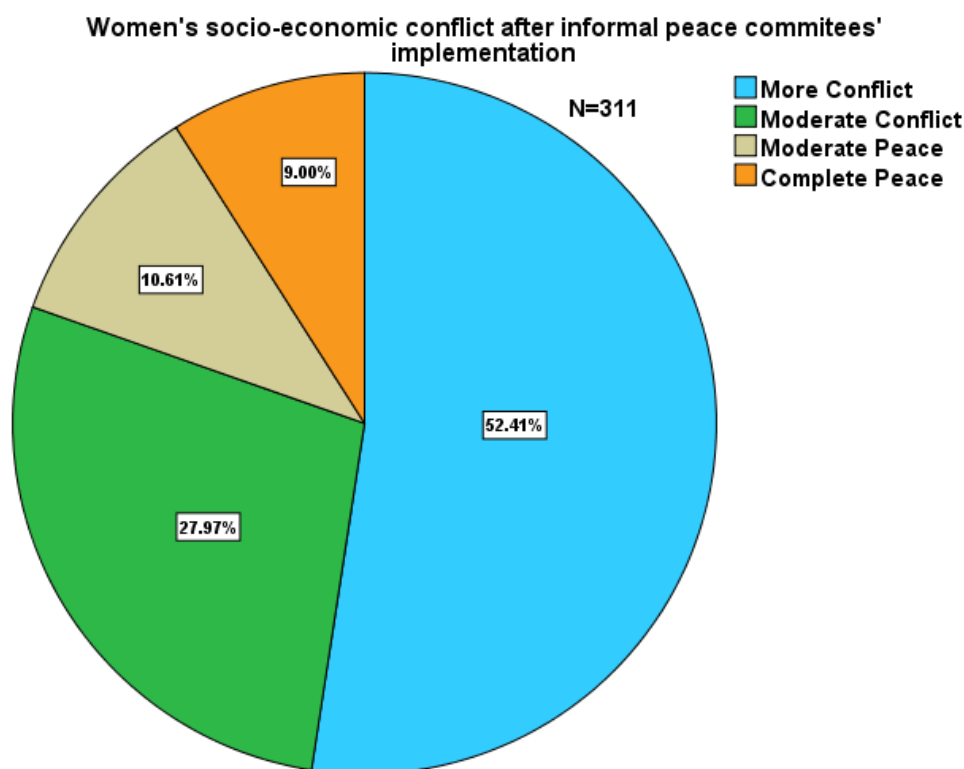
The findings were corroborated by quote from NSC who said that;

“Bringing together traditional dispute resolution mechanisms involving elders, women, youth and interfaith leaders on the one hand and formal mechanisms for conflict resolution including those by Government administrative and security agencies and non-governmental organizations on the other” (NSC, 2015:23).

Nganje (2020) argues that local peace committees should be seen as inclusive and participatory social spaces that facilitate dialogue and mutual understanding for constructive problem-solving. This rather idealistic view of local peace committees creates a problem for these entities which more often than not are least equipped to facilitate dialogue, in particular IPCs. Government response to most conflicts is usually with its security apparatus.

#### **4.6 Extent IPC is playing their role on Women’s socioeconomic conflict**

The study sought to examine the extent IPC play their role on women’s socio-economic conflicts. Out of 311 respondents, 52.4% stated that there was more conflict after implementation, 27.97% reasoned that, there was moderate conflict. On the other hand, 10.61% stated that there was moderate peace and 9% stated that there was complete peace. This shows that there are more women’s socioeconomic conflicts even after the implementation of informal peace committees. This is supported by the finding on the impact of informal peace committees where majority (58.20%) stated no impact. Thus, this can be attributed to women’s’ socioeconomic conflicts having multifaceted factors hence hindering the effectiveness of informal peace committees. In addition, this also can be contributed to the lower level of education of the respondents thus can handle nature of conflicts. The results are illustrated in Figure 5.



**Figure 5**  
Extent IPC is playing their role on women's socio-economic conflict

#### 4.7 Role of IPCs in managing women's socioeconomic conflicts

The study further sought to examine the role played by Informal Peace Committees in transformation of women's socioeconomic conflict along Lake Victoria in Kisumu County, in Kenya. Out of 331, 171 (54.9%) respondents argued that IPCs play significant role while 140 (45.1%) of the respondents reasoned that IPCs play an insignificant role in the transformation of women's socioeconomic conflict.

In view of the foregoing results members of FGD reasoned that:

*Tuku na mikutano ya Amani amabayo inaandaliwa na wanawake katika kijiji chetu. Japo kuna changamoto ya kutambulika, tunazungumza na wenzetu kuhusu umuhimu wa Amani. Mipango hii huangaziwa na kamati za Amani mashinani.* (There are programs organized by IPCs. For instance, Amani initiatives. We have groups of women that offer guidance to women and have other activities that influence women to unify and stop engaging in unnecessary conflict. The Amani program is no longer operational since it lacked structures to support it. Remotely, as women we try to bring peace among people regardless of socioeconomic status. Additionally, we conduct cleanup exercise but they don't take part regularly, they happen once in a while and in these clean-up exercises, people are given information. Clean up exercise also bring people together and build unity) (Women FGD at Nyamware Beach, 2022).

