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THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNICATION MECHANISM
INRESOLVING INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICTS: GEDEO AND
WEST GUJI

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**THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNICATION MECHANISM
IN RESOLVING INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICTS: GEDEO AND
WEST GUJI**

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Presented In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Arts in Journalism and Communication**

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The study conducted by Aster Dagnachew, entitled *the role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts: Gedeo and West Guji*. Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulation of the University.

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Declaration

I declare that, thesis titled (*The Role of Indigenous Communication in Mechanism Inter-Ethnic Conflicts: Gedeo and West Guji*) is my original work and all source of information used for the study have been duly acknowledged.

Aster Dagnachew Signature _____ Date _____

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Glossary

Aba Qalla - Head of Qallu institution (Spiritual leader)

Boka - Ceremonial Traditional honey wine

Baallee - Age graded traditional administration of Gedeo people

Daraso - The ancestral father of Gedeo people

Gada - Traditional ruling system

Gede'uffa - Literary name of Gedeo people language

Gujo - The ancestral father of Guji people

Gondoro - Indigenous method of conflict resolution among Gedeo and Guji peoples

Idir - A traditional association used for ceremonial of sorrow and happiness

Ikub - A saving and credit association

Kebele- Small unit of Administration

Oromifa - Literary name of Oromo people language

Qualla - Spiritual institution among the Oromo

Waata - Pottery man who performs different rituals

Weese - Enset (False Banana)

Acronyms

EPRDF- Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

FGD- Focus Group Discussion

SNNPR- Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflict: West Guji and Gedeo. The study employed qualitative descriptive research to meet the stated objective of the study. Purposive and snowball (non-probable) sampling techniques were used to gather information. To attain the study objective, in-depth interview and focus group discussion were used as a primary data. Primary data were gathered from different informants in both Gedeo and West Guji Zones. A total number of 42 informants participated in the study. The study showed that the main cause of West Guji and Gedeo 2018 conflict was the question of referendum, political and economical interest of individuals and cultural conflicts were the main causes. The finding of the study revealed that the indigenous communication way of conflict resolution mechanism is still used as a major ways of resolving conflict in the study areas. The Gondoro tradition was the common indigenous way of conflict resolution mechanism in ethnic Gedeo and West Guji communities. In the study areas collaboration conflict resolution strategies were employed. But, the conciliation was not successful and still difficult for sustainable peace in the study areas. The study also reported the weakness and challenges of indigenous way of conflict resolution method in study area. Accordingly, local leaders and elders are influenced by some local administrators for political and economical interest and generation gap were the main challenge and weakness. To resolve the conflict, local elders, cultural and tourism bureau experts and local administrative leaders should work cooperatively and they should teach the new generation about the culture of the society in terms of sustainability of peace in the two brotherhood ethnic groups.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This part of the study deals with the introduction part of the study include: background of the study, statement of the study, research questions and objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the study

Communication holds the innermost position in solving differences via verbatim. Fred (2010) stated, communication is the act of giving, receiving or exchanging information, ideas and opinions. So, the message is completely understood by both parties. Craig (2005:660) also noted, the idea that communication is important, human problems are caused by bad communication and can be solved by better communication.

Indigenous communication is one of local communication that is unique to a given culture of society which existed before the arrival of modern mass media which is formally organized bureaucratic system of communication (Ayangunna & Oyewo, 2014). Any form of indigenous communication system which by virtue of its origin from, and integration into a specific culture, serves as a channel for messages in a way and manner that requires the utilization of values, symbols, institutions, and ethos of host culture through its unique qualities and attribute (Kyeremeh, 2000).

In similar definition N'gombe (2000), defines "indigenous communication is a credible and acceptable source of information among the rural populace." Dobb (1961), give an example of indigenous communication system as folk media. Folk media is as indigenous communication system, have evolved as grassroots expression of the value and lifestyle of the society. The social, political, and cultural system is related to the folk ways of the society. Folk communication systems include: the puppet shows, song, dance, festivals, poetry, storytelling and others used in different socio-cultural practices of the people (Finnegan, 2012). These systems of communication are passed from one generation to another and also derived from society's experience and thoughts over a long period of years.

Folk media in conflict resolution yield the proliferation of human diplomatic interactions. On the other hand, Conflict, conversely, largely arises in failure of effective communication. Jeong (2008), defines conflict from a communication perspective as expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals. Conflict is inevitable nature. Tjosvold (2008:19) asserts that, “Conflicts are part of human consciousness in all aspects of life. One cannot avoid conflict, whether at home, at the office, or when watching television news.”

