



# Analysis and Synthesis of the Effects of Different Types of Conflicts on People and the Relationships among Them

Andrew O Otieno\*

Uzima University, Kenya

## Abstract

Conflicts have different effects on people some of which are negative and some are positive. Although most people believe that conflicts usually involve some actual physical force being directly directed at a people or a country, it is not always so. This has been demonstrated by the current COVID-19 pandemic in which an infectious disease has affected the whole world in a way that was never envisioned. The results of this pandemic has been reflected in many sectors of the society including the economic, physical, social, educational, households and even family cohesion. The education sector has been seriously impacted with closure of schools and others being to adopt learning models that had not been prepared for. Many families have endured the effects of domestic violence, gender based violence leading to increased teenage pregnancies, loss of earnings and jobs, massive layoffs by many companies, restricted movements and socialization that has psychologically affected many people. These effects may impact on different countries for many years to come bringing into for other conflicts for example the deterioration of relationships between the superpowers like China and the United States. Therefore the world must be prepared to deal with some unforeseen conflicts some of which may directly lead to violent confrontations among countries. Conflict negotiators must therefore be prepared to play even a bigger role in the near future long after the COVID-19 epidemic would have been brought under control.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; COVID; Coronavirus; Coronavirus disease 2019

## Introduction

### Analysis and Synthesis of the effects of different types of conflict on people and the relationships among them

The coronavirus pandemic has affected all the countries in the world some more severely than others creating conflicts among the peoples of the world [1]. This pandemic has caused havoc on the public health systems and severely impacted on the global economies of nearly all countries in the world and this effect has both short-term and long-term consequences. This infection has created a lot of tensions especially in countries with poor economies with a potential to trigger civil unrests in such countries. In addition the source of the epidemic has been a major issue among the super-powers with blame games involving different countries like America and China which has caused serious tensions in international relations which has a potential to continue into the future and beyond. This infection has disrupted the usual lives of people especially human to human interactions, negatively impacted on both international and local travels in addition to interfering with the conflict management systems due to various restrictions put in place in order to contain the spread of the virus. It is also possible that some leaders in some countries may use this opportunity of travel restrictions to crack down on opposition elements in their countries or use it as a means of furthering their ill-intentioned agendas just because the rest of the world may not be watching due to their involvement in fighting the plague. The war between the superpowers and with the World Health Organization complicates an already fragile situation impairing the mounting of an effective and efficient response to the epidemic. The direction the pandemic is taking is not clear with some countries like Italy and The United States already hit very hard and it is clear that the economies of these countries have been hit hard and it is not yet very clear whether the countries especially of the sub-Saharan Africa would be able to survive a similar attack. The evidence that emanated from Iran, one of the worst hit countries after China reveal that at a time like this the world needs to come together and seriously look for ways of countering this epidemic as has been witnessed by unlikely friends like the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait that have come out strongly in support of Iran. On a positive note it is epidemics such as this that have at times contributed to easing conflicts in

## OPEN ACCESS

### \*Correspondence:

Andrew O Otieno, Uzima University,  
Kenya,

E-mail: opondandy@yahoo.com

**Received Date:** 12 Sep 2020

**Accepted Date:** 08 Oct 2020

**Published Date:** 12 Oct 2020

### Citation:

Otieno AO. Analysis and Synthesis of the Effects of Different Types of Conflicts on People and the Relationships among Them. *Int J Fam Med Prim Care.* 2020; 1(5): 1023.

**Copyright** © 2020 Andrew O Otieno. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

many parts of the world as the opposing factions try to work together to fight one enemy and it is hoped that this is what should happen [10].

As the outbreak comes under control in many countries that were worst hit, the world is entering a second stage that involves assessment of the damage caused by the epidemic especially the damage to the economy of these countries but also keeping cognizance of the fact that the disease is likely to rear its head in the poorer countries of the world with poor health infrastructure for example war torn Somali and the Sudan. Most of the countries that have so far suffered the brunt of the epidemic including China, South Korea, Italy and the United States of America were countries which had very strong economies and therefore were able to allocate sufficient resources in the fight against COVID-19 but at a very negative impact on the countries health systems and the general economy. Fortunately most of the poorer countries in the sub Saharan Africa appear to have been spared from serious impacts of the disease with reports of fewer reported infections and deaths and it is in such countries where the consequences of infection was expected to be grim [1].

