The Politics of 'Eating' and Conflicts: Manifestation of Negative Ethnicity as a Consequence of Horizontal Inequalities in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Horizontal inequalities, such as political exclusion, are likely to motivate ethnic group leaders to instigate conflicts. Ethnic nationalism becomes a key motivation for ethnic groups to mobilise based on their shared primordial identities. Uasin Gishu County has been the epicentre of ethnic conflicts due to horizontal inequalities perpetuated by political decisions that have proved impactful on ethnic relations in the county. Past conflicts in the county have been attributed to land disputes, political competition, and access to economic resources. This study thus puts into perspective how these factors associated with horizontal inequalities have exacerbated conflicts in the county. The study was anchored on the relative deprivation theory. This study adopted descriptive research design and historical research design. The study targeted the following categories of study population in Uasin Gishu County: Household heads, County Commissioner, County Secretary, Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Officials, local administration (Chiefs), religious leaders, civil society organisations, Members of County Assembly (MCAs), security personnel (senior police officers), and opinion leaders. Hence, the total number of household heads is 60,318. The researcher, therefore, determined the sample size for the nine wards using Fisher's formula which states that for a target population greater than 10,000, the desired sample size can be determined using Fisher's formula for sample size determination. Primary data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS version 25 software to obtain descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages. Additionally, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used to generate 2-tail bivariate Pearson's correlation tables from the SPSS data set. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic techniques to support quantitative data. Quantitative data was presented using a table; qualitative data was presented in the form of narrative reports and verbatim quotations. Based on the findings, the study concludes that political horizontal inequalities that manifest through political exclusion, patrimonialism, and discrimination occasioned by ethnic patronage have been a major factor in intractable ethnic conflicts in the county. The study recommends transparency and inclusivity in political processes to reduce the manipulation of ethnic identities for political gains.

Keywords: *Conflicts, Ethnic Patronage, Horizontal Inequality, Negative Ethnicity, Patronage*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Horizontal inequalities are differences in access and opportunities across culturally defined (or constructed) groups based on identities such as ethnicity, region, and religion. They created fertile ground for grievances, especially when they are accumulated across multiple realms such as economic, political, and social (Østby 2008; Justino, 2017). Studies have shown that there is a strong and positive link between political exclusion of certain groups and violent conflict, making political inclusion a significant goal for the prevention of violence (Jones et al., 2012; Cederman et al., 2013). Stewart (2010) asserted that any type of horizontal inequality could provide an incentive for political mobilization. However, political inequalities (that is, political exclusion) were most likely to motivate group leaders to instigate a rebellion.

Uasin Gishu County has been the epicentre of ethnic conflicts due to horizontal inequalities in the area. According to Kahura (2019), specific ethnic communities have historically held more power and influence in local governance structures, leaving other groups marginalised and disenfranchised. The horizontal inequalities in the county have been associated with ethnic conflicts. The inequality in the distribution of resources and opportunities created feelings of

injustice, unfairness, and the perception of marginalisation by ethnic communities that were disadvantaged. Such feelings led to ethnic animosity and tension, thereby creating fertile grounds for ethnic violence, as witnessed in the county in the 1990s and 2007/2008. According to the Minorities at Risk Project (2004), ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu County often erupted over land disputes, political competition, and access to economic resources. In their findings, they opine that disputes over land ownership and allocation were major triggers for conflicts between different ethnic communities in the county.

Several attempts have been made at managing horizontal inequalities and ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu County. The government has initiated land reforms through the National Lands Commission to ensure transparent land allocation processes and equitable access to land resources for all communities. The Kenyan Constitution (2010) and the County Government Act (2012) have attempted to address political imbalances to enhance ethnic inclusivity for marginalised groups in governance structures. Some of the affirmative actions attempted include identifying 30% of non-dominant ethnic groups to ensure that they are employed by the county government of Uasin Gishu County as part of ensuring the face of Kenya is represented in the county (Kenya Law Reports, 2010.; Government of Kenya [GoK], 2012).

There have been attempts by various civil society organisations to facilitate inter-community dialogue with the aim of promoting peace in the county. For example, according to the International Crisis Group (2017), the state and non-state actors identified 80 male elders (40 from each of the main ethnic communities, the Kalenjin and Kikuyu) to participate in a peace process that lasted sixteen months before a local agreement was reached. All these have been efforts made towards averting ethnic conflicts in the county.

In spite of these government and civil society efforts towards averting conflicts and promoting peace among the ethnic communities in Uasin Gishu County, it was apparent that old wounds were far from being healed. In this regard, beyond the superficial differences between the ethnicities in Uasin Gishu County, there were deep-rooted political horizontal inequalities that had not received the attention that was deserved in explaining the intractable conflicts, hence the current study.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Uasin Gishu County has been the epicentre of ethnic conflicts due to horizontal inequalities in the area. Boone *et al.* (2021) indicated that the unequal distribution of land and economic resources in the county, where certain ethnic groups enjoy them while others are marginalised, was a major conflict issue in the area. Kahura (2019) added that political representation and decision-making processes in Uasin Gishu County have been marked by ethnic imbalances, deepening the horizontal inequalities. He further asserted that specific ethnic communities had historically held more power and influence in local governance structures, leaving other groups marginalised and disenfranchised. This combination of factors has over the years led to tension in many ethnically mixed settlements within the county. Inter-ethnic tension in the county has manifested itself through negative ethnicity, with perceived deprived communities viewing perceived privileged communities as 'enemies'. The current study explores the contribution of political greed to these negative perceptions and how this combination of factors has contributed to conflicts in Uasin Gishu County.

1.2 Research Objective

The objective of the study was to critically investigate the contribution of Political Horizontal inequalities towards ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on the Relative Deprivation Theory by Ted Rober (Gurr, 1993). He opined that relative deprivation refers to the discrepancies between what people want and what they actually gain. In this regard, Gurr asserted that people are more likely to rebel when the hope of getting what they believe they deserve is lost. This loss of hope breeds frustration and discontent, thereby leading to bitter rivalry between opposing groups. The state being the one in charge of resources then becomes the target of the frustration by the discounted groups. Ethnicity, Gurr asserts, 'is the obvious basis for mobilising oppositions' against the state. Gurr states that the higher the degree of frustration, the greater the political instability.

This study looks at the group motivation hypothesis by Stewart (2010), who argues that intra-state conflicts primarily arise from conflicts between different groups; these groups can be divided based on cultural, religious, geographical, or class distinctions. They further aver that the driving forces behind these conflicts are the group's motives,

resentments, and ambitions. However, such differences become significant enough to fuel violence when coupled with other important disparities, particularly in the distribution and exercise of political and economic power. In their opinion, when relatively deprived groups perceive a lack of political redress, they may turn to war as a means of seeking redress. This is often influenced or encouraged by their leaders. The deep-rooted resentments arising from these group differences, known as horizontal inequalities, are a major catalyst for conflicts. Furthermore, not only relatively deprived groups but also relatively privileged groups may be motivated to engage in acts of violence to safeguard their privileges from potential attacks by less privileged groups.

