Research Paper                                                                                   Open Access

# Politics of Identity and Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan.

## Dr Abeera Odetha Katuramu.
*Senior Lecturer of International Relations & Diplomacy, Department of Political & Administrative Studies-Kampala International University, Kampala-Uganda.*

**ABSTRACT :** The study sought to examine the impact of politics of identity on Conflict Resolution in the context of Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan. This studyemployed a descriptive survey design; this involvedassessing of the characteristics of a particularindividual, and or a group. It determined the effectbetween variables and the relationshipbetween variables. The design waschosenbecauseitenabled the researcher to obtain information needed for the study;alsoithelped the researcher to focus on a single unit of study. In this case, the studytargeted a population of about 25,000 people of whichincluded;NGOs, Governmentofficialsfrom the ministry of internal affairs, local community members, INGO sofficials, religious leaders and local community leaders. The sample size of 315 respondentswasdeterminedusingSolvene's formula. The studyemployedboth interviews and questionnaire surveymethods for data collection. The collected data wasanalyzedusing SPSS in tabularform in terms of means of percentages, means and standard deviations. From the findings, the studyfound out that the politics of identitysignificantlyintersectwithconflictresolution efforts. Thesefindingsemphasize the need for inclusive dialogue and strategiesthatacknowledge diverse identities, as fostering a sense of commonalitywhilerespectingindividualityemerges as a pivotal approach in conflictresolution. The studythoughconcludedthattherewas a positive correlationbetween the two variables highlights the interplaybetweenidentity-drivendynamics and pathways to resolvingconflicts. The studyhoweverrecommendsthatthereisneed to encourage political leaders to adoptpoliciesthatemphasizeinclusivity and equalrepresentation for all identity groups in decision-makingprocesses, as this can help mitigate feelings of exclusion and reduce the potential for identity-basedconflicts. It wasalsorecommendedthatthereisneed to implementeducational programs thatraiseawareness about the dangers of usingidentitypolitics to manipulate public sentiment.

***KEYWORDS :*** *Politics,Politics of Identity, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Central Equatorial, Juba, South Sudan.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, conflicts are as old as human societies themselves (Carter and Connor, 2019). And the world is a violent place and for various political, economic, religious, ethnic and other reasons, war and conflict are inevitable (Carter and Connor, 2019). Historically, individuals, social groups and societies have disputed and competed against one another over scarce commodities and resources, for instance, land, money, political power, and ideology. They have even fought one another and bitterly sought the elimination and/or subjugation of rivals, in order to control these resources and commodities. But at the same time, human societies and groups have found their own ways and means for averting and/or resolving conflicts. The existing body of literature confirms that the nature and causes of conflicts and the mechanisms for resolving them are deeply rooted in the culture and history of every society. These mechanisms for resolving conflicts are in many important ways unique to each community (Baxi and Gallanter, 2019).

In the late twentieth century, ethnicity and ethnic conflict captivate the world's attention like perhaps no other social phenomenon on earth. Even "peaceful" societies like the United States are not immune to it, although it only infrequently erupts into open conflict and violence and then only briefly (Deng FM, Gifford P (2015). Countries like Afghanistan, India, Syria, and Iraq just to mention a few are not excluded from this reality of violent conflict in the recent years. No continent in the world has ever faced many challenges as Africa in the recent years. One of the challenges affecting this continent is violent conflict. The high level of prevalence of civil wars and violent conflicts in Africa is attributed to ethnic diversity. Though ethnicity by itself is not a

problem but ethnicity manipulated by the African politicians and elites for their own political and economic interest.

In Africa, the African Great Lakes Region continues to face protracted political instability (Maphosa and Keasley 2016). Conflict drivers operate across borders and no sustainable solution has been found to mitigate the transnational conflict drivers (Auteserre 2010; Maphosa 2013 & IJR, 2015). Although the youth can play an important role in building sustainable peace in the region, their efforts and initiatives are not effectively harnessed for this purpose not only in the African Great Lakes Region, but also around the world (Maphosa 2013; IJR 2015 &Ozerdem 2016). For example; Rwanda is one of the African countries in the great lakes region which was faced by the reality of ethnic conflict for long. In 1994 approximately 800,000 men, women and children were brutally massacred within 100 days. It is estimated that in four months, 1.75 million people, or a quarter of the country's prewar population, had either died or fled the country, (APA, 2013). Further, in the politics of Kenya, ethnicity plays a big role in who makes it to the presidency in this East African country. According to Barasa, the common ideology, especially among leaders of different political parties, goes thus, the others have eaten, it is now our turn to eat. In essence, Kenyan politics is characterized by parochialism. Governments are formed out of compromise with tribal agenda and forces (Rop, 2016).

