

The Effectiveness of Traditional Approaches to Peace Building: A Case Study of Murewa District

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Abstract: The research study sought to determine the effectiveness of the traditional peace -building approaches a case study of Murewa District. In this study 30 villagers, 2 headmen and 1 chief were used as the research subjects of Murewa District. The qualitative research design was used with the interview and focus group discussion as research instruments. Data was analyzed in both tabular and graph form. The major sources of conflict were found to be land, boundary disputes, political intolerance, marital and family disputes, livestock related disputes and theft. The traditional peace-building approaches were used in a complementary role. Each approach was appropriate for specific cases- therefore their use assumed an eclectic approach. The unhu/ubuntu approach has a strong influence over all the approaches as the other approaches appealed to unhu/ubuntu aspect of ‘humanness’. Traditional approaches despite being culturally appropriate had the criticism of being at variance in some cases with some of the rights of some marginalised groups like women and children among others. This study recommends that, peace studies be included in the school curriculum to inculcate a culture of peace in communities as well as exploration of other approaches from other cultures and religions with a view to find out what is workable in current times. Finally, it is recommended that the traditional peace building approaches and their practices be aligned with modern practices so as not to violet the rights of the marginalised groups like women and children.

Keywords: Peace building Social learning theory Conflict Resolution.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The greatest threat to humanity, according to Ghali is violent conflict. The absence of peace has disastrous consequences to individuals, families, communities and nations. The need for peace in the world in general, Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, cannot be over emphasized. In Africa, a general increase in the number and magnitude of conflicts has been noted in recent years (UN 2005). The Rwanda conflict (genocide), the DRC war, Liberia, Sudan, Ethiopia / Eritrea conflicts, Nigeria and Somalia’s ever present religious conflicts, the Gukurahundi and the ZANU PF/ MDC conflicts of Zimbabwe, the Egypt and West Africa crises and other numerous conflicts in most African states quickly come to mind.

Statement of the problem

Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon. It is present in all societies and this includes the Murewa community. The escalation of hostilities and violent conflict in the Murewa community particularly in the past four years between individuals as a result of 2008 hamonised elections, land disputes, boundary, and witchcraft among others saw the influx of civil society organizations initiating peace-building programmes.

What becomes an issue of interest in this scenario is the effectiveness of the traditional peace-building approaches on on-going peace-building initiatives in Murewa district in terms of addressing current conflict.

The lack of acknowledgement of local human and cultural knowledge in peace building in local communities at a time when Western intervention methods have been viewed with mixed feelings as explained by Barloteli [2] is a cause for concern to communities and nations in Africa in general and Zimbabwe and Murewa in particular. Whilst conflicts such as land disputes religion, tribal disputes and boundary continues on an upward trend, the need to seriously consider the use of traditional approaches to peace building in African communities becomes a serious matter. The question of how effective this could be is the reason behind this study.

The Murewa communities have their own traditional methods of dealing with conflict. The traditional leadership which includes the chief and the headmen, village heads and village elders are bestowed by the Shona culture with the responsibility of among others, maintaining peace at all times. Members of

society who act in a manner that threatens peace are dealt with in a way that rehabilitates and reintegrates them into society. It is under this background that the study seeks to assess the effectiveness of traditional approaches to peace building in Murewa District.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the traditional approaches to peace-building in Murewa District. The aim is to analyze the effectiveness of approaches such as paying for avenging spirits (kuripa ngozi), payment as acceptance of one's wrong doing (kuripa mhosva), asking for forgiveness etc.

Research Questions

1. What is the nature and root causes of conflicts that are prevalent in the district that have resulted in recurrent and ever escalating hostilities and violent conflict?
2. Which peace building approaches are used in Murewa that communities have adopted as they deal with conflict on a daily basis?
3. How effective are the traditional peace building approaches in use to the Murewa community?
4. Which traditional peace building model is suitable for sustainable peace in Murewa District?

Assumptions / Hypothesis

The researcher assumes that, there are indigenous peace building approaches which the people of Murewa use as they seek to build peace, the Ubuntu philosophy provides the guide and moral framework within which peace building approaches used in Murewa are rooted, traditional peace building approaches are more relevant to the local context of the Murewa community and traditional approaches to peace building used in Murewa are age and gender sensitive.

Significance of the Study

This study on the traditional approaches to peace building in the Murewa community is of much significance in a variety of ways. The various stakeholders including Murewa Community, Other Rural Communities, Researchers, Civil Society and policy makers will benefit from the study. The study will confirm the practices of peace building in other traditional communities with a view to incorporate the best practices of traditional approaches to peace building.

Findings of the study could also have relevance in nations in Africa in which the Ubuntu philosophy is the guiding moral principle in peace building initiatives. The Murewa community is a microcosm of the Zimbabwean traditional community, though results may not be generalized, some best

practices from the findings could be adopted and adapted by local communities in other provinces. To the community, such knowledge from the study may provide the people with a fresh awareness of their own history, cultural and religious values and wisdom. Other researchers including myself can also make use of the findings for academic purposes. Curriculum planners and developers especially in the field of Peace Education will benefit from the findings too.

Delimitation of the Study

Murewa is one of the fifty-seven rural districts found in Zimbabwe. The study looks into the traditional approaches that are in use in the five traditional wards that make up Murewa community /district and how these have influenced and impacted on peace building in the district. Whilst there are other peace building approaches that are in practice, for example the Eurocentric approaches; it was not within the scope of this study to look into such approaches, but to dwell exclusively on traditional approaches.

Limitations of the Study

Murewa is a fairly big district, stretching from the border with Makoni District (Manicaland province) to the boundary with Shamva district (Mashonaland Central province). This involved extensive traveling. The extensive traveling indicated above put a heavy strain on time. A lot of time is needed and researcher is employed and has to fulfill employment and other obligations. However, this challenge will be solved by making use of the Headmen's calendar of meetings. This research will be self-funded. A significant amount of financial resources which are difficult to source are required. To reduce costs the researcher will make use of focus group discussions that will be done during headmen's meetings and traditional courts

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

The study on the effectiveness of traditional approaches to peace building in the Murewa community will be undertaken within the theoretical framework of the social learning theory.

The Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is based on the hypothesis that aggression is not innate or instinctual but that it is actually learned through the process of socialization. According to Bandura aggression is learned from the social environment through direct experience or by observing the behavior of others. One acquires aggressive attributes by learning them at home, in school and by interaction with the environment in general. If aggressive responses to the environmental stimuli are met with approval by peers and elders then aggression is reinforced. On the other hand, if aggression is met with rejection, reprimands and lack of

approval, then aggression will be reduced. In such a way, it is arguable that people learn violence from their environment and culture. The Social Learning Theory as propounded by Bandura maintains the view point that the most important aspects of our behaviour are learned from other persons – family, friends and culture thus individuals are quite frequently, the products of their environments. According to Zindi *et al.*; [3] the theory recognizes the fundamental importance of our ability to symbolize, imagine, imitate, ferret out cause and effect relationships and to anticipate the outcomes of our behaviours. The theory acknowledges that the environment affects our behaviour, whilst at the same time recognising the importance of human cognition in representation and responding to the environment.

Bandura [4] further postulates that by arranging environmental inducements, generating cognitive supports and producing consequences of their actions, people are able to exercise some measure of control over their own behavior. Accordingly, one of Bandura's labels for his theory is reciprocal determinism, since by demonstrating to each other the desirable behaviours people can determine how they will govern themselves.

According to Bandura [5] observing a model results in three basic things. Firstly, the learner (observer) may acquire new responses. Secondly, the learner may strengthen existing responses or may reduce the tendency to continue responding in some way. Thirdly, the learner may recall or re-establish already or forgotten responses. Almost any learning outcome that results from direct experience can also come about on a vicarious basis through observation of other people's behaviours and its consequences for them.

Therefore, learning results from attending to a model as well as through reproducing the model's behaviour. Learning takes place when individuals observe symbolic models as well as from real-life models. When a person perceives another person as significant, one is most likely to observe and adopt much of that person's behaviour. Significant others underestimate the extent to which they serve as models to other people, particularly the young. Behaviour of the rest of the community aligns itself with that of its leadership. Therefore, social learning theory is important in peace building for it attempts to explain the root causes of the conflict as well as explaining and exploring the intervention strategies and policy options which traditional approaches to peace building is not an exception. These conflicts include unequal/unfair distribution of resources, disrespect of human rights, on observation of the rule of law, domestic violence among other conflicts.

Conceptual Framework

Ubuntu Philosophy

The African philosophy of ubuntu has recently come into focus particularly in countries of East, Central and Southern Africa. In terms of its definition Ubuntu means 'humanness'. It tries to articulate what it is to be human. Ramose [6] points out that Ubuntu is at the root of African philosophy and being. Ubuntu expresses the generality of being human and a person is only a person through other persons. Tutu [7] stated that African thinking and actions are guided by the Ubuntu notion. Africans can deal with their problems in a positive manner by drawing on the humanistic values that are inherent in Ubuntu.

According to Shonhiwa [8] the guiding principle of Ubuntu seeks to reconcile parties, maintain social order and equilibrium and avoid as much as possible the culture of violence. Ubuntu has influence on indigenous peace building processes that cover offences across the board from family and marriage disputes, theft and damage of property, to murder and wars. Ubuntu philosophy was made use of during South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation (TRC). The Gacaca of Rwanda, Mato Oput of Uganda and the Bashingantahe of Burundi according to Ntahombaye *et al.*; [9] and Shonhiwa [8] are indigenous approaches to peace building that are rooted in the Ubuntu philosophy. Masolo [10] concludes by arguing that Western philosophy discourse denies Africa its contribution to world knowledge and civilization and yet Ubuntu philosophy has held African communities in solidarity for centuries. It is the Ubuntu ideology and its humanistic values that shall act as the conceptual framework in this study.

The origin and nature of Ubuntu

The word 'Ubuntu' has its origin in the Bantu languages of Southern Africa as explained by Gade C [11]. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that one cannot exist in isolation. It speaks about our connectedness. Gbhowee (2001) defines Ubuntu by the phrase 'I am what I am because of who we all are'. Tutu (1999) in explaining Ubuntu stated that a person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, based from a proper self –assurance that comes from knowing that he or she in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished when others are tortured or oppressed.

Mandela (1995) further explained Ubuntu as evidenced in a scenario where a traveler would stop at a village and did not have to ask for food or water. Once he/she stopped he/she would be entertained. Ubuntu is recognized as being an important source of law within the context of strained or broken relationships amongst individuals or communities and as an aid for providing

remedies which contribute towards more mutually acceptable remedies for the parties in such cases. Lamont (2011) made an important observation to the effect that Ubuntu is a concept which is contrasted with vengeance, it dictates that a value be placed on human beings. It is intrinsically linked to the values of and which places a high premium on dignity, compassion, humanness and respect for humanity of another. Ubuntu dictates a shift from confrontation to mediation and conciliation. It also dictates good attitudes and shared concern. Ubuntu favours the re-establishment of harmony in the relationship between parties and that such harmony should restore the dignity of the plaintiff without ruining the defendant.

