FACTORS AFFECTING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BETWEEN COUNTY
GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES IN KENYA

(A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY)

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
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AND LEADERSHIP OF THE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA.

MARCH 2017
DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE
This research project is my own original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signature: …………………………… Date: …………………
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ODL-BML/1/00021/3/2013

DECLARATION BY THE SUPERVISOR
This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

Signature: …………………………… Date: …………………
LEONARD WAMBUA, PhD
The Management University of Africa.
DEDICATION

Affectionately, this document is dedicated to my beloved family, father Simon Ngari, My mum Nancy Ngithi, My brothers as well as my sisters who gave me support, encouraged me and stood by my side during the entire course work.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My special gratitude to the Almighty God for enabling me achieve this research project successfully. He has given me good health, strength, sound mind, and inspiration throughout the entire process of taking this course and particularly the completion of this research project.

Special thanks to my supervisor Dr. Leonard Wambua (MUA University) for advising and guiding me on how to write this research project professionally.
My sincere thanks goes to “The Management University of Africa” – Nairobi, Kenya for the support and knowledge that I have gained from them since I joined the University in Sep. 2013.

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I would like to extend my thanks to my beloved family, parents, family members, and all persons who assisted me in one way or the other for the realization of the success of this course.
May the Almighty Father bless every one of you.
ABSTRACT
Conflict is experienced everywhere in the whole world, and even in the senses of humans’ individual mind, and it has ever been omnipresent for every individual regardless of time and place. However, all entities that work together need to be in “good-relations” and be able to manage their dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts effectively, hence the County Governments and their respective Business Communities, and in particular in Embu County should “follow suit” as well. The objectives of the study included examining whether “the County policies, the stakeholders’ participation, the communication processes, and the skills of County Government employees” affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Governments and Business Communities in Kenya, a case study of Embu County, and the target population was 50,816 people, from which a sample size of 46 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling technique. The research instruments for data-collection were the questionnaires, interviews, and self-observation, whereby reliability and validity of the questionnaires was ensured through piloting, the data was qualitatively and quantitatively processed, analyzed using descriptive statistics, and presentation done in form of tables, figures, frequencies and percentages. According to the data analysis/respondents’ responses, the research findings were that all the four independent variables had great effect on the relationship between members of the two groups, hence were sighted as being great factors affecting dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between the two entities, though at different percentage, degree or “extent”. In the conclusion, the study revealed that, it is from the foundation of “formulating/adopting or/and establishing fair and just county polices; frequent consultations, meaningful involvement/participations of stakeholders/general public during decision-making process of sensitive issues affecting the traders’ sector; effective communication processes, better communication channels; plus equipping the county government employees with the fundamental/required managerial skills (and more so, public relation skills)”, that the “out-group” of any relationship will build trust, confidence, value, friendship and positive perception concerning the “in-group” entity, hence the issue of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts will be addressed effectively. Recommendations of the study were that, there is great need for intensifying the relationship between County Governments and their esteemed customers, more notably, the Business Community members at all times, as they carry-out their day-to-day operations in Embu County, Embu County Government to consider (widely) the effect of county policies before establishing, formulating, or/and adopting the same, Embu County Governments’ relevant organs to be granting stakeholders the opportunity to participate effectively and sufficiently in “matters of concern” so as to prevent most of the dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts “stemming” from failure of same., there is need to acquire, practice, and apply more effective communication processes/skills, and communicate widely on matters/issues affecting members of both groups in order to work as one team, Embu County Government employees to be granted a chance to attend courses and trainings that offers Public Rations skills and other fundamental skills related to their field of operations. Embu County Government to consider establishing “public relations practitioners’/ conflict-resolution offices/ committees. There is great need for encouraging more research activities so as to unearth and analyze various factors associated with challenges facing Embu County Governments’ operations, in order to obtain effective solutions to address the same. Embu County government to observe “Quality Delivery Services” to the constituents, and the general cleanliness in the public places especially collection of garbage in the towns and markets within its area of jurisdiction. “Strategies Development” is necessary in any organization/relationship in order to curb or reduce dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts at their infancy stage(s). This can be realized through attainment of effective conflict management, and it is advisable that Embu County Government should “follow suit” as well.
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MCAS - Members of County Assembly
P.R.  - Public Relations
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

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<td>County</td>
<td>A geographical unit envisioned by the 2010 constitution of Kenya as the unit of devolved government.</td>
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<td>Business Community</td>
<td>The body of individuals who manage business.</td>
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction
In this chapter, the researcher covers and discusses the following concepts:
- The background of the study, statement of the problem, the research objectives, the research questions, justification of the study, scope of the study, and the chapter summary.

1.1 The Background of The Study
Conflict is experienced everywhere in the whole world – globally, internationally, nationally, locally, and even in the senses of humans’ individual mind, and it has ever been omnipresent for every individual regardless of time and place, (Adams, J., 1999).
Conflict refers to some form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within individuals or groups, in situations where the beliefs, acts, or reactions, and decisions made by one or more members of one group are either resisted by, or unacceptable to one or more members of another group. (Ahuja, V. 1998)
In another perspective, conflict has been defined as “an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings towards each other” – (Fisher, 1990). The incompatibility or differences may exist in reality, or may only be perceived by the parties involved. Nonetheless, Dana (2001) asserts that the opposing actions and the hostile emotions are very real hallmarks of human conflict. It is critical to note that conflict can occur at a number of levels/ categories of human functioning. In this regard the researcher wishes to highlight some four levels/categories of conflicts which are of paramount significance concerning this study, and are as follows:
The first level/category of conflict starts from the individuals’ heads or minds, and is referred to as intrapersonal conflict, (Ahuja, V. 1998). The second is referred to as interpersonal conflict, the third level/category of conflicts is referred to as intergroup conflict, and the forth one is referred to as intergroup conflict.

Intrapersonal conflict: This happens in incidents where a person experiences, or engages himself or herself, or is in a state of “critical thinking” concerning different types of opposing motives, ideas, or some decision-making in his/her head/mind, a situation which is termed to be the first level of conflict in human’s life, and it is expressed by the holder’s internal dialogue, (Ahuja, V. 1998).
**Interpersonal conflict:** This refers to a conflict between two individuals and typically occurs due to how people are different from one another, (Clark, 2002)

It is also known as “dyadic conflict”.

Then, the above two situations are followed by “social conflicts”, whereby conflicts occurs between people, whether they are acting as individuals, as members of groups, or as representatives of Business Communities, Companies, Organizations, or Nations, (Ahuja, V. 1998).

This may take “the due course” (broadly) in two levels/categories of conflicts-namely: - Intragroup conflicts, and Intergroup conflicts.

**Intragroup conflict:** This involves conflicts experienced within or between members of the same group. Here, a group may experience either “substantive conflicts” (conflicts based on intellectual disagreement among group members), or “affective conflicts” (conflicts based on emotional responses to a situation) as explained by Dana, (2001).

**Intergroup conflicts:** According to Dietz, (1987), this refers to conflict that take-place between two or more different groups, each consisting of their “loyal members”, and involves violence, interpersonal discord, psychological tension, plus other situations related to these.

Having touched on the existence, the awareness, and the familiarization of the four broad levels/categories of conflicts which are associated with human beings’ engagement in their day-to-day operations and amongst their relationship(s), the researcher hereby finds it of great importance to point-out that there are two (broad) types of conflicts, namely Functional conflicts and Dysfunctional conflicts- (small Biz). He also wish to define these two types of conflicts and express their impact in humans’ relations.

**Functional conflicts:** These are conflicts known to be associated with entities’ management/operations, and generally involves people who are genuinely interested in amicably solving problems that may arise amongst themselves, also willing to listen to one another and cooperate in their “under-takings” as well as in their usual operations, and actually advocates for “cordial-relationship” amongst the members or groups, Fisher, R. (2000).

**Dysfunctional conflicts:** This type of conflict involves disputes and disagreements that affects the effective performance of the concerned entities, while at the same time, negatively impacting the relationship(s) between members of the associated entities and creates rivalry atmosphere, which mostly leads to mass-actions, strikes, stand-offs, and other sorts of negative acts and reactions/behaviors by the public or the affected stakeholders, Fisher, R. (2000).
These situations eventually end up into destruction of properties, injuring of the concerned participants, and at times, to the extent of loss of lives. According to Loomis and Loomis (1965), “conflict is an ever-present process in humans’ relations”. When “turning-the-other-cheek” fails, many people are at a loss in dealing with conflict because conflict situations appear with frequency, at daily basis, in public, as well as in private life, and maybe in small or large scale, occurring between groups, communities, or nations that disagree or dispute over certain issues as the case(s) may be. As a result of the above discussions, the researcher was enthusiastic concerning exploring the attributes for the occurrences of frequent dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between two groups working interdependently, hence decided to conduct this study under the research-topic “Factors Affecting Conflict Management between County Governments and Business Communities in Kenya”, a case study of Embu County, (United Nations 2012).

According to Fisher, R. (2000), Conflicts management involves designing effective strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict, and enhancing the constructive functions of conflicts in order to enhance learning and effectiveness of organization in its operations. As explained by Hendrickson, (1996), in order to effectively address the concept of “conflict-management”, and at the same time achieve the main objective of this study, the researcher proposed engagement of the following strategies: formulation/ adoption of effective county policies plus smooth implementation processes through friendly-felt techniques applications; effective and sufficient stakeholders’ participation to be prioritized during decision making deliberations; effective communication processes to be applied in “encode-decode” activities; and effective plus adequate acquisition of fundamental managerial skills of county government employees. (Ahuja, V. 1998)

For the purpose of this study, the author focused (mainly) on the “context of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts”, and categorically examined some of the popular and possible factors which affects effective management of this “phenomenon” between county governments and their respective business communities globally, internationally, nationally, and even locally, a situation that negatively affects the relationship between members of the two concerned groups. (Ahuja, V. 1998)

It’s unfortunate that, the researcher revealed that quite often than not, some controversial county-policies, inadequate stakeholders’ participation (or at times none at all) during the counties’ proposals and deliberation processes on “Sensitive Bills” that affects various constituents, lack of proper consultations, ineffective and insufficient communication (or none at times), ineffective and inadequacy of the fundamental managerial skills (especially
public relations skills) among most of the county government employees. County Government’s failure in the necessary involvement concerning issues pertaining to the stakeholders’ expectations concerning “Quality Service Delivery” (especially failure in garbage collection plus other sorts of general cleanliness/maintenance in the counties’ towns and markets), some unfriendly decision-making, plus other related factors, affects, influences and contributes to the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between the two groups, a situation that leads to the Business community members engaging in mass-protests, demonstrations, boycotts, mass actions and all other sorts of “unbecoming behaviors”, as a way of expressing their dissatisfactions of same, and also opts to resist against some of the County Governments’ usual operational practices such as paying market fees, bus park fees, and cess fees, a situation that leads to great loss of County Governments’ revenue, (Ahuja, V. 1998). Notably, all these reactions, acts and unbecoming behaviors by unruly publics also leads to the realization of loss of properties, and to some extent, loss of human lives, plus the overall side-effect of both groups’ day-to-day peaceful operations, their friendly relations, and other related consequences amongst the concerned members.