In Uasin Gishu County, deep-rooted feelings of inequalities regarding the distribution of land and other natural resources that can be traced back to the colonial period have been a major concern for the local communities. The Kalenjin community has for years viewed other communities, especially the Kikuyu, as having taken away their land because they are associated with the government. This has led to deep-rooted negative ethnicity and animosity that has in many cases culminated in violent conflicts, as witnessed in the 1992, 1997, and 2007 electoral cycles. As Uasin Gishu is a multi-ethnic society, there is a need for cohesion among the communities living in the area.

2.2 Empirical Review

Political horizontal inequality could be broadly defined to include inequalities in the distribution and access to political opportunity and power among groups, including access to the executive branch, the police, and the military (Stewart, 2010). It also relates to the ability of individuals to participate in political processes. This considered indices of political discrimination among ethnic groups and political differentials measured by political status between groups (Stewart, 2016).

Throughout Africa, multiple instances of ethnic conflicts have been documented, with horizontal inequalities serving as the core catalysts for these conflicts. According to McCoy (2008), the origins of the Malian conflict can be attributed to a confluence of ethnic strife between the southern black population and the lighter-skinned northern population, compounded by economic grievances in the north. He argued that the systematic neglect, discrimination, and exploitation of the northern regions fueled the Tuareg community's grievances against the government.

Additionally, Onwuzuruigbo (2011) suggests that in West Africa, violent conflicts resulting from horizontal inequalities have manifested between the Aguleri and Umuleri communities in Anambra State, Nigeria. Prolonged land disputes and perceived historical inequalities in accessing social, economic, and political resources have fostered a collective sense of difference between the two groups, erupting into sporadic and bloody conflicts. The conflicts that took place between the two communities in 1995 and 1999 claimed numerous lives from both sides, leaving the two communities in a perpetual state of tension and fear of potential ethnic violence at any moment.

McCoy (2008) contends that the Rwandan genocide stemmed from profound and systemic horizontal inequalities that permeated the political, economic, and military sectors of society. These disparities affected both ethnic "identities" and resulted in widespread violence against both Hutu and Tutsi populations. These inequalities, combined with power-seeking tendencies and a systemic sense of social and economic insecurity, gave rise to extremism, culminating in one of the most efficient and deadliest outbreaks of violence in modern history.

Just like the rest of Africa, Kenya has had issues. According to Wambua (2017), class patronage in the unequal distribution of resources during the reign of President Jomo Kenyatta (1963–1978) entrenched structural differences amongst the indigenous communities. President Daniel Moi's administration (1978–2002) heightened the unfettered accumulation of state resources. The personalisation of state power and the articulation of the political interests of the ruling elite led to the massive plunder of state coffers and heightened the demand for constitutional and institutional reforms in the country (Ajulu, 2008). Musau (2008) further notes that through domination and manipulation of the political institutions, these leaders turned elections into structures for rewarding loyalists and punishing dissenting voices. The president fiddled with ethnicity to gain political mileage.

In 2002, Mwai Kibaki was elected on a National Unity platform. The Kibaki administration, however, failed to inspire the resolve to pursue positive peace in the country. The immediate breakdown of the coalition over an alleged failure to honour a pre-election power deal, a supposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as defined by the coalition partners' leaders, Raila Odinga of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Kibaki of the National Alliance of Kenya (NAK), led to renewed political antagonism in the quest for constitutional reforms in the country (Ajulu 2008). In this regard, the 2007 general election was held amidst deep political tensions. According to the Independent Review Commission (2008), the campaign process was generally peaceful; the political parties, largely the Orange Democratic

Movement (ODM), the Party of National Unity (PNU), and ODM-Kenya, established nation-wide campaign machinery, with a tight race poised between Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga.

The Kriegler and Waki Reports of 2009 indicated that most media houses avoided hate speech, but several FM stations incited ethnic animosity during the 2007 elections. According to an IREC (2008) report, Kass FM radio, broadcasting in Kalenjin, allegedly aired materials of a xenophobic nature against the Kikuyu community. Kameme and Coro FM radio stations broadcasting in Kikuyu dialect had programmes that encouraged ethnic chauvinistic divisions. In addition, phrases such as'madoadoa' (blemishes) and 'getting rid of weeds', in reference to the non-Kalenjin community living in Rift Valley, were aired by Kass FM. In addition, Inooro FM played Kikuyu dialect songs that portrayed Raila Odinga as a murderer and even characterised the Luo community as lazy hooligans who do not pay rent. In this regard, hate messages targeted at specific ethnic groups were used to create political mileage in the campaigns, polarising the country further along politicised ethnic lines.

Therefore, politically informed ethnic patronage has been a defining characteristic of Kenyan policies of resource distribution since independence. Subsequent post-colonial administrations have entrenched the politics of brinkmanship, in which only the co-ethnics of the person in power (the state house) get to benefit from the national cake. The politics of 'eating" have been characterised by the unfair and unequal distribution of resources that have led to negative ethnicity; hence, ethnic mobilisation by those who benefit from patronage and those who don't. For the beneficiaries, the fight has been about maintaining the status quo, and for those who have been sidelined in resource allocation, the fight has been about getting a chance to enjoy the national cake, just like others have done since independence.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive research design and historical research design. The descriptive design was used to obtain data on personal experiences, events, and situations with respect to the variables of the study (Creswell and Clarke., 2017). Descriptive research is directed at making careful observations and detailed documentation of a phenomenon of interest (Bhattacherjee et al., 2019). In this study, the researcher conducted surveys using household questionnaires and conducted in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gain a deeper understanding of the issues of horizontal inequalities and ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu County. Therefore, in this study, the descriptive design was useful in describing the challenges in the management of horizontal inequalities in Uasin Gishu County.

The study was conducted in Uasin Gishu County. The county is situated in the Rift Valley region of Kenya, with its geographical boundaries spanning from approximately 34°50' east to 35°37' east longitude and 0°03' south to 0°55' north latitude (County Government of Uasin Gishu, 2018). Data collection was done in two of the six sub-counties, which represented 30% of the study. The two sub-counties were Kapsaret and Kesses.

The study targeted the following categories of study population in Uasin Gishu County: Household heads, County Commissioner, County Secretary, CDF Officials, local administration (Chiefs), religious leaders, civil society organisations, local political leaders (MCAs), security personnel (senior police officers), and opinion leaders. These categories of respondents were sampled from various sub-counties within the study area.

The study utilised both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Since the main unit of analysis for this study was household heads, data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2019) shows that Kapsaret had a total of 33,975 households, whereas Kessess had a total of 26,343 households. Hence, the total number of household heads is 60,318 . The researcher, therefore, determined the sample size for the nine wards using Fisher et al. (1983), cited in Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), which states that for a target population greater than 10,000, the desired sample size can be determined using Fisher's formula for sample size determination. The formula indicates that:

$$n=\frac{z^2pq}{d^2}$$

Where n=desired sample size (the target population is greater than 10,000).

z=the standard normal deviate at the confidence level of 95% is 1.96.

p=the proportion of the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured is set at 50%

q=1-p (probability of non-success)

d=level of statistical significance set at 0.05

$$n=\frac{(1.96)^2*0.5*(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

n=384

Non-probability sampling techniques were used to sample key informants such as the county commissioner, county secretary, CDF officials, local administration (chiefs), religious leaders, civil society organisations, local political leaders (MCAs), and security personnel (senior police officers). The study had four FGDs made up of 10 participants each.