And for the case of South Sudan, after decades of civil war and one of the worst humanitarian crises in Africa, South Sudan became independent in 2011 through a referendum. However, just two years following the independence of South Sudan on December 15, 2013, conflict broke out between the country's two most prominent tribes when President Salva Kiir, of the Dinka tribe, removed Vice president Riak Machar, a Nuer, from office and accused him of attempting a failed coup. Violence would continue among Kiir and Machar's respective tribes until August 2015 when international pressure resulted into a ceasefire peace deal between the factions. But over the past year, tensions have escalated into greater ethnic violence, leading the UN to warn the international community of another Rwandan-like genocide (Ibid). It's though believed that this ethnic violence has included hostile rhetoric, killings, and specified rapes on members of rival ethnic groups. The majority of ethnic violence is instigated by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the SPLA in Opposition (SPLA/IO), militias, and unidentified armed groups (Beshir, 2014). Initially the conflict was politically motivated but in the course of time, it took on an ethnic dimension between the Dinka and Nuer, the two main tribes from which President Salva Kiir and Riak Machar respectively come (Noel, 2016). Since the beginning of the civil war in 2013, at least 1.73 million people have been displaced internally while 1.5 million have sought refuge in neighboring countries, the largest exodus in East and Central Africa after the Rwanda genocide of 1994 (Brenna, 2016).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW
### 2.1.1. Theoretical Framework
This study was underpinned by the Theory of Protracted Social Conflict by Edward Azar in 1970.This theory was propounded by Edward Azar in 1970. The theory examines the relationship between communal identity, access to basic needs and conflict. The theory argues that when people are deprived of their basic needs, as a result of their common identity, protracted social conflicts are inevitable. The theory suggests that protracted social conflict is almost inevitable in situations where a group's identity is threatened or frustrated or when their access to basic needs is limited. In this case, hostile interactions between communal or ethnic groups that are based in deep-seated racial, ethnic, religious and cultural hatreds, which persist over long periods of time with sporadic outbreaks of violence, are indications of protracted social conflict (Azar, 2010).

### Problem Statement
Since the ethnic conflict broke out in December of 2013 between South Sudan's two most prominent ethnic groups the Dinka and Nuer resulting from the tribal sentiments and belongings, many South Sudanese have been displaced. Attempts by the United Nations and IGAD to bring stability and peace have always been frustrated by the conflicting parties. Numerous ceasefires have been declared, but the warring factions keep on breaching the ceasefire agreements, resulting into the death of nearly 50,000 of people, directly or indirectly from the conflict (Brenna, 2016). This conflict has become a threat to many South Sudanese, especially women and children who are the most vulnerable. A recent report by the UNHCR suggested that the ethnic conflict in South Sudan has forced more than 1.5 million people to flee to the neighboring countries, creating Africa's largest refugee crisis and the third largest in the world after Syria and Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2017).

Furthermore, the report notes that about 1.73 million people have been internally displaced some living in UN protection camps, whilst other are in other IDP camp across the country (UNHCR, 2017). The immediate effects of this conflict include loss of lives and properties, destruction of basic infrastructure, economic breakdown, famine, diseases, trauma and other psychological effects. This has created fear and trepidation among the population, forcing many of them to find refuge in IDP camp or cross into neighboring countries to seek refuge where they would feel more secure. Above all, this study acknowledges the generosity of many South Sudanese

who even during the conflict welcomed and protected people from other ethnic groups. However, ethnicity in the face of tribal sentiments has now become a negative issue through throughout our society. Large-scale ethnic killing has created a circle of fear, hatred and revenge.  Similarly, the politics of South Sudan is inclined on tribal lines, with perceptions from various communities that one tribe or other is favored, or that one tribe or another is under-represented, or even that one tribe or another deserves to rule. Even within religious places like churches, elements of tribal sentiments are creeping in and creating suspicion, hindering the efforts to work for peace and reconciliation. This study therefore, seeks to investigate the impact of Tribal Sentiments and Conflict Resolution in South Sudan, in the context of Central Equatorial (Juba).

### 2.1.2. Politics of identity and Conflict Resolution
The term politics of identity is used here in reference to ethno-politics and other policies that are designed to be exclusionary aimed to further the objectives of a selected few usually at the expense of the majority. Identity politics has filled the vacuum created by the demise of ideological contenders for universal allegiance at the end of the twentieth century. It constitutes the driving force behind fragmentation a major trend in the international arena and a counterpoint to growing interdependence. Although opposing trends, both identity politics and interdependence are enabled and magnified by technological advancement. And both challenge an international order based on viable states with the requisite monopoly on the use of force.

