

Migingo Island Boundary Dispute and Its Socio-Economic And Political Implications For Kenya And Uganda

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Abstract

There exists greater fishing pressure and decreased catches in Kenya and Uganda which have resulted into an ever ending trans-boundary conflict at Migingo Island that is believed to be a fish haven. The purpose of the research was to explore the implications of Migingo island boundary dispute between Kenya and Uganda. The study was anchored on social contract theory. The research utilized descriptive research design. Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires while qualitative data were gathered through interview schedules as well as focus group discussion with the fishermen living in the area. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages), while qualitative data was analyzed through thematic content analysis. The study found that Migingo Island dispute between Kenya and Uganda negatively affect the bilateral trade and relationship between the two countries. The study also found that the Migingo trans boundary conflict between Kenya and Uganda cause area instability and so, also affect the socio-economic livelihood of the communities living in the area because fishing jobs are lost, fishing stock for sale is diminished and finally it also threatens food security of the region. As a mitigation of the conflict, the study found that diplomatic mitigation options such as negotiation, dialogue, mediation and arbitration were some of the effective ways of ending the conflict. Stakeholders such as East African Community (EAC) body as well as the governments of various countries forming EAC should strengthen their strategies for mitigating the conflicts through drafting policies that encourage peaceful coexistence, which has to be ratified by these countries forming East African Community. There should also be various empowerment programs targeting fishermen to pursue alternative sources of income, educating them on sustainable fishing practices, controlling pollution in the lake, sharing of taxes generated from the fishermen and controlling the spread of hyacinth.

Key Words: Boundary Dispute; East African Community's Prosperity; Ethnography; Implications; Migingo Island

Introduction

In Eastern Africa, where heightened tensions and possible finds of natural resources on lakes are prevalent, border delimitation difficulties are pervasive. Lake Victoria trans-boundary conflicts have occurred before (Okoth, 2010). For instance, the 2009 impasse between Kenya and Uganda over the access rights to Lake Victoria's fish resources is a case in point. Other border incidents include the 2008 incident between Eritrea and Djibouti, as well as the border clashes between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) over the oil-rich Lake Albert area. These instances demonstrate that border conflicts are increasing. In addition to the possibility of military confrontation, delineated, indeterminate, permeable, and unmanaged borders are utilized for unlawful cross-border operations that endanger state sovereignty and destabilize regional politics.

In these trans-boundary conflicts, local residents are denied the opportunity to profit from the exploitation of natural resources in their region, hence intensifying the conflict (Fuchs & Klann, 2010). This indicates that the economic worth of lake resources is in jeopardy when access rights are restricted to less powerful groups

that may be disregarded in the management of these resources by participating nations (Pamba, 2019). Territorial conflicts in Lake Victoria illustrate the absence of regional agreements about the distribution of trans-boundary natural resources (water and fish) (Fiorella, Camlin, Salmen, Omondi, Hickey, Omollo & Brashares, 2015). Since 2003, the use of lake resources has grown more controversial, with many cases culminating in the harassment and detention of fishermen accused of trespassing in the trans-boundary waters of their neighbours.

Furthermore, the lake is a primary source of income for several people in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania; hence, there is an acknowledged need to establish a collaboratively managed solution for the lake's resources. To resolve the dispute, the respective representatives from the ministries of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania met in November 2008 and agreed to use bright beacons to demarcate the boundaries in Lake Victoria. However, little progress was made until the outbreak of hostilities over Migingo Island in 2009, which brought the two neighbours to the brink of war.

Migingo is neither the biggest nor the most resourceful of Lake Victoria's numerous islands. It consists of half an acre of rocky terrain and is neither the largest nor the most productive. However, it is situated in a section of the lake that is rich in fish and offers a significant source of income for thousands of Kenyan fisherman, particularly in the western portion of the country bordering Lake Victoria.

