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Abstract

Communal conflict has been a global challenge that has hampered state of national security in many countries across the globe and SubSaharan has been mostly affected. In Kenya, communal conflicts has been a great threat to peace and stability, the Kenyan government has therefore invested a lot of resources to mitigate the problem. The wave of banditry attacks have spread recently to other neighbouring counties, Meru County and in particular the Igembe region being the most recent county to suffer from this wave. The aim of this study is to assess the influence of alternative dispute resolution, as a diplomatic avenue of enhancing national security. The study specifically investigate the influence of mediation, negotiation, conciliation and traditional dispute resolution mechanism in resolving banditry in the Igembe north subcounty of Meru County. The study was underpinned by theory of conflict, process of pluralism theory and the general theory on conflict and dispute. The study adopted mixed research methods where qualitative and quantitative results were triangulated. The study engaged national administration officers, religious leaders and village elders at the location level in the subcounty, thus census was appropriate as members from each location was represented by selected leaders. The study collected primary data using open ended questionnaire. The study undertook pilot from a selected location in the subcounty to test reliability and validity of research instruments. Data was analyzed using SPSS software and generated in form of descriptive and inferential statistics. Negotiations findings significantly affected national security enhancement. Conciliatory mechanisms has positive and significant effect on enhancing national security, focus on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty. Traditional dispute resolution has a positive and significant effect on enhancing national security, focus on banditry attacks in Igembe North Subcounty. The study concluded that mediation process and principles are fundamental in realizing cohesive society. The traditional dispute resolution provide homegrown solutions that is paramount in resolving conflict attributed to banditry attacks. The study recommended strengthening policy and legislation framework to harmonize the existing formal regulation to collaborate with this mechanism.

Keywords: *Alternative Dispute Resolution Diplomacy, National Security, Banditry Attacks, Kenya*

1.0 Introduction

Diplomacy stands as a proven and potent means of communication in international relations, transcending barriers such as race, sect, and language to foster a harmonious global order (Snow, 2020). At its core, diplomacy seeks to maintain peace by preempting and mitigating conflicts. Within the ambit of international relations, alternative dispute resolution serves as a valuable diplomatic tool, having demonstrated its efficacy in resolving conflicts. Globally, communal conflicts have been recorded in many countries all over the world. The global leadership has recognized communal conflict as a serious threat to global security. The Cause of these conflicts have ranged from civil wars, terror attacks and religious conflicts. Experts argue that economic dependence and the scarcity of resources such as land or water are the main cause conflicts (Charbonneau, 2022). For several decades countries in Europe have experienced disputes over fishing rights in international waters. The north sea continental shelf case between Germany and Netherlands (Ali, 2019) is one of the many International cases of conflicts as a result of boundary issues.

Minority people have been the main victims of these communal conflicts where serious human right violations are committed (Dussich, 2018). Communal conflict have caused a lasting havoc to the former Yugoslavia and threatened the stability of various states within the Soviet Union. The middle East is also experiencing a persistent form of communal conflicts that have lasted longer and equally South Asia has also experienced these conflicts. In United States, tensions were high in the 1990s as result of ethnic tensions and inequality which faced US and other nations in the western world (Wilkinson, 2020). Many countries in Europe are struggling with public antagonism occasioned by influx of immigrations from developing economies looking for opportunities in developed economies (Roberts, 2020). It is estimated that over 300 communal conflicts are experienced globally, 87% of these cases are experienced in Subsharan Africa while 10% are experienced in Asian soil while the remaining are recorded in the remaining continents that experienced less conflict (Naudé, 2018). Over 50% of these communal conflict concided with political turmoils experienced by those countries. Moreover, 60% of the communal conflict occurred in countries that recorded political instability in a period of the last two years. In addition, over 81% of the communal conflict were experienced in countries which have experienced political instability over time (World Bank Group, 2018). It is not possible to directly link occurrence of communal conflict and state conflicts.

The SubSaharan Africa has recorded the highest number of communal conflicts in the world and is estimated to be around 87%. Many of the communal conflicts in these regions have resulted to high number of casualties, severe disruption of livelihoods, destabilization of peace and in extreme circumstances loss of lives in large numbers and more escalation result to civil wars (Fisk, 2019). A communal conflict in Nigeria between Andoni and Ogoni communities went to a full civil war in the early 1990s and more than 1000 people were lost (Petrova, 2022). The failure to reach a lasting solution by communities engaged in communal conflict may create tension, lasting animosity and recurrence of violence in the future. This leave communities involve in communal conflict at the mercy of the political class who are prone to manipulating such phenomenon for political capital (Kłosowicz, 2020). Countries such as Sudan has been persistently hit by conflict for over 40 years and in common occurrence in livestock keeping regions.