In south Sudan, the politics of identity has been adopted from successive regimes in old Sudan which has successfully used it as means to divide and rule the country by creating a competing ideology tainted with a concept of "us versus them identity paradigm". In this context religious sectarianism created frictions not only between Muslims and Christians but also between Muslims who claim to be more Islamic than others in the Sudan. Nonetheless, Arabism as an ideology that sought to promote Arab nationalism at the expense of the African identity was introduced as yet another racial divide mechanism that widened the gap between Sudanese Arabs and Africans in the south, east and western Sudan. In its genesis, these politics of identity have fractured Sudanese society so deeply that it resulted into conflicts between the central and marginalized ethnic groups in Darfur, southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, red sea hills and southern Sudan then. Therefore, it is fair to say that South Sudan has modeled the politics of identity adopted from the Sudan after its independence and after deviating from the SPLM vision of rebuilding a just and free democratic society.

South Sudan is a country of over sixty tribes but only two ethnicities Dinka and Nuer dominated the government until the outbreak of 15th civil war and the subsequent massacre of the Nuer in juba. The politics of identity and tribalism posing challenges to south Sudan constituting triggers of potential division capable of undermining the fabric of the south Sudanese. The politics of identity not only favor certain groups in South Sudan but also redefines the composition of South Sudan's society and construct the image of the country as being made up of the two competing tribes, (Dinka-Nuer). Nonetheless, these localized ethnocentric policies created suspicions, resentments and conflicts making it difficult to promote a national identity and socio-political cohesion. Traditionally, political cleavages in Latin America were understood in terms of class rather than ethnicity, despite ample "raw material" for ethnic politics in the form of socially relevant ethnic distinctions in most countries (indigenous versus mestizo versus whites, and in some cases intra-indigenous ethnic distinctions). It is an interesting question why Latin American countries have seen so little politicization of ethnicity in the form of political parties and movements, especially when political and economic benefits have long been allocated along ethnic lines in many countries of the region. Middle Eastern and North African countries with marked linguistic or religious heterogeneity such as Cyprus, Lebanon, turkey, Iraq, and Iran have experienced political mobilization along ethnic lines, while in many countries in this region politics among Arabs is structured by clan and tribal distinctions (Fearon et al., 2003).

Scholars writing on South Sudan conflicts especially those focusing on the period after independence tend to peg governance as a litmus paper test for the rebuilding of South Sudan. Radon and Logan (2014) for example, posit South Sudan as "a prime example of how governance arrangements can either achieve and maintain peace or become the trigger for civil war." Based on this observation, deciding which framework best suit the organization of South Sudan polity is primary for its sustainability; an imperative ordering framework that can accommodate challenges coming from a country that "is sparsely populated and ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse" (Radon and Logan, 2014) such as South Sudan. In response, Awolich (2018) dives-in and provides some suggestions on how to go about embracing governance in South Sudan. In his policy brief for Sudan Institute in Juba, which he titles 'Fixing Governance is Key to Stability in South Sudan', he identifies major challenges facing the country and examine the extent to which the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) has put governance and mechanisms to realize it at its core. Persisting major challenges that Awolich (2018) finds are the lack of good governance strategic direction and vision at which all the people rally around in forging a national identity. Although the R-ARCSS seem to have missed the target, Awolich is still hopeful that, it has "set out mandates for the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGONU)" (Awolich, 2018).

As Zambakari (2015) points-out, there are similarities between identity and citizenship struggles by South Sudanese to those "struggles with the contested nature of citizenship and the dual system of native/settler that operate in most countries in East Africa." It is an important struggle they should face as many African countries have faced it and some continue to face it. Some have made significant successes such as Tanzania (Mamdani, 2012) but other on continuous reforms such as Rwanda (Mamdani, 2002). Nonetheless though is not unique, South Sudan is case which calls for devising "a new concept of citizenship that is inclusive of the different nationalities within the country as well as those who are coming from outside may wish to make South Sudan their homes" (Zambakari, 2015). This is necessary if peace is to flourish and forging common identity is to be achieved. An understanding that identity formation and making people feel as South Sudanese citizens will not come by only identifying demarcations that divides them; but rather by twining the common history (colonialism and struggles for independence) with the common vision of enjoying the country's resources together is necessary. This is a call to self-denial for the sake of South Sudan's better future. To make this possible the government has to provide for its people in order to make them feel the value of being citizens. People ought to go beyond the ethnic binary by embracing a countrywide identity ethic that recognizes everyone. South Sudanese and their leaders should know that violence will not smash the legacy of colonial created identities, but rather it requires a political vision and political organization.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1.1. Instrument

This study followed a descriptive survey design; this involved assessing of the characteristics of a particular individual, and or a group. It determined the effect between variables and the relationship between variables. The design was chosen because it enabled the researcher to obtain information needed for the study; also it helped the researcher to focus on a single unit of study. It also helped the researcher in getting a deeper knowledge of a wide problem with limited resources. The study also was based on two approaches, and these included quantitative and qualitative approaches for the purposes of proper triangulation of data.

### Sample Size

In this case, the study targeted a population of about 25,000 people of which included; NGOs, Government officials from the ministry of internal affairs, local community members, INGOs officials, religious leaders and local community leaders. These was selected because of their credible knowledge on the tribal sentiments and conflict resolution south Sudan. The rational was that all the above are stakeholders.

In this case, the Slovene's formula was used to determine the sample size from the target population.

n=N/1+N (e$^2$) *where;*
- N=Population size
- n=Sample size
- e=Level of significance (0.05 is common level used)

$$\frac{1474}{1+1474\,(0.05)^2} = \frac{1474}{4.685} = \textbf{315 respondents}$$

### 3.1.3. Data Management

Before collecting data, data collection instruments were developed, tested and pre-tested for validity and reliability. The researcher then proceeded to distribute questionnaires and carry out the interviews; the researcher made vigorous follow-ups with respondents to explain the research objectives. After getting data from the field, the researcher proceeded to data processing and analysis with supervisor's guidance.

*Qualitative Data management*: This involved examining and classifying data in terms of constructs, themes patterns, where they belonged and the number of times each answer appears were counted to make up the number of responses. Data was analyzed and respondents' views quoted and presented in the analysis.

*Quantitative Data Management:* The researcher used inferential statics for association to test hypotheses in analyzing the quantitative data. SPSS version 23 was used for correlation and multiple regressions. Correlations and multiple regressions analysis were used in testing the study objectives and the significant of each independent variable tested at a confident level of 95%. The regression equation of the study was as shown. Demographic characteristics was analyzed in terms of percentages to show that the sample selected as the true representation of the population. Descriptive characteristics were presented in terms of means and standard deviation. Relationships between variables were presented in terms of correlation analysis. Regression analysis indicated the extent to which the independent variables explain the changes in the dependent variables.

## IV. RESULTS

**4.1.1. Response Rate**

The response rate is a measure that calculates the percentage of participants who completed the survey, divided by the total number of participants in the designated sample size.

**Table 4. 1: Response Rate**

| Questionnaires Distributed | Questionnaires Returned | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|
| 239 | 230 | 96.2% |

Source: Primary data, (2023)

The findings presented in Table 4.1 indicate that out of the total of 239 respondents who were provided with questionnaires for completion, 230 of them responded by returning the completed questionnaires. This represents a response rate of 96.2%. This high response rate signifies that the researcher successfully gathered sufficient data to support the creation of a thorough and comprehensive report.

***Demographic features of the Respondents***

This section presents the demographic features of the respondents including, gender, age, and level of education of the respondents as discussed here under:

***Gender of the respondents***

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 158 | 68.70 |
| Female | 72 | 31.30 |
| Total | 230 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data, (2023)

The table above presents the distribution of respondents based on their gender in the research study. Out of a total of 230 respondents, 158 (68.70%) are male, while 72 (31.30%) are female. This implies that the gender disparities among respondents in the study are indicative of the interconnectedness of gender dynamics and tribal sentiments in conflict resolution contexts. Addressing these disparities and integrating gender perspectives can enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of efforts to manage tribal conflicts in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan.

***Age of the respondents***

| Age | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 20 – 25 | 51 | 22.2 |
| 26 – 35 | 97 | 42.2 |
| 36 – 45 | 54 | 23.5 |
| 46 - 55 | 16 | 7.0 |
| 56+ | 12 | 5.2 |
| Total | 230 | 100.0 |

Source: Primary Data (2023)

From the table above, the largest age group was aged between "26 - 35, followed by those between 20 to 35 at 64.4%, "36 - 45" at 23.5% of the population, while, "56+" age group were 5.2%. Though, a significant portion of the population falls within this age range of "26 – 35", and age group's dominance could be indicative of their potential influence and role in societal dynamics and conflict resolution efforts. This implies that the distribution of individuals across age groups can impact conflict resolution strategies since younger aged groups have different perspectives and approaches compared to older generations, thus, understanding these differences can be valuable for designing effective conflict resolution interventions that resonate with various segments of the population.

