

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CATTLE RUSTLING AMONG PASTORAL COMMUNITIES IN KENYA

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Abstract: The research study had its frame on the effect of politics and its players in the management of cattle rustling among pastoral communities in Kenya. The general objective of the thesis was the evaluation of the interface between state and non-state policies in the management of cattle rustling among pastoral communities in Kenya. Specific Objective of the Study was to determine the moderating effect of political influence as an intervening factor in the management of cattle rustling in Kenya. The study area was North Western part of Kenya occupied by five main counties; Turkana, Samburu, West Pokot, Elgeiyi Marakwet and Baringo. The main source of livelihood in these counties is livestock rearing. The total population of people in the referred region was 2,980,035. The research determined the sample size of 444 respondents by use of krejcie, R.V and Morgan, D.W table. Findings indicate that politicians funded cattle rustlers in one way or the other at a mean score of 1.3; cattle rustlers case increased before national elections and during campaigns period at a mean score of 1.9; politicians gave scholarships to learners at a mean score of 2.3, provided employment to learners after school at 3.3, supported local residents to build permanent structures at a mean score of 3.4, and supported agriculture through purchase of farm implements at a mean score of 2.4 while the same time encouraging inter-community marriages at a mean score of 1.3. However, from the research findings, the residents averred that politicians discouraged cattle rustling whose mean score was 3.1.

Keywords: Political influence, cattle rustling, policies, pastoral communities, management and interface.

I. INTRODUCTION

The cattle rustling phenomenon is a world-wide manifestation among indigenous pastoral communities where livestock is the main economic source of livelihood. (Vein et al...2014). According to Cheserek and Odenyo (2012), the 'Sepana' ceremony which was a marked as a right of passage among the Pokot young female adults denoting movement from adolescent to elders, politicians never missed in such occasions. The y actually funded it and there-after several raids were witnessed ostensibly carried out by the young initiates who had graduated from sapan events. (Ngara, 2012). The livestock stolen from the neighbouring communities were given out as dowry. (Kothari, 2017). Moreover, Omondi and Odenyo, (2012) observed that poor leadership was contributory to the thriving of cattle rustling and that the same leadership was intentionally bent to perpetuate cultural practices, cattle rustling being one of them. According to Mwani, (2019), cattle rustling was a commercial enterprise whose players were politicians and business people who cashed in on growing urban meat demands. In another related piece of research work done by Paula Palma, (2010), the Kenya Human Right Commission discovered that cattle rustling war-loads were powerful people in society who included policy makers, politicians and senior security officials. The commission also found out that the security officers used to get 'orders from above' directing them

to ignore arrests of suspects who had connections with political leadership. The proliferation of fire arms increased the propensity to stealing among the morans who were supported by political leaders. The political leaders used to acquire fire arms and ammunitions from the neighbouring regions and distribute the same among morans, (Greiner, 2013). Greiner's earlier research work of 1982, revealed that in some cases of cattle rustling, cattle raiders were instigated by politicians especially pitying Pokot's against the Ichamu's. In some cases the politicians waged war in the pretext of annexed administration boundaries by their neighbours just as apply to initiate new wars which would be a precursor to cattle rustling. According to Okoli and Francis (2014) cattle rustling was connected to political struggles especially the processes of democratization during the clamour for political democratization as witnessed in 1992.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The cattle rustling menace has remained a thorny issue for many years despite government interventions to curb it, (Bashir, 2017) Some of the notable challenges which this menace of cattle rustling occasioned in the early years of independence continue to cause more tribulations among the pastoral communities in the North Rift; relocation of residents from their homes to other places due to livestock raids, loss of lives, closure of schools, social amenities and markets, (Mkutu, 2019). The stabilization of security situations by government through creation of more police stations, deployment of security agencies such as General Service Unit (GSU), Anti Stock Theft Unit, (ASTU), Rapid Deployment Unit, (RDU), and at times Kenya Armed Forces, have not borne positive results in as far as the management of cattle rustling is concerned, (Kipsang, 2019). The socio-economic transformation through County Governments in taming cattle rustling has been immense but without meaningful unremarkable success. Some of the strategies employed were; adoption of high breed cattle, 100% transition among school learners, and diversification of agricultural livelihoods which have however not created awareness geared towards discouraging cattle rustling. (Barilla et al., 2019). This situation led to the evaluation of the political influence in the management of cattle rustling in the area under review with a view to providing lasting solutions to the problem.

