

Original Research Article

The paradox of peace on the Seventh Day Adventist Church's doctrinal teachings at Borabu Border, Nyamira County - Kenya

Dr. Tom Mong'are Nyagwoka

Abstract

Social Science Education Department,
Masinde Muliro University of Science
and Technology, P. O. Box 1749
Kakamega.

C/o Kaimosi University, a
Constituency University of Masinde
Muliro University, P. O. Box 385 –
50309, Kaomosi Kenya

E-mail: nyagwoka@rediffmail.com
Mobile No.0725948978

The paper examines the outcome of a study which was done at Borabu Sub County. It was moored on Aristotle's theory on the natural law which stipulates the significance of the natural law in regulating the selections of the Christians. Descriptive survey approaches were utilized with a sample size of 207 out of a population of 2003. Field data was organized, coded, classified and computer analyzed. Major findings of the study were; Seventh-day biblical doctrinal teachings have a great influence on the avenues for ceasefire at the Borabu border for the reason that the whole law of God instills love towards God and fellowman. In addition, the principles of both the national and biblical values were the major components of the Christian ethics enclosed in the six doctrinal teachings of the Seventh Day Adventist church. Therefore, the conclusion drawn was that the Adventist Church at the Borabu border should implement the teachings of their faith in the process of establishing peace paradigm.

Keywords: Adventist doctrines, Paradox, Peace, SDA, Violence

INTRODUCTION

SDA- stands for the Seventh –Day Adventist Church. It is a member of that branch of the Adventists which was constituted as a separate body after the expected second coming of Christ failed to be realized in 1844 (*The Seventh-Day Adventist Church Manual, 2010*). They believe that Christ's second coming is eminent, and they observe Saturday instead of Sunday as their Sabbath. The Seventh –day Adventist church is guided by the six great theological biblical doctrines which provide the basis for mission and social accountability. In line with this objective, the researcher drew several analyses from his respondents based on the six themes upheld by the Seventh day Adventist Church. These six themes investigated here were; the creed of God, the doctrine of man, the dogma of salvation, the creed of the church, the dogma of the Christian life and the doctrine of the last things, (*The Seventh day Adventists believe (2006)*). The investigation was relevant for it sought to find out whether the Seventy-day Adventist theology provides a basis for

her perennial border resolution efforts for the social problems in social setting at Borabu border. Is the SDA church theology enhancing a spirit of engagement with the world or a spirit of 'escapism'? By standing true to these doctrines the Adventists are compelled by the full force of the scriptures to engage the world as recorded in the book of Mathew (28:19-20) "go ye therefore and preach baptizing them in the name of God, the father, the son and the Holy spirit, commanding them to obey all things'. It was worthwhile to investigate the influence of these doctrines to the resolution efforts at the historical volatile border violence.

Ethnicity is the opposite of Peace. Peace is an incidence of accord categorized by absence of violence, ethnicity and the liberty from fear of violence. In the global skirmishes indigenous people are constructing peace in discontinuing fierceness, redeeming lives and curing shattered communities. In the contemporary world home-grown peace builders are making big strides. At the

Borabu border the presence of fear of recurrence of violence still continue to linger in the minds of the natives. The seventh day Adventist church at the Borabu perennial border violence forms a good example of these homegrown peace builders. The local people provide local solutions to volatile situations. These home local solution have been tested in different parts of the world such as Burundi (Rallying young people to discard armed militias), DR Congo (Freeing child soldiers, disarming militias and relocating civilians), Pakistan (helping young people to resist recruitment by violent extremist groups (Philippines (overcoming spiritual divisions), and Sudan (enabling societies to resolve conflict through nonviolence).

The word Paradox is defined as a situation that has two opposite features or a statement containing two opposite ideas that make it seem impossible, strange or unlikely (Oxford, 2012). As from 1992 to current the state of Kenya has been experiencing violence targeted at every election period. Worst of it, since 2011, Kenya has been undergoing expansion passionate terrorist assaults, more particularly Al-Shabaab in revenge for operation Linda Nchi, a harmonized armed operation among the Somalian army and Kenyan military inaugurated in October 2011. However, these Somalia attacks were believed to be executed by the radicalized Kenyan youth who were employed for the intended Somalia terrorists' purpose. At the dawn of 2014, the aggregate muggings started upsetting the tourism industry in Kenya, prompting foreign states which issued travel advices (Macharia, 2014).