Primary data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS version 25 software to obtain descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages. Additionally, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used to generate 2-tail bivariate Pearson's correlation tables from the SPSS data set. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic techniques to support quantitative data. Quantitative data was presented using a table; qualitative data was presented in the form of narrative reports and verbatim quotations.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

The study sought to establish forms of political Horizontal inequalities in Uasin Gishu County. The findings are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Political Horizontal Inequalities in Uasin Gishu County

Variable	Yes		No		Not Sure	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ethnic Patronage	277	73.9	48	12.8	50	13.3
Inequalities in the Distribution of Political appointments and Opportunities	259	69.1	81	21.6	35	9.3
Inequalities in people's capabilities to participate politically e.g. in Voting	144	38.4	186	49.6	45	12
Inequalities in Resource Distribution	259	69.1	70	18.7	46	12.3

4.1 Ethnic Patronage

The findings revealed that there was ethnic patronage, as indicated by 277 (73.9%) who agreed with this assertion, as compared to 48 (12.8%) who said there were no such practices and 50 (13.3%) who stated that they were not sure. The findings from the household heads were supported by those from interviews and focus group discussions. During an FGD conducted in Eldoret town at the Catholic diocese, it emerged that there was a lot of corruption and favouritism in the county, favouring some ethnic groups against others. One of the participants stated that in the county, there was unfairness in getting services, especially if a person belonged to an ethnic group different from the dominant ethnic group. He stated that most of the people who were working at the county were from the same ethnic group and were mostly friends or relatives.

Another participant stated that he had applied for a business permit at the county using his credentials, and that made him regret the decision because the people who were processing the permit made him pay more to get the permit. He indicated that he realised this when a friend of his who later applied for the permit paid an amount less than what he had been made to pay by six thousand shillings. He further revealed that even after being overcharged for the business permit, he had to wait longer to get the permit. According to the participants in this FGD, those who did not belong to the Kalenjn community were treated differently as compared to those who belonged to the ethnic group. One of the youths in the FGD stated that whenever you visit the county to receive services, people will insist on knowing your second name so that they will know how to treat you.

In another FGD conducted in the Langas area, in which women were the key participants, there was consensus that even the way the county enforcement officers treated people was based on some sort of ethnic discrimination. They stated that the enforcement officers would, in many cases, harass people in the market places and would sometimes use foul language meant to remind people that they came from other counties and should therefore go back to their home counties. The attitude of some of the county officers was a reflection of the attitude of county leadership towards other ethnic groups in the county. One FGD participant stated that:

"These county officers are from one ethnic group and have mainly been brought to work in the county by those in powerful positions in the county; therefore, they treat people from other ethnic groups with disdain because that is what their 'godfathers' preach. Many of them have a lot of impunity and arrogance because they know they are untouchable" (Women's FGD at the New Langas County Market, Kisumu Ndogo, July 31, 2021).

One of the women who was part of the FGD in Langas stated that in giving market stalls to people at the market, they always prioritised the Kalenjin traders in those markets; other ethnic groups would be considered last, and in some cases, people had to give a bribe to be allocated spaces. The FGD participant went ahead to elaborate that, in some cases, county officers would collude with some people who were not traders in the markets; such people would be officially allocated the spaces using the normal process, and then later on they would sell these spaces to the actual traders who were deserving of this chance in the first place. Such practices of corruption have made some of the traders feel like they are not respected by the county leadership despite paying taxes.

Another FGD participant stated that county leaders, including MCAs, always prioritised those who voted for them for service delivery as compared to those whom they perceived as opponents. The leaders would work towards improving roads, installing security lights, and ensuring that their strongholds had the best services as compared to other areas. One of the participants in the FGDs pointed to Langas Ward, which is one of the most populous and ethnically diverse in the county. He stated that the MCA, who was from the Kikuyu community, always tried to develop places that are inhabited by the Kikuyu, like Kona Mbaya and the Yamumbi area, while other places like Kisumu Ndogo were left behind with bad drainage systems, poor lighting, and poor roads. He further stated that the MCA, who was now serving his second term as an MCA, had an office in the Kona Mbaya area instead of putting it in a central place that could be accessible to all people in the ward. From the foregoing, it emerged that the political leaders only wanted to work for their supporters and not all members of the public. Such feelings of disenfranchisement could lead to ethnic tension and animosity that could be a pathway to future conflicts. Ethnic patronage has been witnessed in Kenya at the national level over the years and has been one of the major causes of ethnic tension and conflict in post-independence Kenya.

The findings agreed with Gordon (2019), who opined that ethnic patronage networks have hampered the institutionalisation of democratic procedures as the formal rules of elections, political appointments, and the management and distribution of resources are overridden by ethnic patronage systems. Violence has accompanied nearly every election in Kenya, largely due to the high stakes that patronage politics places on elections.

The findings further supported Ranta (2017), who In Chapter 14 of the book *What Politics? Youth and Political Engagement in Africa* discussed *patronage and ethnicity amongst politically active young Kenyans*. In this chapter, Ranta describes the way ethnic patronage occurs in Kenya at the local level. According to Ranta, the networks of patronage are inextricably tied to ethnicity and the amount of wealth a person has. At the local level, the wealthiest members of society are most likely to win political office, as voters perceive them to be most able to provide for the community after taking office. She writes that "this is an indication that implies that instead of the state or county governance functioning as a redistributive agent, the distribution or lack of it in the case of resources is seen by community members to be strongly dependent on individual political leaders and their networks." This is an indication that the political elites have used their power to grab resources to distribute to supporters rather than using institutions to protect all citizens. In this regard, those in power only care about those whom they perceive as their voters, normally the ethnic groups that have supported them, and as such, the rest of the ethnic groups can go to 'hell'.

It is worth noting that before the creation of counties, ethnic patronage had become deeply rooted in Kenya through the politics of the executive arm of government by the first two founding presidents, and the next two seemed to follow suit, and the situation is not any different in the post-2010 dispensation with the birth of county governments. Gordon (2019) opines that the extent of ethnic patronage that extended from the executive branch was made evident once Kenya's vice president, Daniel Arap Moi, became president in 1978. Moi, a Kalenjin, had functioned as an ally of the Kikuyu for years, but upon achieving executive power, he began to shift the power of the state in favour of the Kalenjin. This was made easier once Moi transformed the country into a single-party state by amending the constitution and concentrating personal power. He began to remove Kikuyu from the civil service, government positions, and state-owned enterprises and replace them with Kalenjin. Infrastructure development in Kikuyu-dominated regions was abandoned and redirected to Kalenjin areas (Gordon, 2019). Politicians who complained of ethnic favouritism were labelled "tribalists" and often lost their positions. During this era, detentions, political trials, torture, arbitrary arrests, and police brutality became normalised and took on ethnic dimensions.