However these low numbers should not make these countries to start celebrating that they have been spared from the overwhelming infections that were initially predicted at the beginning of the pandemic because this low rate of infections may be attributed to the lack of testing facilities and possibly a delay between the infection and the manifestations of serious symptoms but even so countries like Kenya are already reporting an escalation in infection from below 2000 when the epidemic started to now approaching a figure of 10,000 reported infections and still rising. The same trend is also being reported in some countries in the Arab world and other African states and failure to put in place structures to contain the virus including social distancing and wearing face masks may seriously put these countries at a serious risk of a calamity of great dimensions. It would be difficult to imagine then what would happen to these countries, because the suffering caused would be enormous and nearly impossible to mitigate. It would escalate the levels of poverty that are already present in some countries; there would be widespread unemployment and escalation in levels of violence including domestic violence including increase in crime rates that was unprecedented.

Countries are already at a loss on how best to manage this pandemic and reverse the spread of the virus with many cities being completely locked, borders have had to be shutdown, bans on social interactions in functions including church gatherings and also social functions with instances of some burials being conducted at night to discourage the large crowds that gather in most funerals in Africa and citizens have also been requested to work from home. Although some of these measures may be deemed to be necessary they are also associated with certain costs especially taking into consideration that this pandemic would not be going away any sooner if a vaccine is not discovered soon. The impact on a ban on social gatherings and asking casual laborers to work from home does not seem to make sense since these are not permanent jobs and this only escalates the poverty and suffering that will be seen in families. Alternatively lifting these restrictions prematurely may also be ill advised because of the risk of infection dissemination sending the countries back to the lockdown situation and this would further compound the economic and political impacts of the disease. Maintaining a lockdown situation requires a lot of financial support, but with the whole of the world feeling the impact it is difficult to imagine where the benefactors are

going to come from International Crisis Group, 2020.

### **COVID-19 and the great power competition**

Many of the militaries of several counties including the United States of America have had their attention diverted from the world politics and re-focus on mounting an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and putting more focus on the virus related vulnerabilities [2]. This diversion of attention has created other bases of political and diplomatic space allowing countries like China and Russia to assert them. A recent activity by these countries against the NATO forces around Northern Europe has been seen as the attempts by these countries to flex their muscles in order to test NATO's readiness in times of such a crisis. Much of these power games have been at play around the South-China Sea with China being accused of exploiting the pandemic and the US being accused of creating a sense of instability. The revival of violence and instability in Afghanistan have not made matters any better and whether it will halt the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan is not clear and in addition the flaring of tensions between China and India across the disputed frontiers has presented another test of the current state of the power relations that has been noticed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic [2]. In Africa it was hoped that this pandemic with its restriction on movement and the fear of contracting infection would hold the fighting affecting many countries in Africa and create space for the peaceful resolution of the conflicts. This focus on Africa appear to have been misguided and in fact the conflict rates in Africa have remained steady although the patterns of the violence has shifted as the armed groups and governments take advantage of the pandemic towards political priorities. The governments have become bolder using the lockdowns as an excuse to crack down on their opponents and to suppress minority groups while violent groupings have expanded their operational boundaries leading to an increase in intergroup conflicts. This implies that while the governments are concentrating all their efforts targeting their citizens in harsh attempts to control their movements the armed militias have used this to try and consolidate their efforts and this means that conflicts have escalated in areas which were already in conflict. Part of the reasons for this is that the foreign powers turned their interest in dealing with their domestic crisis related to the COVID-19 epidemic at the risk of leaving some countries to scale up their military operations [3].

The shifting conflict patterns in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic has emboldened many insurgents to strike at will with the government forces already overstretched and unable to provide adequate security to its people. Demonstrations by the people which had waned during the early periods of the epidemic has seen resurgence although this time they have been pegged to economic hardships facing the people in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic [3].

