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PEACEBUILDING IN SOMALIA: THE ROLE OF LOCAL ELDERS

(CASE OF MOGADISHU)

A thesis submitted to the University of Rwanda in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Award of a Master Degree of Arts in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation**.**

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that this thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has not been submitted to any Institution or University. All sources of information have been acknowledged. This thesis was conducted towards fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Rwanda for award of a master degree of Arts in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation under the supervision of Dr. Jean Bosco Habyarimana**.**

Name:…………………………………..Date:…………………..Signature:………….

DEDICATION

I dedicate with this Master to anyone who supported me in the fulfillment of the master`s degree, especially my parents, brothers, sister and friends.

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AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
CRD	Center for Research and Dialogue
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority for Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nations
UNISOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
USIP	United State Institute of Peace

ABSTRACT

The study was about peacebuilding in Somalia: the role of local elders. It was conducted in Mogadishu. The main objective of this study was to understand the role of elders in peacebuilding in Somalia. The specific objectives of the study were to identify initiatives used by local elders in peace building in Somalia and to assess how local elder's initiatives can contribute to building peace in Somalia and also to examine challenges faced by elders in their efforts to build peace in Somalia. The study used problem solving theory and social capital theory. The methodology used was qualitative approach with purposive sampling and the selected respondents were 32 from Local elders, Police officers and Civilians. The data collection method used was semi structured interview. The study found that local elders play important role in peace- building in Somalia. The study also found that local elders use different initiatives of traditional mechanisms to build peace through mediation, negation and reconciliation initiatives. The study found that local elders use traditional customary law ''Xeer'' to build and deliver traditional justice within the communities. The study found out that communities favor resorting to local elders to solve their disputes rather than going to court. The study found that enforcement and abiding by the decisions reached through mediation, negotiation and arbitrating efforts led by local elders is not implemented and this become a challenge to peacebuilding. The study also found that challenge of resources hindered the efforts of elders in order to lead peacebuilding initiatives, and this could be a challenge to peacebuilding initiatives in the country. Finally the study recommended taking steps and actions in order to tackle challenges faced by local elders who are contributing to peacebuilding initiatives in the Country.

The study recommended that Local Elders should focus societal reconciliation and resolving the root causes of the conflicts. The Somali government should mobilize and support financially and technically the local elders who are working peacebuilding initiatives in the country.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Chapter one shares the study background and problem statement. It also introduces the study purpose, objectives, questions and scope.

1.1   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This study is interested in local peacebuilding, particularly in the role of local elders in Somalia's peacebuilding. Peacebuilding practitioners and researchers recognize the importance of locally - led peacebuilding around the world as violent conflicts occur within the communities and have an impact in the lives of communities. Locally - led peacebuilding also can help the security at national level because whenever the communities feel safe and have trust in local governance systems there is more likely to work with police and security agencies which can have a positive impact on the security of the nation or the country (Connuagton & Berns, 2020, P.7).

According to Interpeace and CRD (2009), the term local elders refers to those elders who exercise traditionally based governance in the society and crucial for managing conflicts and building peace within the societies. Local elders negotiate and mediate conflicting parties within the societies they represent. Elders possess knowledge of history, traditional customary law, powers of oratory and negotiating skills. The elders have the moral authority and legitimacy that derived from a representative of their lineage, groups and those they represent. The moral authority of the elder is important. If people listen to them and show them respect, people believe God will be pleased. Traditionally their authority is based on respect rather than executive power.The study uses local elders as actors who are playing a role in peacebuilding within their communities using traditional mechanisms.

In Africa traditional approaches play an important role in building peace within communities and transform conflicts among communities. The traditional approaches in peacebuilding focus on building social relationship and structures in peacebuilding (Jeng, 2012, P.181). According to Mutisi (2011) traditional mechanisms are based on customs and principles transmitted from generation to generation and founded upon customary practices of the specific context communities. Traditional mechanisms led by local elders are rooted in the representation and rituals which is not only ensuring the participation of the communities but also builds ownership and trust in the communities.

According to the Mutisi (2011) Traditional mechanisms of local actors and institutions with authority can manage and solve conflicts and many scholars underscore the importance of indigenous conflict resolution and peacebuilding because local actors can deal with and respond to the realities that exist in communities living in the context area. As the author mentioned the Abunzi in Rwanda is one great example that indicates how local elders can contribute building peace within the communities. Donais (2012) emphasizes the same idea as he argues that the Post-apartheid in South Africa and post genocide in Rwanda provides examples of how local communities led by local elders can craft their own peace after- math of violent conflicts. Although the author did not mention, the genocide occurred in Rwanda it was against Tutsi in Rwanda. This what Lederach (1997) refers to as peacebuilding from below, calling for more efforts of empowering those local actors who can contribute to peacebuilding initiatives in post conflict societies.

Somalia has been in chaos and conflicts, and functional warlords have been fighting for the control of the country. The whole country faced one of the worst famines between 1991 and 1992; in these periods, millions of Somalis faced starvation. In April 1992 the United Nations sent forces to Somalia with the mandate of delivering humanitarian relief and protecting aid workers who were facing threats from functional groups. In addition, UN mandate included also disarmament, social reconstruction, and supporting peacebuilding initiatives by meeting with functional leaders and local elders to support conflict resolution processes. However, due to worsening situations, the UN did not succeed to all its mandates. In 1995, UN Forces withdraw from Somalia without fully restoring peace and security in the post conflict and building state institutions (Doyle & Sambanis 2006, P.13).

According to Inter peace & CRD (2009), after the UN troops withdrew from Somalia in 1995, the Secretary General established United Nations Political office in Somalia, whose task was to continue the process of peace and reconciliation through contacting Somali leaders, civil societies and state institutions concerned with peacebuilding in Somalia. The office, based in Nairobi, Kenya, continues to monitor and prepare reports for the Secretary General to notify any initiatives taken for peace and reconciliation in Somalia. There were many reconciliation efforts led by regional countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti that Failed mainly due to lack of inclusiveness.

The collapse of the Somali state and bloody civil war that followed destroyed government Institutions, and led the country to divisions into parts controlled by clan militia. In this critical situation, the last decades saw the Northern part of the country, remain stable and peaceful after local elders succeeded reconciliation among communities, but the Southern parts continue to experience violence as local elders there did not fully achieve to reconcile warring militias that destabilized peace and security (Bruton 2010, P.6). In spite of the important role elders have played in building peace in Somalia, there have not been much interest in understanding the contribution of these non - conventional actors, which is the main reason why this study will assess the role of local elders in peacebuilding in Somalia.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Somalia has experienced many years of conflicts and instability that caused collapse of State institutions and lack of service delivery. Many attempts of restoring peace have failed since in 1991, and there has not been law and order of any type in Somalia for many years because of the lack of a central government. In this critical period, a group of Somalis appeared to overcome their differences and acted to bring peace amidst violence. These are local elders who played a significant role in peacebuilding In Somalia. According to Menkhaus (2018), the role of local elders in the Northern Somalia is an example of how elders can deliver reconciliation among communities and warring groups and lead to a sustainable political settlement and peace. The local elders are believed to be the main actors who contributed to existing peace in the country, especially through in their efforts of building peace within the communities in those regions.

Hesse (2011) agrees with that as he observes that the Somali local Elders were focusing on resolving and mediating warring parties of the country, and much of the efforts were successful. In many parts of the country, elders achieved to bring and contribute to peace between parties which also contributed to peace at the state level. Despite this contribution, however, there has not been a comprehensive study that assessed the role elders play in peacebuilding in Somalia. This study engaged with this question, attempting to provide insights on how local elders contributed to peacebuilding in Somalia.

1.3   **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1.3.1   **MAIN OBJECTIVE**

I.   The main objective of this study is to understand the contribution of elders in peacebuilding in Somalia.

1.3.2   **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

I.   To identify local elders' initiatives on peacebuilding in Somalia

II.   To assess how elders implemented their initiatives that contributed to building peace in Somalia

III.   To examine the challenges faced by elders in their efforts to build peace in Somalia

1.4   **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1.4.1   **MAIN QUESTION**: How can we understand the role of local elders in peacebuilding in Somalia?

1.4.2   **SUB-QUESTIONS**

I.   What initiatives of peacebuilding did local elders put in place in Somalia?

II.   How did local elders implement the initiatives of peacebuilding in Somalia?

III.   What challenges did local elders face in building peace in Somalia?

1.5. **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of this study is that it sheds light on how local elders can play a role in peacebuilding process in Somalia. The study, of course interrelate peacebuilding concepts and the role of elders towards contributing to peacebuilding. The local elders in Somalia have been playing a great role in peacebuilding process in the country, especially reconciliation, state building and managing community conflicts in the country after the war had broken into the country. The study also enriches and fill the gaps in the literature that exist, especially the bottom up peacebuilding, mediation, reconciliation and managing conflicts through local elders' role in contributing to peacebuilding. It is not only local elders who contributed to Peacebuilding in the country, but also there are other actors who contributed to peacebuilding.

This study contributes and analysis more on peacebuilding initiatives of elders and how their efforts contribute to the field of peace and conflict transformation. The study contributes to the existing knowledge regarding peacebuilding efforts in Somalia by providing context-based experiences, especially by engaging into a deep analysis of how local elders from the grassroots can contribute to peacebuilding efforts in the country.

1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The geographical scope of the study is Mogadishu, and it was selected due to the accessibility, security constraints, time and economic factors. The study was intended for local elders working in peacebuilding in Mogadishu Somalia. In terms of content, scope, the study will focus local elder's role in peacebuilding in Somalia. It is supposed to generate ideas about how local elders can contribute to the peacebuilding in Somalia.

1.7. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one dealt with the study background, chapter two dealt with the study literature review, chapter three dealt with methodology, chapter four dealt with data analysis and interpretation, and finally chapter five concerned with the study summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted the introduction of the study background, problem statement, study objectives and questions. The chapter also introduced the significance, scope and the structure of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature that was written on peacebuilding and the role of local elders. The chapter is thus structured into the literature on local elder's initiatives in peacebuilding, literature review of building peace, theoretical aspects of building peace, and conceptual framework of the study.

2.1. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Local refers to the actors who are affected by peacebuilding; those must deal with conflicts in their day to day lives with its consequences. They are the ones who take peacebuilding initiatives and implement them. Local could be government initiatives, local community elders, and society members who are playing a role in peacebuilding (Connuagton & Berns, 2020, P.5).

Local actors: as Joakim, Leonardsson, & Lundqvist (2017) cited from DFID and USIP, local actors are non-state actors of different groups in the society such as elders, business communities, religious, youth and women and traditional structures within the communities.

Local ownership refers to the degree of control that domestic actors wield of the domestic political process in the post-conflict contexts, the intent is that any peace process that did include locals may likely fail (Donais, 2012).

Negative Peace is the absence of violence or direct war. While positive peace is a situation where structures have been developed and changed into equality among members of the population and the root causes of the conflicts were solved (Hove & Harris 2019).

