

# **Participatory Theory in Social Transformation of Environmental Land Use Conflict for Hostel Construction: A Case of Karen Communities in Kenya**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of the study is to examine the participatory theory in social transformation on environmental land use conflict on hostel construction among communities within Karen. The study was guided by the following specific questions: What are the key lands stakeholders among the Karen communities, what are some of the issues which are associated to environmental land conflict and what are the challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation? The study adopted participatory theory in social transformation as an interactive approach for analysis with the help of case study approach. The case study focuses on qualitative approach which encompasses general review of literature which was related to engagement by the stakeholders. The case study is relevant as it considers effective and in-depth information regarding the land conflict phenomenon with stakeholders. The study assessed the key lands stakeholders among the Karen communities and established that the main actors were Kenya government, land owners and the local communities. The local communities included the students, residents, companies and publics. The study examined on the issues which are associated to environmental land conflict in Karen and found out that the scarcity of land, the rise of value of land in the area, corruption among leaders, land owners, ever growing demand for land, non-functional land legislative, government weak structures, cartels of land, negative politics, landlessness among some of the population. The study explored on the challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation and established that lack of government budget allocation to support grass root activities, poor distribution of resources in the local community by the national government, non-inclusive decision making activities that do not put into consideration the needs of the local people, and local leadership. The study recommends that multifaceted approach is needed to be encouraged as participation to bring about inclusivity within the community. This is because stakeholder engagement contributes to social transformation as it enhances satisfaction on issues related to hostel construction to improve transparency, responsibility, participation, accountability among the major actors. These key principles for good governance enhance development and harmonious coexistence within societies.

**Key words:** practice, social transformation, stakeholders, Karen hostel construction, project

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The aim of the study is to examine the participatory theory in the practice of social transformation on environmental land use conflict on hostel construction among communities within Karen. Participatory theory can be utilized as a tool for conflict management of individual persons in the governance of the land and environmental issues to enhance wellbeing of the community through environmental justice and equal sharing of resources. The study is informed by three fundamental questions which include: what are the key lands stakeholders among the Karen communities, what are some of the issues which are associated to environmental land conflict and what are the challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation? The researcher is of the opinion that in order for the social justice to be attained, then it has to follow acceptable framework which is inclusive with ability to allow people to contribute views and ideas for decisions that affect them directly. Such atmosphere requires value based principles with inclusivity, equity, freedom, democracy, rule of law as which is acceptable for all as outlined in the national constitution of Kenya, 2010 (Abadi, S.H (2011).

For the community to be engaged in fare manner there is need for them to be aware to enable them participate in a platform which is favorable and accommodative giving chances for the vulnerable voices to be heard in the process. Land as a natural resource is perceived as a scarce resource. The researcher opted for the environmental land use conflict on hostel construction because land is perceived as a valuable commodity for

development hence need effective policy to inform the stakeholders what need to be done and how it should be done. In addition, the feedback from the individual participants would help bring more insights as regards to issues surrounding land and environment conflict to the government, residents and the companies that operates within Karen communities.

The information may also be used by policy makers for not only understand deep issues but also to prevent them from happening. The researcher envisions the community where the use of land does not arise to conflict, where everyone is equal to the tasks, use land for the purpose of development and growth and to have access to any part of land for common gain to enhance social interaction and livelihoods to bring about sustainability in the community.

In the process of data collection, the researcher also interacted with the key stakeholders in Karen where she learnt that each group had their own understanding and issues hence requires more time to analyses their opinion and ideas. During the social engagement with the key stakeholders, the researcher learnt that there was lack of cooperation among them with others showing total disconnection on the problem of the day by disagreeing with all most all the input shared by other parties showing the fact that they did not have solid decision before they came to attend the forum. Through the open forums it was clear that the community engagement among the stakeholders was a new concept hence was difficult to understand the reasons for engagement.

Land provides essential means for economic growth and development by creating wealth through employment. Personal class experience on social transformation was that it requires inclusivity of all stakeholders which bring about satisfaction and more understanding which leads to peace and acceptability among the affected groups. Through the class the researcher was able to interact with both lecturers and students which bring about better safe spaces for social interaction among the students and lecturers communities. The issue of Public participation encompasses the theory and practice associated to citizens' actions or groups potentially influenced by individual interest (Gwaleba & Chiqubu, 2020).