As Moi's regime became more and more authoritarian, domestic and international pressure for a return to a multiparty state increased. Moi gave in to the pressure in 1991, warning that a return to a multiparty state would result in chaos. The ban on multiple parties was repealed in December. The return of multiple parties opened the political system to a vicious struggle for political power as marginalised ethnic groups jockeyed for control of the nation's resources (Gordon, 2019). Moi was reelected by a small majority in 1991, the first election after the one-party era. The election was riddled with accounts of fraud, and a wave of violence swept the country for several days after the election. Even with the

return of multiple parties, ethnic patronage was still rampant. Gordon (2019) further argues that patronage was also at the heart of the electoral violence of 2007. The re-election of Kibaki, a Kikuyu, prompted Luo and Kalenjin leaders to mobilise mass violence in the Rift Valley. The messages were hinged on patronage: if a Kikuyu occupied the executive office, patronage would continue to only benefit Kikuyu at the expense of the Kalenjin and Luo. In this instance, Kalenjin and Luo feared that Kibaki would redistribute the fertile Rift Valley land to the Kikuyu.

The findings further agreed with Hope (2014), who averred that political patronage has been made worse by bureaucracy and political rent-seeking behaviour among public officers. The German sociologist Max Weber was the first person to formally study bureaucracy. In his 1921 book "*Economy and Society*," Weber argued that a bureaucracy represented the most proficient form of organisation due to its possession of specialised expertise, certainty, continuity, and unity of purpose. However, he also warned that uncontrolled bureaucracy could threaten individual freedom, leaving people trapped in an "iron cage" of impersonal, irrational, and inflexible rules. According to Longley (2022), the hierarchical structure of bureaucracies can lead to internal "empire-building." Department supervisors may add unnecessary subordinates, whether through poor decision-making or in order to build their own power and status. In the absence of adequate oversight, bureaucrats with decision-making power could solicit and accept bribes in return for their assistance. In particular, high-level bureaucrats can misuse the power of their positions to further their personal interests. Bureaucracies (especially government bureaucracies) are known to generate a lot of "red tape," which refers to lengthy official processes that involve submitting numerous forms or documents with many specific requirements.

Hope (2014), in his paper titled *Kenya's corruption problem: causes and consequences*, further argued that bureaucrats and politicians who have been successfully maximising their take without regard for such perdition on the size of the overall pie and thereby accounting for the growth of corrupt activities and the particularly adverse impact that corruption has in the country. He further argued that whatever the transaction—getting a driver's license, a national identity card, tax administration decisions, and government contracts for goods and/or services, for example—required the bureaucratic exercise of assumed powers (Hope, 2017b). This, in turn, meant that bribes were demanded and had to be paid for the transactions to be completed. This can be regarded as the systematic exploitation of illegal income-earning opportunities by public officials and the enhancement of rent-seeking opportunities. Incentives for corrupt behaviour have therefore arisen in Kenya, as well as in some other African states, because public officials have considerable control over the instruments regulating valuable socio-economic benefits and private parties are willing to make illegal payments to secure those benefits. The centralised and personalised presidential power that emerged under President Moi resulted in what can only be characterised as the total exercise of all power attached to national sovereignty (Hope, 2013). This exercise of state power led to the supremacy of the state over civil society and, in turn, to the ascendancy of predatory forms of neopatrimonialism with its stranglehold on the economic and political levers of power, through which corruption thrived, for it was through this stranglehold that all decision-making occurred and patronage was dispensed (Bach, 2011).

Additionally, Mueller (2008) argued that controlling the state was the means used by President Moi to entrench an ethnically defined class and ensure its enrichment'. Khadiagala (2009) further argued that 'under Moi, economic mismanagement, corruption, and wanton destruction of national resources became rampant. The 'control of state power meant control of public wealth, leading to patronage, looting, and bribery. Consequently, no distinction was made between public and private interests, and government officials simply plundered the state resources.

The use of terms like it's our turn to "eat" became synonymous with one's ethnicity being in power. The system of patronage therefore thrived, and corrupt behaviour cascaded down to society at large (Hope, 2013). Being part of, or regarded as belonging to, particular groupings became a more acceptable qualification for a given position or contract, for example, than actual capabilities (Hope, 2017a). The result was that the stage was set for corruption to become rampant. It became truly ubiquitous. It also became a way of life, particularly for transactions at a governmental level or with public officials. The tradition of corruption and ethnic patronage has become a way of life in Kenya that even county governments have adopted and has been one of the reasons for continued inequality and ethnic animosity in cosmopolitan counties like Uasin Gishu.

4.2 Inequalities in the Distribution of Political Appointments and Opportunities

The study further sought to find out whether there was inequality in the distribution of political appointments and opportunities, with 259 (69.1%) saying yes, 81 (21.6%) saying no, and 35 (9.3%) stating that they were not sure.

The findings of the study were supported by those from interviews and focus group discussions. During an interview with one of the religious leaders from the inter-faith council of Kenya, he noted that there was a lot of ethnic

exclusion in appointments into public offices both at the national level and at the county level, which had made cosmopolitan counties like Uasin Gishu volatile areas for ethnic conflicts. He further noted that:

"The power that the president wields has a lot of impact on ordinary citizens. Whenever people see public appointments always going to one or two ethnic groups that are in power and the other 40+ ethnic groups are left in the cold, it does not paint a good picture, and this is why people would kill themselves to go to the state house"" (intervie with a member of the Inter-Faith Council of Uasin Gishu County held in Eldoret Town on August 3, 2021).

In an interview done at CJPC, it emerged that ethnic tension is always caused by the fact that those who have tasted power want to stay in power, and those who have never been in power also want a taste of what they have been missing since independence. He went ahead to state that, as much as the counties were formed with the mindset of creating opportunities at the lower level, akin to the *majimbo* that had been proposed after independence, the bigger chunk of the national cake still stays with the central government, which means that the national government still controls everything just like before. This was supported by an FGD participant who stated that the presidency still remains the most coveted position in Kenya. She elaborated by stating that:

"Every ethnic group in Kenya wants to be at the state house; counties have just become places for local ethnic groups to have some small place to benefit, but the national government still runs the show, and therefore political appointments by the president still count. Having the presidency still means getting development, and having people from your ethnic group in powerful positions means that people from your ethnic group can easily get jobs. This has been and continues to be the situation in Kenya before devolution, and even with devolution, nothing has changed" (Elders FGD held at the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret Compound on July 31, 2021). In support of these arguments, one of the youths in another FGD stated that;

"Hapa Kenya ni connection inaweza kukuokoa, kama mtu wenu amepewa post kubwa kwa gava mtafeel fiti juu huyu msee atawaletea development, lakini kama hamna mtu huko juu hata kupata job inakua ngori juu hamna god father. So sisi kama ma youth tunafeel pia ni poa tukipewa that consideration. Si ati ni wasee wa kabila moja na most of them ni wazae ndio wanapewa jobs. Hii story za ku favour watu wa tribe moja ndio pia hufanya vijana watumike vibaya wakati election kwa kuleta tension na vita" (In this country what matters is connections, the moment a person from your ethnic group is given appointment at a higher office, there is likely to be a feeling as satisfaction and as a community you are likely to feel like there is someone to look after your interests in government. It is important that those in positions consider young people from all ethnic groups for such appointments. The issue of favouring specific ethnic groups with appointments has been one of the factors that enable youth mobilization for conflicts during electioneering periods (Youth FGD held at Catholic Diocese of Eldoret Compound on August 1, 2021).