Peacebuilding According to Lederach (1997), it is an inclusive concept that incorporates, engenders, and stands the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more maintainable, peaceful relationships.

Liberal peace: as Joakim, Leonardsson, & Lundqvist (2017) cited from Richmond (2006: 291) said, it is an ideological concept dating back to Immanuel Kant and it is based on democratization, law, human rights, free and globalized markets, and neo-liberal development.

Mediation: can be defined as a process by which a neutral third party helps the parties to solve their disputes without imposing but rather finds a way of reaching a solution (Zweier& Guernsey, 2016, P.135). Also, According to UN (2012), defined Mediation as a process whereby a third neutral party assists warning parties with the approval of parties to manage conflicts and reach a mutually accepted agreement by all parties.

Negotiation: As Alfredson, & Cungu (2008, P.6) cited from Kissinger (1969) is the process of bringing together those warring parties in a common position under the decision rule of unanimity.

Reconciliation: According to Tamai (2017, P.62) is an important initiative for peacebuilding that aimed at eliminating mistrust and hatred that sparked the recurrence of conflicts and achieving consolidation and the realization of lasting peace.It relies on the premise of changing individual perceptions to overcome hatred and mistrust of perpetrators and former enemies.

2.2 LOCAL ELDERS INITIATIVES IN PEACEBUILDING

Much emphasis is put on achieving peace in the long term that can be more than just ending of direct conflicts and many programs are conducted in the countries recovering from conflicts with the intension of reaching viable peace within the perspectives of the affected countries. Yet, it seems that little development has been achieved, as communities continue to experience the conditions of wars, low socioeconomic developments, divisions, political tensions, and communal violence (Joakim, Leonardsson, & Lundqvist, 2017).

According to Joakim, Leonardsson, & Lundqvist (2017) argues on the critique of the lack of progress in the peacebuilding projects, scholars belief that conventional peacebuilding applies embedded idea labeled 'liberal peace' that do not give emphasis and turned back to local peacebuilding initiatives, as ostensibly local were left and that bring peacebuilding decrease of quality and legitimacy. There is no doubt that peacebuilding efforts were focusing much on liberal peace rather than putting much focus on bottom-up.

ODA (2007), indicated that the Peacebuilding focus for the recent years was conventional peace that excludes local actor's especially local community leaders and citizens as they are viewed as receivers of external aid but not as part of playing their role in building peace. The focus of

peacebuilders was only based on state-centric and they neglected to include local communities' participation in peacebuilding. Peacebuilding initiatives that are taking place everywhere led by local community elders in everyday lives in the war-torn and conflict environments do not get much focus and attention and became invisible.

Connolly & Powers (2018), stated that the peacebuilding approaches for the last years were based on a mainly top-down approach, however, in the last years it was realized the importance of peacebuilding from locally-led initiatives and take local knowledge into account in designing peacebuilding programs. The local approach or bottom-up can bring meaning full participation of local peacebuilding actors.

According to Odendaal (2010) local peacebuilding initiatives are vital for dealing with the situations of crippling polarization within local communities suffered from division and conflicts. In these cases, to tackle past grievances in the past it's necessary to use 'soft' approaches such as dialogue, facilitation, and negotiation that are appropriate for such situations.

Peacebuilding involves a selection of actors and roles, interrelated people, systems, and activities. All things are linked and mutually affect one another. People are key players of peacebuilding; therefore peacebuilding is linked to the nature and quality of relationships. It builds and supports the interdependent relationships necessary to effect and sustain the desired changes" (Schilling 2012, P.31).

The focus of peacebuilding is building a relationship between parties and handling conflicts peacefully and also relates to the transformation of the relationship between parties bring together parties for negotiation and mediation efforts to solve the conflicts. Peacebuilding strengthens peacemaking that envisioned reaching reconciliation between parties in armed conflicts by solving root causes of the grievances as Galtung's theory identifies that three kinds of violence in conflict are direct, structural, and cultural (Webel & Galtung, 2007, P.14). The study will use initiatives of mediation, negotiation, and reconciliation that local elders use to build peace in the country. Local elders in the context of Somalia are those traditional elders who are working building peace in the country by using traditional mechanisms.

Peacebuilding from grassroots is vital as the local communities are the people who suffered the huge impact of wars and conflicts. Local actor's engagement for any solution for the conflicts is what many scholars considered as the base of peacebuilding in the war-torn communities. The engagement and participation of local actors can create legitimacy and ownership that are important for building peace. Local community elders are the ones who have cultural and context knowledge and information that can contribute to building peace within the communities. (ACCORD, 2015, P. 60).

According to Maphosa, Deluca & Keasley (2014) in Africa with the significance of protracted armed conflicts that affected many in the region for the last years, the local grassroots peacebuilding contribution had shown unprecedented impact to the continent and shaped the wider field. The authors argued that the role of grassroots in peacebuilding has a long history in the African tradition and still operates in numerous communities. Mutisi, (2011), traditional mechanisms led by local community elders have worked in many countries in Africa such as Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and Burundi. These initiatives led by local community leaders to continue playing a great role in conflict resolutions. The traditional mechanisms led to cases of conflicts such as land disputes, and criminal cases in some countries.

In the African societies, local elders were respected by their communities and play an important role in solving disputes and building peace as the disputants have confidence with the local elders and, willing to submit themselves to reconcile their differences or conflicts. In Nigeria, the Yoruba communities, local elders sit under a tree and discuss until they reach an agreement as the elders are the force behind peace within the communities (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014).

The way African elders engage in managing conflicts and build peace is seen as largely effective and welcomed by all the parties. The traditional mechanisms led by local community elders were more effective for preventing conflicts and elders contributed to building peace as local communities are trustful for the role of local elders. These structures led by elders, were responsible for peace education, confidence-building, peacemaking, peacebuilding, conflict monitoring, conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict resolution (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014).

According to Ajayi & Buhari (2014), traditional peacebuilding initiatives used by local elders include mediation, negotiation, reconciliation, and arbitration. All these mechanisms play an important role in conflict resolution in Africa communities. Lederach (1997) stated that reconciliation is a part of building peace and it is a way of focusing on relationships to address standoff issues and that is providing space for grieving the past events towards the future to succeed peace and transform conflicts.

Reconciliation is a process of mutual accommodation comprised of acknowledgment of past wrongdoing and remorse of perpetrators in exchange for forgiveness offered by the victim. Reconciliation will enable parties to move to the future-oriented activities and reducing the possibilities of violence recurrence (Ozerdem & lee 2016, P.32).

According to Ajayi & Buhari, (2014), stated that mediation is a way of non-coercive of mediators or third party intervention. According to Eriksson & Kostic (2013) Mediators use and pass through different stages and strategies first ending hostility and a ceasefire is a top priority for the mediators to build trust and confidence of the parties, conducting negotiation talks between parties and the main goal of mediation is to achieve a settlement between parties. Mediation can be said for a successful when conflicts lessened and violent conflicts reduced and the parties sign peace agreement aimed at ending conflicts between parties.

Negotiation is a process that brings disputants together to discuss their demands to end conflicts between parties and reach compromise. (Ozerdem & lee 2016, P.30). Zartman & Faure, (2005) stated that negotiations, the parties can reach a ceasefire, power-sharing, and resource sharing, but negotiations do not bring and change behavior, attitudes of the conflicting parties that focus on building the relationship.

Mutisi, & Kwesi (2012), stated that the traditional local elders in the Afar region of Ethiopia are playing a big role in peacebuilding for their communities. The local elders are mediators who participate in resolving conflicts between clans and sub-clans. The elders from neutral clan mediate and reconcile those clans who are fighting. The traditional system led by local elders, plays a great role in conflict resolutions among clans in the Afar region and also this mitigates conflict and participates in building peace within the communities. Traditional mechanisms led by local actors remain to play a greater role in local systems, and reconciliations among communities

and serving justice. The local creativities help states in their activities and play harmonizing role in certain states where the state cannot fulfill alone its responsibilities or it needs local participation in the local communities to get broader involved.

On the other hand, Mutisi, & Kwesi (2012) mentioned how local elders contributed to peacebuilding in Sudan Darfur. In the Sudan, Darfur region as other parts of Africa, locals use traditional interposition deliberation, locally referred to as the Judiyya. This approach is a grassroots system of decision that vocalize on reconcilement and resurrection of social relationships in the participation. Unlike other judicious systems such as government and the courts, the Judiyya is noted by the impermanence of its membership, informality, and respectability to all in the community.

In Burundi, Local traditional elders who were selected from the communities based on their wisdom and justice played a vital role in building peace in the country and helped the African mission in Burundi. The local elders contributed durable peace and settlement among communities (Jeng, 2012, P.225). Leeuwen (2009), states that In South Sudan, local traditional elders are an example of how local elders bring peace in the cattle communities in the border between South Sudan and Sudan which enabled communities peaceful movement into the areas of grasslands.

According to Connaughton & Berns (2020), stated that a case study conducted in Kenya and Uganda also had shown that local grassroots can build lasting peace even there is no external political support. In this case, the local elders from Turkana in Kenya and Matheniko of Uganda achieved peace within both communities.

All these indicate that African culture respects local traditional elders as it's widely used in many parties to contribute peace within the local communities. The approach is based on the bottom-up that put much emphasis on grassroots issues of the larger communities. However, it seems that the peacebuilding literature did not give much attention to the importance of a bottom-up approach that can contribute to building peace within the local communities. For the above reason this study focusing on assessing the role of local elders in peacebuilding.

According to Lederach (1997) in Somalia peacebuilding from grassroots involves a process of creating and holding discussions and reaching agreements to end conflicts between parties at the local peace conference. The local leaders bring together those clan and sub-clan leaders who engaged conflicts to the conference to discuss concerning issues. The local elders use mediation, negotiation, and reconciliation to build peace within the communities. As far as peacebuilding from local grassroots is vital for the success of peacebuilding and little attention was given. This study focused on assessing how local elders can contribute to building peace in a post-conflict country like Somalia.

2.3   PEACEBUILDING LITERATURE

The term peacebuilding was introduced by Galtung in the 1970s, and the peacebuilding concept was widely used and became familiar after former UNSG Boutros-Ghali used it as one of the major elements of his 1992 report titled for agenda for peace. The UN use of the concept brings more attention to how the world will engage innervations conducted countries in conflicts and those who are recovering from wars and conflicts (ACCORD, 2015).

Peacebuilding had grown in the last decades and become prominent global practices and scholars engaged to research the concept of peacebuilding (Joakim; Leonardsson, & Lundqvist, 2017, P.10). Peacebuilding relates to the actions taken to prevent, manage, transform, and address any tension that persists in the communities affected by conflicts (ACCORD, 2015).

Peacebuilding constitutes an effort taken by different actors from government, local society actors, national and international levels to address the immediate impacts and root causes of conflicts before, during, and after the violent conflict occurred". The core principles of peacebuilding are included, local ownership, and processes that prioritize dialogue and consensus-seeking (Connuagton & Berns, 2020, P.1).