According to Hendrickson, (1996), it is critical to learn that such anarchy occurrences and other related deeds and acts/engagements by the affected Business Community members and the general public’s during the expression of their dissatisfactions concerning some of the County’s decisions made, are mostly witnessed during implementation processes of County’s Policies, By-laws, Regulations, mostly related to the implementation of various increments of fees-charges on the “Business Activities”, market gate fee, bus park fees, cess fees, as well as during other operations such as allocation/relocation of sites where hawkers and other temporary traders carry-on their various operations as a way of earning their “daily bread”, the research revealed, (AlterNet, 2011). Other County government’s operations which causes dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts and resistance between their administration and the affected or concerned constituents include demolition of illegal constructions, as well as temporary and obstructive structures elevated by some individuals or groups of people without following the formal and legal procedures as the County Policies may be requiring, the researcher revealed,

In Kenya, there are 47 Counties which are governed by 47 County Governments – (Embu County Government is one of the 47 Counties). The County Governments came in to existence in the year 2010, August, after the new constitution of Kenya was constituted and promulgated officially by President Mwai Kibaki, the third President of the Republic of Kenya. However, the County governments came into effect (fully) in the year 2013, March,
after the Kenya’s first General Election under the new constitution, and they “took-over” (among other responsibilities) the functions which were under-taken by the 175 Local Authorities which operated under the Ministry of Local Government during the regime of the then “government of the day”, the researcher revealed.

According to AlterNet, (2011), the Local Authorities existed during the era of the old constitution of Kenya, as were constituted through Cap.265 of the Laws of Kenya, and empowered to oversee a number of functions and various transactions as the case would be. Since the year 2013, Kenya operates under Devolved Governance, as expressed in the devolution content, which is enshrined in chapter 11 of the new constitution of Kenya – 4th schedule, (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Globally, internationally, nationally, and locally, all entities that work together need to be in “good-relations” to each other, and the County Governments versus their respective Business Communities, and in particular in Embu County should not be an exceptional under any circumstances. But nowadays, more often than not, this aspect of “good-relations” between the two groups is greatly “dented” due to the existence of frequent dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts occurrences that are brought-about by some disagreements and disputes which arises every other time between these two entities over certain issues, resulting to creation of “poor public relations” between them, (Duffield, 1997). According to Orodho (2004), as a County Government, the management’s operations are facilitated through the revenue/resources realized from the “Business Community Members” and other related stakeholders, because every person or company trading within the County’s area of jurisdiction has to pay certain amount of money to that effect, and thereafter, the revenue realized there-in, is utilized for financing the County’s operational and recurrent budgets. On the other hand, the County Government provides various types of services to the same Business Community members and to the general publics as part of the County Governments’ responsibility, and as the Business Communities’ right to receive the services. According to Brett Hutchinson-bus, “Public Relations are a pivot part of any business because it is the direct line of communication between the business and the public”. Further, Orodho (2004) asserts that, “a business or a government institution has to know and understand the general publics’ needs and concerns”. The concerned entities also are expected to build and maintain a “positive reputation” of being committed, open, honest, accountable, trustworthy, and effective involvement with the public, (AlterNet, 2011).
By so doing, the issue of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict occurrences between entities working interdependently (such as the Embu County Government employees and its Business Community members) will be addressed, the consequences which stems from such conflicts shall be curbed/ or avoided, while at the same time, cordial-relations will be realized, practiced, and maintained amongst the concerned members of the two groups, (Rout and Omiko, 2007)

1.3 The objectives
1.3.1 General objective
The general objective of this research is to explore the factors that affects conflict management in a manner that leads to the occurrences of frequent dysfunctional intergroup conflict experienced between the County Governments and their respective business communities globally and in particular Embu county. Secondly, the researcher aims at finding-out the effective, applicable, attainable, and reliable solution(s) to the dysfunctional-intergroup conflict-challenges which have “tinted” the “cordial-relations” between the two groups greatly and for a long period.

1.3.2 Specific objectives
At the completion of this research, the researcher is determined to achieve the following specific objectives: -

i. To examine whether County Policies affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

ii. To establish whether stakeholders’ participation affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

iii. To determine the usefulness of communication processes in dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

iv. To find-out whether skills of County Government employees affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

1.4 The Research Questions
i. Does County Policies affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?
ii. Does stakeholders’ participation affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

iii. How useful are the communication processes in dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

iv. Do the skills of County Government employees affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

1.5 Justification of the study

In the current dispensation, all over the modern world, good public relations between entities working together in an “interdependence status”, may they be government institutions, public organizations, NGOs, and all sorts of firms and companies versus their clients/customers has been intensified greatly, and relations between County Governments versus their respective Business Communities (Embu County included) is expected to be intensified as well according to Farson, N. (1950). Through the help of some wide consultations among the relevant stakeholders, some lengthy survey, plus self-observations, the researcher has revealed that the relationship between these two entities has been greatly affected (negatively) by frequent occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts which have been experienced between members of the two groups within their field of operations for a long period, and discovered that the solution(s) to this phenomenon lies squarely, entirely, and precisely in the views, opinions, proposals, suggestions, and observation of the directly-affected population and other relevant types of stakeholders, as well as the related professionals, diplomats plus all sorts of the associated “players”, having been summarized and presented in a form of “findings, suggestions, conclusion and recommendations” to that effect.

After analyzing the content in all the above discussions, the researcher concluded that such results can only be convincingly achieved through conducting an effective, efficient, and comprehensive research, hence he decided to carry-out this type of study, being a of case-study in Embu County because he is concerned with the nowadays’ ever changing and advancing world’s “ways of doing things”, in terms of dealing with issues pertaining the “giver-receiver” relationship, as well as the “customer satisfaction, respect/value of the customer, quality service delivery, and courteous approach to customers especially when in one-on-one engagement”, among other such valuable aspects, and he is interested in seeing that the way operations are carried-out between County Governments and their respective Business Communities are also upgraded.
The researcher believes that this research shall benefit the following entities:

**Embu County Government**

This research will be of great benefit to Embu County Government because it will identify and provide in-sight of the factors which affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between the government and the Business Community and at the same time, provide the techniques and mechanisms for dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management and minimize the degree of its occurrences.

**The Business Community**

The Business Community members will be comfortable when trading within the County’s area of jurisdiction after realizing that their properties will be safe from any loss or destruction associated with dysfunctional-intergroup conflict occurrences between them and the County officers while in their “line-of-duty”.

**The County Employees**

The county employees will benefit in that they will enjoy the “cordial-relationship” with the business community members, especially when they are in their line-of-duty, as well as when they meet in social places with the traders, due to the improved good public relations after the realization of the “dysfunctional-intergroup conflict effective management” which the researcher anticipates will be achieved through conducting this research and implementation of its recommendations.

1.5 **Scope of the study**

The scope of the study was “Embu County”, which is a geographical-administrative region in Mt Kenya, with a population of 516212 people by the year 2009, and was projected to have grown up to 591,415 people by the year 2017, (KPHC, 2009).

This study was carried-out between May 2016 and October 2016.

1.6 **Chapter Summary**

This chapter covers the following sub-headings; the background of the study, statement of the problem, the general objective and the specific objectives of the study, the research questions, the justification and significance of the study, and the scope of the study.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.0 Introduction
This chapter covers the conflict-literature review as per the following sub-headings:
Theoretical literature review, empirical literature review, summary and research gaps,
conceptual framework, operationalization of variables, and chapter summary.

2.1 Theoretical literature review
In a general view concerning conflicts “theoretical review concept”, the past studies points
out that “the nature of conflict” (generally) expresses that conflict is natural, inevitable,
necessary, and normal, Hogg, R. (1998). Past studies also revealed that the problem is not the
existence of conflict, but it is how we manage it, and that conflict occurs between people in
all kinds of relationships, and in all social setting. Because of the wide range of potential
differences among people, the absence of conflict usually signals the absence of “meaningful
interaction(s)”, a “state” which proves that conflict by itself is neither good or bad, but the
manner in which conflict is handled determines whether it is “constructive or destructive” –
(Deutsch and Coleman, 2000).

According to Abdi, A. (2011), the ambivalence about conflict is rooted in the same primary
challenge(s) which the “conflict-resolvers” face- that is “coming to terms with the nature of
conflict”, whereby they (the conflict-resolvers) may view/think of conflict on many different
levels of the occurrences, a situation that largely determines their attitude and approach to
dealing with this “Phenomenon”. In this regard, conflict maybe viewed as; a feeling, a disagreement, real or perceived
incompatibility of interest(s), an inconsistent worldviews, or a set of behaviors.

2.1.1 Conflict Theory
Conflict theory is a theory propounded by Karl Marx that claims society is in a state of
perpetual conflict due to competition for limited resources. It holds that social order is
maintained by domination and power, rather than consensus and conformity, and the theory
points-out that those with wealth and power try to hold on to it by any means possible, chiefly
by suppressing the poor and powerless. In another perspective, having developed an “in-
built” enthusiasm concerning the effect/impact of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict and social
conflict on relationships between two or more groups, the researcher sought to explore the
theories pertaining this category of conflict “categorically and selectively”, for the purpose of
attaining effectiveness in addressing and analyzing dysfunctional-intergroup conflict/social conflict, hence be able to unearth, and then discuss some of the “thorny factors”, which surrounds this phenomena, and affects its management between the County Governments and their respective Business Communities, expressly in Embu County.

2.1.2 Dysfunctional Conflict
Dysfunctional conflict is a type of conflict which is associated with obstruction of the achievement of goals of a group or groups, (Abdi, A. 2011).

It is also called “destructive conflict”, and it is characterized by increased tension among the concerned members, a situation that mostly results in anxiety, uncertainty, hostility, and frustrations, and to some extent, dysfunctional conflict results to destruction of properties, or even loss of lives of members of the conflicting groups.

2.1.3 Intergroup Conflict
According to Dietz, (1987), intergroup conflict is a term that refers to disagreements or confrontations between two or more groups and their members, may involve physical violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension, and is associated with several theories as discussed below.

2.1.4 Theories of intergroup conflict
The three theories which have received the most attention in the literature of intergroup conflict are: –

Realistic Conflict Theory (RCT)
This theory is probably the oldest of all other theories which are discussed in the intergroup conflict literature. According to RCT, conflict is due to the presence of incompatible goals between groups (Armstrong, 1998). The conflict is termed realistic because it can be based on real competition for scarce resources (Esses et al, 1998), based on any real threat between groups (Kinzel and Fisher, 1993), or formally institutionalized by the organization, presented as being a competition (Taffel, 1982).

Social Identity Theory (SIT)
This theory is the second theory which has received considerable attention, and it is based on the ideas that, people as individuals have a personal identity, and as group members, have a social identity (Irvine and Baker, 1995). As individuals identify more with a certain group, they begin to assume characteristics (both successes and failures) of the group as their own, and develop a sense of who they are (Irvine and Baker, 1995). Identifying with the group then gives them a positive distinctiveness which leads to in-group bias and cohesion (Brown and Abrams, 1986). This group identification is also thought to enhance self-esteem (Ashforth
and Mael, 1989). All of these things are thought to occur even in the absence of strong leadership or cohesion (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Simply assigning someone to group is enough to foster group identification, (Tajfel, 1982), and according to Ashforth and Mael (1989), the in-group bias grows stronger and differences with the out-group are emphasized during competition.

**The Contact Hypothesis Theory (CHT)**

This is the third major theory discussed concerning intergroup conflict. The idea behind this theory is that contact, or interaction between members of different groups should lead to positive feelings about one another which will in turn reduce conflict (Nelson, 1989). Interaction between the groups is also thought to maintain permeability of the boundaries between the groups and provide networks for conflict resolution (Nelson, 1989).

**2.2 Empirical Literature Review**

Highlighting on the “conflict management empirical review concept”, the researcher revealed that there have been numerous occurrences of protests/mass actions across the republic of Kenya (in various Counties), and globally as well, and these encounters are popularly regarded as being triggered by dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts “stemming” from disagreements, and disputes over some contentious issues believed (by the opposing group) to be contained in the proposed changes/ policies intended to be implemented by the County Government, or are in some already newly initiated changes, or put-in place systems of the county government’s formal operations. In the event(s) of such kind of engagement, Business Community members and other affected constituents tend to “resist those changes”, (change-resistance practices), hence fails to comply with the specific implementation(s), or the application of County Policies, By-laws, or Regulations that directly or indirectly affects them, a situation that leads to unfriendly ways of exchanging words, then to quarrels and confrontations, and then, eventually turns to occurrence of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict, which, at most times calls for “formal mechanism” to be applied through engaging the representatives of both groups to “conflict-resolving” processes in order to address the “thorny issues” therein - research revealed. Such incidents mostly occurs during changes on various fee payments rates charged to Business community members concerning their respective business activities such as Single Business Permit (SBP); Market Gate Fee (MGF); Stock Gate Fee (SGF); Bus Park Fee (BPF); Cess Fees, during allocation/relocation of the sites where hawkers and other temporary traders carry-on their day-to-day business operations and during demolitions of illegal structures/constructions, for instance kiosks and
bandas constructed by traders without permission from relevant county offices mandated for same, and also lack of some essential services delivery to/for the constituents, delayed service delivery, or poor service delivery, all are associated with “triggering” the dysfunctional intergroup conflict escalation between the two groups, (Abdi, A. 2011). According to Ducey, (2001), in all the incidents of dysfunctional intergroup conflict occurrences, the disputants blame/accuse the County Government Administration for introducing some “unfriendly-felt policies” which are imposed to the Business Community Members without effective/proper communication and sensitization of the policies introduction/existence, and why/when the changes are to be applied, lack of proper/sufficient public/stakeholders’ participation and consultations during the opinions collection, and during decision-making process pertaining the attainment of the policies, By-laws and Regulations; and the manner in which the whole exercise is executed, which, according to the affected constituents, they question the degree of competence of the County employees who executes the operations/implementations in reference to their skills and expertise, plus the general “PR” during such operations- the research revealed.

On the other hand, the County Government employees believes/argues that all processes during establishment of all the County Policies, By-laws, and Regulations are always properly followed, and the implementations plus the application of the same are all procedural, only that some of the affected Business community members and the general publics are somewhat ignorance and reluctant to comply with the governing mechanisms therein, hence perceives as though there is enmity and rivalry between them and the County government employees, a “state” that leads to them (the Business Community Members) tending to belief-believe that they are being harassed, bulldozed, or treated in a disrespectful manner during such operations, whereas in actual fact it is the law that takes its formal course, the county government management argues, (Javenpoa, 2008). Past studies express that it is very essential for any Business/operational entity, may it be private owned or public operated facility to be in good-terms, with its clients plus the general public and create, practice, and maintain good public relations amongst members of both sides. According to Clark (2002), “the role of Public Relations is to help an entity regain corporate trust, - (now business), must provide Public Relations with a seat at the executive level management table rather than just relying on it when crisis arises”. Also Laurie Wilhelm stressed that “Strong positive interpersonal relationships are essential towards achieving our success, whether they be work relationships, family relationships or relationships with others in our communities. We are in almost constant contact with others and we should make every contact an opportunity to strengthen our social skills and reinforce our relationships”.

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But unfortunately, contrary to the modern world’s status of cordial friendship expectations to be achieved/realized and maintained amongst entities who are working interdependently as the case is between the County Governments and their respective Business Communities, more so in Embu County, the researcher noted with a lot of concern that this initiative has not been realized effectively due to the inconveniences brought-about by the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict between members of both groups and the consequences that “stems” from the existence of this “phenomenon”, a fact that necessitated him to select some four variables/factors, and put them into “organizational lens” in order to form a “formal frame-work” to enable him analyze and understand the whole scenario concerning Dysfunctional-Intergroup Conflict in a manner that brings “the phenomenon” into better focus. The four variables/factors selected were as follows: - County policies, Stakeholders’ participation, Communication processes, and Skills of County Government employees.

2.2.1 County Policies
According to AlterNet (2011), Policies are meant to be “formulated or adopted by an organization”, and the 47 Counties in Kenya fits quite well in this category of entities (organizations), which is why all the Counties are mandated and empowered by the new constitution of Kenya to formulate policies of their own choice and “preference”, and apply those policies in the manner they consider to be appropriate in their operational systems or organizational culture(s), while governing their constituents. However, the main concern surrounding the whole episode of County Policies and procedures is the “context” therein-i.e. whether there exists stakeholders’ involvement when constituting those policies, whether the policies are “friendly” to the affected entities, the manner or design in which they are implemented, and how effectively the whole exercise plus its purposiveness in the County’s field of operations was communicated to the relevant affected persons, as well as the courteousness in the approach design applied by the County employees when they directly engage the stakeholders, and more so, the Business Community during the day-to-day operations, the research revealed.

The research further revealed that as a matter of fact, all the above highlighted aspects are some of the major “determinants” of either acceptance or resistance “state” concerning the County Policies to Business Communities and other affected/interested stakeholders in their respective County Governments- (inclusive of Embu County), the research revealed. According to Javenpoa, (2008), the essence of the County Governments to constitute “formal” County Policies, (plus other legal documents relevant to these as the need would be), in real sense, basically is to combine the legal-legitimacy “state” provided by such
documents, in order to have a framework guidelines towards attainment of “formal/legal structured mechanisms” to be applied through the “put-in place organizational functional systems”, so as to create and ratify a substantial governing provisions/legislations to be employed in controlling, directing, or/and managing all the activities/operations taking-place within the County’s area of jurisdiction, with a hope of acceptance by all the constituents therein. As Vaema (2004) pointed-out, policies refers to “the principles or rules to guide decisions and achieve rational out-come(s). But, despite all the great hopes and high expectations from the County governing organ on the acceptance of the County policies by the affected/interested stakeholders such as Business Communities, at times there develops some resistance or non-compliance by/from some members, and when the County government administration opts to enforce the law so as to achieve the desired results/objectives, sometimes the affected stakeholders defies the orders, a situation that accrues some kind of confrontations, then exchange of bitter words, quarrels, chasing and arresting of the insurgent Business Community members, a state that causes some sorts of anarchy, leading to loss of properties/loss of lives, all which are attributed to the dysfunctional intergroup conflict between the members of these two groups, and these scenarios are notably witnessed between various traders (Business Communities) versus Revenue collectors and enforcement officers (County Governments) - the research revealed.

2.2.2 Stakeholders’ Participation

According to FAO. (2004), Participation refers to joint-consultations in decision-making, goal setting, profit sharing, team work, and other such measures through which a firm attempts to foster or increase its employees’ or customers’ commitment to collective objectives, and Stakeholders’ participation (engagement) is the process by which an organization involves people who may be affected by the decisions it makes, or can influence the implementation of its decisions. They may support or oppose the decisions, be influential in the organization, or within the community in which it operates, hold relevant official positions or be affected in the long term. Therefore stakeholders’ engagement (participation) is a key part of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

As asserted by Wilmet and Hocker (2001), Companies engage their stakeholders in dialogue to find-out which social and environmental issues matters-most to them about their performance in order to improve decision-making and accountability, and more importantly to note is that engaging stakeholders is a requirement of the “Global Reporting Initiative” (GRI), network-based organization with sustainability reporting framework that is widely used around the world, and it is an effective tool used by “mature” private and public sector
organizations especially when they want to develop understanding and agree to solutions on complex issues or issues of concern- (contentious issues).

Jeffrey (2009) wrote on stakeholders’ engagement (participation), and expressed that, “a roadmap to meaningful engagement describes several core values or the practices of gaining meaningful participation”, whereby perhaps the three most critical core values are:-

Stakeholders should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives or essential environment for life; Stakeholders’ participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate; and Stakeholders’ participation includes the promise that stakeholders’ contribution will influence the decision arrived-at. Touching on the participation and its importance, Brager, Specht, and Torczyner (2001) wrote, “Participation is a means to educate citizens and to increase their competence”. It is a vehicle for influencing decisions that affect the lives of citizens and an avenue for ensuring success of any worthwhile functional Business/Entity. Citizen participation is a process by which citizens act in response to public concerns, voice their opinions about decisions that affect them, and take responsibility for changes to their community, and their support is key for the sustainability of a community entity”, (Armitage, 2003). But on the other hand, participation can also be a method to co-opt, or dissent a mechanism for ensuring the receptivity, sensitivity, and even accountability of social services to the customers. As Oakkey and Marsden (2007) wrote, “community participation is a major form of stakeholders’ support to any under-taking” According to Mbata (2006), “if willingness to pay for specific services increases in the community, then it is possible to conclude that the awareness of the community about ownership also increases for that service”.

According to Doss, (2005), part from the specific stakeholders’ participation, the general publics’ participation is also essential to be observed because it has a great impact in “shaping” how successfully an organization operates, which in other words implies that the public’s contribution will influence the decisions made at all such a time that they are involved, and their contribution(s) considered and included in the final end-results. By analyzing all the above discussions concerning stakeholders’/public participation, the indications therein implies that if the County governments fails to grant sufficient stakeholders’ participation and public participation (or grants none at all) during the essential decision-making, formulating of County Policies, or when planning on when to start certain implementations/changes in its operational systems/mechanisms, such changes are very likely to encounter some kind of resistance from the target population (in this study, the Business Community members), a situation that influences the occurrence of dysfunctional-intergroup
conflict between members of the two groups working in an interdependence status, the research revealed.

2.2.3 Communication processes
According to Oakkey and Marsden (2007), Communication processes are the guides towards realizing effective communication, and it is through the communication processes that the sharing of a common meaning between the sender and the receiver takes place. Communication refers to a two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas, and feelings, but also create and share meaning.

Generally, Guliye, (2007) says that communication is a means of connecting people or places, and in functional entities, it is a key function of management because an organization cannot operate without communication between the associated parties. In management context, there are four major types of communication- namely: Interpersonal communication, Nonverbal communication, written communication, and Oral communication. As explained by Doss, (2005), Humans are very imperfect communicators, and sometimes this imperfection generates conflict, whether or not there is a significant incompatibility of interest, and it almost always makes conflict harder to solve. Conflicts frequently escalates because people acts on the assumptions that they have communicated accurately when they have actually not, and when they learn that others (the receivers of their messages) are acting on the basis of different information and assumptions, they often attribute this to “bad faith, or deviousness”, and not the “imperfections of human communication”. Sometimes communication takes more energy and focus than someone is able or willing to give at a critical point, and it is easy to become discouraged, or hopeless about communicating effectively in serious conflicts, but there is always room for improving people’s communication skills and processes for effective communication realization even in very “intense conflicts”, (Doss, 2005).

In a general view, the available evidence by James Cash Penney “holds” that “effective communication processes”, if applied properly, appropriately and effectively by an organization and its associates, have quite fundamental roles in the “healthier-operational status” of the organization, as well as better-status of the well-being for its stakeholders and other interested entities, hence strengthening their relations positively, and thus creates a “dysfunctional-intergroup conflict-free” environment, a situation that promotes cordial relationship between the “in-group and the out-group”, a “state” that results to eradication or
minimization of such kind of “phenomenon” and the consequences associated therein. “The art of effective listening is essential to clear communication, and clear communication is necessary to management success”, (Behnke, 1993). According to Clark, (2002), through application of effective communication processes, the organization is able to encode effectively and also able to receive “feed-back” from its stakeholders plus other interested entities/the general public, and be able to evaluate its “service-delivery quality and quantity status” to the concerned/affected entities, and also have a chance of getting the “real picture” of the kind of “perception” and other related aspects that the external-world “holds-of-it”, and its management’s functionality effectiveness, hence align itself according to the expectations and suggestions therein, so as to portray a positive reputation to that effect, hence dysfunctional-inter group conflict reduction is realized between county governments and their respective business communities.

2.2.4 Skills of County Government Employees

According to Clark, (2002), Skills are essential aspects for strengthening and maintaining “better-terms” in public relations between County Government employees and Business community members, and as its meaning suggests, “being skilled” is the ability to do something well and can also be translated to mean “special ability or capability to handle special and sensitive issues in a better way, in order to achieve positive results, maintain peace, and execute work/manage everything efficiently”- (DPM, 2008), and as McDade (2004) puts it, “individuals with good management skills are considered to be good leaders, and therefore, through their leadership, organizations are steered to prosperity”.

Collier, P. (1998) says that Precise nature of leadership and its relationship to key criterion variables such as customers’ satisfaction, recognition of value of the customers, employees’ commitment to quality delivery service and performance, are some of the key factors which influence stakeholders to develop trust and faith in the concerned organization.

In this regard, Caselton, WF. (1992), it means that lack of the required skills to execute the due operations, or when County employees are handling sensitive issues affecting their esteemed customers can very likely result to negative out-comes that may lead to occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict between them and their affected customers, and that skilled, experienced and well knowledgeable employees in their field of operation(s)/professions, are vital “assets” in their work-places, to their societies, their counties, their countries, and in the whole world at large, (Clark 2002).

This study revealed that generally, the past generations were comfortable when doing their day-to-day operations in a kind of generalized manner, where by the “general knowledge”
was applied in most (if not all) of human interactions as well as in the business transactions and in public office-execution of duties or field-operations as well, and the stakeholders plus the general public were contented with “the way things were done”, (Caselton, WF. 1992). But in the current dispensation, things have changed tremendously in the sense that the “service recipients” (especially in public offices) requires and expects some more modern techniques/skills of handling their issues, as well as more Quality Service Delivery from all sorts of office-bearers (employees) allocated to such responsibilities and tasks, and more so, the “one-on-one” customers engagements during their official day-to-day operations (in the offices, or during field operations), all of which can only be attainable by the help of acquiring and applying the four (4) types of managerial skills, and according to RL Daft, (2002), the four fundamental/essential types of skills required for effective management activities are: Technical skills, Conceptual skills, Diagnostic skills, and Human skills, which if well practiced, will lead to realization of effective conflict management, hence prevent or minimize the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between county governments and their respective business communities, (Behnke, 1993).

In respect of the above discussions, notably, the researcher revealed that some County employees have been un-able to convince, persuade, and influence the Business Community members and the public in general to accept and embrace/support the implementation processes of county policies and the due-changes in operations as they may be introduced by the County Government Administration. This is so because although the policies and due-changes may be worthwhile and good enough to that effect, some individuals tend/opt to disagree, hence “deliberately” resist the implementation of the same, and also incite other members to join them in the demonstrations.

Other employees fail to apply the courteous-way of approach when engaging the business members on payment of various fees charged for their business transactions/activities like market gate fees, bus park fees, cess fees, and on their business premises whereby they are charged the Single Business Permit fee- commonly referred to as (SBP).

In such incidents and others which may be related to same as the case(s) may arise during field-operations, the County employees have been unable to pacify the emotional disputants and advise them on the proper procedures to follow and forward their grievances to the County’s relevant and concerned offices as the need may call-for if they perceive/believe that they have some genuine “grounds” to continue opposing the decisions made, or policies established/introduced and are felt to be affecting their trading activities negatively, or due to other types of real or perceived dissatisfactions to the subject-matter, (Brazzel, M. 2003).
In their response to the Business Community Members’ emotional reactions and behaviors, most of the concerned County Government employees tend to counter-react in a more of “retaliating argument” rather than opting to acquiesce to the conditions therein, a “state” that fuels the realization of exchange of some kind of harsh words then in to quarrels, all which are associated with dysfunctional intergroup conflicts, which further results to protests and mass actions, and later in to violence, all which accrues mass destructions and loss of properties and sometimes, to an extend of loss of lives, an “episode” which the author “antagonizes” in the strongest terms available to that effect while to the contrast, he advocates precisely for peaceful and professional/diplomatic ways of resolving disputes, or contentious issues whenever they arise, in order to prevent the escalation of dysfunctional intergroup conflict and the intrinsic consequences which are associated with this notorious “phenomenon” that for real exists in the relationship between the County Government Administration and the Business Community Fraternities in Kenya, and more so, in Embu County,” (Berdal, M. 2000).

2.3 Summary and Research gaps

2.3.1 Summary

Businesses nowadays are operating in a turbulent environment, where organizations are searching for measures that will allow them to improve their performance and competitiveness (Dodd, 2003), and the author’s desire is to see county governments focusing on this initiative as well, more so Embu county government. Conflict is generally regarded as disagreement regarding interests or ideas (Esquivel and Leiner, 1997). Regarding same, Loomis and Loomis (1965) argue that “conflict is an ever-present process in human relations”, a situation that has necessitated various organizations’ management to change their approaches to enable them manage their organizations effectively to avoid dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts at all costs, and the author of this study suggest that the County Governments should opt to “follow suit” as well, so as to enhance their public relations with their respective counties, although dealing with conflicts is a great challenge to management, (Adomi and Anie, 2005). Nowadays, most serious dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts incidents makes headlines in the newspapers, which might affect the public image of the organizations, County Governments are included in these scenarios too, and according to the researcher’s observation, what is more irritating concerning these scenarios between the two entities, is that from down-of-history, the participants in/of the conflicts activities, their supporters, as well as their due-representatives, when it comes to resolving the contentious issues which may have lead to the occurrences of the dysfunctional-intergroup conflict at
those specific instances (as the cases may be), instead of ‘stepping-out’ and be devoted/committed to ‘unearth’ the real cause(s), or the factors contributing / influencing the escalation of the “phenomenon”, they all tend to have had a propensity to look for “scapegoats”, blaming each of the opposite group, claiming each group was on the right and that the other groups’ members are to be blamed in reference to their members’ deeds/acts, plus other such statements of blame, which actually should not be the case. In actual fact, the researcher has revealed that, “dysfunctional-intergroup conflict and its logical extreme in violence”, can become contagious as people or parties (or groups for that matter) react to each other in the configuration of a chain reaction that can be as deadly as a “military missile”, can create the conditions for revolt and violence, can light-up our industries to hashes, it may fascinate us, and if there are no effective long-term solutions attained to stop the episode therein, its drama may become thrilling, and even may extend to becoming addictive to that effect. In this regard, the researcher suggest that the hope to get the cure for this “phenomenon” can only be found in specific/particular entities who can find technique (through applying the due skills required for such tasks), to break-out of the apparently inevitable logic for quarrel for quarrel, violence for violence, and hurt for hurt - (popularly referred to as “tit for-tat” theory), and as Wilmot and Hocker (2001) points-out, (concerning the source of conflict’s solutions), “Hope is found in people who escape from the spiral of attack and counter attack, and step-out into a world in which new ways of relating becomes “thinkable”.

2.3.2 Research Gaps
According to Cramer, (2006), in the research language, a “research gap”, is a term that refers to “a research question or problem which has not been answered appropriately, or not at all in a given field of study”. It is also defined as a term that indicates a finding from a research in which a key question has not been answered, and also meant to refer to the missing element in the existing research literature, and the author of a specific study is expected/supposed to fill it with his/her own research approach, so as to make the author’s manuscript publishable. In this regard, and as of this study whose topic is concerned with the “status” of the relationship between the in-group (which is the County Governments) and the out-group (which is the Business Communities), the researcher sought to know why has there been consistence actualization of unfriendly-relationship that has existed between the members of these two groups, yet they work together “interdependently” at all times? Again, this study sought to know why has there been no research(es) conducted on dysfunctional intergroup conflicts that dwells in the relations of these two entities, and if ever
there was a researcher who carried-out a study on this field, what is the name of the author(s), and when was the study carried-out?

This concern has come to the attention of the researcher of this study due to the fact that the current unfriendly-relationship between County Governments and their respective Business Communities in Kenya became notably into “being” automatically when the two entities started working interdependently by virtual of the reality that counties were created through the new constitution of Kenya, whereby the County governments are mandated to govern all of its constituents, and are liable of submitting the fees accrued to their chargeable businesses activities to the counties offices’, hence they serve as the main source of income for their respective counties.

More still, to the extreme of the author’s agitation, is the fact that this “state” of relationship between Business Communities versus their resources’ dependents did not begin just with the introduction/formation of Counties in Kenya, but more seriously is that even in the era of the local Authorities’ Administration which were in-place during the governance of the old constitution of Kenya, the relationship therein was still dented by many aspects, but most notably is when such incidents are occasioned by occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict amongst the members of these two entities working interdependently at all times, and the losses that accrues its presence which are witnessed through the consequences therein.

The essence of two or more entities working together is concerned with strengthening their “status” of relationship by creating, practicing, and maintaining the cordial-relationship, and application of “best organizational practices”, and observing the perceived/real values and understanding the “role” of each group in terms of their responsibilities and rights within their field of operations, entrust each other, and embracing each other at all times, and in case there emerges some disputes or disagreements, the two entities are expected/supposed to resolve all their differences harmoniously and “move-on” with their operations as “one people”, with great presence of “cordial-relationship”, free from dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts, (Collier, P. 1998).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework section is concerned with the variables of the study, how they interrelate with/to each other as the independent factors of the research, and how these independent factors affects the management of the “dependent factor”. The phenomenon in this study is the dysfunctional-intergroup conflict, which exist between County Governments and their respective Business Communities, as is presented in form of a conceptual modeled diagram illustrated below herein.
2.5 Operationalization of Variables

This part entails the term definition of variables in figure 2.1 above, which the author wish to explain as follows:

2.5.1 County Policies:

County Policies refers to formal principles and guidelines by which a County Government is guided in its management of public affairs, or the legislature in its measures.

If county policies implementation exercise is resisted by the stakeholders, such situations can affect conflicts management, hence influence occurrences of Dysfunctional-Intergroup Conflicts between members of the two groups.
2.5.2 Stakeholders’ participation

This is also referred to as the stakeholders’ engagement, and is defined as the process by which an organization involves people (stakeholders) who may be affected by the decisions which the particular organization makes, or can influence the implementation of its decisions hence affects the end results.

When the stakeholders of a particular entity are not sufficiently granted a chance to participate in Decision-making on issues affecting them, they can opt to resist the implementation of the same, a situation that can affect conflict management, hence influence Dysfunctional-Intergroup Conflicts between members of the two groups.

2.5.3 Communication processes

Communication processes are the guide toward realizing effective communication, and it is through the communication processes that the sharing of a common meaning between the sender and the receiver takes place.

Communication may be defined as a two-way process of reaching mutual-understanding, in which participants not only exchange words (encode – decode) information, news, ideas, and feelings, but also create and share meaning.

As a general term, communication is a means of connecting people or places.

In the event(s) whereby there is lack of effective communication processes concerning issues that need “combined effort of stakeholders and the county officers”, the stakeholders may raise some disputes, then resist implementation of same to take place, such a situation can affect conflict management, hence influence Dysfunctional-Intergroup Conflicts between members of the two groups.

2.5.4 Skills County Government employees

Skills refers to the ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry-out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (referred to as cognitive skills); or involving things (referred to as technical skills); and those which involves people (referred to as interpersonal skills). Inadequacy of skills of County Government employees to carry-out complex job functions effectively, failure to relate cordially with the stakeholders, or lack the expected credibility when handling the stakeholders’ issues, or when engaging them in “one-on-one” encounter during field-operations, the stakeholders may turn to be aggressive and opt to counter attack, a situation
that can affect conflict management, hence influence Dysfunctional-Intergroup Conflicts between members of the two groups.

2.6 Chapter Summary

With respect to the summary of this chapter, the author wish to point-out that the “in-depth” discussions in this chapter prove that this study “holds” enough evidence that all the concerned aspects discussed therein, affects conflict management, hence influences the occurrences of the dysfunctional intergroup conflicts between the County Governments and their respective Business Communities in one way or the other.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
This chapter covers and discuss the following: -The research design, the target population, the sample and sampling technique, the instruments, the pilot study, the validity and reliability test, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis and presentation, the ethical consideration and the chapter summary.

3.1 The Research Design
Research design refers to the plan and investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions (Ker linger 1989). The researcher adopted a descriptive design because it was suitable for the specific research-topic selected - “An Evaluation of factors influencing County Governments Administration and Business Community Fraternities in Kenya, (a case study in Embu County). In addition, the researcher considered the descriptive design as the appropriate research design for this study because “it seeks to explain the state of affairs within a given area of study (Kothari”, 2004).

Notably, this research design was appropriate for the author’s study because it helped in getting information / views from both the “service provider” (the County Government), as well as the “service recipients”(the Business Community members), in the sense that it was more efficient and reliable because it attempts to describe the attitudes, characteristics, behaviors, as well as the values in the field of the study without much manipulation.

3.2 The Target Population
Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or subjects having a common generalized finding (Orodho 2005). Target population is a term used in research language, and it refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions, and usually has varying characteristics. It is also known as the “theoretical population”, and in this study, the total target population comprises of the following entities (categories) as presented in the table below: -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of population</th>
<th>Number of persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Prominent Business Persons</td>
<td>15,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Open-air market traders</td>
<td>34,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Country Government employees</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Members of County Assembly</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50,816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.1 above shows the distribution (categories) of this study’s total target population. For the purpose of making this study more efficient, the researcher selected a “sample representative unit/population” of 350 people to represent the large target population, and further to a smaller population known as “accessible population”, which refers to a portion of the population to which the researcher has reasonable access, and it’s usually a subset of the target population, and in this study, the accessible population was 150 people, whereby the “Target population” (represented by “sample representative unit), and the “Accessible population, were as illustrated through a table as shown below, whereby the “population percentage is also indicated.

Table 3.2: Target population (Representative unit), Accessible population and the percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature/category of the population</th>
<th>Target Representative population</th>
<th>Accessible population</th>
<th>Population percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prominent Business Persons</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-air Market Traders</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Government Employees</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of County Assembly</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 3.2 above shows the distribution of the target population (represented by the target representative unit/population), accessible population, and the due-percentage, which, together were used in providing the data needed to enable the researcher meet main the “research objective”, as well as its specific objectives.

3.3 The sample and sampling technique

The researcher selected a sample size of 46(forty six respondents), and adopted the “stratified random sampling technique”. The aim of stratified random sampling technique is to achieve the desired presentation from various categories of the target population. A sample is a part of the population that is procedurally selected so as to represent the total target population.

The target population was stratified into clusters; therefore the technique was suitable for fair representation.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a 30% population sample or respondents is a sufficient percentage for representing the total target population in conducting studies.
Table 3.3: Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature/category of the population</th>
<th>Accessible population</th>
<th>Frequency (sample size)</th>
<th>Sample percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prominent Business Persons</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-air Market Traders</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Government Employees</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of County Assembly</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 above shows the frequency of the accessible population, and the “Sample Size” which were used to provide the data in order to enable the author achieve the research objectives.

Pre-testing of the questionnaires was carried-out prior to the actual data collection (the pilot test), the aim being to refine the questionnaires so that the respondents would easily answer the questions therein more efficiently.

3.4 The Instruments

The researcher used “self-reporting questionnaires” specifically because it includes both structured and unstructured questions which capture both quantitative and qualitative data.

In addition, the researcher also used the activity of interviewing the sampled population, as well as applied the observation process of how the events took place amongst the target population as the “formal instruments” for obtaining the appropriate information associated with the success of conducting this research.

3.5 Pilot study

Pilot study was engaged in this research for the purpose of pre-testing the questionnaires before administering them to the sampled respondents, in order to eliminate any shortcomings so that the research instruments become valid and reliable, (Kombo and Tromp, 2006).

3.5.1 Validity

Validity is defined as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results (Mugenda, 2003). The researcher had received advice from the supervisor on the validity of the research topic under study, the case study, and the legibility of the questions in the questionnaires for the data collection, all of which were for the purposes of enhancing the validity of the “data collecting tools”.

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3.5.2 Reliability
Reliability implies stability or dependability of an instrument or procedure in order to obtain information (Kasomo 2006). It also entails the degree to which “test-scores” are free from measurements errors.

The findings were discussed by the researcher and the supervisor when re-modification was made on instruments in order to get the test-score, while formulating the final copies.

3.6 Data collection procedures
This involved questionnaires, interviews, and the observation process of data collection.

After verifying that the questionnaires were free from short-comings, valid, and reliable, then the researcher presented the questionnaires to the sampled population for filling-in and return them (the questionnaires) for the purposes of obtaining the views, opinions, and suggestions from the sampled respondents which was conveyed to him through the information therein, (Farson, N. 1950).

The questionnaires were considered suitable for this study because a large quantity of data was required and the respondents had easy time when answering the questions therein.

The questionnaires were divided in to the four categories of population involved in this study.

3.7 Data analysis, processing and presentation
Data analysis refers to categorizing, manipulating and summarizing of data in order to obtain answers to research questions (Kerling 1986). The data processing and analysis started by editing the collected information, then the raw data was later classified into four categories of the target population involved in this study, namely:- Prominent Business Persons, Open-air Market Traders, County Government Employees, and Members of County Assembly.

Classification was done on the level of gender, duration of service, and the professional experience.

Then, thereafter, the data was transferred from the data gathering instruments to the tabular-form for the purpose of attaining “systematic examination”.

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which involved (but not limited to) measures of centre tendency, and frequency.

In order to obtain effective and efficient data processing, as Ahuja, V. (1998) explains, the whole process was conducted qualitatively and quantitatively through a computer programme known as “statistical package for social science” (SPSS), and presentation was done inform of tables, figures, frequencies, all meant to ensure that the expected accuracy was realized. The researcher used both proportional and presentations in the analysis of the tabulated data in order to make the whole exercise “a success”.

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3.8 Ethical Considerations
The role of ethics in research is to ensure that the researcher follows the right procedures in collecting, analysis and recommendations of the research findings. According to Mugenda (2011), protecting the rights and welfare of the participants should be the major ethical obligation of all parties involved in the study.

3.8.1 Informed Consent
The researcher managed to seek consent from the sampled respondents by assuring them that their contributions and the research findings were meant for academic purposes only.

3.8.2 Voluntary participation
All the respondents were set free to give their responses voluntary.

3.8.3 Confidentiality
The respondents were assured that all their views, opinions, and suggestions were to be treated with maximum confidence.

3.8.4 Privacy
All documentation was to be treated with total privacy.

3.8.5 Anonymity
To take care of anonymity, all the questionnaires were indicated “Name (optional)” in Appendix II Section A in the questionnaire and all respondents agreed upon same, hence indicating one’s name was optional.

3.9 Chapter Summary
In this chapter, the author has discussed the following: the research design, the target population, the sample and sampling technique, the research instrument, the pilot study, the validity of the research instruments, the validity test, the data collection procedure, the data analysis and presentation, and the ethical considerations, where by all procedurally engaged accordingly as required by the research regulations.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction
This chapter entails presentation of research findings, limitation of the study, and the chapter summary.

4.1 Presentation of research findings
As was illustrated in the prior chapter concerning this research’s sample size (In chapter 3, Table 3.2), the researcher opted to select a sample size of forty six (46) respondents, hence the questionnaires administered for capturing their views were 46 in number.

However, out of the 46 questionnaires engaged in data-collecting exercise amongst the “sampled respondents”, 40 questionnaires were successfully filled-in and formally captured the intended information, but the balance of 6 questionnaires were in one way or another faulted upon/ or spoiled by the respondents who were served with the same, and as a result the six questionnaires were treated as “invalid items”.

This denoted that 87% of the total questionnaires were successfully and correctly filled-in, hence were termed as “valid items”, while the rest of 13% of the questionnaires were treated as “invalid items” or “no response”.

The response rate was considered adequate for this research purpose because according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argument, a 30% response rate is enough to generalize the entire population’s opinions, views and suggestions.

4.1.1 Data analysis and discussion/interpretation according to the response-rate of the sampled respondents, selected from the larger target population of Embu County constituents.
Quantitative data analysis was done in different entities as per each respondent’s response concerning every question/variable there-in, as was captured in this research’s “data-collecting instruments”, then illustrated in the tables and figures herein, and their interpretations expressed explicitly as demonstrated in the following sequence.

Table 4.1: Response-rate of the respondents engaged in the “entire sample size” selected from Embu County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency Rate of Respondents’ response</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successfully filled-in questionnaires</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faulted/or spoiled questionnaires</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.1 Response-rate of the respondents engaged in the “entire sample size” selected from Embu County.

Table 4.1 and figure 4.1 above shows that the respondents’ response rate was as follows: - 87% questionnaires were successfully filled-in, while 13% questionnaires were either faulted or spoiled by the sampled respondents who were served with the same. This is a clear indication of the research necessity / or popularity within Embu County area of jurisdiction.

4.2.1 “Gender-based” distribution-rate of persons who are engaged in the County Governments’ operations.

The aim here was to sought-out the distribution rate of persons engaged in the County Governments’ operations based on gender, and the data obtained for the same was as illustrated in table 4.2, and figure 4.2 below, and the interpretation follows thereafter.

Table 4.2: Response on “Gender-based” distribution-rate of the persons who are engaged in the County Governments’ operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.2: Response on “Gender-based distribution-rate of the persons who are engaged in the County Governments’ operations.

Table 4.2 and figure 4.2 above shows that the distribution-rate of target population based on gender were as follows: -Male at 37.5%, and female at 62.5% as represented by the sampled-respondents.

4.1.3 “Period-of-experience based” distribution-rate of persons who are knowledgeable on matters of County Governments operations.

The researcher sough to establish the “period-of-experience based” distribution-rate of persons who are knowledgeable on matters of the County Governments’ operations.

The results for the same was as illustrated in table 4.4 and figure 4.4 below, and the discussion therein.

Table 4.3: Response on distribution-rate of persons who are knowledgeable on matters of County Governments operations based on “period-of-experience”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of experience in year-brackets</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 1 year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 5 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 20 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 40 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 40 years</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.3: Response on distribution-rate of persons who are knowledgeable on matters of County Governments operations based on “period-of-experience”.

The findings in table 4.3 and figure 4.3 above denote that greater percentage of the total constituents in Embu County are knowledgeable on matters touching the County Governments operations.

This was proved by the fact that all the “period of experience year brackets” were well presented by the sampled-respondents as indicated in the data-collection instruments on this research, and distributed as 50% for over 40 years, 25% for 21-40 years, 10% for 11-20 years, 7.5% for 6-10 years, 5% for 1-5 years and 2.5% for persons with less than 1 year experience in the “subject matter”.

4.1.4 Distribution-rate of sampled respondents based on “Education status”.

The aim was to know the average education status of the sampled respondents because they were representing the entire target population of this research.

The results were as illustrated in table 4.4 and figure 4.4 below, and the discussion that follows therein.

Table 4.4: Response on Distribution-rate of sampled respondents based on education status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Level</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’ Level</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma Level</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Level</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other trainings</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.4: Response on Distribution-rate of sampled respondents based on education status.

The information contained in Table 4.4 and figure 4.4 above interpretation was as follows:- The most respondents involved in the County Governments operations have O’ Level education, rated at 52.5%, followed by those with Diploma level rated at 22.5%, then Degree level rated at 12.5%, then “other trainings” category, was rated at 7.5%, and last in this list was primary level which was rated at 5%. This shows that most of the people associated with County Government’s operations have a O’ level and above as their education status.