These scenarios that are being seen in parts of Africa and other parts of the world demonstrates that most conflicts are either directly or indirectly related to power and conflict is usually seen as a means of seeking or maintaining the balance of power in relationships. The powerful largely determine what is important and just for example in this case determining which parts of the countries to be locked down and which ones to remain open [4]. Dramatic changes in power either through military efforts or following a natural catastrophe like the COVID-19 pandemic can also affect conflict in several ways for example emboldening the weaker members of the society to challenge the leaders. Power is deemed to be a relational concept functioning between individuals and their environment

and any time the environment changes it may dictate the direction in which power flows and it may also stimulate other groups to rise up against injustices that were dormant [4]. Power therefore can be conceptualized as the ability to make use of opportunities available within the environment to leverage relevant resources with the aim of achieving personal, rational and environment goals. In this case the vacuum created by COVID-19 then is being used by certain forces to increase their visibility and thereby strengthening their position and thus their negotiation power.

### **Economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic**

Many countries in Africa including the Eastern part of Africa have been characterized as facing moderate risk of the epidemic with a highly variable capacity to respond effectively to the epidemic. These countries are also faced with very high debt burdens and the economy is dependent on exports to foreign countries like China who are currently faced with the aftermath of the COVID-19 infection. In addition these countries' currencies are also very unstable in the money market in addition to poor balance of payments. Most of the negative impact of the infection has already reared its head in the form of decreasing demands for the African exports including minerals like oil from the oil rich countries like the Democratic republic of Congo and Nigeria. It is estimated that all these factors put together will lead to a negative growth rate for most African countries as a result of the coronavirus [5]. Additionally the rate of decline will be worsened by the disruption of the global supply chain of various goods and other commodities which may lead to a total economic crash in some countries. The effect of the Coronavirus infection in Africa has also been witnessed in the tourism industry which is one of the most important foreign currency earner for countries like Kenya as international travelers are heeding the advice to stay at home again seriously impacting on the economy [5]. Coupled with this, stories abound of investors departing from emerging markets to seek safety in their countries as there are still a lot of hidden facts concerning the HIV pandemic. If the current scenario remains the same then it is expected the COVID-19 pandemic will seriously impact the African economy in terms of poverty eradication and inequality, food security and nutrition, women and girl child issues, internally displaced persons and migrants and it might also impact negatively on the governance issues and security. Already several negative effects of the infection are visible in many sectors of the economy including the tourism sector, agricultural sector and manufacturing and trade as most industries have been shut down putting many jobs at risk. This therefore means that the COVID-19 pandemic poses serious adverse socio-economic effects on the health and livelihoods of most communities in Africa and the rest of the world affecting the most vulnerable groups negating the goals already achieved in attaining the sustainable development goals. Most governments are therefore being called upon that as they concentrate on halting the spread of the COVID-19 infection they should now also start seriously thinking of how to mitigate the socio-economic effects of the infection on the people [5].

The illness in itself has had direct and indirect effects on the population [6]. For example when income earners are affected as so often happens due to their exposure to other people in their normal course of work, it results in a fall in the number of actively productive members in turn increasing the number of dependents. In addition to the loss in earnings, there is additional expenditure incurred in taking care of the sick and when they succumb more money spent on funeral costs. The ill-health and the poverty that it causes within

families leads to family conflicts which has appeared in form of domestic and gender based violence creating tension and conflicts within the families and thus the community. The poverty created by the pandemic has led to families disposing off assets at below normal market and even turning to cheap unsecured loans that may be available at very high interest rates thus worsening an already bad situation [7]. This therefore means that the coronavirus infection far from being an ordinary virus will be a source of impoverishment for most countries in Africa worsening the economic status for most of them and turning them into beggars within their own continent [6].

The way the virus is spread has also discouraged close contact among different people for fear of contracting the infection leading to reduction in close associations which is a necessity in labor intensive countries like Kenya [8]. In addition it has led to many places of employment ordered closed for example restaurants, markets and other business premises, closure of most transportation services, closure of the countries geographical borders, cancellation of commercial flights and even shipping and cargo services. Closure of countries borders has led to cross border tensions and conflicts for example between Kenya and Tanzania which in certain situations may even cause cross border incursions using illegal entry points posing serious challenges for the countries.

The closure of schools for both higher and basic education in Kenya has in itself also created tension and conflicts within families in a number of ways. By students staying at home rather than in schools it means more mouths to feed for families whose incomes have already dwindled. At the same times the students have also lost time of learning because of their prolonged stay at home and some of them may never return back to school for various reasons and this will in turn translate to poor earning due to inability to access well-paying jobs increasing poverty and conflicts within families [8].