According to Schilling (2012, P.22) cited from Galtung's framework, peace can be negative or positive peace. Negative peace can be referred to as free from wars, conflicts, violence that can affect persons, groups, communities, states, and the globe in large. While positive peace is free from any form of structural, cultural, behavioral, and an unequal relationship that can trigger

indirect violence between persons, groups, and community members. Positive can be to be free from any form of structural violence that indirectly afflicts to the people.

After a long period of wars and conflicts, peacebuilding is dependent on unfavorable conditions that exist in post-conflict countries and there is the likelihood to come back in physical destruction, an economy in shambles, booming black markets and smuggling, immigrants and those whom internally displaced persons lived in camps and temporary residences, unemployment of youth with accessible weapons, high level of poverty and violent violence, the dependence of relief and spoiler groups who continue the conflict. Within this typical condition, there is a great deal of state failure (Oberschall, 2007, P.188).

Peacebuilding is an important country that experienced conditions caused by state failure in post-conflict countries like Somalia. Peacebuilding comprises many approaches intended to tackle the obstacles confronted to the countries recovering from conflicts and civil wars. Local community-led approaches have shown great success in many parts where local elders achieved ending conflicts and building broken trust relationships in the communities.

According to Schilling (2012, P.28), the concept of peacebuilding attracted much use and widespread in the early in the 1990s as it became one of those terms used widely by the UN in its international interventions. The peacebuilding concept intended to deal with and solve conflicts, grievances in the past, and increase long term peace and security and justice. It is not limited to that, but focuses on also an early warning, prevention, mitigating the causes, and interventions in war-affected areas.

According to Schilling (2012), peacebuilding approaches relate to the process and initiatives aimed at reaching lasting and enforcing peaceful relationship among different groups. It's a set action that was taken towards peace and managing conflicts to address any form of violence that arises among communities and the focus could be before, and after the war has ended. It's important to engage parties before and after because peacebuilding can tackle any potential aspects of conflicts before it turns into violent conflict and also after as needed to solve past grievances among warned parties and those communities affected by the violent conflicts.

According to ACCORD (2015), many take the traditional perspective that peacebuilding starts when hostilities and conflicts stopped and a peace settlement was reached. However, in the contemporary view, it is believed that peacebuilding concerns all stages, even before, during, and after wars and conflicts. Different actors participate in peacebuilding initiatives from external to local actors. But what is important to recognize is local actors are the primary architects, owners, and long term stakeholders in the peacebuilding process. There is doubt that also external actors' support is vital for the success of local actors as local actors need the synergy of external partners.

Peacebuilding focus is essentially about the process of achieving peace. By launching approaches and initiatives based on the time frame and context of peacebuilding activities. (Paffenholz, et al, 2009, P. 3).

Lederach (1997) described peacebuilding into three approaches of top-down, middle, and bottom-up approaches or grass roots. The top-down peacebuilding approach is the approach that focuses on making peace with political leaders who are engaging conflicts and this approach mediated by third parties especially from the UN and other supporting governments. The peacebuilding approach on this level aimed at ending conflicts and hostilities by building the mechanisms that enable the war to transition. This approach of top-down was the main approach that was used in building peace in Somalia; however, this approach did not take into account the importance of local actors or bottom approach.

Also, Lederach mentioned the middle range approach which involves leaders who can participate in the peacebuilding initiatives, although the author mentioned that this approach had been yet developed. The third approach of peacebuilding is grassroots or bottom-up that faces challenges from the top level and middle level. With this approach, there are a massive number of people as it relates to the local community level representation. The grassroots is one of the latest approaches that can be utilized for building peace. This approach implemented in many countries that such as Ethiopia, El Salvador as well as in the Philippines was driven largely by the pressure for change that was bubbling up from the grassroots.

The three approaches of top-down, middle, and bottom-up all are important for building peace and their participation is vital, however, it's more important for a bottom-up approach that focuses on grassroots who have a direct relation with different parts of the community. The grassroots of

peacebuilding approach shown great success in many attempts of peacebuilding efforts around the continent. The grassroots are actors that have local's legitimacy, trust, and understand more the real problems existing in their areas of residence.

Schilling (2012) stated that one of the main tasks of peacebuilding is to craft an optimistic, social environment in which the disagreements do not escalate into violence and conflicts. Sustainable peace can be characterized as sustainability, absence of bodily and structural violence, and eradication of forms of discrimination.

According to Call (2015), stated that in the trend of peacebuilding many scholars challenged the peacebuilding approaches from the top-down that driven by liberalism and externally-driven copies. Especially in Africa, regional and sub-regional organizations considered expanding their civilian capacity for peacekeeping and peacebuilding, though admittedly with limited success. More critique has emerged in the liberal peacebuilding that is based on a top-down approach as this approach marginalized the local context, civil society, and affected people. Scholars and researchers showed that there are inadequate consultation and empowerment of local peoples in peacebuilding efforts in their communities.

According to Lederach (1997) peacebuilding, a process is an integrated initiative based on role, functions, and activities. The post-conflict countries' societies divided into deep-rooted, intense animosity and fear so, peacebuilding should be responsive to subjective realities and shape people's needs. According to Schilling (2012), the actor's role in building peace varies based on their involvement. Peacebuilding measures were necessary to integrate all the difference to achieve aims and objectives taken towards building peace within the communities. The focus needed to be the involvement of local community elders who have the necessary skills and knowledge of peacebuilding.

According to Lederach (1997, P.24) "…To be at all useful to contemporary conflict, peacebuilding must be rooted in and responsive to the experiential and subjective realities shaping people's perspectives and needs".

The latter scholars argued that peacebuilding should focus on a bottom-up process based on layers of society members, including local community elders who are key for the success of building peace in the countries raged wars and conflicts. (Joakim, Leonardsson, & Lundqvist, 2017, P.31).

ODA (2007) stated that peacebuilding from bellow focuses on activities taken by a local actor by utilizing the various resources to create an amicable relationship with different groups within the communities and even political aspects to build a social structure that makes possible for sustainable peace. The word on state actors according to the author meant by local grassroots affected by the conflicts.

According to ACCORD (2015), Successful peacebuilding in the African context requires local ownership. Broadly local ownership relates to the process of consulting and involving the local actors in the implementations of externally designed processes. Local actors fit for the bottom-up solution that can sustain peace within the communities.

According to Lederach (1997), indicated that peacebuilding through a" bottom-up" is about integrating the various levels and spheres of society where the goal is unified social cooperation, which requires strong links between different parts. Peacebuilding in the bottom-up approach first intended to achieve discussions and agreements to end conflicts at the local level led by local elders.

According to O'Toole et. al (2019) the peacebuilding literature usually comes up with three schools of management, resolution, and transformation. The management school focuses on those in power who are responsible for conflicts and the importance of bringing to the table. However, this school was criticized only focusing on the warring parties. The resolution school approach focuses on solving the causes of the conflicts and improves the relationship between parties. These approaches, builders of peace are coming from western institutions and provide workshops to the non-state actors close to the conflicting parties. Transformation school focuses on the transformation of deep-rooted armed conflicts into peaceful ones, based on a different understanding of peacebuilding. This approach supports more ownership and focuses on the local actor's role in peacebuilding.

2.4 PEACEBUILDING PROCESSESS IN SOMALIA

Somalia's peacebuilding process from 1992 was based on a top-down approach where international actors mediated and invited functional leaders of the armed groups who were fighting in the country, although also local bottom peacebuilding approach was undertaken in many parts of the country.

Mason & Meernik (2006, P.121), states that Somalia was the first country where the UN conducted the first peacebuilding operation followed by Bosnia and Haiti and other places. The UN operation in Somalia was deployed in 1992 to restore order and respond to humanitarian crises. The operation in Somalia was beyond election supervision as the UN did in Namibia and Cambodia because in Somalia there was no an election that needed to be supervised. The UN operation focus was responding to humanitarian crises, restoring peace and order, and facilitating peace talks and reconciliations between fighting groups. Several peace processes were held in the neighboring countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, and Egypt to mediate functional groups.

2.4.1 FIRST DJIBOUTI PEACE CONFERENCE

Soon after the military central government collapsed the government of Djibouti organized a reconciliation conference that invited political leaders of the country such as the former President of Somalia, Aden Abdulle Osman, former Prime Ministers Abdirizak and late Mohamed Ibrahim Egal. The first conference, the deposed President Siad Barre was still in the country and his loyal soldiers were continuing their resistance and fighting in some parts of the country. The peace conference called the deposed president to leave the country and Northern Somali front to attend the conference, and the conference decided to send a Peace Mission and representatives of various groups to the North (Omar, 2006).

According to Omar, the Peace conference of Djibouti agreed on all rebel groups ceasefire and the delegations elected the interim president, Ali Mahdi Mohamed with a two years mandate. However, the Northern rebels did not attend the peace, reconciliation conference that was held. The Conference ended positively and was welcomed by most of the rebel groups and International community representatives who attended the conference. Unfortunately, a few months later, after the formation of the interim government led by Ali Mahdi, a war broken out in

Mogadishu and one of the strongest rebel group who defeated the military government split into two groups, one led by Ali Mahdi, and another group Gen. Aided who refused the outcomes of the Djibouti Conference.

2.4.2 ADDIS- ABABA PEACE CONFERENCE

On the 15th of March 1993, another peace conference was held bringing together Somali functional groups that were fighting for the control of the country. This conference was organized and chaired by Ambassador Lansane Koyote, the Deputy of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It was a four day conference that ended without reaching any solution and political leaders failed to reach an agreement to solve conflicts in the country (Omar, 2006, P.189). In the Northern regions, people managed to hold a reconciliation conference in the country under the leadership of local traditional elders. In different ways, elders put in place efforts to bring peace, and formed local administration.

2.4.3. CAIRO PEACE CONFERENCE

According to Omar (2006), political, functional leaders gathered in Cairo, Egypt, in 1997 after the government of Egypt invited Somali political parties to a peace conference to solve their issues. All political parties, except two, signed the Cairo Declaration. Like the previous ones, the Cairo agreement too did not bring any achievement and peace to the country. The fighting between different groups continued in the country as all peace reconciliation conferences failed. According to Menkhaus (2007), after several attempts of peace talks led by UN diplomats failed to bring lasting peace and from the National government in the country, the UN finally withdrew from Somalia in 1995. The locally-led reconciliation approaches had shown success in starting reconciliation processes, such as the peace conference in Borama in the Northern regions where local traditional elders convened the conference by using traditional systematic way of managing conflicts. The elders, with the support of intellectuals, and local NGOs, achieved to restore order in the Northern regions.

According to Menkhaus (2007) other parts of the country also organized locally - led efforts to play a role in reconciling warring clans, and support from the UN a hybrid framework that

combined traditional conflict resolutions and diplomacy. The locally-led agreements contributed to reducing conflicts and reviving regional trade.

