INFLUENCE OF INTER-CLAN CONFLICTS ON COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS IN KENYA'S NORTHEASTERN REGION: A CASE OF MANDERA NORTH SUB-COUNTY

GALGALLO KATELO MAMO

REG.NO: 110062133

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DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research that it describes are my original work and that they have not been presented in any other university for academic work.

GALGALLO KATELO MAMO

REG No. 110062133

Student signature: ..... Date: 30.06.25

This research was conducted under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

Supervisor name: DR. CHARLES KHAMALA

Supervisor signature: ..... Date: 30 JUNE 2025

Supervisor name: DR. OSEW MICHAEL NGACHRA (PhD)

Supervisor signature: ..... Date: 30 JUNE 2025

Africa Nazarene University Nairobi, Kenya

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved family: my wife, Midina, and our cherished children, Adho, Milcah and Talu. Their unwavering love, boundless patience, steadfast support, and constant encouragement sustained me throughout my academic journey and the writing process.

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ABSTRACT

Terrorist organizations, particularly Al-Shabaab, have frequently targeted Mandera North Sub-County. Additionally, inter-clan conflicts, primarily involving the Garre, Murule, and Degodia clans, have exacerbated insecurity in the region, further complicating counterterrorism efforts. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the influence of inter-clan conflicts on Kenya's counterterrorism efforts in North-Eastern Kenya, with a specific focus on Mandera North Sub-County. The study was guided by three objectives: to analyze the nature of inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County, to assess the influence of clan dynamics on counterterrorism efforts, and to evaluate the extent to which inter-clan conflicts contribute to community vulnerability to radicalization. The study was anchored on Social Identity Theory, Conflict Transformation Theory, and Deterrence Theory. A descriptive research design was adopted, targeting 143,850 individuals residing in Mandera North Sub-County. Using stratified and simple random sampling, a sample of 383 respondents was selected, comprising community members, local elders, area chiefs, religious leaders, and security officers. Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires and interviews, with quantitative data analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis. Findings revealed that inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County are primarily driven by competition over resources, political rivalries, and historical grievances. The study established that clan dynamics influence counterterrorism efforts by shaping intelligence-sharing, trust in security agencies, and the willingness of community members to cooperate with authorities. Additionally, the findings indicated that inter-clan conflicts create an enabling environment for radicalization by fostering resentment, marginalization, and instability, which extremist groups exploit to recruit vulnerable individuals. The study concludes that inter-clan conflicts significantly hinder counterterrorism efforts by weakening social cohesion, fostering distrust in government institutions, and facilitating radicalization. Based on these findings, the study recommends strengthening community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, enhancing trust between security agencies and local communities, and integrating counterterrorism efforts with broader peacebuilding initiatives. Policymakers should also focus on equitable resource distribution, legislative support for hybrid justice systems, and structured de-radicalization programs. The study contributes to the discourse on counterterrorism and conflict resolution in Kenya, offering insights that can inform policy and practice. Future research should explore the role of women in peacebuilding, the effectiveness of community-driven intelligence, and the impact of climate change on inter-clan conflicts.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Al-Shabaab: This is an Islamist militant group that operates primarily in Somalia but has also carried out attacks in neighboring countries including Kenya (Phillips, 2017).

Counterterrorism: The initiatives and strategies implemented in the Mandera North Sub-County to mitigate terrorism (Obwogi, 2021).

Inter-clan conflict: Refers to the conflicts and hostilities that arise between the Garre and Murule clans, as well as Garre and Degodia clans, which are groups of families or households who claim descend from the common ancestors (Abdi, 2017).

Nature of clan conflict: Refers to the fundamental characteristics and root causes of disputes between clan-based groups, often driven by competition over scarce resources, political representation, historical grievances. (Menkhaus, 2006).

Northern Kenya: This is a region situated in Northern part of Kenya which is often referred to as the Northern Frontier Districts (NFD) and comprises of Mandera, Wajir, Isiolo, Marsabit and Garissa (KNBS, 2019).

Radicalization: This is the process of causing people or groups to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious beliefs (Subedi, 2017).

Terrorism: Acts of violence or intimidation committed in the Mandera North Sub-County with the intent to cause injury, induce fear, or further a certain political, ideological, or religious goal (ACLED, 2023).

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AU:	African Union
CVE:	Counter-Violence Extremism
IS:	Islamic State
KDF:	Kenya Defence Forces
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organizations

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study. It covers the background of the study, the statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study. The research questions are also covered in this chapter. The significance, scope, delimitations, limitations and assumptions of the study are also presented in this chapter. The study culminates with a theoretical and conceptual framework.

1.2 Background of the Study

In recent years, the world has witnessed a new wave of violent extremism that has taken the lives of many innocent people of different faiths, races and nationalities. While data from the Global Terrorism Index (2023) showed 38% drop in terrorism-related fatalities in 2022 from 2015, it also unveiled a disturbing nuance: the increased lethality of terrorist groups such as the Islamic State (IS) and Al-Shabaab. Specifically, the IS's lethality per incident surged by 12% to 2.9, and Al-Shabaab's lethality surged by 32% to 2.5 fatalities per attack, hinting at a potential shift in their modus operandi (Global Terrorism Index, 2023). Further, this global survey notes that, the West contributes only 0.5% of the global death toll, excluding the 9/11 attack. Sub-Saharan Africa, especially the Sahel region, is at the epicenter and contributes to 43% of all terrorist-related deaths worldwide. From Boko Haram in Nigeria to Al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa, this region faces numerous extremist groups (Minteh, 2014). The evolving tactics of terrorist groups, possibly targeting more vulnerable or populated areas with devastating methods, necessitates a recalibrated approach to counterterrorism.

Counterterrorism measures have been developed through data collection, analysis, monitoring,and evaluation. According to Phillips (2017), individual African countries such as

Nigeria and Kenya have taken action in response to terrorist threats, with or without the political support of the continent's institutions such as the African Union. In 2011, the Kenyan government chose to intervene militarily in Somalia, which it saw as the heart of the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab. Despite the Kenyan government's military efforts, the country is still confronting terrorist assaults. Most recently in June 2023, the ACLED (2023) reported 19 violent incidents involving the Al Shabaab in Mandera County a border to the Gedo region in Somali. These attacks were perpetrated by the Al-Shabaab using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and targeting the police forces. According to the report by the ACLED (2023), 26 police officers were killed during these attacks. Based on this understanding, this study aims to analyze Kenya's counterterrorism operations through a different lens, concentrating onthe impact of inter-clan conflicts in the North-Eastern region.

Interclan conflict in Northern Kenya are criminal acts that violate the Penal Code and other laws against organized crime. Despite, this fact, inter-clan conflicts are a common phenomenon in Northern Kenya. This is attributed to a combination of factors. A major issue that has resulted in the existence of inter-clan conflicts in Northern Kenya is the failure of addressing historical issues such as demarcation of land (Lind, 2018). This has led to communities battling over land since its demarcation is yet to be implemented. Secondly, while the constitution advocates a justice system, it also provides for customary justice through the alternative justice system. The latter focusses on addressing conflicts through mediation and engaging local communities instead of taking all issues to the courts. While the alternative justice system may be effective in addressing some conflicts, it is not always aligned with the requirements of accountability and fairness (NYU CIC, 2023). This leads to loopholes that are exploited to engage in inter-clan conflicts. For the alternative justice system to be effective, it ought to be aligned with the requirements of the legal justice system.

Inter-clan conflicts are attributed to the fact that majority of the people in northern Kenya still practice pastoralism and with it, cattle rustling. While urban regions in Kenya rely on other sources of income such as starting businesses, the communities in northern Kenya have maintained pastoralism as a core source of income with few embracing agricultural practices. According to National Police Service (2021), the northern area in Kenya accounted for 73% of all stock theft raids between January and December 2021. During the same time period, 58% of the illegal weaponry recovered and surrendered to the authorities came from northern Kenya (National Police Service, 2021).

It is worth noting that inter-clan conflicts in Northern Kenya are often motivated by cultural practices such as cattle rustling. In northern Kenya, cattle rustling is perceived as a way of life since it is a traditional practice. However, with modernization, this practice has been exacerbated as more people in these regions have taken up commercialization of cattle rustling. This is where individuals are not only engaging in cattle rustling as a traditional practice bust to earn an income. A report by the National Police Service (2021) shows that the recovery of the cattle stolen to be low with only 27,980 stolen cattle recovered as compared to the 62,476 total cattle stolen in 2021. While the government through the security agencies in Northern Kenyan are making efforts to make arrests and recover the stolen cattle, it is evident that better strategies need to be implemented. This is evidenced by the fact that only 245 arrests were made in 2021 despite the number of cattle rusting case reports being 817 (National Police Service, 2021). This low arrest rate may be attributed to the fact that the individuals engaging in cattle rustling are often armed with AK47s, rifles and machetes, thus imposing a treat to law enforcement.

Historically, inter-clan conflicts in Northern Kenya have been prevalent, with roots dating back to colonial rule and persisting through post-independence Kenya into the 21st century.

During colonial times, authorities neglected arid and semi-arid regions, leading to marginalization and historical injustices that fueled communal grievances and hindered inter-group unity (Sahgal et al., 2019). Post-independence governments continued policies that further marginalized the north, damaging trust in state institutions and exacerbating conflicts along ethnic lines. These conflicts have been driven by factors such as regional inequality, exclusion, resource disputes, political power struggles, cultural practices like cattle rustling, and the proliferation of small arms and weapons.

The interclan conflicts in Northern Kenya have been worsened by extreme climatic conditions, unpredictable weather patterns, and general remoteness. The population is susceptible to natural disasters likedroughts and floods. These harsh weather conditions have exacerbated inter-clan warfare as aresult of competition for scarce resources. In Wajir County, for example, Sahgal et al. (2019) discovered that changes in climatic conditions, such as irregular rainfall, shrinking grazing lands, and decreased water supply in watershed sites, had all contributed significantly to clan conflicts. During dry seasons, societies compete for resources, resulting in tensions and, eventually, conflicts over scarce resources. Furthermore, Sahgal et al. (2019) discovered that clan disputes in Garissa County are frequently caused by intense rivalry for grazing pasture, which spreads to other counties. For example, conflict between the Abdalla, who are generally pastoralists in Ijara, Garissa County, and the Pokomo, who are primarily farmers in Tana River County caused by rivalry for land and water.

Moreover, the inter-community conflicts in Northern Kenya have persisted since no official demarcation of individual land has been conducted. This challenge led to the enactment of the Community Land Act (CLA) 2016 whose aim is to address these issues by providing a legal framework for communities to formalize their land ownership through collective titles

(Alden Willy, 2018). However, the actual demarcation of boundaries remains a pending task. This is largely attributed to the historical set up of landownership, where certain communities live on a specific land based on the fact that they are natives of the land. This implies that although there are legal frameworks on paper implementing these policies is a difficult task given that the social aspect of these communities must be considered. Therefore, since the communities in the Northern Kenya lay claim to land based on the natives that first settled in specific pieces of lands, the demarcation process may encounter a lot of resistance. This is because it will entail the government having dialogues with the communities and their local elders to establish which pieces of land belong to which groups.

Mandera County, sharing its border with Somalia, the primary base for the Al-Shabaab terrorist group, is highly susceptible to cross-border terrorist activities (Obwogi, 2021). The presence of inter-clan conflicts within this region exacerbates the security situation, as these disputes can divert attention and resources from counterterrorism to managing local clan rivalries. The complex social fabric, marked by clan allegiance, affect the local population's cooperation with security forces, potentially hindering intelligence-gathering efforts and the implementation of effective counterterrorism measures. The rugged and remote terrain further complicates the situation, providing cover for both inter-clan militants and terrorist infiltrators, making it a strategic challenge to secure the area against both internal and external threats.

Mandera North Sub-County in northeastern Kenya is vulnerable to attacks from Al-Shabaab terrorist group sharing its border with Somalia, the primary base of Al-Shabaab operations, it becomes an easy target for infiltration, facilitating cross-border terrorist incursions (ACLED, 2023). Moreover, the region's vast and occasionally remote terrain can make it more difficult to implement prompt security measures, increasing the risk to the area. In addition to the

terror attacks experienced in the region, Mandera North Sub-County also battles inter-clan conflicts particularly between the Degodia and the Murule clan. At the moment peace has been maintained in Mandera County following the peace agreement that was signed in September 2023 by the village elders of the two communities. The peace talks were prompted by the conflict between Degodia and Murule clans earlier that September 2023 (Astariko, 2023) which resulted in the death of three individuals and burning of a dozen houses (Ombati, 2023). The signing of the peace agreement resulted in the establishment of a 10-member Peace Committee (made up of representatives from the Gurreh, Degodia, and Murulle communities) aimed at enforcing the agreement and monitoring the relations between the communities. The peace agreement was overseen by the Mandera Governor Mohamed Adan Khalif who appealed to the communities to embrace peaceful co-existence. At the moment, peace between the two communities still prevails. This is a promising indication that the two communities are learning to co-exist. However, there is no assurance that this will last, given the long conflict history of the two communities. Therefore, this study sought to assess whether the inter-clan conflicts have an effect on the counterterrorism efforts in the region.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Terrorism is one of the most pervasive and insidious dangers to global security, with certain places being more vulnerable due to their geographic location and other socio-political factors. To combat this threat, many countries have employed a variety of tactics, including the use of the military as in the case of Kenya's invasion in Somalia. Terrorist organizations, particularly the Al-Shabaab, have frequently targeted the Mandera North Sub-County. This terrorist group was responsible for a significant portion of political violence in Kenya, particularly in July 2023, when it accounted for 17% of such occurrences, resulting in the loss of lives in Mandera County

(ACLED, 2023). The region's ongoing struggle with terrorism highlights the severe security challenge. The historical setting depicts a protracted confrontation with terrorism since 2014, which has severely disrupted community infrastructure, including the closure of educational and hospital facilities. The local attempts to create solidarity against terrorism, as indicated by a call for collaboration among Takaba citizens in June 2021 (Pick, 2021), demonstrate the community's resilience in the face of these challenges.

However, despite efforts by the Kenyan government including the allocation of 20 billion to improve security operations in North-Eastern Kenya (Dahir, 2023), and conducting air campaigns along the Kenya-Somali border (ACLED, 2023), terror attacks still persist in Mandera North Sub-County. This show that the counterterrorism efforts deployed by the government are ineffective. This may be attributed to the persistent inter-clan conflicts in Mandera County (Garre and Murule clans) (Abdi, 2017) that pave way to increased radicalization. These internal tensions, fueled by historical disputes and rivalry for limited resources like land, water, and pasture, have hindered the collective ability to successfully confront foreign threats. The political environment, heavily impacted by clan relations, reinforces these divisions, with the Garre clan's dominance in key constituencies demonstrating the politicization of clan identities (UNDP Kenya, 2010). Previous peace measures such as the Sheikh Umal Peace Accord signed in 2008; the Granada I Peace Agreement in 2020; and the Granada II Peace Agreement in 2020 failed due to a lack of comprehensive understanding and addressing the core causes of these inter-clan disputes, necessitating a more nuanced approach (Reliefweb, 2021). Moreover, these agreements rely on the alternative justice system that often lacks accountability unlike the legal justice system imposed by the courts. Moreover, the failure of these peace agreements raises concerns over the reliance of customary law in these rural settings. There needs to be a change in the legal systems applied when

dealing with inter-clan conflicts to ensure not only accountability but also sustainability. Recognizing the urgent need for a plan that addresses inter-clan conflicts, comprehensive solutions are essential for building long-term peace and security in this troubled region. Therefore, this study sought to answer this research question; what is the influence of inter-clan conflicts on Kenya's counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub County in North-Eastern region?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study sought to determine how inter-clan conflicts affect Kenya's counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

In specific, this study aimed to;

i. Examine the nature of inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County.
ii. Assess how clan alliances, rivalries, and decision-making impact counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County
iii. Determine whether inter-clan conflicts increase community vulnerability to radicalization in Mandera North Sub-County.

1.6 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

i. What characterizes inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County?
ii. How do clan alliances, rivalries, and decision-making hinder or aid counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County.?
iii. To what extent do inter-clan conflicts contribute to community vulnerability to radicalization in Mandera North Sub-County?

1.7 Significance of the Study

First, the County Government of Mandera is set to benefit from this study. The government may be able to allocate resources, formulate policies, and prepare strategies with greater knowledge about the effective counterterrorism efforts that are aligned with the clan dynamics, hence ensuring sustainability. This data may help make the best use of the region's limited resources to improve security and successfully combat the threat of terrorism as well as the inter-clan conflicts. The study is also beneficial to governmental institutions such as the Counter Terrorism Police Unit, the National Center for Crime Research, Anti-Stock theft unit, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, and the judiciary. These governmental institutions may benefit from gaining insights into inter-clan conflicts. By understanding inter-clan conflicts, these institutions can develop strategies that aim to end these disputes. Moreover, given that the current customary justice system has not been effective in addressing inter-clan conflicts, these institutions can formulate and enforce policies that legalize inter-clan conflict in Kenya.

Secondly, the residents of Mandera North Sub-County stand to gain from this research. The community places a high priority on their safety and security. Therefore, knowledge on how the different communities can co-exist is important to the residents of Mandera North Sub-County to not only help end inter-clan conflicts but also combat terrorism.

Finally, results of this study are of great use to future researchers and scholars working in the field of counterterrorism. It offers a case study that can serve as a foundation for comparative analysis in different regions and a point of reference for additional research. Future researchers can use the study as a reference in their research on the effect inter-clan conflict has on counter terrorism efforts in Kenya.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study focused on the role inter-clan conflicts played in countering terrorism in Mandera North Sub-County as part of North-Eastern Kenya. In North-Eastern Kenya, inter-clan conflicts were a common phenomenon as communities fought over limited resources. Moreover, North-Eastern Kenya was susceptible to terror attacks due to its proximity to Somalia. In general, the scope of this study entailed providing an understanding of the relationship between inter-clan conflicts in North-Eastern Kenya and counterterrorism efforts in the region. This study, in particular, collected data from the residents of Mandera North Sub-County.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited in scope since it focused on inter-clan conflicts and their effect on counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County. This study did not assess other factors that might have influenced counterterrorism efforts that were not related to inter-clan conflicts. As such, this study made recommendations for further research to be conducted to assess other factors that might have influenced counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County. Moreover, the study was delimited to Mandera North Sub-County. This delimitation was addressed by suggesting further research to be conducted targeting other areas in Kenya, such as Mombasa County, which are prone to terror attacks.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

This study faced a number of limitations. The first limitation was the high level of insecurity in Mandera North Sub-County, which hindered the researcher from collecting data. To address this limitation, the researcher requested police officers to offer security during the process of data collection. The second limitation was that respondents were sometimes unwilling to participate in the study due to fear of victimization. To address this limitation, the researcher

assured respondents that confidentiality would be maintained. Moreover, the researcher educated respondents on the importance of the study in relation to reducing incidences of terrorism in the region.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study

This study made three assumptions. First, it assumed that the sampled respondents would voluntarily participate in the study. Also, the study assumed that respondents would answer the research questionnaires correctly, thus providing adequate data for analysis. This study further assumed that the findings derived from the research could be generalized and were representative of Kenya's North-Eastern region.

1.12 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored by two theories, namely, the social identity theory, the theory of conflict transformation and the deterrence theory.

1.12.1 Social Identity Theory

Developed by Tajfel and Turner (1986, 1979), Social Identity Theory offers insights into the psychological processes that explain inter-group bias, discrimination, and conflict. The theory revolves around the concept of social identity, which entails individuals categorizing themselves into groups. This categorization process is a three-part phenomenon: first, individuals develop a preference for certain groups; second, they affiliate themselves with these preferred groups, known as "in-groups"; and third, they compare their in-groups to other groups considered "out-groups" (Humphreys, Posner & Weinstein, 2002). This comparative process is essential because it promotes distinction among social groupings, potentially leading to prejudices and conflicts. "

According to the theory, group categorization is motivated by two needs: membership within a group and distinctiveness from others. This paradox represents a fundamental component of human social interaction: people want to belong to groups that boost their self-esteem and worth. The distinction between in-groups and out-groups is more than a matter of social classification; it also helps in-group members develop a positive and differentiated identity (Salad, 2015). This is especially visible in clan dynamics in Northern Kenya, where people strongly identify with their birth clans and avoid association with other clans, even within the same village, to maintain their clan identity. Strong in-group attachments frequently result in negative stereotypes and values to out-groups, while in-groups are viewed positively. This polarization plays an important role in making social identity a prominent feature of inter-group interactions and disputes.