Since independence, Kenya has faced a complex and uncertain security situation, especially among the pastoralist communities. Banditry in Kenya has no doubt hurt the communities and the country

at large. It has limited the exploitation of the resources in the areas involved consequently slowing down growth and development (Kimokoti, 2022). The government of Kenya also has deployed a lot of security forces over the years to deal with banditry but little has been achieved. According to Marigat & Cheruiyot (2022), banditry attacks are a pressing issue that requires a holistic approach to counter. Notably, banditry is becoming more sophisticated day by day evolving from the traditional customary practices that were practiced by various communities, mainly as a right of passage, to organized criminal organizations.

National security is the protection against internal threats to a nation's territorial integrity and sovereignty, its people, their rights, freedoms, property, peace, stability and prosperity, and other national interests (Odalonu, 2023). Throughout much of the 20th century, the concept of national security primarily revolved around military strength and preparedness. Yet, in today's complex landscape, threats stem not only from strained inter-state relations but also from internal disputes influenced by ethnic, religious, and nationalistic tensions (Baldwin, 2019). Challenges like international and domestic terrorism, political radicalism, narcotics syndicates, and risks from the digital era have heightened the security landscape. As globalization takes root and new economic giants emerge, the intricate bond between economic prosperity and national security grows more apparent (Dycus, 2022). In this globally intertwined environment, it's crucial to ensure the smooth transit of goods, services, and the protection of vital infrastructure. Merely defending against foreign military threats is insufficient in our era of widespread global links.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) refers to methods used to resolve conflicts and disputes between parties without resorting to traditional, formal processes such as litigation or war. These methods are particularly appealing in international relations, as they can often produce faster, more efficient, and more amicable solutions. Giving alternative dispute resolution an opportunity to deal with the banditry menace is a good strategy to provide a long-lasting solution (Kimokoti, 2022). The ADR mechanisms that can be explored include; conciliation, mediation and negotiation, mechanism. The Kenyan 2010 constitution acknowledges ADR mechanisms and encourages their use to achieve long-lasting peace that is important for the growth and development of the country (Sebayiga, 2023). Through mediation, a negotiated solution is facilitated by a neutral third party who enables an agreement to be reached faster and at a low cost (RCS Solicitors, 2023). It also helps to improve communication and cooperation among communities, thus ensuring long-lasting solutions. Conciliation, on the other hand, is where a neutral third party, the conciliator, aids parties to a dispute in identifying the disputed issues, developing choices, considering alternatives, and attempting to come to a resolution (Dispute Resolution Hamburg, 2023). Conciliation is important because it allows people to give their views and get involved in solving the dispute thus aiding in the avoidance of retaliation attacks. Negotiation also allows the warring parties to come together and attempt to solve the issues in dispute (Legal Information Institute, 2023).

The use of ADR, which is also involves the traditional dispute-resolution mechanism, recognizes culture as a fountain of peace and stability in society. Traditional dispute resolution mechanism helps to ensure that competition that might derail peace is avoided. Bringing such recognizable institutions into society can help to resolve issues such as banditry. Examining conciliation, mediation, negotiation, and traditional dispute resolution mechanism to solve banditry issues in Meru is important since it will help to ensure that a long-lasting solution is found (Muigai, 2017). It will also help to ensure that the needs of the warring communities are better understood and taken care of to avoid recurrence of attacks. Leveraging Alternative Dispute Resolutions (ADRs)

offers a promising avenue to foster cohesion among communities and forge enduring resolutions to the banditry issue. ADRs extend a unique opportunity for these communities to gain mutual understanding, encouraging harmonious coexistence and the effective utilization of available resources. Therefore, confronting it effectively necessitates a comprehensive approach that addresses the multifaceted social, economic, and political demands of the conflicting communities (Musau, 2023). By embracing ADRs, we can undoubtedly ensure that these varied needs are duly met. ADRs also facilitate the active participation of all stakeholders, a crucial element that ensures their commitment to the outcomes achieved through these mechanisms. This inclusivity enhances the chances of successful resolution and paves the way for sustainable peace.

Empirical studies carried out on alternative dispute mechanisms have been employed to resolve communal conflicts such as banditry attacks. Omondi and Munene (2023) reviewed existing literature on how banditry attack affected people in North rift and concluded that mediation is a viable option of resolving banditry attacks that have been commonly manifested in the North Rift of Kenya. The study only relied on existing literature while the current study focused on primary data thus resulted to methodological gap. Adebajo, and Adebajo, (2023) assessed the role of community leaders in management of conflict among pastoral and found out that mediation has resulted to lasting peace in the wrangling communities. The study focused only on the role of leaders while this study focused on the overall role of ADR in resolving communal conflict thus resulted to conceptual gap. Ouma, (2017) focused on genocide in Rwanda and addressing it using ADR, it was found out that this mechanism complimented the court solution in resolving conflict. The introduction of courts in helping ADR to function can be pointed as conceptual gap which this study was address by only focusing on ADR in resolving conflicts. Studies have investigated various tenets of ADR, Omondi and Munene (2023) noted that mediation is a viable option of resolving banditry attacks that have been commonly manifested in the North Rift of Kenya. according to Wertheim, (2022) negotiation is a process which has clear steps of resolving a conflict and it involves proposals and counter proposals. Begum, Khan, and Khan, (2022) argued that a conciliator involved an active process where issues are weight without necessarily finding a common ground or compromising positions. Ghebretkle, and Rammala, (2018) posited that traditional conflict resolution systems are extensively employed by the people in the settlement of various kinds of conflict. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of alternative dispute resolution, as a diplomatic avenue of enhancing national security. this was based on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty and particularly focused on four aspects of ADR that include mediation, Negotiations, conciliatory mechanisms and traditional dispute resolution.