The community is understood as involving social groups or any size whose members reside in some particular place or sharing common heritage or practicing some sets of values, political bonds or interest. Public participation is the act of engaging in and contributing to the activities, processes and the outcomes of the group the principle of community participation holds that those who are influenced by the decisions have the rights.

According to Kernel-Torres, (Ed). (2020) community participation is the process of communication that invites the stakeholders together to cooperate for the purpose of addressing the problem of dissolution of the environment and natural resource. Furthermore, participation communication refers to the tool for stakeholders which enable them to work collaboratively as a family towards sustainable social transformation. This is because through public participation the communications are empowered with skills to handle and manage issues surrounding natural resources and to engage the key actors in creating an enhanced policy environment. The proponent argues that if individuals in the community are able to understand reasons and voluntary change their practices to bring social change.

Through community participation, people are able to collaborate more effectively to undertake development in the community for the common good thus determine the level of their engagement (Kernel-Torres, (Ed). (2020). The purpose of participatory community is that every stakeholder to work together through partnership in any developmental activities from the initial projects identification, planning, periodization, implementing, and evaluation and monitoring designed to achieve the sense of ownership and sustainability of the projects (Pelletir, Pousette, Fox, Keahey, Ward, Faulner & Allison,2019).

The theory is suitable because it permits both negative inputs and positives which help in backing the reasons behind the conflict hence it gives an opportunity to examine both the negative and positive views at the same time bringing long lasting solution or sustainable solution for the whole community. In addition, the premise of the theory is that both actors are given a moment to present their reasons of argument which is subject to dialogue until consensus is reached hence the best mode in solving community disputes such as land. Through this framework both the students' population, the Karen land owners group, the QWETU Proprietors limited and NEEMA were all given an opportunity to present their cases. They presented their grievances and possible grey areas that needed more explorations for the common good of everyone within Karen community.

### **Background of the Study**

The Kenya Constitution 2010 brought about political transformation where decisions made must involve the public. The first chapter of the Kenyan constitution is on the sovereignty of the people and the supremacy, the public participation is a requirement in the constitution as outlined in the article One which states that the sovereign powers is attributed to the people and article 10(2) part (a) and the fourth schedule part 2 section 14 of the Kenyan constitution is designed as the function of the devolved government. The Kenyan bylaws section 87-92 as well as section 115 of the regional government act, 2012 presenting the principles of public participation and the imperative to encourage public participation across all the community functions.

The structure of public participation provides a mean to consult with various individuals, social groups and entities before any actual decisions are made. It is constructed to give voice to the most marginalized people in the community and to promote the concept of agency to the local leadership and the government as representative of the people in the society. The citizens' participation is created to generate and to confirm decisions and not to convey already existing information. This is because the citizens' participation is not apolitical activity but none partisans process which involves the agent going to take instruction and direction from the general publics in the community.

The County government of Nairobi through its leadership needs to use different level of social groups in the community to participate when it comes to issue affecting our environment. The Kenya constitution chapter 6- leadership and integrity, the government through the established rules and principles is committed to encourage community consultation, placation and collaboration. The article encourages that people need to socially interact to encourage people centered driven development focus. There is need for the government to prove functional safe spaces for everyone to be engaged to provide their views in the land policies from all, through constitution encourage free sharing of information, consultation, community engagement and collaboration for social transformation (Akech, Kameri-Mboti, Ichnagi, Ogada, Njuguna, Kamau, 2013). According to Dadashpoor and Ahani, (2019) the conflict of land refers to the social conflict which involves more than an individual or groups, on the basis of diverse interests and views over the property right to land, land usage rights, to manage the land, to generate income from land, to exclude others from land, transfer it and the right to compensate.

The study established that stakeholder engagement contribute to social transformation as it enhanced satisfaction on issues related to hostel construction, improve transparency, accountability, responsibility, legality and public participation (Abubakari, Twun & Asokwah, 2020). As part of policy formulation and implementation of community dialogue as constituted by Kenya constitution which offers strong legal framework for the enhancement of participatory governance through devolved structures at various levels of the counties (Francis, 2013). The NEEMA facilitated the dialogue by inviting all the key stakeholders who include community residents, Government and local companies, student's communities and the local Universities who shared on their views and opinion on Hostel construction an environmental conflict in Karen. The main actors and policy designers' needs to support theory in practice for social transformation on issues such as land where the land owners raised concerned on the possible implications of the project which could course huge stressors and stress to the locals, the land owners claimed that the area is low density settlement hence constructing students hostel would contribute to the depreciation of land and value. In addition, influx rate of students would contribute to chaos in an event of the possible protest as well as truancy in behavior this lead to the disagreement with the students' population leading to the land owners walking out of the public forums organized by NEEMA.