While Social Identity Theory provides useful insights into the causes of intergroup bias and conflict, it has been criticized for potentially oversimplifying the complexities of group dynamics and intergroup relations. Critics contend that the theory does not sufficiently account for the multifaceted causes of conflict (Brown, 2020), such as historical grievances, economic inequality, and political circumstances, which can exacerbate inter-group resentment beyond the pursuit of positive social identity. Furthermore, the theory's emphasis on cognitive processes may overlook emotional and environmental aspects such as fear, wrath, or firsthand experiences of injustice, which all play important roles in the formation and escalation of disputes. This critique argues for a more comprehensive approach to properly comprehending the complexity of social identity and its impact on intergroup relations.

Despite the limitation, this theory is relevant to this study since it explains how people's affiliation with their clans (in-groups) develops a sense of belonging and pride while also creating biases against other clans (out-groups). This theory explains the psychological basis of group

affiliation and conflict, emphasizing how the distinction between in-groups and out-groups can cause inter-clan disputes (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Such tensions not only intensify local disputes, but they also hamper counterterrorism operations by eroding societal cohesiveness and potentially providing a breeding environment for terrorist recruitment and funding. The anchor theory for this study was the Social Identity Theory. It is central because it explains how the formation of in-groups (clans) and out-groups can lead to inter-clan bias and conflict in Northern Kenya. This inter-clan strife can weaken social cohesion, potentially creating an environment conducive to terrorist recruitment and operations. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing effective counterterrorism strategies in the region.

1.12.2 Theory of Conflict Transformation

The theory of conflict transformation was propounded by scholars such as Galtung (1975) Lederach (1997) and Paffenholz (2014). This theory holds that conflict transformation is a process that results in the change of personal, structural and cultural aspects of a conflict. The goal of this theory is to change societal structures through the creation of better co-existence between the disputing communities. Across the world, many societies have their own established techniques and mechanisms for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts, hence efforts aimed at transforming conflict must acknowledge these aspects. To ensure sustainable peace, in areas where societal conflict is prevalent, these mechanisms have to embrace the culture and the structures within these communities (Buckley-Zistel, 2008).

The aim of conflict transformation is to rebuild relationships, focusing on reconciliation and fortifying a society's long-term peace-building potential. Since conflict transformation focusses on changing cultural structure; it looks at the attitudes, relationships, behaviors and interests within a community (Shulika, 2013). This is important especially in conflicting

communities such as those in Northern Kenya. The inter-clan conflicts are driven by cultural structures that have been imbedded for generations. As such any efforts aimed at eradicating this vice must acknowledge the cultural structures to be effective. Moreover, a transformational approach advocates for a constructive change in conflict through parties working together. This multisectoral approach makes the theory to be more holistic and flexible in addressing different conflict.

Therefore, with reference to this study the conflict transformation theory will be effective in understanding the inter-clan conflicts in occurrence in Mandera North sub-County. Moreover, the theory provided a framework that can be used by policy makers and leaders kin transforming the current societal structures in the region to eliminate inter-clan conflicts. By adopting the theory of conflict transformation, the communities can come up with sustainable strategies that are binding and long-term addressing the root courses of disputes in the region. This is attributed to the fact that conflict transformation advocates for ownership of the conflict resolution process, hence increasing its probability of being binding for the long-term (Paffenholz, 2014).

1.12.3 Deterrence Theory

The study was anchored by the deterrence theory which was postulated by Thomas Hobbes in 1651. The theory was revised by Cesare Beccaria in 1764, and Jeremy Bentham in 1781 (Abramovaite, et al., 2023). Deterrence theory, which is based on criminological and international relations principles, proposes that the threat or implementation of punitive actions might reduce the possibility of undesired behaviors, such as terrorism. Key proponents of this theory claim that for deterrence to be successful in discouraging criminal or unfriendly behavior, the consequences must be regarded as certain, harsh, and quick (Abramovaite, et al., 2023). This theory is based on

the idea that both people and groups conduct rational cost-benefit analyses before committing to damaging or illegal behaviors. In the context of counterterrorism, the application of deterrence theory anticipates that planned, visible, and credible counterterrorism measures could considerably diminish the incentives for participation in terrorist actions by amplifying the perceived consequences.

Applying deterrence theory to counter-terrorism efforts in Kenya's North-Eastern area, notably in Mandera North Sub-County, provides a framework for its effectiveness. The theory explains how strong counterterrorism measures, by raising the perceived costs of terrorism, may reduce the influence radicalization in the region (Wilner, 2014). It implies that in places where there is a conducive environment for radicalization, well-articulated deterrent actions tailored can play an important role in countering terrorism. The theory emphasizes the importance of counterterrorism methods that are not only punitive, but also take into account the sociopolitical and economic realities that support inter-clan relations.

Critics of deterrence theory in this context may argue that the theory fails to understand the complexities of radicalization driven by inter-clan strife. Radicalization processes are frequently fueled by a complex combination of socioeconomic, psychological, and identity-based elements that defy simple rational decision-making models. The theory's emphasis on rationality may fail (Raskolnikov, 2020) to account for the deeply established grievances and historical legacies that drive both inter-clan strife and radicalization. Furthermore, the effectiveness of deterrence-based measures may be hampered by obstacles in assuring the certainty, severity, and immediacy of punishments, particularly in places with inadequate governance and law enforcement capacities.

Despite, this limitation, the deterrence theory was essential in assessing the punitive counterterrorism efforts put in place by the Kenyan government. The theory was essential in

explaining whether the legal systems set by the government of Kenya have been effective in deterring the residents of Mandera County from joining terrorist groups.

1.13 Conceptual Framework

The study's variables are graphically represented in Figure 1.1.

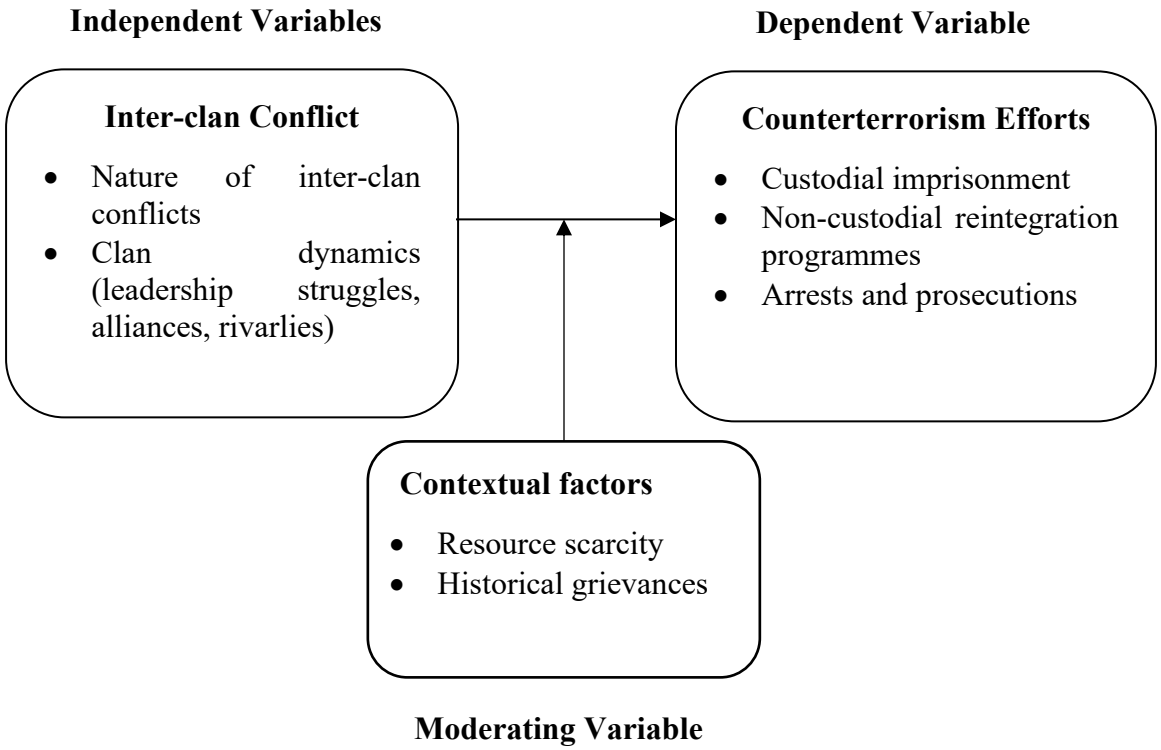


Figure 1. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher, (2024)

The independent variable is inter-clan conflict, examined through the nature of conflicts–such as their historical roots and resource-based triggers–and clan dynamics, including leadership struggles, rivalries, and alliances. The dependent variable is counterterrorism efforts, measured through indicators such as custodial imprisonment, non-custodial reintegration programs, and the number of arrests and prosecutions. The framework also incorporates contextual factors as moderating variable–specifically resource scarcity and historical grievances–which are expected

to influence the strength or direction of the relationship between inter-clan conflict and counterterrorism effectiveness. These variables are critical in understanding the complex sociopolitical environment in which counterterrorism strategies are implemented and how underlying community tensions may either hinder or facilitate their success.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents literature on inter-clan conflict and counterterrorism efforts. The chapter culminates by summarizing the reviewed literature and identifying the existing gaps in literature.

2.2 Theoretical Review of Literature

2.2.1 Inter-Clan Conflict

Inter-clan conflicts are disputes between different clans or tribal groupings that are often motivated by historical grievances, competition for resources, and differences in political or cultural goals (Beyene, 2017). These inter-clan conflicts are often rooted in cultural histories and identities that define group boundaries and govern interactions within a particular society. Notably, inter-clan conflicts can escalate from localized disputes (ordinary crimes) into extensive violence that disrupts national stability and security (extraordinary crimes). When clan-based disputes escalate to involve organized violence, complex planning, and have wider geopolitical implications or aimed at changing political systems, they transition from ordinary crimes to extraordinary criminal activities. Moreover, these inter-clan conflicts are distinguished by their long duration, often spanning generations. In African countries, where clan identity is important in social organization, such conflicts can have a significant impact on communal life, leading to cycles of violence, displacement, and insecurity.

The dynamics of inter-clan conflicts are compounded by modern factors such as globalization, environmental deterioration, and political manipulation. As traditional resources

become scarce and more expensive, competition increases, leading to rising conflicts among tribes. Furthermore, political actors may use these tensions for their own gain, deepening divisions and impeding peacebuilding attempts (Afriyie, Jisong, & Yaw Appiah, 2020). These conflicts have far-reaching consequences, including not only loss of life and property but also long-term social and economic underdevelopment. Communities engaging in inter-clan conflict face challenges in accessing education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, continuing the cycle of poverty.

Inter-clan conflicts are particularly difficult to resolve because their fundamental causes are rooted in the communities' historical, economic, and social narratives (Beyene, 2017). Therefore, addressing inter-clan conflicts necessitates a multifaceted strategy that recognizes the complexities of these disputes. Implementing strategies that combine both punitive and rehabilitative measures may be most effective. While some level of deterrence may be necessary to maintain law and order, the emphasis should be on rehabilitation programs that foster interclan dialogue, promote shared community values, and educate on the benefits of peaceful coexistence. These programs should be culturally sensitive and include the participation of local leaders and influencers who can facilitate change from within the community. Addressing the deep-rooted interclan rivalry requires a form of cultural transformation. This transformation often involves redefining cultural norms and values to promote more constructive and peaceful relationships within and between communities (Joseph 2015). While cultural transformation is necessary, it is complex and should be approached sensitively to avoid alienation or backlash that can occur with perceived external interference.

2.2.2 Counterterrorism Efforts

The difference between inter-clan conflicts and terrorist activities is essential with regards to this study that seeks to determine the influence of inter-clan conflicts on counterterrorism

efforts. Both inter-clan conflicts and terrorism are challenges in society, however, the distinction between the two is the degree of impact and motivation. The impact of inter-clan conflicts often only impacts the communities engaged in the dispute are motivated by cultural issues such as competition over land, water, and livestock (Beyene, 2017). On the other hand, the impact of terrorism is broader, impacting different regions in a County, and it is often motivated by religious, political or social beliefs. Terrorist groups such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, the Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab are driven by ideologies that can be political, regional or social. Thus, the state's response requires a combination of security measures, legal frameworks, and community-based strategies. Khamala and Likaka (2022) note that integrating non-state actors in counter-radicalization efforts, particularly through education and local community engagement, is essential. This integration helps tailor responses to the local context, enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures.

Counterterrorism efforts include a variety of policies and measures used by governments, international organizations, and local communities to prevent and combat terrorism (Baldaro & D'Amato, 2023). These initiatives are categorized into "hard" and "soft" strategies, each addressing a distinct aspect of the terrorism threat (Ugwueze & Onuoha, 2020). Hard approaches are often coercive and security-oriented, requiring military action, law enforcement operations, and intelligence gathering to detect, discourage, and disrupt terrorist activity. These measures prioritize the quick neutralization of terrorist threats and are distinguished by their emphasis on physical security and the use of force.

Kenya has been at the forefront in implementing hard strategies in countering terrorism. In 2011 the Operation Linda Nchi was launched where the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) were deployed in Somali as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to combat Al-

Shabaab (Williams, 2018). This strategy involved using the military to combat terrorism, however, it was not as effective as anticipated since terrorist attacks by the Al-Shabaab still continued such as the 2013 Westgate mall shooting, 2014 Mpeketoni attacks and the 2015 Garissa University. In addition to using military force, the government of Kenya has established the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) whose role is to combat domestic terrorism by focusing on intelligence gathering, conducting raids, and executing counter-terrorism operations. Further, the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2012 and the Security Laws (Amendment) Act of 2014 strengthen the legal framework for combating terrorism in Kenya (Waringa, 2021).

Soft approaches to counterterrorism, on the other hand, address the fundamental causes of radicalization and the appeal of terrorist ideas (Ugwueze & Onuoha, 2020). These techniques include initiatives to combat violent extremism (CVE) through community engagement, education, economic growth, and the promotion of moderate narratives. Soft approaches seek to undercut ideological and societal support for terrorism by promoting social cohesion, resilience, and addressing grievances that terrorists may exploit (Bishar, 2022). This component of counterterrorism understands the significance of winning "hearts and minds" and regards the war against terrorism as both a physical conflict and an ideological one.

The counter-terrorism initiatives in Kenya extend beyond the criminal justice system. According to Khamala and Likaka (2022), non-state actors are important players in combating radicalization particularly in educational settings. In 2018, an amendment of the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2012 was introduced in parliament with the provision to hold accountable institutional administrators who failed to report instances of radicalization in their institutions. While the 2018 Bill expired before it was debated, it is evidence of the government's shift towards incorporating educational institutions and community leaders into its counter-terrorism

framework. Preventive measures such as the Nyumba Kumi Initiative rely on the local community's perception of their legitimacy. Khamala and Likaka (2022) argued that while these measures are designed to prevent terrorism, their success is often limited by short implementation durations and insufficient community integration, which may not adequately address the deeper socio-economic and cultural factors that fuel extremism. As such it is important for the soft strategies employed to have longer implementation durations to have a significant impact in countering terrorism.

The Nyumba Kumi Initiative has been implemented in different areas in Kenya such as in Nairobi County (Khamala & Likaka, 2022) and in Mombasa County (Sharamo, R. D., & Mohamed, 2020). The Nyumba Kumi Initiative is a good example of soft strategies since it advocates for local members to know each other within the neighborhood and advocates for community policing. Sharamo and Mohammed (2020) revealed that through the Nyumba Kumi initiative, the security officers in Mombasa County have received early warning information on different threats within the region. This allows for action to be taken immediately to avoid any criminal offenses. As such, this study will assess whether such strategies such as the Nymba Kumi have been adopted in northern Kenya and particularly Mandera County.

The combination of hard and soft measures is essential for a comprehensive and effective counterterrorism strategy. While hard measures are necessary for immediate threat reduction, their effectiveness may be restricted in the absence of soft tactics that address the long-term drivers of terrorism. Counterterrorism operations are frequently successful when they can balance and integrate these measures in a way that respects human rights and fosters long-term peace (Barre, 2016). This holistic perspective recognizes that addressing the socioeconomic and political conditions that contribute to terrorism is only as vital as destroying terrorist plots. As a result, a

comprehensive knowledge and application of both hard and soft counterterrorism measures is important in establishing resilient societies that are less vulnerable to terrorism.

2.2.3 Radicalization

To understand radicalization, it is important to differentiate it from fundamentalism and extremism. Radicalization is the process where individuals or groups of people adopt extreme religious, political and social ideologies often undermining and rejecting the status quo. However, as Subedi (2017) established, it is worth noting that not all radicalization processes result in violence extremism (VE). While radicalization does not always lead to violence, it creates an environment suitable for recruitment into violent acts. as radicalized individuals may feel isolated, persecuted, and drawn towards groups that promise a sense of belonging and purpose. On the other hand, fundamentalism involves strict adherence to specific doctrinal tenets of a religion or ideology, focusing on a return to original principles which might not inherently advocate violence. Extremism, on the other hand, is the stage where radical views intensify, often justifying violence as a necessary means to achieve ideological goals (Khamala & Likaka, 2022).

Radicalization is a multidimensional and developmental process that typically begins early in an individual's life and can progress to extremism (Schröder et al., 2022). This view is based on the premise that radicalization begins in adolescence, to teenagers' vulnerabilities and susceptibilities to extremist ideologies. Beelmann (2020) and Neumann (2013) establish that radicalization is a protracted process marked by a combination of psychological, social, and economic elements. Collectively, these variables promote the formation of ideas, attitudes, and actions that sharply contradict democratic norms and constitutional ideals. Furthermore, the environment of internal disputes increases the vulnerability of communities, particularly adolescents, to radicalization.

Countries engaged in armed conflicts such as Somalia, Libya, Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, and Mali provide a conducive environment for radicalization due to existing conditions of insecurity, poor governance, social and economic inequality, and political instability (Subedi, 2017). These factors collectively create an environment in which extremist groups may entice and mobilize young people to commit acts of violence. The situation in the southern Philippines demonstrates how a combination of inequities, insecurity, marginalization, and radical beliefs can drive young people to radicalization and, eventually, violent extremism (VE) (Rasul 2009).

Radicalization is shaped by a combination of factors, including economic factors and psychological factors (Subedi, 2017). This is proven by the fact that individuals in rural settings such as the northern Kenya region face harsh economic conditions, however, not all individuals in these regions have been radicalized. Factors such as strong community ties, stable education, supportive family environments, and engagement in non-radical religious teachings has been essential in lowering the number of radicalized youths. This is because, these aspects such as strong community ties provide a sense of belonging a tactic that extremist groups often use to radicalize the youth. To radicalize the youth groups like Al-Shabaab, distort Islamic teachings to present violence as a divine duty against perceived enemies of Islam, these groups exploit feelings of injustice, alienation, and oppression, offering social benefits such as a sense of belonging, purpose, and identity to entice youth (Abdirahman, 2016). Therefore, based on this on this argument, it is important to look at all facets of life to understand radicalization by terrorist groups. This study will not only be limited to the economic status as drivers of radicalization but will also look at radicalization as a process that hinges on the psychological state of its target population.