4.1.5 Distribution-rate based on operational organs within Embu County.

This was aimed at capturing the information pertaining the operational organ of the sampled respondents as they represented the entire target population of this research, which was obtained through the research instruments for data-collection and same was as indicated in table 4.5 and figure 4.5 below, and the discussion follows therein.

Table 4.5: Response on Distribution-rate respondents based on operational organs within Embu County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational organ</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political wing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business community</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other entities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.5: Response on Distribution-rate respondents based on operational organs within Embu County.

The information in table 4.5 and figure 4.5 above entails that the distribution-rate of the sampled respondents representing the whole target population were at 62.5% for the Business community organ, 15% for administration organ, 10% for the treasury organ, 7.5% for political-wing, and 5% for other entities associated with matters concerning County Government operations. This means that in Embu County, the Business Community organ occupies greater population than all the other organs combined together.

4.1.6 Response on whether County policies affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between county government and business community in Embu County.

The researcher sought to examine whether the County policies affects conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County, and the results obtained from the sampled-respondents were as illustrated in table 4.6 and figure 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Response on whether County policies affect conflict management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.6 and figure 4.6 above showed that variable “County policies” is one of the factors affecting conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County, because 45% of the respondents were for “Yes” as their response to that effect, 37.5% respondent were for “No” as their response, while 17.5% felt that they were not sure whether or not the County policies have any effects concerning “the subject matter”.

4.1.7 Response on County policies in rating the influence-degree on occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict between county government and business community in Embu County.

The researcher sought to know the degree at which County policies influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

The results of the same were obtained from the respondents and presented as shown in table 4.7 and figure 4.7 here below.

Table 4.7: Response on County policies in rating the influence-degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in table 4.7 and figure 4.7 above showed that County policies was considered to be part of the factors that influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County at the following rates: - Very high was rated 7.5%, relatively high was rated 22.5% and high was rated at 15%, making a total of 45% of respondents who felt that it was worthy to be rated either high, relatively high or very high. On the other hand, other respondents rated it 25% for low, 20% for relatively low, and 10% for very low, hence totaling to 55% as a low rated factor to that effect.

4.1.8 Response on County Government sensitization programs.

The author sought to find-out whether the County Government engages its members in sensitizing stakeholders on county policies establishment, and through obtaining the respondents views on the same, the results attained to that effect were as presented in table 4.9 and figure 4.9 here below.

Table 4.8: Response on County Government sensitization programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.7: Response on County policies in rating the influence-degree.
The results in table 4.8 and figure 4.8 above indicated that the sensitization activities on newly formulate/adopted county policies to the affected stakeholders is quite minimal because only 10% respondents were for “Yes” as their response to that effect, and 85% of the respondents expressed that they are not approached for such activities, while the other 5% respondents’ response as “not sure” whether such programs really do exist.

4.1.9 Rating the adequacy of the sensitization activities in the County.

The researcher found it necessary to sought-out the adequacy of the subject matter through engaging the respondents to provide their response of the same, and the results forwarded to that effect were as presented in table 4.9 and figure 4.9 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very adequate</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively adequate</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not adequate</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in table 4.9 and figure 4.9 above indicated that there is a serious scarcity of sensitization programs in the County level concerning the newly formulated/adopted county policies to reach to the stakeholders, a situation that raises a lot of concern especially to the affected Business Community members. The responses were 95% for the “not adequate” state, and 5% for “adequate” side of the subject matter.

4.1.10 Response on whether the County policies implementation influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between county government and business community in Embu County.

Through engaging the sampled respondents, the researcher sought to find out whether the above subject matter influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between members of the two groups, and the results provided by the respondents were as presented in table 4.10 and figure 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: Response on whether the County policies implementation influences dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.10: Response on whether the County policies implementation influences dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts.

The results in table 4.10 and figure 4.10 above showed that the implementation exercise and the techniques applied by the County government employees greatly influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community members in Embu County.

This was proved by the fact that 87.5% of the respondents’ response indicated a “yes” answer to that effect, 7.5% respondents were not sure of the “state”, while only 5% of the respondents were for a “no” response to that effect.

4.1.11 Response on rating the County policies implementation’s influences on occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between county government and business community in Embu County.

The researcher found it necessary to sought-out the response on rating the extent to which County policies implementation exercise and the techniques applied by the County Government employees influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community members in Embu County, and the results of the same were as presented in table 4.11 and figure 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Response on rating the County policies implementations’ influence on occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.11: Response on rating the County policies implementations’ influence on occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts

The results in table 4.11 and figure 4.11 above showed that the implementation exercise of the County policies and the techniques applied by the County Government employees influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community members in Embu County in great extent. This was proved by the fact that the respondents who gave their response as “very high” were 37.5%, 30% respondents were for “relatively high” as their response, and 20% respondents were for “high” as their response, resulting to a combination of 87.5% respondents who gave their response to that effect, while only 12.5% was left for a “otherwise” response, distributed as 7.5% for the “low” response, 5% for the “relatively low” response, and 0% for the “very low” response to that effect.

4.1.12 Response on whether stakeholders’ participation affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between county government and business community in Embu County.

The research sought to establish whether stakeholders’ participation affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and Business Community in Embu County, and the results were as illustrated in table 4.12 and figure 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: Response on whether stakeholders’ participation effects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between county government and business community in Embu County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.12: Response on whether stakeholders’ participation effects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between county government and business community in Embu County.

The results in table 4.1 and figure 4.12 above showed that the variable “stakeholders’ participation” is a great factor that affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County. This was proved through the sampled respondents’ response, whereby those who were for “Yes” as their response were at 70%, while those who were for “No” as their response were at 20%, and those who were for “Not sure” as their response were at 10% to that effect.

4.1.13 Response on rating the extent of stakeholders’ participation influence on occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between county government and business community in Embu County.

4.1.14

The research sought to know the extent at which stakeholders’ participation influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and Business Community in Embu County, and the results were as illustrated in table 4.13 and figure 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: Response on rating the stakeholders’ participation influence-extent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in table 4.1 and figure 4.13 above showed that the stakeholders’ participation influences dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community members in Embu County at a reasonable rate. This is so because 32.5% of the respondents were for “very high” as their response, 17.5% for relatively high, and 20% gave their response as “high”, making a combination of 70% to that effect, leaving only 30% to the opposite response which was distributed as 15% for “low”, 10% for “relatively low”, and 5% for very low.

4.1.14 Response on communication processes usefulness in dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between county government and business community in Embu County.

4.1.15
The researcher decided to engage the respondents on whether communication processes are useful in dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County, and the results were presented in table 4.14 and figure 4.14 below.

Table 4.14: Response on whether communication processes are useful in dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.14: Response on whether communication processes are useful in dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management.

Results in table 4.14 and figure 4.14 above showed that the “variable communication processes” is a very useful factor in dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County. This was proved by the fact that 90% of the respondents were for “Yes” as their response, leaving only 10% of the respondents’ response for an “otherwise” answer, distributed as 7.5% for “No” response, and 2.5% response for “Not sure” response to that effect.

4.1.15 Response on gauging the degree of communication processes’ influence on occurrences of dysfunctional conflict between county government and business community in Embu county

The author sought to know the degree at which the variable “communication processes” influences occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and Business Community, and the results were as illustrated in table 4.15 and figure 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: Response on gauging the communication processes’ influence-degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.15: Response on gauging the communication processes’ influence-degree.

The results in table 4.15 and figure 4.15 above showed that communication processes is one of the major factors that influences the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community in Embu county, because a total of 36 respondents out of 40 respondents, which is a population that represented 90% of the entire target population were positive to that effect.

The response was distributed as 62.5% for “very high”, 17.5% for relatively high, and 10% “high” response, leaving the 10% response for an “otherwise” answer distributed as 7.5% for “low” and 2.5% for relatively low to that effect.

4.1.16 Response on the most common communication channel.

The researcher had sought to examine the most common channel through which Embu County Government communicates to the stakeholders and to the general public as well, and the results were as presented in table 4.16 and figure 4.16 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notices</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memos</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.16: Response on the most common communication channel.
The results in table 4.15 and figure 4.16 above showed that the most channel through which Embu County Government Communicates to the stakeholders and the general public was “Notices”, which was rated at 80% to that effect, followed by verbal at 12.5%, then followed by letters at 7.5%, but memos seems not to be used as a means of communication in this case, because it was rated at 0% to that effect.

4.1.17 Response on the degree on effectiveness of “notices” as a communication-channel.

The researcher had sought to find-out the effectiveness of “notices” as the most channel through which Embu County Government communicates to the stakeholders and to the general public within the County government’s area of jurisdiction. The results were as presented in table 4.17 and figure 4.17 below.

Table 4.17: Response on the degree on effectiveness of “notices” as a communication-channel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.17: Response on the degree on effectiveness of “notices” as a communication-channel.

The results in table 4.17 and figure 4.17 above showed that “notices”, though having been identified as the most popular channel for communication through which the Embu County Government applies for communication purposes to the stakeholders and the general public, its effectiveness was rated as being quite poor.

This was proved by the fact that 25% of the respondents gave “low” as their preferred response to that effect, relatively low scored 20%, while “very low” was rated at 12.5%, totaling to 57.5%, leaving only 42.5% on the other side, which was distributed as 15% for high, 17.5% for relatively high, and 10% for “very high” as the response to the subject matter.

4.1.18 Response on whether skills of County Government employees affect conflict management between county government and business community in Embu County.

The author had sought to find-out whether skills of County Government employees affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

The results were as presented in table 4.18 and figure 4.18 below.

Table 4.18: Response on whether skills of County Government employees affect conflict management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.18: Response on whether skills of County Government employee affects conflict management.

The results in table 4.18 and figure 4.18 above showed that the skills of County Government employees greatly affect conflict management between County Governments and the Business Community in Embu County.

This was proved by the fact that 85% of the respondents’ response was for a “yes” as their response with regards to the subject matter; leaving only 15% for the “an other-wise” answer, distributed as response “No” at 5%, and response “Not sure” at 10% to that effect.

4.1.19 Response on the extent of skills of County Government employees’ influence on the occurrences of conflicts between county government and business community in Embu County.

The researcher sought to find-out the extent at which the County Government employees’ skills influence the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County.

The results obtained from the sampled respondents were as presented in table 4.19 and figure 4.19 below.

Table 4.19: Response on the extent of skills of County Government employees’ influence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.19: Response on the extent of skills of County Government employees’ influence.

The results in table 4.19 and figure 4.19 above showed that the skills of County Government employees greatly influence the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County. This is so because a total of 85% of the entire respondents gave their response in support for the same, which was distributed as: - Very high response was rated at 35%, relatively high at 22.5%, and “high” scored 27.5% to that effect. On the other hand, “low” was rated at 10%, relatively low at 2.5%, and “very low” also was rated at 2.5% to that effect.

4.1.20 Response on whether County Government employees attend courses and trainings concerning public relations.

The researcher had sought to establish whether the County Government employees who engage Business Community members on one-on-one encounter do attend courses and trainings concerning public relations. The results obtained from the respondents were as presented in table 4.20 and figure 4.20 below.

Table 4.20: Response on whether County Government employees attend courses and trainings concerning public relations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.20: Response on whether County Government employees attend courses and trainings concerning public relations.

The results in table 4.20 and figure 4.20 above showed that courses and trainings on Public Relations seem to be quite minimal amongst the County Government employees. This was proven by the fact that respondents who responded “yes” as their response were only 12.5% of the entire sampled respondents, 45% believed there were no public courses and trainings amongst the County Government employees who were dealing one-on-one with the Business Community members in Embu County, while the other 42.4% were not sure of the reality concerning the “subject matter”.