The none profit organizations, private companies and other relevant actors are encouraged to share their inputs in cross cutting decision making. The participatory theory in practice for social transformation is that it offers the voice to local individuals in the community, improves collaboration; provide relevant information which is meaningful to the actor. Social Transformation refers to the engagement of people for common purpose which includes local resources, external resources and community change agents (Scheller, 2020).

According to Hall (2013) community participation, individuals can develop by engaging directly in activities which have direct influence to their well-being. Land ownership is perceived as a greater achievement by everyone in the community hence land as a major resource of production is seen as inadequate and vulnerable, although, proper utilization of land can yield results this is because the use of land has much impact on the natural and human environment (Mdunyelwa, 2015).

Okowa, (2015) Land is not merely seen as a factor of production but it's also perceived as very emotive factor among the Kenyan population, in Africa particularly in Kenya, land is the major source of not only income but livelihoods with over 80% making their daily income from it, surprisingly only 20% of the total land mass in Kenya is considered arable land. Those high elite in Kenya such as the business man and women consider land as a great source of individual wealth and source of their superiority or power. For the general public majority of the urban population where the land acquisition is not only fragile but challenging due to its emotional attachment to nature, it is through the land ownership to which the quest to seek independence was aroused from the British colonial powers(Okowa,2015).

Banerjee and Iyer, (2005) the historical issues surrounding land can be traced back from the colonial error where the private ownership of land created better incentives for sustainable development, permitted easy access to capital and growth (Cease, Kim, Ko & Cappel,2019). This conviction has been followed with consistency and success through the colonial government. Since then, majority of the residential and commercial as well as arable land in in Kenya was assigned under private individual ownership by the process of systematic first registration. the indigenious persons to own land, they had to go through the government, this

contributed to complex process in land acquisition encouraging selective land allocation either to close friends or relatives, political loyalists through their eminent influence in the government, inefficiency and corruption. This attributed to the indigenous persons remaining landless fueling more of land related issues remaining unresolved in Kenya (Nyaga, Ichuloi, Moses & Okecke, 2020).

The dialogue surrounding the common use of land on human sprawling human settlement in good location for development of hostels, roads and other constructions are development focused hence may have negative impact on general wellness of persons and the natural environment (Bidandi & Williams, 2020). Citizen participation in key decision making processes ensures that the common social interaction between the community avengement in urban setting such as housing and satisfaction of the main actors with the outcomes of the various development schemes. Urbanization programs made assertion that major actors with key resources such as land require deep consultation for common agreement for better success. In addition, the insinuation of casual interaction climes that various environmental and social engagement approaches in urban and rural settings have been designed to help community coexist peacefully (Bidandi & Williams, 2020). Bad policies and poor governance of land in Kenya negatively impact on development.

The only way out to resolve the land issue is through the community approach focusing on constitution and the outlined policies governing the land use and land acquisition, the constitution is incognizant that the effective and sustainable solution can be attained through the effective legal and institutional model, it needs all laws and policies relating to land to be revised, consolidated and rationalized, in addition, the act of parliament land registration act 2012 aiming at revising and consolidate land laws resources indoor to offer sustainable administration and management of land. The function of National land commission act 2012 which was formed to provide for the functioning of the National Land Commission (NLC), the public body is mandated to manage the public land and country government. Different land laws include community Bill, eviction, Resettlement and investigation and adjusication of historical land injustices Bill were formulated.

During the public forum organized by NEEMA, the land owners raised concerns over the students' influxes which are apprehensive that will bring chaos of protest and truancy. The pressure was mounted by students to the land owners to enable the spruce company to develop the hostel meant to house 3000 students by adopting the existing legal procedures however the locals did not consent to the argument of the student saying that putting pressure on social structure would help them.