Objective of the Study

To determine the moderating effect of political influence as an intervening factor in the management of cattle rustling in Kenya.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Azar, (1990) the failure by leadership and those in governance structures to mitigate conflict afflicted by cattle rustling prolonged the vice further. In his research paper, he manifested regret that those in authority used their positions to frustrate the governed instead of supporting their efforts to outgrow poverty and develop strong resilience to conflicts and other challenges. These sentiments were supported by Ramsbotham, (2005) who observed that the conflicts are protracted by deployment of weak and inappropriate strategies. In his part, Jean Jacques Rousseau, (1762) who was a French philosopher observed that the injustices meted on citizens were abhorred and were meant to subjugate them. The government in ability to control any form of injustices and atrocities directed at the people amounted to terror against the governed. He sighted that the ordinary people insurgence who in their huge numbers rose up against the French authorities, leading to the French revolution of 1789. He observed that the French revolution would have been averted if the leaders listened to the peoples' plight. The researcher linked this theory to the insensitivity of government to manage cattle rustling and save people of gross human rights violations in the North Rift. The concept of social contract is also linked to the cattle rustling in respect of the voter and the leaders. The voter expects the political leadership to take care of their interests, but the converse was true. (K.N.H.R.C 1998). According to Mwani, (2019) cattle rustling became a commercialized venture orchestrated by armed militia, commonly known as morans' who perpetuated the vice to the detriment of the citizens. The imperative in the raids was the gun, (Greinner, 2013) and poor leadership which gave way to the continued menace. Oldenyo (2012), observed that the intimidation of security officers with suckings, transfers, and other unknown consequences if they ever tried to stop the vice gave the morans, the momentum to run down the civilians economic livelihoods. On the other hand, the use of cattle rustling as a means to secure territorial/land integrity protracted the vice (Palmer, 2010). On the same breathe, cattle rustling had been used for a long time as a source of livelihood at the expense of local residence who have always suffered the blunt. (Okolli et al, 2014).

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized simple random, purposive and observation methods to collect data from the respondents in the study area. The methodology deployed was by the use of questionnaires and interview schedules. The total population of people in the referred region was 2,980,035. The research determined the sample size of 444 respondents by use of krejcie, R.V and Morgan, D.W table. The questionnaires were administered across the general population while interview schedules were administered to specific type of residents such as elected leaders, security officers and local leaders. Having used the above methods, the researcher deployed mixed research design where quantitative data was analysed by use of software package of social sciences and qualitative data through content analysis given out by the respondents. The findings from quantitative analysis were recorded in the table below.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings on political influences in cattle rustling management among pastoral communities in Kenya indicated that the respondents believed cattle rustling increased just before election campaigns and during campaigns for political seats as supported by a mean 1.8672 and a standard deviation .3617. A Sig. (2-tailed) .013 was derived. On whether the respondents believed politicians supported elimination of cattle rustling as supported by a mean 3.4505 and a standard deviation .2917. A Sig. (2-tailed) .012 was derived. Politicians financed cattle rustlers was supported by a mean 1.8698 and a standard deviation .8325. A Sig. (2-tailed) .032 was derived. These findings were in line with Mkutu, (2018) that the cattle rustling tradition had increasingly changed and assumed various faces where political influence played a paramount and key role in influencing violence and banditry attacks. His findings further argued that with devolution at hand, scholars had argued that cattle raiding is motivated by political competition aimed at capturing power and being in possession of critical resources. The political barons used organized attacks to drive out their political rivals and extend their businesses interests. Politicians discouraged people from practicing cattle rustling was supported by a mean 3.1615 and a standard deviation .9881. A Sig. (2-tailed) .036 was derived. On whether the respondents believed politicians supported cattle rustling was supported by a mean 1.2891 and a standard deviation .4539. A Sig. (2-tailed) .023 was derived. A mean 2.2891 and a standard deviation .4539 supported politicians' gave scholarships. A Sig. (2-tailed) .037 was derived. Politicians provided employment after school, a mean 3.2891 and a standard deviation .4764 supported. A Sig. (2-tailed) .024 was derived. Politicians supported locals by offering loans to own permanent structures as supported by a mean 2.2891 and a standard deviation .4539. A Sig. (2-tailed) .037 was derived. On the contrary, the respondents disagreed that politicians supported locals to own farm implements as supported by a mean 2.4167 and a standard deviation .6709. A Sig. (2-tailed) .212 was derived. Politicians offered education on good farming as supported by a mean 2.4271 and a standard deviation .6745. A Sig. (2-tailed) .021 was derived. Politicians found locals market for their produce as supported by a mean 2.7083 and a standard deviation .4838. A Sig. (2-tailed) .015 was derived. Politicians encouraged community intermarriages as supported by a mean 1.2917 and a standard deviation .4551. A Sig. (2-tailed) .013 was derived. Politicians taught against killing to acquire cattle as supported by a mean 1.7109 and a standard deviation .4539. A Sig. (2-tailed) .012 was derived. Politicians taught that cattle is not the only means of paying dowry as supported by a mean 2.1667 and a standard deviation .8204. A Sig. (2-tailed) .012 was derived. Politicians mitigated among communities as supported by a mean 2.2891 and a standard deviation .4870. A Sig. (2-tailed) .028 was derived. Cases of Cattle rustling increased near election period as supported by a mean 1.7109 and a standard deviation .4539. A Sig. (2-tailed) .031 was derived. These findings corroborated with other scholars such as Betty Budho, (2020), argued that cattle rustling had become a tool to perpetuate power and influence in the North Rift, and this was witnessed during electioneering period, where politicians jostled for political seats. Clemens Greiner, (2013), in his research, titled Guns, Land and Votes: Cattle Rustling and Politics of Boundary (re) Making in Northern Kenya, argued that there was a disguised relationship between politics and cattle raids. This in effect meant that the cattle raiders utilized political opportunities created by politicians to steal cattle from their neighbors. Finally, on whether Politicians funded cattle rustlers was agreed upon with a mean 1.2891 and a standard deviation .4539. A Sig. (2-tailed) .021 was derived. The results from all the indicators of political influence indicated that there was statistical significance in the political situations and influenced cattle rustling ($p < 0.05$) out of the 17 descriptive statements. On the contrary, the respondents disagreed that politicians supported locals to own farm implements ($p > 0.05$). All the mean scores were above one (1) across all the descriptive statements which showed there was variation in the causes of cattle rustling.