School closures during epidemics are based on evidence and assumptions from influenza outbreaks that they reduce social contacts between students and therefore interrupt transmission [9]. Some studies in the UK have revealed that the social contacts that take place during school holidays are less than those that take place when the school sessions are on Earnes et al. [10,11]. Contacts are said to increase between the children and adults and children from other schools and this may actually put the school going children at an added risk of acquiring infection while at home [12,13].

School closure as a response to the coronavirus outbreak was implemented as a result of evidence in the reduction of spread of the influenza virus in which transmission of the virus is children driven but it is not yet clear whether it would also work for the coronavirus infection whose transmission dynamics appear quite different [14]. Apart from school closure there exists other strategies that may be used in reducing spread of infections that are spread through aerosols rather than the drastic step of school closures but these have not yet been tried for COVID-19. Such practices may include suspending classes that have been affected by the infection or reorganizing the school organization structure to limit mixing of large numbers of students for example through closure of playing grounds and cancellation of activities deemed to be non-essential, increasing spacing within the classrooms, shortening the school week and even staggering class start-ups among different year groups. These alternative methods of reducing spread of infections have been supported by a number of studies [15,16]. During the H1N1 outbreak in 2009 Taiwan used some of these measures rather than total school

shutdown facilitated by encouraging homeroom classes using core teachers and it was discovered that this method was an effective social distancing measure in the epidemic without disruption of the education process for the students. There may be many reasons why the large-scale closure of institutions of learning may not work for the COVID-19 epidemic. So far in the COVID-19 pandemic the infection rate in children has remained low all over the world including countries that have been worst hit by the virus and some students reveal that although children are as likely to be infected with the virus, they remain largely asymptomatic or may only develop a mild form of the disease [17]. China which was the original country to report the COVID infection also reported low infection rate in children and whether this was due to low infectivity, subclinical or mild infections or the specific population policy that exists in China is not clear. Previous coronavirus outbreaks also revealed that the transmission rates of these viruses in schools was very low or absent [18]. Taiwan has effectively minimized the spread of the COVID-19 infection using policies that advocated widespread non-closure of schools but based on evidence based closure of local individual schools [19].

The closure of the institutions of higher learning in Kenya has brought into the fore serious challenges include the roll out of online learning for thousands of students in addition to the financial crisis they are facing due to these closures since students do not pay their fee obligations. This translates to the universities failure to meet their financial obligations because their main revenue stream which is school fees has suddenly been curtailed. Most universities just like other private entities rely on tuition fees to fund most of their operations since the support they receive from the government in form of subsidies are not enough to meet their needs. Therefore continued lockdown in the wake of the Corona pandemic especially when it is not supported by evidence as to its effectiveness is not conducive to the healthy existence of these learning institutions. Although the government has proposed that learning institutions continue in the online platforms this has been resisted by many of the student unions quoting problems with internet access and less personal engagement between the students and their lecturers and most of them also believe that this modality of learning is less effective than the face to face learning they are used to. The University of Nairobi student's body has thus advised their colleagues to boycott these online classes creating a crisis and conflict between the university and the learners. The conflict that has been created in the learning institutions is caused by lack of inclusiveness in decision making that brings in the issue of justice as a source of conflict [4]. For example considering that the school population is diverse with students coming from far flung areas some of whom are poor barely able to afford a meal, accessing the internet for learning might be a serious challenge to them. Moreover some of them may not afford the sophisticated gadgets that are a prerequisite to accessing e-learning platforms. For implementation of any serious changes within organizations it needs widespread consultation and discussions before implementation of a decision to adopt a change in certain processes. Thus the decision to re-open institutions and schools of higher learning would be welcome if Kenya has to reverse the negative trends that have resulted from its prolonged closure of these institutions [4].

### **Gender issues and conflict**

According to the conflict theory the myriads of social problems that occur in most communities can be ascribed to the mistreatment by subordinate groups by the most dominant ones in the absence of a power balance between the genders [20]. According to Engels,