An interview with a key informant further adduced that:

IPCs have peace monitors. When reporting on threats, these are people who are known by the community and they have been trained. They don't wait for threats to show up, they make communication to us. On day to day basis they talk to people on the importance of keeping peace. IPC members are drawn from different sectors within the community. Teacher use parent meetings to talk about peace. Pastors also preach peace; business men also preach peace in board meetings. Women use their fishing meetings to advocate for peace. They take time to remind other fishers and fish mongers on the importance of keeping peace. There are these issues they promote, matters of good relations and matters of ethics. These are things that they assist in promoting that is the term and in the process of promoting such peace messages, there are building peace amidst of our people but now along that process in case there is any threat because for them they are not reactive,





there are supposed to be promoters of peace, when their reaction is called for now they make that communication to the relevant government agencies (Interview with Key informant at Ogal beach, 27/10/2022).

Oseremen and Ewanole (2016) conducted a study named "*Creating Local Peace Committee: A Participatory Action Research Project in Ojoo*" whereby they emphasize three significant functions performed by peace committees in support of the preventative claim. The Prevention or Reduction of Violence Local Peace Committees have demonstrated a high degree of efficacy in mitigating the prevalence of violence within communities. The effectiveness of these measures can be enhanced through the implementation of sufficient early warning systems, enabling prompt coordination for the implementation of collective preventive measures.

#### 4.8 Whether IPC is Effective or Not

The study sought to examine whether IPC is effective and implemented or not. The study found out that, out of 311 respondents, (1.3%) reasoned that IPCs role towards fostering women’s leadership and representation was implemented as well as being very effective. Besides, 6.8 % stated that it was implemented and effective, 9.0 % reasoned that it was implemented but less effective. Additionally, 40.8% stated that it was implemented but not effective and 42.1% affirmed that it was not implemented. The results are demonstrated in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
*Whether IPC is Effective or Not*

|                                | Frequency  | Percent      |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Not implemented                | 131        | 42.1         |
| Implemented but not effective  | 127        | 40.8         |
| Implemented but less effective | 28         | 9.0          |
| Implemented and effective      | 21         | 6.8          |
| Implemented and very effective | 4          | 1.3          |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>311</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

During focus group discussions held with one of the women's groups the study found out that women saw their role as the link between the community and the authorities when it comes to peace matters along Nyamware, Ogal and Dunga beaches. Women’s Groups along Nyamware, Ogal and Dunga beaches are part of the Informal peace Committee and have had active membership of more than 100 women, most of whom act as volunteer peace crusaders.

One of the respondents made the following point,

*We address issues, we receive complains from people, listen to them, and do referrals where necessary to the chiefs and the police and we also do awareness in public Barazas, (public meetings). We mobilize fellow women, young girls and youths to understand the need to be actively involved in spreading peace messages. This in turn helps us to lessen the burden that come with social as well as economic problems (FGD with Women’s Group, Nyamware, December 11, 2022)*

Another female member of the Informal Peace Committee added that,

*We also attend chiefs Barazas. As often is the case, men hardly attend. After that we go back home and combine with other village elders, call villagers, and tell them what is happening in the community. We do tell fellow parents to speak to their children to love peace and work hard to fight poverty and domestic abuse (FGD with Women’s Group, November 29, 2022).*

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Nganje (2021) argues, based on the preceding, that local peace committees are not established for conflict situations that necessitate the enforcement of peace. However, these committees are specifically intended for the purpose of consensus-building forums, where the focus lies on actively listening to and tackling the socio-economic challenges that are inherent to the society. The formation of the National Women's Peace Committee Network took place in Isiolo County, Kenya, in 2021, coinciding with the commemoration of UNSC Resolution 1325. This initiative aimed to enhance the implementation of the Kenya National Action Plan on Women's Peace and Security, with the backing of UN Women (UN Women, 2022). The network facilitates the collaboration of female leaders within the peace institutions of the country's counties. According to a government assessment, the implementation of the action plan has resulted in a significant rise in female representation within County Peace Committees.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

This study found out that Informal Peace Committees are community driven and have been very instrumental in peace building efforts in the Kisumu's wetlands. They are credited for reducing tension and improving the inter-community relations. The study concludes that the nature of IPCs along Lake Victoria shores is both complex and community driven. Those men have worked at cross-purposes with women and consequently jeopardizing efforts to manage these conflicts.

### 5.2 Recommendation

There is a critical need to legitimize Informal Peace Committees through legislation and policy frameworks. At minimum, the government should come up with a policy document and legal framework that not only institutionalize and secure the role of Informal Peace Committees but also provides it with "teeth" to enforce its resolutions.

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