2.3 Empirical Review of Literature

2.3.1 Nature of Inter-Clan Conflict

In China, Zhang et al. (2020) utilized Elinor Ostrom's Social and Ecological System paradigm and conflict theory while assessing conflicts between nature reserves and neighboring communities in the case of Taibai Mountain National Nature Reserve, Shaanxi, China. The study demonstrates that conflict levels fluctuate across three villages, depending on characteristics such as natural resource systems, government frameworks, and socioeconomic conditions. High conflict in Hetaoping Village resulted from competing conservation and tourism interests. On the other hand, Changhushan village recorded high levels of conflict due to the polycentric governance system that was adopted. The polycentric governances allowed strong networking and self-organization processes together with rational harvesting of natural resources outside the nature reserve. This system of governance allowed Changhushan village to utilize their resources in multiple ways, lowering conflicts. Dali Village saw medium conflict levels due to insufficient government compensation and conflict settlement following reserve expansion. The study emphasized the importance of effective governance in addressing the conflicts in these villages. While Zhang et al. (2020) offered valuable insights into the role of governance and resource management in conflict, their focus on nature reserve-community conflicts in China presented a different socio-ecological context than the inter-clan conflicts prevalent in Kenya. The current study, therefore, adapted the understanding of governance effectiveness to the unique clan-based societal structures of North-Eastern Kenya, exploring how specific governance approaches interacted with long-standing clan dynamics rather than community-reserve interfaces.

According to Joseph (2015), a combination of historical grievances and political rivalries fuels inter-clan conflicts in the Msinga villages in South Africa. The study indicated that distrust

among community members led to conflict. This was particularly evident in the marginalized position of women and local citizens in peace processes, perpetuating a cycle of violence and division, highlighting the deep socioeconomic and political hurdles to achieving long-term peace and unity in the region. Joseph's (2015) emphasis on political rivalries and historical grievances in South Africa provided a relevant framework. However, the current study posited that while political factors are undeniably significant, the socio-economic (such as poverty and unemployment) and psychological dimensions (individual interests like greed for power and wealth) warranted a more focused investigation in the Kenyan context. This research, therefore, built upon Joseph's findings by dissecting these often-intertwined socio-economic and psychological motivators which were identified as particularly salient in shaping inter-clan conflicts within different Kenyan societies.

According to Afriyie, Jisong, and Yaw Appiah (2020), the relationship between ethnic and political fault-lines combined with competing for control of rich oil resources, has aggravated the conflict targeting ethnic populations such as the Dinka and Nuer in South Sudan. This has also been propelled by the fact that South Sudan is still a young country whose political frameworks are yet to be fully established unlike those of Kenya. Control over oil-rich regions has become a source of dispute, representing not only economic power but also political leverage within the country and beyond. The study by Afriyie, Jisong, and Yaw Appiah (2020) underscores the potent mix of ethnic identity, political instability, and resource wealth in fueling conflict. While instructive, its concentration on the political economy of oil in the nascent state of South Sudan differed from the dynamics in North-Eastern Kenya, where conflicts are more clan-based and often revolve around pastoral resources and local political power, within a more established, albeit challenged, state framework. The current study thus focused on the specific socio-economic

drivers pertinent to North-Eastern Kenya, which, while less about vast mineral wealth, were found to be critical to livelihoods and local power structures.

Furthermore, the conflict between the Somali and Oromo ethnic groups in southern Ethiopia, as noted by Beyene (2017), is rooted in a complex of cultural, ecological, and political elements, worsened by the government's ethnic-based regional control. This has heightened rivalry over key resources like land and water, further compounded by unstable community land rights, resulting in disputes within the Oromo clan. Hence, it is imperative to address these socio-economic factors to mitigate conflict in the region. Beyene's (2017) analysis of the Somali-Oromo conflict highlights crucial factors like resource competition and ethnic-based administrative structures. However, a significant dimension not explored in Beyene's work was the subsequent impact of such inter-communal conflicts on broader security challenges, such as efforts to counter terrorism. The current research bridged this specific gap by investigating how inter-clan conflicts in North-Eastern Kenya, driven by similar resource and boundary issues, directly influenced and potentially undermined counter-terrorism initiatives in the region.

Aengwony's (2019) study discovered that unemployment, resource scarcity, and cultural practices such as cattle rustling are the primary causes of inter-clan conflict in parts of Kenya. The study also indicated that youth are the most common perpetrators of inter-clan confrontations. Similarly, in Kismayo District, Somalia, Abdirahman (2016) discovered that socio-economic issues such as competition for land resources and religious ideology differences contribute to inter-clan conflict, affecting the region's socioeconomic development. Both Aengwony (2019) and Abdirahman (2016) identify critical socio-economic drivers. In addressing the complex dynamics highlighted by Abdirahman (2016) in Kismayo, it is important to understand the interplay between socio-economic pressures and local governance structures. While competition for land and

resources, as well as ideological differences, fuel these conflicts, the expectation in any law-abiding society is that such disputes should not escalate to violence. The rule of law typically prohibits such escalations, with criminal codes in place to deter and punish acts of violence and property violation. However, in regions like Kismayo, the efficacy of these legal frameworks can be undermined by weak state institutions and the dominance of clan-based governance systems (Abdirahman, 2016). Local leadership is pivotal in this context, with the power to either exacerbate or mitigate conflict. These leaders' responses, whether aligned with formal legal institutions or embedded in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, are important in shaping the community's approach to conflict and adherence to the rule of law (Astariko, 2023). The current study built on these foundational insights by examining not just the existence of these factors, but their specific manifestations and the mechanisms through which they operated within the distinct clan configurations of North-Eastern Kenya, and crucially, their subsequent effect on regional stability and counter-terrorism.

Inter-clan conflicts in Kenya show an ingrained problem that impedes communal harmony and progress. These conflicts, according to Farah (2021), are disputes between two or more clans that have far-reaching effects for societal activities, such as disruptions in schooling and local governance. Their roots lie in a complex interplay of historical grievances, competition for scarce resources, and ethnic rivalries, often leading to violence and displacement of communities. The intricacies of these conflicts are further complicated by cultural practices and environmental factors. For instance, in some communities like the Samburu and Turkana communities, cultural norms, such as cattle raiding for dowry, fuel these disputes, reflecting a mix of tradition and economic necessity (Likaka, & Muia, 2015). Additionally, environmental stressors, like drought, exacerbate these conflicts by intensifying the competition for essential resources like water and

pasture. The weakening of traditional systems for sharing resources and the undermining of elders' authority by external influences, such as government or political actors, also contribute to the escalation of these conflicts (FAO, 2018). These elders, once central to conflict resolution and resource allocation, find their roles diminished, impacting their ability to prevent and resolve disputes. Moreover, the role of political incitement, particularly around issues of land and territorial boundaries, serves as a trigger for these conflicts, highlighting the interconnection between environmental, social, and political dynamics in these disputes. Thus, while cultural traditions may play a role in conflicts, they are part of a larger fabric of contributing factors, including historical, socio-economic, and political elements. These studies provide a comprehensive overview of the general landscape of inter-clan conflict in Kenya. The current study sharpened this focus by concentrating on a specific geographical area, North-Eastern Kenya, to provide a more granular analysis of how these well-documented factors manifested and interacted, particularly exploring the under-researched nexus between these localized conflicts and their implications for national security issues like terrorism.

The gravity of these conflicts is demonstrated in Wajir County, where a one-day fight between the Jibrael Sub Clan of the Degodia Clan and the Wakle Sub Clan of the Ajuran Clan resulted in 15 deaths, 9 injured persons, and the relocation of 3,560 households in 2015 (Salad, 2015). According to the reports available to the public, it was not clear which group won the fight, however, the fight was over a place called Kulani by the Garre and Gunani by the Degodia. While the number of arrests is not provided in reports, Jubat and Sugow (2015) document that security reinforcement had been dispatched from Tarbaj, 198 kilometers from the incident location to help resolve the conflicts. This tragedy exemplifies the devastating character of inter-clan disputes, which not only result in immediate loss of life and economic suffering, but also destroy the social

fabric of communities, leaving long-term scars that impede efforts toward sustainable peace and development. The inter-clan conflicts have exacerbated some challenges that have been prevalent in the North-Eastern region of Kenya such as starvation. This has resulted in the communities relying on international aid for food since the inter-clan conflicts not only lead to loss of lives and livestock but also destroy the few crops in the semi-arid region. Therefore, it is likely that if the inter-clan conflicts are resolved, the over-reliance on international aid for food in Northern Kenya may reduce.

Such conflicts have multiple origins that are firmly rooted in the region's sociopolitical landscape. Mworia and Ndiku (2012) argue that in cases such as the Tharaka-Tigania conflict, access to and control over scarce resources, combined with political self-interest, border disputes, and contentious government policies, exacerbate inter-ethnic tensions. Similarly, Kimutai and Aluvi (2013) ascribe the inter-clan conflicts in Kuria East mostly to cattle rustling, which is exacerbated by factors such as the proliferation of small guns, high illiteracy rates, clan politics, and permeable boundaries. These findings by Mworia and Ndiku (2012) and Kimutai and Aluvi (2013) robustly establish the multifaceted nature of these conflicts. The current research took these analyses further by not only identifying the causes but by specifically investigating how these deeply entrenched socio-economic and political challenges, and the conflicts they generated, created vulnerabilities or complexities for counter-terrorism efforts in the unique context of North-Eastern Kenya.

Efforts to resolve these disputes and promote sustainable peace have yielded uneven results. In Mandera District, peace activities initiated by the Kenyan government and local leaders from the rival Garre and Murulle clans resulted in a significant breakthrough with the signing of a peace pact. According to Hassan (2014), this arrangement was largely accepted by the local

community and officials, allowing displaced people to be resettled and schools to reopen. Such success examples demonstrate the potential of inclusive, locally led peace processes. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge, as revealed by Akiwumi (1999), that inter-clan conflicts between these communities are not spontaneous and are often incited by political leaders seeking to occupy certain positions. While these studies highlight pathways to peace and pinpoint catalysts like political incitement, the current study explored how the persistence or resolution of such conflicts, and the role of political actors within them, specifically impacted the ability of communities and state agencies to collaborate on counter-terrorism, a dimension that remained less explored. Therefore, in an effort of resolving these inter-clan conflicts, political leaders need to take active engagement to ensure that the mitigations implemented are sustainable for the coming generations.

2.3.2 Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism Efforts

Xie and Liu (2021) in China investigated the relationship between state counter-terrorism policies and local societal dynamics, highlighting the performative aspect of these security measures as well as their impact on community relations and governmental legitimacy in Xinjiang. The study examines how local cadres and ethnic populations interact with and respond to state-led counter-terrorism efforts. While the Xinjiang context, with its focus on state performativity and specific ethnic dynamics, differs from North-Eastern Kenya, the underlying principle of state-society interaction in counter-terrorism is highly relevant. Xie and Liu's work prompted an inquiry into how clan structures in North-Eastern Kenya – which are distinct from Xinjiang's ethnic landscape – mediated community responses to state counter-terrorism. The current study moved beyond suggesting a better approach to empirically investigate the *specific ways* existing clan dynamics in North-Eastern Kenya actively shaped, enabled, or hindered counter-terrorism efforts, aiming to provide contextually grounded recommendations.

Baldaro and D'Amato's (2023) study of the relationship between international and local counterterrorism in Mali reveals that effective measures require an awareness of local power dynamics, cultural norms, and social structures. In the case of North-Eastern Kenya, this indicates that clan dynamics, which are fundamental to the social fabric, should be addressed. Baldaro and D'Amato (2023) provide a crucial framework from Mali, emphasizing an understanding of local specificities. The current study operationalized this by moving from the general principle of addressing clan dynamics to a detailed examination of *how* these intricate clan power structures, allegiances, and traditional governance systems in North-Eastern Kenya currently interacted with counterterrorism strategies, and how these interactions could be more effectively leveraged to enhance both legitimacy and operational outcomes.

Gelot and Hansen (2019) conducted a study on counter-violence extremism (CVE) in South-central Somalia, which sheds light on how local actors and NGOs' social position and impact evolve as a result of their participation in CVE operations, affecting traditional power equations and community structures. This engagement frequently results in clans using their affiliations with extremist groups for local gain, complicating the counterterrorism picture. Gelot and Hansen's (2019) research in Somalia reveals the complex, sometimes co-optive, relationship between CVE efforts and clan politics. This is a critical insight. The present study extended this by specifically mapping and analyzing the distinct clan dynamics within North-Eastern Kenya, which, while sharing some similarities with Somalia, has its own unique historical and political context. It examined their precise effect on the sustainability and efficacy of counterterrorism activities, aiming to discern whether similar patterns of strategic clan engagement with extremist or counter-extremist forces were at play and with what consequences for regional security.

Bishar (2022) investigated the impact of community policing in combating radicalization among youngsters in Wajir County, Kenya. It showed the relationship between community characteristics, such as clan relationships, and counterterrorism activities. The study concludes that socioeconomic challenges, together with clan affiliations and politics, play a key role in the radicalization process. Community policing was highlighted as a solution for mitigating these issues. Bishar's (2022) focus on community policing in Wajir offers valuable localized insights. The current research built upon this by specifically interrogating how *active inter-clan conflicts* – a variable perhaps less central in Bishar's analysis of community policing against radicalization – might complicate or even undermine such community policing initiatives. It explored how clan structures could be engaged not just as community characteristics, but as dynamic political entities whose internal and external conflicts directly influenced the success of counter-radicalization efforts.

Barre's (2016) research evaluated the challenges of conducting counterinsurgency measures in Mandera County, highlighting the lack of a unified strategy among security services and the minimal use of propaganda as compared to rebels. Despite these limitations, the report recognizes the usefulness of security forces in protecting people and acquiring intelligence through coordinated community policing operations. Barre (2016) identifies operational challenges in Mandera's counterinsurgency. While noting the value of community policing for intelligence, the study did not deeply dissect how pervasive inter-clan conflicts – a defining feature of Mandera's social landscape – specifically affected the willingness and ability of different clan members to cooperate with security forces or participate meaningfully in such policing efforts. The current study filled this lacuna by focusing explicitly on the influence of these inter-clan conflict dynamics on the entire spectrum of counterterrorism measures.

2.3.3 Inter-Clan Conflict and Radicalization

In the United Kingdom, Polo (2020) investigated the spread of terrorism through emulation and diffusion. According to the study, ethnic and ethnoreligious groups are more likely to commit terrorism by mimicking tactics used by organizations with similar political concerns, especially if they share spatial or network proximities. This emulation process is essential for understanding how radicalization methods spread. Polo's (2020) work on emulation provides a useful lens for understanding one mechanism of radicalization. However, its focus was on ethnic and ethnoreligious groups in the UK and the tactics they emulate, rather than the underlying conditions that might foster such emulation. The current study examined how the grievances and social disruptions stemming from inter-clan conflict in North-Eastern Kenya might have created a fertile ground where emulation of extremist ideologies and tactics became more likely, and further, what counterterrorism initiatives could address this specific interplay.

Subedi's (2017) research in New England found that a driver of radicalization often comes from unresolved conflicts, whether political, social, economic, or cultural, creating grievances that extremist groups can use. The author noted that conflict disrupts societal orders and can undermine state institutions. Subedi (2017) offers a general but important thesis that unresolved conflicts are breeding grounds for radicalization. The current study contextualized and empirically tested this thesis within the very specific milieu of inter-clan conflicts in North-Eastern Kenya, an African setting with distinct conflict drivers and socio-cultural fabrics not covered by Subedi's New England focus. This allowed for a more nuanced understanding of how local conflict dynamics, rather than general unresolved issues, contributed to radicalization pathways.

Morada (2023) investigated the negative consequences of hate speech and provocation, particularly in the setting of Myanmar's communal conflict against the Rohingya, showing how

such conflict encouraged violence and radicalization. The study established that communal conflict amplified radicalization by widening societal divides. Morada's (2023) study on Myanmar effectively demonstrates the role of hate speech in communal conflict and radicalization. While the Rohingya context is unique, the underlying dynamic of how conflict-driven societal cleavages foster radicalization is transferable. The current research explored whether similar mechanisms – perhaps involving inflammatory rhetoric between clans or divisive political narratives – operated within North-Eastern Kenya's inter-clan conflicts and how these specifically contributed to radicalization, thereby applying Morada's insights to a new socio-political environment.

In Nigeria, Olaniyan and Asuelime (2014) argue that the state's intrinsic religious, regional, ethnic, and political fault lines, exacerbated by Boko Haram's actions, contribute considerably to social cleavages and a climate favorable to radicalization. The group's ideology challenges Nigerian state sovereignty. The varying interpretations of Boko Haram reflect Nigeria's deep divisions. Olaniyan and Asuelime's (2014) work on Nigeria and Boko Haram highlights how a militant group can exploit national fault lines. While both Nigeria and Kenya face challenges from Islamist militant groups, the nature of the primary fault lines being exploited differs; in North-Eastern Kenya, the focus was more on inter-clan divisions and perceived marginalization rather than the broader religious and regional cleavages emphasized in the Nigerian context. This research provided a focused analysis on Al-Shabaab's interaction with Kenyan *inter-clan* dynamics, offering a distinct perspective from the Boko Haram-Nigeria scenario.

In Kenya, Rink and Sharma's (2018) study looked at the multiple elements that contribute to religious radicalization in the context of Muslim-Christian tensions, highlighting individual-level psychological trauma, disturbed social ties, and the major importance of religious identification and exposure to radical networks as key predictors. Rink and Sharma's (2018) study

provides crucial insights into individual-level drivers of radicalization across Kenya. However, its nationwide scope may not have fully captured how these individual factors were uniquely shaped, intensified, or triggered within the specific localized context of persistent inter-clan conflict in North-Eastern Kenya. The current study provided this more granular, context-sensitive analysis by examining the interplay between these individual predispositions and the specific socio-political environment of inter-clan strife in the region.

Haider (2020) investigated strife in North-Eastern Kenya, describing Al-Shabaab's intentional use of Kenya's internal tensions caused by uneven growth patterns and the marginalization of Muslim groups to gain local support through targeted propaganda. Where persuasion fails, the organization has used intimidation. Haider (2020) aptly describes Al-Shabaab's strategic exploitation of grievances in North-Eastern Kenya. While this work provided an excellent overview of the region, the current study narrowed its geographical focus to Mandera County. This allowed for a deeper investigation into how active and specific inter-clan conflicts within Mandera may have offered even more tailored opportunities for Al-Shabaab's exploitation, potentially revealing nuances in propaganda, recruitment, or operational facilitation that a broader regional analysis might not have covered, thus adding a layer of specificity to Haider's findings.

2.4 Summary of Review of Literature

Inter-clan conflicts are marked by disagreements and hostility among various clans or tribal groups, which are frequently motivated by historical grudges, rivalry for resources, and cultural and political differences. These conflicts are notable for their persistence and complexity, which is compounded by environmental degradation and political manipulation, resulting in severe community disruption (Beyene, 2017; Afriyie, Jisong, and Yaw Appiah, 2020). To prepare the path for long-term peace, these conflicts must be addressed through comprehensive methods that

address both immediate disputes and underlying causes, while also encouraging dialogue, inclusive governance, and socioeconomic growth.

The association between inter-clan conflict and radicalization is strong, with an environment of conflict increasing community vulnerability to radicalization, particularly among adolescents. In conflict-affected areas, the ongoing instability, governance shortcomings, and socioeconomic inequality create favorable conditions for extremist groups to persuade individuals to engage in violent extremism (Subedi, 2017; Rasul, 2009). This emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between radicalization and violent extremism and conducting targeted interventions that address radicalism's underlying roots in contested environments.

Extant literature shows that clan dynamics have a significant impact on the effectiveness of counterterrorism activities. The combination of hard and soft measures is essential for a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy. While hard measures aim to eliminate immediate threats, their effectiveness is frequently dependent on soft solutions that address the long-term causes of terrorism, such as the sociopolitical and economic conditions that contribute to radicalization. Understanding and incorporating clan dynamics into counterterrorism programs might improve their effectiveness by creating peaceful settings and increasing resilience to terrorist beliefs (Haider, 2020; Rink & Sharma, 2018).