TABLE I

	N	M	SD	Sig.
I believe cattle rustling increases just before election campaigns and during campaigns for political seats	384	1.8672	.3617	.013
I believe Politicians support elimination of cattle rustling	384	3.4505	.2917	.012
Politicians finance cattle rustlers	384	1.8698	.8325	.032
Politicians discourages people from practicing cattle rustling	384	3.1615	.9881	.036
I believe politicians support cattle rusting	384	1.2891	.4539	.023
Politicians gives scholarships	384	2.2891	.4539	.037
Politicians provides employment after school	384	3.2891	.4764	.024
Politicians supports locals by loans to own permanent structures	384	3.4375	.2992	.014
Politicians support locals to own farm implements	384	2.4167	.6709	.212
Politicians offers education on good farming	384	2.4271	.6745	.021
Politicians finds locals market to their produce	384	2.7083	.4838	.015
Politicians encourages community intermarriages	384	1.2917	.4551	.013
Politicians teach against killing to acquire cattle	384	1.7109	.4539	.012
Politicians teaches that cattle is not the only means of paying dowry	384	2.1667	.8204	.012
Politicians mitigates among communities	384	2.2891	.4870	.028
Cases of Cattle rustling increases near election period	384	1.7109	.4539	.031
Politicians funds cattle rustlers	384	1.2891	.4539	.021

Results of Interview Schedules

The results on the effects of Political Influence as an Intervening Factor in the Management of Cattle Rustling were recorded and showed that the prevalence of cattle theft among pastoral tribes had also been attributed to bad politics. Their ethnic, spiritual leaders anointed most of these political leaders, and as a result, the communities they represent faithfully follow and obey what their leaders say. Some political leaders took advantage of the sacred positions they hold in their communities to deceive their constituents and instigated them against other groups, increasing tensions between them. Furthermore, it had been revealed that some political officials had swayed the hiring of KPRs and house guards in their neighborhoods. These respective politicians' "yes men" were more likely than not to act in ways that benefited the individual politicians rather than the entire community.

The researcher found out the following political impediments in the management of cattle rustling;

- (i) The politicians controlled recruitment of National Police Reservists (NPR)
- (ii) The politicians secured bonds on arrested cattle raiders
- (iii) The politicians Threatened security officers with transfers when they failed to comply with their requests.
- (iv) The politicians failed to condemn cattle rustling and this suggested that they condoned the practice.

From these finding, the researcher concluded that political influence as an intervening factor contributed to the unsuccessful management of cattle rustling by authorities and other policy players.