In another interview by a religious leader he stated that the:

"Look at the BBI proposals on issues of rotational presidency and even the political tone of those who are pro-BBI, it is an indication that some people feel as though there is need to give all ethnic groups and equal opportunity to get the presidency because that is where power lies. The devolved systems of governance do not attract as much ethnic division as the one cause by the presidency. I can dare say that ethnic conflicts in this county and other counties are caused by one thing, the presidential election, all the other electoral positions rarely cause division or never attract as much emotion as the presidency" (Interview with a Priest at RCEA Ushirika, July 31, 2021).

The findings agreed with Nyabira and Ayele (2016), who opined that the political exclusion of many ethnic communities in Kenya is the legacy of colonial rule and a decades-long centralised, ethinicized, and personalised presidential system. The presidency has always been used for the political and material benefit of the holder of the office and his close political associates, often belonging to the ethnic community from which the president hails. The Founding Father, President Kenyatta, abolished the Independence Constitution, which provided for a semi-federal political system and centralised all political powers in his office. He justified the centralization of powers by the ideal of nation-building, a project that was predicated on a denial of the ethnic diversity of the Kenyan people. Dubbed pejoratively "majimboism," the semi-federal system was viewed as a system that would exacerbate the ethnic cleavages of the Kenyan people and sabotage the nation-building project. The centralised system, however, had the opposite effect of ethnic-based exclusion and division. This trend continued under the second president, Daniel Arap Moi, who, having assumed the presidency after Kenyatta died in 1978, also used it to empower the Kalenjin, an ethnic community to which he belongs. Even worse, Moi formalised a mono-party political system, which had in any case been the de facto system in Kenya since 1969, thereby ending any semblance of democratic pluralism in the country. President Mwai Kibaki, the third

President of Kenya, who was also from the Kikuyu ethnic group like President Kenyatta, was no exception to this since, having assumed the presidency after Moi, he also increasingly preferred his Kikuyu kinsmen in political appointments. During the presidency of Kenyatta, the percentage of cabinet ministers from the Kikuyu community was 28.5. However, in 2001, the percentage of ministers from the Kikuyu community dropped to just 4%, and that of the Kalenjin rose to 22%. Moreover, a maximum of 10 ethnic communities were represented in the cabinet of both Kenyatta and Moi out of about 43 ethnic communities. The same trend followed in the appointments of the Permanent Secretaries (PS).

Further, the perspective given by Sundet et al. (2009) was also in tandem with the findings; they opined that in the 1970s, for example, the PS from the Kikuyu community constituted 37.5% while those from the Kalenjin community were just 8.3%. The percentage of PS from the Kikuyu community dropped to 8.7% in 2001, while that of the Kalenjin community rose to 34.8%. This was once again reversed when Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu, came to power in 2002. When Uhuru Kenyatta became president, he continued the Kikuyu dominance with the aspect of negotiated democracy between the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu communities and saw President Kenyatta form a government dominated by the two ethnic groups. Major appointments, including those of ambassadors, parastatal heads, and appointments to state agencies, were dominated by ethnic groups that were in the ruling coalition.

The ethnic composition of the 2013 cabinet was as follows: Kikuyu (3), Kalenjin (4), Somali (3), Luo (1), Meru (1), Kisii (1), Kamba (1), Luhya (1), and Arab (1). In fact, in 2019, the Uhuru Kenyatta's government had to contend with a court case in which the appointment of the board of the Postal Corporation of Kenya, as well as the Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority, had been challenged in court on grounds that they did not consider ethnic balance. Reports by Citizen Digital on May 15, 2019 indicated that Chama Cha Mawakili, in a petition, argued that the appointment of Mike Rubia, Fred Gachie, Munyua Waiyaki, Simon Kiuta, Pauline Muthangani, James Muriithi, Jane Githinji, Ndogo Waweru, and Robert Murimito to the boards of the two institutions did not meet the constitutional requirement of ethnic and regional balance and should therefore be quashed. The petitioners argued that regional and ethnic balance is a constitutional edict that runs through the entire Constitution, and therefore the composition of all national or public institutions at all levels should reflect the regional and ethnic diversity of the people of Kenya (Citizen Digital, May 15, 2019).

In a nutshell, those holding the presidency effectively entrenched the politics of "it's our turn to eat" in Kenya, leaving other ethnic communities with a feeling of exclusion. In such a centralised and personalised political system, and in the absence of alternative sub-national political institutions, controlling the national government, in particular, the presidency, becomes a life-and-death matter for every ethnic community during general elections.

To bring a clearer perspective into this, a study by Gutiérrez-Romero (2013) further averred that there had been sporadic inter-ethnic violent conflicts in what came to be known as Kenya even before the emergence of colonialism towards the end of the 19th century. The creation of the Kenyan State and the systematic exclusion of the various ethnic communities, in particular after independence, however, politicised the conflict to the extent that it reached a catastrophic proportion in the aftermath of the 2007 general elections. The political exclusion of and economic discrimination against the various ethnic communities and the urgency to curb these problems triggered persistent demands for constitutional reform in the 1980s. At the centre of the call for constitutional reform was the demand to remove the centralised government system and replace it with a decentralised one. There was an even stronger demand for equitable representation in the national government of all regions and communities, which had been the domain of a few communities and individuals. These demands could not be ignored after the 2007 post-election violence. Thus, serious moves were begun towards constitutional reform, resulting in the adoption of the 2010 Constitution. The Constitution, among other things, introduced a devolved government system composed of 47 counties and a national government.

Bosire (2013) points out that each of the major ethnic communities holds the possibility of clinching the presidency and might not see the weak county powers as an alternative to the control of the presidency. The bulk of political powers and resources are retained at the centre, with the Constitution retaining a pure presidential system, albeit with clipped presidential powers. The limited county powers diminish the "political significance" of counties, meaning that the presidency may thus remain a highly attractive prize to these communities. Barkan (2012) further affirmed that this situation could make the large ethnic groups rush to form "counter-coalitions" and, in the process, deeply divide the country in a deadly "zero-sum" game of ethno-political competition. Indeed, the run-up to the March 2013 and August 2022 general elections saw gradual ethnic and political polarisation as coalitions and counter-coalitions formed around the big five ethnic communities.

Political appointments and opportunities are therefore a major factor in ethnic tension conflicts, and even the attempt at consociational democracy through the devolution that was brought about by the 2010 constitution has not

solved the conflicts, not only in the county of Uasin Gishu but also in Kenya. Uasin Gishu County, being Cosmopolitan in nature, literally represents that face of Kenya, and as such, if all the Kenyan ethnic groups were to be put together in one large basket, then Uasin Gishu County would be that basket. The findings have shown that the most lucrative position in Kenya is the presidency and that every 5 years Kenyans go for elections, each ethnic group wants one of their own to be a president because of the amount of power, influence, and resources that the president holds, including making all the important appointments. This is an indication that ethnic conflicts in Kenya are easily influenced by the decisions that the office of the president makes with regards to appointments into public offices.