The role of local actors' roles including local elders, business communities, women, and other members of the society increased from 1995 to 2006, as it was characterized as governance without government. The actors contributed to peacebuilding initiatives by using traditional customary systems and Sharia courts, which in some extent restored law and order within the communities and the country. The locally - led initiatives enabled communities functioning of social services such as education, health, and business services within the country (Karbo & Virk, 2018, P.361). Although authors indicated that the power of traditional elders was encountering restrictions and marginalization by warlords, their legitimacy and authority were rooted deeply in historical claims that remained valid and respected within the communities. The local elder's role was important for building peace within the communities and peacebuilding continued to rely on traditional approaches led by local elders.

2.4.4 ARTA PEACE PROCESS IN DJIBOUTI

In 2000, the Government of Djibouti organized another peace conference for Somalis. The president of the Republic of Djibouti arranged a mega meeting at Arta, Djibouti attended by over three thousand people, such as local elders and civil society groups. The Arta Peace Process was the first-ever conference held without the factions involved in the civil war. It was a conference of the civil society. The Functional leaders were also invited provided they would join without factions' hats and as ordinary civilian representatives. It determined the elections of the parliamentarians and the President for the Transitional National Authority for a period of three years (Omar, 2006, P.191). According to Menkhaus (2007), states that in 2000, the Djibouti government hosted and facilitated the Arta Peace conference was attended by traditional elders and civil society groups and for the first time it was not included, factional warlords. The conference has reached an agreement that formed the Transitional National government. The government, which was formed in Arta was not achieved to restore peace and it was opposed rigorously functional warlords.

According to Omar (2006), Somali people were having great hope that the established government will restore and bring stability in the country, however, that was no happen, and the

Warlords against the new government started fighting to destabilize the functioning of a new transitional government. The transitional national government ended its mandate without bringing any achievement and peace to the country and it only existed as symbolic by bringing back the Somali flag and name to international spheres.

2.4.5. SOMALI PEACE RECONCILIATION PROCESS IN KENYA

According to Menkhaus, (2007), after TNG failed its three-year mandate, the regional intergovernmental organization which comprises seven states in the eastern part of Africa led another effort to hold peace talks. The peace talks were held over two years in Kenya. The mediation, peace talks were structured by external mediators from IGAD, UN, and EU, and peace talks were shaped into three of the declaration of ceasefire, resolution of key conflict issues, and power-sharing.

According to Omar (2006), the IGAD has called the peace, reconciliation process which was held in Kenya and all political parties were invited including the TNG. The Peace process reconciliation meeting was attended by all parties and this conference was the longest conference that was held for Somali political groups and lasted from 2002 up to 2004. The parties reached an agreement and for the first time, it was agreed to the Transitional Federal Government that included all parties. The president was elected Col. Abdullahi Yusuf, who was among functional leaders and all parties agreed to be part of that government. The new Government requested from AU and UN peacekeeping mission to support and restore peace in the country and the African Union immediately responded to the request of Government by promising to send a first peacekeeping mission to Somalia to give hand peace in Somalia. The new Government was challenged and met difficult for the relocation in Mogadishu and decided to move to Jowhar until the security of the capital improved.

In 2004, IGAD led peace process held in Kenya has resulted in the inauguration of the new government after a long process of peace talks with 275 members of parliament represented all the political functions of all the clans. The TFG moved to Jowhar because the warlords opposed the move of Mogadishu and the warlords although they were part of the signed agreement it did not happen to allow the Government to move to Mogadishu. In 2006 the warlords were defeated by Islamic courts union and establish law and order many parts of the country, including

Mogadishu (Dagne, 2011, P.22). Inter-peace & CRD (2009), argue that traditional local elders were not active in the Kenya peace process as they were involved Djibouti peace process as elders' involvement was an important representation of the entire country and legitimacy of the process.

In February 2007, the UNSC authorized the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), with the mandate of supporting reconciliations and dialogue led by the transitional Federal Government, protecting Government institutions and infrastructures, support, train, and reform security forces and undertake DDR programs for the armed militia (Karbo & Virk, 2018, P.364). According to Dagne, (2011), in 2009, an agreement was reached by TFG and rebel groups which bring the resignation of TFG president and the election of former Islamic courts union leader Sh.Sharif to lead coalition Government comprised of TFG members and newly joined members of rebel groups.

African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was first deployed in the country in 2007 to help and support the Somali Government to fight against terrorist groups and support the peace process in the country. AMISOM started with small battalions from Uganda and Burundi and later joined by Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti. The Mission has played a big role in peacebuilding efforts and the country achieved to hold two indirect elections where local elders select Parliament and the members of parliament elected president (Keating & Abshir, 2018, P.3).

The peacebuilding process in Somalia for the last years was going smoothly and there were peaceful elections that were held in 2012 and 2017 respectively. The two indirect elections the power was transferred smoothly and local elders played an effective role in the state-building and peace process in the country. Although peacebuilding approaches in the country were a mainly top-down approach, also there were other bottom-up peacebuilding approaches within the country.

According to Connaughton, & Berns (2020, P.75), argues that building peace from bellow was the option of building trust, reconciliation, and peace. The bottom-up approach peacebuilding was applicable and relevant to the Somali traditional system of conflict resolution where community members, led by elders met under the tree and solve conflict issues. Also According to Menkhaus (2007), mentioned that peacebuilding to be successful, it should be started from the bottom and

showed ownership of the process. The author has indicated that the first local led approaches or grassroots showed a strong degree level of ownership, secondly, traditional mechanisms led by local elders supported by intellectuals are generally accepted in local peacebuilding, thirdly local led peacebuilding proceeds pace or long period and fourth Somali communities sought out mediation or arbitration a by neutral respected elder or sheik. This indicates that locally-led peacebuilding initiatives is based on ownership, accepted traditional mechanisms, pace, respect, and neutrality of the mediators or actors especially local elders who are contributing to building peace within communities.

The Somalia peace process was focusing mainly on state-building and these efforts led by International actors, although there was also local peace process led by local actors that focused on managing conflicts within the clans and communities. Many scholars indicated that top-down approach success was limited while others mentioned that bottom up peacebuilding had shown great success.

2.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1 PROBLEM SOLVING THEORY

This study used problem-solving theory as this theory accepts that always humans encounter and experience problems and challenges and looks for ways to solve those problems faced by humans. This theory tended to form systems and structures that can contribute and play a role in solving problems or conflicts within communities and individuals (Chang, Zurilla & Sanna, 2004). The problem-solving theory can be an as self-directed cognitive process in which a group of people tries to identify possible solutions to certain problems in every life.

According to Chang, Zurilla & Sanna (2004) problem solving distinguished into problem-solving and solution implementation. The problem-solving focuses on ways of getting a solution to a specific problem. While implementing solutions relates to carrying the solutions in real problematic situations. According to Dostál (2015) people encountering the problem, but their readiness to solve is important. This is a situation where persons try to evaluate the problem and what causes the problem to find solutions.
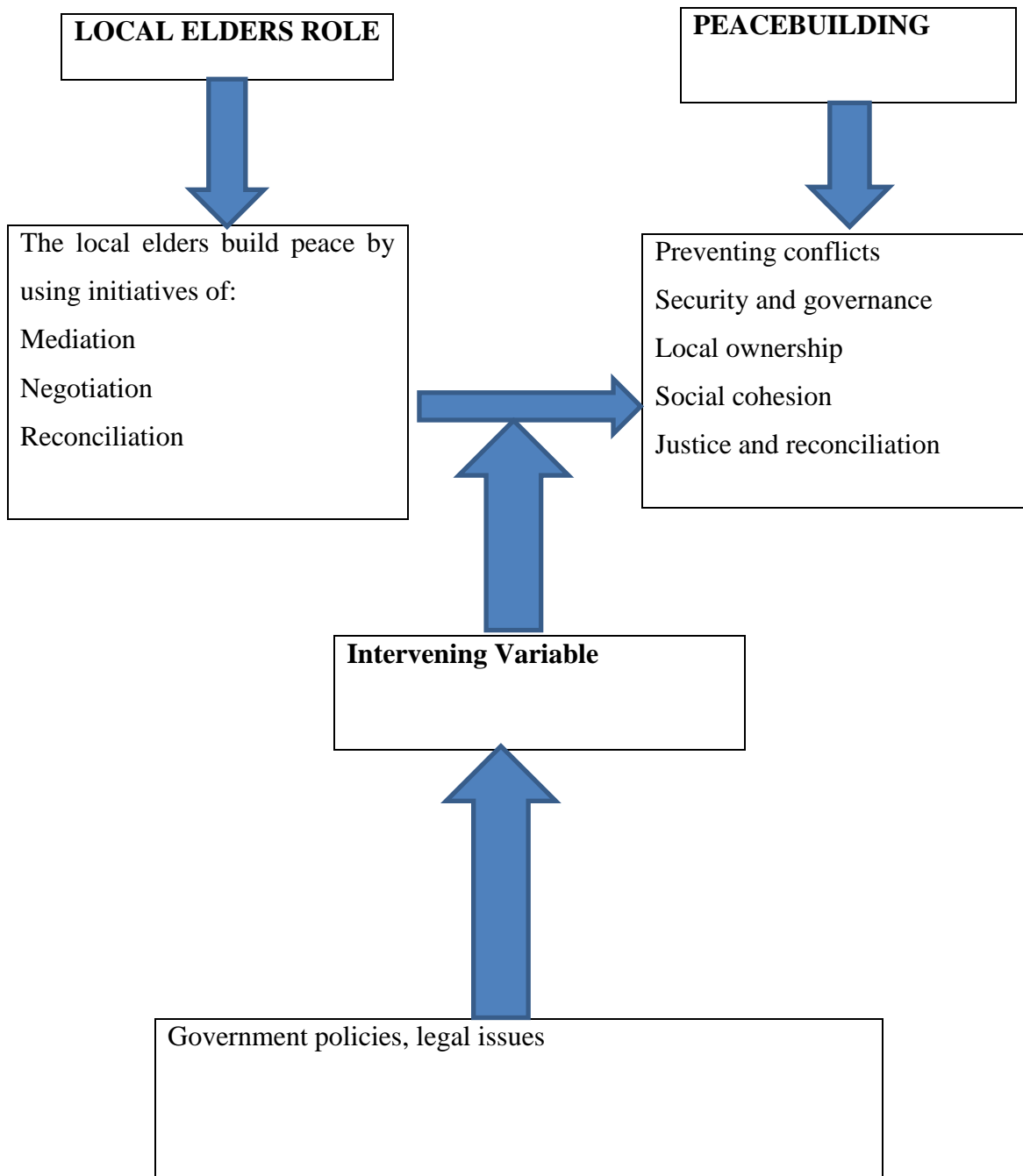
2.5.2 SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY

Social capital is the relational resource embedded in personal ties that are useful for the development of individual communities. Social capital stands for a sense of goodwill that represents sympathy, trust, and forgiveness that engendered fabric social relations (Hassan, 2009, P.421).

The Theory of Social capital is based on the notion of trusts, norms and informal networks of social relations that built on social norms, values, beliefs, trusts, obligations, relationships, networks, friends, memberships, civic engagement, information flows, and institutions that foster cooperation and collective activities for the shared welfares that contributes to the socioeconomic developments of the communities. It can be regarded as actions taken as collective in the base of social relations and shared norms, and trust that facilitate the relationship and cooperation of mutual benefits. (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009).