Mandela (1995), Tutu (1999) Samkange (1980) and Lamont (2011) agreed that, Ubuntu works towards sensitizing a disputant or a defendant in litigation to the harmful effect of his/her actions to the other party and towards changing such conduct rather than merely punishing the disputant. Thus, ubuntu promotes mutual understanding rather than punishment and favors face-to-face encounters of disputants with a view to facilitating dialogue on differences being resolved rather than conflict and victory for the most powerful.

Ubuntu and traditional justice

According to Samkange (1980) the concept of 'unhu' also constitutes the kernel of African traditional jurisprudence as well as leadership and governance. In the concept of 'unhu' a crime committed by one individual on another extends beyond the two individuals and has far reaching implications to the people from among whom the perpetrator of the crime comes. Lamont (2011) also observes that Unhu jurisprudence tends to support remedies and punishments that tend to bring people together. For instance a murder would lead to the creation of a bond of marriage between the family of the victim and the accuser's family in addition to the perpetrator being punished both inside and outside his social circles.

The role of the 'tertiary perpetrator' to the murder crime is extended to the family and the society where the individual perpetrator hails from. However, the punishment of the tertiary perpetrator is a huge fine and a social stigma which they must shack off after many years of demonstrating unhu or ubuntu. A leader who has unhu is selfless and consults widely and listens to subjects. According to Samkange (1980) such a person does not adopt a life style that is different from the subjects and lives among them and shares property. A leader who has 'unhu' does not lead, but allows the people to lead them and cannot impose his will on his people, which is incompatible with 'unhu'. What this therefore means is that 'unhu' or ubuntu is the source of reference for all human action from the African

perspective. Behaviour is judged using 'unhu'/ ubuntu as the moral yardstick for the ideal. It strives for harmony and peaceful co-existence. The ubuntu concept has therefore, a strong bearing on peace building approaches in African communities. In fact it has influenced the traditional peace building approaches as highlighted in the cases of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi's Gacaca, Mato Oput and Bashingantahe respectively.

Ubuntu and Traditional Peace building

Kosmo (2010) says that while different indigenous communities utilize different conflict resolution and peace building techniques most of them share common characteristics. Since indigenous peace building practices arise from local communities, they are tailored to local context and culture in a way that generalized international peace building approaches are not.

Not much research studies have been conducted by scholars related to the present theme of the study on the traditional approaches to peace building. However, some scholars have contributed to the idea of traditional peace building as seen through the Ubuntu philosophy. This has relevance to the study. Gray bill (1998) is of the view that there is much that can be learnt from traditional approaches to peace building. However, Gray bill (1998) notes the challenge of mobilizing resources for the initiative as a stumbling block. Shonhiwa (2012) notes that whilst traditional ideas can be made use of in on-going peace building processes, it should be appreciated that some of these traditions promote gender inequality. As a result of this, the best practices from traditional approaches may need to be balanced with modern methods so as to safeguard human rights. WaThiongo (1993) supported by Salih (2001) believe that a combination of modernity and tradition can help Africans to reconstruct their continent by adopting that which works. In fact Tutu (1999) points out that he made use of both his Christian and cultural values of Ubuntu as he dealt with witnesses, perpetrators and victims as they went through the Truth and Reconciliation processes.

According to Shonhiwa (2012) the Ubuntu tradition highlights the importance of building peace through reciprocity, inclusivity plus a sense of a common destiny among Africans. It promotes and cultivates the spirit of giving and receiving forgiveness. Ubuntu as observed by Shonhiwa creates the rationale for sacrificing or foregoing the desire to take revenge for past wrongs. Societies and their governments can obtain guidelines on establishing law and promoting reconciliation and peace building.

What is peace building?

Peace building is the term coined by Galtung (1975) which developed from interest in identifying the conditions that lead beyond a temporary cessation of violence to sustainable processes of conflict management and mutual co-operation between those who have previously been adversaries. It is a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effects of conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation.

Peace building, as observed by Nitze (2011) is complex and results only materialize in the medium and long term. A great number of agents engage in a wide variety of reconstruction efforts. These efforts include addressing the functional and emotional dimensions of peace building in specified target areas, such as civil society and legal institutions, among others. Evaluating the success and failure of peace building efforts is therefore especially challenging. Some of the tasks of peace building include creating an environment conducive to self-sustaining and durable peace, resolving the problems of willingness to cooperate, since social and economic transformation is paramount for the establishment of durable peace. Peace building also seeks to reconcile opponents by considering the psychological and emotional components of protracted conflict and the relationships between antagonist groups.

Peace building should include the integration of civil society in all efforts and at the same time all levels of society should be included in the post-conflict strategy. According to Nitze (2011) for peace building to be effective, political transformation must be designed in such a way that civil society is included in decision making (bottom – up and top-down approaches).

Shed rack (2006) points out that peace building restore peaceful interaction among groups on the horizontal as well as on the vertical levels. It also helps in re-establishing social norms, the rule of law and ethics in the population. As this is done, the needs and cultural peculiarities of the affected groups are factored in. Peace building prevents the start or resumption of violent conflict within a nation by creating sustainable peace. Peace building activities address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation of peaceful conflict resolution and stabilize society politically and socio-economically. The peace building strategies must be coherent and tailored to specific needs of the community / nation concerned basing on ownership and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at

achieving the stated objectives Francis (2006) explained ‘peace building as from below’. This acknowledges the respect, promotion and use of indigenous human and socio-cultural resources in building peace. It can therefore be suggested that ‘peace building from below’ has local relevance and is culturally appropriate. However, Lederach (1997) proposed a different concept of peace building as engaging grassroots, local NGOs, international and other actors to create a sustainable peace process. Lederach does not advocate the same degree of structural change as Galtung. Peace building has since expanded to include many different dimensions such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and rebuilding governmental, economic and civil society institutions.

According to Best (2007) more recently, peace building has been implemented in post conflict situations in countries including Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia and South Africa. In Zimbabwe the need for both post conflict and pre conflict peace building has become a reality judging by the results of the decade long political tension. The tension in Murewa for example is closely linked to other conflicts such as land, boundary disputes, pastures, water, headman ship/ chieftainship, marriage and family disputes. The intervention of the various western partners to implement peace building in Murewa should therefore be welcomed as a positive development as long as this creates sustainable peace and local approaches are utilized.

An insight of African peace building processes

Pilisuk and Parks (2005) noted the peace building processes of South Africa, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Liberia. The processes raised interest in indigenous and traditional methods of forgiveness, justice, reconciliation and peace building. Indignation was raised especially among Western human rights activists who still feel that the pain and suffering of victims are sacrificed in the name of peace. Pilisuk and Parks (2005) noted that this was described as ‘cheap reconciliation’. In the case of Mozambique, it did not go for Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Bartoli (2005) observed that in each of the African countries where peace has returned and the country is moving on, the question still remains of what should be done with human rights abuses? Bartoli (2005) points out that the irony of the debate is that the liberal peace-building system is in crisis. The justice it presents as a pre-requisite for reconciliation does not work. The argument that for any meaningful peace to exist there must first be justice, forgiveness and then reconciliation, Bartoli (2005) argues that it is not practical and limits the space for alternative approaches to peace building. The justice referred to in this context is the retributive system in which the state takes up the responsibility of carrying out justice. Maphisa (1994)

made a similar observation about peace building in Ubuntu societies. Maphisa observed that Ubuntu societies maintained peace building mechanisms which also served as institutions for the maintenance of law and order within society. The mechanisms existed in pre-colonial times and still function up to today.

According to Nomonde (2000), in African societies, this was achieved through an institution called *inkundla / lekgotla / dare*, which acted as a group mediation platform. The forum was communal in nature. It allowed for the participation of the entire community at various levels starting at family, village and community levels. Bourdillon (2005) explains that elders played a catalytic role in peace building. Tom *et al* (2011) state that among the Ambu people of Uganda and the Shona of Zimbabwe elders taught moral codes of the community. Warfare was viewed as disruptive of peace between people and between people and spiritual forces. Elders/ leaders ensured peace existed between the visible and the invisible world.

The Gacaca Approach: Rwanda

In Rwanda, the existence of a traditional model of dispute resolution and peace building known as the Gacaca is practiced. In the local Rwanda Language Gacaca means 'judgment on the grasses. The Gacaca as suggested by the term 'judgment on the grasses involves the whole community sitting down to find solutions to disputes that arise in the community. It is a traditional model or approach of dispute resolution. It could best be described as a village court that draws solutions to problems from traditional wisdom which is obviously based on the notion of Ubuntuism. The approach offers a pragmatic and community based solution to dispute resolution. In its current form, the Gacaca approach bears elements of modern practices and the traditional values of the original traditional Gacaca.

The positive attributes of Gacaca lie in its characterization as a model of restorative justice. The approach has been and continues to be applied in Rwanda. The congestion in the Rwandan prisons as a result of the 1994 genocide perpetrators is expected to be decongested by making use of the Gacaca approach. In Rwanda, the Gacaca and the national courts complement each other as they have defined jurisdiction as observed by Shonhiwa (2012)

In practice, Gacaca tribunals are composed of persons of integrity elected by locals. The entire community will be present and acts as the general assembly as cases are deliberated on. The elected Gacaca officials are expected to be people of high moral standing and non-partisan. According to Shonhiwa (2012) the objective of the Gacaca system apart from speeding up trials and emptying prisons is to

involve the community in establishing the truth and, through that, promoting reconciliation and ongoing peacebuilding.

However, Shonhiwa (2012) observes that the Gacaca system has its limitations. It compromises on principles of justice as defined in internationally agreed human rights criminal law. For example, there is no separation between prosecutor and judge, no legal counsel, no legally reasoned verdict, there is great encouragement for self-incrimination through self-confessions and there is no uniformity in punishments. But however, it will also have to be noted that even the formal justice system has its own faults, also violates human rights. The two systems Gacaca and the formal justice system are both weak and incomplete. The Gacaca in its traditional version has its roots embedded in the Ubuntu which, according to Murithi (2007) seeks to restore relationship instead of pursuing retributive justice.

Shonhiwa (2012) makes an interesting observation to the effect that research results indicate that the majority of both Hutus and Tutsis prefer the Gacaca system of peacebuilding as compared to the formal court system. This is all despite the observation that Gacaca is affected or influenced by interference by power holders, lacking in the gender dimension, population movements and the broader political and social dynamics of Rwanda. Indigenous communities tend to identify with approaches that are culturally appropriate.