The researcher used participatory theory for social transformation to relate to land challenge affecting the multiple parties in the community. The participatory theory related to the leadership and integrity section 7.3 on leadership responsibility in chapter six of the Kenyan constitution and principle of leadership objectivity and impartiality in decision making and ensuring that decisions are not influenced by nepotism, favourism or other improper motives or corrupt practices, selfless service for the public interest which include honesty, accountability, discipline and commitment (Ngondo, 2014).

## **1.2 Methodology of the Study**

The study considered an exploratory survey design. The exploratory survey design is an approach that facilitates the analysis of attitude, behaviour, views, perceptions among actors was required hence the design to analyse participatory theory in social transformation on environmental land use conflict on hostel construction in Karen communities which is founded on central context and practice. A research design is a strategic plan that sets out the broad outline and key features of the work to be undertaken in a research study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). According to Bevir, (2013) democracy of participation stresses on the wider engagement of constituents in the direction of the political systems. The premise of democracy is that the people are in power hence all democracies are participatory. The researcher developed interview question to analyse the key stakeholders, Brayson, (2013) the qualitative design offer fresh perspective on questions regarding factors associated to environmental land conflicts and challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation that are affected by the land related conflict to generalise the concept of participatory theory.

The interview questions help in the generation of in-depth information on the pheromone on land conflict situation. It provides practical evidence and procedural knowledge development stressing on the need to respondent some specific context, hence public participation contributes categorical process to gain knowledge. Quick and Bryson (2016) assert that public participation in governance involves the direct or indirect engagement with stakeholders in decision making regarding policies, plans or programs in which they have interest. Wu, Chang, Yili and Zhou (2017) through public participation, the stakeholders have the opportunity to interact with the government organizations, the political leaders, non-profit organizations and business organization which create or implement public policies and programs. The study aimed at attending to the broader question on what is the role of participatory theory in social transformation on environmental land use conflict on hostel construction in Karen.

Questions that guide the study are as follows:

- i. Who are the key lands stakeholders among the Karen community?
- ii. What are some of the issues which are associated to environmental land conflicts?
- iii. What are the challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation?

Other sub questions include “what are the key lands stakeholders, what are some of the issues which are associated to environmental land conflict and what are the challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation among the Karen communities. The qualitative design provides in-depth understanding of the conflict between parties entrenched in the social process for interpretation.

The question for the qualitative study are informed by the discussion provided by <https://nairobi.news.nation.co.ke/news/karen-developer-faces-off-with-developer-students-over-construction-of-hostels> and <https://twitter.com/hashtag/NEMAPublicParticipationKaren?src=hash&f=video>

which provided the students views, opinions from seven local universities within the periphery focussed on group discussions with the main actors or players within Karen such as Catholic University of Eastern Africa, NEEMA Representatives, the QWETU construction company and Kenya school of law as the host were involved to generate qualitative data to help get deeper understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. The main approach used for generating primary data for which the study is based was face to face interviews, observations and focus group discussion as well as document analysis during the month of November, 2020. In support of the reviewed literature. Further 40 semi structured interviews were carried out; notes were taken during the face to face interrogation of the stakeholders with field observation alongside focus group discussion with the main actors of land in Karen to share their inputs and opinions. The qualitative data from the instruments were analysed and presented in the following section through descriptive format. The philosophy of public participation holds that individuals who are affected by decision have the right to be engaged in the decision-making process. Public participation means that public contribution affect decision making process. The table below explains who participated and in the land conflict discussion on the 11, 12:2020 at Kenya school of law in Karen.

Karen Land Stakeholders Profile		
Actors	Relationship	Relevance
Catholic University of Eastern Africa	Seller of the disputed land	CUEA1
QWETU Construction company (3 leaders spoke)	Buyer of the disputed land	QCC 1
Karen Residents (60 people)	The Land Host Community	KOL1
NEEMA Government Institution	Government assessor authoritative body	NGI 1
Kenya school of law	Dialogue host venue	KSL 1
Local Universities Collaborators	Students from local institutions	MMU 1

### 1.3 Results

This section discusses the results obtained from the questions regarding participatory theory in social transformation on environmental land use conflict on hostel construction in Karen communities in Kenya. The section presents the answers to three questions to offer greater insights on the issue. The three questions are:

- i. What are the key lands stakeholders among the Karen communities?
- ii. What are some of the issues which are associated to environmental land conflict?
- iii. What are the challenges associated to application of participatory theory as an approach to social transformation?