However, Owino (2019) emphasizes the dispute's underlying economic worth. In Uganda, the number of fishermen almost doubled between 2000 and 2012, from 34,000 to 63,922. In Kenya, which comprises 6% of the lake's surface area, the population fluctuated between 38,431 and 40,078 throughout the same time. Increasing numbers of fishing boats and fishnets accompany the growth of fishermen. His analysis indicates that, among the three nations, only Uganda's Nile perch exports have increased, while those of Kenya and Tanzania have decreased. This is a result of Uganda's strict regulations on fishing in the area. Despite these threats to economic stability, Uganda and Kenya have failed to agree on the demarcation of Lake Victoria, which would set the geographical limits of each state on the lake. This is fundamental to the international relations and policies of both nations.

Harrington, Deacon and Munyi (2021) when studying the sovereignty and Kenyan development, focusing on law and the politics of traditional knowledge in Kenya elaborate that Kenya's foreign policy has garnered a variety of definitions, but that these definitions are relevant in the sense that foreign policy is marked by a great deal of dynamism. In general, Okoth (2010) defines foreign policy as the techniques governments and states utilize to steer their activities beyond their borders and to achieve territorial integrity amongst and among nations. However, Okoth's claim does not necessarily address economic security in the international ties between the two nations. In addition, Okoth, Matanga, and Onkware, (2018) in their book "Peace Security and Development in the 21st Century Africa" emphasize the significance of peace in the East African Economic integration. Kenya and Uganda are not excluded from economic security discussions. Therefore, the gap is that the majority of research concentrate on territorial integrity and trans-boundary natural resource management, rather than the negative effects that trans-boundary disputes have on the economic worth of these trans-boundary resources themselves. This research examines the effects of the Kenya-Uganda dispute over the Migingo Island on the prosperity of the East African society.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this research were to:

1. Understudy the impact of the Migindo Island conflict on the bilateral relationship between Kenya and Uganda.
2. Determine how the Migingo Island row affects the livelihood of fisher folk in Kenya and Uganda
3. Evaluate how the Migingo Island dispute can be mitigated to promote social cohesion within the East

Africa Community.

Literature Review

Migingio Island Boundary Dispute

An islet in Lake Victoria with the size of a football pitch is called Migingo. It was of little consequence for the most of its existence. The lake's water table and biodiversity have recently been tampered with in the Anthropocene epoch, which has changed how useful the islet is (Rossi, 2018). It presently occupies the lake's prime fishing territory and acts as a key offshore port that spans the maritime boundary between Kenya and Uganda. In 2016, Kenya and Uganda resolved to establish a joint commission to identify the boundary, based on maps from the 1920s as population density on the rocky island started to rise. The committee, however, has not produced anything. The island is now jointly controlled by the two nations, although tensions do periodically rise; some local fisherman have referred to it as Africa's "smallest war." Its sovereignty is disputed by Kenya and Uganda.

The origin of the present conflict may be traced to 2004, when the Ugandan government stationed armed marines and police on the island in addition to flying its flag there. Since then, Kenyan fishermen have begun to complain about harassment by Ugandan security personnel for various reasons, including engaging in illicit fishing in Ugandan seas. Kenya also dispatched a police force to the island before the end of 2007, but the government eventually ordered their withdrawal as a precaution against Kenya and its neighbor Uganda going to war. Early in 2009, the Ugandan government demanded that Kenyans residing on the island pay for special licenses, which aggravated the conflict. This led to a diplomatic dispute between the two nations, which was exacerbated by remarks made by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in May 2009 when he was speaking to students at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Although the island is located in Kenya, Museveni said that Uganda controls the seas around it, hence Luos (a Kenyan group that makes up the bulk of Migingo Island's residents) would not be allowed to fish there. Museveni's remarks and the implication of the language employed were not well received by certain Kenyan lawmakers and members of the media, who called for their government to adopt a more aggressive stance.