2.5 Research Gaps

The existing literature on inter-clan conflicts in Kenya provides a foundational understanding of the immediate effects and causes of these disputes, but it leaves several important areas unexplored, particularly in terms of the long-term consequences for affected communities and the broader sociopolitical landscape. One gap is a lack of research of the long-term psychosocial repercussions on communities, such as trauma and rooted grudges, which can

perpetuate violent cycles across generations. This lack of awareness of the post-conflict alteration of the social fabric, as well as the governance consequences, raises concerns about community resilience to external influences such as radicalization. Furthermore, while factors such as resource scarcity are recognized, the links between local conflicts and geopolitical and economic contexts, such as climate change implications and regional arms proliferation, have received insufficient attention. This gap points out the need for a more integrated strategy that considers the interplay between local conflict dynamics and larger global trends, which is essential to developing detailed and long-term conflict resolution methods.

Furthermore, the literature on peace efforts frequently focuses on success stories rather than importantly examining the long-term viability of these agreements or the incorporation of conflict resolution methods into community life. Women and youth's potential responsibilities in counterterrorism efforts have been neglected, despite their significant contributions to social cohesiveness, indicating a gap in recognizing and harnessing all community resources for peace. Furthermore, the link between inter-clan conflicts and radicalization, notably in Kenya's North-Eastern region, is poorly addressed. The journey from clan disputes to extremist ideology requires a thorough assessment to inform targeted counterterrorism operations that address not only the symptoms but also the underlying socioeconomic and political frustrations that drive both inter-clan conflicts and radicalization. Bridging these analytical gaps is important for a thorough knowledge that guides successful policy and practical initiatives for long-term counterterrorism efforts in the region.

2.6 Conclusion

Inter-clan conflicts are disputes amongst communities that pose a challenge to society. This is particularly the case in counterterrorism efforts. This is because, interclan-conflict creates a

conducive environment for radicalization. Radicalization is the process of inducting individuals into extremist beliefs. Extant literature posits that terrorist groups spread false doctrines targeting the psychological vulnerabilities of individuals seeking a sense of purpose and belonging. Due to the isolation and the enmity that is propagated by inter-clan conflicts, a fertile ground is created which is an taken as an opportunity by terrorist groups to radicalize more members into engaging into violent activities. Therefore, if inter-clan conflicts are eradicated, the environment in which terrorist groups operate to radicalize other members is eliminated, hence resulting in successful counterterrorism efforts. Notably, as governments act to counter terrorism, both state and non-state actors ought to be given an opportunity to combat terrorism. Implementing bot punitive and culturally sensitive strategies is essential to the effectiveness of the counterterrorism efforts.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The outline that was followed to facilitate effective data collecting and analysis for the study is described in this chapter. The components of the research methodology including the research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques are described in this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

For this study, a descriptive research design was used. This design was chosen because it provided an overview of the current situation (Sileyew, 2019). The design helped capture specific data on the effect of inter-clan conflict on counterterrorism efforts in North-Eastern Kenya. By adopting this approach, the study developed an in-depth understanding of the subtleties and intricate nature of counterterrorism activities in the region.

3.3 Research Site

Mandera North Sub-County is located in the northeastern region of Kenya with a population of 143,850 people (KNBS, 2019). The sub-County's porous border with Somalia makes it a significant front in the fight against terrorism, especially in light of Al-Shabaab threats. The region's geographic location makes it vulnerable to cross-border terrorist activity, and its vast and often inaccessible terrain makes it difficult to respond quickly to security threats. It is not only pertinent but important that Mandera North Sub-County be the focus of this research on the effect of inter-clan conflicts on counterterrorism efforts. This is because inter-clan conflicts are a common phenomenon in Mandera North Sub-County. The Sub-County borders Lafey to the east

where most of the inhabitants are Murule clan. Inter-clan clashes between the Degodia and Murule clans are common in Mandera North Sub-County. The tensions between these two communities are typical of the larger issues faced by many regions of Kenya's North-Eastern region, where ethnic and clan identities play key roles in social and political organization. The demographic composition of the clan inhabiting Mandera North Sub-County is represented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Clan Population Distribution in Mandera North Sub-County

Ward	Population Census (2019)	Clan
Ashabito	19,376	Degodia
Guticha	11,614	Degodia
Marothile	27,444	Degodia
Rhamu	47,641	Degodia and Murule
Rhamu Dimtu	37,775	Degodia and Murule
Total	**143,850**	

3.4 Target Population

The target population encompassed all individuals who fulfill the specified criteria for inclusion in the study (Taherdoost, 2016). The study targeted 143,850 individuals residing in Mandera North Sub-County. This was because the residents in the region had experienced inter-clan conflicts and were vulnerable to terrorist attacks, hence necessitating the need to implement counterterrorism initiatives. Moreover, the target population was categorized into area chiefs, local elders, religious leaders, security agencies, and community members. The target population included five area chiefs, five local elders, four officers from the special operations group, four officers from the quick response unit, four officers from the Kenya police, and 143,828 community members.

3.5 Determination of Study Sample

A sample size, as defined by Taherdoost (2016), is a subset of people chosen from the overall population from which a researcher plans to gather data. The sample size for the study was determined using the formula developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The following is the formula:

$$n = \frac{\chi^2 * N * P * (1 - P)}{d^2 * (N - 1) + \chi^2 * P * (1 - P)}$$

Where:

n = required sample size.

χ^2= the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum Sample size).

D = the degree of accuracy (the margin of error) expressed as a proportion (.05).

3.5.1 Study Sample Frame

Sampling is a statistical procedure used in research to select a subset of individuals from a larger population to estimate the group's characteristics (Casteel, & Bridier, 2021). The participants for this study were chosen using a mixed sampling method. Random sampling was employed for community members, guaranteeing that each individual has an equal chance of being chosen. This method increases the generalizability of the findings across the population. In addition, a stratified sample technique was used to assure representation across different segments of the community, improving the study's comprehensiveness and the dependability of its

conclusions by capturing a diverse range of opinions and experiences within the population. Purposive sampling was used for security agency officers, area chiefs, local leaders, and religious leaders, with individuals chosen based on their specific responsibilities and experiences related to the study's focus on inter-clan conflicts, radicalization, and counterterrorism initiatives. This strategic selection sought to elicit in-depth insights from key informants who are directly involved in or affected by the issues at hand.

Table 3.2: Study Sample Frame

Category	Population
Area Chiefs from the five wards	5
Local elders from the five wards	5
Religious leaders	5
Officers from special operations group	4
Officers from quick response unit	4
Officers from the Kenya police	4
Community members	143,823
Total	**143,850**

3.5.2 Study Sample Size

The sample size for this study represented the individuals from whom the researcher would collect data. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula the sample size for the study was in the range of 383 respondents representing the seven categories of the target populations. The sample size included the area chiefs, local elders and religious leaders from the five wards, the officers from the special operation group, officers from the quick response unit, officers from the Kenya police and the community members. The sample size is presented below on Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample Size
Area Chiefs from the five wards	5	5
Local elders from the five wards	5	5
Religious Leaders	5	5
Officers from special operations group	4	4
Officers from quick response unit	4	4
Officers from the Kenya police	4	4
Community members	143,823	356
Total	**143,850**	**383**

3.5.3 Sampling Procedures

This study's sampling strategy used disproportionate sampling to ensure coverage of all categories of the target population in Mandera North Sub-County. The study used disproportionate sampling to capture the distinctive contributions of both smaller and bigger population segments, allowing for a better understanding of the impact of inter-clan conflicts on regional counterterrorism operations. The sample size is presented below on Table 3.4

Table 3.4: Sample Procedures

Category	Population	Sample Procedure
Area Chiefs from the five wards	5	Purposive sampling
Local elders from the five wards	5	Purposive sampling
Religious leaders	5	Purposive sampling
Officers from special operations group	4	Purposive sampling
Officers from quick response unit	4	Purposive sampling
Officers from the Kenya police	4	Purposive sampling
Community members	143,823	Random sampling
Total	**143,850**	

3.6 Data Collection

Primary data collection was conducted using questionnaires, interview guide and focus group discussions during the period 1st September – 30th September 2024.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Data from the community members in Mandera North Sub-County was collected using a questionnaire. A semi-structured questionnaire comprising of both open and close-ended questions was developed for data collection. This method allowed for the collection of detailed responses through open-ended responses, while also facilitating statistical analysis of data through close-ended questions (Taherdoost, 2022). The questionnaires collected demographic data and data on the study variables to cover the specific objectives of the study. The questionnaires were distributed to the community members in Mandera North Sub-County with the help of two research assistants. The researcher together with the research assistants distributed the questionnaires and waited while the respondents filled in the questionnaire. This helped improve the response rate. Moreover, the research assistants were selected from the Mandera community, to facilitate in translating questions for the respondents who did not understand English.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

Data from the local elders in Mandera North Sub-County were collected using and interview guide. This data collection strategy was selected to capture the depth of insights that can only be gained through human interaction, resulting in a more comprehensive knowledge of inter-clan tensions, radicalization, and counterterrorism activities in the region. Face-to-face interviews allowed for the observation of nonverbal clues and build a culture of trust and openness, which is essential for obtaining genuine responses. The interviews were scheduled with the local elders and religious leaders before the actual day of data collection. This ensured that the data is collected at the convenience of the local elders and religious leaders. The interviews took approximately thirty minutes ensuring the collection of in-depth data to compliment the quantitative data that was collected using the questionnaire.

3.6.3 Focus Group Discussion

Four focus group discussions were conducted with the security officers from Mandera North Sub County. Three groups were e made of four participants each (officers from the special operations group, quick response unit and the Kenya police) while one group was made up of five participants (local chiefs). The small groups provided a greater chance that everyone would feel at ease contributing to the discussion being held. Appointments with 17 security agency personnel were made before the day of actual data collection. Before collecting the data, the participants were required to give their consent to volunteer to participate in the study. Detailed notes were made during these the focus group discussions, which were later transcribed for qualitative data analysis.

3.7 Piloting, Reliability and Validity of the Research Instruments

3.7.1 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

To ensure that the research instruments are reliable, a pilot test of the items was conducted. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), a pretest of the instruments with competent respondents can determine whether the research participants will have issues with the instrument. The validity and reliability of the research items were tested using a pilot team composed of 10% of the sample size. The Mandera East Sub-County, where the pilot study was carried out, is similarly vulnerable to terrorist attacks. The pilot study assisted in honing the research questions for the final data collection.

3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

The internal consistency of study items is measured by reliability. The study used Cronbach's alpha (α) to test the research items' internal consistency. The α varies from 0 to 1. A α value close to 1 indicates strong reliability. The pilot study was conducted to assess the research instrument's reliability. According to Ursachi, Horodnic, and Zait (2015), a Cronbach's alpha value of more than 0.7 indicates high dependability. Following the recommendation, the cut-off value for testing dependability was 0.7. he Cronbach's Alpha coefficients obtained from the pilot study for the Likert-scale measured constructs are presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Reliability Test Results

Construct	Cronnbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Inter-clan conflicts and vulnerability to radicalization	0.82	4
Clan dynamics in counterterrorism efforts	0.79	5

Source: Field Data (2025)

As shown in Table 3.5, the "Inter-Clan Conflicts and Vulnerability to Radicalization" scale yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.82, and the " Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism Efforts" scale reported an alpha of 0.79. Since both obtained Cronbach's Alpha values are above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Ursachi et al., 2015), it can be concluded that these sections of the research instrument exhibited high dependability, and the items within each scale consistently measure the intended construct.

3.7.3 Validity of Research Instruments

According to Rose and Johnson (2020), validity is the capacity of the study instruments to measure the things that they were designed to evaluate. The current study applied both content and face validity. The pilot study was used to assess content validity. This is because ensuring that all study variables and indicators are adequately handled in the research instruments is an important component of content validity. The researcher worked closely with the academic supervisors to be guided on the approaches to use when building research instruments to test face validity. The academic supervisor's recommendations were taken into consideration when constructing the research tools.

3.8 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

The data analysis process started with editing questionnaire responses to identify and correct any errors or gaps, ensuring accuracy and completeness (Ali, 2020). This editing step was important for maintaining the integrity of the data, as it involved cross-checking responses for consistency and completeness, resolving ambiguities, and standardizing formats where necessary. After editing, responses to closed-ended questions were coded and entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. The study employed descriptive analysis to summarize the features of study variables, using statistical measures such as mean to represent central tendency and standard deviation to

indicate data variability. These measures provided a clear picture of the general trends and patterns within the dataset. Chi-square test was also used to assess whether distribution of perceived frequency of inter-clan conflicts was uniformly distributed or not Results were presented in tables to ensure clear and efficient interpretation.

The qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The data preparation process began with the transcription of interview recordings and the creation of notes from the interviews to capture the raw data (Church et al., 2019). Following preparation, the study used open coding to sift through the data, identifying significant statements and observations and organizing them into initial codes, as outlined by Campbell et al. (2021). These initial codes, which reflected participants' perspectives and experiences, were consolidated into themes that aligned with the study's objectives. The themes were then reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the data and provided a comprehensive understanding of the participants' views. Additionally, the analysis process involved constant comparison, where new data was continuously compared with existing codes and themes to verify their relevance and accuracy. This iterative process helped uncover deeper insights and ensure that the themes were well-supported by the data. Finally, the findings were interpreted in the context of existing literature to draw meaningful conclusions and implications for future research and practice.

3.9 Legal and Ethical Considerations

Sensitive information about counterterrorism efforts was obtained for the study. Since this was an issue of concern, particularly in areas where terrorist attacks were common, the researcher had an ethical duty to maintain the secrecy of all the data collected. Before starting data collection, the researcher applied for and received a research permit from NACOSTI. The objective of the study was explained to the respondents prior to data collection. Additionally, the researcher

reassured the respondents that their privacy would be protected by not recording their names or ID numbers.

The researcher also trained two research assistants to help in collecting the data. The research assistants were engaged from Mandera North Sub-County and acted as interpreters in situations where the sampled respondents did not understand English. It was important to engage research assistants who understood the local dialect to facilitate easier data collection from the sampled population. Access to the data was restricted to the researcher, research assistants, and university supervisor in order to maintain data security. Furthermore, the shared material was only utilized for scholarly purposes.

3.10 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has outlined the methodology that was used to collect and analyze data. The data was collected using questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The next chapter presents the results following the data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data obtained from the study. The chapter begins by reporting the response rate, providing insights into the representativeness and reliability of the sample. It then presents background information about the respondents, offering context for the analysis. This is followed by presentation and interpretation of statistics and themes all aimed at addressing the research objectives. The chapter concludes with a discussion of these findings, contextualizing them within existing literature.

4.2 Response Rate

A response rate reflects the proportion of participants who successfully complete the data collection process out of the total number of individuals approached. A high response rate minimizes non-response bias and ensures that the collected data accurately represents the target population. Table 4.1 outlines the response rate for each research instrument used in the study.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Research Instrument	Target Sample Size	Actual Responses Received	Response Rate (%)
Questionnaires	356	328	92%
Interview Guide	10	10	100%
Focus Group Discussion	17	17	100%
Total	**383**	**355**	**93%**

Source: Field Data (2025)

For the questionnaires, the study achieved a response rate of 92%, with 328 out of 356 community members completing the forms. This high response rate can be attributed to the direct

involvement of the researcher and research assistants, who distributed and collected the questionnaires on the spot. The use of local research assistants to translate questions into the respondents' preferred language also played a significant role in encouraging participation. The completed questionnaires provided comprehensive data for statistical analysis, ensuring the reliability of the findings. The interview guide yielded a 100% response rate, with all 10 targeted local elders and religious leaders participating in the face-to-face interviews. The pre-scheduled interviews, combined with the personal and interactive nature of the data collection method, ensured full participation. The trust and rapport established during the interviews facilitated open and honest responses, contributing to the depth and quality of the qualitative data collected.

For the focus group discussions (FGDs), a 100% response rate was achieved, with all 17 security officers and local chiefs participating in the discussions. The purposive selection of participants, combined with the relevance of the discussion topics to their roles, ensured full engagement. The key informant interviews and the focus group discussions were key in triangulating the findings received from the questionnaires.

The overall response rate for the study was 93%, which is considered excellent for social science research (Rosenstein, 2019). This high response rate ensures that the data collected is robust and representative of the target population, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the study findings. The successful completion of data collection across all instruments demonstrates the effectiveness of the sampling and data collection strategies employed in the study.

4.3 Background Information

This section presents the background information of the participants involved in the study, which is essential for understanding the context of their responses. For community members,

segregated data on gender and age were collected to provide demographic insights into the sample, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the population in Mandera North Sub-County. For the interview guide, information on the duration of residency was gathered from local elders and religious leaders to establish their familiarity with the region's inter-clan conflicts and existing counterterrorism initiatives. Similarly, for focus group discussions, security agency officers were asked about their current designations and deployments, responsibilities, and duration of involvement in counterterrorism measures to ascertain their expertise and relevance to the study's objectives.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Community Members

The demographic characteristics of community members, including gender and age were examined. Frequencies and percentages were utilized to summarize the distribution of respondents. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Community Members

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	190	58
Female	138	42
Age		
21-30 years	92	28
31-40 years	148	45
41-50 years	59	18
Above 50 years	29	9

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 4.2 reveals that 58% of the respondents were male, while 42% were female, indicating a slightly higher representation of males in the sample. This gender disparity can be attributed to the cultural and social dynamics of Mandera North Sub-County, where men

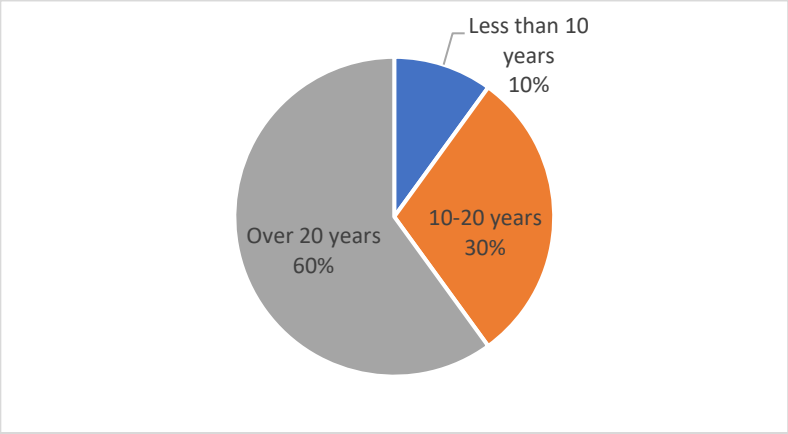
traditionally serve as gatekeepers and decision-makers within the community, particularly in matters related to conflict, security, and public engagement. Women, on the other hand, are often culturally restricted from interacting with strangers, especially male researchers, due to prevailing gender norms and practices rooted in the region's Somali and Islamic traditions, which emphasize modesty and limited public interaction for women. Additionally, higher illiteracy rates among women compared to men in this region, as reported in various studies on gender disparities in education in pastoralist communities, may have further limited their participation, as they may feel less confident or equipped to engage in research activities requiring verbal or written responses.

In terms of age, the majority of respondents (45%) fell within the 31–40 age bracket, followed by 28% in the 21–30 age group, and 18% in the 41–50 age group. Only 9% of the respondents were above 50 years old, suggesting that the sample primarily consisted of middle-aged individuals. This demographic distribution reflects the active population in Mandera North Sub-County, who are likely to be directly affected by inter-clan conflicts and counterterrorism initiatives.