For the Borabu border violence, it has been occurring as a contagious consequent of negative ethnicity, presidential elections, the land question and cattle rusting, (Nyagwoka et al., 2015). What is peace? Peace is disputed, equally when it is structured by the disputant to a skirmish and when it is enforced by authority. Is it that at Borabu the envisioned peace should be enhanced by the authority or has it been contaminated by power, interests and ideology? Dialogues on armistice and battle, besides the brands of power connected by them are fashioned by, and create, socio-political relation, law, security and institutions which endure influencing the comportment of individuals through conformity. The paper scrutinized three pertinent issues: Can command create amity than an undesirable concord? Can authority appease than make peace? Does peace eradicate power? Because of diversity at the Borabu border, there is no simple prescription for peace building except action research in the aftermath of the perennial violence at Borabu.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of the superficial reappearance of peace after the experienced perennial violence, multifaceted compact of skirmishes, which are designed alongside tribal outlines, are observed at the Borabu border. The Borabu border has

been experiencing the challenges of cattle rustling which has been the cause for tribal violence, underdevelopment, poverty, ethnicity, insecurity and negation of God's law. Regardless of the different ethnic languages, societies, philosophies and chronological cattle clash, Kipsigis and Kisiis have existed in comparative amity from the time of Kenyan independence. However, this changed in 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007 with violence across the country, which negatively affected the Borabu border, socially, politically and economically. Despite the efforts of religious faith in enhancing peace through behavior change and inclusive education, perennial violence persists. The paradox the investigator distinguished was that the populace percentage of the Adventists to that of other Christians groups and in extension other regions at the Borabu border were high which should have been a good indicator for responsible living but the violence is perennial. It is against this background that the paper found it worthwhile to investigate 'The paradox of peace on the Seventh Day Adventists' Church's doctrinal teachings at Borabu Border, Nyamira County.

Objectives

- i. The main objectives of this paper are; to identify the most challenges the Seventh-day Adventist Christians face in the process of peace building initiatives at Borabu border in Kenya
- ii. Examine SDA church peace building methods at the Borabu border line, Nyamira County, Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

A sample size of 207 out of from a population of 2003 was used. A questionnaire with a 5 point likert type scale, interview schedule and observation techniques were found to be appropriate. Simple random sampling and purposive were suitable in choosing respondents for questionnaire and interview data respectfully. 195 copies of the questionnaire were directed in data processing. 12 respondents were interviewed by interview schedules. Field data was organized, coded, classified and computer analyzed. Interview data was evaluated by percentages and frequency counts.

Area of study

The researcher's study area was Borabu Sub-county of Nyamira County in Kenya as shown in figure 1 below. The Borabu border is the administrative departure between the Bomet and Nyamira Counties as well as the separation among the territory of the Kipsigis on the Bomet side and the land of the Absgusii on the Borabu part. The Sub County is one of the three districts that were curved out of