#### **What are the key lands stakeholders among the Karen communities?**

The first question was what the key lands stakeholders among the Karen communities are. Based on interviews and focus group discussions the participants were requested to mention known key stakeholders. Through public participation, the Kenya government through the court system is given mandate to act and determine the application for redress of denial, infringement and violation or threat to the rights affecting human freedom which are associated to conducive environment under the article 42, 69 and 70 of the national constitution of Kenya. The court is given mandate to use and implement, its motion with the agreement based on the party’s interest including any other means acceptable to contain dispute including mediation, reconciliation and traditional mechanism to reduce the tension which is in accordance with section c of the constitution of Kenya article 159(2). The main Karen land stakeholders are identified and presented on the table.

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>No of Responses</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
Catholic University CUEA	10	25
QWETU Company	2	5
Karen Residents	8	20
NEEMA (Government of Kenya)	3	7.5
Kenya School of Law	6	15
Other local Universities	11	27.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The participants were requested to identify community stakeholders within Karen communities. Majority shared common understanding that the role played by the stakeholders in the realization of peace and social transformation was critical. In attempt to answer to the stakeholders mapping question, majority 25% mentioned Catholic University of eastern Africa as one of the key land owners in the area with 5% commented on the QWETU developer as part of the community, 20% of participant said Karen communities which include all the residents population within Karen region, 7.5 have mentioned the Kenya Government body NEEMA, 15% said the Kenya school of law and the rest 27.5% have mentioned the local universities who have their premises within the locality of Karen. During the interview regarding the community stakeholders” The CUEA representative said that Karen community has three main stakeholders which include all the Karen residents, the local companies and the government of Kenya participant 9. 12<sup>th</sup> 12.2020”. One of the residents commented that “a community stakeholder of Karen land is the community and the Kenya government of Kenya, participant 5. 12<sup>th</sup> 12.2020”

These findings agree with Forkam, Ajonina, and Tchamba (2020) stakeholders refers to the individuals or groups with the common interest or culture and can make their contribution inform of advice or labor to create an impact in any particular project in the community. Based on the data it is clear that the main actors of land are Government of Kenya, local companies and the communities within the designated region of Karen. The researcher made the observation that regarding community public participation on issues around land and environment. The national environmental Management Authority (NEEMA) has the sole responsibility to arrange and coordinate such function with the help of the national government and regional leadership within the County.

#### **Issues associated to environmental land conflict in Karen**

Based on the interviews and focus group discussion, the participants were requested to identify the common factors associated to environmental conflict among the Karen communities. According to the principle of relationship, where every cause is considered to have an effect and as the philosopher Aristotle states, knowledge of the things are known merely when causes are established (Falcon, 2019). The conversation of land uses is described in the Kenyan constitution chapter 5 lands and environment which are influenced from diverse factors. The table 2 presents the results.

<b>Associated Factors</b>	<b>No of Responses</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
Upsurge in Population	8	20
Scarcity and Degradation of Land	4	10
Rise of value of Land and Past Injustice	10	25
Corruption Among Leaders	7	17.5
Government Weak Structures	6	15
Excessive Fragmentation	5	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The answers from the interviews and focus groups discussion on issues associated to environmental land use conflict in Karen were 85% of the majority shared common agreement that there were too many players or stakeholders. 20% said upsurge in population, 10% have mentioned the scarcity and degradation of land, 25% had commented on the rise of value of land and past injustice. 17.5% said corruption among leaders with 12% said Government weak structures and the rest 12.5% of the participants had indicated excessive fragmentation of land in the area. This includes corruption among leaders, land owners, these factors contribute to the abuse of the stipulated rules in the constitution.

The concepts of argument concur with Kenyan constitution 2010 which states that the conflicting interest on land use or the lack of community participation on issues of natural resources contributes to the land conflict (Kenya constitution, 2010). In addition Mutta (2020) also share the same perspective that the issues surrounding the violation of land use are encouraged by land cartels, and big fish that are socially connected individuals in the community with deep state influence as commented by Mutta (2020) he argues that conflict of land is due to unclear framework on land reform and lack of public participation what is fare for everyone in the community. The researcher observed that the actors may be genuine in their feedback while others are mere cartels whose intensions are hidden and could not be easily established whether they are acting for the common good of the project and community or they were acting under the influence of some charms or money being forwarded by the wealthy individuals.