One interviewee, Respondents R33, observed that;

The political statements especially during electioneering period serve as an encouragement rather than an inhibition to cattle thefts. The cultural practises ranging from stealing for bride price, glorification of moranism, heroism, seership and social esteem related to more livestock as a source of wealth are detrimental to the management of cattle theft and more efforts need to be put on preaching against political and cultural aspects in the fight against cattle rustling.

In other instances, the political class especially members of parliament who were custodians of public funds intended to foster security and promote education played partisan roles in allocation of funds to the extent that some people benefited from bursaries at the expense of others. This encouraged dropping out of school by youth who could go back to the society to participate in cattle rustling. On the other hand, the politicians failed to utilize security funds to open up security roads and put up more police stations with the view to curbing cattle rustling activities. This texts could be traced to page 57. In most communities politicians incited people against others and this enabled their youth to steal from neighbours. This practice encouraged lawlessness to the extent that communities looked at each other as enemies instead of keeping peace across borders. In addition to the above the political class got involved in the recruitment of national police reservist hence politicized security because the NPRs put their royalty to the politicians instead of security commanders of the police.

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Findings on political influences in cattle rustling management among pastoral communities in study area were; the respondents believed cattle rustling increased just before election campaigns and during campaigns for political seats, that they discouraged people from cattle rustling practices and provided employment to students after school. The residents also felt politicians supported local residents to access loans to own permanent structures, but disagreed that they didn't support them to buy farming implements. The residents also felt that politicians offered education on good farming methods and found markets for their produce. The residents also felt that politicians also encouraged inter-community marriages and advocated against killing of people over livestock. They further recognized that politicians mitigated against cattle rustling though it increased towards electioneering periods.

Conclusion

In this research political influence came out as an intervening variable which played a double role; negative and positive. The communities believed that politicians supported the elimination of cattle rustling, provided job opportunities to the youth, loans to put up permanent structures and found local markets for their produce. However, on the contrary the same politicians exacerbated and abated cattle rustling especially during the five-year electioneering cycle hence contradiction in the perception of political leadership as crusaders of stock theft. This was how this variable became an intervening factor in the management of cattle rustling- in the absence of general elections the politicians play supportive roles but when the electioneering period approaches they wear different hats where they clandestinely supported cattle rustlers. The study found out that Cattle rustling was entrenched and actually part of the livelihoods of the communities in the North Rift. The cattle rustlers were looked upon as people who had wealth which could be used for dowry and for subsistence upkeep. Cattle rustlers were viewed as defenders of communities who attracted heroism and respect in the community. The mere fact that each community in the North Rift adored and cherished moralism cattle rustling could persist for some time.

Recommendations

The researcher linked numerous theories which guided the processes of the research and in particular the underdevelopment and marginalization theory. He observed that the politico - cultural practices continued to erode the gains made insidiously in the management of cattle rustling in the pastoral North Rift hence making the political cultural theories a hindrance to the general development in the region. The continued practices bordering on heroism, seership and moranism at the expense of contemporary formal education continued to nature and bring up a generation devoid of abilities to cope up with the new technological skills which drive the trajectory of a modern person. This meant that the pastoral North Rift would ostracize itself from the rest of Kenya due to clinging to practices which not only under developed the region, but also undermined the efforts put up by the Government and various agencies in management of cattle rustling. The politics of praise to the politicians who were militant at the expense of humble and devoted leaders conspired with outdated cultural practices to

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marginalize the North Rift. This brought in a new theory of politico - cultural dominion into the whole subject matter of cattle rustling in the pastoral communities of Northern Kenya. The politico - cultural theory strengthened under-development and marginalized theory as explored by Weiss, (2004).

It is pertinent that Human security should have been given the priority it deserves. This was because rampant poverty and unemployment had often been unduly politicized and ethnicized by self-interested citizens which were major causes of cattle rustling, conflicts and many organized crimes. The following are specific recommendations;

- The political should play a leading role management of cattle rustling by shunning political statement which support cattle rustling.
- Leaders from the political class who incite and promote cattle rustling should be prosecuted and bared from occupying public offices.
- The government should legislate laws which criminalize moranism and associated practices thereof.
- The ownership of firearms should be a preserve of the government only and not any civilian unless authorized by law.
- The idea of National Police Reservists policy should be discouraged because the operatives are identified by politicians and end up defending their community interests as opposed to national interest (augmenting police strength)

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