2.0 Theoretical Literature

The theories that was adopted by this study include theory of process pluralism, theory of conflict and General Theory on Conflicts and Disputes. The theory of pluralism was developed by Duguit, L . Krabbe, H . and Harold J. (1980) and is premised on political actions where citizens from divergent groups have an opportunity to enjoy all their rights and interest being safeguarded. This imply that non of the group interest dominate the interest of another group but rather all the interest of each group is safeguarded. According to (Fiebich, 2021) this theory attempted to understand how various forms of conflict and its dynamics of conflict develop and declines. The management of these conflict are important. The tenet of this theory is based on the need of peaceful coexistence using multiple dispute resolution mechanism, acknowledging diverse conflict resolutions and be tailored to specific context. This theory support flexibility in conflict

management by integrating mediations, arbitrations, customary justice and negotiations. This also extend to international relations, pluralism theory advocate for diplomatic engagements by engaging states to adopt ADR that acknowledge culture, legal instruments of the respective country and political climate of the country. Adoption of such strategies will enhance cross border cooperation, reduce dependency on adversarial legal systems and form foundation of global peacebuilding through inclusive and solutions that are sensitive to peace and coexistence among the individuals.

The theory conflict was coined by Karl Max (1873) and is based on the existence of a society that experience conflict from time to time. The occurrence of a conflict may involve individuals or groups that are oriented on social behaviors. This theory outline genesis of several conflicts. Theory of conflict attempts to understand the different sources of conflict, the dynamics of how conflict develops, escalates or declines, and how conflict can be managed, reduced or resolved. Conflict theory tries to explain the types of conflicts that exist and whether they are productive or destructive and then goes on to attempt to explain the ways in which conflict proceeds or is structured and how it can be managed or resolved. Interaction of individual is believed to be determinant of conflict. The conflict can at times be positive but in most cases conflict has a negative influence. It is difficult to prevent conflict from occurring and thus most institutions are more interested in ensuring that conflict occurrence does not escalate to destructive levels. Thus, it is pertinent for families that experience conflict to have ways and initiatives of resolving them so as to avoid negative consequences that grip in if the issues are unresolved. Outstanding issues such as struggle for power and communication break down is supposed to be addressed with urgency that is required.

The theory of conflict is vital in explaining causes, dynamics and dispute resolutions mechanism thus very fundamental in explaining significance of ADR in conflict resolution. Conflict has been linked to competing interest, scarcity of resources and sociopolitical differences. Adoption of ADR provide a roadmap that is structured and non-adversarial strategies such as mediation, negotiations that help in addressing underlying issues fostering sustainable peace. ADR based on conflict theory enhances diplomatic conflict management by prioritizing dialogue over coercion. It strengthens international cooperation by offering peaceful mechanisms to resolve disputes between nations, ethnic groups, or political entities. The General theory on conflict and disputes was developed by Meadow and it posits by attaching conflicts regimes characterized by authoritarian rule and associating mature democracies with with disputes (Otomar and Wehr, 2001). This theory argues that it is extremely difficult to find a conflict in a democratic society and the least challenge which can be found is dispute. On the other hand, regimes that are defined by authoritative style are associated with conflicts. This conflict problem can be resolved by international organization which are known to be arbiters of conflicts. The theory explain how conflict and disputes is brought economic competing interests and political instabilities. Theory highlight structural, psychological and cultural factors that are linked with disputes. ADR help in solving disputes and increase global interconnections. This strategy is vital preventing conflict by promoting diplomacy over warfare. ADR mechanisms are widely used in resolving trade conflicts, border disputes, and diplomatic tensions, ensuring global stability. By incorporating conflict theory principles, ADR enhances international legal frameworks, strengthens diplomatic relations, and promotes long-term peace.

2.1 Empirical Literature Review

While investigating how the use of mediation can help in preventing bandit attacks in Kenya Omondi and Munene (2023) reviewed existing literature and status. The study concluded that mediation is a viable option of resolving banditry attacks that have been commonly manifested in the North Rift of Kenya. Mediation is critical in bridging the gap existing between parties, enhancing understanding and creating a conducive environment for everlasting peace. The process of mediation are impeded by cultural barriers and lack of cooperation among the responsible stakeholders. Assessing peace building, fragility cattle rustling and armed banditry in Nigeria Tar, and Bala (2023) adopted explanatory research design. The study found out that peace process is complex activity that involve various process such as mediation and dialogue of warring parties. The dysfunctionality of many social structures among communities experiencing banditry attacks impede diminishes the mediation process among the conflicting parties. Investigating the role of community leaders in management of conflict among pastoral practices Adebajo, and Adebajo, (2023) employed indepth interviews involving farmers, community leaders, NGOs and state actors in two Northern States of Nigeria. Conflict Transformation theory anchored the study and both qualitative and quantitative data was collected by use of primary data collection tools. It was found that prevailing conflicts have been managed by community leaders by use of mediation. The management by mediation was hampered by values and ethics of community leaders that involved extortion. Therefore, management of conflict has not been effective because of insincerity among the team leaders.

Assessing the use of negotiation as the means of resolving conflict Wertheim, (2022) adopted descriptive research design where desk top research was conducted. Existing literature was reviewed and a conclusion was drawn after making comparisons. Negotiation is a process which has clear steps of resolving a conflict and it involves proposals and counter proposals. The key role of the process is to gain new information which can help in resolving the conflict. It is through counter offer process a solution is borne. Investigating overview of negotiation Cronin, (2023) employed secondary data sources to examine the cause and solutions of banditry attacks. It is difficult to predict that engaging a criminal gang can be effective in mitigating increased level of crime. On the other hand, negotiations can facilitate a process of decline but have rarely been the single factor driving an outcome. Negotiation is only ideal when dealing issues pertaining marginalized groups, exploit difference, provision of information and reducing attacks.

While investigating the unsolicited amnesty through negotiation Aina, (2023) employed qualitative research methods in understanding how negotiation is important. The study found out that negotiation with bandits has not yielded much fruits since there is frequent banditry after this peace making process. Negotiating does not work alone but rather combine other strategies in eradicating banditry. Investigating the alternative dispute resolutions mechanisms Begum, Khan, and Khan, (2022) adopted qualitative research methods. The study found out that a conciliator involved an active process where issues are weight without necessarily finding a common ground or compromising positions. Parties in the conflict are obligated to either take the position of conciliator or consider not binding. Taking the position of conciliator is not mandatory thus each party has a right to reject or accept the position of conciliator as long as their expectations are met. Sources of failure to agree will not be shared to the external parties or interested groups. Examining the role of alternative dispute resolution on judicial conciliation Tykhanskyi, et al. (2021) adopted dialectical scientific cognition method. The study found out that judicial conciliation are closely

interrelated and, depending on their types, can sometimes manifest themselves as synonymous categories or institutions of law.

Assessing the application of conciliation in settling fishery dispute in Yellow sea Pan, (2023) adopted correlational research design. The study found out that mandatory conciliation accelerate dialogue and mediation process that help in resolving a dispute. Conciliation demonstrate flexibility since each party is granted a chance and thus may bring out all the issues that require attention. Assessing the implementation of conciliation in social cultural dimension Kazakova, et al. (2021) employed descriptive research design. It was found out that conciliation procedures are a fundamental category of modern objective law, in which the freedom of choice of the subjects of law is not limited to permissive and administrative means, but must be justified by the essence of the dispute being resolved and the final result. The conciliation procedures are not always consistent with the existing dictums of nature. Assessing the influence of resolving conflicts using traditional mechanism in Uganda Chapman, and Kagaha, (2019) adopted explanatory research design. Traditional dispute resolution improved security in an area experiencing conflicts especially banditry attacks across pastoralism. Traditional dispute resolution mechanism was criticized since it does not punish the offender fairly thus repeat of offence is common.

Investigating the influence of traditional African resolution Ghebretsele, and Rammala, (2018) focused on South Africa system. The study found out that modern governments have been reluctant but a slow integration into formal system have helped in resolving conflict. Traditional conflict resolution systems are extensively employed by the people in the settlement of various kinds of conflict. The traditional dispute mechanism borrowed heavily on customary laws. The customary laws proved effective in handling various matters that are related with marriage, land and property disputes. Investigating the institutionalization of traditional dispute resolution mechanism Muigai, (2017) focused on African countries and some selected countries globally. The study found out that most African countries have institutionalized traditional dispute mechanism and aligned them with existing laws.

3.0 Research Methodology

This research methodology section describes a mixed-methods study that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and their influence on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty. The study targeted 2,204 local administration officers, religious leaders, and council of elders involved in peacekeeping initiatives, from which a stratified sample of 338 participants was selected using Yamane's formula. Data collection employed structured questionnaires with both Likert-scale closed-ended questions (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) and open-ended questions to capture comprehensive responses. Prior to data collection, a pilot study was conducted using 10% of the sample (23 questionnaires) to test reliability and validity, while diagnostic tests including normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov), multicollinearity (Variance Inflation Factor), and heteroscedasticity (Wald test) were performed to ensure statistical assumptions were met. Data analysis utilized SPSS software for both quantitative regression analysis and qualitative thematic content analysis, with the regression model examining the relationship between banditry attacks (dependent variable) and four independent variables: mediation, negotiation, conciliation, and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms. The study's main objective was to assess how alternative dispute resolution serves as a diplomatic avenue for enhancing national security by reducing banditry attacks in the specified region.

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Regression model to be adopted

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \dots + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = Banditry attacks

X₁ = Mediation

X₂ = Negotiation

X₃ = Conciliation

X₄ = Traditional dispute resolution mechanism;

ε = error value

β₀ = Constant

β₁, β₂, β₃, β₄ = independent coefficient variables

4.0 Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study and further discussion.

4.1 Mediation Mechanism and National Security Enhancing

The study sought to investigate influence of Mediation in enhancing national security, focus on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty. The participants were asked to give their opinions regarding statements on mediation and were supposed to respond by strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). The results is presented in Table 3.

Table 1: Descriptive Finding of the role of mediation in Enhancing National Security

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
The process of resolving conflict in our area remains voluntary to both parties	4.43	0.82
Our peace making process is normally characterized by high level of impartiality	4.10	0.92
The leading team in the peace making proess always maintain high level of neutrality	4.30	0.84
All parties restraint themselves from conflict of interest during the peace making process	4.40	0.86
All matters discussed in the peace making process are kept confedential among parties	4.53	0.73
Some of the agreements during the peace making process are unwritten thus remains a word of mouth	4.37	0.89
The peace making process is recognized by authorities since it has legal basis	4.34	0.67
The dialogue process has been consistent with our cultural practices	4.40	0.72

The finding from the Table 1 indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that process of resolving conflict in the area remains voluntary to both parties as shown by the mean of 4.43 and standard deviation of 0.82. The finding of the study showed that majority of the respondent agreed that peace making process is normally characterized by high level of impartiality as depicted by the mean of 4.10 and standard deviation of 0.92. The study revealed many of the participants agreed that leading team in the peace making process demand high level of neutrality as shown by the mean of 4.30 and standard deviation of 0.84. Further, it was noted that many participants agreed that parties restraint themselves from conflict of interest during the peace making process as indicated by mean of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.86. It was established that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that matters discussed in the peace making process are kept confidential among parties as depicted by the mean of 4.53 and affirmed by standard deviation of 0.73. On the other hand, it was revealed that many of the respondents agreed that some of the agreements during the peace making process are unwritten thus remains a word of mouth as deduced by the mean of 4.37 and supported by standard deviation of 0.89. The finding of the study revealed many people spearheading peace process agreed that the entire process is recognized by authorities since it has legal basis as depicted by the mean of 4.34 and supported by standard deviation of 0.67. The finding of the study revealed that many of the respondents agreed that dialogue process has been consistent with our cultural practices as depicted by the mean of 4.40 and supported by standard deviation of 0.72.

4.2 Negotiations and National Security

The study assessed assess the impact of negotiations on enhancing national security, focus on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty. The participants were asked to give their opinions regarding statements on impact of negotiations on enhancing national security and were supposed to respond by strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Table 2: Descriptive Finding Of Negotiations On Enhancing National Security

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Our peace making process is manifested by good faith where each party is given a chance to submit proposals and their counter proposals	4.57	0.63
In peace making process all parties have always agreed to concession when deemed necessary	4.47	0.51
The peace making process is always defined by structured communication with well defined terms of engagement	4.67	0.61
The process has yielded temporary solution such as ceasefire agreements	4.63	0.67
The peace process making process has been collaborative where all stakeholders are involved	4.50	0.78
The process of negotiation is normally adopted during the early stages of conflict in our area	4.10	0.96
There has been more commitment by parties in resolving peace	4.37	0.89
The process gives options to the parties all aimed at attaining a common ground	4.77	0.50

