An Overview of Defence Diplomacy in Kenya

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Abstract: Defence diplomacy is an instrument of diplomacy that promotes the implementation of national foreign and defence policy. It fosters inter-state relations that further establishes mutual trust and interdependence between states. The origin of Kenya's defence diplomacy is underpinned by the foreign policy 'doctrines' of the first four Presidents and its democratic governance. The study was geared to examine and assess the overview of defence diplomacy in Kenya with a view of promoting inter-state relations. The study employed mixed design underpinned in pragmatism research philosophy design, targeting key strategic Senior Military and Civilian Staff in related security institutions, and Ministries. Through purposive sampling techniques participants with not less than twenty years in service or served, relevant knowledge and in decision making were targeted. The sample size reached was eighty, but only fourteen participated through questionnaires, thirteen in interviews and twelve in focus group. Data analysis followed scientific procedures of categorised coding, conversation and discourse analysis and graphical interpretation for archival data. It concludes that the national defence and security structures and institutions establish the bedrock of defence diplomacy in Kenyan. It recommends that Kenya should improve its defence and security structures and institutions with good policies that ensure effective conduct of defence diplomacy.

Key words: *Defence Diplomacy, Diplomacy Education, Inter-state Diplomacy, Kenya Defence, Interstate Policy, Kenya Security, Diplomacy Training*

INTRODUCTION

The origin of Kenya's defence diplomacy doctrine can be traced back to the foreign policy (FP) articulation by Kenya's first four Presidents' policy doctrines. The institution of the Presidency is the most important FP strategic institution in its implementation and articulation (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982, p.1). Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta, established the road map of Kenya's FP through the African state's liberation struggles and political dispensations (Kipyego, 2018, foreword by Mohammed, A. C. pp. v-vii).Through him, Kenya got involved in peace and security endeavours that were deemed necessary on the African continent.Kenya's secondPresident, Daniel Moi, engaged Kenya fully in conflict resolutions, peace and security negotiations, diplomatic and defence and security training cooperation in Africa and also internationally, culminating with the establishment of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) (Kipyego, 2018, Chapter 1, pp. 1–6).

The third President Mwai Kibaki's foreign policy was fundamentally proactive and 'aggressive' in that it focused on protecting Kenya's interests. Kipyego,(2018, Chapter 14, pp

197– 208), argues that the Kibaki regime articulated a proactive foreign policy to position Kenya as a major actor in the international system. This proactive foreign policy was realized when Kenya's sovereignty and national integrity were threatened by the al-Shabaab terror group that was primarily based in Somalia. Kibaki launched the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) under Operation *Linda Inchi (literary means, 'Operation in Defence of the Nation')* to pursue the al–Shabaab terror militant group across the international border into Somalia on 16 October 2011 (Kipyego, 2018). Thereafter the Kenyan troops rehatted into African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).Prior to this KDF had not been involved in major combat, despite Kenya's involvement in brokering peacedeals both in Sudan and Somalia conflicts. The emerging Kibaki FP doctrine communicated military power to augment its political/diplomatic, social and economic power in the region, a neorealist approach to international politics.

Kenya's fourth president was Uhuru Kenyatta and his regime continued with the political and diplomatic traditions of his predecessor. Uhuru's FP approach was fundamentally *'Afrocentric'* (Kipyego, 2018). The regime endeavoured to strengthen the focus on economic diplomacy, sustained the peace agenda in Africa, invested in the war on terror and raised the efforts of engaging with the African states. Kenya is a democratic state with a governance system that has developed structures, institutions and policies of defence and security to undertake defence diplomacy as a tool of diplomacy to foster some of its foreign policy objectives. According to the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the key among them is the National Security Council, which is chaired by the President, the Parliamentary Committee on national security, defence and foreign relations, and the Kenya defence policy.