As Bhandari & Yasunobu, (2009) cited from Coleman (1990), social capital theory can be defined as a combination of various individuals having two common features that are the aspect of social structure and it enables certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. The entities include obligations, expectations, and trust, and information flow. It is a production resource that facilitates the production and makes it possible to achieve certain ends that would be impossible in its absence. Social capital focuses on the structural relationship among the actors and it facilitates individual actions taken by the actors that form the basis of social capital. The efforts taken by the group members can be perceived as rational investments in social capital.

In this study, both theories can provide the understanding and describes the role of local elders in peacebuilding. The theories help to understand how elders can play a role in maintaining peace and managing conflicts through traditional mechanisms of reconciliation, mediation, negotiation, and building social cohesion and relationship. The local elder's role enables and enforces social cohesion and the relationship that exists among community members.

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

LOCAL ELDERS ROLE

PEACEBUILDING

The local elders build peace by using initiatives of: Mediation Negotiation Reconciliation

Preventing conflicts Security and governance Local ownership Social cohesion Justice and reconciliation

Intervening Variable

Government policies, legal issues

Source: Author`s conceptual framework 2020.

2.7 **SUMMARY**

This chapter introduced the literature review by focusing on the definition of key terms, local elders initiatives, peacebuilding literature and peacebuilding process in Somalia. The chapter also presented the theories used in the study problem solving theory and social capital theory, also, the chapter presented the conceptual framework of the local elders role and peacebuilding.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and it introduces the research design, selection of participants, data collection methods, analysis of data, and ethical consideration of the study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design can be defined as a plan that the researcher uses to collect information regarding the questions of the study from the respondents, selection process and how to analyze and communicate research findings (Kumar, 2014, P.123). This study used a qualitative approach that is based on the research questions and objectives of the study, which guides the study research design and approaches used. According to Brayman, (2012) Qualitative research approach covers and focuses on learning and understanding behavior and the reasons that direct behavior and the views of members of a certain social group, and how participants interpret their social world.

Qualitative research aims at identifying characteristics and phenomena and events examined in their natural context, attitude needs that can lead to understanding how others feel their situation (Jonker & Pennink, 2010, P.77). Dawson (2002) stated that qualitative research focuses on finding and looking at attitudes, conducts, and experiences of individuals and groups, and this study aimed at looking and assessing the view and opinions of respondents.

3.2 STUDY AREA

The study was carried out in Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia. It is the largest city of the country and highly populated area. It resides along the southeastern coast of Somalia. Mogadishu it is the diplomatic, commercial, manufacturing and economic center of Somalia, and chief seaport. It is the area where most of the activities of peacebuilding occur. The political administration of the city is in the hands of the federal government of Somalia. This city was convenient for the researcher as it was easy to access study respondents, especially local elders and other respondents who were the main focus of the study.

3.3.   **POPULATION**

Dawson (2002), stated that the qualitative approach to the population of the study is not the goal, instead, research can look groups who can provide insights and information needed based on the research questions. Lichtman (2010) the main purpose of qualitative research is to provide an in-depth description and to understand human experiences, views, and discourses and mostly qualitative research uses the interview to collect data where respondents tell their stories to the researcher. The study population is the local elders who live in Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia, police officer and civilians, where the respondents of the study lives. The main reason the researcher selected this population is that; they have information and knowledge of the study and their availability to participate in the study.

3.4**. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

The study used purposive sampling to select participants. The study used purposive sampling due to the relevance of study questions and respondents expected to be part of the study. A purposive sampling technique is a kind of judgmental form of sampling that the person conducting the research not looking to sample research participants on a random basis, but the goal is to sample respondents on the strategic way so, those sampled apply to the study questions that are being presented (Bryman, 2012, P.418). This technique puts research questions at the heart of the sampling consideration. The researcher wanted to speak with the knowledgeable local elders and other respondents who have the relevant information to the study.

In the regard with the number of participants, the research relied on the principle of saturation, which is the point of reaching or getting the needed information from the respondents, meaning that the researcher stopped the exercise of collecting data after he realized the information was being repeated. As Hennink, Hutter & Bailey (2011, P.82) say, the size, number of the qualitative studies is guided by the diversity of the information, and once there is no further diversity, it means the researcher has reached the point of saturation. In this context, the sample of the study was 32 respondents from 22 local elders, 2 police officers and 8 from the public who responded to the research questions. The researcher selected the respondents based on their knowledge and willingness to provide information to the study. The researcher come up with the respondents

after realizing that they are the key informants and their information and knowledge is vital to the study.

3.5. **METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

According to Kumar (2014), several methods can be used to collect primary data, which depends on the purpose of the study, resources available, and skills needed. The study used a semi-structured interview method to collect the primary data of the study and documentary analysis as secondary sources.

3.5.1 **SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

This study used Semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviewing is one of perhaps the most common interview used to type in qualitative social research (Dowson, 2002, P.28).

A semi-structured interview is a method in which the researcher has or prepares an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of freedom in how to answer as questions may not use as it was introduced in the guide and may be asked other questions that did not include in the guide Nonetheless, by and large, all the questions will be asked and a similar wording will be used from interviewee to interviewee (Bryman, 2012, P.471).

The researcher prepared an interview guide before starting the semi-structured interview. Also, the researcher followed similar wording from interview to interview and asked to follow up questions to get a more clear understanding of the questions asked to the interviewee. The researcher used in the interview Somali language because it was the language that the interviewee speaks locally and the interviewee could not understand the English language. After concluding the interview the researcher translated collected data from Somali to English as the researcher speaks both languages.

3.5.2 **DOCUMENTARY REVIEW**

The study used secondary sources of documents that are relevant to the study. The secondary sources as one of the sources of data gathering in qualitative research. The studies extracted the relevant information from books, articles, journals and other important sources acquire the needed information about the study.

3.6 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The Study analyzed the data using qualitative methods. The qualitative data analysis is the analysis of qualitative data, such as text data from interview transcripts. Qualitative analysis is heavily dependent on the researcher's analytic and integrative skills and personal knowledge of social context where the data were collected. (Bhaacherjee, 2012, P.113).

In this regard, the study intended to analyses how local elders can contribute to building peace and this relates to the socio-historical and cultural aspects as elders use traditional ways that existed for generations.

3.7. RESEARCH ETHICS

The study was guided by research ethics that concerned informed consent, no harm, confidentiality, avoiding bias, and plagiarism (Kumar, 2014). According to Bryman (2012), the researcher must ensure there is no harm to participants, there is informed consent, there is no invasion of privacy and whether deception is involved. According to Dawson (2002) researchers have to make sure they treat respondents and information they provide with respect and honesty.

The researcher asked respondents for their consent, and respondents gave verbal consent after the researcher shared with them the aim of the study. To keep the privacy of the interviewee, the study used coding and data collected from interviewees were coded. According to Bryman (2012, P.365) coding " is the process of assigning numerical values to different categories of responses to a question to analyze them". The research questions used were free from any harm and bias. And the study acknowledged any sources from others by avoiding its best form of plagiarisms.

3.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

During the collection of the primary data of the study, the researcher encountered limitations that related to the availability of the respondents, especially working hours as many of the respondents involved and busy in their daily life activities. To overcome the limitations the researcher looked appropriate time for the respondents in order to collect the required information. The accessibility and movement within the city due to the security challenge was another limitation to the study.

Also, another limitation was respondents of the study whose majority of them do not speak English and there is a need to translate Somali language into English.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted the research methodology by focusing research design, study area, population, sampling technique, and data collection methods. The chapter also introduced data analysis, ethics of the study and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports the findings of the study thematically and according to the study objectives as outlined in the introduction. These findings are informed by data collected from 32 respondents as the table below shows respondent's distribution.

4.1 TABLE: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents Type	Gender	Number	Method of data collection used
Local elders	M	22	Semi-structured interview and focus group discussion
Local communities	5 M and 5 F	10	Semi-structured interview

Source: Author 2020

4.2 Characteristics of the Study respondents

The study respondents were comprised of 32 respondents from local elders 22 (69%), police officers 2 (6%), and ordinary citizens 8 (25%). 27 of them were males (84%), while 5 of them were females (16%). The respondents were aged between 32-75 years, which means that they were capable of giving the relevant information to the study. As already explained, the term local elders means actors who are responsible for grassroots peacebuilding local initiatives by using Somali traditional system. Local communities are the communities affected and witnessed the local elders building peace in their communities.

4.3. THE INITIATIVES USED BY ELDERS IN PEACEBUILDING

The local elders play roles in peacebuilding by using different initiatives, including traditional customary laws, traditional justice, and conflict resolution through mediation, negotiation, and reconciliation.

4.3.1 Traditional Customary Laws "Xeer"

The customary laws "Xeer" were applied and led by local traditional elders who have the knowledge and trust of the local communities. The customary law is unwritten and passes from generation to generation. It is the responsibility of elders to guard and apply customary laws in the Somali societies. Customary laws are disseminated orally from generation to generation and traditionally customary laws define reciprocal rights, obligations among clans, covering domestic issues, social welfare, political relations, property rights and management of resources among communities and clans. As local elder who was interviewed said:

"*We use the traditional customary laws to manage conflicts and build peace within the community and these initiatives include orienting the public to the importance of peace, reconciliation efforts, mediating and arbitrating if there are any conflicting parties within the communities. When we are dealing with conflict issues among communities and parties, we use traditional way to manage and deal with conflicts between parties. We achieve a lot with the use of traditional ways of solving conflicts. The traditional system is based on customary, traditional law "Xeer" and sharia justice where we focus on justice and reconciliation between our communities. This helps to build peace and restore security in our country that suffered many years of conflicts and civil wars"[1] (Interviewee with code number 1, 24th, December 2019).*

In this situation, the application of a customary, traditional way of solving community issues is based on family or clan. For example, if someone commits a crime, elders from victim side and the perpetrator side site together, and discuss how best they solve the problem by using traditional way and they will base their decisions on the shared previous manner of solving cases. In this case, the elders will apply and follow for example; if an injury was paid in a certain amount then the same case happens elders will decide based on how the first issue was solved.

The commonly used methods of traditional ways of solving and mediating parties based on agreed decisions taken by both sides of the elders. The side of the victim and the side of the perpetrator and third-party mediate both sides if the parties fail to reach an agreement or the situation is serious. The decision could be paying compensation "Diya" for deaths and injuries, returning or reimbursement of properties taken, or the parties may agree as part of reconciliation to forgive what happened in the past to achieve lasting peace within the parties and communities.

Also, another local elder mentioned: "*the local traditional elders intervene in conflicts between the parties and the parties are called to come in front of the neutral local elders to negotiate a solution to what happened. Elders mediate to reach an agreement that is based on traditional customs laws and sharia law. In this case if one party inflicted injuries or death to the other party, elders decides to pay damage compensation "DIYA" to the victims who suffered damage and also sometimes it could happen to reach forgiveness and reconciliation, meaning that the victim party forgives their perpetrators. Elders encourage parties forgiveness to achieve lasting peace within the parties"* [7] (Interviewee with code number 7, 25th, December 2019).