Based on the finding in Table 2, the study deduced that many of the participants strongly agreed that peace making process is manifested by good faith where each party is given a chance to submit proposals and their counter proposals as depicted by the mean of 4.57 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.63. The study established that most of the participants agreed that all parties have always agreed to concession when deemed necessary in peace making process as shown by the mean of 4.47 and complimented by standard deviation of 0.51. The finding of the study revealed that many of the respondents strongly agreed that peace making process is always defined by structured communication with well defined terms of engagement as depicted by the mean of 4.67 and supported by standard deviation of 0.61. The outcome of the study revealed that many participants strongly agreed that the process has yielded temporary solution such as ceasefire agreements as depicted by the mean of 4.63 and complimented by standard deviation of 0.67. On the other hand, the study noted that many of the respondents strongly agreed that peace making process has been collaborative since all stakeholders are involved as deduced by the mean of 4.50 and supported by standard deviation of 0.78. The finding of the study revealed that internet banking has minimal operating and maintenance cost as shown by the mean of 3.87. The finding of the study revealed that majority of the respondents are unanimously agreed that process of negotiation is normally adopted during the early stages of conflict in conflict resolution as depicted by the mean of 4.10 and standard deviation of 0.96. On the other hand majority of the respondents agreed that there has been more commitment by parties in resolving peace as deduced by the mean of 4.37 and standard deviation of 0.89. The finding of the study revealed that many participants strongly agreed that the process gives options to the parties all aimed at attaining a common ground as depicted by the mean of 4.77 and supported by standard deviation of 0.50.

4.3 Conciliatory Mechanisms on Enhancing National Security

The study assessed the impact of conciliatory on enhancing national security, focus on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty. The participants were asked to give their opinions regarding statements on impact of conciliatory on enhancing national security and were supposed to respond by strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Table 3: Conciliatory and National Security

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
The parties involved in the process enjoy willfulness among themselves	4.53	0.63
The process is designed with flexibility which each party find it convenient thus rigidity is eliminated	4.30	0.95
The process is tailored to homegrown solutions to the conflict to ease implementation	4.60	0.62
The solutions attained is as result of consensus where all parties own the process	4.57	0.56
The proposed solutions during the process is supposed to be binding hence a party is at will to reject any proposal deemed unfit	4.63	0.54
In case of disagreements during the process nothing will be shared thus secrecy is elementary value in the process	4.17	0.99
This process is normally administered in solving petty offences during the banditry attacks	4.13	1.11
Sometimes this process is not consistent with existing laws and customary practices	4.27	1.14

Based on the finding from Table 3, the study established that most of the participants strongly agreed that parties involved in the process enjoy willfulness among themselves as depicted by the mean of 4.53 and supported by standard deviation of 0.63. The study established that many of the respondents agreed that the process is designed with flexibility which each party find it convenient thus rigidity is eliminated as shown by the mean of 4.30 and supported by standard deviation of 0.95. It was revealed that many of the respondents strongly agreed that process is tailored to homegrown solutions to the conflict to ease implementation as deduced by the mean of 4.60 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.62. Likewise, the study established that majority of the respondents agreed that solutions attained is as result of consensus where all parties own the process as depicted by the mean of 4.57 and supported by standard deviation of 0.56. The study established that many of the respondents strongly agreed that proposed solutions during the process is supposed to be binding hence a party is at will to reject any proposal deemed unfit as depicted by the mean of 4.63 and was complimented by a standard deviation of 0.54. On the other hand, it was revealed that many of respondents were in consensus that in case of disagreements during the process nothing will be shared thus secrecy is elementary value in the process as shown by the mean of 4.17 and was supported by a standard deviation of 0.99. It was revealed that many of the participants unanimously agreed that the process is normally administered in solving petty offences during the banditry attacks as shown by the mean of 4.13 and complimented by a standard deviation of 1.11. The results of the study indicated that many of the respondents agreed that at times the process is not consistent with existing laws and customary practices as depicted by the mean of 4.27 and was supported by standard deviation of 1.14.

4.4 Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms and Enhancing National Security

The study sought to investigate influence of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms in enhancing national security, focus on banditry attacks in Igembe North subcounty. The participants were asked to give their opinions regarding statements on traditional dispute resolution

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mechanisms and were supposed to respond by strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). The results is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms And National Security

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Customary laws have been critical in tackling conflicts rooted to culture	4.70	0.47
The dispute mechanism has been instrumental in resolving recurrent conflicts	4.77	0.43
The conflict mechanism has fostered relationship of communities experiencing conflict	4.35	0.89
The process has resulted to sustained peaceful solutions	4.37	0.85
This process is non-coersive thus sometimes may jeopardize peace making process.	4.40	0.72
The process has a clear reconciliation framework among the communities engaged in conflict	4.23	0.94
The process involve persuasion of the parties in conflict to have compromised solution	4.43	0.68
The process uses force and coercion in realizing a solution	4.13	1.20