The issue was a reflection of both the fractious legacy of colonial borders in Africa and the absence of tools to settle border disputes there. On June 2, 2009, a collaborative physical delineation of the boundary on Lake Victoria was started amid worries that the bluster might harm ties between the two nations and the East African cooperation program. Among other things, the British Order in Council of 1926, which created the present Uganda-Kenya border, was expected to serve as the team's guidance. The coordinates for the boundary are specified in this Order in Council and are mirrored in the constitutions of Kenya and Uganda (for a full examination of the island's coordinates). However, a closer examination of the conflict indicates that the main points of concern were not the island per se but rather the dwindling lake fish populations and the growing global demand, particularly for the Nile perch species. The apparent imbalance and the lake's diminishing fish stock are the main factors contributing to the Migingo controversy. There is an urgent need, especially on the part of regional organizations, the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the African Union (AU), to facilitate the completion of the border survey process and the establishment.

Implications of Trans-boundary Row on Bilateral Relationships

Nagy (2014) evaluated the effects of the territorial dispute between China and Japan on bilateral commerce. Using interviews with businesses, scholars, and government officials in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Tokyo, as well as data gathered from policy papers and businesses, this study argues that the traditional *seikei bunri* (separation of politics and economics) relationship that existed between Japan and China in the post-World War II era has given way to a more confrontational relationship in which economic pressure can and has

been used to press Japan on bilateral issues. Understanding how frictions resulting from territorial disputes have influenced the Sino-Japanese commercial relationship may have consequences for the management of comparable issues throughout North- and South-East Asia, the paper contends.

Mulindwa (2020) analyzed interstate border disputes and their impact on regional development and East African Community integration. The report examines how interstate boundary issues continue to impact the East African Community's goals. It contends that natural resources beyond state borders have been a factor in the expansion of territorial boundaries without respect to colonial borders. This article argues that lengthy border conflicts are precipitated by governance and leadership issues disguised as "colonial legacy" by African leaders. This study highlights the importance of prioritizing the resolution of interstate border disputes in order to prevent a recurrence of the 1977 experience of community disintegration. This could be accomplished by instituting special mechanisms to deal with such disputes, as well as decolonizing and rethinking the purpose of these borders.

Mulindwa (2020) examined interstate Border Conflicts and their Effects on Regional Development and East African Community Integration. Given that most academic studies on territorial wars focus on their materialistic causes, this article examines the conceptual frameworks that influence the issue. In addition, it examines the historical origins of the disagreement, the importance of the island, and the repercussions of the battle on the local populace and East Africa as a whole. Using archival records, oral interviews, and documentary sources, and guided by the constructivism theory of international relations, this study argues that the Uganda-Kenya dispute over Migingo is about fish, which is intertwined with each state's desire to protect its sovereign rights over the island. The dynamics of the tensions are affected by lingering conceptions of territorial sovereignty. This is due to the fact that territorial integrity is universally regarded as the most vital national interest.

Okinda and Kinyungu (2019) researched the Migingo Island Border Dispute in East Africa and compared the coverage of the Migingo Island ownership dispute in Kenya's Nation and The Standard and Uganda's Monitor and New Vision newspapers using agenda-setting, priming, and framing theories. The contents of 92 issues between 1 March and 31 December 2009 were examined. The investigation revealed that Kenyan and Ugandan media covered the dispute mostly on their inner pages, with each side attributing the conflict to a non-existent frontier. However, the Kenyan press highlighted the subject more regularly and featured a couple of its pieces on the front page while attributing the fighting to the Ugandan security forces. The reporters' nationalistic attitudes and desire to serve a home audience resulted in a skewed coverage pattern. This has implications for reporting conflict-sensitively on interstate border disputes in Africa.

Implications of Trans-boundary Row on Socio-economic livelihoods

Largely forgotten in literature and public discourse are the implications of maritime disputes on fishing communities and trans-boundary fisheries (Zhang, 2018). Zhang (2018) argues that joint development and management of natural resources in areas of overlapping claims could encourage cooperation over contentious issues. When approached from a social and economic viewpoint, the Indian Ocean Rim fisheries are commercially important and provide livelihoods and a source of food to communities (Okoth, 2019). Additionally, fish recognize no national jurisdiction and the presence of shared and straddling or highly migratory stocks such as tuna and tuna-like species make a case for bilateral cooperation in the management and conservation of shared fisheries.