The Somali traditional customary is traditional agreements that manage community issues such as business, resource sharing, ownership, ways of paying compensations among different clans. Rules and responsibilities, discipline, and ways of dealing with internal matters of the public are all referenced by the traditional customary laws led by local elders. Traditional customary laws may not be permanently it could change due to the agreements between the parties. Traditional ways related to the ways of living of the public of rural, urban, farmers, pastoralists, and businesses. Abiding and enforcement of traditional customary depends on trust and respect among communities who are living together as traditional customary guided by local elders. Also, respondents indicated that the role of local elders is not only limited to the traditional mechanisms of managing conflicts within the communities, but elders for the last years played a role in state formation and building local administrations, as happened in many areas in the country and this showed the important role of local elders in peacebuilding in the country.

According to the respondents, the local elders contribute more to building peace within the communities. The elders play a big role in building peace within the communities as the respondents mentioned, for the last decades after the government collapsed, elders stand to fill the

gap and become big players of the peace in the country. The country plagued conflicts and civil war and elders mobilized for themselves for intervening warring groups and their focus was stopping conflicts and bringing to the table the warring parties to negotiate, mediate and reconcile by following the traditional system. The local elders were having much respect and trust within the communities and this contributed to more and created the falls of conflicts that were going on in the country.

4.3.2. Traditional Justice System "Nidaam Cadaaladeed"

The local elders deliver to the community' traditional justice that is based on compensation "Diya", and forgiveness "Cafis". As the local elders who were interviewed indicated, restitution is based on traditional justice that is commonly practiced within Somali people, and in this case, it is common that the perpetrators compensate the victim to reach peace within the communities. The respondents indicated that local elders conducted their mediating exercise outside (open areas), where perpetrators and victims come together in front of large gatherings witnessed by the communities. Oath takes place to avoid a denial of the suspected individuals for the commission of the crime. Local elders use reconciliation, negotiation, and mediation initiatives that are vital for justice, managing disputes and peacebuilding within the communities. The respondents indicated that to build peace within the communities, it is necessary to take those steps and initiatives that can play a big role and contribute to building peace within the communities.

One respondent from the public who was interviewed said: "*In case we have problems that occur in the village whether it is family issues, resources related issues, inheritance, marriage conflicts, elders are called to intervene first before we go to the police station. I can say that their role of managing conflicts within the communities is effective and helps to maintain peace, to the extent that, as community members, we have trusted the local elders, who work for peace within our village and community*"[19] *(Interviewee with code number 19, 27th, December 2019).*

Another said: "*What the elders did for the last decades, especially during the period of conflicts in the country, is visible. The elders were the main source of peacebuilding, and this effort of elders saved many lives and properties. Communities look for justice and reconciliation because elders are available to everybody*"[3] *(Interviewee with code number 3, 24th, December 2019).*

As the respondents mentioned the local elders were the main actors of peace in the country and within the clans and communities. This effort of local elder's strengths, their role traditionally as the Somali people always respects and abide by their decisions regarding family issues and communities. The local elders have a close working relationship with the local authorities, security organs, and community and this facilitated to solve issues that arise within the communities and strengthen peace within the communities. The relationship between elders and authorities contributed a lot to peace in the villages as elders participated orienting communities to support peace and work with the local authorities and security organs to prevent any problem that can violate the peace.

A local elder indicated: *"To build peace, we work with local authorities, security agencies, and the communities at large. Mostly we work with the Police about the security and managing cases as we try to solve cases which are not serious offenses such as family conflicts, marriage related issues, own resources conflicts, business and other normal conflicts between individuals. So, there is a close relationship between authorities, security organs and elders in efforts to build peace in the village."[6] (Interviewee with code number 6, 25th, December 2019).*

The close working relationship between elders, local authorities, and security organs have contributed to peacebuilding within the communities and country. This enabled local authorities and security agencies to prevent insecurity within the communities. The local elders solve conflicts and issues that arise within the communities by using traditional mechanisms. In this situation, elders managed cases between the parties, whether cases are minor or even serious, they are called to tackle the concerned issues, and the parties trusted their role and effort that aimed at contributing to peace within the communities.

On police station commander who was interviewed responded: *"I believe elders play a role in peace in the community and village. We have a close link with the elders of the village and when there is a problem they play a big part, and also participate with us for public orientation. In the police station they come to us, we meet any time. I have their numbers and I call any time I need or they call me whenever they want me. Mostly they intervene if, for example, minor cases happen to the village, they solve it. Sometimes even when minor cases are brought to the police they come to us and request to give them back to case solve them, which we always do because we have*

good relation with them. After resolving the conflicts they inform the station about any agreements reached and bring written agreement to the station. Their involvement and role is important for peace in the district. Communities trust and respect the role of elders and that is why local elders are even involved in managing and solving criminal cases by using the traditional customary system"[14] (Interviewee with code number 14, 26th, December 2019).

The respondent appreciated the role of the local elders and explained how they play a vital role in building peace within the communities. The local authorities and security agencies work closely with the local elders as they can facilitate managing conflicts that occur within the communities, and this effort helped authorities to prevent and manage crimes that occur in their localities. Many community members are willing and happy to see their issues managed by local elders and this shows public trust towards them.

Also, another respondent from security organs, especially the criminal investigation department responded*: "Elders come to the department and solve minor cases that are brought to the department; however, we submit serious cases to the prosecutors and competent courts. It happens that elders go to court and request to handle the cases and it's up to the court to give them back or not. But what I have seen is that courts allow elders to handle some cases that are not serious. In our situation, we do not have any problem the cases they handle. Parties and communities are happy of decisions elders take because if the parties are not happy they would come to the C.I.D and complain about elders. The role of elders cannot be denied and I can say that their role is vital for managing disputes between parties"[15] (Interviewee with code number 15, 26th, December 2019).*

According to the respondents' communities favor to solve their disputes in the process, led by local elders rather than going to court. This could be related to the acceptance and trust of the people to the elders and the fact that the process is faster to reach solutions than formal processes that may take a long period. Another reason is due to costs and expenses that relate to traveling and paying legal representation in normal courts, and this becomes a challenge to those who cannot afford. So people prefer looking for elders to find a solution as they can be reachable and easily available within the communities.

The respondents indicated that local elders as they are living and working within the communities it's easier for them to understand the dynamics of the conflicts and this can help them to find a resolution that can best suit and serves the peace and interest of local communities. The local elders involve providing justice to the local communities, who prefer to solve their issues within the traditional customary based system rather than going to the formal justice in the ordinary courts. Although the intervention of local elders in the serous cases can hinder justice, such as the cases of rape and murder. The elder's intervention in such cases can deprive victims of finding rights they deserve as the traditional customary system may not fully give protection for the victims' rights.

As respondents from the public indicated: "*I believe that sometimes elders can deprive the rights of the victims because the traditional way that elders practice for managing cases may not give consideration to the victim, especially rape cases, and this can violate the rights of the victim. Elders negotiate and mediate parties for paying a small amount that cannot cover all expenses for injuries installed to the victim and this gives a chance for the criminal to be free and commit crimes again within the communities*"[16] *(Interviewee with code number 16, 27th, December 2019).*

The respondents indicated the feeling that the traditional system can give a chance to the offenders who committed crimes within the communities and this can violate the rights of the victims. Also freeing offenders without any punishment that is equal to the crimes committed can encourage offenders to crimes again within the public and this will become a challenge to peace and stability in the country.

4.3.3. Resolutions of conflicts through negotiation, mediation and reconciliation

The traditional mechanisms for managing and solving conflicts and disputes among parties and communities, the local elders uses negotiation, mediation, and reconciliation tools to build peace within the warring groups. As the respondents who were interviewed indicated, the local elders are called to mediate and lead the reconciliation efforts within the communities, if there is a conflict that occurs within members of the public. The respondents mentioned that due to the trust and respect vested upon the elders, they always play a vital role for peace within the communities, and this effort led by local elders has resulted the reduction of violent conflicts that were occurring in the country for the last years.

A respondent who was interviewed indicated: "*...I believe that elder's role is helpful for peacebuilding within the communities, villages and the country as we experienced long years of wars and conflicts. What I witnessed is that elders were working with the communities and managing conflicts between the clans as Somali peoples' culture is based on the clan. The elders use negotiation, mediation and reconciliation efforts stop fighting and restore peace within the parties*"[13] (Interviewee with code number 13, 26th, December 2019).

According to the respondents, the local elders were the backbone of managing conflicts between clans and other groups who were fighting in the country, and this shows that elders play a role in peacebuilding in the country. The local elders use the mechanisms of negotiation, mediation and reconciliation efforts like the one they believe that it's fit and suitable for the situation and dealing with the issue that has arisen within the communities they represent. The elders first share information regarding their communities and issues rises and look for the suitable initiative to tackle the issues and generally contributing building peace within the communities. They commonly use reconciliation, mediation, negotiation, and arbitration to manage conflicts and methods of solving conflicts based on traditional system practices and follow of customary laws "Xeer", which the Somali people practice for many centuries.

The respondents indicated that the traditional way of managing conflicts and building peace within the communities focus on justice and reconciliation that are vital for ending conflicts and reaching a lasting peace. Local elders have better understanding and knowledge about the tradition and community contexts and this enabled to work peacefully and manage conflicts that occur within the communities. Communities trust the interventions of local elders and whenever there is an issue or any problem, it invites the elders to intervene in the issue by using the traditional way of mediating and reconciling parties. The elder's initiatives were the only means used by local communities, especially when the central government collapsed in 1991. The country became the battling ground for different groups and then elders take the lead to fill the vacuum that exists. The local elders use their position of moral strength and authority to find acceptable solutions to the conflicts and disputes between individual and community members and their focus is ending disputes by consensus.

One respondent from the public indicated: "*I can say that the local elders were the home of solution where communities run to find a solution so, the elders did a good job and they achieved to restore peace and communities recognized that role of local elders in building peace. I believe that elders efforts together with other parts of the communities and government, we can achieve peace and security in our country*"[2] (Interviewee with code number 2, 24th, December 2019).

The respondents admitted how the local elders and other actors are important and can play a role in building peace in the country. The initiatives used by local elders were mainly based traditional way of mediating, negotiating, arbitrating, and reconciling different parties of the communities. The local elders share unwritten customary "xeer", which shows how to mediate, compensate, or use of forgiveness and reconciliation to achieve a sense of peace in the parties and communities. The local elders call people peace and harmony and mostly elders participate with local authorities and security institutions how best communities can prevent violence and conflicts. Authorities and security organs invite their meeting with local elders to the orient public on the importance of peace and security. Local community believes that the initiatives used by local elders are vital and effective for restoring and maintain peace within the communities.