Political appointments can, therefore, be an indicator of whether the leadership of the country is inclusive or excludes some ethnic groups. As an indicator of political horizontal inequalities, political appointments, positions, and opportunities have a bearing on how different ethnic groups look at the power that the appointing authority holds. It therefore means that if the appointing authority only appoints people from his ethnic group or his allies, then feelings of disenfranchisement and exclusion would set in for those ethnicities that have been left without any appointments. As indicated by the FGDs, those who have one of their own appointed feel as though their interests are taken into consideration, as opposed to those who lack appointments.

In this regard, having inequalities in the distribution of political positions among various ethnic groups can be a strong ground for ethnic mobilisation and conflicts, unless the powers that be find ways to make all the ethnic groups feel like they are part of the government in a way that does not show open bias and exclusion of other ethnic groups. One way through which this could be done is through the adoption of principles that would make even the minority feel that they have been represented in some way.

This can be done through Lijphart's model of a *mutual veto,* in which those in power can include all segments of society in the decision-making process, thereby enabling minorities to protect their special interests (Ram & Strøm, 2014). As Stewart (2009) suggests, conflict is less likely when a particular group that is relatively deprived in one dimension is privileged in another. In cases in which a group is economically or socially excluded (or both), but the group's elite holds power or participates in the government, the elite are less likely to organise or lead a rebellion.

4.3 Inequalities in people's Capabilities to Participate Politically

The study sought to establish whether there were Inequalities in people's capabilities to participate in political processes. This variable sought to establish whether there was interference with people taking part in the process of elections such as voting, running for political office or joining political party. The findings revealed that, 144 (38.4%) stated that yes, there was interference with political participation while 186 (49.6%) stated that there was no interference with political participation and people had equal rights to participate in the political processes, however, 45 (12%) stated that they were not sure. The finding from the household heads therefore indicated that the issue of people being denied a chance to take part in political processes like voting, running for political offices or joining political parties was not witnessed in the county. However, during FGDs and interviews, it emerged that acts of people being intimidated not to participate in political processes were present indirectly. One issue that emerged in both interviews and FGDs was the issue of voter intimidation during electoral periods. This was done both by the politicians and ordinary citizens who seized opportunities to threaten their perceived political nemesis at such times. In one of the Focus Group discussion conducted in Langas area one women stated that:

> *Wakati wa campaign ikifika, watu huwa hawaamini wenzao, utapata hata landlord wako kama ni wa kabila ingine na mko mrengo tofauti kisiasa, atakuambia uhame uatfute mahali utaishi. Hii ni njia ya kufukuza mtu asipige kura mahali anafaa kupigia kura. Saa zingine inabidi watu wengine waende ushago na walichukulia kura huku. Sasa si unajua kura kama hio itakua imelala* (During political campaigns, some landlords ask their tenants to leave the houses especially if they belong to different ethnic groups and different political sides. This has in some cases forced people who have registered to vote in the town to go back to the village, meaning that such individuals are likely to miss out in the voting process). (Women's FGD at the New Langas County Market, Kisumu Ndogo on July 31, 2021).

In an interview with one of the clergy, he affirmed that voter intimidation always manifests itself through politicians with the use of words like *madoadoa* making people fear for their safety. The clergy further added that:

> *One of the common things that I have witnessed in this county that I could categorise as voter harassment is the issue of leaflets. Its common practice during electioneering period to wake up to threats of leaflets especially in areas where multiple ethnicities live. The messages from these leaflets are always meant to scare people and even make people run away so that they do not vote within this area. Some of these acts are*

often instigated through politics of incitement (Interview with Religious leader from the PCEA church held at PCEA Langas, Eldoret on 11/08/2021).

There was a general consensus among the respondents that people were never stopped from running for political offices or joining political parties. Therefore, in this regard, political participation was free for all. However, in an interview with an officer at CJPC, it emerged that, in as much as there was freedom to run for office and join political parties, many of the political parties that were present in the county were ethnic based and as such people from different ethnic groups would associate more with a party that was having candidates from parties with their ethnic group. He gave an example indicating that:

> *Today in Kenya and even in Uasin Gishu, you can predict who will win what and in which political party. For example if you talk about the Luo ethnic group, they associated more with ODM party and it is known that all governors in Luo Nyanza for example will be elected on an ODM ticket. That means if one of the candidates running for governor of Uasin Gishu County was to run on ODM ticket, there is a 99% chance that he will not win because it is known that Uasin Gishu is a UDA zone. This is not even the biggest problem, the bigger issue is that for example if a Kikuyu who is a member of UDA would run for governor in Uasin Gishu, he would not win the ticket and even if he wins the local political brokers would not allow him to proceed to run for in governor's race on that ticket because it is believed that the governor of this county must be a Kalenjin. So ethnicity still plays a role on who is elected where, whether they belong to the most popular political party or not* (Interview with CJPC Coordinator at CJPC Offices in Eldoret Town on July, 29 2021).

The findings were in agreement with a Human Rights Watch (2017) report that revealed that voter intimidation as the election nears was common in cosmopolitan areas in Kenya. The report indicated that in the run-up to the 2017 election, there were threats to perceived opposition supporters in Nakuru County with the Naivasha area being one of the most affected in the county. According to Human rights watch some real or perceived opposition supporters in Naivasha said that they have begun to pack up their belongings to flee the area out of fear of a return to ethnic conflict. As registered voters in Naivasha, they would not be able to vote in other parts of the country.

An article published by the Star Newspaper on June 10, 2017, indicated that Bishop Maurice Muhatia, head of the Nakuru Catholic Diocese, had expressed alarm over the rate at which families were fleeing the county ahead of the August elections. The report stated that "Some families are first transporting their children, then wife and personal effects to their rural areas ahead of the election" (The Star, June 10, 2017). Human Rights Watch documented at least six incidents of direct threats against opposition supporters, with people from both sides of the political divide saying that such threats were increasingly prevalent. Eight opposition supporters said a group of young men in the Kinamba and Kihoto neighbourhoods of Naivasha, whom they said they believed were behind the 2007 violence, have repeatedly told them to stay away from polling places if they do not intend to vote for the ruling party (Human Rights Watch, 2017). This scenario was not unique to Nakuru County as there were similar situations on other cosmopolitan counties including Uasin Gishu which affected people's ability to participate freely in elections.

The findings further agreed with Horowitz (2022) who opined that in Kenya, ethnicity was an important aspect of voting patterns due to the fact that it conveyed important information on patronage allocation and community representation. In this regard, Horowitz argued that individual voters preferred their co-ethnics or candidates who were in the same coalitions with their co-ethnics to be elected, therefore, candidates who were opposed to co-ethnics and their supporters were viewed as threats to an ethnic group and as such would most likely be treated as political enemies during campaign periods. In many cases, this enemy treatment of other ethnic groups then became a basis for ethnic clashes in post-election periods as witnessed in the 1992, 1997 and 2007 elections. As Arusei *et al* (2019) puts it, before the 2007 election, voter intimidation and harassment was almost the order of the day, this was done with aim of either manipulating voters to distort their preferences or sway preference expression or scaring them away and making them not to vote.