In this respect, Kenya has developed defence and security institutions of education and training to impart knowledge and skills to its defence and security personnel in their implementation of national defence and security policy. They include the National Defence College (NDC), Joint Command and Staff College (JCSC), formerly Defence Staff College (DSC), the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC), and the Kenya Military Academy (KMA). NDC is a premier defence and security institution for higher education and training on matters of national security and policy formulation that was commissioned in 2001. It trains an average of seventy participants annually.The JCSC – Kenya, is an institution of military professional training, founded in 1984 as Defence Staff College (DSC), but renamed to JCSC in 2022. It primarily trains military officers for leadership, command and management. It comprises two divisions, the senior and junior cadre. The study examines the senior division. It trains an average number of 181 students per year in its both divisions. The IPSTC was commissioned in 2001 with a mandate of conducting peace support-related training and research. The College carries out its mandate in a formal partnership with other international stakeholders. The College trains an average of 500 students per year. KMA isthe oldest defence and security education and training in Kenya. It was established in colonial Kenya in 1941, as a military basic training College. However, with time, it has transformed itself into a Military Academy for Officer Cadets training, with four streams averaging 800 Cadets annually. In addition, Kenya previously used to train Officer Cadets from almost all Eastern and Southern African states. The four institutions are colleges of National Defence University – Kenya.

Internationally, defence and security institutions have common experiences and similarities that make them proficient in working with equivalent in any state (Foster,*et al.,* 2013; Leahy, 2014). Defence diplomacy is defined in terms of its significance as a tool for implementation

of national foreign defence and security policy by using security institutions and the ministry of defence leadership in international undertakings (Drab, 2018). Despite its many references whichdependonthe state, it carries a wide scope that encompasses military and civilians in the realm of national security (Emy, 2019). In this respect, the paper delves to examine and to assess the underpinning overview of defence diplomacy inKenya that fosters cordial inter-state relations in the promotion of peace and security.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed mixed design underpinned in pragmatism research philosophy. The research design was grounded by various research strategies. The target population comprised key strategic Senior Military Officers and Senior Civilian Staff in related security institutions and Ministries in Kenya, including Ministries of Defence, Interior and Foreign Affairs, the National Police Service, the National Intelligence Service and the Department of Migration. The target population participants were of not less than twenty years in service and with a degree level and above of education. Purposive sampling technique was applied for specific targeting of individuals in decision making, with requisite knowledge, expertise and experience relevant to the study.

Determination of sample size followed a scientific approach using the Cochran formular (1997, para 6.2.1), thus for an unknown size of population the formular is:
$n_0 = \{z^2.p.(1-p)\}/e^2$.
Where e = desired margin of error;
p = the fraction of the population (as %) that displays the attribute;
and z = the z-value, extracted from Cochran's z-tables, thus z= 1.96.

Hence given the lack of information of the actual number of the strategic leaders in the security related Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) (due to security nature of the information), the study sought to consider that 50% of the desired population was targeted, which provided the largest variability.

Then considering a 95% confidence level (led to a 5% margin of error) thus (+5% or -5%) margin of error. From the Cochran's z-Tables, the value for z is 1.96. Thus, the theoretical sample size was found to be:
$n_0 = \{1.96^2 \text{ x } 0.5 \text{ x } (1-.0.5)\}/0.05^2 = 385$

Thus, applying Cochran's modified sample size formula
$n = n_0/[1+\{(n_0 - 1)/N\}]$;
where n_0 is the Cochran's sample size computed using formula for unknown population size, thus the sample estimate idea.

N is the size of the population, (in the case of the study this was rough estimates reached by the researcher in all MDAs).

Table. 1. Determination of sample size.

MDA	Estimated Strategic Target Population	Sample Size	Questionnaire Respondents between Jun & Nov 2021	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Participants; on 26 Nov 2021 (Video Conferencing)	Interviewee participants Conducted Between Feb & Jun 2021	Sampling Procedures
MOD/ DoD	80	14	8	4	6	Purposeful
MFA	80	14	2	1	2	Purposeful
MoI	40	4	2	1	2	Purposeful
NIS	40	4	2	0	2	Purposeful

Source: Research data, 2023.

Further, the study collected data from defence and security education and training institutions archival records. Data analysis followed scientific procedures of adequate checking its reliability and verification. Raw data was edited, coded and tabulated. Thus, categorised coding of textual data from questionnaires, interview conversations and discourse analysis to interpret elements of speech act from the interviews and focus group discussions. Content and descriptive statistics procedures were applied (Loebs*et al.,* 2017). Ethical and legal considerations were observed (Resnik *et al.,*2015), while permission to conduct research was sought from Kenya's National Commission for Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents
The study sought to examine the demographic characteristics of the respondents who took part bin the study. the characteristics examined included the age bracket of the respondents, whether the participants were still serving or retired, gender distribution.