***Educational levels of the respondents***

| Education level | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Primary | 114 | 49.6 |
| Secondary level | 58 | 25.2 |
| Vocational | 54 | 23.5 |
| University | 4 | 1.7 |
| Total | 230 | 100.0 |

***Source:*** Primary data, (2023)

Results in Table 4.5 shows that there are 114 individuals in the "Primary" education level category, constituting 49.6% of the total population. The "Secondary level" category consists of 58 individuals, accounting for 25.2% of the total population. There are 54 individuals classified as having a "Vocational" education, making up 23.5% of the total population. The smallest category is "University," with 4 individuals, representing 1.7% of the total population. This implies that the prevalence of individuals with "Primary" education indicates that a substantial portion of the population has received basic education.

**4.1.3 Descriptive results on the Impact of Politics of identity on Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan**
**Table showing the Impact of Politics of identity on Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan**

| Items | Mean | SD | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identity politics has filled the vacuum created by the demise of ideological contenders for universal allegiance at the end of the twentieth century | 4.65 | 0.37 | 1 |
| In South Sudan, the politics of identity has been adopted from successive regimes in old Sudan, which has successfully used it as a means to divide and rule the country | 4.49 | 0.42 | 2 |
| It is fair to say that South Sudan has modeled the politics of identity adopted from Sudan after its independence | 4.41 | 0.39 | 3 |
| The politics of identity and tribalism posing challenges to South Sudan, constituting triggers of potential division capable of undermining the fabric of South Sudanese society | 4.36 | 0.45 | 4 |
| The politics of identity not only favor certain groups in South Sudan but also redefine the composition of South Sudan's society and construct the image of the country | 4.25 | 0.51 | 5 |
| Although opposing trends, both identity politics and interdependence are enabled and magnified by technological advancement | 4.12 | 0.59 | 6 |
| In its genesis, politics of identity has fractured Sudanese society so deeply that it resulted in conflicts between the central and marginalized ethnic groups | 3.98 | 0.68 | 7 |
| Due to politics of identity, the adoption of a decentralized and federal system of governance is not a choice but a necessity | 3.75 | 0.73 | 8 |
| **Overall SD & Mean** | **4.25** | **0.52** | |

**Source:** *Primary data, (2023)*

Results from the table above, indicated that there are different ways on how the Politics of identity affects Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan, and this was together rated by the respondents as satisfactory with (Overall mean= 4.25 & SD= 0.52), implying that majority of the respondents affirmed that the Politics of identity severely hindered Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan. From the findings, the statement: Identity politics has filled the vacuum created by the demise of ideological contenders for universal allegiance at the end of the twentieth century (Mean: 4.65, Standard Deviation: 0.37, Rank: 1), this implies that respondents strongly agree that identity politics has emerged as a significant force after the decline of universal ideologies. This perspective is highly satisfactory and aligns with their understanding of the topic. This was followed by the statement "In South Sudan, the politics of identity has been adopted from successive regimes in old Sudan, which has successfully used it as a means to divide and rule the country" (Mean: 4.49, Standard Deviation: 0.42, Rank: 2), this implies that respondents strongly agree that identity politics has been utilized effectively to divide and control South Sudan, which is considered very satisfactory based on their perception.

It is fair to say that South Sudan has modeled the politics of identity adopted from Sudan after its independence" (Mean: 4.41, Standard Deviation: 0.39, Rank: 3) this implies that respondents strongly agree that South Sudan has continued to adopt identity politics from Sudan even after gaining independence. This viewpoint is seen as very satisfactory by the respondents. "The politics of identity and tribalism posing challenges to South Sudan, constituting triggers of potential division capable of undermining the fabric of South Sudanese society" (Mean: 4.36, Standard Deviation: 0.45, Rank: 4), this implies that respondents strongly agree that identity politics and tribalism present significant challenges to South Sudan, leading to the potential risk of division. This perception is seen as very satisfactory. The politics of identity not only favor certain groups in South Sudan but also

redefine the composition of South Sudan's society and construct the image of the country" (Mean: 4.25, Standard Deviation: 0.51, Rank: 5), this implies that respondents strongly agree that identity politics impacts certain groups and reshapes the society's composition and image. This perspective is still considered very satisfactory, despite a slightly higher standard deviation indicating some variability.