4.3.2 Duration of Residency among Local Elders and Religious Leaders

The duration of residency among local elders and religious leaders were probed. Frequencies and percentages were utilized to summarize the distribution of respondents. The results are presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Duration of Residency among Local Elders and Religious Leaders



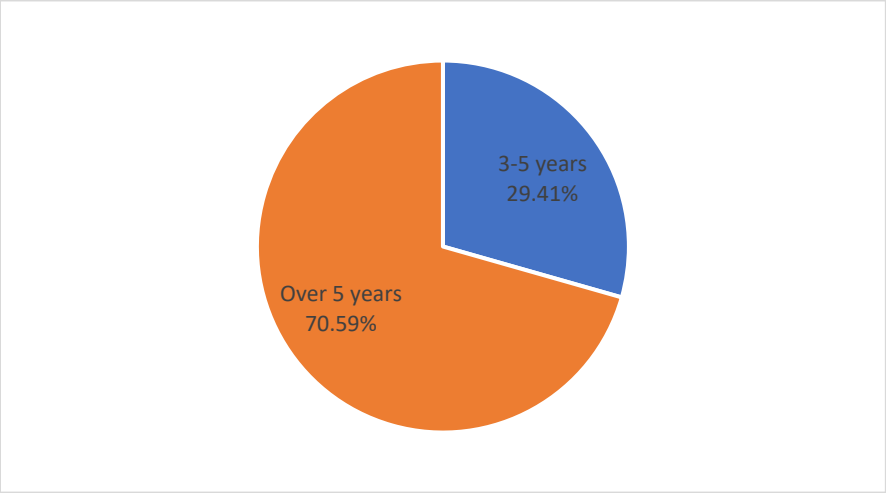
Source: Field Data (2025)

The results show that 60% of the interviewees had lived in Mandera North Sub-County for over 20 years, while 30% have resided in the area for between 10–20 years. Only 10% of the respondents had lived in the region for less than 10 years. This indicates that the majority of the interviewees had extensive experience and knowledge of the region's history, inter-clan conflicts, and existing counterterrorism efforts in the sub-county. Their long-term residency provided a strong foundation for their insights, making their perspectives highly valuable for the study.

4.3.2 Roles and Experience of Security Agency Officers

The roles and experience of security agency officers participating in the focus group discussions were examined. Frequencies and percentages were utilized to summarize the distribution of respondents. The results are presented in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Experience of Security Agency Officers in Counterterrorism



Source: Field Data (2025)

The results indicate that 70.59% of the officers had been actively involved in counterterrorism measures for over 5 years, while 29.41% had been involved for 3–5 years. This demonstrates that the majority of the security officers have significant experience in addressing security challenges in Mandera County. Additionally, the officers' current positions and responsibilities, such as intelligence gathering, community engagement, and rapid response operations, highlighted their direct involvement in counterterrorism initiatives. Their expertise ensured that the discussions provide in-depth and practical insights into the effectiveness of current measures and potential areas for improvement.

4.4 Nature of Inter-Clan Conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County

This section presents the findings on the nature of inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County, addressing the study's first objective. The results are drawn from questionnaires, key informant interviews, and FGDs, providing a comprehensive understanding of the causes, frequency, and impact of these conflicts. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data

from key informant interviews and FGDs, while descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the data from the questionnaire instrument.

4.4.1 Community Members' Experiences and Perceptions

The questionnaire data provided insights into community members' experiences and perceptions of inter-clan conflicts. Table 4.3 summarizes the responses regarding personal experiences or witnessing inter-clan conflicts.

Table 4.3: Personal Experiences with Inter-Clan Conflicts among Community Members

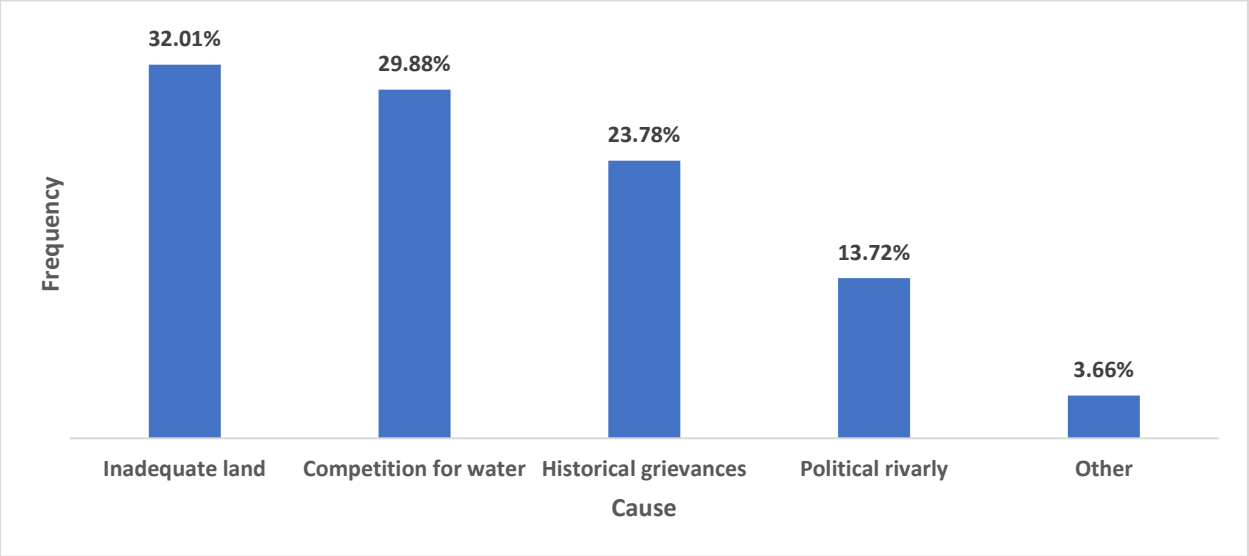
Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	262	79.88
No	66	20.12
Total	**328**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results show that 79.88% of respondents (262 out of 328) had personally experienced or witnessed inter-clan conflicts, indicating a high prevalence of such conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County. This high exposure suggests that inter-clan conflicts are a significant issue affecting the majority of the community. The remaining 20% (66 respondents) reported not to have had any direct experience, possibly due to residing in less conflict-prone areas or having limited interaction with conflicting clans. These findings highlight the widespread impact of inter-clan conflicts on the community.

To understand the driving factors behind inter-clan conflicts, respondents who had witnessed conflicts were asked to identify the primary causes. Table 4.6 presents these findings.

Figure 4.3: Primary Causes of Inter-Clan Conflicts



Source: Field Data (2025)

Note: Respondents could select multiple causes, so percentages do not sum to 100%.

Figure 4.3 reveals that inadequate land (32.01%) and competition for water (29.88%) were the most commonly cited causes of inter-clan conflicts, reflecting the resource scarcity challenges in the region. Historical grievances (23.78%) were also significant, pointing to economic and historical dimensions of the conflicts often exacerbated by strong clan identities, as conceptualized by Social Identity Theory. Political rivalry (13.72%) was less frequently mentioned, suggesting it is a secondary factor. These findings indicate that resource-based and historical tensions are central to inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County.

Understanding the temporal pattern of conflicts provides insight into their severity and impact on community life. Respondents were asked to indicate how often inter-clan conflicts occur in the region. Table 4.4 presents these findings.

Table 4.4: Perceived Frequency of Inter-Clan Conflicts

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Rarely	37	11.28
Occasionally	142	43.29
Frequently	149	45.43
Total	**328**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results indicate that most respondents perceive inter-clan conflicts as occurring either frequently (45.43%) or occasionally (43.29%) in Mandera North Sub-County, with only 11.28% reporting that inter-clan conflicts occur rarely. This high frequency perception suggests that these conflicts represent a persistent challenge rather than isolated incidents. The regular occurrence of conflicts has implications for community stability, economic development, and security operations in the region. It also indicates that existing conflict resolution mechanisms may not be adequately addressing the underlying causes, allowing tensions to resurface periodically. This pattern of recurring conflicts aligns with feedback from local leaders who described a cycle of tension and violence in the region.

To assess whether the frequency of inter-clan conflicts is perceived uniformly by respondents, a Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit test was conducted. The test evaluated if the observed differences in responses–rarely, occasionally, and frequently–were statistically significant beyond chance.

Table 4.5: Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit Test for Perceived Frequency of Inter-Clan Conflicts

Test Statistic (χ^2)	*df*	p-value
150.23	2	.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

The Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit test showed a statistically significant difference in how respondents perceived the frequency of inter-clan conflicts ($\chi^2 = 150.23$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$). This means the distribution is not uniform—respondents were significantly more likely to report that inter-clan conflicts occur frequently or occasionally, rather than rarely. This result supports the narrative that such conflicts are not sporadic events but are regular and deeply embedded challenges in the region. These findings highlight the need for stronger conflict mitigation and prevention systems, especially those that address root causes such as **re**source competition and historical grievances

4.4.2 Thematic Analysis: Insights from Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Thematic analysis of interviews with local elders and religious leaders, as well as FGDs with security agency officers, revealed four key themes related to the nature of inter-clan conflicts. These are; resource scarcity, historical grievances, political influence, and social fragmentation. Verbatim quotes from participants, using pseudonyms to ensure anonymity, are included to illustrate these themes. The analysis integrates perspectives from both community leaders and security personnel to provide a comprehensive understanding of the conflicts, often reflecting the in-group cohesion and inter-group competition that Social Identity Theory describes.

4.4.2.1 Resource Scarcity as a Primary Driver of Conflict

Resource scarcity, particularly related to land and water, emerged as a dominant cause of inter-clan conflicts. Local elders and religious leaders emphasized that competition for scarce resources often escalated into violent disputes. This aligns with the core tenets of Conflict Transformation Theory, which recognizes that structural issues, such as unequal access to resources, are fundamental drivers of conflict. For instance, "Hassan" (pseudonym), a local elder,

stated, *"The land here is not enough for all clans, and when drought comes, everyone fights for the little water left..."*

Similarly, security officers noted that resource disputes frequently complicated their operations. "Fatuma" (pseudonym), a security officer, remarked, *"When clans fight over water points, it becomes hard to focus on terrorism because these conflicts create chaos…"* These accounts align with the questionnaire findings, where land and water were the most cited causes, highlighting the centrality of resource scarcity in driving inter-clan conflicts. This competition for limited resources also reinforces 'in-group'/'out-group' distinctions as described by Social Identity Theory, where scarcity intensifies the perceived threat from other groups competing for the same vital resources.

4.4.2.2 Historical Grievances and Cycles of Revenge

Historical grievances were identified as a significant factor perpetuating inter-clan conflicts, often leading to cycles of revenge. Elders and religious leaders explained that past disputes which have remained unresolved over generations, fueled ongoing tensions. This cyclical nature of violence driven by historical wrongs is a key element addressed by Conflict Transformation Theory, which seeks to break these patterns by transforming the underlying relationships and cultural structures that perpetuate the conflict. "Ahmed" (pseudonym), a religious leader, noted, *"Some clans still remember attacks from decades ago, and they teach their children to seek revenge."*

Security officers interviewed also acknowledged that historical grievances complicated counterterrorism efforts, as clans sometimes aligned with radical groups for protection. This highlights how unresolved historical issues can be exploited by external actors, a dynamic not fully accounted for in traditional deterrence models but crucial for understanding the environment in

which radicalization occurs. "Ibrahim" (pseudonym), a security officer, stated, *"Old grudges make clans distrust each other, and terrorists exploit this to gain support."*

These insights corroborate the questionnaire data, where historical grievances were cited by 23.79% of respondents, highlighting their role in sustaining conflicts. This also speaks to the 'in-group' favoritism and 'out-group' derogation inherent in Social Identity Theory, where past conflicts solidify negative perceptions and mistrust between clans.

4.4.2.3 Political Influence and Clan Rivalries

Political rivalry emerged as a secondary but notable factor influencing inter-clan conflicts and often linked to competition for leadership positions. Elders highlighted that political leaders sometimes instigated clan divisions for personal electoral gains. "Amina" (pseudonym), an elder, explained, *"Politicians promise resources to one clan and ignore others, which creates tension."*

Security officers noted that political rivalries within the sub-county weakened community cohesion, making it harder to implement counterterrorism strategies. "Mohamed" (pseudonym), a security officer, remarked, *"When clans are divided by politicians, they are less likely to cooperate with us."*

These findings align with the questionnaire results, where 13.72% of respondents identified political rivalry as a contributing factor to conflict in the sub-county, indicating its role in exacerbating inter-clan tensions. This demonstrates how political dynamics can manipulate and intensify the 'in-group'/'out-group' divisions described by Social Identity Theory, using group identity for political gain. Akiwumi (1999) also noted the role of political leaders in inciting inter-clan conflicts in Kenya.

4.4.2.4 Social Fragmentation and Weakened Community Cohesion

Inter-clan conflicts were found to contribute to social fragmentation, weakening community cohesion and trust. Elders and religious leaders emphasized that conflicts disrupted social bonds, making it difficult to resolve disputes peacefully. This outcome is directly addressed by Conflict Transformation Theory, which aims to rebuild relationships and social structures damaged by conflict. "Fatima" (pseudonym), a religious leader, stated, "*Families from different clans no longer visit each other because of fear and mistrust*." Security officers noted that social fragmentation increased vulnerability to radicalization, as isolated clans were more susceptible to external influences and recruitment to radical groupings. "Yusuf" (pseudonym), a security officer, explained, "*When clans are divided, terrorists find it easier to recruit youths who feel unprotected*."

These perspectives highlight the broader social impact of inter-clan conflicts, reinforcing the need for community-based interventions and peacebuilding initiatives that restore trust and cooperation between groups, consistent with Conflict Transformation Theory and the need to foster positive inter-group relations as suggested by Social Identity Theory.

4.4.2.5 Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons

The widespread availability of small arms and light weapons in the Northeastern region has significantly contributed to the resurgence of clan conflicts, exacerbating security challenges in the region. As inter-clan tensions escalate in the sub-county, access to firearms becomes easier, thereby enabling local vigilante groups to arm themselves in preparation for conflict and to "protect" their community. This proliferation of small arms and light weapons blurs the lines of distinction between clan-based militant vigilante groups and terrorist militants, as neither of the groups wear distinct uniforms or identifiable markers. Security forces often struggle to differentiate between a militia member of the community defending their clan and an extremist affiliated with a terrorist group. "Abdirahman" (pseudonym), a local elder, highlighted this concern: "*In the past, when disputes arose, people used traditional mediation, but now, with so many guns in the community, clans immediately resort to violence instead of dialogue...*"

This shift from traditional conflict resolution towards armed confrontation undermines the principles of Conflict Transformation Theory, which advocates for non-violent means of resolving disputes. Security personnel also emphasized the challenge they experience of not being able to distinguish between different armed factions when inter-clan conflicts erupt in the sub-county. "Fatuma" (pseudonym), a security officer, explained: "*We face a serious dilemma. When a militia member and a terrorist use the same weapons and tactics, how do we tell them apart in the heat of conflict*?"

The tactical similarities employed by the local militant vigilante groups and the violent extremist groups–such as ambushes, guerrilla-style attacks, and blending into the local population–further complicate counterterrorism efforts. This uncertainty makes intelligence gathering more difficult, as security forces struggle to discern who is a genuine ally and who might be aiding

extremist activities. A security officer "Hassan" (pseudonym), elaborated on the risks of this situation: "*Terrorist groups take advantage of the confusion. They infiltrate local vigilante groups, and before you know it, fighters who initially joined to protect their clans find themselves involved in extremist activities*."

Without effective measures to control the flow of small arms and light weapons, terrorist groups can continue exploiting clan conflicts to further their radical agendas. This dynamic poses a significant challenge for Deterrence Theory, as the target of deterrence (criminal vs. terrorist) becomes unclear, and the perceived certainty and severity of punishment are diminished in chaotic environments. Strengthening local security mechanisms, enhancing intelligence-sharing, and implementing arms control strategies are critical steps in addressing these challenges and ensuring more effective counterterrorism efforts. Kimutai and Aluvi (2013) also identified the proliferation of small arms as a factor exacerbating inter-clan conflict.

4.4.3 Integrated Analysis of the Nature of Inter-Clan Conflict

The data analysis reveals that inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County are driven by five main factors: resource scarcity, historical grievances, political rivalries, social fragmentation, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The questionnaire responses show that 79.8% of community members have directly experienced or witnessed these conflicts, indicating their widespread impact across the sub-county. Competition for natural resources, particularly land (32.01%) and water (29.88%), emerged as the most frequently cited causes of conflict. Historical grievances were identified by 23.78% of respondents as another significant driver, while political rivalry was mentioned by 13.72% of participants. These findings align with existing literature, including studies by Beyene (2017) and Aengwony (2019), who documented similar conflict drivers in comparable pastoral contexts.

The frequency data demonstrates that inter-clan conflicts are a persistent challenge rather than isolated incidents. The questionnaire results show that 43.29% of respondents reported occasional conflicts, while 45.43% indicated that conflicts occur frequently in their area. Only 11.28% of participants described conflicts as rare occurrences. The Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit test confirmed that this distribution is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 150.23$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$), indicating that the high frequency of conflicts is a genuine pattern rather than a random occurrence. This persistent nature of conflicts suggests that existing resolution mechanisms are inadequate in addressing the underlying causes of tension between clans.

The thematic analysis from key informant interviews and focus group discussions strongly supports the questionnaire findings. Local elders, religious leaders, and security officers all emphasized resource scarcity and historical grievances as the primary drivers of inter-clan conflicts. The qualitative data provided deeper insights into how these factors operate, revealing that competition for scarce resources intensifies during drought periods and that historical injustices are passed down through generations. Political influence emerged as a factor that manipulates existing clan divisions, with leaders sometimes exploiting these tensions for electoral gain. Social fragmentation was identified as both a cause and consequence of conflicts, as repeated disputes weaken traditional mediation systems and community cohesion.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons represents a critical factor that transforms the nature of inter-clan disputes. The qualitative data revealed that easy access to firearms has changed conflict dynamics from traditional mediation-based resolution to immediate violent confrontation. Security officers noted that the widespread availability of weapons makes it difficult to distinguish between clan militias and terrorist groups, as both use similar tactics and equipment. This situation creates operational challenges for counterterrorism efforts and increases

the potential for conflicts to escalate into more serious security incidents. The presence of weapons also undermines traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, as communities increasingly resort to armed responses rather than dialogue and negotiation.

These findings demonstrate significant convergence between quantitative and qualitative data sources, strengthening the validity of the results. Both questionnaire responses and interview data consistently identified resource competition and historical grievances as primary conflict drivers. The statistical patterns from questionnaire data were explained and contextualized through the rich narratives provided by key informants and focus group participants. However, some differences emerged in emphasis, with qualitative methods revealing additional complexity in conflict dynamics, particularly regarding social fragmentation and the role of small arms proliferation. The integration of multiple data sources provides a comprehensive understanding that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods could achieve independently.

The complex interplay of these factors highlights that inter-clan conflicts cannot be addressed through simple interventions. The findings support the application of Conflict Transformation Theory, which emphasizes the need to address personal, structural, and cultural dimensions of conflict simultaneously. Resource scarcity represents a structural issue requiring economic and environmental interventions, while historical grievances involve cultural and psychological dimensions that need reconciliation processes. The strong clan identities that lead to viewing other groups as competitors for scarce resources reflect the dynamics described by Social Identity Theory, where in-group loyalty intensifies conflict with out-groups. Political manipulation exploits these existing divisions, while the proliferation of weapons escalates the potential consequences of any dispute.

The analysis supports what can be termed the "environmental forces" perspective in understanding conflict drivers and radicalization vulnerability in Mandera North Sub-County. This approach recognizes that external and environmental factors significantly influence individual and group behavior toward conflict and extremism. The prevailing conditions of resource scarcity, unresolved historical injustices, political manipulation, and weapon availability create a criminogenic environment that increases the likelihood of conflict and radicalization. Rather than attributing conflicts solely to individual choices or clan characteristics, the findings emphasize how structural conditions shape behavior and decision-making. This perspective has important implications for intervention strategies, suggesting that addressing environmental factors may be more effective than focusing only on individual or group-level interventions.

The practical implications of these findings suggest that effective conflict resolution requires a dual approach that addresses both structural causes and immediate security concerns. Conflict Transformation Theory provides guidance for addressing root causes through economic development, historical reconciliation, and institutional strengthening. Simultaneously, Deterrence Theory principles suggest the need for credible law enforcement responses to violent behavior and weapons proliferation. The challenge lies in balancing these approaches, as heavy-handed security measures without addressing underlying grievances can increase tensions and reduce community cooperation. Successful intervention strategies must therefore combine transformative approaches that address structural causes with targeted security measures that maintain order and protect vulnerable populations.