The local elder's peacebuilding initiatives promote a sense of local ownership, building trust and consensus and providing the opportunity to interact with local communities that brings a sense of ownership as mechanisms used by elders based on traditional customs, norms, and culture of the communities. This helps to maintain and ensure a peaceful and cohesive relationship among community members. The focus of local elders in the traditional justice based on compensating the victims, renovating harmony inside the community, and reconciliation of the conflicting parties. Reconciliation is vital for building peace to build the social harmony of the community in general and the warning parties particularly. This can be related to the aim of elders which is the restoration of social harmony, forgiveness, and reconciliation rather than punishing the offenders who committed crimes within the communities.

The respondents mentioned that the role of local elders in building peace contributed a lot of social cohesion, trust, and the relationship between communities. Elders encourage communities to share and cooperate with common interests and prevent any group that may disturb and violate norms and cohesion of the communities. Generally, the elders had shown great success, according

to the respondents, and communities trust elders by managing conflicts and building peace. The elder's initiatives showed that through the application of traditional ways peace is achievable as the public's trust and belief of local peacebuilding initiatives from the bottom-up approach.

The respondent mentioned in the interview that the role of elders is visible within the communities and manages communities' issues, whether conflicts related to family issues and any other issues, it is important to maintain social cohesion, peace and security. The communities rely on and trust elder's initiatives of peacebuilding whether it's individual, family, and communities at large. The local elders called any issues that arise within community members and elders intervene by using the traditional way. The elders also contribute peacebuilding in the villages by working with local authorities and security organs to maintain peace within the communities.

As the country was lacking a functioning central government for a long period, people see elders filled and played the role of the Government. Previously, the elders were the main actors of building peace in the rural areas where clans may fight, however, for the last years of lawlessness elders become main actors in urban to contribute peace in the cities and towns as there was no police and other Government organs who maintain peace and security in urban areas.

As one respondent mentioned *"I can tell you that local elders contributed peace in the country because they are doing that task of peace for the country. Previously elders were much more active in rural areas, especially by solving conflicts between clans. However, in the last years, even cities and town elders were the main actors of builders of peace and solving issues among the communities"*[18] *(Interviewee with code number 18, 27th, December 2019).*

This indicated that elders played an important role in peace in the country. In addition to that, respondents showed that, there are other actors such as religious leaders, politicians, business people, and international actors who played an important role in peace in the country.

One respondent indicated*: "Elders alone cannot contribute peace in the communities and the country because there are other actors such as, religious leaders, the business community, politicians and international actors who played an important role and contribute peace in the country"*[20] *(Interviewee with code number 20, 27th, December 2019).*

The above reinforced the multiplicity of actors in peacebuilding (Habyarimana, 2018), even if this research focused on local elders. Generally, based on the respondent's view, it is clear that the role of local elders is important for peacebuilding in the country, though other actors also, contributed to peacebuilding. The role of local elders is visible and effective as communities trusted and respected them. The elders have the knowledge and experience and use of traditional ways that played a role in building peace within the locals and the country. The contribution of local elders in building peace within warring parties, communities, and the country is mostly welcomed by all parties of the local communities. Respondents indicated that, it is still needed the continuation of the local elder's roles in building peace within the communities. The local elders also played a role in state formation in the country as elders selected parliament members for the last years.

The respondents indicated that for the last years, the elders' focus was mediation and negotiation to manage conflicts and in this situation, local elders called to mediate if there are warring parties and their role are to bring peace within the communities. The people see elders as effective as far as their mediation is based on neutrality and justice to achieve lasting peace.

4.4. THE LOCAL ELDERS INITIATIVES CONTRIBUTION TO PEACEBUILDING

This part presents the extent of the local elder's role in peacebuilding as the aim is to assess the local elder's role to build peace within the communities. According to the respondents, the local elders are vital to building peace in the country. The local elders lead and take part in any effort that is responding to community concerns regarding individuals, family issues, clans, and communities at large. The local elders acquire their position traditional inheritance, knowledge of the culture and tradition of the communities, trust, and respect given by the societies they represent.

Respondents were asked local elders' role in peacebuilding and it was interviewed key local elders who work community issues and some members of the public. The local elders do different tasks within the communities as the respondents who were interviewed indicated. The quotes in this study were translated from the original from the Somali language into the English language.

One respondent from local elders mentioned: "*As an elder, I'm always standing to participate in building peace in the village, district, and entire country where it's needed. The role of the elder is*

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to serve his community with justice by working in peacebuilding within the communities because the elder's main role is working for peace and preventing and managing conflicts"1 (*Interviewee with code number 1, 24th, December 2019*).

Another local elder who was interviewed says: "*our role as an elder is broad and including solving conflicts between individual parties, family members and community at large and participating in other activities that are important for the public. We also give a hand to the local authorities and security agencies for building peace by orienting communities and solving community disputes. All these efforts are helpful and support our communities to live peaceful environment*" 7 (*Interviewee with code number 7, 25th, December 2019*).

Also, another local elder who was interviewed responded: "*My role is to work for communities interest and this what I was doing for many years and I will continue to work for the interest of public and this includes managing and resolving conflicts and activities we are working have an impact for the public as we working building peace, of course, its impact is positive and peace is the interest of every human being, As an elder community invested and trust me to work for peace initiatives and that is what I stand and work always for the last years. My role is to prevent and manage conflicts by working with other elders and we use the traditional way that is based on Sharia. The role of elders includes collecting compensation payments from the clan members "Diya" and collecting other resources needed to work for the common interest of the communities*"8 (*Interviewee with code number 8, 25th, December 2019*).

Besides, another local elder responded: "*As elders whenever we receive information regarding the conflicts we start to intervene and solve these conflicts by negotiating and mediating parties to reach peace and this a big role that elders stand and work all the time. The elders who are mediating and negotiating parties are coming from a neutral third party and this facilitate and create trust of the parties, if one party reject the elder's role of mediation or decision traditionally its imposed fine and this works generally, although people may resist it's a traditional way that local elders use mostly to achieve peace*" 9 (*Interviewee with code number 9, 25th, December 2019*).

Furthermore, local elders work closely with the existing authorities and security organs as one local elder who was interviewed indicated: *"Our role is to work with the public and strive to build peace within the community and this could be possible if we work closely with local authorities and security organs to prevent and manage any problem that occurs within our communities"* [10] *(Interviewee with code number 10, 25th, December 2019).*

The interviewed respondents indicated that the role of local elders was peacebuilding, managing and preventing conflicts and problems that occur within the communities, also respondents indicated that to build peace, it is important to work closely with local authorities and security agencies for this time to prevent and solve disputes that occur within the communities. Also, Respondents indicated that the local elders' rule should focus on building social cohesion, trust, and relationship among community members to maintain peace. Respondents mentioned that to become elder it needs certain requirements such as knowledge of traditional customs and sharia, respect and trust, decision making, and communication skills that enable elders to manage and resolve disputes within the communities.

Local elders manage conflicts that occur within individuals, groups who can disagree or dispute ownership of property, family issues, politics, and all other issues can cause conflicts. The local Elders focus is managing those conflicts in order communities live together in a peaceful environment. As there were no strong institutions that manage conflicts for the last decade, local elders were the main source where people look for managing and solving conflicts, and the elders mainly achieve to solve conflicts and build peace within the communities by using traditional customary system.

Respondents indicated that the traditional laws used by local elders are effective and bring peace within the communities for the last years of conflicts and people believe that in many parts of the country peace was restored and communities' live together peacefully in those areas as local elders managed conflicts and achieved peacebuilding within the communities. The peacebuilding initiatives used by elders implemented by the parties and communities to achieve lasting peace. Elder's initiatives are aimed at reaching the point of reconciliation where parties encouraged forgiving what was happening in the past to achieve and bring successful lasting peace within parties and communities.

The respondents that were interviewed mentioned generally that traditional mechanisms are the way of solving conflicts among the community and the traditional system led by local elders has the trust and respect within the communities so, respondents agree that this system is effective and play a role in peacebuilding within communities. One respondent from the public responded: "*The local elders are important for building peace within the village as they solve any dispute or conflict that occurs within the public by using the traditional culture of solving disputes. I believe that their role is effective and working for the interest peace in the country*" [22]*(Interviewee with code number 22, 28th, December 2019).*

Furthermore, respondents who were interviewed indicated that local elders needed to focus on solving and managing conflicts by looking and touching deeply the root causes as tackling the problems are necessary reaching durable peace within the parties and communities. Also, respondents mentioned that public orientation and reconciliation are missing from the initiatives as reconciliation needs time and resources and without reconciliation, it is harder to reach a lasting peace in the country.

4.5. CHALLENGES FACED BY ELDERS IN PEACEBUILDING

This part presents challenges encountered by local elders while they are working peacebuilding efforts. As the respondents indicated local elders encounter various challenges that can hamper their role in peacebuilding in the country. The challenges that local elder faces include lack of enforcement for the decisions and agreements reached and this has become an obstacle for the implementation of peace agreements mediated by local elders. Warring parties may not abide and enforce or one party can deny for the implementation of the peace process. Also, challenges include lack of funding for peacebuilding initiatives led by local elders and this can become a challenge for local elder's peacebuilding initiatives. Any conference that convened to the parties needs funding and sometimes it's difficult to find someone ready to support peace initiatives.

A local elder who was interviewed mentioned: "*The main challenges that elders face during their task of peacebuilding include the fact that parties may not abide with the efforts of elders and this can become an obstacle to the peacebuilding initiatives. We have seen that sometimes warning groups violate the agreements and decisions taken and this will creates tension and continuations*

of the problem. This is a challenge to the local elders' role in peacebuilding" [1] *(Interviewee with code number 1, 24th, December 2019).*

Also, another respondent indicated: *"The main challenges that local elders face is the lack of the economy, convincing warring parties, obstacles from armed groups who may sometimes disrupt the peacebuilding process. These are the main challenges that we face and try all the time solve and move forward"* [3] *(Interviewee with code number 3, 24th, December 2019).*

Also, another respondent mentioned: *"As local elders, the main challenges include lack of resources to implement peacebuilding initiatives especially when elders want to launch reconciliation program there is no resources to conduct and this becomes a challenge to the peacebuilding initiatives so it's, a challenge that could hinder the role of local elders, for example, elders need resources used traveling and holding peace conference and in this situation, elders request funding from community members, especially businessmen to support the efforts of local elders in peacebuilding"* [4] *(Interviewee with code number 4, 24th, December 2019).*

Respondents reported that one of the challenges that elders encounter during peacebuilding is lack of resources, especially economic funding needed to conduct and implement peacebuilding initiatives. The elders were interviewed mentioned that lack of resources is a challenge to their role in building peace and due to the lack of needed resources peacebuilding initiatives do not reach their final goal that brings peace within the parties and communities. Respondents indicated that local business communities support their efforts because business people want peace, and for this reason, business members in the communities also important for peacebuilding initiatives led by local elders.