Although opposing trends, both identity politics and interdependence are enabled and magnified by technological advancement" (Mean: 4.12, Standard Deviation: 0.59, Rank: 6), this implies that respondents strongly agree that identity politics and interdependence are both influenced by technological advancements. The interpretation remains very satisfactory, though the higher standard deviation indicates more diverse opinions. In its genesis, politics of identity has fractured Sudanese society so deeply that it resulted in conflicts between the central and marginalized ethnic groups" (Mean: 3.98, Standard Deviation: 0.68, Rank: 7), this implies that respondents agree that identity politics has led to conflicts between central and marginalized ethnic groups. While this view is satisfactory, the higher standard deviation suggests some divergence in opinions. "Due to politics of identity, the adoption of a decentralized and federal system of governance is not a choice but a necessity" (Mean: 3.75, Standard Deviation: 0.73, Rank: 8), this implies that respondents agree that adopting a decentralized and federal system of governance is necessary due to identity politics. This interpretation is satisfactory, yet the higher standard deviation indicates a wider range of viewpoints.

Overall SD & Mean 4.25 and Standard Deviation was 0.52, this implies that the interpretation of the table reveals that respondents generally hold strong agreement with the statements related to identity politics and its influence on South Sudan. The consistently high mean scores within the "Strongly Agree" range underscore the significant impact of identity politics on the region. The justified rankings and the satisfactory interpretation categories align with a consensus view among the respondents regarding the role and challenges of identity politics in South Sudan's socio-political landscape. The variations in standard deviations highlight the diversity of opinions within each interpretation category.

**Relationship between the Variables**

**Table 4.2 shows correlation between Politics of identity and Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan**

| Correlations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Politics of identity | Conflict Resolution |
| Politics of identity | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .986** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 230 | 230 |
| Conflict Resolution | Pearson Correlation | .986** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 230 | 230 |
| **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). | | | |

Source: Primary Data (2023)

Findings indicated that the high Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.986 indicates a very strong positive relationship between "Politics of identity" and "Conflict Resolution" in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan. The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1, where +1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, 0 indicates no correlation, and -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation. In this case, a coefficient of 0.986 indicates a nearly perfect positive correlation. The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 suggests that the correlation observed between these two variables is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This means that the likelihood of observing such a strong correlation by chance is very low. This implies that the strong positive correlation suggests that as the "Politics of identity" increase, there is a corresponding increase in "Conflict Resolution." This implies that areas with a higher emphasis on identity politics are also more likely to have active efforts towards conflict resolution. The correlation indicates that these two variables are closely related and interact with each other. It suggests that the dynamics of identity politics might play a role in shaping conflict resolution approaches, and vice versa. This also furthermore implies that recognizing the positive correlation between identity politics and conflict resolution, policymakers and stakeholders might find ways to leverage identity-related initiatives to promote peaceful conflict resolution strategies.

**4.1.4. Discussion of Findings**

The study found out that Overall mean= 4.25 & SD= 0.52 and this indicated that there are different ways on how the Politics of identity affects Conflict Resolution in Central Equatorial (Juba), South Sudan, and this was together rated by the  respondents as satisfactory. The finding of a satisfactory rating indicates that addressing the politics of identity could play a positive role in conflict resolution efforts in the Central Equatorial (Juba) region. This implication could guide policymakers and stakeholders in crafting more targeted interventions that acknowledge and utilize the impact of identity dynamics.

## 5.1. Conclusion

The study concluded that the politics of identity significantly intersect with conflict resolution efforts. The observed positive correlation between the two variables highlights the interplay between identity-driven dynamics and pathways to resolving conflicts. These findings emphasize the need for inclusive dialogue and strategies that acknowledge diverse identities, as fostering a sense of commonality while respecting individuality emerges as a pivotal approach in conflict resolution.

### 5.1.1 Recommendations of the study

The study recommends that there is need to encourage political leaders to adopt policies that emphasize inclusivity and equal representation for all identity groups in decision-making processes. This can help mitigate feelings of exclusion and reduce the potential for identity-based conflicts. It was also recommended that there is need to implement educational programs that raise awareness about the dangers of using identity politics to manipulate public sentiment. Encourage critical thinking and media literacy to help citizens distinguish between constructive political engagement and divisive tactics. There is also need to encourage interethnic collaborations in areas such as business, education, and public services. Joint efforts can help create a sense of shared identity beyond ethnicity.  It was also recommended to work towards decentralization and devolution of power to local communities, allowing them to have a say in matters that directly affect their lives. This can reduce feelings of marginalization and foster a sense of ownership.

There is need to establish neutral platforms for dialogue between different identity groups. Engaging in open discussions can foster understanding, empathy, and cooperation, which are essential for conflict resolution. It is vital to encourage collaborative projects that involve individuals from diverse identity backgrounds. Common goals and experiences can foster shared values and break down barriers.The study recommends that there is need to organize cultural exchange programs to promote understanding and appreciation of different ethnicities and cultures. This can help break down stereotypes and build bridges between groups. It is very essential to empower respected community leaders from various ethnic backgrounds to act as mediators and advocates for peaceful coexistence. Their influence can be invaluable in diffusing tensions.