While international courts have taken the well-being of fishing communities into account in several maritime boundary dispute cases, the case studies presented here indicate that hydrocarbon resources are often at the forefront of negotiations for African states. Traynor, (2018) also highlighted the viability of fisheries as significant drivers of community livelihoods and socio-economic security making them tangible objects of negotiation and re-evaluating of power relationships between the disputants. The Nigerian versus

Cameroon case is a prime example of the negative implications of outright delimitation, as communities who depend on fisheries for livelihood are disenfranchised by the process resulting in violent conflicts over fishing rights (Unah, 2019).

Side-stepping sovereignty over energy resources, the Kenya-Uganda Migingo maritime boundary dispute could provide a catalyst for collaboration in fisheries research and management, focusing on the common interest of food and socio-economic security. Difficulties posed by the prevailing dispute can be viewed two-fold. First, fishing remains an important lifeblood for the communities living in the disputed boundary, as a source of food and income (Van der Elst et al., 2005). Second, fish, fishers and fishing operations are active constituents in disputed areas (Baye, 2010). Thus, fisheries can be seen as a common resource that serve as a wildcard for both Kenya and Uganda to reach a compromise. In this context, cooperation over fisheries reduces the potential that food and economic security is undermined for communities that rely on fishery resources during the dispute resolution.

Mitigation of Trans-Boundary Conflict for Social Cohesion

Mwinyi, Okoth and Maloba (2022) argues that water conflict is a term describing a conflict between countries, states, or groups over an access to water resources. The United Nations recognizes that water disputes result from opposing interests of water users, public or private. A wide range of water conflicts appear throughout history, though rarely are traditional wars waged over water alone. Instead, water has historically been a source of tension and a factor in conflicts that start for other reasons. However, water conflicts arise for several reasons, including territorial disputes, a fight for resources, and strategic advantage. Furthermore, Tian, Liu, Li, Li, and Yin (2020) stress that when countries disagree over the way in which water resources of an international river basin should be utilized, they have to resort to some disputes settlement procedures. So, before parties or countries sharing a water system go into a conflict, which may from water security problem lead to a national security problem, there are three main procedures and methods used to find a solution to the problem. These are negotiation and consultation; mediation and conciliation; and arbitration and adjudication.

Dispute over shared water bodies can normally arise at least under two different circumstances; one can be riparian states that have never entered a treaty or agreement, while the other can be an existing agreement which cannot provide a binding decision to a problem in dispute. The UN Convention is however an international framework instrument, which may apply in the absence of agreement over shared freshwaters. Cooperation through joint mechanism in the form of commission is a vital necessity if the aims are to achieve equitable, reasonable and non-harmful utilization of the international watercourse.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Social Contract Theory. In moral and political philosophy, the social contract is a theory or model that originated during the Age of Enlightenment and usually, although not always, concerns the legitimacy of the authority of the state over the individual. Social contract arguments typically are that individuals have consented, either explicitly or tacitly, to surrender some of their freedoms and submit to the authority (of the ruler, or to the decision of a majority) in exchange for protection of their remaining rights or maintenance of the social order. The relation between natural and legal rights is often a topic of social contract theory. The term takes its name from *The Social Contract* (French: *Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique*), a 1762 book by Jean-Jacques Rousseau that discussed this concept. Although the antecedents of social contract theory are found in antiquity, in Greek and Stoic philosophy and Roman and Canon Law, the heyday of the social contract was the mid-17th to early 19th centuries, when it emerged as the leading doctrine of political legitimacy. Therefore, the Social Contract theory can be traced back to the classic social-contract theorists of the 17th and 18th centuries—Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78). Social contract, is therefore

appropriate for this study, given that it deals with the social contract between the government and the people. The government protects the people, as both Ugandan and Kenya government tries to lay claims to the Island, and the people pay taxes and allegiance to the government

Methodology

Study Area

Migingo is a 2,000-square-metre (0.49-acre; 0.20-hectare) island in Kenya on Lake Victoria. The island was the center of a low-level territorial dispute between Kenya and Uganda and is extremely densely populated. Figure 1 shows the map of Migingo Area.

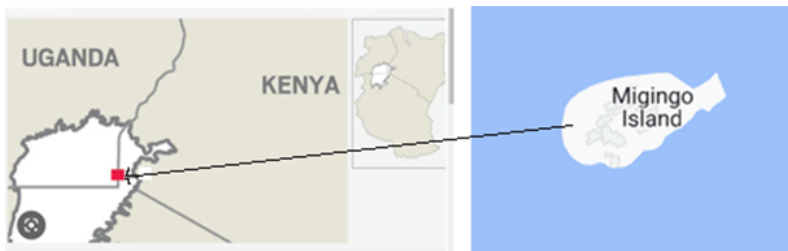


Figure 1. Map of Migingo Area

Research Design

The research utilized descriptive research design in collecting both the qualitative and quantitative data. A descriptive survey design was used to obtain information about residents of Migingo on bilateral diplomacy and Migingo Island trans-boundary conflict management. A descriptive survey is a research design that allows the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data from the sample of respondents from a population (Kosie & Lew?Williams, 2022).

Target Population

The target population is the population that the researcher wants to generalize the results of the study; (Harris, Holyfield, Jones, Ellis & Neal, 2019). The study population was drawn from all the residents of the disputed island. At present, the population is believed to be about 375. The sample frame comprised of 370 fishermen and traders and 5 beach management unit (BMU).

Sample Size

Sampling is a procedure of selecting a part of the population on which research is to be conducted. A recommended sample size of 10%-30% for a small population of the population was sufficed to give information on the phenomenon under investigation (Kaliyadan, & Kulkarni, 2019). Purposive sampling was used to sample fishermen, traders and BMU officials from the entire population. Simple random sampling was used to select the 37 fishermen and traders taken to avoid bias while all the 5 BMU officials were involved in the study through purposive sampling. The sample size composed of 42 respondents representing 10% of 370 fishermen and traders while all the 5 BMU officials were included to be interviewed for qualitative data.

Data Collection

Quantitative data was collected from the 37 fishermen and traders (main respondents) using questionnaires, while qualitative data were collected using interview schedules with the 5 BMU officers as well as Focus

Group Discussions among the fishermen residing in the Island.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages), while qualitative data was analyzed through thematic content analysis.

Findings and Interpretations

Transboundary disputes and Bilateral Trade

The study first sought to assess how the Migingo Island row affects the bilateral relationships between Kenya and Uganda within the East Africa Community. Respondents were therefore asked to indicate whether Migingo Island transboundary disputes in Lake Victoria contested state sovereignty and bilateral trade of the two countries. Table 1 shows the response.

Table 1: Transboundary disputes Contest State Sovereignty and Bilateral Trade

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	9	24.32
Agree	17	45.95
Neutral	6	16.22
Disagree	3	8.11
Strongly Disagree	2	5.41

The study found that out of 37 respondents, 17 (45.95%) strongly agreed that the transboundary conflict between Kenya and Uganda at the Island shakes the sovereignty of the two countries and hence bilateral trade between the countries, 9(24.32%) strongly agree, 6(16.22%) neither agreed nor disagreed, while 3(8.11%) disagreed and 2(5.41%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Similarly, during the interview sessions with the Beach Management Units, (BMU), one of them had this to say,

The conflict in Migingo started way back in 2004 and resurfaced strongly in 2009 until it became a hot issue in both governments' cycles. Economically, the strained relationship between Kenya and Uganda along Migingo Island may cause adverse repercussion on bilateral trade between the two countries (BMU, 3).