The findings strongly support the proposition that Al-Shabaab has exploited historical clan rivalries and socio-political marginalization to gain support in Kenya's northeastern region. The documented patterns of historical grievances, resource competition, and political marginalization

create conditions that extremist groups can exploit for recruitment and operational purposes. Prolonged inter-clan conflicts weaken state legitimacy by demonstrating government inability to provide security and resolve disputes fairly. This creates entry points for extremist narratives that promise protection, resources, or justice to marginalized communities. The analysis shows how security vacuums and reduced trust in state institutions during and after conflicts make communities more susceptible to extremist recruitment and influence. These dynamics highlight the interconnected nature of local conflicts and regional security threats, emphasizing the need for comprehensive approaches that address both immediate conflicts and broader radicalization risks.

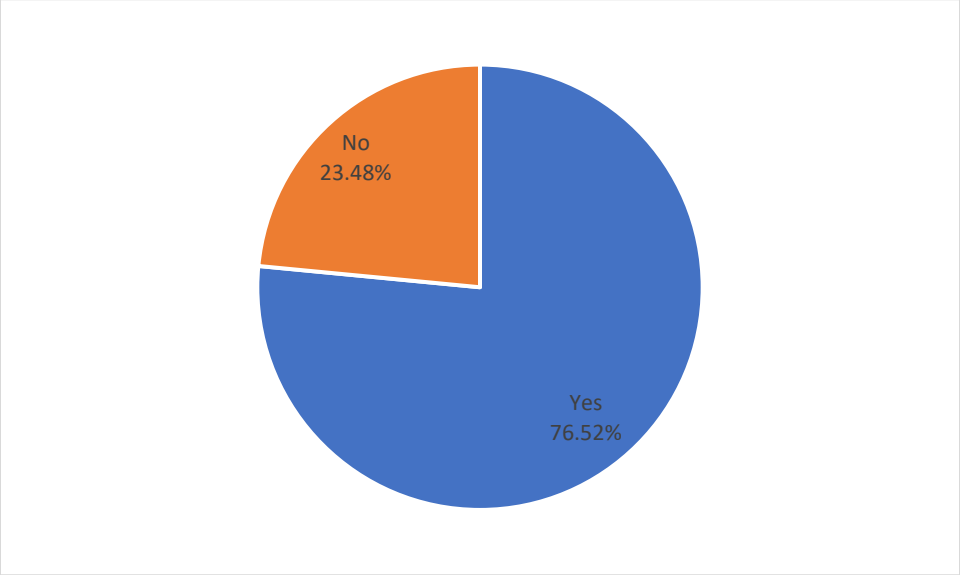
4.5 Effects of Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism Efforts in Mandera North Sub- County

This section addresses the second research objective: "Assess the effects of clan dynamics in counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County." The analysis integrates quantitative data collected from community members and qualitative insights from interviews with local elders and religious leaders, as well as focus group discussions with security personnel. Thematic analysis was utilized for qualitative data, with pseudonyms employed to protect participant identities while presenting verbatim quotes.

4.5.1 Community Member’s Perceptions of Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism

To assess community perceptions regarding clan involvement in security matters, respondents were asked about their familiarity with efforts made by clan leaders in supporting counterterrorism activities. The responses are presented in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Community Awareness of Clan Leaders' Involvement in Counterterrorism Efforts

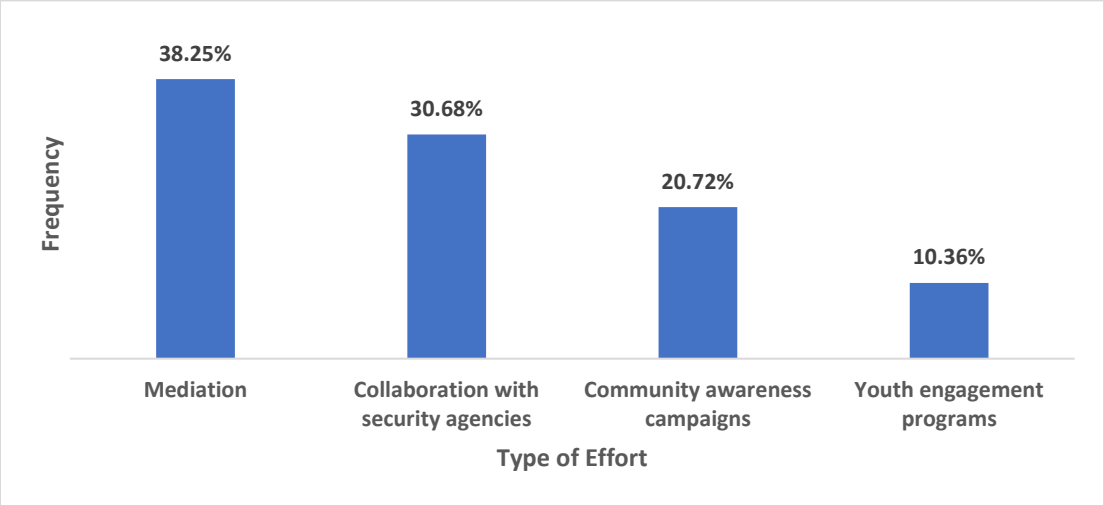


Source: Field Data (2025)

The findings reveal that a substantial majority (76.5%) of respondents were familiar with efforts made by clan leaders in supporting counterterrorism activities in Mandera North Sub-County. This high level of awareness indicates the visibility and recognized role of traditional leadership structures in security matters within the community. The significant proportion of community members acknowledging clan leaders' involvement in security related activities suggests that these traditional authority figures maintain relevance in contemporary security challenges despite changing socio-political dynamics. This awareness also reflects the community's attentiveness to security interventions in their environment, potentially enabling more effective participation in collective security efforts. This highlights the importance of local actors in peace and security initiatives, a concept supported by Conflict Transformation Theory.

Respondents who indicated familiarity with clan leaders' counterterrorism efforts were asked to specify the types of initiatives these leaders had implemented. Figure 4.5 presents these findings.

Figure 4.5: Community Awareness of Clan Leaders' Involvement in Counterterrorism Efforts



Source: Field Data (2025)

The results indicate that clan leaders employ a variety of approaches in counterterrorism efforts, with mediation being the most prominent (38.2%). This reflects the traditional conflict resolution role that clan elders have historically played in the community, which is a key element of culturally-embedded peacebuilding recognized by Conflict Transformation Theory. Collaboration with security agencies ranked second (30.7%), suggesting an evolving relationship between traditional and formal security systems. Community awareness campaigns (20.7%) and youth engagement programs (10.4%) represent more preventative approaches targeting vulnerable populations. The distribution of efforts demonstrates a multi-faceted approach by clan leaders, combining traditional authority structures with contemporary security partnerships and preventative interventions.

The understanding of who community members trust to lead effective counterterrorism efforts provides insight into the perceived legitimacy of different stakeholders. Respondents were asked to indicate who they trust more to lead counterterrorism efforts in their community. Table 4.6 presents these findings.

Table 4.6: Community Trust in Different Stakeholders to Lead Counterterrorism Efforts

Leadership	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Clan elders	115	35.06
Security agencies	98	29.88
Religious leaders	105	32.01
Other	10	3.05
Total	**328**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 4.6 indicates that clan elders (35.06%) and religious leaders (32.01%) were the most trusted to lead counterterrorism efforts, reflecting their perceived legitimacy and influence within the community. This trust in traditional and religious authorities aligns with the findings of Bishar (2022) regarding the influence of community characteristics on counterterrorism in Wajir County. Security agencies (29.88%) were slightly less trusted, possibly due to perceived external interference or lack of community engagement. This lower trust level poses a challenge for the effective implementation of deterrence-based counterterrorism measures, which rely on community cooperation and trust in law enforcement. Only 3.05% trusted other entities, suggesting limited reliance on alternative leadership. These findings highlight the central role of clan and religious leaders in counterterrorism, alongside the need to strengthen trust in security agencies.

To further understand how clan dynamics, influence counterterrorism efforts, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements on a five-point Likert scale. Table 4.7 presents the mean scores and standard deviations for each statement.

Table 4.7: Community Perceptions of Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism Efforts

Statement	Mean	SD
The clan leaders actively participate in counterterrorism efforts in my community	3.44	0.94
clan-based approaches are more effective than government-led initiatives in counterterrorism efforts	3.09	1.12
The clan leaders play a significant role in preventing radicalization within the community	3.32	0.87
Counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County adequately incorporate the insights and cooperation of all clans	2.95	0.91
The clan rivalries impact the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies in the area	3.72	0.76

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 4.7 shows varied perceptions of clan dynamics in counterterrorism. The results indicate strong agreement (*M* = 3.72, *SD*=0.76) that clan rivalries impact the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies, suggesting that inter-clan tensions significantly affect security operations. Respondents moderately agreed that clan leaders actively participate (*M* = 3.44, *SD*=0.94) and play a significant role in preventing radicalization (*M*= 3.32, *SD*=0.87), indicating recognition of their involvement. However, perceptions of clan-based approaches being more effective than government-led initiatives were neutral (*M*= 3.09, *SD*=1.12), suggesting skepticism about their comparative effectiveness. The incorporation of all clans in counterterrorism efforts was rated lowest (*M* = 2.95, *SD*=0.91), highlighting inclusivity challenges. This perceived lack of inclusivity can exacerbate 'out-group' dynamics and mistrust towards state-led initiatives, as explained by Social Identity Theory.

4.5.2 Thematic Analysis of Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism

Thematic analysis of interviews with local elders and religious leaders, as well as FGDs with security agency officers, revealed four key themes related to the effects of clan dynamics on counterterrorism efforts: clan leadership in mediation, collaboration with security agencies,

challenges of clan rivalries, and inclusivity gaps. Verbatim quotes from participants, using pseudonyms to ensure anonymity, are included to illustrate these themes. The analysis integrates perspectives from both community leaders and security personnel to provide a comprehensive understanding of clan dynamics.

4.5.2.1 Clan Leadership in Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Clan leaders were recognized for their crucial role in mediating conflicts and supporting counterterrorism efforts. Elders and religious leaders emphasized that their mediation efforts helped reduce tensions that could be exploited by terrorists. This aligns with the principles of Conflict Transformation Theory, which recognizes the importance of local, culturally-embedded mechanisms for resolving disputes and building peace from within the community. "Hassan" (pseudonym), an elder, stated, "*We sit with rival clans to resolve disputes, and this prevents terrorists from taking advantage of our divisions.*" Security officers acknowledged the importance of clan mediation in stabilizing communities. "Fatuma" (pseudonym), a security officer, remarked, "*When clan leaders mediate, it creates a calm environment for us to focus on security threats*."

These accounts align with the questionnaire findings, where mediation was the most cited effort, highlighting its critical role in counterterrorism by addressing conflicts before they escalate and become exploitable by extremist groups. This also subtly challenges a purely Deterrence Theory approach, suggesting that preventative conflict resolution through local mechanisms is as vital as punitive measures in counterterrorism.

4.5.2.2 Inclusivity Gaps in Security Operations

One of the key challenges in counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County is the issue of inclusivity gaps in security operations, particularly regarding the establishment of special

operation bases. Findings from interviews with security personnel and local community members revealed that these bases are often set up in areas predominantly inhabited by one clan, leaving out other clans. This selective deployment of security forces has led to perceptions of favoritism, where security agencies are seen as aligning with the dominant clan in a given area. This perception reinforces 'in-group'/'out-group' biases and mistrust towards the state, as explained by Social Identity Theory. A senior security official highlighted, "*When a security base is established in a particular location, it inadvertently sends a message about which community has stronger ties with the state. This perception has created mistrust, particularly among clans that feel excluded from security arrangements*." This perceived bias has had significant implications for counterterrorism efforts. Communities that feel sidelined tend to be less cooperative with security forces, withholding intelligence that could aid in counterterrorism operations.

Focus group discussions with local elders and youth groups indicated that in times of clan conflict, the absence of an inclusive security presence leads to increased tensions. A community elder remarked, "*There is a long-standing concern that when conflicts arise, security teams appear more responsive in areas where they have established bases, while those without direct security presence are left vulnerable.*" This dynamic not only exacerbates clan rivalries but also weakens counterterrorism efforts by making intelligence gathering more difficult. Security agencies working in the region acknowledged this challenge, noting that they face operational constraints in balancing neutrality while also maintaining strategic deployment. The findings highlight a fundamental issue of trust between security forces and the communities they serve.

The perceived alignment of security forces with particular clans affects cooperation, which is a crucial factor in intelligence-led counterterrorism. This perceived lack of impartiality undermines the perceived certainty and swiftness of state response across all communities,

impacting the effectiveness of Deterrence Theory in practice. Addressing this inclusivity gap requires a re-evaluation of deployment strategies to ensure a balanced presence across all clans. Additionally, integrating all communities into peacebuilding and intelligence-sharing efforts could help mitigate perceptions of bias and foster a sense of shared security, aligning with Conflict Transformation Theory's aim to build positive relationships between groups.

4.5.2.3 Impact of Clan Rivalries on Security Cooperation

Clan rivalries significantly impact the willingness of different groups to support counterterrorism initiatives, often undermining cooperation with security agencies. This is directly related to the 'in-group'/'out-group' dynamics described by Social Identity Theory, where loyalty to one's clan (in-group) can override cooperation with external entities, including state security forces, especially when there is historical distrust or ongoing conflict with rival clans (out-groups). When conflicts escalate, some clan militias retreat to their territories, leading to a temporary breakdown in collaboration with security forces. Local National Police Reservists (NPRs), who are often recruited from different clans, become entangled in these rivalries, further complicating security operations. A security officer stationed in Mandera noted, "*The challenge we face is that NPRs and local informants may withhold intelligence or provide misleading information, especially when tensions between clans are high.*" This aligns with the findings of Baldaro and D'Amato (2023) on how clan loyalties in Mali hinder counterterrorism efforts.

During clan disputes, security teams are at risk of acting on skewed intelligence, which can result in unintended consequences. In some instances, counterterrorism efforts have been misdirected due to biased reporting from clan-affiliated sources. This presents a serious challenge in differentiating between legitimate security threats and clan-based grievances. The intersection of clan rivalries and counterterrorism highlights the need for security agencies to adopt a more

nuanced approach to intelligence verification. Relying solely on local informants without cross-referencing information can lead to operational inefficiencies. Establishing multi-clan intelligence-sharing platforms could help counteract misinformation and improve the accuracy of counterterrorism responses, fostering better relationships and cooperation as envisioned by Conflict Transformation Theory. This also suggests limitations of a pure Deterrence Theory application, as the effectiveness of punitive measures relies on reliable intelligence and community cooperation, which are hindered by these social divisions and mistrust

4.5.2.4 Challenges of Clan Rivalries

Clan rivalries were identified as a significant obstacle to effective counterterrorism efforts, often undermining cooperation. Elders and religious leaders explained that rivalries led to distrust and reluctance to share information. This further exemplifies the negative impact of 'out-group' dynamics on inter-group cooperation, a core concept in Social Identity Theory. "Amina" (pseudonym), an elder, noted, "*When clans are fighting, they don't want to work together, even against terrorism*." Security officers highlighted those rivalries' complicated operations, as clans sometimes prioritized their disputes over security concerns. "Mohamed" (pseudonym), a security officer, remarked, "*Clan rivalries make it hard to get unified support, and terrorists exploit these divisions*."

These findings align with the questionnaire results, where clan rivalries had the highest agreement for impacting effectiveness (M = 3.72), emphasizing their negative influence. This constant tension and lack of cooperation impede both preventative measures (soft counterterrorism) and the effective application of punitive measures (hard counterterrorism/Deterrence Theory), as a fractured community is less able to resist radicalization or assist law enforcement.

4.5.3 Synthesis of Findings on Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism

All three data collection methods consistently demonstrated high community awareness of clan leaders' involvement in counterterrorism activities. The questionnaire data showed that 76.52% of community members were familiar with clan leaders' security-related efforts, while interviews with elders and religious leaders provided detailed accounts of their active participation in security initiatives. Focus group discussions with security officers validated this finding by acknowledging the visible contributions of clan leaders to their operations. This convergence across different stakeholder perspectives confirms that clan involvement represents actual operational reality rather than mere perception.

Mediation emerged as the primary contribution of clan leaders across all data sources. The questionnaire responses identified mediation as the most common initiative (38.25%), while interview participants provided detailed narratives about their conflict resolution activities. Security officers confirmed the operational value of clan mediation in creating stable environments for counterterrorism work. Trust patterns also showed consistency, with clan elders (35.06%) and religious leaders (32.01%) being most trusted to lead efforts, ahead of security agencies (29.88%). Clan rivalries were consistently identified as major obstacles, receiving the highest agreement score ($M = 3.72$) in questionnaire responses and extensive discussion in qualitative data.

Important differences emerged in the analytical depth provided by each method. The questionnaire data established broad patterns and prevalence rates but offered limited explanatory power regarding underlying mechanisms. Structured survey responses effectively measured awareness levels and trust distributions but could not capture the complex social dynamics driving these patterns. Key informant interviews revealed historical and cultural contexts that explained quantitative findings, including the basis for trust differentials and specific mediation techniques

used by traditional leaders. Focus group discussions contributed unique operational perspectives about intelligence challenges and deployment strategies that neither surveys nor individual interviews could provide.

The issue of inclusivity gaps emerged primarily through qualitative methods. While questionnaire responses showed low agreement on inclusive clan participation (M = 2.95), interviews and focus groups revealed the specific mechanisms behind this exclusion. Security officers described how base deployment strategies created perceptions of favoritism, while community leaders explained how these perceptions affected cooperation and intelligence sharing. This demonstrates how qualitative methods provide crucial explanatory context for quantitative patterns that might otherwise remain unclear.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals the dual nature of clan dynamics in counterterrorism efforts. Clan leaders' mediation activities and collaboration with security agencies represent significant assets for counterterrorism operations, providing cultural legitimacy, local knowledge, and conflict resolution capabilities that formal security systems cannot easily replicate. The high community trust in traditional and religious leaders creates opportunities for effective community-based counterterrorism approaches that align with Conflict Transformation Theory principles. However, clan rivalries and inclusivity gaps pose significant barriers that can undermine these positive contributions and create vulnerabilities that terrorist groups can exploit.

The trust differentials between clan leaders and security agencies highlight the importance of legitimacy in counterterrorism efforts. The consistently lower trust in security agencies across all data sources suggests that formal security systems have not achieved the same level of community acceptance as traditional leadership structures. This pattern has important implications

for Deterrence Theory applications, as effective deterrence requires community trust and cooperation to function properly. The findings suggest that counterterrorism strategies that rely solely on formal security measures may be less effective than approaches that integrate traditional leadership structures and address community perceptions of legitimacy.

Clan rivalries create complex challenges that reflect Social Identity Theory dynamics, where in-group loyalty and out-group competition undermine collective action against common threats. The consistent identification of rivalries as obstacles across all data sources demonstrates that these divisions are not superficial but represent fundamental social dynamics that affect security cooperation. The qualitative data revealed how rivalries influence intelligence sharing, operational cooperation, and community support for counterterrorism efforts. These findings suggest that effective counterterrorism strategies must address underlying social divisions rather than simply working around them.

The synthesis of findings emphasizes that successful counterterrorism in Mandera North Sub-County requires approaches that leverage clan leadership while addressing the negative effects of clan dynamics. Strategies must combine the cultural legitimacy and conflict resolution capabilities of traditional leaders with the operational capacity of formal security systems. However, such integration must address inclusivity concerns and work to reduce clan rivalries that undermine collective security efforts. This requires a nuanced understanding of local social dynamics and the development of intervention approaches that can navigate complex clan relationships while maintaining focus on counterterrorism objectives.

4.6 Influence of Inter-Clan Conflicts on Community Vulnerability to Radicalization

This section presents findings on the influence of inter-clan conflicts on the community's vulnerability to radicalization in Mandera North Sub-County, addressing the study's fourth objective. The analysis integrates data from questionnaires, interviews with local elders and religious leaders, and focus group discussions with security personnel. The findings reveal a significant relationship between inter-clan conflicts and increased vulnerability to radicalization, with several interconnected mechanisms identified.