## REFERENCES

[1]      Albeto J. E. (2011). Peace deserves a change. Limuru: Kolbe Press.

[2]      Amin, M.E. (2005). Social science research: Conception, methodology and analysis. Kampala: Makerere University Press.

[3]      Anderson, M. B. and Olson, L. (2003). Confronting war: Critical lessons for peace practitioners. Cambridge: The Collaborative for Development Action, Inc.

[4]      Azar .E. (1990). The management of protracted social conflict. Theory and cases. England: Dartmouth Publishing Company.

[5]      Batware, B. (2012). Rwandan ethnic conflicts: A Historical look at root causes. Stadtshianing: European Peace University.

[6]      Beshir, M.O. (1984). Ethnicity, regionalism and national cohesion in Sudan. Thousand Oaks:

[7]      Chandra, K. ( 2004). Why ethnic parties succeed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[8]      Chandra, K. (2012). Constructivist theories of ethnic conflict. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[9]      Che, A. M. (2016). Linking instrumentalist and primordialist theories of ethnic conflict.

[10]    Coetzee, (2009). The Anatomy of Racial Inequality: Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

[11]    Collier, P & Anke H. (2000). Greed and grievance in civil war. Washington DC: World Bank Policy Research, Working Paper 2355.

[12]    Collier, P. & Anke H. (2004). Greed and grievance in civil war. Oxford: Oxford Economic Papers 56 (4), 563–595.

[13]    Collier, P. & Anke, H. (1998). On economic causes of civil war. Oxford: Oxford Economic Papers 50 (4), 563–573.

[14]    Collignon, S. (2001). Availability of public health data about Norwegian refugees. Norway: City Press Publishers.

[15] Collins, (2008). Ethnic Groups in Conflict. London: University of California Press.

[16] Creswell, J.W. (1994). Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

[17] Deng FM, Gifford P (2007)The search for peace and unity in the Sudan. The Wilson Center Press, USA.

[18] Deng FM, Gifford P. (2015). Ethnic Conflict and International Politics: Explaining Diffusion and Escalation. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

[19] Dubrin, (2016). Modernization, ethnic competition, and the rationality of politics in contemporary Africa: Nigeria, Westview Press.

[20] Ellingsen, T. (2000). Colourful community or ethnic witches brew, multi ethnicity and domestic conflict during and after the Cold War. Journal of conflict resolution 44 (2): 228–249.

[21] Fearon, J. and David L. (2003). Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. American political science review 97 (1), 1–16.

[22] Francis (2013).The joy of the Gospel: Apostolisc exhortation. Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa.

[23] Ganesan, N. et al, (2007). Refugee self-settlement versus settlement on government schemes: The long-term consequences for security, integration and economic development of Angolan refugees (1966-1989) in Zambia. UNRISD, Discussion Paper.

[24] Gasper .R.(2007). The status and situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. A Review of the Current Documentation.

[25] Glien&Glien, (2003). Transitions to independence and ethnic nationalist mobilization: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[26] Hamm. B. I. (2001). Palestinian and Iraqi refugees and urban change in Lebanon and Syria.

[27] Hanagen, M. and Tilly, C. (2010). Cities, states, trust, and rule: new departures from the work of Charles Tilly. Theory and Society, 39(3/4):245-263.

[28] Hansen, A. (1995). The Refugee integration aspects in two settlement models in Zambia: The case of the north-western province. In Mijere, N. J. (Ed.).African refugees and human rights in host countries.

[29] Hanssen. B. (2007). Living in provisional normality: The living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the host countries of the Middle East. Nigerian: Prentice-Hall Publishers.

[30] Harper, A. (2008). Paying a price: Coping with closure in Jericho. Oslo: Zandi Publishers.

[31] Harper, A. (2008).Ignored and unwanted in Iraq. International review of the Red Cross, 90,: 169- 190.

[32] Hart, J. and Lo Forte, C. (2010). Human rights and the economy in Burma, In Collignon, S. Taylor, R. (Eds.).Burma political economy under military rule. London: Hurst &Company,:70-108

[33] Heppner, K. (2005). Sovereignty, survival and resistance: Contending perspectives on Karen internal displacement in Burma, Working Paper, Thailand: Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)

[34] Heppner, K. (2005). The potential of UNRWA-Data for research on Palestinian refugees, A Study of UNRWA administrative data, Palestine: London Publishers. In viewpoints: Migration and the mashreq. Washington DC: The Middle East Institute. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (1998-2018). Retrieved from: www.internaldisplacement.org/countries/south Sudan. Accessed 12th March. 2017.