From the finding in Table 4, the study noted many of the respondents unanimously agreed that customary laws have been critical in tackling conflicts rooted to culture as shown by the mean of 4.70 and affirmed by standard deviation of 0.47. On the other hand, the study revealed that most of the participants strongly agreed that dispute mechanism has been instrumental in resolving recurrent conflicts as depicted by mean of 4.77 and supported by standard deviation of 0.43. The study noted that many of the respondents were in consensus that conflict mechanism has fostered relationship of communities experiencing conflict as shown by the mean of 4.35 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.89. It was revealed that majority of the participants agreed that the ATR process has resulted to sustained peaceful solutions as shown by the mean of 4.37 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.89. The study finding established majority of respondents agreed that the process is non-coersive thus sometimes may jeopardize peace making process as deduced by the mean of 4.40 and was supported standard deviation of 0.72. The study established that many respondents agreed that process has a clear reconciliation framework among the communities engaged in conflict as depicted by the mean of 4.23 and standard deviation of 0.94. Drawn from the finding of the study, it was revealed that many of the respondents agreed that process involve persuasion of the parties in conflict to have compromised solution as depicted by the mean of as shown by the mean of 4.43 and was supported by mean of 0.68. The finding of the study established that most of the respondents agreed that loan management reengineered business as depicted by the mean of 4.06. The finding of the study established that most the participants agreed that cash tellering services reengineered business process as depicted by the mean of 4.02. Additionally, the study established that many of respondents unanimously agreed that account processes as deduced by the mean of 4.09. Likewise, it was revealed that many of the participants agreed unanimously that process uses force and coercion in realizing a solution as depicted by mean of 4.17 and was supported by standard deviation of 1.20.

4.5 Banditry Attacks Element of National Insecurity

The participants were asked to give their opinions regarding statements on banditry attacks aspect of national security and were supposed to respond by strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). The results is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive Results on Banditry Attacks

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
We have recorded massive displacement of people in the last one year	4.67	0.66
Several properties have been lost in the last one year especially livestock	4.87	0.35
The area has witnessed organized attacks where property and lives were targeted	4.78	0.39
The location has seen people lose their lives in the last one year as result of organized attacks	4.80	0.41
Schools and businesses have been abruptly stopped in the last one year as result of coordinated attacks	4.77	0.43
There has been tension across the neighbourhood in the last one year as a result of existing amniosity	4.83	0.38

From the finding in Table 5, it was revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed the area has recorded massive displacement of people in the last one year as depicted by the mean of 4.67 and was complimented by standard deviation of 0.66. The study noted that most of the respondents strongly agreed that several properties have been lost in the last one year especially livestock as depicted by the mean of 4.87 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.35. On the other hand, it was established that many of the respondents unanimously agreed that the area has witnessed organized attacks where property and lives were targeted as depicted by the mean of 4.78 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.39. Drawn from the finding of the study, it was noted that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that several location has seen people lose their lives in the last one year as result of organized attacks as depicted by the mean of 4.80 and was supported by 0.41. On the other hand, the finding of the study revealed that most of the participants agreed that schools and businesses have been abruptly stopped in the last one year as result of coordinated attacks as shown by the mean 4.77 and was supported by standard deviation of 0.43. Moreover, it was noted that majority of respondents agreed that there has been tension across the neighbourhood in the last one year as a result of existing amniosity as depicted by mean of 4.83 and was support by standard deviation of 0.38.

4.6 Regression Analysis

The multiple regression model was estimated to assess the influence of alternative dispute resolution, as a diplomatic avenue of enhancing national security and finding is presented in Table 6 presents the model summary results.

Table 6: Summary Model Finding

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.746a	0.556	0.547	0.22553

a Predictors: (Constant), traditional_dispute, negotiation, mediation, conciliation

Alternative dispute resolution was found to be satisfactory in explaining national security enhancement. This was supported by coefficient of determination also known as the R square of 54.7%. This means that restructuring explain 54.7% of the variations in the dependent variable which is national security enhancement. Further, the correlation coefficient (R=0.746) denoted that alternative dispute resolution had a strong relationship with the national security enhancement. The validity of the model was also validated using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.062	4	3.266	64.204	.000b
	Residual	10.427	205	0.051		
	Total	23.489	209			

a Dependent Variable: bandirty_attacks

b Predictors: (Constant), traditional_dispute, negotiation, mediation, conciliation

The results indicate that the overall model was statistically significant as supported by a p value of 0.000 which was less than the critical p value of 0.05. This was supported by an F statistic of 64.204 which implied that alternative dispute resolution is a good predictor of national security enhancement. The regression weights of each variable in the model are presented in Table 8. The regression coefficients demonstrate the marginal effect of each predictor on the dependent variable.