4.6.1 Community Experiences with Radicalization

To establish the context of radicalization in the study area, respondents were asked about their direct and indirect experiences with terrorist recruitment. Table 4.8 presents the findings on personal recruitment attempts.

Table 4.8: Personal Experience with Recruitment Attempts

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	53	16.16
No	275	83.84
Total	**328**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 4.8 indicates that 16.16% of respondents reported being directly approached for recruitment by terrorist groups, suggesting a significant presence of radicalization efforts in the community. This finding is particularly concerning as it demonstrates that terrorist groups are actively targeting community members in Mandera North Sub-County. The majority (83.84%) reported no direct recruitment attempts, which may reflect varying levels of terrorist activity across different areas of the sub-county or demographic factors that influence targeting strategies by radical groups.

To further understand the prevalence of radicalization, respondents were asked about their knowledge of others who had been recruited to join terrorist groups. Table 4.9 presents these findings.

Table 4.9: Knowledge of Others Recruited by Terrorist Groups

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	187	57.01
No	141	42.99
Total	**328**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2025)

A majority of respondents (57.01%) reported knowing someone who had been recruited by terrorist groups, indicating a widespread impact of radicalization within the community. This high percentage suggests that radicalization is not an isolated phenomenon but rather a pervasive issue affecting social networks throughout Mandera North Sub-County. The finding also indicates that many community members have witnessed the consequences of radicalization firsthand, which may influence their perceptions of vulnerability factors and prevention strategies.

In order to directly assess the perceived relationship between inter-clan conflicts and vulnerability to radicalization, respondents were asked whether they believed such a connection existed. Table 4.10 presents these findings.

Table 4.10: Perceived Contribution of Inter-Clan Conflicts to Radicalization Vulnerability

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	264	80.49
No	64	19.51
Total	**328**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2025)

An overwhelming majority of respondents (80.49%) believed that inter-clan conflicts contribute to the community's vulnerability to radicalization, suggesting a strong perceived connection between these phenomena. This finding indicates that community members recognize inter-clan conflicts as a significant risk factor for radicalization, based on their observations and experiences. The high percentage of affirmative responses underscores the importance of addressing inter-clan conflicts as part of a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy in the region. This aligns with Subedi's (2017) argument that unresolved conflicts create a fertile ground for radicalization.

To gain deeper insights into specific mechanisms through which inter-clan conflicts influence vulnerability to radicalization, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with four statements. Table 4.11 presents these findings.

T able 4.11: Mechanisms Linking Inter-Clan Conflicts to Radicalization Vulnerability

Statement	Mean	SD
Exposure to inter-clan conflicts has made youths more open to radical ideologies	4.01	1.07
Radical groups often exploit existing inter-clan tensions to recruit members	4.15	0.92
Youth in the community are particularly at risk of radicalization during periods of conflict	4.04	1.01
Efforts to mediate and resolve inter-clan conflicts have been effective in reducing radicalization	2.07	1.12

Source: Field Data (2025)

The data reveals strong agreement with the first three statements, with mean scores above 4.0 on a 5-point scale. The relatively low standard deviations (0.92-1.07) for these items indicate consistency in respondents' views on these mechanisms. Respondents strongly agreed that radical

groups exploit inter-clan tensions for recruitment ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.92$), that youth are particularly vulnerable during conflict periods ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.01$), and that exposure to conflicts makes youth more open to radical ideologies ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 1.07$). These findings align with Haider's (2020) observations on Al-Shabaab's exploitation of internal tensions in North-Eastern Kenya. Conversely, there was strong disagreement with the statement that conflict mediation efforts have been effective in reducing radicalization ($M = 2.07$, $SD = 1.12$), indicating perceived inadequacies in current intervention approaches. This suggests that while mediation is used, its perceived effectiveness in preventing radicalization is low, pointing to limitations in current Conflict Transformation efforts in this context.

4.6.2 Thematic Analysis: Mechanisms of Vulnerability

Thematic analysis of qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions revealed four key themes regarding how inter-clan conflicts influence vulnerability to radicalization: security vacuums, grievance exploitation, economic vulnerability, and identity crisis. These themes provide deeper insights into the complex relationship between clan conflicts and radicalization.

4.6.2.1 Security Vacuums and Protection Seeking

Findings indicate that inter-clan conflicts create security vacuums that terrorist groups strategically exploit, particularly by targeting disillusioned youth. When government security forces struggle to maintain stability during clan conflicts, extremist groups step in, presenting themselves as alternative security providers. This dynamic highlight a key limitation of Deterrence Theory in contexts of weak state presence; if the certainty or swiftness of state punishment is low due to insecurity, the deterrent effect is diminished, opening space for non-state actors to offer "protection". These groups offer military training as a means of self-defence, an approach that has

been effective in recruiting young men who feel powerless or unrepresented in mainstream security and political structures. A local elder, "Abdi" (pseudonym), highlighted this trend, "*When one clan attacks another and the police don't respond quickly, Al-Shabaab sometimes offers to protect the weaker clan, and this is how they gain a foothold in our communities*."

Security officers confirmed that extremist groups capitalize on government resource constraints, strategically inserting themselves where official forces have limited presence. "Halima" (pseudonym), a security officer, stated, "*We cannot be everywhere at once, and terrorists know this–they move into areas where conflicts have weakened government presence and offer their own form of security*." During one period of heightened clan conflict, a religious leader, "Omar" (pseudonym), explained how militants targeted frustrated young men, "*Al-Shabaab recruiters' approach young men who have lost family members in clan conflicts and tell them, 'Join us and we will help you get justice*.'" This offer of protection and empowerment made extremist groups appear as viable alternatives to absent or overstretched government forces. Many recruits initially believed they were being trained to defend their communities. However, instead of equipping them for self-defence, militants manipulated them into full-fledged indoctrination. Over time, these young men became absorbed into terrorist networks, leaving their communities behind. "Khadija" (pseudonym), a security officer, reinforced this concern, "*When clan elders and government officials fail to resolve conflicts fairly, young people feel abandoned by traditional systems and become easy targets for radical messaging that promises justice*."

This pattern highlights how marginalized groups become easy targets for radicalization when they perceive extremist groups as offering immediate, tangible solutions to their security concerns. It highlights the urgent need for strengthening trust in state security institutions and addressing structural vulnerabilities–such as lack of education, economic opportunities, and

effective governance–to prevent extremist groups from exploiting community grievances. This necessitates a blend of Deterrence Theory (strengthening state capacity for security and justice) and Conflict Transformation Theory (addressing root causes of marginalization and grievance).

4.6.2.2 Exploitation of Grievances and Revenge Motives

Terrorist groups were found to systematically exploit grievances arising from inter-clan conflicts to facilitate recruitment. Interviews revealed that extremist groups often frame joining their ranks as a means of seeking revenge for clan-related injustices. This resonates with Subedi's (2017) finding that unresolved conflicts generate grievances exploited by extremists. "Omar" (pseudonym), a religious leader, observed, "*Al-Shabaab recruiters' approach young men who have lost family members in clan conflicts and tell them, 'Join us and we will help you get justice.*'"

Security officers noted that unresolved grievances create fertile ground for radicalization. "Khadija" (pseudonym), a security officer, explained, "*When clan elders and government officials fail to resolve conflicts fairly, young people feel abandoned by traditional systems and become easy targets for radical messaging that promises justice*." This exploitation of grievances is particularly effective when conflicts result in casualties or displacement, creating a pool of individuals motivated by desires for revenge or justice that terrorist groups can manipulate. This psychological vulnerability, driven by unresolved conflict, is not fully accounted for in purely rational choice models like Deterrence Theory and highlights the importance of addressing the emotional and social impacts of conflict through transformative approaches.

4.6.2.3 Identity Crisis and Search for Belonging

Inter-clan conflicts were found to create identity crises and social isolation that terrorist groups exploit by offering alternative forms of belonging and purpose. This directly relates to Social Identity Theory, which posits that individuals have a need for belonging and derive part of

their identity from group membership. When inter-clan conflicts fracture traditional community bonds and lead to marginalization, particularly for youth, the sense of belonging provided by their clan or community is weakened. Extremist groups step into this void, offering a new, albeit radicalized, 'in-group' based on religious or ideological identity rather than clan affiliation. "Maryam" (pseudonym), a religious leader, explained, "*When young people feel rejected by their own community due to clan tensions, or when mixed-clan marriages create confusion about identity, extremist groups offer a new identity based on religion rather than clan*."

Security officers noted that this identity dimension is often overlooked in counterterrorism strategies. "Yusuf" (pseudonym), a security officer, observed, "*Many youths who join these groups are searching for acceptance and brotherhood, something they lost when clan conflicts divided their communities.*" This theme highlights how the social and psychological impacts of inter-clan conflicts create vulnerability to radicalization by undermining traditional sources of identity and belonging, creating a void that extremist ideologies can fill. Addressing these identity needs through social cohesion initiatives and inclusive community programs, consistent with Social Identity Theory and Conflict Transformation Theory, is therefore crucial for counter-radicalization efforts.

4.6.3 Synthesis of Findings on the Influence of Inter-Clan Conflicts on Vulnerability and Radicalization

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals a comprehensive picture of how inter-clan conflicts increase vulnerability to radicalization through multiple interconnected pathways that align with the study's theoretical framework. Across all three data collection methods–questionnaires, focus group discussions with security personnel, and interviews with community leaders–there was remarkable convergence in identifying the core relationship

between clan conflicts and radicalization vulnerability, providing strong empirical support for Social Identity Theory's proposition that group conflict intensifies in-group/out-group dynamics. The survey finding that 80.49% of respondents perceived a connection between inter-clan conflicts and radicalization was consistently supported by detailed accounts from both security officers in FGDs and religious leaders in interviews, who provided specific examples of how this relationship manifests in practice. This triangulation of findings strengthens the validity of the core premise that inter-clan conflicts significantly increase community vulnerability to extremist recruitment while demonstrating how Conflict Transformation Theory's emphasis on addressing root causes is empirically supported across different data sources.

The quantitative data provided the statistical foundation that was enriched by qualitative insights across the identified vulnerability mechanisms, with findings consistently supporting the theoretical predictions of Deterrence Theory regarding state capacity limitations. Survey responses showing strong agreement that radical groups exploit inter-clan tensions ($M = 4.15$) and that youth are particularly vulnerable during conflicts ($M = 4.04$) were substantiated through detailed narratives from interviews and FGDs that revealed the specific tactics used by extremist groups, aligning with Social Identity Theory's explanation of how group membership needs are exploited during identity crises. While questionnaires captured the breadth and consistency of these perceptions across the population, the qualitative methods revealed the depth of these processes, such as how Al-Shabaab recruiters specifically target grieving families with promises of justice and protection, demonstrating Conflict Transformation Theory's emphasis on how unresolved grievances create radicalization pathways. The low mean score for mediation effectiveness ($M = 2.07$) from surveys was corroborated by detailed accounts from security officers and community leaders who described specific limitations in current conflict resolution approaches, providing

empirical evidence for Deterrence Theory's limitations in contexts where state presence and capacity are compromised. However, the qualitative data went beyond the survey findings by revealing the psychological and identity dimensions of vulnerability that statistical measures alone could not capture, particularly supporting Social Identity Theory's propositions about belonging needs and in-group formation processes.

Notably, all three methods consistently identified youth as the primary demographic at risk, though each provided different perspectives on this vulnerability that collectively support Social Identity Theory's predictions about identity formation during adolescence and young adulthood. The survey data showed statistical evidence of youth susceptibility during conflict periods, while FGDs with security personnel revealed the operational challenges of protecting youth from recruitment during clan conflicts, and interviews with religious leaders provided insights into the spiritual and identity crises that make youth particularly vulnerable to extremist messaging, all aligning with Social Identity Theory's emphasis on the search for meaningful group membership. The qualitative methods also revealed nuanced differences in how different community stakeholders understand youth vulnerability; security officers emphasized the tactical aspects of recruitment reflecting Deterrence Theory concerns about protection and punishment, while religious leaders focused more on the ideological and identity dimensions consistent with Social Identity Theory's focus on belonging and purpose. This multi-perspective understanding of youth vulnerability demonstrates how different data collection methods can provide complementary insights into the same phenomenon while supporting different but interconnected theoretical explanations for radicalization processes.

The findings across all methods consistently supported the four primary vulnerability pathways: security-seeking behavior, grievance exploitation, economic marginalization, and

identity crisis, with each pathway finding strong theoretical grounding in the study's framework. However, the emphasis on these pathways varied across data sources, with surveys providing statistical validation of their perceived importance, FGDs offering operational insights into how they function in practice through a Deterrence Theory lens of security gaps and state capacity, and interviews revealing their psychological and social dimensions through Social Identity Theory and Conflict Transformation Theory perspectives on belonging, grievance, and social cohesion. The integration of these findings indicates that effective counter-radicalization strategies must address both the immediate security challenges of clan conflicts and their deeper socioeconomic and psychological impacts on community members, particularly youth, reflecting the complementary rather than competing nature of the three theoretical approaches employed. This convergent evidence from multiple methods provides robust support for shifting from solely punitive approaches (Deterrence Theory application) to incorporating transformative interventions that rebuild social cohesion and address underlying grievances through coordinated application of Deterrence Theory, Conflict Transformation Theory, and Social Identity Theory in a comprehensive counter-radicalization framework.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study indicate that inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County are primarily driven by competition over scarce resources such as water, land, and pasture, as well as political differences and historical grievances. This aligns with Beyene (2017), who found that inter-clan conflicts in Ethiopia’s Oromo and Somali regions stem from similar socio-economic and environmental factors. Likewise, Aengwony (2019) identified resource scarcity and cultural practices, such as cattle rustling, as key drivers of inter-clan conflicts in pastoralist communities. However, while Aengwony’s study emphasized cultural practices, the current study suggests that

political rivalry plays an equally significant role in fueling tensions in Mandera North. These drivers are consistent with the structural causes of conflict highlighted by Conflict Transformation Theory.

A key divergence from previous studies is the study's indication that counterterrorism efforts may unintentionally exacerbate inter-clan conflicts. The military and police interventions aimed at suppressing terrorist activities sometimes reinforce clan divisions, as certain groups perceive security forces as favoring rival clans. This perspective was not explicitly covered in the literature reviewed. While Afriyie, Jisong, and Yaw Appiah (2020) examined how resource-based conflicts escalate into large-scale violence, they did not explore the unintended consequences of counterterrorism measures in such settings. This finding highlights the need for conflict-sensitive security operations that address clan-based grievances and consider the potential impact on 'in-group'/'out-group' dynamics, a crucial aspect informed by Social Identity Theory.

The study established that clan dynamics significantly affect counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North, particularly in intelligence gathering and community cooperation with security agencies. Findings reveal that strong clan loyalty often prevents individuals from reporting suspected terrorist activities, as doing so may be perceived as betraying their kin. This is consistent with Baldaro and D'Amato (2023), who found that clan loyalties in Mali have hindered counterterrorism efforts by limiting cooperation with state security forces. Similarly, Bishar (2022) argued that clan-based social structures influence community policing and radicalization dynamics in Wajir County, Kenya. This reluctance to cooperate is a direct manifestation of the 'in-group' loyalty described by Social Identity Theory. However, the study also found that, in some cases, clan elders play a crucial role in supporting counterterrorism initiatives by discouraging young people from joining extremist groups. This finding diverges from Gelot and Hansen (2019), who

suggested that clan elders in Somalia often exploit their influence to align with extremist groups for political or economic gains. The difference in findings could be attributed to variations in local governance structures and the extent of governmental presence in Mandera compared to Somalia. While in Somalia, clan elders wield substantial power in governance, in Mandera North, their role is more informal and subject to the influence of state actors. This highlights the potential for leveraging traditional leadership structures, as suggested by Conflict Transformation Theory, in counterterrorism efforts.

The study found that inter-clan conflicts create an environment conducive to radicalization by fostering feelings of marginalization, resentment, and insecurity. This finding is in line with Subedi (2017), who argued that unresolved inter-group conflicts generate grievances that extremist groups exploit to recruit individuals. Additionally, Haider (2020) found that Al-Shabaab has strategically used historical clan rivalries and socio-political marginalization to gain support in Kenya's North-Eastern region. The current study supports this argument, as findings indicate that prolonged conflicts weaken state legitimacy and provide an entry point for extremist narratives. This process aligns with the concept of security vacuums being exploited by extremist groups, a challenge to the effectiveness of Deterrence Theory in unstable environments. However, a key divergence emerges regarding the role of economic factors in radicalization.

While previous studies, such as Rink and Sharma (2018), emphasized that economic deprivation is a primary driver of radicalization, the current study suggests that social and psychological factors–such as the need for belonging and revenge–are equally influential. Respondents highlighted that radicalized individuals often seek identity and status, rather than purely economic benefits, when joining extremist groups. This highlights the importance of

addressing both material and ideological drivers of radicalization in counterterrorism strategies, incorporating insights from Social Identity Theory regarding the search for belonging and identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study's key findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It provides a recap of the findings based on the research objectives, highlighting their implications for counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County. The chapter concludes by offering recommendations for policymakers and practitioners, as well as suggestions for future research.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

5.2.1 Nature of Inter-Clan Conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County

The study established that inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County are driven by competition over scarce resources, political rivalries, and historical grievances. These findings support the Conflict Transformation Theory's emphasis on structural causes of conflict. These conflicts often escalate into violent confrontations, which weaken social cohesion and divert attention from security efforts. Findings indicate that security interventions, while aimed at maintaining order, sometimes exacerbate tensions by being perceived as favoring certain clans over others, highlighting unintended consequences not always captured by simple Deterrence Theory models. Additionally, customary conflict resolution mechanisms, such as mediation by elders, remain influential but are often insufficient in preventing recurring conflicts, suggesting the need for transformative approaches that address the root causes and rebuild relationships as advocated by Conflict Transformation Theory

5.2.2 Clan Dynamics on Counterterrorism Efforts

The study found that clan dynamics significantly shape the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts in the region. Strong clan loyalties often prevent community members from reporting suspected terrorist activities, as doing so may be seen as betrayal. This illustrates the power of 'in-group' loyalty as described by Social Identity Theory, which can hinder cooperation with external authorities. This aligns with the findings of Baldaro and D'Amato (2023) on the impact of clan loyalties in Mali. However, clan elders also play a crucial role in discouraging radicalization by guiding the youth away from extremist groups. This demonstrates the potential for leveraging traditional leadership in counter-radicalization efforts, consistent with Conflict Transformation Theory principles. The study further established that security agencies face challenges in gaining trust from local communities due to historical grievances and perceptions of bias. This finding suggests that counterterrorism measures need to be more community-centered to gain wider acceptance and effectiveness, a need not fully addressed by purely punitive Deterrence Theory approaches.

5.2.3 Inter-Clan Conflicts on Community Vulnerability to Radicalization

The findings indicate that inter-clan conflicts create an enabling environment for radicalization by fostering a sense of marginalization, resentment, and insecurity. This aligns with the understanding within Conflict Transformation Theory that unresolved conflicts can create conditions ripe for exploitation by extremist groups. The prolonged nature of these conflicts weakens government authority, allowing extremist groups to exploit grievances and recruit vulnerable individuals, highlighting the limitations of state deterrence in the absence of stability. While proliferation of small arms contributes to radicalization, the study found that psychological and social factors, such as the need for belonging and revenge, are equally influential. This finding

is strongly supported by Social Identity Theory, which explains how individuals seeking belonging or a new identity may be drawn to extremist groups when traditional social structures are fractured by conflict. The study also found that radicalized individuals are often drawn into extremist groups through networks embedded within their clan structures.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 Nature of Inter-Clan Conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County

The study concludes that inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County are characterized by deep-seated rivalries that foster widespread insecurity. These conflicts often revolve around structural issues such as competition for resources, political power, and territorial control, aligning with the core drivers identified by Conflict Transformation Theory. The persistence of such disputes disrupts social cohesion and undermines local governance structures, creating an environment where 'in-group'/'out-group' divisions are reinforced, as explained by Social Identity Theory. As a result, the region becomes a fertile ground for instability, making it challenging to implement sustainable development initiatives.