When asked to give their age bracket, nearly a third (31%) of the respondents were of the age brackets of 45-50 years, 28% were between 40-45 years, 22% were between 50-55 years, while only 19% were of 55 years and above.
The age distribution was as shown by Figure 1.

On whether the participants were serving or retired, 25 of them were still serving, while only 5 of them had retired. This meant that participants had a wide level of knowledge, expertise and experience in matters of diplomacy undertaking in widened span of time.

Regarding the gender distribution of the participants, slightly more than two thirds (69%) of the respondents were males, while only 31% were female. The study's gender distribution was reminiscent of Kenya's employment structure where men are generally more than women.

An Overview of Defence Diplomacy in Kenya

The study had in-depth examination and assessment of defence diplomacy in Kenya with respect to four arguments including, defence and security structures, efforts in inter-states conflict negotiations and interventions, secondment of strategic leaders to AU and UN field missions and, defence and security education and training. The first three were examined based on primary qualitative data while the last was based on quantitative primary data from institutions archival records. The study examined the qualitative primary data regarding the arguments, based on representation of the fourteen questionnaire respondents by weight age of scale of 1 to 4 as levels of significant/agreement such that 1=lowest, 2=low, 3=high and 4=highest rating.

Defence and security structures

The study sought to examine the defence and security structures of the country. the respondents were asked to give their views on whether Kenya's defence and security structures fostered inter-state relations. The distribution of the respondents is summarised in figure 1
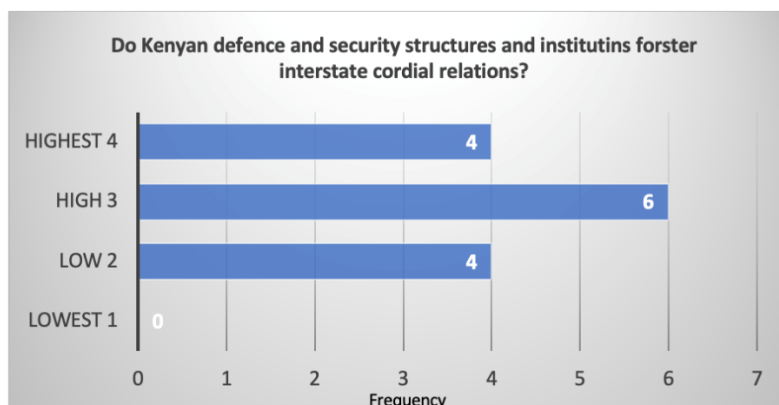

Fig. 4.
Source: Research data, 2023

Figure 1: whether Kenya's defence and security structures fostered inter-state relations

The affirmation of the argument was found to stand at 71% significant level of combined highest and high rating levels. However, the 29% low rating level was found to be as a result of participants view that, less was being done to improve the institutions to foster impact. The results were in tandem with interviewees' and focus group's (FG) view that Kenya has various structures and institutions of defence and security that have capacity and capability to project and conduct defence diplomatic issues in international system. In addition, the Kenya defence policy stipulated the need and desire to collaborate with international partners. The study found out that the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Interior and such institutions as the KDF, the National Police Service, the National Police Service, the National Intelligence Service and the Department of Migration had played major activities of diplomacy including in conflict stabilizations and negotiations, peacekeeping and in information gathering. Additionally, Kenya was found to be a member of neoliberal peace and security organizations like the UN and African Standby Force (ASF).

Efforts in inter-state conflicts negotiations and interventions

The results on the argument whether Kenya's efforts in inter-state conflict negotiations and interventions fostered interstate relations were as shown by Figure 2.
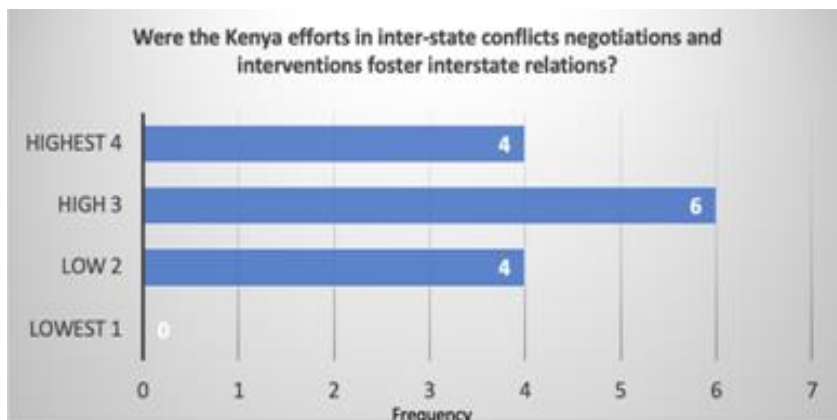