Similar with the above idea Fisher (2000), on their part explain the ever and wherever existing nature of conflict in that Conflict is everywhere. Every relationship has conflict. It exists inside us. It exists around us. It is natural and inevitable part of all human social relationships. It occurs at all levels of society, intra-personal, interpersonal, inter-group and international level, which bring communication as a main cause (ibid).

Ethnic conflict is a form of conflict in which there is an ethnic dimension. Ethnic disputes are common in every multicultural society. Inter-group problems arise in periods of substantial political, economic, and social change and lead to uncertainty, emerging opportunities for action, and particularistic interests. Ethnic conflicts are often accompanied by gross human rights violations, such as genocide and crimes against humanity, by economic decline, state failure, environmental problems, and refugee flows. Violent ethnic conflict leads to tremendous human suffering (Reuter, 2011). Therefore, political, economic, social, cultural, perceptual and structural or geographical factors are the main causes of ethnic conflicts.

Ethnic geography, the geographic distribution and territorial concentration of ethnic groups in pluralistic states also contributes to the likelihood of violent ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflict is particularly common in states with territorial concentrated ethnic groups located at border or with in ethnic adjacent state. Those groups show high levels of organization and increased group cohesion and are able to use shared homelands as a territorial base for their political struggle (Ravi Bhavnani & Hyun Jin Choi, 2012).

In the history, ethnic conflicts have long been a component of international politics. Even today, ethnic wars continue to be the most common form of armed conflicts around the world. For example, there have been numerous instances of ethnic conflict

including ethnic war in Somalia, Kurdish struggle for autonomy in Iraq and Turkey, Guerilla wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua, insurrection in Chechnya, and the conflict between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda to name a few (Sadowski, 1998).

There are varieties of ethnic conflict in the present African country. Ethiopia like any other African country has had numerous ethnic conflicts. The most Ethiopia district is haunted by racial issues, the issue of identity, the question of referendum and political ethnic conflict. This is partly because of the fact different communities continue to consciously rely on ethnicity to perpetuate their dominance. The atmosphere of the conflict is characterized by scarce resources, lack of tolerance and seeking of political profit. Ethnic conflict has had very negative and several impact on Ethiopia. These impacts include loss of life, destruction of property, displacement of people, disruption of socio- economic activities and livelihoods as well as moral smash up.

In all cases, the effects of conflict among the various societies appropriate mechanisms must be devised to manage the conflict effectively, which we call it conflict resolution. Conflict resolution is a process of peace making and a means of handling conflicts in a society to create peace when conflicts occur either in family, groups or interpersonal relations. According to Fisher(1997: 268-69) defines, conflict resolution as “A process that transforms conflicts in an enduring manner rather than settling disputes or suppressing differences, by addressing basic human needs and building qualities of sustainable relationships between groups through creating structural mechanisms involving equality among identity groups as appropriate to each situation.” Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms use local actors and traditional community-based judicial and legal decision-making mechanisms to manage and resolve conflicts within or between communities (Barfield et al, 2004). It depends on a common cultural and ethical code that produces binding rules on its members.

Like in other parts of the world, Africa people with different background, culture, norms, value and others come into conflict. The conflicting parties may be individuals, groups, families, clans, ethnic group and etc (Teshome, 2010). To resolve their conflicts, Africans have reached by indigenous cultural conflict resolution, like their counter parts of Africa, diverse Ethiopia society have also employed indigenous

conflict resolution mechanism. Among the different ethnic groups in Ethiopia, for instance, the Oromo and Amhara people have used different mechanisms to handling/settling conflicts among individual and groups (Yihun, 2011).

Pertaining to the research area, the two zones are located in different regional states, one in SNNPR and the other in Oromia. According to Asebe, (2007) ‘Guji’ people are part of the Oromia Regional State. The ‘Guji’ land is bordered with the ‘Borana’ wereda in the south, ‘Burji’ and ‘Amaro’ in the southwest, ‘Wolayta’ in the west, ‘Arsi’ in the east and ‘Gedeo’ and ‘Sidama’ in the north. And the Gedeo zone is part of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional state of Ethiopia (SNNPR). ‘Gedeo’ extends to the south as a narrow strip of land along the eastern escarpment of the Ethiopian Highlands into the Oromia Region, which borders the Zone on the east, south and west; ‘Gedeo’ shares its northern boundary with Sidama (Tadesse,2002). Therefore, this study focused on the role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts: Gedeo and west Guji.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Indigenous communication system is still used as a means of resolving different conflict in developing country. Indigenous communication plays a leading role in maintaining peace among people at different level of conflict in the community (Gebreselassie, 2007).