there is a relationship between the most powerful people within the society (compared to the bourgeoisie and the proletariats) and what happens within the family structure implying that the power that women exercise within families is much less than that of their male counterparts creating a sense of dependency within the households. This is related to the traditional structure that existed in most families in which the breadwinners were mostly men who then dictated whatever happens in such families although this now appears to be changing and both the man and the women have become breadwinners. This implied that traditionally because of the wealth advantage wielded by the men made them to believe that they were the rightful leaders of households creating conflicts within many households leading to movements that arose to counter this domination by the males. Therefore traditionally gender has best been demonstrated by men attempting to maintain power to the detriment of the women. This led to certain gender roles being ascribed to women and these roles have persisted as men struggle to maintain this status quo. Social problems are then the result of this struggle as the male dominant groups try to work towards retaining their power and status as they oppress their weaker subordinates. In many societies men have traditionally held most of the world's resources and until recently many women in most traditional societies were even denied voting rights and property rights making them totally dependent on their men counterparts. Contemporary conflict theories suggest that whenever women take on the roles of wage earners it improves their status in the family giving them added power to dictate the family engagements and gives them more democratic space in major decision-making although most of the domestic chores are still their responsibility [20].

The Gender role social conflict is a situation that is ascribed to the negative consequences of describing certain roles to people or persons especially when such roles lead to rigid or very restrictive behaviors that result in devaluation and violation of other people. Such conflicts may lead to the suppression of people's potentials interfering with their growth and possible prosperity. Such behaviors have a lot of basis in psychology where they have been found to occur at four levels including cognitive, emotional, behavioral and in the unconscious as a result of the learning that has taken place from childhood to adulthood being taught by sexist and patriarchal societies. This implies that such behaviors are inbuilt and very difficult to change. According to the masculinity ideology men have been socialized to masculine stereotypes and this has been operationalized by the various concepts of masculine norms and behaviors [21]. It is posited that that this ideology represents the standards that determine the behavior of the boys and this may negatively affect them when they become men leading to the gender-based violence that is most commonly reported in families especially when families are subjected to stressful situations.

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic is expected to be serious especially on women and children and might reverse the gains that women have achieved with respect to fighting for their own place in the family. Women appear to be less likely to succumb to the infection since there is evidence that more men than women appear to be dying from the infection and this has been related to immunological and gender differences that exist between them and the prevalence of cigarette smoking among the men [22]. Basing evidence on the impact of Ebola epidemic on women in West Africa it has been estimated that this epidemic will have negative and disproportionate effects to gendered power relations in decision-making in families. Because

of the traditional roles that have been given to women as family primary care givers including taking care of family members infected with the virus before it is diagnosed it is expected that more women will get infected. In addition it is estimated that the Kenyan health workforce employs more women (75%) than men who will expose many of them to the infection although this is yet to be seen but only time will tell. Because the burden of care in many of the households falls on women most of them would find themselves burdened with household chores especially during this time when most people are working from home and companies laying off staff due to inability to pay salaries. As already been reported the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the incidence of gender based violence because of the economic stresses that most families have found themselves in and the increased social isolation in which most men find themselves indoors without any meaningful employment and it is estimated that about 30% of the women experience Gender based violence. In addition the numbers of teenage pregnancies have also been reported to be on the increase and some of them have been attributed to sexual violations sometimes by very close family members and if the schools fail to open soon this situation is only expected to get worse. All these when coupled together is expected to increase the tension and stress that already exists among families.

### Conflict and poverty

Although the WHO defines conflict as a collective form of violence some conflicts that are caused by natural calamities may not really fall within this definition (WHO, 2002). Most people normally associate conflict with violence that is impacted on a people using some kind of physical violence with the aim of achieving certain political, economic or social achievements but we now realize that we don't really need such measures in order for conflict to occur. It is quite clear that direct and indirect forms of conflict have a very negative effect on people and it may act through wealth erosion and reinforcement of poverty. It has been proven that violence can cause actual physical impairment and this may in turn lead to chronic poverty affecting members of the households and most of the impact of the poverty has more impact on the most vulnerable family members especially the children. Children are usually mostly through interruption with their education as most of them have to drop out of school and are sometimes enlisted into the conflict while the adult members of the household lose their economic livelihood which interferes with their capacity to care for the members of the household [22].