Table 8: Regression Coefficient Finding

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.596	0.149		17.396	0.000
	Mediation	0.323	0.071	0.484	4.548	0.000
	Negotiation	0.458	0.07	0.666	6.501	0.000
	Conciliation	0.176	0.068	0.29	2.597	0.010
	Traditional_dispute	0.175	0.071	0.277	2.472	0.014

a Dependent Variable: ehacing national security

The hypothesized model [$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$] becomes;

National security= 2.596+0.323 Mediation +0.458 Negotiation +0.176 Conciliation + 0.175 Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

The regression analysis results revealed that all four alternative dispute resolution mechanisms significantly and positively influenced national security enhancement, with negotiation demonstrating the strongest impact ($\beta=0.458$, $p=0.000$), followed by mediation ($\beta=0.323$, $p=0.000$), conciliation ($\beta=0.176$, $p=0.010$), and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms ($\beta=0.175$, $p=0.014$). The findings indicated that negotiation's effectiveness stems from its structured approach involving proposals and counter-proposals that facilitate information sharing and collaborative solutions, though challenges remain in selecting competent negotiators and addressing conflicts requiring homegrown solutions, as supported by studies from Wertheim (2022), Warning and Network (2019), and Cronin (2023) who emphasized negotiation's role in maintaining peace through agreed positions and addressing marginalized group issues. Mediation proved crucial in bridging gaps between conflicting parties and creating conducive environments for lasting peace through impartial processes that enhance understanding, with its success dependent on good rapport, impartiality, and early intervention, aligning with research by Omondi and Munene (2023) and Adebajo and Adebajo (2023) who demonstrated mediation's viability in resolving banditry attacks in Kenya's North Rift region. Conciliation showed significant effectiveness as a solution-based approach that allows parties flexibility in accepting or rejecting conciliator positions without mandatory compliance, proving particularly useful for resolving petty offenses and environmental conflicts, consistent with findings by Rendón (2017), Khan and Khan (2022), and Tykhan skyi et al. (2021) who highlighted conciliation's growing adoption in dispute settlement due to its built-in flexibility and convenience. Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, while criticized for potentially inadequate punishment leading to repeat offenses, demonstrated effectiveness in providing homegrown solutions for conflicts, particularly through elder-mediated processes that restore peaceful coexistence and address marriage, land, and property disputes where modern methods have failed, supporting research by Chapman and Kagaha (2019), Ghebretেকে and Rammala (2018), and Abe and Ouma (2017) who documented the success of traditional mechanisms in post-conflict societies like Rwanda and their institutionalization across African countries when aligned with existing legal frameworks.

5.0 Conclusions

The study concluded that mediation processes and principles are fundamental in realizing a cohesive society, as mediation significantly influences national security in areas prone to banditry attacks. Mediation has proved to be an essential tool used in implementing development projects that promote sustainable peace among communities through its capacity to bridge gaps between conflicting parties and create conducive environments for lasting peace. The investigation established that negotiation is a vital tool in enhancing national security in areas experiencing banditry attacks, with findings demonstrating that negotiation is a significant predictor of national security enhancement. However, the adoption of this strategy has not been entirely effective since it does not consistently yield homegrown solutions that can address banditry problems sustainably, particularly when dealing with conflicts requiring locally contextualized approaches.

The study concluded that conciliatory mechanisms constitute a critical pillar in enhancing national security in areas where banditry attacks occasion conflict. The conciliatory mechanism's tenet of finding consensus in resolving issues has proved more beneficial in addressing security challenges, particularly because this strategy can effectively address simple crimes while being less resource-intensive and known to administer justice fairly through its flexible, solution-based approach. The study was concluded that traditional dispute resolution mechanisms are essential in enhancing

national security by providing homegrown solutions that are paramount in resolving conflicts attributed to banditry attacks. Traditional dispute resolution improved security in areas experiencing conflicts, especially banditry attacks across pastoral communities, though the mechanism was criticized for potentially inadequate punishment of offenders, leading to common repeat offenses.

6.0 Recommendations

The study recommends establishing clear rules and regulations to guide the mediation process, as there has been no comprehensive framework on how to undertake mediation when conflicts arise. The framework should be defined by impartiality and integrity to ensure success in processes deemed trustworthy, with specific guidelines addressing rapport-building, maintaining neutrality, and early intervention strategies to prevent conflict escalation. The investigation recommends undertaking capacity building among community leaders to impart them with negotiation skills, as training is key to developing competent negotiators who can effectively address problems at hand. This capacity building should foster consultative processes that ensure negotiation and peace processes obtain compromised solutions agreeable to all parties, with emphasis on selecting appropriate negotiators and developing sustainable, locally relevant approaches.

It is recommended that awareness creation programs be established to emphasize the importance of embracing peace, informing people about the consequences of peace instability in their areas. Communicating and informing the public about the need for peaceful coexistence may be crucial in their decision-making regarding challenges and calamities attributed to banditry attacks, while also providing incentives for individuals who are vigilant in ensuring order and peace in society. The investigation recommends strengthening traditional value systems in society so that people can gain values such as honesty and receptiveness, with the taboo system being reinforced to criminalize vices such as stealing, while banditry should be classified as a similar taboo. Traditional taboo practices instilled discipline among people since violating certain vices resulted in harsh punishment, unlike the current dispensation of modern law that lessens punishment, prompting individuals to engage in such vices, therefore requiring integration of traditional and modern justice systems for more effective conflict resolution.

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