The Bashingantahe Approach: Burundi

Just like in Rwanda, in Burundi there also exists a traditional approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding by the name Bashingantahe. According to Ntabona (1999), Bashingantahe refers to a man responsible for good order, for tranquility, for truth and peace in his environment. Men of integrity who are responsible for settling conflicts at all levels from the lowest level in society right up to the courts of the king. This is not by some conferred administrative authority, but by his very being, by the quality of his lifestyle recognized by society and for which it confers such powers on him. By tradition only men are admitted to this noble institution.

Despite the passage of time and the influence of modernity, the institution of Bashingantahe remains vivid in the hearts of Burundians. At all levels in Burundi since the era of the monarch, every authority has had a body of Bashingantahe which helped and advised it while playing the role of check and balance. The structure is rather informal and it has a number of missions. In terms of jurisdiction, the institution has a formal structure, starting from family arbitration, continuing through local-level arbitration to arbitration

of the deputy chief and from there to the arbitration of the chief and then the king's court. At these various levels the Bashingantahe settled different kinds of disputes for example, matters relating to succession and the distribution of property (land, livestock), family and community disputes among others. More complicated or serious cases were handled by the chiefs and the king handled those cases calling for capital punishment. The Ubuntu philosophy remained the guiding principle in dealing with all matters.

Ntahombaye *et al.*; (2003) explain that the Bashingantahe institution had three basic principles. The institution was assigned three essential mandates which are; mediation, reconciliation and arbitration. Regarding mediation, the Bashingantahe elder was appointed to help the parties to a dispute to resolve their differences peacefully and to continue to live and attain healthy relationships. In the event that the elder fails in his efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution, then the Council of Bashingantahe would then be required to find a compromise through conciliation. Ntahombaye *et al.*; (2003) point out that conciliation in the Burundian culture was not entirely linked to conflict resolution but was practiced in various situations that included among others, organization of traditional ceremonies that included marriages and rituals.

The other basic principle of the Bashingantahe according to Ntahombaye *et al.*; (2003) involves Conciliation. In the event of a conflict arising in the community, with neighbours or members of the same family involved, the elder (Bashingantahe) engages the disputants with a view to seek broker peace. This is done as means of counseling and proposing forgiveness and reconciliation instead of damage claims. Conciliation under the Bashingantahe approach is viewed as a necessary preliminary to court action as it seeks common understanding among the disputants. The idea is to seek reconciliation, maintain peace, social cohesion and harmonious coexistence.

Ntahombaye *et al.*; (2003) point out the third principle of the Bashingantahe which is arbitration. Arbitration complements conciliation especially if conciliation has failed or appears not to be yielding the desirable outcome. The mushingantahe hands down judgment and this is usually considered binding in the Burundian tradition. The success of conciliation and arbitration requires mutual understanding and a willingness on the part of the disputants to cease hostilities, as well as the neutrality of the arbiter, who is neither from any of the disputants' side. Of course, depending on the nature of the conflict, a party that is not satisfied with the outcome is always at liberty to take up the case right up to the king's court for further arbitration. Today, in Burundi, any of the parties feeling aggrieved can still appeal to the judiciary courts,

presenting a copy of the original minutes of the judgment pronounced by the Bashingantahe.

And finally the principle regarding free social service to citizens is worth appreciating. According to National Council of Bashingantahe (2006), conciliation, arbitration and providing judicial rulings done by the Bashingantahe are for free. In principle, there is no fee for court proceedings or remuneration of any kind. There are of course exceptional cases where those seeking services may be required to provide traditional beer commonly known in Burundi as *agatutuk'abagabo*, that is shared by all present as a sign that unity has been achieved.

In Burundi the institution of Bashingantahe is a well-respected one. According to NCB (2006) the bashingantahe is the custodian of national values. It has for a long time offered Burundian society a basis on which its communities could be held together and prevented from collapsing. The bashingantahe have served as lubricants to the wheels of traditional Burundian society. Traditionally, the functions delegated to them went beyond judiciary. They served as custodians of tradition, and from a moral point of view they were a force of social harmony and exercised a regulatory role within the politico-administrative system. According to Ntabona (1999), the Bashingantahe needs to be rehabilitated as it has been proved useful in dealing with the Burundi post conflict peace building. Social tensions of the post conflict period can easily degenerate into conflicts, particularly as a result of political tension and land disputes and these are typically settled by the Bashingantahe.

Mato Oput of Uganda

Ugandans have been subjected to extensive human rights abuses under successive regimes. Yet no systematic or effective efforts have been made to prosecute the perpetrators. In part, this might have been due to the fragility of new governments whose weak institutional and political bases have made robust legal responses difficult. For example, following the violent overthrow of Amin's regime, many former members of the security services were detained pending trial but most were eventually released without charge because of lack of evidence.

Ugandans have had to grapple with the meaning of justice in this context. For a country with such a troubled history, amnesty has come to be seen as the most effective way of drawing a line between the past and the present, in order to rebuild the nation. In the Acholi region, traditional reconciliation processes of 'Mato Oput' complement and underpin the pardon offered by the state. Mato Oput is the most prevalent and involves a ceremony of wrong doers and the family who they have allegedly wronged. The families perform

rituals and are required to make some form of compensation to the victim's family. This is a ceremony of forgiveness in which most of the community is involved. Mato Oput is used to welcome back people who have been away from the village for extended periods of time, such as children returning from the bush. Mato Oput is a traditional process used by the Acholi population throughout their history. According to Murithi (2002), Mato Oput is based on consensus building, a process in which participation of parties involved in the dispute is necessary. It is often a lengthy process of dialogue, the end of which is a reconciliatory action of drinking the bitter tasting of the Oput tree.

The unacceptably high costs of civil war have caused Ugandans to re-assess approaches to resolving conflict. Among the Acholi of northern Uganda, the bitter experience of unending conflict has generated a remarkable commitment to reconciliation and a peaceful settlement of the conflict rather than calling for retribution against the perpetrators of serious abuses. Through their civic and religious leaders, and in other public fora, they have called for the government to pursue dialogue and to introduce a comprehensive amnesty for combatants as a confidence-building measure. This call for amnesty was underpinned by their faith in the capacity of the community and cultural institutions to manage effective reconciliation even against the background of serious offences.

Mbiti (1993) argues that peace building in Africa is possible if and only if inclusions of African indigenous approaches of social control are revitalized. The approaches, though looked down upon, Mbiti (1993) insists that they would be relevant in not only conflict prevention between warring communities but also preventing the recurrence of conflicts in communities and nations in Africa. These approaches can be counted on for pre-conflict and post conflict peace building. The Gacaca of Rwanda, Mato Oput and the Bashingantahe of Burundi could be viewed as traditional approaches from which models of peace building could be derived.

Divination

According to the free online dictionary (www.thefreedictionary.com/divination accessed 20.02.14), divination is the practice of seeking to foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge by occult or supernatural means. Some cultures consult their gods through the art of divination to resolve conflict. A family or community experiencing a conflict may choose to consult the gods of the land. In some cultures, there are conflicts that have religious and spiritual dimensions and are said to require ancestral intervention. In West Africa, Uwaze (2000) explains that the Yoruba society for instance the spirits of gods such as Ogun (god of iron), Sango (god of thunder and

storm) could be invoked to wreak calamity on guilty persons who want to lie or interfere with the processor enemies that may involve the wrath of the gods against the community as the case might be.

African Alternative Dispute Resolution

Dodo *et al.*; (2011) note that the African Alternative Dispute Resolution is a peace building approach that serves as an alternative to the official conventional means of resolving conflicts. It prefers the non-violent way. In Africa this approach differs from culture to culture. It involves adjudication by family member or community elders. Traditional dispute resolution attaches more importance to community interests than individual needs and interests. The approaches may differ as one moves from one level of conflict to another. In modern times these may include and or involve law enforcement. The universal religions of Christianity and Islam have impacted on the approaches used in Africa in the same way they have impacted on the culture of the people. Hence the seldom use of the law enforcement using the coercive apparatus of the state.

Community Engagement by Civil Society in Peace building

Increasingly, peacemaking, humanitarian and peace building tasks are being delegated by states and intergovernmental organizations to NGOs that have humanitarian, developmental, human rights, educational and conflict resolution orientations. Richmond (2001) states that these actors are forming in the development of new roles to ending conflict, particularly in the context of their growing links with transnational organizations and their professed interests in human security issues. These interests appear to be constituted by their civic nature both at the local and international level. Richmond (2001) points out that though they may express partisan interests, the amelioration of the root causes of conflict appear to be the NGOs overriding objective. They make use of local knowledge and culture so as to gain relevance. They adopt local methods to address issues like peace and conflict among other such issues. In this case NGOs act as catalysts whilst the locals own the processes, that is according to Lederach (1997)

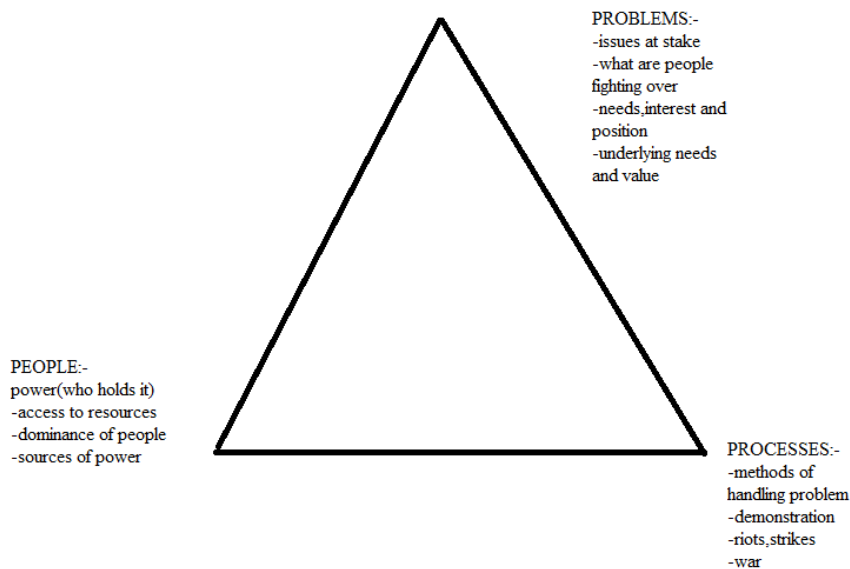
The idea of the role of civil society in peace building was a result of the seminal work of Lederach (1997). Lederach placed the role of civil society, as opposed to external actors, as being central to the peace building exercise and is best associated with what came to be known as the Conflict Transformation School. According to Lederach (1997), third party intervention should concentrate on supporting internal actors, and coordinating external peace efforts. Sensitivity to local culture and a long term timeframe are necessary. According to Lederach (1997) there are three types of

actors engaged in peace building and three types of approaches to peace building.