4.1.21 Response on adequacy of public relations skills amongst County Government employees.

The author had sought to find-out the adequacy of public relations skills among the County Government employees who handle the Business Community members on one-on-one basis in Embu County.

The results were as illustrated in table 4.21 and figure 4.21 below.

Table 4.21: Response on adequacy of P.R. skills amongst County Government employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively High</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively Low</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.21: Response on adequacy of P.R. skills amongst County Government employees.

The results in table 4.21 and figure 4.21 above showed that public relations skills are quite scarce amongst the County Government employees who deals with Business Community members on one-on-one basis, because a total of 82.5% of the respondents proved this by giving their responses as “low” at 70%, “relatively low” at 7.5%, “very low” was rated at 5%, leaving only 17.5% as the response to the “upper-hand”, which was distributed as “high” at 10% Relatively high” at 5%, and very high at 2.5% to that effect.

4.1.22 Response on whether there are County Government conflict-resolution committees or offices put-in-place.

The researcher had sought to find out for the subject matter above, and the results were as presented in table 4.22 and figure 4.22 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.22: Response on whether there are County Government conflict-resolution committees or offices put-in-place.

The results in table 4.22 and figure 4.22 above showed that most of the respondents believe that there are no committees or County offices put-in-place specifically for the purpose of resolving conflicts and disputes whenever they arise amongst the members of the two groups. This was proved by the fact that 87.5% respondents were for “No” as their response to that effect, and 5% was for “not sure”, only leaving a 7.5% respondents who felt that there exist such entities.

4.1.23 Response on creation of conflict-resolution committees/offices in the County level.

The researcher had sought to find-out whether there is need to create such offices/committees, and the answers he got are presented in table 4.23 and figure 4.23 below.

Table 4.23: Response on creation of conflict-resolution committees/offices in the County level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response-Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in table 4.23 and figure 4.23 above showed that there is a great need for creating conflict-resolution committees or offices be put in place for such purposes. This was proved by the fact that 95% of the respondents were for “yes” as their responses to that effect, 5% was the rate indicated by those who responded that they were “not sure” and there was 0% as the rate for those who responded a “No” respond. This was a clear indication that there is really a necessity to honor the views/opinions of the 95% respondents who actually represented the 95% of the entire “target population” meant for this research.

4.2 Limitation of the study

The limitation of this study included the following encounters:

Some respondents were unwilling to provide the researcher with the full expected information, arguing that they were not certain of the real purpose of the study, hence afraid of the consequences that may result from what they may share with the researcher in terms of the relevant information.

Others were reluctant to answering questions arguing that they were too busy carrying-out their daily operations, hence could not afford posing to be interviewed.

The researcher also encountered some challenges related to finding past-researches which contain/provide similar documentations as the ones associated with this research.

This was as a result of scarcity of availability of other authors who may have explored the same field of interest as the one here-in that is, the “Dysfunctional Inter-groups conflict context between the County Governments’ Administration and their respective Business Community Fraternities.”
Another challenge that the author encountered was during the gathering of data from the target population, whereby the sampled respondents were suspicious of the intention/objective of the research concerning the beneficiaries of the study, hence some refused to co-operate. This was due to the perception of poor reputation that the public have developed for a long period about the County Governments management in Kenya, and in particular, in Embu County.

Notably, some of the target respondents hesitated to fill-in the questionnaires because they suspected that they are being targeted for some kind of investigations that they perceived may result to some harmful repercussions amongst them.

However, the researcher managed to overcome all these challenges by seeking consent from the sampled respondents, and assuring them that the findings of the study were meant for academic purposes only, and in case its recommendations can be adopted and implemented by the County Government Administration Organ, then it can be of great benefit to the constituents as well as to their County.

4.3 Chapter Summary

Chapter four of this study have covered “in-depth” the research’s data analysis/discussion, the presentation of the findings, and the interpretations of the outcome of the respondents’ response concerning the study-topic “factors affecting Conflict management between County Governments and their Business Communities”, whereby the scope of study was Embu County.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
This chapter covers the summary of the study findings and answers to the research questions as obtained from the sampled respondents’ responses, as well as the researcher’s recommendations and the conclusion of the overall process of this research entitled “Factors affecting conflicts management between County Government and Business Communities in Kenya, and being a case study of Embu County.
Suggestions for further studies, plus the views, opinions, and perceptions from the target population and the general public are also presented herein.

5.1 Summary of findings
In order to make the research “a success”, the author selected four independent variables, which acted as the research objectives, and also formulated the research questions. These variables were:- County policies, Stakeholders’ participation, Communication processes, Skills of County Government employees.

The research findings were as discussed below. According to the data analysis/respondents’ responses, all the four independent variables had great effect on the relationship between members of the two groups, hence were sighted as being great factors affecting dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between the two entities, though at different percentage, degree or “extent”, as demonstrated in the following discussion, and at the same time, answering “the research questions” in the sequence that follows herein.

5.1.1 Answers to “The Research Questions”
5.1.1.1 Does County Policies affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Governments and the Business Community in Embu County?

Policies are principles and guidelines adopted or formulated by the concerned organization’s management in support of the specific entity’s system, goals, and are meant to guide administrative decision-making. County policies, (plus other legal documents relevant to the law), are combined and forms a “formal/legal structured mechanisms” which are employed by “the mother entities” – (in this study, the counties), for the purposes of controlling, directing, and/or managing all the activities/operations taking-place within the concerned County government’s area of jurisdiction, with a hope of full acceptance by all the constituents therein, and those constituents expects these “legal instruments” to be friendly-felt, applicable, reliable, and that the implementation of the same will be carried-out professionally, and in a “courteous manner”
With regard to the above discussed perception and the high expectations of positive and friendly-felt policies plus friendly environment during implementation exercise, incase the out-come of the whole process fails to capture the attention of the stakeholders (the Business Community in this case), there will be resistance-to-change, failure to comply or adhere-to the directives/instructions from the County Government’s office, a situation that leads to realization of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between members of the two groups, who actually work interdependently.

Concerning the degree at which this variable affects the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between members of both County Government and the Business Community during their operations, the answer is derived from the results obtained through the sampled-respondents’ response, and the interpretations therein.

According to the presentation indicated in table 4.8 and figure 4.8 plus the interpretation that followed therein, 7.5% of the respondents were for “very high” as the response to the influence rate to the subject matter, “relatively high” scored 22.5%, and “high” response was at 15%, making a total of 45% of the respondents who felt that the variables was worthy to be rated either as very high, relatively high, or high.

On the either hand, other respondents rated it at 25% for “low”, 20% for relatively low and 10% for “very low”, hence totaling to 55% for a “low rated factor” to that effect.

5.1.2 Does stakeholders’ participation affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and Business Communities in Embu County?

Yes it does. The support to this answer is evidenced by the presentation of the out-come of respondents’ response in table and figure 4.15, and the interpretation of the same that followed therein.

The results in table 4.14 and in figure 4.14, plus the interpretation that followed showed that this variable is among the factors that affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and Business Community in Embu at the following rates:- “very high” at 32.5%, “Relatively high” at 17.5%, “High” at 20%. This made a combination of 70%.

Then, 15% for “low”, 10% for “Relatively low” and 5% for “very low”, making a total of 30%.
5.1.3 How useful are communication processes in dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between County Government and Business Community in Embu County?

Communication processes are the guides towards realizing effective communication, and it is through the communication processes that the sharing of a common meaning between the sender and the receiver takes place. Communication refers to a two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas, and feelings, but also create and share meaning. The usefulness of communication processes can be witnessed through realization of “effect communication” between members of the two groups.

As James Penney pointed-out’ “The art of effective listening is essential to clear communication, and clear communication is necessary to management success”.

It is through effective communication that an organization can be able to receive feed-back from the stakeholders, and also be able to convey to the stakeholders meaningfully about issues of importance concerning their working together interdependently, for instance, the newly formulated policies and regulations and the implementation process of same, notifying them of the intended “undertakings” which may affect the stakeholders plus the changes that are likely to take place and may affect the stakeholders in one way or the other.

Failure to effective communication practices between any two or more entities working together (like County Government and the Business Community in Embu County), leads to creation of disconnection state or disunity state, resulting to each group opting to operate as though disregarding the importance and legality of the other’s existence, a situation that leads to lack of “unity of purpose” between members of the two groups, and in such unfriendly relations situations, in the event(s) of occurrences of some kind of contentious issues between these two groups, coming together to reason-out together and find solution(s) together will not be attainable, hence each group may end-up blaming the other for the consequences therein, and realization of dysfunctional intergroup conflicts are very likely to be the end results to that effect. In respect to communication processes being one of the major factors that affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between Embu County Government and the Business Community, the respondents’ response addressed the issue clearly as evidenced through the results in table and figure 4.15, and table and figure 4.16, whereby 90% of the respondents expressed their views clearly concerning the subject matter by indicating “Yes” as their answer against 7.5% and 2.5% who indicated “No” and “Not sure” respectively as their answer to that effect.
5.1.4 Does skill of county government employees affect Dysfunctional-Intergroup Conflicts management between County Governments and Business Community in Embu County?

Yes, the skills of county government employees affects dysfunctional-inter group conflict management between county Government and the business community in Embu County.

Employees who are well equipped with the necessary skills required for better management and settling of contentious issues between two groups who may be experiencing some disagreement due to some reasons therein, are more likely to resolve the differences between them and their customers more professionally and prevent dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts that accrues such incidents when handled in unprofessional manner, by employees without the due skills to that effect. In this study, variable “skills of county government employees”, has been proven to be one of the major factors that affects dysfunctional intergroup conflicts management between County Government and Business Community in Embu county.

This fact was proven to be correct by the results in table and figure 4.19 and 4.20 which were obtain through the sampled respondents’ responses as presented therein, plus the interpretation of the same whereby 85% of the respondents were for “Yes” as their response with regard to this variables’ effect-rate of affecting dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts management between members of the two groups, against 5% for “No”, and 10% for “Not sure” respectively as their answer concerning the “subject matter”.

5.2 Conclusions

The study revealed that, it is from the foundation of “formulating/adopting or/and establishing fair and just county polices; frequent consultations, meaningful involvement/participations of stakeholders/general public during decision-making process of sensitive issues affecting the traders’ sector; effective communication processes, better communication channels; plus equipping the county government employees with the fundamental/required managerial skills (and more so, public relation skills)”, that the “out-group” of any relationship will build trust, confidence, value, friendship and positive perception concerning the “in-group“ entity, hence the issue of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts will be addressed effectively. In this study the “out-group” are the business communities and the “in-group” are the county governments).

Concerning the four (4) independent variables which the researcher selected for the purpose of conducting this study, their analyses were as follows:

All the variables were found and proven to have some substantial effects concerning the “Dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management” between the county governments and their
respective business communities which is a “thorny” issue that exists in the relationship between members of the two groups, globally, in Kenya and more so in Embu County.

More notably is that the four variables were found to have different rates of influence concerning the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between the members of these two groups that work together interdependently at all times.

Variable “communication processes” was found to possess the greatest percentage of 90% in-terms of influencing the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts witnessed “time and again” between these two entities, followed very closely by the variable “skills of County Government employees”, which was rated at 85% by the sampled respondents.

At third position, the respondents “crowned” the variable “stakeholders’ participation” with an average score of 70% while the least scores in the list of the four variables were credited to variable “County Polices” which was rated at 45% to that effect.

The respondents were quite co-operative; hence the exercise was successful to the researcher’s satisfaction.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations by the researcher after the completion of the study.