Kenya is believed to be exporting more fish than Uganda yet Uganda has the largest share of the Lake Victoria on her side which is supposed to translate to more fish. Apparently, this has turned out to be indirectly proportional to the catch. It is imperative to claim that economics has a hand in causing the dispute over the Migingo Island and as such, may cause bilateral trade strain between the two countries. Ugandan state has not disguised her intent to control fisheries resources on her part of Lake Victoria. The quest for control and dominance over the natural resource of Lake Victoria between Kenya and Uganda has negatively affected transboundary resource management and might as well strain their trade relationship. Okinda and Kinyungu (2019), postulate that Migingo Island dispute is primarily about fisheries on the International boundary between Kenya and Uganda. According Mwinyi, Okoth and Maloba, (2022) in Lake Victoria region fish markets appear to be unstable due to the structural changes currently taking place in the production and marketing of fish and fish products.

Effects of Trans-boundary Disputes on Livelihoods of Fisher Folk in Kenya

The study sought to determine how the Migingo Island Row affects the livelihood of fisher folk in Kenya within the East Africa Community. Respondents were therefore probed on frequency of transboundary disputes in Lake Victoria, whether Migingo Dispute affects management of economic value of fish as a resource and livelihood indicators by trans-boundary conflict.

Frequency of Transboundary Disputes in Lake Victoria

The study sought to examine the frequency of trans-boundary disputes in Lake Victoria. During the Focus Group Discussions with the fishermen residing in the island, it was found that the dispute over the island between the Kenya and Uganda Fishermen was almost on a daily basis. One of the discussants said thus;

We are very much used to the dispute that exists between the Kenya and Uganda Fishermen. In fact, a day cannot pass before witnessing feud or strive between the fishermen from both countries and this has really taken us back in terms of harmonious living for socio-economic stability (Focus Group Discussion 2)

Constant dispute between Kenya and Uganda on Migingo border has been seen to have also adverse effects on the economic value of fish as a resource. This is because lack of peace in the area makes the fishermen from both countries shy away from engaging in the fishing activity in the area. Here is what the one of the BMU officer had to say during the interview;

We cannot carry out proper fishing activities in this area as a result of endless feud between the fishermen and the law enforcers from both countries and this had a negative consequence on the economic value of fishing in this area (BMU, 4)

Similarly, Owino (2019) argued that, the Migingo island dispute represents not only a tussle over sovereignty by Kenya and Uganda, but also illustrates the importance of dwindling economic fortunes in shaping political responses in the region.

Mostly affected Livelihood indicators by Trans-boundary Conflict

Respondents were also asked to indicate the mostly affected livelihood indicators as a result of Trans-boundary conflict. Table 2 shows the results

Table 2. Mostly affected livelihood indicators by Trans-boundary Conflict

	Frequency	Percentages
Depletion of fish stocks	14	37.84
Threats to livelihoods through job losses,	15	40.54
Interference in power supplies	3	8.11
Food insecurity	5	13.51

The study found that trans boundary conflict at Migingo Island has greatly and adversely affected the livelihood of the fishing folk living in the disputed area through losing their jobs as fishermen and fish trading, as indicated by 15(40.54%) of the respondents, 14(37.84%) indicated that the dispute has caused the depletion of fish stocks, 5(13.51%) indicated food insecurity, while 3(8.11%) indicated interference in power supplies. Shared between the three members of the original East African community Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the fisheries resources of Lake Victoria have been economically important to the local

populations for decades. Yet, the growing mismanagement of the lake in more recent years has had far reaching consequences in terms of reduction of fish stocks, job losses among the fisher folk, interference in power supplies and other infrastructural development, and food insecurity. In one of the interview sessions with the BMUs, it was also established that the dispute at Migingo Island sometimes threatens the fishing activities in the area and hence reduction of fish stock. One of the interviewees had this to say;

“If we end up losing the Migingo fishing grounds because of the Kenya-Uganda maritime water disputes, many of us will be forced to leave fishing altogether, because we might end up being subjected to the cruelties at the hands of Uganda authorities because of maritime water disputes,” (BMU, 3)

Mitigation of Migingo Island Dispute for Social Cohesion

The study also sought to evaluate how the Migingo Island dispute can be mitigated to promote social cohesion within the East Africa Community. Respondents were therefore probed on mitigation options of to be employed in Resolving the Conflict. Results were as discussed in subsequent tables.