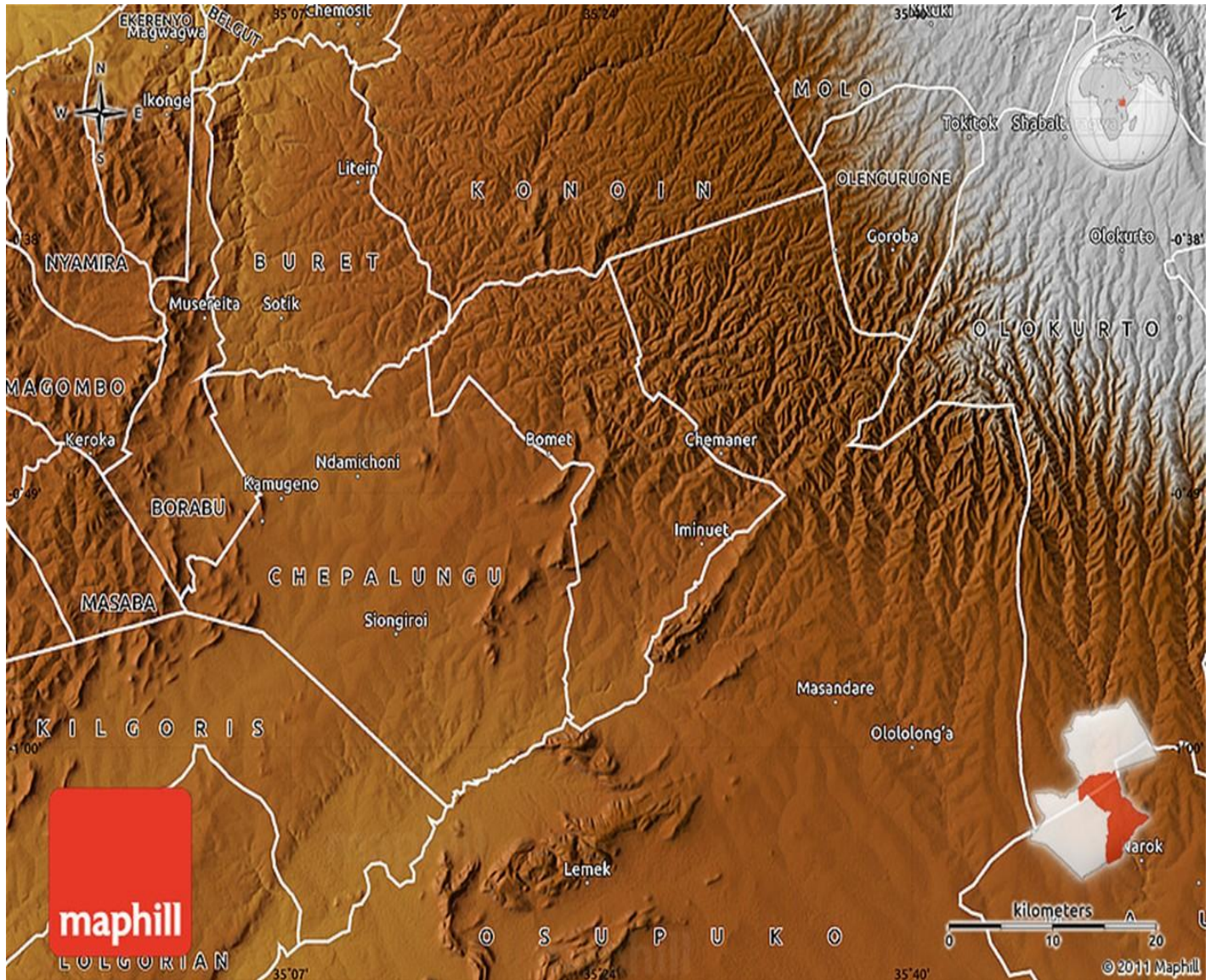


Figure 1. Map of Borabu and her neighbors

the former Nyamira County, now Nyamira County. Borabu County is one of the smallest Districts in Kenya both in area coverage and total population. It was one of the worst hit by the 2007/8 PEV. It is sparsely populated as compared to its neighbors since much of it is in the settlement scheme formerly held by the white settlers.

Theory

The researcher adopted Aristotle’s institutionalization theoretical framework of the natural law which states the significance of natural law in guiding the choices of the Christians. In this theory Aristotle advances for instance that it is wrong to steal because it weakens social relations and one’s health and reason.

FINDINGS

Regarding table 1 below, 88 respondents established that majority of adherents of the Seventh day Adventist Church were taught regarding the law of God as one of the doctrines of the Seventh-day philosophy of education. This finding is similar to *Seventh-day Adventists believe* (2006:263) which holds that the law of God when efficiently communicated to the followers, it augments the growth of personality and behavior patterns to equally the young and the adult generation. The results in the present research agreed with the scriptural instructions about the law, where Moses was inculcated by the Lord to impart the progenies of Israel both at mornings and evenings as a guiding and controlling principle (Deuteronomy 5:3-5). Although the respondents were educated regarding the significance of

Table 1. Whether adherents were educated on the doctrine of Christian life. (a) I was instructed regarding God's law during the tenure prior to baptism

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
S A	31	16	16
A	140	72	88
U	02	01	89
D	13	07	96
S D	09	04	100
Total	195	100	

Source: Research data 2009

Table 2. Whether the adherents were educated regarding the doctrine of God

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Strongly agree	09	05	05
Agree	171	88	93
Undecided	01	00	93
Disagree	09	05	98
Strongly Disagree	05	02	100

Source: Research data 2009

Table 3. Whether adherents were imparted the principles of the doctrine of humanity; (the doctrine of humanity was communicated to me in the class baptismal, (SA), (A), (U), (D), (SD))