(i) There is great need for intensifying the relationship between County Governments and their esteemed customers, more notably, the Business Community members at all times, as they carry-out their day-to-day operations in Embu County. This will act as one of the strategies for dysfunction-intergroup conflict reduction between the two groups.

(The county government top management and Business Community officials to initiate).

(ii) Embu County Government to consider (widely) the effect of county policies before establishing, formulating, or/and adopting the same, for the purposes of avoidance of oppressing the stakeholders in one way or another, which leads to the stakeholders opposing the implementation of such county policies, a situation that leads to realization of dysfunction-intergroup conflict between members of the two groups.

(iii) The Embu County Governments’ relevant organs to be granting stakeholders the opportunity to participate effectively and sufficiently in “matters of concern” so as to prevent most of the dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts “stemming” from failure of same. This will be realized through the support of the stakeholders during implementation exercise

(iv) There is need to acquire, practice, and apply more effective communication processes, skills, and communicate widely on matters/issues affecting members of both groups in
order to work as one team in Embu County, as a strategy for reduction of dysfunction-intergroup conflicts occurrences between members of the two groups. (The county government top management and Business Community officials to strategize and deliberate on the subject matter earliest possible).

(v) The Embu County Government employees to be granted a chance to attend courses and trainings that offers Public Rations skills and other fundamental skills related to their field of operations. This will be an effective strategy in reduction of dysfunction-intergroup conflict occurrences between the two groups. (The Embu County Government top management to consider this as essential and urgent issue).

(vi) The Embu County Government to consider establishing “public relations practitioners” conflict-resolution offices/committees to be responsible for resolving the dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts, disputes, or disagreements and other related issues, address them and advise the top management on the same whenever such incidents arise. This will serve the purpose of resolving conflicts in a more effective manner, hence reduce dysfunction-intergroup conflicts between members of the two groups.

(vii) The County Governments management, (Embu County included) to realize the importance of being “proactive” instead of being “reactive” (as currently witnessed in most cases) concerning sensitive/ contentious issues affecting the business community.

(viii) Embu County government to observe “Quality Delivery Services” to the constituents, and the general cleanliness in the public places especially collection of garbage in the towns and markets within its area of jurisdiction.

(ix) “Strategies Development” is necessary in any organization/relationship in order to curb or reduce dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts at their infancy stage(s). This can be realized through attainment of effective conflict management, and it is advisable that Embu County Government should “follow suit” as well.

(x) There is great need for encouraging more research activities so as to unearth and analyze various factors associated with challenges facing County Governments’ operations, (Embu County included) in order to obtain effective solution to address the same. (Embu County top management to consider this as a fundamental necessity, budget for it, and take the initiative with seriousness it deserves).
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INTRODUCTION LETTER:

BENJAMIN MBOGO NGARI
THE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA
P.O. BOX 29677-00100
NAIROBI, KENYA.
22/9/2016

THE CHIEF OFFICER ADMINISTRATION
EMBU COUNTY GOVERNMENT
P.O. BOX 36 – 60100
EMBU.

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY INFORMATION PERTAINING MY RESEARCH PROJECT

I am a student at “The management University of Africa”, pursuing for the degree of Bachelor in management and leadership. Currently, I am carrying-out a research project entitled “FACTORS AFFECTING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BETWEEN COUNTY GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES IN KENYA”, (A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY).

Through your office Sir, I humbly request you to grant me permission to obtain the necessary information pertaining my research project please.

The exercise is executed through engaging the respondents in answering the questions in the questionnaires, interviewing them through face-to-face conversation, and conducting some self-observations as the research instruments to capture the data required for the “subject matter”.

I assure you that this study is purely for an academic requirement Sir, hence the information obtained from the “respondents” will be meant for academic purposes only, and will be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated assistance Sir.

Yours faithfully,

BENJAMIN MBOGO NGARI.
APPENDIX II
THE QUESTIONNAIRES:

Dear Respondents,
I hereby urge you to answer the questions in this questionnaire as honestly as possible please.
The information provided will be used for the purpose of conducting my research project which is a requirement for the accomplishment of my degree of Bachelor in Management and Leadership at “The Management University of Africa”.
Please be assured that your contribution will be treated with maximum confidence.

The findings of this research will act as the basis for examining the factors which affects Dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management, find-out solutions to address this “phenomenon” that exists between County Governments’ employees and their respective Business Community members in Kenya, and in particular in Embu County and has negatively affected their cordial relations, hence provide “the way forward” to foster better relationship between the two entities plus the general public as they continue working together interdependently.

Please be very genuine and unemotional, carefully read, understand the information, and then follow the instructions provided as you answer the questions herein:

NB: Please return the questionnaires within the next five days from the date of acceptance, and thank you for your anticipated contributions and co-operation.
SECTION A: THE PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Name (OPTIONAL)...........................................................................................................................................

2. Show your preferred answer by ticking (✓) in the corresponding space provided.
   (a) Gender
       Male ( ) Female ( )
   (b) Your current age bracket
       Below 20 years ( ) 20 – 35 years ( )
       36 – 50 years ( ) Over 50 years ( )
   (c) Period of your experience in matters concerning County Government operations
       Below 1 year ( ) 1 – 5 years ( )
       6 – 10 years ( ) 11 – 20 years ( )
       21 – 40 years ( ) Over 40 years ( )
   (d) Nature of terms of Employment
       Permanent ( ) Casual ( )
       Contract ( ) Laborer ( )
       Others (Specify) ........................................................................................................................................
   (e) Education level / Professional status
       Primary level ( ) O’ level ( )
       Diploma level ( ) Degree level ( )
       Other trainings/courses (Specify) ................................................................................................................
   (f) Your operational organ
       Administration ( ) Treasury ( )
       Political - wing ( ) Business community ( )
       Other Entities (Specify) ............................................................................................................................
   (g) Your job title
       Sub-County Administrator ( ) Sub-County Revenue Officer ( )
       Enforcement officer ( ) Revenue collector ( )
       Other County Government employees (Specify designation)
       NB: For business community members
       (a) Indicate your operational business activity type................................................................................................................
       (b) Status of operation:
           Self-employed ( )
           Employed by business owners ( )
       (c) Business community officials (indicate your title)..............................................................................................
SECTION B: VARIABLES / OBJECTIVES AND THEIR RESPECTIVE-ASSOCIATED QUESTIONS SELECTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING THE RESEARCHER IN IDENTIFYING AND ANALYZING THE POSSIBLE FACTORS AFFECTING DYSFUNCTIONAL-INTERGROUP CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BETWEEN COUNTY GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES IN KENYA, A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY.

With respect to the above “subject matter”, the researcher has developed the four under listed research variables, which also acted as specific research objectives, formulated the research questions for this study, and engaged in analyzing the issue of dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management, as well as constructing the items in this section of the questionnaires.

The four variables are: -

i) County Policies
ii) Stakeholders’ participation
iii) Communication processes
iv) Skills of County Government Employees.

The selected questions associated to the research variables are as follows: -

1. **Does County Policies affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?**

   Yes ( )    No ( )    Not Sure ( )

   (a) In reference to your above selection, support your answer with a brief explanation

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   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
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   (b) If yes, rate the degree at which you believe the County Policies affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between members of the two groups.

   Very high ( )    Relatively high ( )    High ( )
   Low ( )    Relatively low ( )    Very Low ( )

   (c) In your views, does county policies influences the occurrences of dysfunction-intergroup conflicts between county government and business community in Embu County?

   Yes ( )    No ( )    Not Sure ( )
a) If Yes rate the extent of county policies ‘influence

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very low ( )

b) Rate the adequacy (if any) of the sensitization activities conducted by the County Government to the stakeholders and the general publics concerning their governing policies.

Very adequate ( ) Relatively adequate ( )
Adequate ( ) Not adequate ( )

c) Do the County policies implementation exercise and the type of techniques applied by the County Government employees influence the occurrences of dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between members of the two groups?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

d) If yes, rate the extent of the subject matter.

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )

2. Does stakeholders’ participation affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

a) Please support your answer with some brief explanations

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

b) If yes, rate the degree of stakeholders participation’s effect

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )

c) In your opinion, does stakeholders’ participation influences the occurrences of Dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts between county government and Business Community in Embu County?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

(d) If yes, rate the influence-extent of stakeholders’ participation.

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )
(e) Are there any stakeholder’s consultations/engagement on projects undertaken by Embu County Government?

Yes ( )    No ( )    Not Sure ( )

(f) If yes, rate the adequacy therein

Very high ( )    Relatively high ( )    High ( )
Low ( )    Relatively low ( )    Very Low ( )

(g) Does your above selected answer influence the occurrences of dysfunctional intergroup Conflicts between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

Yes ( )    No ( )    Not Sure ( )

(h) What is the general perception status between County Government’s employees and the Business Community members in Embu County?

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(i) In your opinion, what contributes to the above selected status between members of the two groups?

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(j) Does the “perception status” between members of these two groups influence the occurrences of dysfunctional intergroup conflicts between members of the two groups?

Yes ( )    No ( )    Not Sure ( )

(k) Please support your above selected answer with some brief explanations

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3. What is the usefulness of communication processes in dysfunction-intergroup conflict management between county government and business community in Embu county?

(a) Does communication processes affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

(b) Please support your answer with some highlights

(c) If yes, indicate the extent of communication processes’ effect

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )

(d) In your opinion, does communication processes influences occurrences of dysfunction-intergroup conflicts between county government and the business community in Embu County?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

(e) If yes, gauge the communication processes’ influence-degree

High ( ) Relatively high ( ) Very high ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very low ( )

(f) Which is the most common channel through which the Embu County Government communicates to its stakeholders and the general public on issues affecting them?

Verbal ( ) Letter ( ) Notices ( ) Memos ( )

(g) Gauge the degree of effectiveness of your above selected answer

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )

(h) Please give general summary/comments in regard to communication skills demonstrated by the Embu County Government employees in executing their official duties and responsibilities.

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4. Do skills of County Government employees affect dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County Government and the Business Community in Embu County?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

(a) Please demonstrate your above selected answer by providing some highlights

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(b) If yes, indicate the skills of County Government employees’ extent of effect

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )

(c) According to your opinion, do skills of county government influences the occurrences of dysfunction-intergroup conflicts between county government and community members in Embu County?

(d) If yes, indicate the influence-extent of the skills of the county government employees

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Very low () Relatively low ( ) Low ( )

(e) In your views/knowledge do the County Government employees who engage Business Community members on one-on-one encounter e.g. Revenue collectors and enforcement officers attend courses and trainings on Public Relations?

Yes ( ) No ( ) Not Sure ( )

(f) If yes, how adequately do they seem to be equipped with the public relations skills?

Very high ( ) Relatively high ( ) High ( )
Low ( ) Relatively low ( ) Very Low ( )

(g) How are the “PR” and the “Courtesy approach” during the execution of operations between members of these two groups?

Very good ( ) Relatively good ( ) Good ( )
Poor ( ) Relatively poor ( ) Very poor ( )

(h) In your opinion, what do you think/believe contributes to the status of relationship between members of the two groups as you have selected above?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………
(a) Are there County Government conflict-resolution committees or offices put-in place to address/resolve dysfunctional-intergroup conflicts issues between the County Government employees and the Business Community members in Embu County?

Yes ( )       No ( )       Not Sure ( )

(b) If yes, how effective/operational are they?

   Very effective ( )   Relatively effective ( )
   Poorly effective ( )  Not effective ( )

(c) If no, do you think/believe there is need for such offices/committees to be put-in place in the Embu County Government’s organizational structure?

   Yes ( )       No ( )       Not Sure ( )

(d) State the importance of creating/forming such offices/committees in the County Governments’ organizational structure.

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(e) Give your general summary/views concerning the factors which affects dysfunctional-intergroup conflict management between County governments and their respective business communities

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