Figure 2: Kenya's efforts in inter-state conflict negotiations and interventions fostered interstate relations

The affirmation on this argument was found to stand at 72% of the combined highest and high rating levels. But the low-level rating of 28% was attributed to participants' observation that little effort was being employed, while potential was huge. The results were in consonance with findings from the interviews and FG that observed that, Kenya security structures and institutions got very much involved in negotiating for peace in the region due to break out of intra- and inter-states conflicts, for instance in Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia/Eritrea. In addition, the cross-border threats and human security threats were observed to have demanded cooperation between states in humanitarian interventions. Moreover, Kenya was found to have been a key player in initiating major liberal institutions in Africa like the IGAD.

Secondment of strategic leaders to AU and UN field missions

The results on the argument on whether secondment of senior defence and security staff to strategic leadership positions in both the AU and the UN field missions fostered interstate relations were as shown on Figure 3.
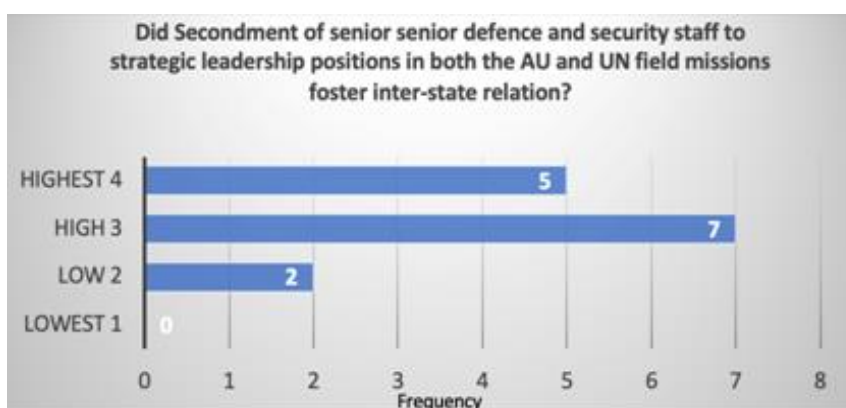

Figure 3: Secondment of strategic leaders to AU and UN field missions

The affirmation of this argument was found to stand at 86% of the combined highest and high rating. The low-level rating of 24% was attributed to participants' observation that the secondment was of a few senior officers but the contingents had a bigger impact. The results conformed with interviewees and FG argument that Kenya was an important player in regional and international by providing strategic leaders to peacekeeping missions both in the AU and UN. The Kenya constitution provided the legal mandate and the democratic governance was found to have had the necessary political-will to participate in promotion of international peace and security. Thus, Kenya contributed to stabilize Namibia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Morocco under UN missions and participated in AU Missions in Sudan, Ethiopia/Eritrea, and Somalia among others.

Defence and security education and training

The study assessed the argument that education and training offered in Kenya's defence and security institutions fostered inter-states relations. Thus, the number of regional partner states participants, students and cadets trained in the last ten or eight years was assessed for their impact with respect to this argument and particular institution including; NDC, the JCSC, the IPSTC and the KMA.