Form of Teaching	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Strongly Agree	31	16	16
Agree	146	75	91
Don't know	02	01	92
Disagree	11	06	98
Strongly disagree	05	02	100
Total	195	100	

Source: Research data 2009

conforming to God's law, they recurrently contravene it as evidenced in perennial Borabu border violence. (Table 2)

This response was sought in order to establish whether adherents had a full knowledge of God who is the source of true wisdom, education and character development. The findings in Table 2 above revealed that 93% respondents established that majority of the believers were accurately informed regarding the doctrine of God as chronicled in the SDA church manual (2010). The doctrine of God contains five main constituents which are recorded as; the word of God, the God head, God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit. Conferring to Seventh – day Adventists believe (2006), the doctrine of God discloses God as adoration, maker, savior, and modifier. The doctrine of God subscribe to the principles of monotheism (Deut, 6:4), almighty, magnificence and anonymous. The harmony of determination demonstrated

in the study of the doctrine of the trinity is an aspect of correlation the researcher anticipated to be displayed by the residents of Borabu Sub County. The study intended at prompting the Borabu populations of their prerequisite to unite to the Godhead who is competent to reestablish their broken relations with Him and with one another (john 17:21).

The inquiry results in table 3 above showed that 91% respondents decided to the query that the instructions on the doctrine of humanity were commendably directed to them during their tutorial baptismal instructions. As documented in the *SDA church manual* (2010: 11), there are two foremost mechanisms of the doctrine of humanity which include; creation and the nature of man. The gap identified and investigated at Borabu is the disconnection between knowing the doctrine of humanity and fulfilling the anticipations of the doctrine. The study distinguished that if the populaces of Borabu border endure to persist in their

Table 4. Whether adherents were qualified to the principles of the doctrine of the Salvation: The doctrine salvation was taught to me in the baptismal class, (SA), (A), (U), (D), (SD))

Form of Teaching	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Strongly Agree	28	14	14
Agree	149	77	91
Don't know	03	01	92
Disagree	14	07	99
Strongly disagree	01	01	100
Total	195	100	

Source: Research data 2009

Table 5. Whether adherents were trained concerning the values of the doctrine of the Church: The values of the doctrine of church were imparted to me in the baptismal class, (SA), (A), (U), (D), (SD))

Form of Teaching	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Strongly Agree	33	17	17
Agree	141	72	89
Don't know	02	01	90
Disagree	15	08	98
Strongly disagree	04	02	100
Total	195	100	

Source: Research data 2009

previous unconverted exists, then, the perpetual Borabu border fierceness will linger to exist till the close of time. It is for that reason that all the Borabu inhabitants whose past exists have been transmuted by the spirit of Christ shall henceforward remain united and peaceful to one another until the reappearance of Christ, our prince of peace. However, the determined reappearances of viciousness at Borabu border generate a contest to the enactment of requirements of the doctrine of humanity.

According to the outcomes in table 4 above the scores designates that 91 % respondents approved the interrogation that required to scrutinize whether believers were educated to the creeds of the doctrine of salvation for the period of their baptismal lesson instructions. The investigator projected that if they were tutored efficiently and were enthusiastic to be controlled by the Holy Spirit as documented in the Seventh –day Adventists belief (2006:133), they would not exhibited a brutal conduct to one another for the reason that the gospel is understood to marque them mild. Bearing upon the fact that the study observed that the continuing fierceness at Borabu Sub County is chronological, the consequent elucidation is that various adherents may have been transformed devoid of the changes in their exists.

Establishing the upshots in table 4 the anticipation of the examiner is that the believers of the SDA church at Borabu sub County should instill and inaugurate a secure transformation which enhances clemency of sins and optimism of bliss. The paradox here is that the doctrine of salvation has frequently been communicated by the

church to the adherents but the most of the believers' conduct have been obstinately demonstrating adversely as verified in the chronological border clashes. This is an evidential paradox for the reason that the vehemence is persistent regardless of the circumstance that the good news of salvation has been imparted.