The effect of the COVID-19 epidemic is likely to have long time effects in the future in terms of economic and social impact from the direct and indirect effects of the illness, the prevented behaviors adopted by individuals and the different policies adopted by various government to try and control the spread of the disease. Most governments around the world have adopted measures that sometimes entail complete lockdowns on cities and other stringent measures of mitigating the infection without consideration of the long-term effects of such measures on the future economy of these countries. Although the implementation of social distancing in Kenya has contributed to slowing the rate of spread of the virus and reduced possible deaths these measures have also lead to the reduction in domestic economic activity and hurting many livelihoods just like actual physical violence. Therefore the sooner the health sector is strengthened to respond effectively to the pandemic the easier it will be to open up the economy in order to reverse the negative impact of the infection on the economy. The Kenyan government also needs to invest much of the resources in supporting vulnerable households

including controlled cash transfers or mobile telephone money transfer systems but the difficulty with this system will be clearly identifying those considered most vulnerable. Measures need to also be put in place to support workers and firms that have been seriously impacted with the pandemic through targeted liquidity support and introducing measures like credit guarantees and also support to transition them into digital platforms that are compatible with social distancing. It is estimated that Kenya's economy will grow by 1.5% in 2020 compared with the 5.6% that was estimated in 2019 due to the COVID-19 crisis and may even be worse than this estimate.

### Result

COVID-19 pandemic in which an infectious disease has affected the whole world in a way that was never envisioned. The results of this pandemic has been reflected in many sectors of the society including the economic, physical, social, educational, households and even family cohesion. The education sector has been seriously impacted with closure of schools and others being to adopt learning models that had not been prepared for. Therefore the world must be prepared to deal with some unforeseen conflicts some of which may directly lead to violent confrontations among countries.

### Conclusion

In conclusion therefore conflicts in whatever form whether caused through a direct physical force of indirectly by pandemics have certain common negative effects on the people. Among the negative effects are mental health issues, reduction in productive both for the country, organization or at household level, members leaving or running away from a country to seek exile or being expelled from a country due to enmity that has developed as a result of a conflict or loss of jobs, violence in one form or another, distraction of primary purposes and psychological pain. Conflicts whatever its cause may cause frustrations to the members of an organization especially when they see to immediate solutions to the problem. This has been very well demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic in which countries see no immediate return to normalcy and countries that have tried to open up their economies have instead reported a surge in the infection rates. This has increased the stress levels of individuals in both the personal and professional levels. Increased stress levels have always been associated with negative health effects including sleep disturbances, loss of appetite or overeating, headaches and irritability and these effects will be expected to become apparent as the disease takes its toll on the people. Therefore it is expected that this may later increase suicidal tendencies and hypertensive heart diseases leading to premature death. Reduction in economic productivity has been associated with many conflicts because the activities are diverted towards the mitigation of the conflict which takes precedence over all other activities and this has also been demonstrated in the COVID-19 pandemic. With organizations and individuals concentrating all their efforts in dealing with conflicts it diverts their attention from their usual roles and from their usual core goals. Conflict makes members to lose focus on their current projects as they begin gossiping about the conflict as they vent out their frustrations like has so often happened during this current epidemic. This leads to loss of income for the countries, organizations and families reducing access to essential resources necessary for growth or for the survival of the country.

Organizations that increasingly get frustrated with the conflict levels may opt to leave the organization through resignation or defection from duties which can be very detrimental to the

organization due to loss of skills and to families due to loss of income. If the members who leave are holders of executive positions within organizations it may require complete overhaul and reorganization of the management boards or in the extreme may lead to dissolution or winding up of the organization. When conflicts escalate without any hope of peaceful resolution it may lead to intense situations between the involved parties and it may sometimes result in actual physical violence leading to deaths or actual body harm or for organizations may lead to a raft of litigations affecting the performance of the organization. In the COVID-19 pandemic the kind of conflict that has been witnessed includes escalation in domestic violence due to economic deterioration witnessed in families and gender based violence. All these then would contribute to the distraction of family members and groups from their primary purposes leaving them with inadequate time and resources to deal with other essential and beneficial matters. When all these matters are taken into context, conflicts appear to have both long-term and short-term effects on individuals, groups, organizations and even countries affecting the physical, economic and psychological health of all the groups involved or affected by the conflict. In the worst scenarios the psychological effects may cause serious trauma and reduce coping mechanisms of the members.

