

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERFORMANCE OF DISTRICT PEACE
COMMITTEES IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN KENYA.
A CASE OF KIENI SUB-COUNTY, NYERI COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Peace committees use both traditional and modern conflict intervention mechanisms to prevent, manage or transform intra-ethnic or interethnic conflicts. They have been instrumental in peace-building efforts in Kenya's dry lands, and are credited for reducing tension and improving the inter-community relations. However, despite their successes, Peace Committees face a number of challenges. This study aimed to evaluate the factors influencing the performance of district peace committees in conflict management in Kieni Sub County, a semi arid region in Kenya. The specific objectives guiding the study included: to evaluate the influence of committees formation on their performance in conflict management ; to establish the influence of financial resources on the performance of peace committees in conflict management; to establish the influence of district peace committee members capacity to perform on conflict management: and to evaluate the influence of peace regulatory framework on district peace committees performance in conflict management in Kieni sub county. It adopted the descriptive research design and the population of the study was 45 respondents composing the 16 district peace committee members in Kieni Sub County, 8 ward representatives , 1 Sub County administrator and 20 leaders of 10 Public Benefit Organizations (PBOs) operating in Kieni Sub County. Cluster sampling method was employed to include all the 45 targeted respondents and as such, the study sample was 45 respondents. The selected respondents were considered to be key informants in the study area. Data was collected from primary sources using a questionnaire. Ethics in research was observed and responses were handled with utmost confidentiality, while the study ensured fair gender representation of respondents. Data was analyzed by the aid of Microsoft Excel as well as the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software through frequencies, means, percentages, correlation coefficient as well as regression method. Tables and graph were used for data presentation that enabled inference, conclusion and recommendations. The study found that the formation process of the committees, financial resources, DPCs members' capacity and the peace regulatory framework all had a significant influence on the DPCs performance. It was recommended that: The state should legislate on the punitive measures for political instigations on peace committees either during formation or implementation of conflict resolution mechanisms. A peace management fund should be established by all county governments as well as the national government to ensure logistical support for DPCs. Also, capacity building programmes on peace building and conflict management should be established at county levels in order to equip DPCs with necessary skills.