### **Participatory theory as an Approach to social Transformation Challenges**

The researcher sought information from the participant regarding the participatory theory challenges. In order to have deeper understanding on participatory theory as an Approach to social Transformation Challenges. The researcher engaged the participant into face to face interview and focus group discussion which shared the inputs and views of participants. The results of the variable are presented on the table.

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
Lack of Transparency and Corrupt Leaders	12	30
Poor Government Structure	10	25
lack of Awareness	6	15
Power Struggle	9	22.5
Cultural Challenges	3	7.5
Total	40	100

All 100% participants shared common agreement that challenges were numerous impeding the actual implementation of community to participate on issues affecting their decision. The participated have listed problems or challenges facing participatory implementation in the community with 30% of the participant saying the lack of transparency and corrupt leaders, 25% poor Government structure, 15% lack of awareness, 22.5% Power Struggle and the rests 7.5% had commented on cultural challenges in the community. The findings agrees with Akinbogun, Aigbavboa, Gumbo and Thwala, (2020) who said that the problem of community engagement is associated to lack of government budget allocation to support grass root activities, poor distribution of resources in the local community by the national government, non-inclusive decision making activities that do not put into consideration the needs of the local people, and local leadership which contribute to inconveniences between the two coordinating authorities that is the national government and the local communities.

These concepts were also conceived by Mdunyelwa, (2015) who stated that Land ownership is perceived as a greater achievement by everyone in the community hence land as a major resource of production is seen as inadequate and vulnerable, although, proper utilization of land can yield results this is because the use of land has much impact on the natural and human environment. The researcher made observation that all of these fore mentioned challenges contributed to the land conflict situation which was influenced by the commitments levels of the key stakeholders to engage in diverse level of environmental land related issues and land use such as construction of Hostels and other amenities in the area.

Based on the views from the participants and the literature, the researcher conclude that the issue of land and environment conflict is complex hence require multifaceted approach such as participation to bring about inclusivity. This is because through community participation individuals and other actors are able to deliberate and resolve main issues to satisfaction leading to transformation of the land use which at the same time encourage growth and development of both the individuals and the communities encourage trust and collaboration between the community and developers which improve social interaction in the society.

### **1.4 Discussion**

Based on the literature review and the analyzed field data. It is demonstrated that the issue of land conflict is part of human endeavor. The Karen situation shows the challenges posed by human necessities for hostels and residents for privacy. The findings show that in order to achieve social transformation the need to adopt the legal framework such as using the legal procedure in the Kenyan constitution is necessary with the absolute engagement of the main stakeholders in structured discussion so that the developer and the community could satisfy their differences and reach common understanding for the good of the community and the student population. Peterson, Kapiyo, Campbell, & Nyabua (2018) citizen participation is made part of spatial planning in view of counteracting possible deficits in democracy.

It's also demonstrated that the views and opinion of the Government bodies such as NEEMA and the local companies is relevant as they affect the life of the residents directly and their concerns could not be ignored for long lasting solution to be achieved. It also demonstrated that need of the students' hostel is imminent but more need to be done to reduce the tension between the main parties involved to shed more light on the benefits that such development may attract as value added to the regions socio economic development and impact. These concepts concur with Bidandi and Williams, (2020) which stated that the dialogue surrounding the common use of land on human sprawling human settlement in good location for development of hostels, roads and other constructions are development focused hence may have negative impact on general wellness of persons and the natural environment. Land and environmental conflict is complex in nature and require multifaceted approach.

It is also clear that there is need for more land to cater for the expanding population in the area, the researcher is aware that land being a natural resource is critical for value and it is also the source of livelihood for all human beings hence necessary for the purposes of growth and development. These ideas agree with Hall (2013) through community participation, individuals can develop by engaging directly in activities which have directly influenced their well-being.

It is also evident that their need for the stakeholders and the government to fight corruption and bad leadership on land and environmental issues and strengthened its mandate to help improve the systems which are weak to destroy any loophole that may exist giving room for possible conflict on natural resources. These ideas are outlined in the Kenyan national constitution as presented by Ngondo, (2014) stating that leadership and integrity in chapter six of the constitution on principle of leadership objectivity and impartiality in decision making which ensures that decisions are not influenced by nepotism, favourism or other improper motives.