Track One approaches as explained by Lederach (1997) focused on high level negotiations where the top leadership (military/political groups among others) were the main actors. In Track Two approaches middle range leaders (religious leaders, humanitarian NGOs, intellectuals, among others) were the dominant actors and they engaged in problem solving workshops, training in conflict resolution and so forth. Grassroots leadership (local leaders, indigenous NGOs, community developers, refugee camp leaders, among others) was presented in the Track Three approach and they were usually engaged in local peace initiatives.

According to Lederach (1997), in order to build sustainable peace, all the levels of society should be included in an integrated manner. The contribution of civil society to the development of peace building is on-going and others like Paffenholz and Spurk (2009) have made significant input. Paffenholz and Spurk (2009) describe the functions that civil society performs in relation to peace building. The first function is that of protecting citizens against human rights abuses. The second involves monitoring and accountability and this also includes input into early warning systems. The other function involves advocacy and public communication. This serves to promote the articulation of the interests of marginalised groups and creation of communication channels. The fourth function deals with socialization of a culture of peace. Both pre and post conflict peace building are addressed.

Lederach Conflict Theory



Research Design

The major research design adopted was qualitative. Moyo (2010) states that qualitative methodology is highly descriptive and explanatory (investigative). Thus, it is any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons, lives, stories, behaviour, organisational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships. This type of methodology allows the researcher to study phenomenon in their natural settings. Qualitative research design emphasizes understanding of verbal narratives. The focus of this study is on the everyday behaviours such as interactions, language, rituals of the community. The idea being to identify cultural norms, beliefs, social

structures and other cultural / traditional patterns that have a bearing on in this case, peace building approaches.

Population

The study's respondents were derived from the five traditional wards of Murewa which are Cheuka, Zihute, Mukarakate, Nheweyembwa and Mushaninga. Respondents include village elders, eighty-five (85) village heads, five (5) headmen and the chief. It is mainly the adults/ elders and the traditional leadership that are at the forefront of inculcating the values of peace and ubuntu in general. Therefore, my population under study was the traditional leadership. It is from these that I obtained my sample

Sampling Method

In this study stratified random sampling and purposive sampling were adopted. Purposive or judgment sampling according to Grinnell (1993) specifically excludes certain types of people because their presence might confuse the research findings. Also in purposive sampling participants who were known or judged to be good sources of information were specifically sought out and selected for the sample, for example in this case village elders and other traditional leaders were quite relevant and appropriate because of their position in the community inculcating the values of peace and ubuntu in general. In this respect in purposive sampling the researcher used her own judgment in selecting the sample which can yield considerable data as earlier own explained by Grinnell (1993)

From the five wards only two wards were selected and an equal number of villagers (elder men and women) were chosen. An equal number of village heads were randomly selected within each ward. The two headmen and the chief were part of their own strata and because of their low numbers they automatically become part of the sample. A total sample of thirty-three participants participated. Stratified random sampling was adopted so that each stratum is represented after purposive sampling as explained above has been effected.

Sampling Procedure

The sample comprised of one chief, two headmen and thirty village elders. This sample selected share the same distribution characteristics as the population from which it has been selected. This particular group is at the center of all traditional initiatives including religion and morality, harmony and peaceful coexistence at community level. Grinnell (1993) states that samples of at least 10- 20% of the population often bring valid results. Grinnell (1993) further states that if the selection of informants is carried out in accordance with the requirements of sampling theory, the data obtained should quite accurately pertain to the entire set. Each stratum (headmen, village heads and village elders) from each of the two traditional wards of Murewa has the same number of representatives. The chief, being over ally in charge had to be included for purposive reasons.

Research Instruments

The study applied the use of a multi-technique approach to data collection in order to obtain a holistic or total view and understanding of the approaches to peacebuilding used in the Murewa community. A combination of the focus group discussions and interviews, as data collection instruments were preferred. This enables the facilitation of gathering of valid and reliable data from the respondents over and

above enabling the validity and reliability of the solicited data.

Data Collection Methods

Data was collected through interviews guided by interview guides and focus group discussions. I administered the interviews. These interviews were based on the same questions with very few variations, which mean that the respondents would be treated to the same questions since the main objective of the study is on effectiveness of the traditional approaches to peace building. The issues under discussion also involved both leadership and the villagers. However, despite the aid of interview guides, the challenge with this interview technique was that due to probing, some respondents could raise issues which were never raised before by other respondents – issues which could be quite pertinent. This warrants the need for revisits to respondents so as to give them the opportunity to respond to raised issues.

In-depth Interviews

I interviewed will be conducted the chief, and the two headmen. The researcher extensively probed the stated respondents with a view that they give answers to issues in an unrestricted manner.

Interview Guides

In this study the semi-directive interviews were used. Moyo (2010) points out that this type of interview places a significant amount of importance on the subjects' freedom of expression. The researcher did not use a rigid questionnaire, but relied more heavily on the interview guide, which consisted of a series of topics. The respondent was given freedom to discuss the issue, but the issue itself was the choice of the researcher in this case the issue of peace building approaches.

The Focus group Discussions

The Focus group discussions involve face to face interview with individual respondent with small groups of 6 to 10 people with a shared interest in the topic differentiated by gender, age, positions etc. The researcher was the facilitator who lead the discussion and ensure people has the opportunity to respond and deal with dominant personalities. The researcher was at the forefront of data collection efforts and the quality of data depended on the researcher. This means that, the researcher enlisted cooperation of respondents, schedule time, motivate respondents and adjust and think on what's appropriate for discussion. The same interview questions used on interviews were used since they were used to collect same information on the effectiveness of traditional approaches to peace building in Murewa District.

Data Management

Data analysis began during data collection. The analysis involved arranging information into a logical order focusing on responses that had relevance to research questions. Data was categorized according to its meaning, identifying patterns and regularities. From the collected data, an interpretation was made by inferring from the categories, meanings and patterns identified.

Responses from respondents would be classified into five categories for the sake of answering the research questions. The categories are as follows:

- Major sources/ types of conflict prevalent in Murewa.
- The traditional peace building approaches in use in Murewa.
- Appreciation /effectiveness of the traditional peace building approaches in the Murewa community or lack thereof by the people in the Murewa community.
- Awareness of peace building approaches by the Murewa community.

Information was summarized in graphs and diagrams form and discussion of the presented information was made by way of an analysis.

Ethical considerations

To reduce skepticism on the part of the respondents, as they may not be willing to engage strangers on matters they may consider as personal, local gatekeepers known to the respondents were made use of. These lead respondents into opening up. Informed consent was sought from research participants at all times. Respondents were assured of confidentiality from the onset. Reassurance had to be made. In case of reliability of ethics and information, some informed consent forms were availed to respondents for security reasons.

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 1 shows some general background to age and sex of people who participated in the study as respondents. This also helped the researcher to know which group of people are considered to be important when dealing with traditional courts .Issues of gender equity are also valued in our traditional courts since women and children suffer most if a conflict arise.

Table 1: Distribution response by sex (N= 33)

Respondents' age in years	21-30		31-40		41-50		51-60		Above 60		Grand Totals	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Frequency	2	1	5	5	8	6	3	1	2	0	20	13
Percentage	6.06	3.03	15.15	15.15	24.24	18.18	9.09	3.03	6.06	0	60.6	39.3

Table 2 shows the respondents according to sex and level of education. This information was collected from the chief and two headmen who were part of the sample under study. This information is very

important especially for those in leadership position for it gives room for variations when dealing with issues of conflicts depending on the nature of conflict.

Table 2 Response by level of education and sex (N=3)

Level of Education	Number of Respondents			
	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Not been to school	Nil	0	Nil	0
Primary	1	33.3	0	0
Secondary	1	33.3	1	33.3

Data Presentation and Analysis

Fig 1 indicates the sources and or types of conflicts prevalent in the district. The sources ranges from 1% to 18% as the most frequently source of

conflict in Murewa District. However, boundary dispute was viewed by most of the respondents (18%) as a major threat to peace.

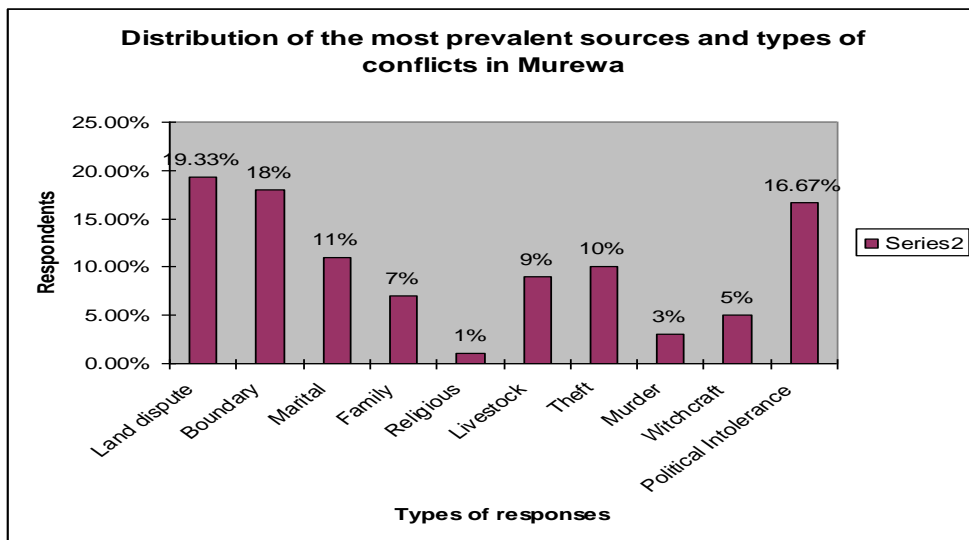


Fig-1: Most prevalent sources (N=33)

Concerning what peace building involves, Fig-1 shows that thirty respondents (90%) were in agreement with the view that peace building involves

avoiding violent conflict. However, two respondents were in disagreement with the view whilst one respondent did not know.

What Peace building involves: avoiding violent conflict.

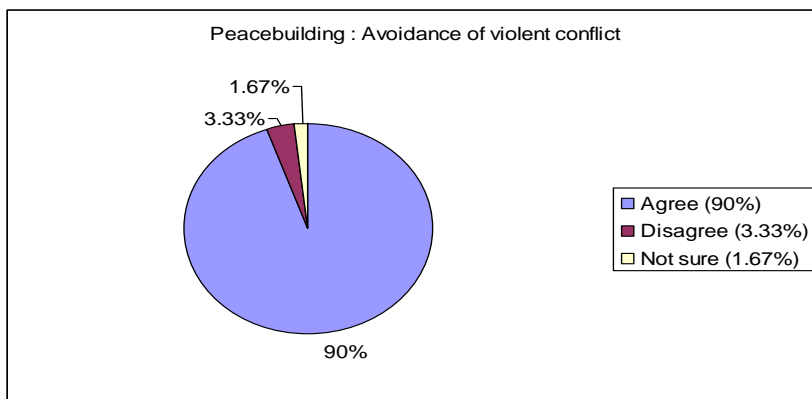


Fig-2: Avoidance of conflict (N=33)

Peace building as involving sharing resources equitably

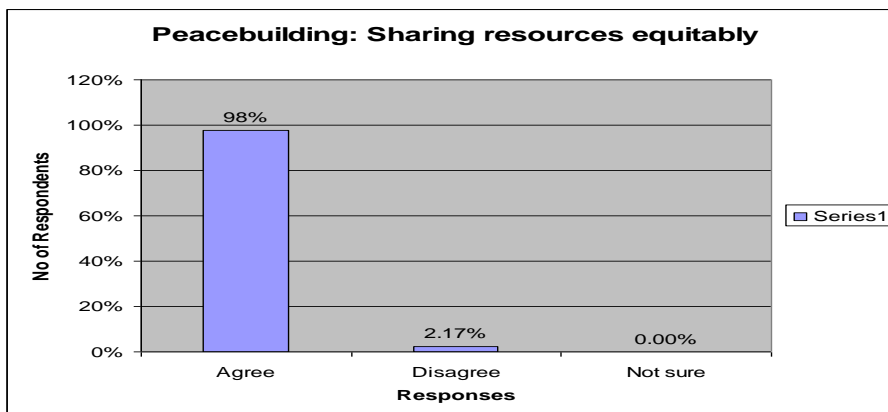


Fig-3: Sharing resources equitably (N=33)

Fig -3 shows that thirty-two respondents (97%) agreed that peacebuilding involved sharing resources

equitably whilst none of the respondents were not sure (0%).

Table-3 Seeking peaceful solutions (N=33)

Agree		Disagree		Not sure	
Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
33	100%	0	0%	0	0%

Table-3 above shows that thirty-three respondents (100%) were in total agreement with the view that peace building involves seeking peaceful

solutions to problems. The findings established that peaceful ways to conflict resolution should always be sought.

Being tolerant to others’ beliefs and opinions

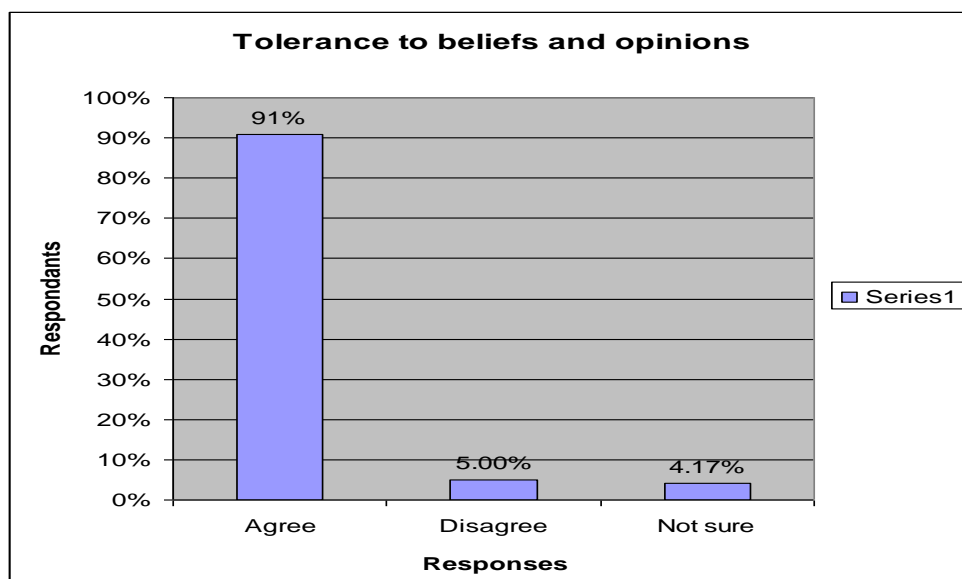


Fig-4: Tolerance to beliefs and opinions (N=33)

Fig-4 indicates that thirty respondents (90, 83%) were in agreement with the view that peace building involves being tolerant to others’ belief and

opinions. Two of the respondents (5%) and one of them (4, 17%) disagreed and were not sure respectively.

Peace building approaches in use

Table-4: Peace building approaches in use (N=33)

Peacebuilding approach	Agree		Disagree		Don’t know	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Traditional courts (matare)	33	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Alternative Dispute Resolution	33	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Civil Society Peace Programmes	12	39.6	0	0%	21	60.4
Learning/ acquiring Unhu/Ubuntu	33	100%	0	0%	0	0%

Table-4 shows the four peace building approaches in use. All the thirty-three respondents (100%) were in agreement to traditional courts being used in their communities. None of the respondents disagreed or professed ignorance of the approach. The

table also indicates that the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) was used as a peace building measure. Twelve (12) respondents (39.6) agreed and acknowledged the existence civil society (NGOs, churches) peace building programmes. However,

twenty-one (21) respondents (60.4%) indicated ignorance of the existence of civil society initiated peace programmes. Finally, all the thirty-three (33)

respondents (100%) acknowledged the use of the unhu/ubuntu approach in peac ebuilding.

Appropriateness of peacebuilding approaches

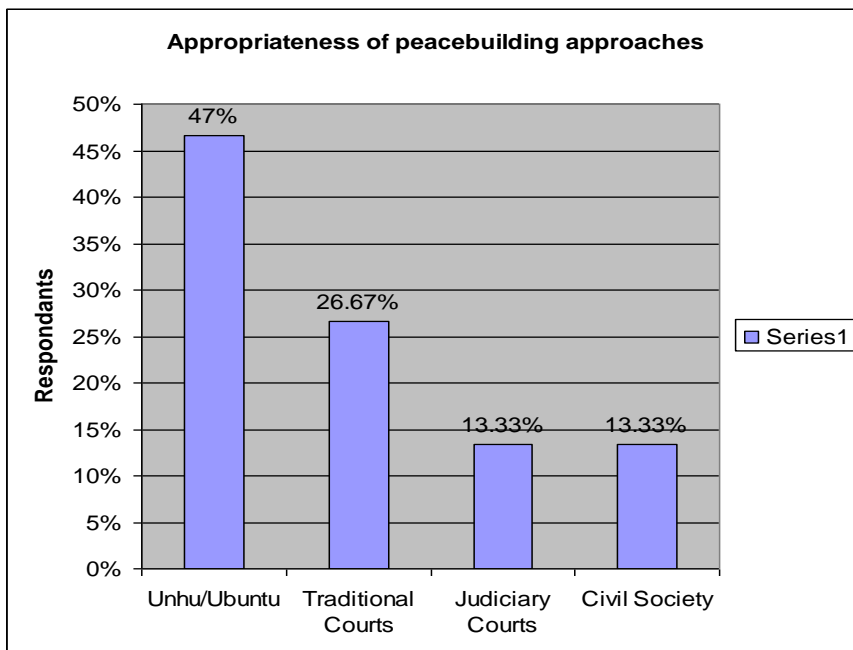


Fig-5 Appropriateness of peacebuilding approaches (N=33)

Fig-5 shows that twenty-two (22) respondents (46, 67%) ranked the Unhu/Ubuntu approach as the most appropriate peace-building approach. Traditional courts were ranked second most appropriate peace building approaches after seven (7) respondents (26, 67%) placed it second. Alternative dispute resolution and Civil society were both tied on three (3) each (33%).The findings in Fig 4.5 showed that the four peace building approaches in use namely the unhu/ubuntu concept, traditional courts, alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and civil society peace initiatives had a role to play in Murewa. Twenty two (22) respondents (46, 67%) felt that the unhu/ubuntu

concept was the most appropriate and effective approach whilst seven (7) respondents (26, 67%) believed that traditional courts were the second most appropriate and effective approach. However, the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) with 3 (13, 33%) was ranked the same as civil society initiatives also at 3 respondents (13, 33%).

It emerged from the findings from Fig 4.5 and the chief/headmen interviews that the approaches could be used simultaneously and as such they were effective and relevant. The approaches were interdependent and also that each approach suited a particular situation.

Challenges encountered in the application of peacebuilding approaches.

Table-5:Traditional Courts

Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
5	15.15	25	75.75	3	9.09

Table-5 shows that five respondents agreed with the view that traditional courts were no longer relevant in the current modern set up. However, twenty

five respondents disagreed with the view while three respondents did not know whether traditional courts were relevant or not.

Traditional courts and unfair cultural practices

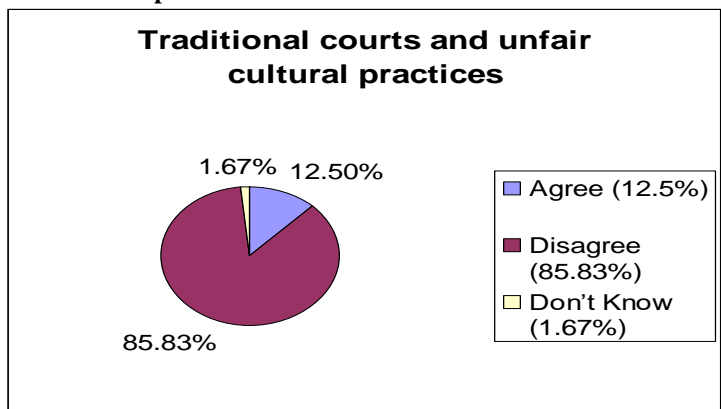


Fig-6: Traditional courts and unfair cultural practices (N=33)

Fig-6 shows that five respondents agreed with the view that some traditional court practices were unfair to women, children and other marginalised groups. However, twenty-five respondents (85, 83%)

disagreed with the view. At the same time three respondents did not know whether traditional court practices were in any way unfair to women and children and any other marginalised social groups.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) (Challenges)

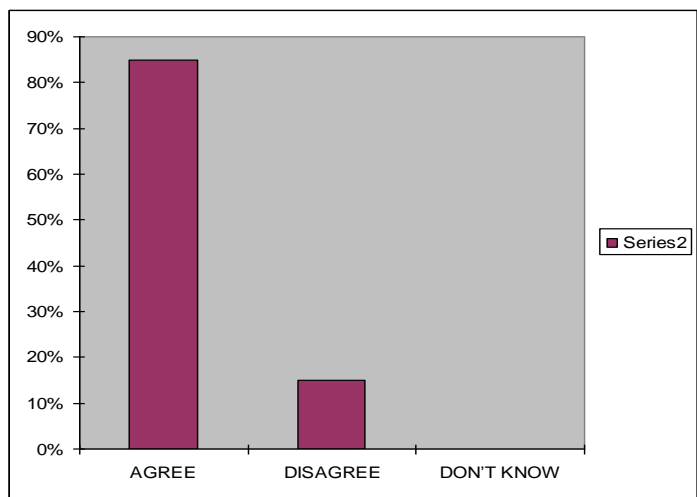


Fig-7: Challenges of Alternative dispute resolution (N=33)

Concerning alternative dispute resolution (ADR) verdicts and their impact on cultural practices, twenty-seven (27) respondents were of the opinion that some of the verdicts tended to contract or violet

cultural practices. However six respondents (6) disagreed with the view whilst no one claimed to be ignorant of what position to take as reflected in Fig-7.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is retributive.

Table-6: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) (N=33)

Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Respondents		Respondents		Respondents	
30	90,9	1	3	2	6,06

Thirty (30) respondents (90,9%) according to Table 6 showed that the Alternative Dispute Resolution

(ADR) was rather retributive. One (1) respondent (3%) disagreed with the idea that Alternative Dispute

Resolution was retributive. However, two (2) respondents did not know whether Alternative Dispute

Resolution was retributive or not.

Civil Society initiated peace projects

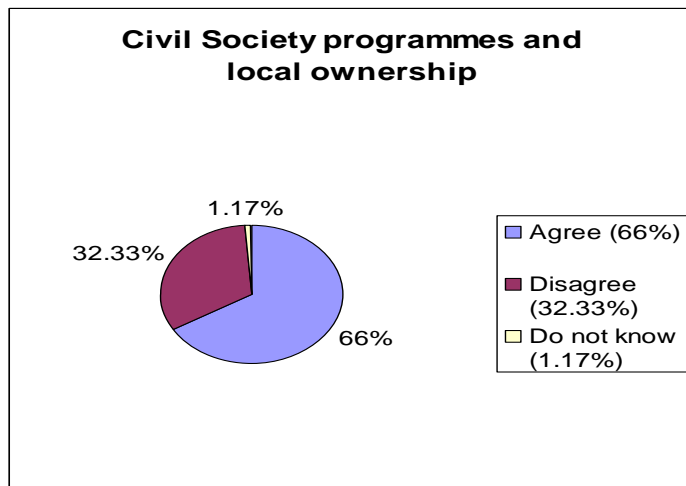


Fig-8: Civil Society programmes and local ownership (N ==33)

Concerning local ownership of civil society initiated peace building programmes; 66 % believed that the programmes lacked local ownership, 32, 33%

were not in agreement with that position and 1.17 respondents were not so sure of the exact position regarding local ownership as shown in Fig-8.

Civil Society programmes lack continuity

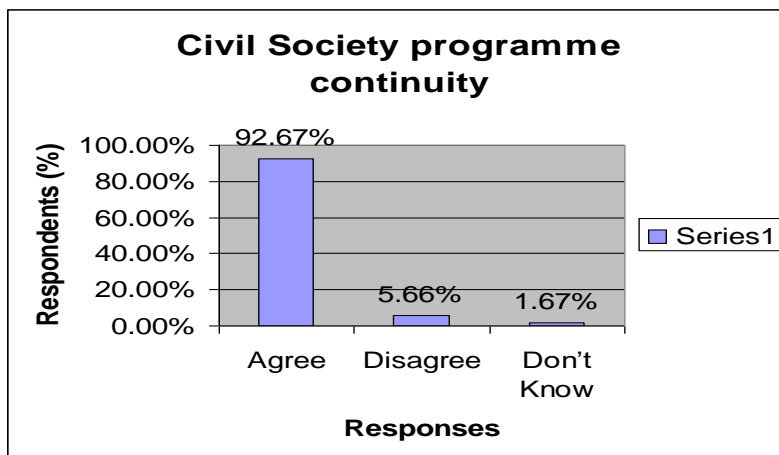


Fig -9: Civil Society programme continuity (N ==33)

Fig-9 shows that 92, 67% saw the continuity of civil society initiated peace building projects as likely to stop as soon as fund for such projects comes to an end. However, 5, 66%) did not agree with the idea that

withdrawal of funding results in the collapse of the project. At the same time 1, 67% respondents were ignorant of what exactly happened in the event of project finance getting exhausted.

Unhu/Ubuntu practices

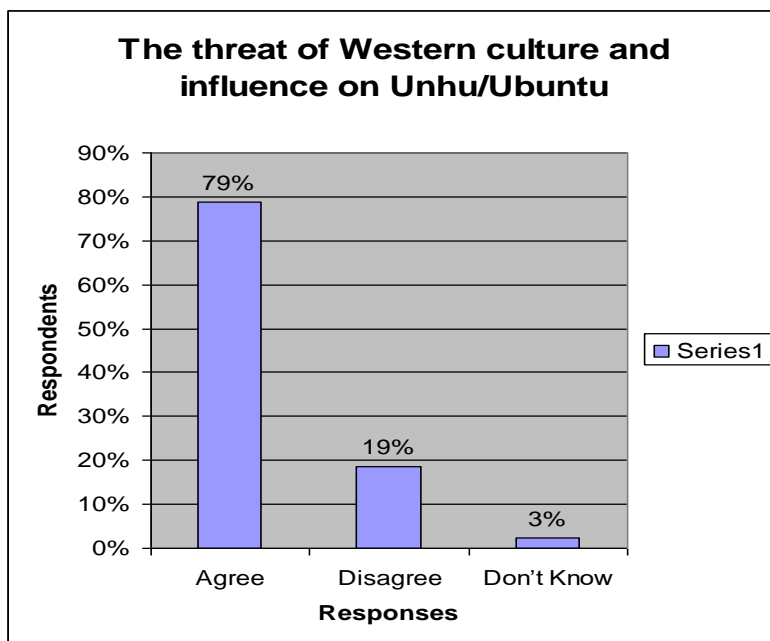


Fig-10: The threat of western culture and influence on Unhu/UBUNTU (N ==33)

Fig-10 shows 78, 83% agreeing with the idea that the challenge to unhu/ubuntu was the influence of western culture, 18, and 67%) indicated that western culture would not have significant negative impact on

unhu/ubuntu as a peace building approach. However, 2, 5% were not aware as to whether western culture would influence unhu/ubuntu in a negative way or not.

Table-7: Cultural practices no longer in agreement with modernity (N ==33)

Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
17	51,5	13	39	3	9,09

The idea that some cultural practices under unhu/ubuntu were no longer in agreement with modernity was agreed to by seventeen (51, 5%) respondents. Thirteen (39%) disagreed with the view that some cultural practices were no longer in

agreement with modern life. Three (9, 09) of the remaining respondents were not so sure as to whether some unhu/ubuntu practices were in agreement with modernity or not.

Table-8: Peacebuilding Approaches and their points of strength (N ==33)

Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
33	100	0	0	0	0

Table-8 shows that thirty-three respondents (100%) agreed to the idea that traditional courts (matare) were part of their way of life. No respondents

(0%) disagreed with the view that traditional courts were part of the culture of the people of Murewa. None (0) indicated that they did not know anything.

Restoration and fostering of peace

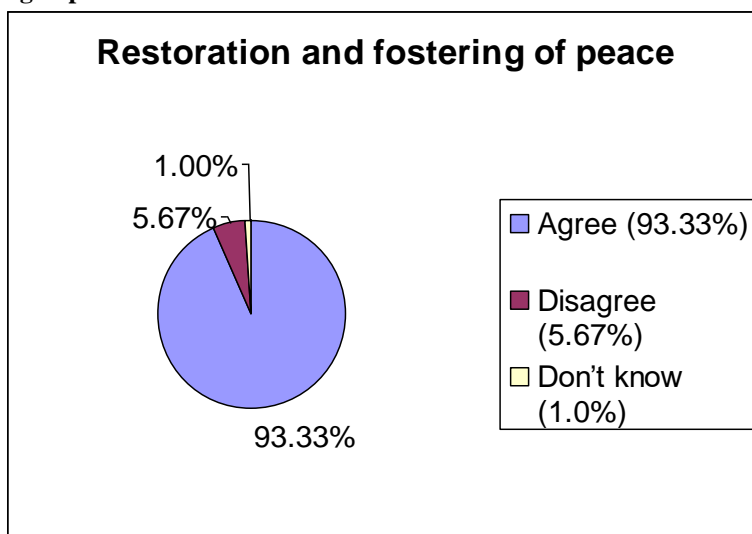


Fig 11: Restoration and Fostering of peace (N=33)

Fig 11 shows that 93, 33% viewed traditional courts as seeking to restore broken relationships and foster peace. However, 5, 67% disagreed with the position that traditional courts seek to restore broken

relationships. And only 1% indicated that they were not so sure whether traditional courts fostered peace or not.

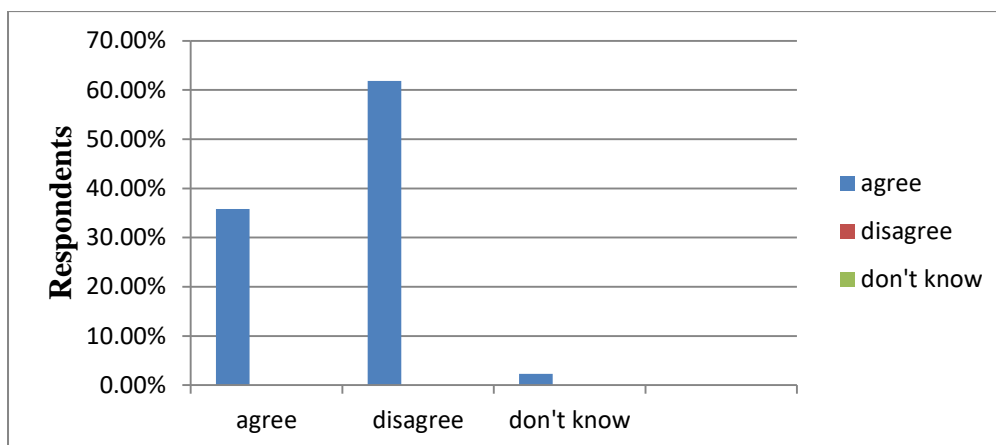


Fig -12 :Alternative Dispute Resolution(N=33)

Concerning the strength of the Alternative Dispute Resolution’ (ADR) strength lying in its ability to severely punish offenders, 35, 84% agreed that the ADR punished severely enough. However, 61, 83% did not agree with the idea that offenders were being

punished severely and that this was not even a point of strength. At the same time 2, 33% did not know whether the Alternative Dispute Resolution’s way of punishing the offender was in itself a form of strength.

Table -9 Alternative Resolution is a Deterrent measure (N=33)

Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
16	49,33%	15	48,84%	2	1,83

Table 9 shows that 49, 33% agreed with the idea that the Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provided some deterrent measures which were

necessary for peace building. However, an almost equal percentage 48, 84% disagreed with the notion that the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provided deterrent

measures.1, 83% were not so sure whether the alternative dispute resolution measures were deterrent or not.

Civil society initiated peace projects

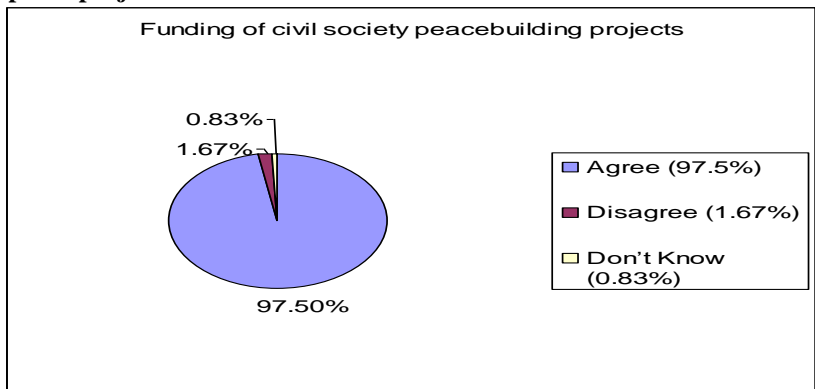


Fig-12: Civil society initiated peace projects(N=33)

Concerning the strong funding of civil society peace building programmes, 97, 5% believe that, this is strength for civil society initiated peace programmes. However, 1,67% respondents disagreed with the idea that the existence of well-funded peace programmes

was strength for the civil society peace building projects.0, 83% were not so sure whether funding of civil society peace building initiatives was either strength or not.

Table-10: Participation increases in donor funded peace building projects. (N=33)

Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
33	100%	0	0%	0	0%

Table-10 indicates that all the thirty-three respondents agreed with the idea that community participation increases due to well funding of programes. The same respondents also indicated that civil society funded peace programmes provided temporary employment to locals thereby curbing poverty which is a source of conflict resulting in theft.

None (0) of the respondents disagreed with the idea that the community is enticed by well-funded peace building projects by the civil society. Also none (0) of the respondents indicated that they were not so sure of the exact position concerning funding as being a point of strength for peace building initiatives by civil society.

Learning of Ubuntu/Unhu as strength in peace building approaches.

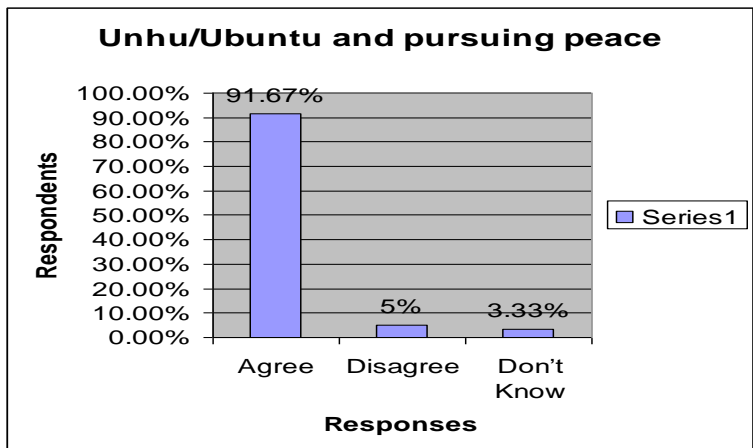


Fig-13: Unhu/Ubuntu and pursuing peace (N=33)

91, 67% agreed with the idea that a person cultured in Unhu/Ubuntu seeks and pursues peace. However, 5% disagreed with the idea. 3, 33% indicated

that they were not so sure as to whether Unhu/Ubuntu resulted in people (cultured in them) seeking or pursuing peace.

Unhu/Ubuntu promotes restorative justice

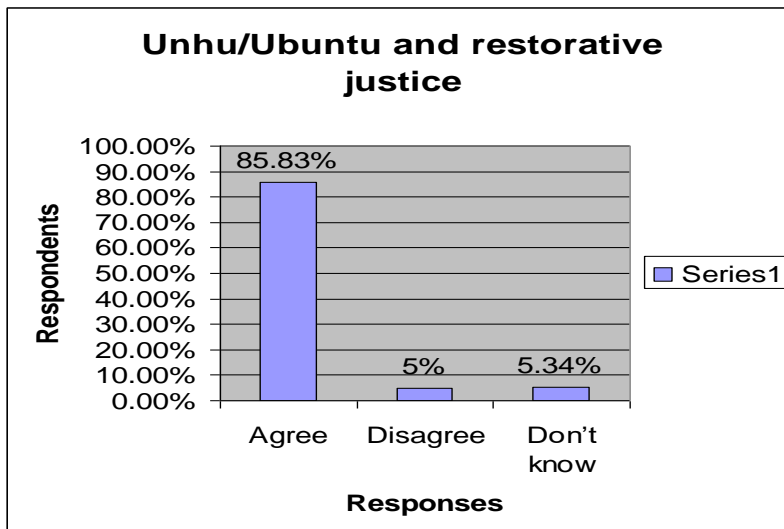


Fig 15: Unhu/Ubuntu promotes restorative justice (N=33)

85, 83% as shown in Fig 15 above indicated that they agreed with the idea that unhu/ubuntu as an approach to peace building seeks to restore relationships between aggrieved parties. 5% of respondents did not approve of the idea that the strength

of the unhu/ubuntu lies in its being restorative in nature purpose. However, 5,34% were not so sure as to the exact position regarding the restorative characteristic of unhu/ubuntu being a strength as a peace building approach.

Unhu/Ubuntu is a way of life

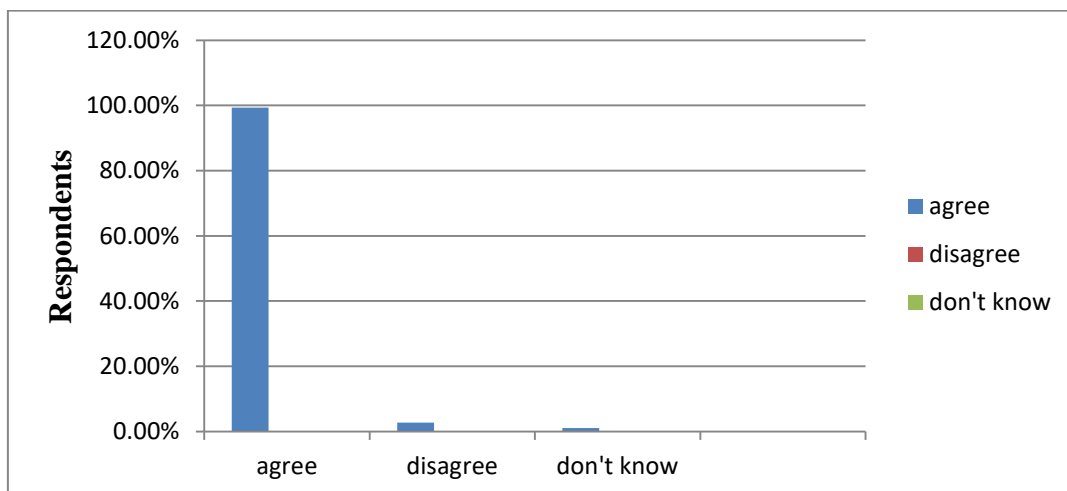


Fig 14: Unhu/Ubuntu is a way of life (N=33)

Fig-16 shows that 99,33% supported the idea that the strength of unhu/ubuntu as a peace building approach lay in it being Murewa community's way of life (culture). However, 2, 67% disagreed with the above suggested strength of the part of unhu/ubuntu. And finally, 1% was not as sure as to whether the idea

that unhu/ubuntu as a way of life was strength on its part as a peace building approach or not.

**DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION
DISCUSSION
Root causes of conflict in Murewa district.**

The findings as shown in Fig 1 established that land dispute ranked as the most prevalent type of conflict as reflected by (19.33%) of the respondents. This view is supported by Moyo (2005) who states that the land issue remained a major source of conflict not only between blacks and whites but also between the landless majorities. Laakso (2005) further explained that land as a scarce source is a source of conflict as long as its distribution is not equitable and ownership is not resolved. It was observed that the types of conflicts differed from one part of the district to another. For example political violence was most prevalent in wards which later on came to be target areas for intervention by NGOs pursuing peace building programmes. These findings are in agreement with Moyo (2005) position that non availability of adequate resources in the community is a potential source of conflict.

Moyo and Laakso (2005) views may explain why in Murewa land and boundary disputes are major sources of conflict. Land and boundary disputes according to Moyo (2005) have been a major source of recurrent violent conflicts in many African communities and nations. Some of the cited examples are Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritria, Sudan (between North and South) and Nigeria among others. According to findings on Fig 1, political intolerance is ranked as the third major source of conflict. This view is supported by ZESN (2000) which states that some non-state actors in Zimbabwe have unleashed violence targeted at members of opposition political parties. According to Good (2002), political violence as a result of political intolerance has been a major source of conflict. Therefore the research findings on political intolerance corroborated by Addison Laakso (2003), Good (2002) and ZESN (2008) after Zimbabwe's June 27 presidential elections of 2008.

Fig 1 shows marital disputes as being the fourth major source of conflict in the area. This is corroborated by media reports and court reports indicating an upsurge in domestic violence. The Herald (23 March 2013) quotes Zimbabwe's vice president Mujuru indicating that domestic violence cases had drastically increased over 500% to nearly 11 000 cases from 2008 to 2012. This could also explain why family matters on Fig 1 are also considered to be yet another source of conflict. Fig 1 indicates that theft was yet another major source of conflict. According to Zimbabwe Wikiversity (2013) theft cases were on the rise in Zimbabwe. Cases of witchcraft 30 (5%), murder 18 (3%) and religious conflict 6 (1%) were indicated as other sources of conflict in the community. These should be viewed as less pronounced sources of conflict in Zimbabwe as these occurred seldom according to cw.routledge.com/Zimbabwe.

