

The effects of ethnic conflicts on Uganda's National Security: A case of the Bakonzo and Basongora in Kasese District.

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Introduction

Ethnicity is an attempt by man to work out a relationship with a super-ordinate being often epitomised in God. Implicit in this is an interaction between ethnicity and the society within which it functions (Aliyu & Lawal, 2011). Consequently, because it is tended to colour relationships, ethnic conflicts have become a major influence on politics and crises, playing significant roles in the entire societal process especially in multi-ethnic societies. This study was designed to analyse the effects of ethnic conflicts on Uganda's national security.

Objectives

1. To examine the drivers of ethnic conflicts in Kasese District.
2. To assess the relationship between ethnic conflicts and the security of Kasese District.
3. To establish strategies that can be adopted to minimise the effect of ethnic conflicts on security in Kasese District.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional design and used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. the study population

was 900 and a sample size of 269. Data were collected through survey, interview, and document review methods. The target population was 900 individuals out of whom 269 respondents were selected using a mix of simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Primary data were obtained through self-administered questionnaires and an interview guide, while secondary data were obtained by the use of a document checklist.

Key findings

It was found out that ethnic conflict seriously affected security in the district, which in turn had an incidental impact on national security. The study further revealed that some of the strategies for dealing with ethnic conflicts in Kasese included engaging in political socialisation and dialoguing, as well as establishing mediation grounds.

Key recommendations

1. Religious leaders and other community leaders should be involved in reconciliation between the Bakonzo and the Basongara.
2. Resident District Commissioners should design and make use of early warning mechanisms for the detection of seething tribal disputes and make necessary preventive interventions.
3. Reconciliation and enquiry committees should be set up to mediate the conflicts.
4. Community policing strategies should be effectively employed to prevent inter-tribal violent acts before they breakout.

Key references

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