Viewed from another perspective, conflicts may also have a positive effect on groups and organizations. The beginning of a conflict may be the start a change process. Conflicts contributes to the change process ensuring that both interpersonal and intergroup dynamics remain fresh and are reflective of current interests and realities. Otherwise most people continue to live in the past despite it being not conducive with society's changing roles and needs and it takes a conflict for them to realize their misconceptions and transform for the better. A conflict may also serve as a deterrent for premature group decision making enforcing adoption of certain decision-making processes that encourage participation to thoroughly explore the issues under consideration. For there to be reconciliation there has to be a conflict which brings to the fore the people's concerns and generates a discussion that allows for these to be amicably resolved while maintaining the already established relationships. Conflict strengthens intergroup unity because it provides an outlet for the discussion and negotiation of various interests within diverse groups of individuals. Without conflicts groups may falsely believe that they are healthy yet there may exist serious undercurrents that are waiting to erupt in a very violent manner. Additionally conflicts inspire creativity, for example the e-learning that is being adopted in most of the Kenyan Institutions which was initially considered inferior to face-to-face learning, but it has since been realized that it can be a very effective learning platform.

## References

1. International Crisis Group. COVID-19 and conflict: Seven trends to watch. Special Briefing number 4: New York Brussels. 2020.
2. Childs N. Great-power competition and COVID-19. International institute for strategic studies. 2020.
3. Clionadh R. The pandemic has shifted patterns of conflict in Africa. Mail and guardian. Centre for prevention Action. 2020.
4. Deutsch M. Equity, equality and need: What determines which value will be used as the basis of distributive justice. *J Social Issues*. 1975;31(3):137-49.
5. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. ECA estimates billions of losses in Africa due to COVID-19 impact. 2020.
6. Diwaker V, Shephard A. Health, resilience and sustainable poverty escapes: A synthesis. 2018.
7. Diwaker V, Shephard A. Sustaining escapes from poverty. ODI working paper 539. 2018.
8. Malingha D. Kenya restricts foreign travel suspends school on corona virus. 2020.
9. Jackson C, Vynnycky E, Mangtani O. The relationship between school holidays and transmission of influenza in England and Wales. *Am J Epidemiol*. 2016;184(9):644-51.
10. Earnes KT, Tilston NL, White PJ, Adams E, Edmunds WJ. The impact of illness and the impact of school closure on social contact patterns. *Health Technol Assess*. 2010;14(34):267-312.
11. Earnes KT, Tilston NL, Edmunds WJ. The impact of school holidays on the social mixing patterns of school children. *Epidemics*. 2011;3(2):103-8.
12. Hens N, Ayele GM, Goeyvaertes N, Aerts M, Mossong J, Edmunds JW, et al. The impact of unplanned school closure on social mixing behavior and the transmission of close contact infections in eight European countries. *BMC Infect Dis*. 9;187.
13. Brooks SK, Smith LE, Webster RK, Weston D, Woodland L, Hall I, et al. The impact of unplanned school closure on children's social contact: Rapid evidence review. *Euro Surveill*. 2020;25(13):2000188.
14. Jackson C, Mangtani P, Vynnycky E. Impact of school closures on an influenza pandemic. *PLoS One*. 2014;9(5):e97297.
15. Lofgren ET, Rogers J, Senese M, Fefferman NH. Pandemic preparedness strategies for school systems: Is closure the only way? *Ann Zoologic Fennici*. 2008;45:449-58.
16. Ridenhour BJ, Braun A, Teyrasse T, Goldsman D. Controlling the spread of disease in schools. *PLoS One*. 2011;6(12):e29640.
17. Shen K, Yang Y, Wang T, Zhao D, Jin R, Zheng Y, et al. Diagnosis, treatment and prevention of 2019 novel Coronavirus infection in children: Experts consensus statement. *World J Pediatr*. 2020;16(3):223-31.
18. Wong GW, Li AM, Ng PC, Fok TF. Severe acute respiratory syndrome in children. *Pediatr Pulmonol*. 2003;36(4):261-6.
19. Wang CJ, Ng CY, Brooke RH. Response to COVID-19 in Taiwan: Big data analytics, new technology and proactive testing. *JAMA*. 2020;323(14):1341-2.
20. O'Neil JM. Men's gender conflict: 25 years research summary. *The Counseling Psychologist*. 36, 358-476.
21. Levant RF, Hirsch L, Celentano E, Cozza T, Hill S, MacRachorn M, et al. The male role: An investigation of contemporary norms. *J Mental Health Counseling*. 1992;14(3):325-37.
22. Wenham C, Smith J, Morgan R. Covid-19: The gendered impacts of the outbreak. *The Lancet*. 2020;395(10227):846-48.