Furthermore, the nature of these conflicts is cyclical, with historical grievances fueling recurring violence between clans. The study highlights that extremist groups exploit these divisions, using inter-clan tensions as a tool to destabilize the region further. This exploitation is facilitated by the breakdown of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, which are often overwhelmed by the scale of modern disputes, underscoring the need for transformative approaches to address the root causes and rebuild social structures (Conflict Transformation Theory). Consequently, the ongoing insecurity not only weakens community resilience but also creates an environment in which extremist ideologies can thrive unchecked.

5.3.2 Clan Dynamics on Counterterrorism Efforts

The study concludes that clan dynamics in Mandera North Sub-County significantly hinder counterterrorism efforts by fostering mistrust between local communities and security agencies. Historical injustices, such as perceived favoritism or marginalization of certain clans, have deepened community skepticism toward state interventions, a perception that exacerbates negative 'out-group' views towards state security forces (Social Identity Theory). This mistrust is compounded by clan-based loyalty, which often prioritizes allegiance to clan interests over cooperation with security forces. As a result, intelligence-sharing, a critical component of counterterrorism, is severely impeded, limiting the effectiveness of security operations. This presents a challenge for purely Deterrence Theory-based approaches which rely on effective intelligence and law enforcement.

To address these challenges, the study emphasizes the need for a more integrated strategy that combines conflict resolution mechanisms with counterterrorism efforts, consistent with the principles of Conflict Transformation Theory. Security agencies must work to rebuild trust by addressing historical grievances and ensuring equitable treatment of all clans. Community engagement initiatives, such as dialogue forums and collaborative security programs, are essential to bridge the gap between clans and state actors and foster a sense of shared identity and purpose (Social Identity Theory). Ultimately, such an approach is vital for fostering long-term stability and enhancing the success of counterterrorism efforts in the region.

5.3.3 Inter-Clan Conflicts on Community Vulnerability to Radicalization

The study concludes that inter-clan conflicts significantly increase community vulnerability to radicalization by creating an environment of instability and disenfranchisement. These conflicts generate grievances, such as loss of livelihoods and displacement, which extremist

groups exploit to recruit vulnerable individuals, aligning with the understanding that unresolved conflicts provide fertile ground for radicalization. The breakdown of social structures during conflicts further isolates communities, making them more susceptible to extremist narratives that offer a sense of belonging or purpose. This dynamic is particularly pronounced among youth, who are often the primary targets of radicalization efforts in the region, and is strongly explained by Social Identity Theory, as individuals seek alternative group affiliations when their primary social bonds are weakened.

Addressing this vulnerability, the study argues for a multi-faceted approach that extends beyond economic interventions to include psychological and social dimensions. Economic programs alone, such as job creation, are insufficient without addressing the emotional and social scars left by inter-clan conflicts. Initiatives such as trauma counseling, community reconciliation programs, and education campaigns are crucial to counter extremist ideologies and rebuild a sense of community (Social Identity Theory) and transform relationships (Conflict Transformation Theory). By tackling the root causes of inter-clan conflicts, such as resource disputes and political marginalization, the region can reduce its susceptibility to radicalization and build a more resilient society.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

5.4.1 Nature of Inter-Clan Conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County

1. Strengthening community-based conflict resolution mechanisms: Support and formalize traditional mediation by clan elders to ensure durable peace.
2. Policy reforms on resource allocation- Equitably distribute resources (e.g., water, land) to reduce conflicts driven by scarcity.

3. Legislative support for hybrid justice systems - Integrate customary conflict resolution with formal legal frameworks for accountability and cultural legitimacy.
4. Decentralization of security operations - Localize security strategies with community leader involvement to address clan-specific tensions.
5. Promoting inter-clan dialogue forums - Facilitate regular dialogues between clans to address grievances and foster reconciliation.

5.4.2 Clan Dynamics on Counterterrorism Efforts

1. Enhancing trust between security agencies and communities-Adopt community-oriented policing to improve collaboration in counterterrorism. This may involve undertaking exercises such as medical camp, food distribution as well as water tracking during drought.
2. Training security forces on clan sensitivities - Educate officers on local dynamics to avoid actions that exacerbate mistrust.
3. Public accountability for security operations - Ensure transparency in counterterrorism operations to counter perceptions of bias or brutality.
4. Incentivizing clan cooperation in counterterrorism - Reward communities that actively support security efforts (e.g., through development projects).

5.4.3 Inter-Clan Conflicts on Community Vulnerability to Radicalization

1. Integrating counterterrorism with peacebuilding - Address root causes of clan conflicts to reduce radicalization opportunities.

2. Youth engagement and rehabilitation programs - Expand vocational training and ideological rehab to deter extremist recruitment.

3. Implementation of de-radicalization policies: Develop holistic programs targeting economic and psychological drivers of radicalization. Undertake properly tailored

4. Strengthening social cohesion initiatives - Support cross-clan projects (e.g., sports, trade) to build unity and reduce alienation.

5.5 Areas for Further Research

Future research should explore the role of women in inter-clan conflict resolution and counterterrorism efforts, as their contributions to peacebuilding remain underexplored. Additionally, studies should examine the effectiveness of community-based intelligence mechanisms in enhancing counterterrorism efforts, particularly in conflict-prone regions where formal security structures face challenges. Given the increasing impact of climate change on resource scarcity, further research should investigate how environmental changes exacerbate inter-clan conflicts and their implications for security in Northern Kenya. Moreover, a comparative analysis of counterterrorism strategies in different Kenyan counties could provide insights into best practices that may be applicable to Mandera North. Lastly, research should examine the long-term psychological and socio-economic impacts of radicalization on communities affected by inter-clan conflicts, to better inform rehabilitation and reintegration programs for former extremists.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: WORKPLAN SCHEDULE

	2024 - 2025					
Activity	**May**	**June**	**July-Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct - Dec**	**Jan 2025**
Development of writing the concept						
Proposal writing and presentation						
Submission of proposal to Ethics Board						
Pretesting the instrument						
Data collection and analysis						
Report writing and corrections						
Presentation of the project and graduation						

APPENDIX 2: BUDGET

Item	Number	Unit cost	Total cost (Kshs.)
Assorted stationery (pens, pencils, rubber & notebooks)	5 each	@100	500
Typesetting, photocopying and printing of the proposal		@ 8,000	8,000
Transport and accommodation	30 days	@5,000	150,000
Telephone and internet		@10, 000	10,000
Typesetting and printing of the final research proposal		@ 10,000	10,000
Proposal loose binding	4	@100	400
Data analysis SPSS program		@30,000	30,000
Typesetting and printing of research project		@10,000	10,000
Project final binding	4	@ 500	2,000
Sub Total			**220,900**
Contingency (10% * 220,900)		@ 20,900	20,900
Grand total			**241,800**

APPENDIX 3: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Galgallo Katelo Mamo

Africa Nazarene University

Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH

I am currently enrolled in the master's degree in governance, Peace and Security at Africa Nazarene University. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the influence of inter-clan conflicts on Kenya's counterterrorism efforts in Northeastern region. I humbly request that you participate in this study by completing the enclosed questionnaire. Your valuable assistance will be important in acquiring the information I need for my research.

Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance for your time and help. Best regards.

Sincerely,

Galgallo Katelo Mamo

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Dear Respondent

Thank you for sparing time to fill in this questionnaire. I am undertaking a master's degree in governance, Peace and Security at Africa Nazarene University. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the influence of inter-clan conflicts on Kenya's counterterrorism efforts in Northeastern region. Please complete each section as instructed. All information provided will be highly confidential.

Instructions

Kindly give honest and accurate responses to the items in the questionnaire by placing a tick in the chosen cell or providing answers in the given spaces.

Section A: Demographic Data

1. Kindly indicate your gender

   Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Kindly indicate your age _____

3. Indicate ward of residence

   Ashabito Ward [ ]

   Guticha Ward [ ]

   Marothile Ward [ ]

   Rhamu Ward [ ]

   Rhamu Dimtu [ ]

Section B: Nature of Inter-Clan Conflict

4. Have you personally experienced or witnessed any inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. If yes to the above question, what was the cause of the conflict?

   Inadequate land [ ]

   Competition for water [ ]

   Livestock rustling [ ]

   Political rivalry [ ]

   Historical grievances [ ]

Other_____

6. How often do these conflicts occur?

   Rarely [ ]

   Occasionally [ ]

   Frequently [ ]

Section C: Inter-Clan Conflicts and Vulnerability to Radicalization

8. Has terrorist groups tried to recruit you to join them?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. Do you know of anyone who has been recruited to join a terrorist group?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. Do you believe that inter-clan conflicts contribute to community vulnerability to radicalization?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

11. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the influence of inter-clan conflicts on community vulnerability to radicalization in Mandera North Sub-County. Use the following Likert scale for your responses: 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neural, 4-agree and 5- strongly agree

Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Exposure to inter-clan conflicts has made the youths more open to radical ideologies.					
Radical groups often exploit existing inter-clan tensions to recruit members.					
Youth in the community are particularly at risk of radicalization during periods of conflict					
Efforts to mediate and resolve inter-clan conflicts have been effective in reducing radicalization					

12. What measures do you think can be taken to reduce the community's vulnerability to radicalization amid inter-clan conflicts?_____

Section D: Role of Clan Dynamics in Counterterrorism Efforts

13. Are you familiar with any efforts made by clan leaders in supporting counterterrorism activities in Mandera North Sub-County?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

14. If yes to the above question, indicate the efforts that have been implemented by the clan leaders to counter terrorism?

    Mediation [ ]
    Collaboration with security agencies [ ]
    Community awareness campaigns [ ]
    Youth engagement programs [ ]

15. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the influence of clan dynamics on counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County. Use the following Likert scale for your responses: 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neural, 4-agree and 5- strongly agree

Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
The clan leaders actively participate in counterterrorism efforts in my community					
clan-based approaches are more effective than government-led initiatives in counterterrorism efforts					
The clan leaders play a significant role in preventing radicalization within the community					
Counterterrorism efforts in Mandera North Sub-County adequately incorporate the insights and cooperation of all clans					
The clan rivalries impact the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies in the area					

16. Who do you trust more to lead effective counterterrorism efforts in your community?

    Clan elders

    Security agencies

    Religious leaders

    Other _____

17. What recommendations do you have for enhancing the role of clan dynamics in counterterrorism efforts?

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME"

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE - CLAN ELDERS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

1. How long have you been a resident in Mandera North Sub-County?
2. What are the underlying reasons of inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County?
3. How have inter-clan conflicts changed over time in your community?
4. How have inter-clan conflicts affected community cohesiveness in Mandera North Sub-County?
5. How has local leadership addressed the issue of radicalization?
6. How do clan relations affect counterterrorism activities in the area?
7. Have religious organizations played a role in combating terrorism in the region? (explain)
8. In your opinion, what is the main element used by the terrorist groups to radicalize the individuals in the region? (explain)
9. How have you or other local leaders worked with security services to combat terrorism?
10. What tactics have worked best in settling inter-clan conflicts in your community?
11. How would you improve counterterrorism operations and reduce the impact of inter-clan conflicts on radicalization?

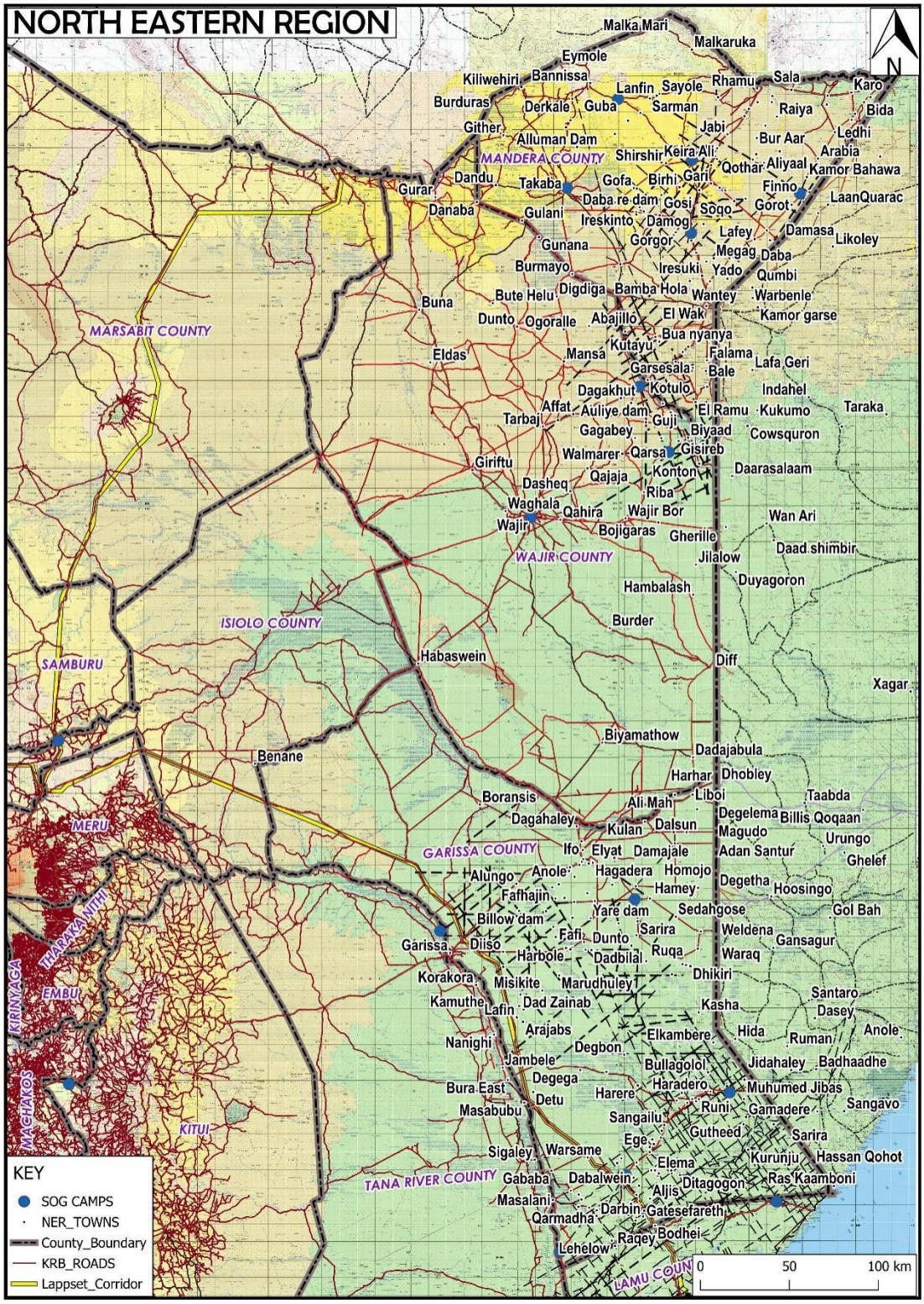
"THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME"

APPENDIX 6: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS - SECURITY AGENCY PERSONNEL

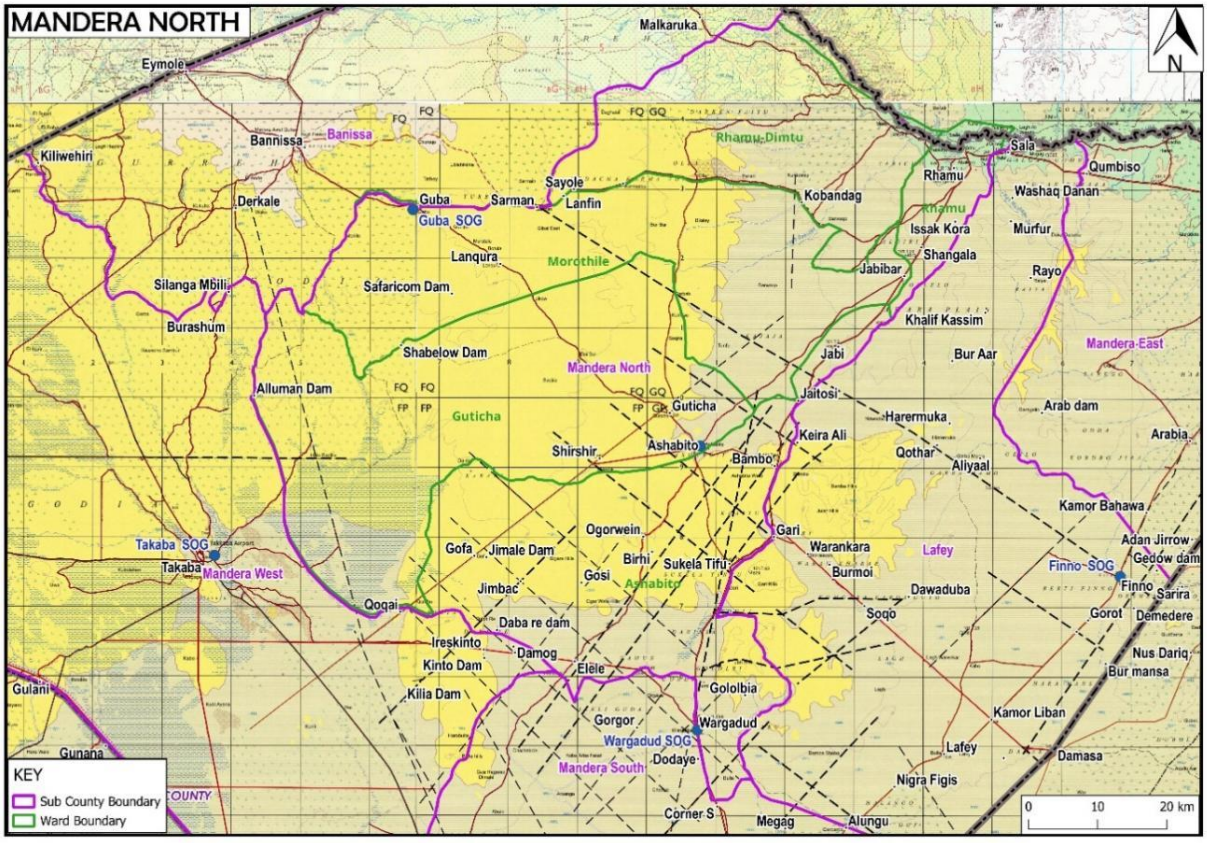
1. Describe your current position and responsibilities in the security agency?
2. How long have you been active in counter-terrorism measures in Mandera County?
3. How do inter-clan conflicts in Mandera North Sub-County affect the overall security situation?
4. How do inter-clan tensions impact your agency's counterterrorism operations?
5. What are your agency's counterterrorism strategies in Mandera North Sub-County?
6. How effective are present preventative strategies?
7. What are the challenges your agency encounters when enforcing counterterrorism measures?
8. Can you explain how clan relations in Mandera North Sub-County impact counterterrorism efforts?
9. How does your agency work with clan leaders to promote counterterrorism initiatives?
10. What strategies are in place to combat radicalization in the community, particularly among youth?
11. How do you assess community-security collaboration in combatting terrorism?
12. How would you improve Mandera North Sub-County's counterterrorism efforts?

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME"

APPENDIX 7: MAP OF KENYA'S NORTH EASTERN COUNTIES



APPENDIX 8: MAP OF MANDERA NORTH SUB COUNTY



APPENDIX 9: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **148182**

Date of Issue: **08/November/2024**

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Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P. O. Box 30623 - 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
Telephone: 020 4007000, 0713788787, 0735404245
E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

APPENDIX 10: INTRODUCTION LETTER

AFRICA NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY

P.O.Box: 53067 – 00200
Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: 020 252 7170/1 – 5
Email: vc@anu.ac.ke
www.anu.ac.ke

26th September 2024

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Galgallo Katelo Mamo (110062133) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University.

He has finished his course work and has defended his thesis proposal

entitled: -

"Influence of Inter-Clan Conflicts on Counterterrorism Efforts in Kenya's North Eastern Region: A Case of Mandera North Sub-County"

Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and finish his thesis is highly welcomed.

Dr. Simon Obwatho
Interim Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs