

BALIQ: INDIGENOUS CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISM AMONG THE SILTE PEOPLE: THE CASE OF SILTI WOREDA, KIBET TOWN

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ABSTRACT

The different ethnic groups in Ethiopia have developed their own indigenous mechanism to deal with conflicts. The Silte of southern Ethiopia is among those ethnic groups with their own conflict resolution mechanism. The main purpose of this study is to explore the indigenous institutions of conflict resolution among the Silte people of southern Ethiopia. This study has employed a qualitative research to meet the stated objectives of the study. To achieve the above objectives, the study collected primary data from different informants in Silte Woreda by employing such qualitative data collection techniques as an interview, focus group discussions and observation. The secondary data sources were obtained from published and unpublished government documents; such as books and magazine and. The finding of this research reveals that the indigenous conflict resolution institution is one of the ways of resolving conflict in the study area. The study also came up with the major causes of conflict in the study area and the indigenous means to resolve them through the Baliq conflict resolution institution. The major causes that drive people of the study area in to conflict are family related conflicts, land, theft, marriage and insult. This research also exposes the criterion for the selection of an elder in conflict resolution institution and the study areas indigenous rules of law enforcement. It also came up with the relationship that existed between ICRM and the formal court system in resolving conflicts and keeping the societies peace and security. Hence, Baliq plays a core role in resolving conflicts.

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Conflict occurs between people in all kinds of human relationship and all social setting. Because of the wide range of potential differences among people, the absence of conflict usually signals the absence of meaningful interaction. Conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. However, the manner in which conflict is handled determines whether it is constitutive or destructive (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000). Conflict is defined as an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feeling toward each other. Fisher (2000) resolution of conflict is crucial for day to day coexistence as human societies are in constant search of resolution mechanism of conflicts (Pankhurst and Getachew, 2008). Hence, different societies of the world have developed their own mechanisms to resolve conflict. Like in other part of the world, in Africa, people with different backgrounds, culture, class, age and other come into conflict. The conflicting parties may be individuals, groups, families, clan's or ethnic group. To manage their conflict, Africans have developed their own indigenous institutions. In other words, those indigenous conflict resolving institutions helped them to settle their conflicts. However, the mechanisms are different from a given society to the other because of the different ways of life. Mellese (2008) states that, as a multicultural society, there are various social groups that live together in harmony, cooperation and sometimes in conflict. On the circumstance when conflict arises within or between social groups, Abera (2000) notes that, various types of conflict resolution methods were applied in different parts of the country and among different sections of the population.

The Abala in Afar, the Shimagille in Amhara region, Nemo in Shinasha, RuecWecRing and Guk among the Nuer of Gambela, the Korefinie among the Gamo are also some of the many indigenous systems of conflict resolution mechanisms in Ethiopia (Pankhurst and Getachew, 2008). Thus, Ethiopians, like their African counterparts have employed their own indigenous conflict resolution methods in the process of settling conflict. Conflict resolution mechanism in Ethiopia can be generally classified as indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and formal mechanisms of conflict resolution, which are provided by the state (Pankhurst and Getachew, 2008). Every society developed a worldview through which it looks at and interacts with the surrounding reality. A society's worldview is constructed through the cultural lenses that people have developed through years of socialization (Hamdessa, 2000). Similarly, the Silte people have also developed different institution like Baliq, Ragaa, and Magaa to manipulate the day to day activities of its members. Among these institutions, Baliq is a conflict resolution mechanisms which employed by the society in order to resolve conflicts. We have selected Baliq indigenous conflict mechanism because of to solve a few cause of conflict and if we include all types of indigenous conflict mechanism the topic is it can be bulky or broad. Therefore, the general purpose of this study was aimed at exploring Baliq indigenous institution of conflict resolution mechanism in handling conflict in the study area.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Conflict is a result of relationship between two or more parties (individual or groups) who have, or think they have in compatible goals depending on the goals and behaviour. Conflict further categorized as no conflict, blend conflict, open conflict and surface conflict (Yohannes, 2005). Tirsit (2002), also notes that traditional approaches of conflict resolution are an important component of the cultural heritage of African societies. According to Rabar and Karimi (2004), indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in Africa are generally closely bound with socio-political and economic realities of the lifestyles of the communities. These mechanisms are rooted in the culture and history of the African people, and are in one way or another unique to each community. For example, as it is mentioned in the works of Malan (2005), the Rwandan Gacaca court, Kacokemadit meetings in northern Uganda and the Ajaweed Council are known in their provision of speedy solution to genocide criminals and healing of traumas. Therefore, have number of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms which helps its people to manage and resolve conflicts ranging from inter personal to inter-ethnic ones. As part of Africa, Ethiopian have also developed its own means to address conflict. Ethiopia is believed to be the country of more than eighty ethnic groups, who have their own languages, and cultures. These diverse ethnic groups have developed their own distinctive political, administrative, economic, social and judicial systems. These diverse groups had been living in cooperation and conflict for a long period of time. They have also developed and employed their own mechanisms to solve different conflicts that arise due to divergence of interest and other factors (Assefa, 2001). The different scholarly works in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples region also showed that the region employed its own methods of conflict resolution mechanism. For instance, Yewondwossen (2006) explains the YeJoka indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms among the Gurage people.

However, Silte have been discussed in few of the literature found. Among those scholarly works, for instance, Hussen Mohammed (2010) touches some points in the use Silte as medium of instruction. However, the findings of this study do not give any information about conflicts and indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in the study area based on the worldview of the people. Therefore, there is no previous study on the Silte understanding of conflict, causes of conflict and their resolution mechanism. However, the Silte have their own indigenous conflict resolution institution based on their own traditions, customs and worldview, which are not studied yet. Thus, the main target of the research is to examine Baliq of Silte conflict resolution mechanism of Southern Ethiopia.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study expected to answer the following research questions.

- What are the causes of conflict in the study area?
- How Baliq conflict resolution mechanism is operate?
- Who are actors of the Baliq conflict resolution mechanism?

- To examine the relationship between the Baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanism and formal court.

1. 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to examine Baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in Silte people Silti, Woreda, Kibet Town of Southern Ethiopia.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To identify the main cause of conflict in the study area.
- To examine how Baliq is operate.
- To identify the actor of Baliq conflict resolution mechanism.
- To examine the relationship between the Baliq conflict resolution mechanism and formal court.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study of Baliq conflict resolution mechanism among the Silte of Silti, woreda, Kibet, Town of southern Ethiopia is important from the following perspectives.

This study intended to provide some information for the government and nongovernmental bodies on indigenous institution in conflict resolution in the study area. Also, the public organizations and any interested bodies may consider it as the reference in promoting the indigenous values of the people in general and the indigenous conflict resolution in particular. It is also supposed to serve as a significant and reliable ground for policy makers, and development partners (government bodies, nongovernmental organizations, etc.) in their activities towards initiating, executing, handling and supervising the holistic and sustainable development of the study area and other similar localities of the state. Finally for Kibet Town People Baliq to the community and helps to specific factor that hinder the indigenous conflict resolution method form application and contribute for further strength the institutions to the extent that go line with the formal court.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study delimited to understand the Baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms among Silte zone. The geographically study was conduct in Silte zone, Siltiworeda, Kibet Town. And methodologically the study was used qualitative research approach. Thematically to examine Baliq conflict resolution mechanism in order to get more information about Baliq conflict resolution mechanism.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

Conducting a research in one's own society presents both prospects and challenging experiences. There are some limitations that research was taken when we conduct the research. These include; Shortage of reference materials, Financial problem, Shortage of transportation, Translating local language Siltigna to English transcripts language with the time constraints and the occurrence of Covid-19 has left a few gap in our study because of not found freely individuals to know Baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanism.

2. METHODOLOGY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

2.1. Description of the Study Area

2.1.1. Location and Size

Silti Woreda is located in Silte Zone, SNNPR state of Ethiopia. Astronomically, the Woreda is located between 8° 00' and 60°00' N Latitude and 38 19°00' and 60°00' E longitude. The Woreda capital Silti is found 148 km away from the country capital Addis Abeba , 180km away from Regional capital, Hawassa and 28 km from Worabe Which is capital city of Siltezone. It is bordered with Oromia region in the North, Lanfro Woreda in the South, Alichio Wuriro Woreda in the West (Municipality Office, 2007).

3.1.2. Demographic of the Study Area

Based on 2007 census conducted by the CSA, this Woreda has a total population 750,398 of whom 364,108 are male and 386,290 are female. From the total population only 6.28% are urban dwellers and the rest

were rural dwellers. The majority of inhabitants of the town were Muslim, with 97.6% of population, reporting that beliefs 4% follow Orthodox. The largest ethnic groups reported in Woreda Silte People (97.78%) and all other ethnics groups made up (0.87%) of the total population of Woreda (Municipal Office, 2007) Silte was the dominant first languages spoken by 98,22% and 0.91% speak Amharic. The remaining 0.87% spoken other languages (Municipality Office, 2007).

2.1.3. Socio-Economic Condition

The Silti Woreda is known by its practicing predominantly agriculture (arable farming and animal husbandry). The major agricultural production includes Maize, Teff, Enset, Coffee, Chat, Wheat and others in their ecological zone. The economics of the people in this Woreda also mainly on the agriculture and some peoples in the densely populated areas practices commercial activity (Agricultural and development Office, 2007). Peoples in the study area also engaged in different economic activities, majority of the practices commercial activities. Some people also produce food and drinks and some peoples are shop keepers, carpenter and traders. Others are engaged on government sectors for their livelihood (Municipality Office, 2007).

2.2. Research Methodology

In this study we conducted qualitative research method. It was helps in describing, interpreting, explaining, and examining the issue under the study. To understand the basics of conflict resolution mechanisms, research asset the beliefs, norms, cultural, and practice of the conflict resolution methods. Thus, to attain in the above general and specific objective of the study both primary and secondary data sources employed.

2.3. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The sampling technique was purposive sampling which means (non-probable sampling technique) to get the reliable from information from informant. Due to their intimacy with issue (Silte people) leaders, elders, cultural and tourism bureau selected. Based on the knowledgeable and involvement in Baliq. From this primary data, interview (10) ten, and one (1) focus group discussion this consisted participant is (6) six we have been used. The total sample is (16) sixteen

2.4. Data Collection Methods

In order to meet research objectives and to come out with relevant data from the field, we used both primary and secondary source of data.

2.4.1. Primary Data Collection Method

In this research we used the following gathering mechanisms.

2.4.2. Interview

In this study we have used interview to investigate the Baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanism and to examine the measure cause and consequence among the study community. In this interview we have been choose (10) ten key informants from this study community members through elders community, clan leaders, religious leaders.

2.4.3. Case Study

Case study method enables research to close and examine the data with in specific context. As most anthropologists use this method research also use this as back bone of this study. This helped the researchers to get detail information about the traditional conflict resolution mechanism. In order to get detail information researchers used two (2) case studies in this research.

2.4.4. Observation

In this study, it can also take to see when people can solve dispute among group or individual. To get reliable data observation is another major method of data gathering information, because of people say something contradicts with each other. It can be taken in to account with mostly dispute solvers like elders.

The research collected first-hand information by observing the day to day activities and the process of the Silti indigenous conflict resolution in the study area. We were also observed various cultural practices of the communities which is related with Baliq.

2.4.5. Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussions is one of the primary data gathering techniques through qualitative research the choose of participant depend on the topic of focus group. This study we have used one (1) focus group discussion. In this groups participants has been consisted six (6) individual from the Baliq conflict resolution community.

2.5. Secondary Data

To support the study and to get the general insight about the select problem, we was also use secondary data from both published materials, such as report of the community organization documents, which the select issue and other un published materials which strength this work.

2.6. Method of Data Analysis

After the ends of necessary data collected the study we have analyzed in detail by using qualitative research method. The study have been employed qualitative methods of analyze the Baliq as indigenous conflict resolution mechanism. Regarding this the researchers data have been collecting by interview observation and focus group discussion. Therefore the study was integrated and presented all data obtained through different data collection method in proper and meaning full ways.

2.7. Ethical Consideration

During gathering information from different concerned bodies the researcher were show positive approach at any time for the respondents. The respondents asked question given by (answer) different things according to the need of the researcher. The respondents are giving clear information to the researcher asked question. The respondents are does not showed unethical behaviors.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

3.1. The Causes of Conflict among the Silti woreda in Kibet Town

Under this chapter, efforts have been made to present the findings of this study. That is, we have tried to discuss and analyse the different causes of conflict among the Silti society. Among this society, peoples at different times came into conflict caused by different factors, and the society conceives conflict as an inevitable phenomena. Informants state that in their day-to day activities people may turn down the interest of others, which could lead to a clash of interests among individuals or between groups.

3.1.1. Land

According to many informants the land of Kibet town is the cause of conflict. Land distribution and transformation in the property right often leaves significance of the affected population having to claim or re-claim accesses to their land and land based resources. It is clear that competition over land have been a critical cause of violence. Land is a central or crucial element to agrarian society for instance to be able to pay dowry (dowry is a material exchange in which the wife groups provide a substantial gift to the husband of the family) to be getting married. In most of the society possessions of land is the many way of socio economic advancement without which a young men cannot become independent. The other cause of the conflict is in the area relating to sharing of natural resource. For instance, water is used for irrigation according to FGD discussants in winter season, there is a shortage of water for crops and other agricultural product due to this reason conflict occur.

Case Study 1

In 04 kebele, two brothers, older and younger disputed on the border of farm land. The younger accused his older brother by saying “He has deplumed my farm land” to the villagers. Even though the villagers wanted to mediate, they weren’t able to do so. Because of this, the case was taken to the elders (BALIQ). After that,

the elders said “speak the truth or each of you will deposit ten thousand birr”. Then the brothers agreed on this. After conducting an experienced investigation the elders found out that, the younger’s border was deplumed. They punished the older brother ten thousand birr and a Honey. Finally, they reconciled.

3.1.2. Ranjenet (Theft)

Among the silte society, Ranje is still the other types of case of conflict. In our observation people may come in to conflict due to theft such that is when the person who lost his property suspected and sometimes insulted someone without certain evidence. Theft usually happens during the rainy season this because during this season of the year agricultural product like wheat, teff, maize, potato, and barely, which are the main staple food of the society, are the target of thieves. That is during the rainy season they could be stolen from the stores of the farmer either during the day or night time. Then they may come in to conflict with such individual.

Case Study 2

In 01 kebele, Three Brothers discussed and steal a cow of their Neighbour’s farmer, and the farmer doubt these peoples and inform to the villagers. When the subsectors were asked they denied by saying “we haven’t stolen it”. Because of this, the issue have been taken to the Elders (BALIQ). After that the elders said to the accused brothers “you peoples if you have stolen the cow, just accept, if you accept the causal, the punishment will be lowered for you” by saying this they tried to make them believe, but the accused brothers never wanted to confess. Because of this, the elders didn’t have another option to get the truth. They reached to the stage of oath. To be comfortable for this, they make an open way by separating the people who were on the gathering into two parts. Then, the elders said to the defendants “if you denied the stealing of the cow walk on this path by covering your eyes with your hands”, the accused brothers’ father was also present on the gathering. “Before the oath please, my children’s if you have stolen the cow accept it then i will pay the penalty” said their father. The older brother, he started walking on the path by covering his eyes with his hands, while saying “we haven’t stolen the cow”. After he finished passing the path between the congregations, when he removed his hands from his eyes he became blind. Immediately he frightened a lot, he shouted by saying “Oh !my eyes”. When the younger brothers saw this shocking incident, they confess their guiltiness. The audience were very surprised, instantly the wrong doers were punished to pay a bull and honey.

3.1.3. Family Dispute

Family Dispute:- Is a disagreement which occurs between children and parents and married couples starting from smaller dispute up to tougher one. Even though most of the times, this type of fight doesn’t happen daily but by the time it occurs, the elders (BALIQ) of each area will solve the dispute. For instance, we saw an accused person in 03 kebele going through Guda process in our zone. From the report we heard that he disputed with his father. This person was accused by his father. “He tried to beat me and he broke his own mobile phone by anger” said the father. After the Baliq investigated the proves deeply, they passed a judgment of 500 birr and GABI (traditional cloth) to his father.

3.1.4. Insult

Insult (tesadebot),is the other source of conflict which is found in the study area .According to in formants, teasdebot is an offensive word which can annoy people and will result for the rise of disagreement and later to conflict. Based on the data obtained from informants, tesadebot will result in a serious conflict if the insult is bad and directed against clan or the social status of an individual or lineage descent. In the study area, as explained from informants, people insult one another using offensive words. For instance, insulting one another using offensive words as welamo (slave), buda (evileye) is viewed as bad insult that may result in serious of conflict between individuals and groups. This is because insulting some one wrongly using such types of words could result in the discrimination or exclusion from the society. Therefore, a person who has been insulted in such away would come in to serious conflict with the person who is the victim of the insult. For instance, if some one insulted a person who is not belongs to his clan saying fuga, it possibly will initiate annoy among the insulted clan and may result for the eruption of serious conflict between

groups or clans which can end in heavy consequences from both sides. This is because, according to the belief of the society, fugaa is most despised and excluded section of the society. Therefore, people often dislike to be connected with this name in any form of their social life.

3.1.5. Marriage

Conflict sometimes occurs between couples due to case. According to our informants Absence of faithfulness between the husband and wife when one of the spouses being to have another marry or in the local name “Tenget” mostly leads to divorce is and sometimes it was leads to conflict between the spouses. Focus group discussants in their part argued that the other reason for divorce is the family interference on the affairs of spouse .Although, controversy and disputes is inevitable or certain to happening between husband and wife, sometimes family of one spouse interferes and this leads to the family relation become an end. In addition to that, when one of the spouses mostly the husband without the knowledge of his wife have an illegitimate child out of marriage in the local name “encherbe”leads to dispute on the issue of succession. Generally, According to informants, the main source of conflict around Kibet generally can be seen from two broad categories. That is namely; economic source of conflict and social source of conflict in the area which areas between the peoples regarding to economic interests that means natural resources such as land, irrigation, over grazing etc. And other related economic activities. Whereas social resource of conflict are conflicts which arise from the society in case of social interests that is marriage, Eder(sierra),distribution of property, inheritance etc.Kibet like other Ethiopian society have their own culture, belief and customs used to project the human and material distraction. These traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are very important in reducing conflict. Though conflict by its natures is unavoidable the baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanism is still now carrying out in Kibet. However, the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms have their own defects and sometimes they contradict with modern legal system .but It’s doesn’t mean always contradict each other but sometimes the customary law prevails or preferable than court if contradiction exists. The important thing here can be best described by the silting proverb which says. “Baliq kizb Awalekane yateran” which literally means the Baliqche was it to get the parties compromised. It’s to mean that, they was hide some facts and offers made by one of the disputant if it’s offensive to the other or if it’s not substantially important or if it would not help to end up the dispute amicably.

3.2. The Operate Of Baliq as Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism

According to informants, the Baliq as indigenous conflict resolution mechanism is that the conflict is once solved it, rules provided by the elders that mean either parties of the disputants break the rules or betray, there was punishment for the party who is betrayed. This is the great role on the operate of Baliq as conflict resolution institution. Those elders resolve the conflict by giving chance to the disputants to talk peacefully about the starting point and source of their conflict. In addition to that, they also extinguish the conflict of the disputants. And they reconcile their families of the disputants forever. The other essential thing to operate of Baliq. they have not finished many time. And quickly solve the problem before going to revenge the disputant person.

3.3. The Actors of Baliq

According to the information collected from informants the criteria used to selected Baliq elders were run by hereditary or descent bases during the imperial regime and after the derg seized power, the government interrupted the selection of Baliq elders by descent. After this, the community agreed Baliq elders should be elected by the local people. According to FGD discussants The community formulates the criteria to selected Baliq elders Among others, main qualities required to be elected as Baliq elders are mentioned as follows; being wise, being above the age of 50 because the community believe that people beyond the age of 50 are wise, knowledgeable and respected by others Having white hair is not enough for being capable of taking responsibility, being honest, and able to maintain confidentiality are the criteria for the selection of the Baliq. Those factors determine the selection of elders. The Baliq elders was elected in front of the community.

3.4. The Process of Baliq Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Baliq is one part of elders those are elected by local community. According to key informants Baliq have their own process to solve the problem. First conflict may be started by either individual or group in cause of incompatibility of interest like economic, social, political idea. Second, accused person directly going to Baliqs and tell the problem and ask to mediate them. After that if the mediator volunteer to mediate them immediately going to accuser and ask to the cause of conflict and source of conflict. After that Baliq listen the told disputant parties and they are clasp to appointment for the next day. After that in the Appointment day Baliq, disputants and their relatives found in particular place. Baliq give advice and suggestion to the disputant's party who's the case of conflict Baliq check and know who is more influenced by opposite party and give decision to them. After that Baliqs say that the hurt person give compensation to the affected person if the hurt person agrees to the decision of the old idea to pay the compensation, then both disputant's party and their relatives prepared food ceremony. Lastly the elders go to check conciliation of the disputants and after that the Baliqs give thanks to disputant party.

3.5. The Procedure of Baliq Conflict Resolution Mechanism

1. **Family** (Aberos); in the Kibet community there are different level of conflict resolution mechanism. Family is the first step toward conflict resolution. Most of the time conflicts resolved in these levels are like family disputes, husband and wife dispute and other close relative conflict are resolved in these levels. Most of the time in this dispute settlement stage participating, the elders of family and resolve the conflict with less punishment and creates peace.

2. **Community** (Azgaga); In the Kibet society there is also second level of conflict resolution. In these levels of conflict resolution the whole community elders are participate on the conflict resolution process on this stage conflict are resolved like cattle killing. On settlement place or residence and other are solved in these levels. Sometime intra conflicts within the kinship members are resolved in these levels there is also a punishment. Who harms or betrayal the community elders and the disputes, parties, In addition to this conflict are resolved in this stage are conflict that are difficult to solve in the family level.

3. **Baliq**; this stage is the middle stage of conflict resolution in the Kibet community or society. In this conflicts are resolved that are crime and other problems. From these some of them are like theft, the natural resource, house burning or distinction and intimidation. In addition to these the conflicts are solved under this level are difficult in the family level and in the community level.

4. **Raga**; this stage is the last and the biggest stage of conflict resolution In the Silti society. Most of the murder crimes are held through Guda mediation process by Religious Leader, Tribe Ruler Elders. Sometimes the disagreement may occur between accuser and accused individuals. At this time, there will be several famous individual persons who have skill and knowledgeable elders of this society for the mediation. This person is called Raga (knowledgeable). Certainly, this disagreement will be taken to the Ragas. They will conduct a deep investigation concerning the murder from the victim's family and the killer accordingly. Before this incident is there anything that happened between this families? They will investigate if there was a complaint and weren't completely negotiated between them and Relative members and if the unpaid murder punishment has occurred or not? And if there such thing, they will analyze deeply. After a successful investigation the Raga experts will tell them to finalize their case by Guda System. Based on what they were told, the victim's family and the killer will solve the murder accident through their known culture. Generally this stage is the biggest stage of conflict resolution in Kibet community.

The Guda Mediation Ceremony;- If unexpected murder accident happen between families, Relatives, Neighbours, from same tribe, from different tribes and also nearer Nation and Nationalities in Silie cultural mediation ceremony (RAGA) are used to solve the disputes by going through a process called Guda Mediation process. In this Guda Ceremony black a slaughtering is expected from the killer.

3.6. The Relationship between Baliq institution and Formal Court System

The Baliq Institution of Conflict Resolution and the Formal Court System In this sub topic we have tried to put the relationship between the indigenous conflict resolution institution and formal court system in their collaborative work towards the maintenance of peace and security issues of the society in the study area. Indigenous institutions of conflict resolution and the formal court system are obviously sources of peace and stability in the study area. Therefore, it is clear that their collaboration is inevitable. There are certain areas that these institutions work together as far as the peace and conflict resolution are concerned. Those collaborative works are made for the mutual benefits of the institutions on one hand and to keep the societies peace and stability on the other. According to the data obtained from elders and FGD participants, there is a relation between Baliq institution and the formal court system and they work together in collaboration. It was argued by the informants that one of the institutions cannot be successful without the other because the formal mechanism has its own legal means (police force, militia) to maintain order in the area but the indigenous one have the experience and traditional authority to harmonize the relation of the people and strengthen social cohesion. Although the scope of their contribution in resolving conflicts is different, based on the data obtained from informants, the indigenous conflict resolution methods are currently operating in conflict resolving and drawing the attention of the government whenever the community feels insecure. In the study area, Baliq conflict resolution institution is working in cooperation with the formal court system. For example, in their respective areas, individuals bring cases to the Baliq institutions based on their interest. However, in order to do that they have to bring agreement letters from local authorities (community police, kebele) regarding agreement of the authorities on the resolution of these individuals through Baliq institutions. On the other hand, whether the conflict is resolved or not, the Kibet elders also expected to give a final report to the local authorities concerning the issue. Finally the authorities were give the results of the dispute to the concerned government bodies (forml court system). On the other side, all dispute and conflict related cases that lack evidence and that needs social reconciliation are resolved by the indigenous methods. Both institutions work hand in hand with each other to maintain the societal peace and security. Because they are heard by the community, elders advise and recommend the community to abstain from criminal acts. Both institutions cooperative work for mutual benefit is viewed when they see issues regarding a family dispute such as divorce, property inheritance and property division. Generally, the Baliq indigenous conflict resolution mechanism and the formal one, which are sources of peace and stability in the area, work cooperatively for the benefit of the community.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1. CONCLUSION

The principal aim of this study was to explore the nature of conflict and its indigenous management practices of Silti community, which is found in south Nation Nationality Regional state, Silte zone, and Silti woreda. To achieve the objectives of the study, the Researcher employed qualitative approach particularly phenomenological. Moreover, to obtain in–depth information regarding the issue under scrutiny, various instruments (tools)were used. The data gathering instruments employed in the Course of the study were in–depth interview, document analysis and focus group discussions conducted with the key informants of the community. In the cause of silti community, the main cause of conflict seems to be in the area of economic interests, drunkenness and violation of social values. Regardless of the theoretical controversies on the causes and types of conflicts consensus seems to exist among scholars on how individuals, groups, communities or nations handle their differences. Scholars divided peaceful mechanisms of conflict management in to various categories as; negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication. But concerning the silti community one may came to the conclusion that these dispute handling modes are not equally important .Instead negotiation and arbitration are the major ones that mostly practiced by the study community. Silti community have high regard for their culture and their areas. Consequently; the community elders are interested with the responsibility of searching the truth mediating and resolving all kinds of conflicts.

Regarding the procedures of conflict management, the findings of the study showed that the Silti (community elders) largely depend on the type and nature of the conflicts to be solved. Silti believe that all conflicts with in their community should be solved peacefully according to the long –standing indigenous

mechanism. The system consists of specified guidelines and rules regarding the fine and compensation payments that correspond to the severity of the offenses. The smooth relationship between the indigenous system and the formal state law is also confirmed in this study.

4.2. RECOMMENDATION

The Baliq traditional elders work is difficult and it takes a long period of time. Although, elders are not played and their members decrease time to time the concerning body should be give attention and shell institutionalize on how they need to be paid. Even though, the elders have traditional knowledge of conflict resolution mechanism, the need to be supported by training forms the concerned.

Baliq is a means of ensuring peace and order, this traditional institution which is concerned with correcting and reforming the behaviour of the criminal. But the main problem is the method doses not prevent the community before involving the criminal acts. So to avoid these problem Baliq elders by collaborating with the government need to conduct a program of awareness creation.

The other main challenge is the reduction of members of qualified Baliq elders. This is either because baliq of lack of able successors from the new generation or because of death of the elders. So, elders curve this problem come up with a short term and long term solution. A short term solution, the elders delegate their power in some peripheral parts of Silti for notable elders of the village and as a long term solution the elders by collaboration with the culture and tourism Bureau are trying to get successors from the educated youth in the future. Baliq elders are not organized, had no office and their decision making process is taken place in river of field. These have had for year's negative influences on their delusion making process and easily lost their documents. Therefore the concerning body should give due attention, in organizing offices. The government should give high emphasis on creating youth whom shall the part in arbitration process and one way of creating awareness on the community. The Baliq elders should get continues training to apply the rule of this traditional conflict mechanism, in accordance with the law of the country like constitutional, the criminal and civil code.

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