Mitigation options to be employed

This entails discussions and analysis of diplomatic mitigation options that can be used in solving the Trans boundary conflict in Migingo. Diplomatic mitigation options available for peaceful conflict resolution according to the findings include mediation, negotiation, dialogue, and arbitration, among others (Lee and Forss, 2011). The findings of the study were tabulated and analyzed in the table 3.

Table 3. Mitigation options to be employed

	Frequency	Percentages
Negotiation	11	29.73
Mediation	9	24.32
Dialogue	10	27.03
Arbitration	7	18.92

The study revealed that 11(29.73%) of the respondents mentioned that negotiation ought to be employed in solving the conflict, 10(27.03%) suggested dialogue, 9(24.32%) indicated mediation, while 7(18.92%) proposed arbitration. The most mentioned option was negotiation and dialogue in other words talks. Dialogue is simply talk or conversation between two or more people discussing positions or beliefs especially between groups to resolve a disagreement (Ndirangu, 2020), while negotiation which is defined as process of achieving solutions through discussion between two parties. Findings of the study are comparable with the reviewed literature that highlighted the options which have been employed so far in the following manner. Seno, (2019) in his study sought to identify the bilateral and multi- lateral steps that had been undertaken towards the settlement of the dispute. The bilaterally diplomatic negotiations undertaken had culminated in a number of ministerial and technical meetings that were held between the officials of the two countries. The first bilateral meeting at Ministerial level was held in Kampala, Uganda on 13th March 2009. The meeting agreed on the primary reference documents from their archives and colonial records to be used, the withdrawal of security forces from the island, a joint boundary survey, stoppage of harassment of fishermen and the enforcement of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) fishing regulations.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Migingo Island dispute between Kenya and Uganda happens on daily basis and the continued strained relationship between Kenya and Uganda as a result of this trans boundary conflict may as well negatively affect the bilateral trade between the two countries when the diplomatic mitigation options of conflict resolution is not implemented. The study also concluded that the trans-boundary conflict between Kenya and Uganda over Migingo Island cause the area instability and so, affects the socio-economic livelihoods of the communities living in the area given that as a result of conflict, fishing jobs are lost, fishing stock for sale is diminished and finally it also threatens food security of the region. As a mitigation of the conflict, the study concluded that much as diplomatic mitigation options such as negotiation, dialogue, mediation and arbitration were some of the likely effective ways of ending the conflict, negotiation and dialogue between the two countries may be more efficient and effective in ending the feud.

Recommendations

1. Among the strategies employed in dealing with the conflicts, the fishermen feel that the Kenyan and Ugandan Governments should collaborate in finding a lasting solution to the impasse especially on the ownership of Migingo Island.
2. The people and especially the government agents from both countries should respect existing boundaries and stick to their legitimate fishing grounds.
3. The East African Community (EAC) as a body should strengthen their strategies for mitigating the conflicts through drafting policies encouraging peaceful coexistence, which has to be ratified by the various countries forming East African Community.
4. The EAC body should also come up with various empowerment programs targeting fishermen to pursue alternative sources of income, educating them on sustainable fishing practices and proper managing of fish resources, controlling pollution in the lake, sharing of taxes generated from the fishermen and controlling the spread of hyacinth.

Recommendation for Further Research

While the study centered around the economic implications of the trans-border conflict between Kenya and Uganda on Migingo Island, and also came up with the possible mitigation options for the conflict, not so much concentration has been made on the most effective diplomatic mitigation options in settling the dispute. The study therefore recommends that future research should be on the comparative analysis of the diplomatic mitigation options in settling the dispute to help in informing the decision makers on the most effective approach in settling the dispute between Kenya and Uganda on Migingo Island.

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