Voter intimidation, therefore, contributed to horizontal inequalities because it denied people a chance to choose leaders whom they believed could help them. Considering that some of the registered voters from Uasin Gishu county took off to their respective villages and failed to vote, this meant that these people did not elect leaders who were running affairs either at county level or national level, this indicated that such people did not have a choice of who represents them at both levels of governance and as such, in the 5 years that these leaders would be in office, their interest were not going to be taken care of as compared to a situation where they had a say on who gets elected.

The zoning of Kenyan regions based on ethnicity has also been another problem affecting people's ability to participate in political processes. The assumption that specific counties belong to specific ethnicities has made political

choices particularly difficult to many people in cosmopolitan areas. According to one Muslim cleric who was interviewed in this study, Uasin Gishu county for example has many ethnic groups most of whom live within town. He indicated that most of the people from the dominant ethnic group which is the Kalenjin's live in the peri-urban or the rural areas. He added that Eldoret town which had a large population multi-ethnic of could not be made a sub-county or constituency because the local political leadership always fear that the town may have a member of parliament from another ethnic group other than the Kalenjin. The cleric further indicated that this had made service delivery a problem to the people living within the town because a person could be on one side of town but on a different sub-county. He noted that;

> *If you come from West Indies which part of Eldoret town, and you need something processed in your sub-county, you may have to go all the way to turbo because you belong to Turbo sub-county. All the constituencies and sub-counties in Uasin Gishu start from the villages and end up on a particular part of the town* (Interview with Catholic Priest, at Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, 10th August, 2021)

This is an indication of well-choreographed strategy by the political elites in the county to ensure that only those who belong to the dominant ethnic groups can successfully run for and win elections within the county. In a way, this limits the political choices of the other residents of the county because in a democracy the majority will always have their way.

4.4 Inequalities in Resource Distribution

The study sought to establish whether there were Inequalities in resource allocation across the county. The findings revealed that 259 (69.1%) indicated that indeed there were inequalities in resource allocation while 70 (18.7%) stated that such inequalities did not exist. However, 46 (12.3%) stated that they were not sure.

The findings from the household heads were supported by those from the interviews and FGDs. During an interview conducted at NCCK, it emerged that the issues of resource allocation have been a major reason for inequality. The NCCK officer stated that:

> *Resource distribution in Kenya has been one of the biggest challenges for inter-ethnic cohesion due to the fact that since independence, there are communities who have always felt short changed. There is a lot of power politics involved in resource allocation not only at the national level but also at the county level* (Interview with NCCK Official NCCK Offices in Eldoret Town July 26, 2021).

These sentiments were supported by the youths who were part of the Focus Discussions conducted in Eldoret town. They indicated that issues of development were always done by those in county leadership in a way that was not fair to everyone. They indicated that the county had some areas with better lighting, better county roads and people from some parts of the county would be involved in the *Kazi mtaani* programmes more than others. One of the youths particular stated that:

> *Some of those serving in the counties as either County executives, Member of county Assembly or even the governor and senior officers in the county had ensured that their home areas had some of the best services as compared to other places. Some of these people have tarmacked roads heading to their homes but the rest of the residential places have poor roads with bad drainage and sewerage systems* (Youth FGD held at Catholic Diocese of Eldoret Compound on August 1, 2021).

In support of the findings, the CJPC coordinator stated that:

> *Unequal resource allocation has been one of the biggest factors for ethnic tension and conflicts in Kenya since the time of President Kenyatta, Moi, Kibaki and now Uhuru. The political class has always used resources as a bargaining chip and as a tool to control the masses and win support. This has always been done based on the ethnic nature of Kenyan politics. The first Kenyatta always worked on a plan to benefit Kikuyus, Moi worked to benefit Kalenjins especially the Tugen, Kibaki was always trying to benefic Kikuyus and the paradox continues. It's always either you benefit your ethnic group or your allies. This had been the nature of Kenyan ethnic politics* (Interview with CJPC Coordinator at CJPC Offices on July 29, 2021).

The CJPC coordinator added that, in as much as counties get 15% revenue allocation from the government, this allocation is not enough because it still leaves the national government in control of almost everything and this is why all ethnic groups want to win the presidency so that they can be favoured in the distribution of the resources. He stated that, since independence it has been a norm that those who control statehouse benefit more from the national cake.

These arguments were further supported by one of the religious leaders from the inter-faith council who stated that:

The reason our politics is always so heated from national to county level is because everyone want to control resources. Here in Uasin Gishu, during campaigns, candidates running for Governorship even used threats in campaigns to get elected. It's always about control of resources. Everyone wants to be in charge of the resources and distribute them in the way that pleases them (Interview with member of the Inter-Faith Council of Uasin Gishu County held in Eldoret Town at Wagon Hotel on August 3, 2021).

It was, therefore, evident that there was a consensus among all the respondents that resource distribution is a matter of concern in Uasin Gishu County. These findings were in agreement with Hassan (2020), who opined that the ethical distribution of resources in Kenya has occurred through numerous and varied channels throughout Kenya's post-independence period. He argued that resource distribution strategies have been divided into two tracks based on the distributing patron: a centre-led track largely driven by each president and a local-led track largely driven by Members of Parliament (MPs) within their individual constituencies. Kenya achieved independence with a devolved, *majimbo* state where the bulk of the country's resources were distributed at the provincial level (Branch, 2017).

Under *majimboism*, the central government played little role in development; instead, development monies were devolved to the country's eight regional assemblies, which individually led development within their province (Maxon, 2016). In the first Kenyan government after independence, the seed of skewed resource allocation was sown, and President Kenyatta, having seen that *majimboism* mechanically limited the number of resources he could divert to the Kikuyu area,

(Hassan, 2015). In this regard, the founding president devised a system of governance that would favour the diversion of resources to favour his co-ethnics. He created ministries, and each national ministry funnelled resources to the grassroots for the creation of new development projects and the maintenance of existing ones.

First, central ministries could divert their budget anywhere across the country without regard to minimum spending thresholds outside Central Province. Second, Kenyatta was able to staff the state largely with Kikuyu bureaucrats (Horowitz, 2022). By 1969, at the very beginning of Kenya's consolidation of power, almost 40% of permanent secretaries were Kikuyu (Hornsby, 2011), as were half of the country's PCs and DCs, as well as the vast majority of parastatal bosses.

As Hassan (2015) indicated, for the same reasons that centre-led development led by Nairobi benefited Kenyatta and his co-ethnics, they hindered the country's second president, Daniel Arap Moi (1978–2002), from distributing resources to his own co-ethnic base. The centralization of distribution decisions to the ministries and a large number of Kikuyu bureaucrats institutionally ensured a Kikuyu bias in centre-led resource allocation even after Kenyatta's death. To be sure, Moi did begin to circumvent this bias through the replacement of Kikuyu bureaucrats and senior government elites in Nairobi (e.g., by 1990, roughly two-thirds of permanent secretaries were Kalenjin) (Lynch, 2011). However, this strategy proved gradual, as there was a significant dearth of educated pastoralists. Instead, Moi, like Kenyatta before him, sought to institutionally change centre-led resource distribution to best advantage his base.