Figure 4, shows the results in number of regional partner states participants trained in NDC in the last ten years.
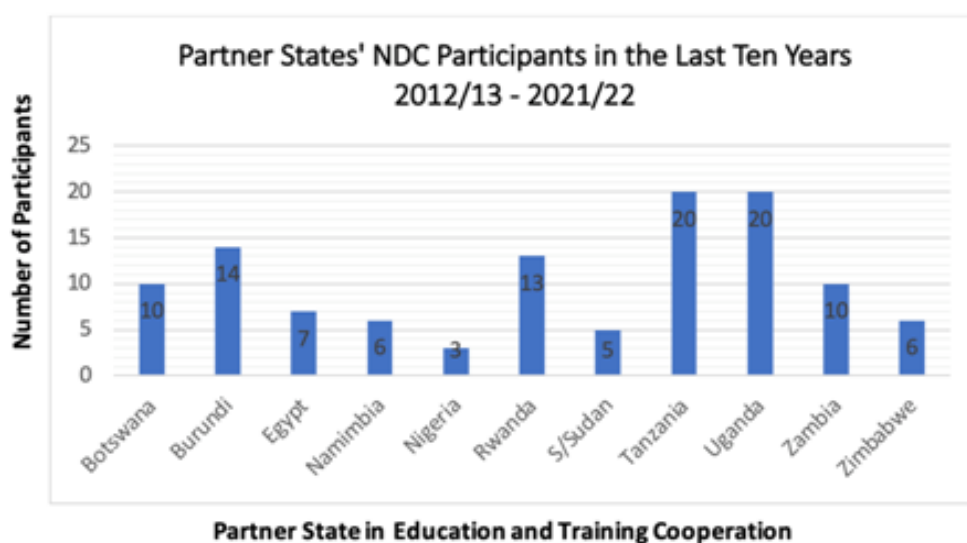

Figure 4: Number of regional partner states participants trained in NDC

The study found out that, NDC had been attracting participants from Anglophone African states in the last ten years. It was found that, Kenya and the partner state came together and signed a bilateral agreement to facilitate participants training. However, number of regional partner states participants trained in NDC Cumulatively in the last ten years the results were as shown by Figure 5.
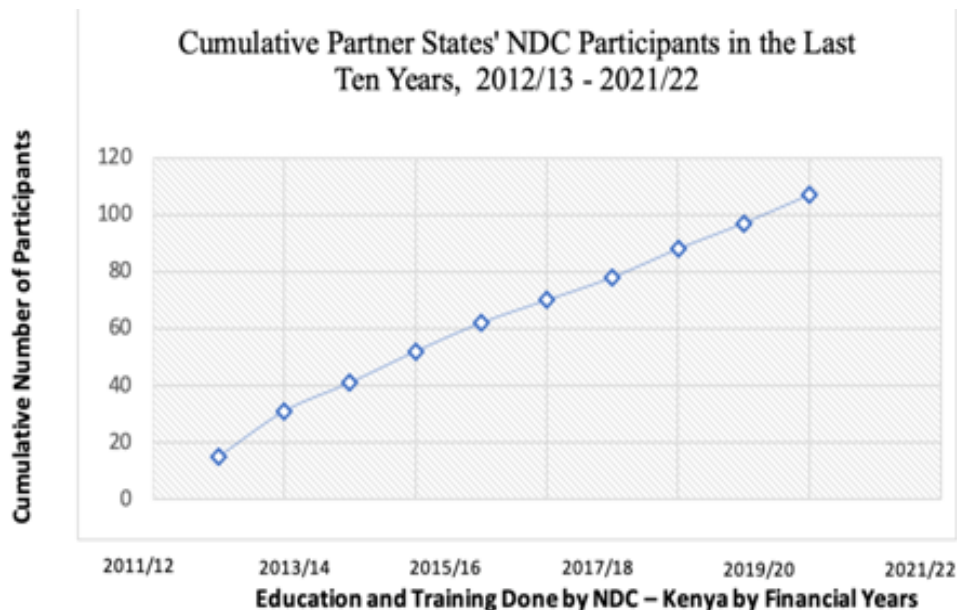
Figure 5: Cumulative number of regional partner states participants trained in NDC

Thus, the study found out that there was a gradual growth in number of partner states participants in the last ten years 2012/13 to 2021/22.