The literature and the field data has shown that both the national government and the local leadership need to corroborate with the publics and provide budget for social communication on the community progress and development, more so to shed light on ways and means for land utilization for socio economic impact. Akinbogun, Aigbavboa, Gumbo and Thwala, (2020) the problem of community engagement is associated to lack of government budget allocation to support grass root activities, poor distribution of resources in the local community by the national government, non-inclusive decision making activities that do not put into consideration the needs of the local people, and local leadership which contribute to inconveniences between the two coordinating authorities

The findings have demonstrated that the government needs to address the issue of land, cultural related challenges and the power struggles issue to reform the land and environmental related problem in Karen region. During the sessions with the stakeholder NEMA had argued on coexistence and observing laws. Kweyu, Thenya, Kiemo and Emborg (2020). Literature has shown that land conflicts occur and the major form of land disputes which has changed from boundaries to ownership rights is the main problem of land in different countries based on varying factors which include cultural differences and social factors. This needs to be demonstrated more and the mitigations need to be shared with the local communities. However, residents thought it is the institutions which do not observe the laws. Nevertheless, as a student the author thought there should be a clear analysis of the needs to help draw up a policy on land use in Karen. Most students do not belong to Karen. Nor can they afford the homes the Karen residents own. Therefore, there is need for legal framework to be adopted in respect to the community voices and the students to help in the achievement of the social transformation. The Kenyan Constitution in the article 1 which states that the sovereign powers are attributed to the people and article 10 (2) part and the fourth schedule part 2 section 14 of the Kenyan constitution is designed as the function of the devolved government. The Kenyan bylaws section 87-92 as well as section 115 of the regional government act, 2012 presenting the principles of public participation and the imperative to encourage public participation across all the community functions.

In Kenya, women are considered equal in all spheres of life hence treated equal as men. Kenya government has subscribed to the universal declaration of Human rights presided by the United Nation. The UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) refers to the declaration by the general assembly of the united nation an international organization which was adopted in 1948 after the world war two and it represents the initial world view expression on rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled.

Through the provision associated to land and property which includes: the rights to equality before the law to the equal protection of the law as articulated in the article 7 of the national constitution section b regarding right to own property on article 17 part c, the right to adequate housing on article 25. All members' states therefore are under the obligation to ensure that women and men have equal rights to property and land. The Kenya constitution article 40, guarantees the rights to property ownership while article 60 ensure the equitable access to land and security of land rights however no gender is mentioned or acknowledging their historical landlessness.



## **1.5 Conclusion**

The study concludes that land issues are critical in Kenya hence the need for sober, inclusive and open minded process on solution for social transformation to be obtained. Based on personal experience, the analyzed literature, discussions from the social media and public. As presented in this article, the researcher has gained more insights on issues sounding land. The insights gained from Karen hostel construction dispute. The researcher has learned many lessons from Karen land disputes with the main actors who were involved. Some of the key lessons learned includes: When to engage community members to bring about social transformation whenever there is dispute, where there are human beings there is also conflict. Land and environmental conflict is complex in nature and require multifaceted approach. In order to achieve social transformation on issue on sentimental and land it is necessary to look at all the presenting issues from all the main actors as this would play key role to inform decisions on what is accepted. Past injustices on land contribute to the current problem on the same. The upsurge of the population contributes to the environmental and land conflict. The need for housing in the urban settlement contributes largely on environmental and land related conflict. In order to attain community transformation, the researcher recommend more explicit dialogue with main actors that is the government, the land owners and the communities need exclusive engagement for the common good of the whole society. The researcher recommended for the ad vocation of the participatory framework as a model to bring about community liberation from the land and environment related problems.

As means of proper engagement NEEMA need to work closely with the local structure to disseminate information which are meaningful to the local communities. there is also need for more analysis to be undertaken based on the critical lessons learned from the study to assist strengthening the need and participation of the community members to enable the attainment of social transformation across the land issues in the society today. The study recommend advocacy for the Karenites and other parts of Kenya with similar challenges. The content of such work would require conscientization, problem identification, strategies for education, media campaigns, stakeholder involvement, reaching decision makers and bills into law to help bridge the knowledge gap in the community.

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