Hassan (2020) opined that Moi inaugurated a new central-led resource distribution programme, District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD, or simply, "District Focus"), in 1982 that decentralised central resources away from Nairobi. DFRD promised to "bring development closer to the people" by allocating each of the country's (then) 40 districts a lump sum of money to enact development programmes within its boundaries. Spending decisions within each district were finalised by each district's internal District Development Committee (DDC). The DDC was chaired by the presidentially appointed DC and also included all district MPs and other local stakeholders. Each central ministry would then create its nationwide budgets according to the demands of each of the country's districts. Moreover, Moi mandated that each ministry list and justify the specific projects that the ministry spent resources on. This accounting trick made (Kikuyu) central government bureaucrats more accountable for their spending decisions. Because bureaucrats' decisions were now recorded and reviewable, lay bureaucrats had to justify their decisions to their largely Kalenjin superiors. District Focus benefited Moi's ethnic base by leveraging their geographic spread across districts. To further maximise the benefits to his co-ethnics, Moi increased the number of districts from 40 to 71 by 1992 and 2002, which ensured that many of his co-ethnics received a disproportionate share of central government resources as compared to other ethnic groups in the county (Horowitz, 2022). Moi did this by ensuring that the number of Kalenjin District Commissioners increased from approximately 10% at the beginning of his tenure as president to 25% by 1992 (Hassan, 2016).

The district distribution continued under President Kibaki, who was elected by a multi-ethnic coalition that had support from the country's largest ethnic groups (Arriola & Johnson, 2012). Kibaki also created new districts, but most of them never got budgetary allocations (Horowitz, 2022). The onset of devolution in 2013 created a new dynamic for resource allocation, with county governments from all parts of the country having legally sanctioned resource distribution

styles. Indeed, Kenya's counties have the same boundaries as districts in 1992 and are governed as they had been before proliferation (Hassan, 2015). Resource allocation for counties has also faced challenges, with the central or national government retaining the biggest chunk of the allocation.

Since 2013, 84.5 percent of the revenues have been allocated to the national government, while a mere 15 percent is allocated to county governments, with the remaining 0.5 percent being in the equalisation fund (Kimenyi, 2013). This means that the president still controls almost all resources, just as it has been since independence, making the ethnic competition for the presidency a major issue in resource allocation and ethnic conflicts.

Resource distribution has been more of a struggle between the country's ethnic groups about 'whose turn it is to eat.' Just like in many multi-ethnic societies with salient ethnic cleavages, the geographic concentration of ethnic groups allows politicians to distribute resources to particular ethnic groups by targeting the areas where specific groups live. Put simply, those in charge of distributing resources have used existing ethnic settlement patterns to co-opt ethnic groups that they need support from while overlooking ethnic groups associated with their political opposition. Resource distribution patterns in Kenya are both strongly influenced by and reinforced by the logic of ethnic politics.

From the foregoing, it was evident based on the findings that the issue of resource allocation was more of a national issue than a county issue, and therefore ethnicities represented in the county who were not part of the 'national government' would always harbour feelings of unfair treatment that would breed ethnic tension in the region. Just like resource allocation at the national level, which is skewed to benefit some ethnicities at the expense of others, county administrators seem to be reading from the same script that has been used by the national government since 1964. Even with this kind of attitude, the amount of resources controlled by counties is still too small, making the national resource distribution a big concern as it has been used and continues to be used to perpetuate horizontal inequalities.

4.5 Correlation between Political Horizontal inequalities and Ethnic Conflicts in Uasin Gishu County

The study sought to find out the correlation between Political Horizontal inequalities and Ethnic Conflicts in Uasin Gishu County. Ethnic conflicts were in this context as a measure of negative ethnicity. The findings are as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Correlation between Political HIs and Ethnic Conflicts

Correlations					
		Experience Conflict	Ethnic Patronage	Inequalities in the Distribution of Political Positions and Appointments	Inequalities in people's capabilities to participate politically e.g. in Voting	Inequalities in Resource Distribution
Ethnic Conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	.265**	.095	.003	.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.067	.951	.243
	N	375	375	375	375	375

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In comparing the correlation between Ethnic Patronage and the experience of ethnic conflicts, there was Pearson Correlation value (r) of 265** and statistical significance (p-value) of .000. The study also compared Inequalities in the Distribution of Political Positions and Opportunities against ethnic conflicts which showed the values as $r=0.095$ and p-value=0.067; inequalities in people's capabilities to participate politically e.g. in Voting against the experience of ethnic conflicts which gave $r=0.003$ and p-value=0.951 and finally, the correlation between Inequalities in Resource Distribution and ethnic conflicts revealed $r=0.060$ and p-value=0.243.

 The findings of the correlation therefore revealed that for all the four variables analyzed. There was a positive correlation between political horizontal inequalities and ethnic conflicts, this means that each of the four political factors had a relationship to the incidences of ethnic conflicts experienced in the Uasin Gishu County. Additionally, it is important to note that from the findings of the study, a cross tabulation of between Ethnic Patronage and Ethnic Conflicts in Uasin Gishu gave statistically significant bivariate association between the two variables. An indication that Ethnic Patronage had significant influence on the occurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu County as compared to the other variables. In this regard, ethnic patronage had more influence on negative ethnicity and ethnic conflicts. This means

that people were unhappy with the way those in positions of power perpetuated ethnic favourism, cronyism, corruption and political rent seeking which left many people from ethnic groups that were not benefiting from government services disgruntled hence becoming a breeding ground for negative ethnicity and ethnic conflicts.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study concludes that horizontal inequalities have played a significant role in the manifestation of negative ethnicity and conflicts in Uasin Gishu County. The long-standing differential treatment of various ethnic groups, especially those who are 'not in government' and the culture of 'it's our time to eat' has led to various ethnic groups feeling disenfranchised and has led to the culture of 'mtu *wetu'* ('Our person must be in the statehouse for us to benefit'). These factors have created a situation in which ethnic groups in the county are involved in political competition, with ethnic nationalism taking centre stage. The incidences of violence that have been experienced in Kenya since the advent of political pluralism can be attributed to this ethnic nationalism since all the past presidents have preferentially treated their own co-ethnics at the expense of other ethnic groups. Uasin Gishu, being a county, has several ethnic groups and therefore hosts the so-called relatively privileged and the relatively deprived communities; thus, the kind of conflict experienced in the county is a reflection of what Kenya as a nation goes through in every election cycle. Therefore, horizontal inequalities have many faces through which they create an environment in which ethnic identity thrives over national identity, which is attributable to intractable ethnic conflicts in Uasin Gishu County.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends transparency and inclusivity in political processes to reduce the manipulation of ethnic identities for political gains**.** In this regard, the government, civil society organizations and other stakeholders should work towards formulating fair policies in which all ethnicities within the county have equal chances at getting government appointments and opportunities, as well as resources, without discrimination.

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