Figure 6, shows the results of number of partner state students in the JCSC senior division in the last ten years, 2012/13 – 2021/22.
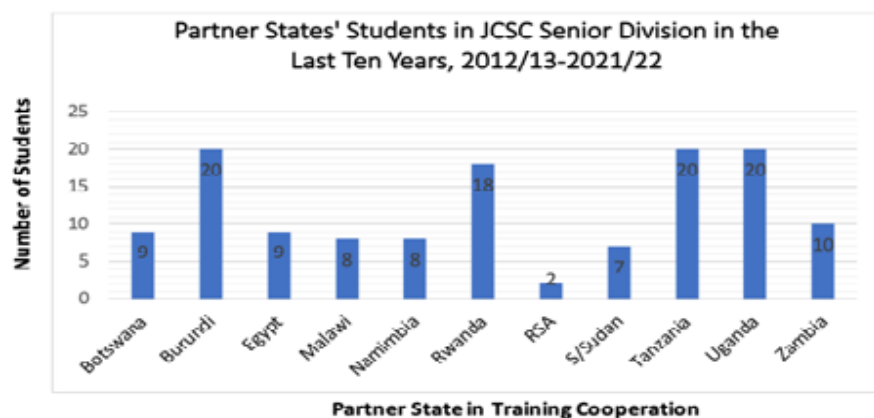

Figure 6: number of partner state students in the JCSC senior division

Similarly, the study found out that, JCSC had been attracting participants from Anglophone African states in the last ten years. Further, the earlier five EAC partner sates were found to have a multilateral agreement on exchange programme for students training. However, cumulatively the results were as shown on Figure 7.
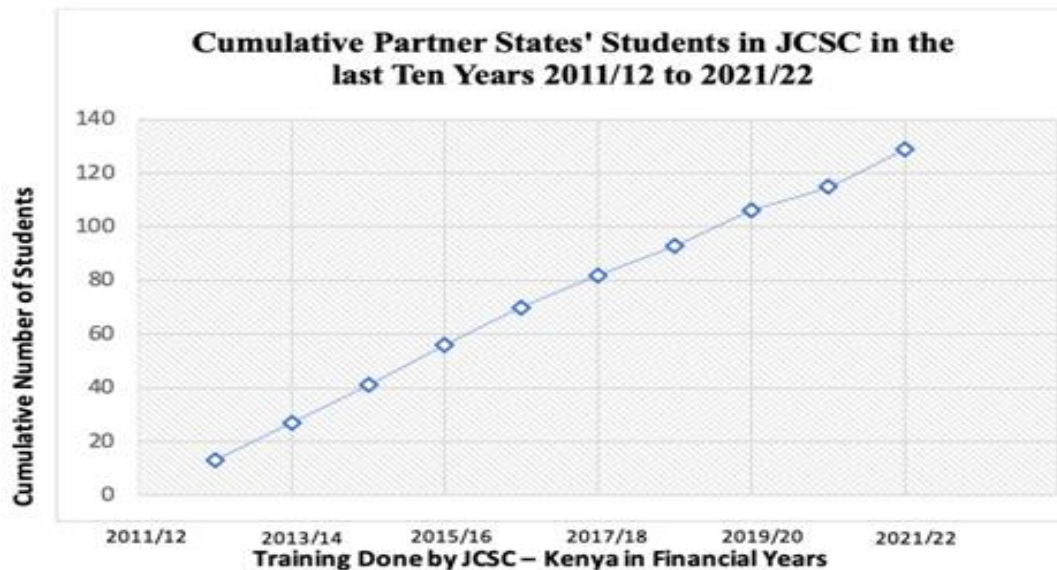
Figure 7: Cumulative number of partner state students in the JCSC senior division

The study found out that, there was gradual growth in number of partner states' students in JCSC in the last ten years, 2011/12 to 2021/22.

Figure 8, shows the results of partner states' participants in IPSTC in the last eight years, 2012 to 2020.

Figure 8: Partner states' participants in IPSTC

The study found out that, IPSTC attracted participants from the sub-regional states in the last eight years. It was also found that Kenya and partner states or other major stake holders had bilateral agreement to facilitate the training. However, cumulatively the results were as shown on Figure 9.
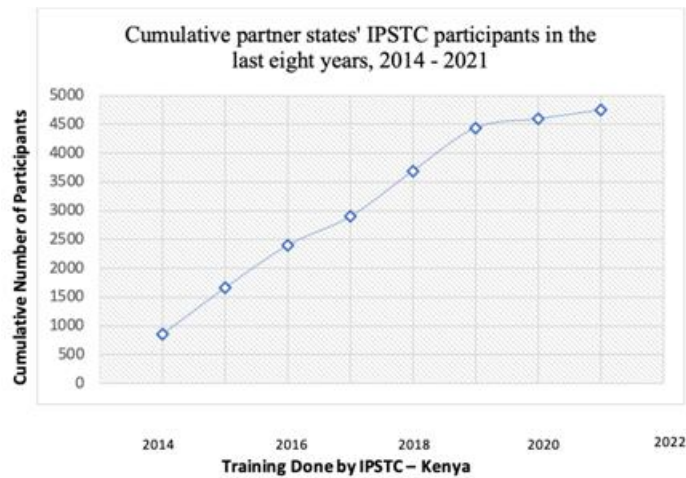
Figure 9: Cumulative partner states' participants in IPSTC

The study found out that, there was gradual growth in number of partner states' students in IPSTC in the last eight years, 2014-2021.