The traditional peace building approaches used to resolve conflicts in Murewa District

Thirty respondents (85%) were in agreement with the view that peace building involves avoiding violent conflict. However, two respondents (10%) were in disagreement with the view whilst one respondent (5%) did not know. This is supported by the chief and headman's input who also believe that conflict should not be violent nor create endless hostilities. Ramose (2002) as cited in the literature review section that the ideas behind the African traditional world view is that a person is a person through others. It is these others that one has to be reconciled to. The other respondents' position who disagreed and did not know whether violent conflict should be avoided may be that, conflict being inevitable could naturally lead to violence and hostilities. If people are socialized in violent ways, to then expect them to avoid violent confrontation would be unrealistic a position which was corroborated by Zindi et al (1989) who cited Bandura's social learning theory which states that violent behavior can be acquired through socialization. The findings established that peaceful ways to conflict resolution should always be sought. This was shown by the 100% unanimous response in their agreement to seeking peaceful ways when dealing with conflicts. Lamont (2011) states Unhu/Ubuntu dictates a shift from confrontation to mediation and conciliation. It also dictates good attitudes and shared concern. This agrees with the views of the respondents in the study including the chief and the headmen. The findings are consistent with the position taken by Lamont (2011).

It was also established that peace building involves being considerate, tolerant especially to other people's views and opinions as confirmed by results above. The findings are in agreement with observations made by Mandela (1995) supported by Tutu (2011) that peace building in the African tradition prefers civility and civilized dialogue premised on mutual tolerance. To support the findings, Samkange (1980) stated that to be human is to affirm one's humanity by recognising the humanity of others and on that basis, establish respectful human relations with them. Therefore, tolerance to beliefs and opinions of others is an important feature or component that is inherent in peace building.

The effectiveness of the traditional peace building approaches in use by the Murewa community.

The approaches could be used There are four main peace building approaches in use in Murewa district. All the thirty-three respondents (100%) were in agreement to traditional courts being used in their communities. None of the respondents disagreed or professed ignorance of the approach. The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) was also used as a peace building measure. Twelve (12) respondent (39.6) agreed

and acknowledged the existence of civil society (NGOs, churches) peace building programmes. However, twenty-one (21) respondents (60.4%) indicated ignorance of the existence of civil society initiated peace programmes. Finally, all the thirty-three (33) respondents (100%) acknowledged the use of the unhu/ubuntu approach in peace building. The approaches were observed as being in existence and the community made use of them in appropriate situations. The four approaches to peace building that are in existence in Murewa community are testimony to the inevitability of conflict and that it should be managed through appropriate approaches to peace building. The findings agree with the view of Francis (2006) and John Galtung who first created the term 'peace building' through the promotion of systems that would create sustainable peace. Such systems needed to address the root causes of conflict and support local capacity for peace management and conflict resolution. The peace building approaches in use in Murewa could therefore be viewed as an attempt at local level for peace management and conflict resolution. The Unhu/Ubuntu approach was ranked as the most appropriate peace-building approach. Traditional courts were ranked second most appropriate peacebuilding approaches after seven (7) respondents (26, 67%) placed it second. Alternative dispute resolution and Civil society were both tied on three (3) each (33%). The findings in Fig 5 showed that the four peacebuilding approaches in use namely the unhu/ubuntu concept, traditional courts, alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and civil society peace initiatives had a role to play in Murewa. Twenty two (22) respondents (46, 67%) felt that the unhu/ubuntu concept was the most appropriate and effective approach whilst seven (7) respondents (26, 67%) believed that traditional courts were the second most appropriate and effective approach. However, the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) with 3 (13, 33%) was ranked the same as civil society initiatives also at 3 respondents (13, 33%).

Simultaneously and as such they were effective and relevant. The approaches were interdependent and also that each approach suited a particular situation for 22; 23 among others were direct beneficiaries of the civil society peace building example, the traditional courts suited issues that covered general community disputes which were in most cases not criminal since criminal matters were handled by the criminal justice system. Civil society initiated peace building approaches in Murewa were heavily dependent on local culture. They provided timely interventions usually before or after the violent conflict. Interview results indicated that in the case of Murewa, the civil society peace building intervention proved to be very effective soon after the violent 27 June 2008 presidential elections. Wards 14; 16; 30; 4; 12; initiatives from 2009 onwards.

Sen (1999) observed that civil society has been widely recognized as an essential 'third' force / sector. Its strength can have a positive influence on the state and the market. Civil society is therefore seen as an increasingly important agent for promoting peace, good governance like transparency, effectiveness, openness, responsiveness and accountability. As noted in the findings civil society have the capacity to mobilize particular constituencies (including parties in conflict) to participate in public life affairs peacefully. They empower the weak by influencing moral-political climate, by developing co-operation and providing humanitarian aid.

On the other hand, it also emerged that unhu/ubuntu approach in the research study has a very strong influence over the other peacebuilding approaches. The findings from the study showed that through unhu/ubuntu, traditional communities valued life and peace highly. The fear of God and spirits is the highest element of unhu/ubuntu. This observation agrees with that of Tutu (1999) that a person with unhu/ubuntu is peace-loving, forgiving and generous.

Kosmo (2010) points that in unhu/ubuntu; there was more action for peace than more talk about it. An offence once given was never recalled. It was 'forgive and forget'. Unhu/ubuntu plays a fundamental role in integrating the Murewa society as it offered its numbers certain common values and objectives, which bound them together in their attempt to live peacefully. The moral uprightness uncalculated through unhu/ubuntu then go as far as influencing other peace building approaches namely, the alternative dispute resolution (ADR), civil society and the traditional courts.

The traditional courts were appreciated strongly owing to their being the community's way of life and as such were not alien to them. Traditional courts were the ability to restore and foster peace in the community. The findings tally with the view shared by Nomonde (2000), in African societies, ubuntu societies developed mechanisms for reconciliation and peacebuilding with a view to heal past wrongs, reconcile the parties and maintain social harmony. In ubuntu societies this was achieved through an institution called inkundla / lekgotla / dare, which acted as a group mediation platform. Therefore Nomonde (2000) observation concurs with the research findings.

In Table 4.9 it however, emerged that the community 49, 33% agreed whilst almost disagreeing 49, 84% to the notion that the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) had deterrence as strength. The large number disagreeing was too large to ignore implying that the ADR approach may not be deterrent enough

even though the approach was consented to by 49,33%. Appreciation of the approach still existed.

The civil society approach because of its strong funding was viewed favorably by respondents (97, 5%) who felt civil society organisations played a key role in peace building. It emerged that civil society peace building programmes received overwhelming support from the community as they had the resources in terms funding and expertise. Fig 15 indicates that the unhu/ubuntu approach was viewed as pursuing restorative justice and as such remained a preferred peace building approach.

The above findings are in agreement with Shonhiwa (2012) view that the unhu/ubuntu approach guides and moderates behaviour and traditional African culture is modeled around it. It is the source of reference in all human endeavors, including peace, choosing war, pursuing wealth among others. Unhu/ubuntu is recognized as being an important source of law within the context of broken relationships amongst individuals or communities and as an aid for providing remedies which contribute towards more mutually acceptable remedies for the parties in such cases. It can therefore be noted that the peace building approaches were effective as shown by the results and their daily use.

But however, it also emerged according to Fig 16 that 2.67% were of the view that unhu/ubuntu may not continue to be considered as a way of life given to understand the influence of other religions and cultures on unhu/ubuntu to a people who are gradually drifting away from the unhu/ubuntu notion is just being irrelevant.

Therefore the position by Mandela (1999), Tutu (1999) and Ramose (2002) that the lesson to be learnt from the Ubuntu tradition is that African relationships exist in a web of humanity in which everyone is linked to everyone else and this is important for peace building is contestable. This view according to the (results) findings is disputed on the grounds that a people that no longer subscribes to Ubuntuism cannot be measured using the unhu/ubuntu yardstick since they no longer believe they are governed by it. Albert Bandura's social learning theory cited in Zindi *et al.*; (1987) supports the above position since people are modeled into what society expects them to become. People were now being modeled or socialized not only along the dictates of unhu/ubuntu but according to various ways, for example Christian, Islamic among such other value systems or models within the same Murewa community.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concentrated on the effectiveness of the traditional peacebuilding approaches in Murewa District. Below are the findings that were established;

It was established (Fig 1 and Table 12) that the most prevalent sources of conflict (in descending order) were as follows: land dispute, boundary dispute, political intolerance, marital disputes, theft (poverty – according to traditional leaders), livestock related disputes, family, witchcraft, murder and religious disputes.

The Murewa community understood peace building as involving removing violent and hostile conflict, distributing resources equitably and being tolerant to others' beliefs and opinions. This was reflected on Fig 2: Fig 3: Table 3: Fig 4 and Table 11

There were four major approaches in use in the community of Murewa in peace building. The approaches include traditional court system (dare), African Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), civil society initiated peace building programmes and the unhu/ubuntu approach. Traditional leaders indicated divination as yet another traditional approach.

It emerged that the unhu/ubuntu approach played a central role in all the other peacebuilding approaches. It emerged as the pillar of the other approaches.

Evidence (Fig 4 and Table-14) established that the traditional peacebuilding approaches under study were appropriate and effective despite continued rise in conflict, since conflict is inevitable. Results showed that the approaches were appropriate and played a complimentary role.

The study concluded that the people of Murewa were aware of the traditional peace building approaches in use and they showed appreciation of each of them.

It however emerged that whilst civil society approaches to peace building were guided by local culture to some extent, the alternative dispute resolution approach was rather retributive but at the same time deterrent. It accommodated aspects of the formal system, hence being labeled retributive.

It also emerged through observation and interviews as shown through Fig 15, and Table 11 that the unhu/ubuntu concept/ notion had a very powerful influence on how the people of Murewa co-existed peacefully.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having found out through this study the traditional peace building approaches in use in Murewa recommendations are hereby presented as follows:

- Available resources in the community should be distributed equitably by the community leadership, civil society, government, private sector or any other agency with responsibility over resource allocation.
- Peace studies should be included in the school curriculum to inculcate a culture of peace in communities.
- The study recommends the exploration of other approaches from other cultures and religions with a view to find out what is workable in current times.
- That unhu/ubuntu notion is incorporated into other areas of influence like law, politics, and administration among others. This could go a long way towards attaining peaceful communities.
- That traditional peace building approaches and their practices needed to be realigned with modern practices so as not to violet the rights of the marginalised groups like women and children.
- It is recommended that traditional peace building knowledge be developed further so that it complements the other approaches in use.
- Further studies could be carried out to establish how the Gacaca and Bashingantahe peace building approaches of Rwanda and Burundi respectively could be adapted and adopted for local communities like Murewa. The traditional leadership and other community leaders in Murewa should continue to safeguard the progressive aspects of traditional peace building in their communities for the benefit of future generations.

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