[35] Jahan, S. (2004), Human rights-based approach to poverty reduction – analytical linkages, practical work and UNDP. Geneva: Working Paper.

[36] Jahan, S. (2004). An unworkable idea or a promising Alternative? Sen's capability approach reexamined. Working Paper. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

[37] Kaldor, M. (2013). In defense of new swars. Stability, 2(1): 1-16.

[38] Krejcie, R.V. and Morgan, D.W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. educational and psychological Measurement, 30: 607-610.

[39] Lederach, J. P. (1997). Building peace-sustainable reconciliation in divided societies. Washington D.C.: United States Institute for Peace Press.

[40] MacGinty, R. and Firchow, P. (2015). Top-down and bottom-up narratives of peace and conflict. Politics. 36(3):308-323

[41] Madut, K. F. (2015), Institutional development, governance, and ethnic policies in South Sudan. Ottawa: York University.

[42] Mamdani, M. (2001). When victims become killers: Colonialism, nativism, and the genocide in Rwanda. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[43] Maslow .A. (1943). A Theory of human motivation, psychological review, 50(4): 370-396.

[44] Mugenda, O.M and Mugenda A. G. (1999).Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches. Nairobi: African Centre for Technological Studies. (ACTS).

[45] Noel, A. (2016).The Refugee Integration Aspects in Two Settlement Models in Zambia: The Case of the North-Western Province. IN MIJERE, N. J. (Ed.) African refugees and human rights in host countries.

[46]    Nonato, R. (2016). Justice and peace manual, a tool for parish Justice and peace committees. Universal Printers Company Limited, Juba, South Sudan.

[47]    Nordstrom, C. (2004). Shadows of war. violence, power, and international profiteering in the twenty-first century. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[48]    Nyaba P. A. (1997). The policies of liberation, an insider's view, Kampala, Uganda Fountain publisher.

[49]    Posen, B. (1993). The security dilemma and ethnic conflict survival 35 (1): 27–47. Ramsbotham, O. (2005). The analysis of protracted social conflict: A Tribuste to Edward Azar, Review of International Studies, 31(1): 109-126.

[50]    Ramsbotham, O., & Woodhouse, T. (2011).Contemporary conflict resolution, Cambridge Polity.

[51]    Refugee Law Project, (2015). Report on rapid assessment of South Sudanese refugees influx into Northern Uganda, Kampala: Refugee Law Project.

[52]    Republic of Uganda, (2017). Uganda solidarity summit on refugees: Translating New York Declaration into Commitment, Kampala: The Office of the Prime Minister.

[53]    Ripsman, N, M. (2016). Peacemaking from above, Peace from below – Ending conflict between regional rivals. London: Cornell University Press.

[54]    Ritzer, G. (2008). Sociological theory (8thed.). New York: NY McGraw-Hills.

[55]    Robeyns, I. (2000). Protecting African children from political violence: The role of the international community. Oxford: RSC Policy Briefing.

[56]    Rop M. K.., (2016).Ethic violence in Africa. Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publication CUEA Press.

[57]    Salisu, S.S., Mohammed, A. and Abdulahi .S. Y. (2015). The impact of Boko Haram insurgency on Nigerian national security. International Journal of academic research in business and social sciences, 5 (6) issue No. 2222-6990: 254-256.

[58]    Sarantakos, S. (2000). Social research. Houndmills: Macmillan.

[59]    Sen, (2005). Ethnic Conflict in India. New York: St Martin's Press.

[60]    Shulika. Et al. (2011).Living in provisional normality: the living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the host countries of the Middle East. Nigerian: Prentice Hall Publishers.

[61]    Slezkine& Suny, (1994). Keeping the Peace and Lasting Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts: 60 Jonkoping: Johns Hopkins University Press.

[62]    United Nations International Commission of Inquiry for Burundi (UNICIB) Final Report, (1996): Available at: http://www.datasheets.net/pdf/atmel.com/doc0401.pdf. Retrieved on 10th February, 2017.

[63]    Uvin, P. (1999). Ethnicity and power in Burundi and Rwanda: Different paths to mass violence comparative politics 31 (3): 253–271.

[64]    Vanhanen, T. (1999). Domestic ethnic conflict and ethnic nepotism: A Comparative analysis journal of peace research 36 (1): 55–73.

[65]    VOA News (2017). South Sudan now largest crisis in Africa. Available at: https://www.voanews.com/a/south-sudan-is-now-largest-refugees-crisis-inafrica/3718522.html. Retrieved on 10th February, 2017.