Figure 10 shows the results of EAC partner states cadets trained in KMA in the last ten years, between 2012 and 2022.
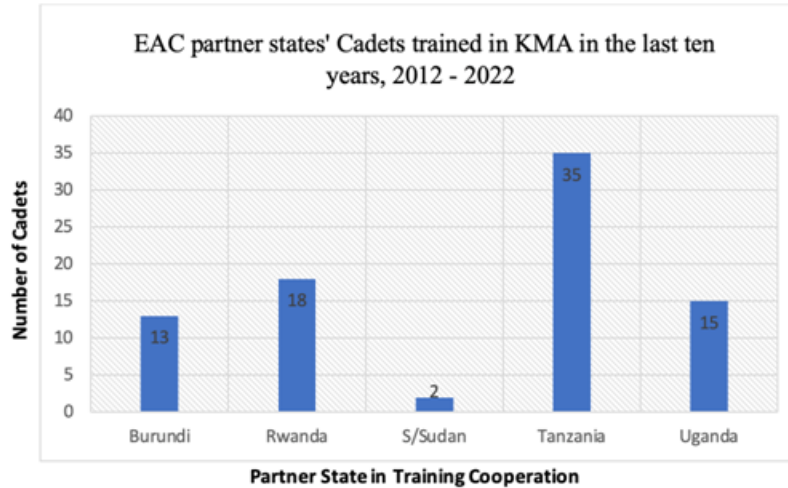

Figure 10: EAC partner states cadets trained in KMA

Similarly, the study found out that, KMA attracted cadets from the EAC sub-regional states in the last ten years. Although four EAC partner sates Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda had a multilateral agreement on cadets' exchange programme. However, cumulatively the results were as shown on Figure 11.
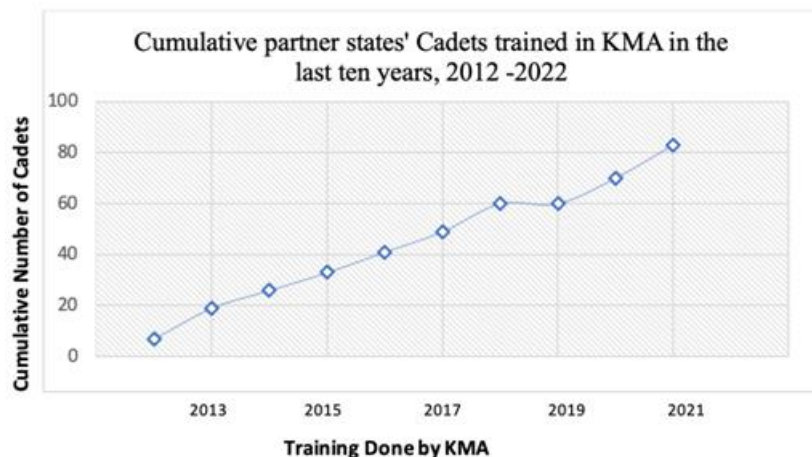
Figure 11: Cumulative EAC partner states cadets trained in KMA

The study found out that, there was gradual growth in number of EAC partner states' cadets in KMA in the last ten years, 2012-2022.

DISCUSSION

The study's findings, as revealed, underscore the pivotal role played by Kenya's defense and security institutions in cultivating inter-state cordial relations within the region through the strategic implementation of defense diplomacy. This observation resonates with the research conducted by De Coning (2016), a prominent expert in peace and conflict studies, who extensively examines the significance of regional organizations in resolving conflicts. De Coning's insights offer a valuable framework to comprehend how Kenyan defense institutions actively engage in diplomatic endeavors, thereby fostering the advancement of peace and security across a broader spectrum.

