

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS CAUSING
THE PERRENIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN COMMUNITIES: A CASE OF
MERU AND SAMBURU IN ISIOLO BORDER.**

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ABSTRACT

This study explored on the nature of conflicts between the Samburu and Meru communities in Isiolo County. Specifically the study sought to establish the causes of the conflicts, establish the forms of the conflicts, and determine the effect of the conflicts on the communities and what can be done to resolve the conflicts between the two communities. The literature was reviewed on the concept of conflict, structural conflicts and violence, causes of conflicts, the effects of conflict on affected population and government and community based conflict management strategies. The theories used in the study are conflict theory, rational choice theory and social exchange theory.

The study was carried out in Isiolo central division in the seven estates in Isiolo town namely: Wabera, Tulu Roba, Odha, Gambela, Kiwanjani, Bula pesa and Kula Mawe. The target population involved both adults and youths living in the estates employing both probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling methods. A sample size of 140 households was randomly picked from the seven (7) areas. The data was collected through face to face interviews, focus groups, key informants and structured questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS, Excel and Word computer packages based on the study objectives.

The major findings were that, the conflicts occurring between Samburu and Meru communities take different forms. These are religious conflicts, boundary (geographical) conflicts. The conflicts mainly occur because of the land struggle between the two communities and are currently being blamed on the devolved system of government. Some are seeing a possibility in which the conflicts may escalate to the levels of the Tana Delta conflicts if not effectively addressed.

Therefore the study recommends that the National government through its various agencies like parliament, Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (IEBC), National Land Commission (NLC), National Land Tribunal (NLT) to carry out fresh land and boundary dispute between Isiolo and Meru and demarcate it guided by all pre and post colonial maps especially of 1969. The process should involve all stakeholders including the minorities and the pastoralists communities who were neglected in the past when a similar exercise was carried out.