The results presented in table 5 exposed that 89% aficionados accepted that they were judiciously inculcated regarding the doctrine of the church in the process of being prepared for baptism. The anticipation of the researcher was that the believers would have continued unified by the church which is embodied as the body of Christ (*Seventh –day Adventists believes*, 2006: 163). Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the Borabu border continuously exhibit violence, thus an indication of paradox of peace. *SDA church manual* (2010:13) embrace that the church is a society of followers who, have faith in God the son as their redeemer. They also hold that they have been so-called out from the world in order to articulate the good tidings of liberation (Mathew 28:19-20). Therefore the adherents of the SDA church are projected to display accord and pleasant interactions at the Borabu border point; nevertheless this is not always achieved. The church as a cooperate entity ought to outspread the benefits of her values to the surrounding environment, however, the challenge of violence at the Borabu border is perennial and has persisted and this has become a spikey problem to the enactment of the desired purposes of the doctrine of the Church.

Table 6. Whether adherents were instructed on the views of the doctrine of the last things: (The doctrine eschatology was educated to me in the baptismal class. (SA), (A), (U), (D), (SD))

Form of Teaching	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Strongly Agree	35	18	18
Agree	142	73	91
Don't know	02	01	92
Disagree	14	07	99
Strongly disagree	02	01	100
Total	195	100	

Source: Research data 2009

The results in table 6 above designated that 91 adherents decided to the inquiry that believers were sufficiently tutored on the creeds of the instructions of the doctrine of the last things. As regards to the *Seventh – day Adventists believe (2006: 347-417)*, four main constituents of this doctrine are recorded as ; Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, the second coming of Christ, death and resurrection of Christ, the millennium and the new earth. The second coming of Christ is the splendid occasion that is the foundation for the reality of the Seventh-day Adventist church. (Rev 1:7), The SDA belief that at this second coming, the faithful death shall be resurrected and together with the living faithful will be translated and then ushered in into God's kingdom, (1Thesalonians 4:13-15, NIV).

The residents of the Borabu border are anticipated to have a knowledge of transformed lives well-intentioned of the values that Christ will accept at his coming back to take his church home. They should abandon the perpetual performances of fierceness and entirely its origins in order to adapt the wants of the Christian integrities as recorded in Colossians (3:1-2), “

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of the Christian behavior enhances character development at the Borabu border which is fundamental to wellbeing of a person. Secondly, the doctrine of God establishes unity in diversity, ascending from the oneness of God. Thirdly, the doctrine of man divulges man as asocial being who should co-exist harmoniously with neighbors and who should exhibit the character of God. Fourthly, the doctrine of the church expounds that the church exists as a body of Christ and all the adherents form individual parts and so the church has to engage the world in which they live in the process of mitigating the challenges. Fifty, the doctrine of Salvation holds that the fantastic good news of the Christian bible bestows positive transformation on the believers. And sixthly, the doctrine of eschatology raises the question of the destiny of man. Therefore the Seventh day Adventist at the Borabu border

that form the majority should, where possible implement their biblical doctrinal teachings in the process of influencing the two border sub-Counties towards the part of sustainable development and good governance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The paper recommended that in order to overcome the danger of the paradox of peace at the Borabu border the SDA adherents have to establish local radio talk shows concerning the merits of inter-tribal harmonious living.
- ii. The paper also recommended the creation of mediation and organized security through joint local tribunals.
- iii. Once in every four months, there should be put in place a joint Sabbath congregational gathering from both the ethnic divide at the border town of Chebirat.

REFERENCES

- Adventist Statements*, Communications Department of the General Conference, Review and Herald.
- American Heritage (2011), Dictionary of English Language, 5th ed., Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, Oxford,
- Nyagwoka, Tom Mong'are, et al (2015), "Applicability of Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Holistic Education in Enhancing Vision 2030 and Beyond- Nyamira County" *Journal of Modern Education Review* ISSN Academic Star Publishing Associatio, Michigan
- Rajmud, Dabroeski (2005). *Statements, Guidelines and Other Documents: Seventh-day*
- Seventh day Adventist Church Manual (2010)*. Secretariat General Conference of SDA, Review and Herald, USA.
- White, Hellen G. (1970). *Patriarchs and Kings* Vol 1, Review and Herald, Wessington, DC,
- Wieland, Robert J. (1980). *The Revelation of Things to Come*. The Stan Borough Press:,England,

Internet

- Macharia Munene, James (1June 2014). <http://uk.Reuters.com, article/2014/06.01>. "Bombings threaten Kenya growth goals, open new strains with wary West"

Journals

- Akers, George H.(1993: ,73). "*Journal of the Adventist Theological Society: The Role of the Seventh day Adventist Education in the Formation of Adventist Lifestyle*, (Adventist Theological Society, 4)