Moreover, the study's affirmation of Kenyan defense and security structures contributing to conflict stabilization, negotiations, peacekeeping, and information sharing aligns seamlessly with Olonisakin's research focus on conflict prevention, security governance, and peacebuilding in Africa (2021). Olonisakin's work accentuates the proactive security measures that Kenyan defense institutions employ, amplifying our understanding of their effectiveness in addressing regional challenges and ensuring stability through defense diplomacy. The significance of Kenya's defense diplomacy gains further context from Paul Williams' extensive research on conflict intervention, peace operations, and African security organizations (2012). Williams' insights enable a deeper appreciation of how Kenyan defense institutions actively contribute to regional peacekeeping efforts and collaborative endeavors within international security frameworks, substantiating the study's observations.

Adebajo's research on conflict resolution, regional security organizations, and peacebuilding in Africa (2012) provides a relevant framework for understanding the study's assertion of Kenyan defense institutions fostering inter-state relations. Adebajo's exploration of collaborative security approaches offers valuable context, highlighting the compatibility of Kenya's defense diplomacy with regional and international peace and security initiatives. The findings of the study are further enriched by Dzinesa's analyses of regional security dynamics and conflict resolution efforts in Africa (2012). Dzinesa's work provides nuanced perspectives on how Kenyan defense institutions contribute to regional stability through

diplomatic engagement and collaborative security efforts, amplifying the study's conclusions regarding defense diplomacy's role in conflict management and peace promotion. Likewise, Bouka's emphasis on pea cebuilding, conflict prevention, and gender issues in African security contexts (2018) offers a lens through which to explore the gender dimensions of Kenyan defense institutions' diplomatic activities and their impact on peace and security. This complements the study's focus on defense diplomacy's multifaceted contributions to conflict stabilization, negotiations, and peacekeeping.

Khadiagala's research on African international relations, conflict management, and regional security (2013) offers a relevant backdrop, situating Kenya's contributions within a broader framework of collaborative security efforts within the African context. His insights underscore the interconnected nature of security dynamics, aligning with the study's emphasis on inter-state relations fostered by Kenyan defense and security institutions. Mangala's expertise in African politics and international relations (2017) provides valuable perspectives on how Kenyan defense institutions engage in diplomatic activities and contribute to conflict resolution efforts, aligning with the broader impact of defense diplomacy on regional security dynamics. This reinforces the study's assertion of Kenya's role in shaping inter-state relations.

Aning's comprehensive research spanning peace operations, security sector reform, and the role of regional organizations in African security (2010) offers a comprehensive view of Kenya's contributions to regional stability, underscoring the study's focus on defense diplomacy and its role in promoting collaborative security approaches. Shaw's analysis of African security governance, conflict resolution, and regional organizations (2011) contextualizes Kenya's engagement in defense diplomacy within the broader realm of African security governance, establishing the groundwork for understanding the study's findings in the context of regional security dynamics.

CONCLUSION

The paper concludes that the establishment of various defence and security structures and institutions enabled Kenya to foster inter-state relations in the region by putting its efforts in inter-state conflict negotiations and interventions. Hence, Kenya's defence diplomacy can be viewed as vibrant regionally and internationally. Further, the study concludes that Kenya's cooperation with sub-regional and regional states with respect to defence and security education and training, fostered cordial inter-state relations. Notwithstanding, study concludes that, Kenya's secondment of senior defence and security staff to strategic leadership positions in both the AU and the UN field missions fostered interstate relations in promotion of peace and security. It also concludes that, the four major defence and security institutions, the NDC, the JCSC, the IPSTC and KMA had a positive impact on inter-state relations in the sub-region as well as in the region. However, these education and training institutions had a marginal growth in the last ten years with respect to foreign students. Ultimately, the study concludes that, the national defence and security structures and institutions of defence and security education and training establish the bedrock of defence diplomacy in Kenyan, which fosters inter-state relations.

Based on the study findings, the study recommends that Kenya should endeavour to improve its defence and security structures and institutions to formulate good policies that would ensure efficient and effective conduct of defence diplomacy with a view to fostering inter-state relations. In particular policy guidance to improve defence and security institutions of

education and training capacity to absorb more foreign participants, students and cadets from the region to enhance inter-state relations.

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