Furthermore, one respondent mentioned: *"Indeed, there are so many challenges mainly lack of abidance of the elders rule in certain groups, lack of enough resources to do the work, and many other challenges, including security challenges, lack of coordination and collaboration…"* [5] *(Interviewee with code number 5, 24th, December 2019).*

Also, another respondent mentioned: *"The main challenges we face include challenges from parties, without enforcement in our decisions and security situation of the country for example If the parties decline to enforce the decision and arbitration of local elders, there is no enforcement*

imposed to the parties, although mostly parties abide and enforce elders' decisions you can find someone who may not abide and enforce elders decisions and agreements reached and this can become an obstacle to the peace" [7] *(Interviewee with code number 7, 25th, December 2019).*

Another respondent indicated: *"Another challenge is lack of compromise for the conflicting parties and readiness for reconciliation and this becomes a challenge to the elders as the parties may not ready to reach an agreement and reconciliation so, unless parties ready and agree the role of elders it's difficult to reach peace"*[3] *(Interviewee with code number 3, 24th, December 2019).*

Also, another respondent mentioned *"Challenges include lack of technical, economic, and different armed groups who are against the role of elders in peacebuilding within the country', all these challenges and others become obstacles to the' elders efforts in peacebuilding"*[8] *(Interviewee with code number 8, 25th, December 2019).*

As the respondents indicated there is a challenge that local elders meet while they are working peacebuilding in the country. The main challenges that elders mentioned include economic challenge, enforcement, and acceptance of the decisions and agreements reached and this becomes a big challenge for the fulfillment and implementations of peace initiatives. Also, challenges mentioned include security as sometimes security is not good and elders may face security risks from different groups who are not happy or against the role of local elders in peacebuilding in the country.

Besides, respondents indicated that there is no enough cooperation and connection among local elders to accelerate their role in building peace and managing conflicts that occur within communities and clans. This challenge lowered their efforts and tasks that needed to be conducted within different locations in the country. The information may not reach elders and sharing information also is important for their task of peacebuilding. Also, another challenge is convincing the parties to accept the elder's role and in many cases, it can happen that if local elders reach a decision concerning parties one group may not abide and deny the implementation of arbitrary decisions reached during the peace process. Also, respondents indicated challenges that exist include that sometimes initiatives do not deeply look the main root causes of the conflicts and this could trigger again the recurrence of the conflicts that could be a challenge to

the peacebuilding initiatives led by local elders. Also, elders encounter influences of the politicians and other players and this becomes a challenge to building peace in the country.

The local elders negotiate and mediate warring parties and these process agreements were reached by the parties, however, sometimes it might be not implemented and this can hamper and become a challenge to the local elder's role traditionally. This is related to the neutrality and trust of elders that can convince the parties and the communities. The more parties are trusting and belief that local elders are partial and their decisions based on justice, there is belief indication that decisions are abiding, although traditionally there are consequences of those who violate peace agreements.

4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted data analysis and interpretation by introducing distribution of respondents, characteristics of the respondents. The chapter analyzed and presented data collected from the respondents and the information was coded. The data presented in the chapter based on the research objective by focusing on initiatives used by local elders, the contributions of local elder's initiatives and the challenges faced by local elders.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMMAY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a summary of the key finding of the study and provides recommendations based on study findings. The study objective was to assess the local elder's role in peacebuilding in Somalia.

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The study explored the role of local elders in peacebuilding in Somalia. With that, it assessed the initiatives used by local elders to build peace and how the elder's role contributes to peacebuilding. Also, the study examined the challenges that local elders face during their efforts in peacebuilding in the country.

The study found that local elders play an important role in peacebuilding in the country, and that they use traditional customary laws "Xeer", and traditional justice for the tools of mediation, negotiation, and reconciliation. Based on the respondents` views parties mostly accept the mediating role of elders which allows for handling issues between parties. According to the respondents, reconciliation is important for ending past grievances, and reconciliation. Perpetrators must confess their mistakes in the past and ask for forgiveness, and at the same time, victims may accept the demands and grant forgiveness so that peace can prevail within parties and communities. The study found that local elders also use mediation and negotiation initiatives where neutral elders participate in managing disputes and conflicts that occur within the communities.

The finding indicated that local elders were the main sources of conflict management and peacemakers in the country for the last years during civil wars and conflicts. Elders filled the gap of governance during the years of conflicts and achieved to restore peace in many parts of the country.

The study found out that communities favor solving their disputes in the process, led by local elders rather than going to court. This could be related to the acceptance and trust of the people to the elders and the fact that the process is faster to reach solutions than formal processes that may

take a long period. Another reason is due to costs and expenses that relate to traveling and paying legal representation in normal courts, and this becomes a challenge to those who cannot afford. So people prefer looking for elders to find a solution as they can be reachable and easily available within the communities.

The study findings showed that local elders play vital for settlement of disputes and peacebuilding between clans. However, the findings also showed that elders are sometimes influenced by politicians and armed groups, which respondents see as a hindrance to peacebuilding. The study also found that there was no enough comprehensive societal reconciliation, and that the main root causes of the conflicts remain unresolved, which can make the conflicts re-emerged again. Respondents see the failure to address the root causes of conflicts as a challenge to the peacebuilding initiatives in the country. Solving the main root causes of the problem can limit the chances of conflict recurrences.

The study also found that local elder's intervention is mainly based on kinship where local elders traditionally manage family or clan issues and in this case if there are two warring parties it is common to see elders from the third party who are making negotiations and mediation to solve conflicts within parties. Also, respondents indicated that elders play a role in peacebuilding within the villages and communities and in this case, the elders do not necessarily look at kinship and family connection, but rather focus on intervening in any issues that occur within the village. This shows that the elders play a role in solving any problem that occurs in their communities and villages.

The study also, found that local elders are at the forefront of any effort aimed at solving and managing any conflict that occurs within the communities. This shows how locally-led peacebuilding initiatives are vital to peace from the grassroots where communities need peace because communities are the ones affected by conflicts.

Besides, the study also found that local elders help local authorities and security organs in the efforts of preventing and managing security issues within the communities. As the respondents indicated, local elders have close cooperation with local authorities and security agencies, especially police that is responsible for internal peace and security of the country. Also, the study

indicated that local elders involve in solving criminal and civil cases that occur in their villages with the collaboration of police and judiciary organs.

Also, the study indicated that a local elder's role is more accepted and trusted by parties and communities, which has allowed the elders to manage and solve disputes between family members and communities. This indicates how the elders could manage and have the capability of managing conflicts and contributing to peace in the country.

The study also, found that the involvement of local elders in criminal cases, such as rape, can deprive the rights of the victims as the elder's way of solving is based on traditional systems that allow elders to reach an agreement with parties without much involvement and consultation with the victim. The traditional way of managing cases may allow the perpetrator to be free and not face needed justice, so this traditional system used by local elders may not fully give the rights and protections needed by the victims.

In regard to the challenges faced by local elders in the peacebuilding, the study found that local elders encounter challenges that can hinder the role of local elders in building peace. The study found that there is no enough enforcement and abiding by the decisions reached through mediation, negotiation, and arbitration efforts led by local elders, and this becomes an obstacle for the role of elders in peacebuilding. The study also found that the challenge of resources hindered the efforts of elders to implement peacebuilding initiatives, and this could be a challenge to peacebuilding initiatives in the country. Also, the study indicated that there is no enough connection and cooperation between local elders who are involved in peacebuilding and this limited local elder's role in peacebuilding. The local elders may not share necessary information that is important for building peace within the communities.

The study finally, indicated that there is a security challenge that prevents elders to fully achieve their role in building peace. As respondents indicated there are insecure and different groups who oppose the peacebuilding initiatives led by local elders. All these challenges can hamper the role of local elders in the peacebuilding initiatives in the country. There is no doubt that these challenges hindered the role of elders in peacebuilding. As far as those challenges still exist elders' role in peacebuilding will be limited unless measures and strategies are put in place to overcome and manage those challenges faced by local elders.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings and challenges that exist the study recommends the following steps and actions to be taken:

1. It is necessary to create and coordinate local elders peacebuilding initiatives throughout the country.

2. The government should prepare a safe environment and give protection for elders who are involved in peacebuilding in the country

3. The government should support local elders who are working for peace financially and technically.

4. The government should facilitate and encourage local elders to play a role in building peace in the country.

5. Governments should use local elders to play a role in societal reconciliation in the country.

6. Local elders should focus on comprehensive reconciliation and solving the root causes of the conflicts.

7. The government should institutionalize and harmonize traditional systems into the legal system of the country.

8. There is a need for enforcement of local elder's decisions so that parties will abide with and implement them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICE 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS/INTERVIEW GUIDE

PART A

LOCAL ELDERS

1. What do you do as an elder to build peace?
2. What do you think has been the impact of your actions?
3. What would do differently to maintain building Peace?
4. What do the people say about what you did?
5. What are the initiatives you use to build peace?
6. How far the initiatives you are using are effective to the efforts of peacebuilding?
7. Could you mention if there are best initiative that more effective to peacebuilding?
8. What challenges you face during your task in the peacebuilding?
9. How do you address the challenges?
10. What are the specific practical problems you face personally?
11. Is there anything you would like to add about this topic we are talking?

    PART B CITIZENS RESPONDENTS

12. How do you see the role of elders in building Peace?
13. Do you think that elders can contribute building peace?
14. If yes, explain how the elders' actions contribute Building peace?
15. What is needed for strength the role of local elders in building peace?
16. What the elders can do differently to strength building peace?
17. Is there anything you would like to share with me regarding this topic?

APPENDICE 2: SU`AALAHA CILMI BAARISTA/ SOMALI VERSION

Part A

1. Maxaad sameysaan ka odayaal ahaan si loo dhiso nabadda?
2. Maxey saameyn leeyihiin talaabooyinka aad qaadaan?
3. Maxaad is leedahay waxgaara ayaa lasameyn karaa si loo dhiso nabadda?
4. Dadka maxey ka aaminsanyihiin dadaaladiina?
5. Waa maxey talaabooyinka aad adeegsataa si aad u dhistaan nabadda?
6. Wax tar intee la eg ayaa ku jirta talaabooyinka aad adeegsataan?
7. Ma tilmaami kartaa talaabo aad isleedahay wax tarfiican ayey u leedahay nabada?
8. Waa maxay caqabadaha idin soo wajaha marka aad dhiseysaan nabadda?
9. Sidee ku xalisaan caqabadahaas?
10. Waa maxay caqabadaha sida gaarka ah kusoo wajaha?
11. Ma jiraan wax aad ku dareysid ciwaankan?

Part B

12. Sidee u aragtaa doorka odayaasha ee dhisidda nabadda?
13. Ma isleedahay wax badan ayey kusoo kordhiyeen nabadda?
14. Hadii ay jawaabtaadu haa tahay sharaxaad ka bixi?
15. Maxaa loo baahanyahay si loo xoojiyo doorka odayaasha ee dhisidda nabadda?
16. Maxey odayaashu sameyn karaan si ay u xoojiyaan kaalintoda nabad dhisidda?
17. Ma jiraan wax aad ku dareyso mowduucaan?