In Africa, communication is an important feature for resolving of economical, political and socio-cultural conflicts. Many indigenous conflict resolution methods have been developed and employed by the society of Africa since ancient time. Research showed that, almost all African societies have had their own indigenous communication system of conflict resolution before the introduction of formal system through colonization during the colonial era.

Some societies like modern western societies may more rely on the formal on whereas most African societies have employed their indigenous way of conflict resolution mechanism (Esayas, 2015). Only small numbers of conflict taken to and dealt with by

formal government (Alula and Getachew, 2008). Obviously, almost all African societies have had their own indigenous conflict resolution mechanism before the introduction of modern/formal system through colonization during the colonial era.

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic country where diverse people live together (Mellese, 2008&Abate, 2006). Thus, the society has developed their own respective of indigenous communication system for resolving different conflicts. They applying their own traditional mechanism based on the accepted cultures, values, and norms of the society. Rural people have been effectively employing indigenous communication system in resolving individual and ethnic conflict (Mushengyzi, 2004).

In previous, Gedeo and Guji ethnic groups facing different conflict due to different reason and which requires effective way of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and maintaining peace for a long period of time. The society have carefully practiced and respected their own cultural value. Only three researches was directly related to indigenous conflict resolution in Guji and Gedeo ethnic community of Ethiopia.

Asebe (2007), studied on ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations: the ‘Ethiopian Experiment’ and the case of the Guji and Gedio. In this study finding are, the distinctive groups to a considerable extent maintain their ethnic boundaries regardless of interaction, interdependence and even flow of personnel across ethnic and geographical boundaries. The mechanisms of boundary maintenance differ from group to group on the basis of their culture, tradition, religion, political and social organizations and so forth.

Girum (2014), also have studied the quest for resolution of Gedeo and Guji conflict in Southern Ethiopia: a review of mechanisms employed, actors and their effectiveness. The finding is, the role of judicial organs, i.e. courts at Woreda, zonal and regional levels in management of conflict was missing. Therefore, it comes as no surprising that the conflict management process in those contentious areas were burdened with severe constraints considerably ranging from lack of good will gesture of the authorities fragile nature of institutionalization of inter-governmental joint effort to the extent of reluctance among all concerned bodies to work in partnership vigilantly, that is to say

the authorities of the two regional states, in a number of occasions, tried to disassociate themselves from such conflict formally.

Nigussie Mechesha, have researched the folk media as a platforms for conflict resolution the case of Gedeo people. In this study the researcher views how folk media play vital role in course of conflict resolution as indigenous communication in the Gedeo people. He studied only the Gedeo people way of conflict resolution mechanism, he was not studied the Gedeo and neighboring Guji common indigenous communication system of conflict resolution mechanism. And also, in this study area only a limited amount of research can be found on socio-cultural and conflict resolution mechanism aspects of the Gedeo and Guji people.

So, what make this study different from the previous research doing in the study areas is that these studies not give information about indigenous communication practices of the two selected areas of ethnic groups in conflict resolution mechanism.

Therefore, this study attempted to fill this gap by giving clear information about the cause of West Guji and Gedeo 2018 conflicts, the role of indigenous communication system for resolving the current conflict of the two ethnic groups. And also, the strategies of communication system of conflict resolution. In addition, the challenges and weakness of indigenous communication system in conflict resolution in the study areas. So, this study was aimed at filling this gap. Generally, this study was focused on the role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts: ethnic Gedio and West Guji.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The Objective of the study constitutes the following general and specific objectives:

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this research was to investigate the indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts between Gedio and West Guji.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To explore the main causes of 2018 Gedeo and West Guji conflicts.
- To explore the role of indigenous communication in resolving conflict in the study areas.
- To assess challenges and weakness of resolving conflicts by using indigenous communication system.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the above objectives of the study the following main research questions were formulated.

1. What are the main causes of the 2018 West Guji and Gedio conflict?
2. What are the challenges and weakness of indigenous communication system in resolving conflicts?
3. What is the role of indigenous communication system to resolve the Gedio and West Guji ethnic groups conflict?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study on role indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts was important area of ethnic conflict research. Therefore, this researcher shows brief, reliable information on the role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving conflict in the study areas. In addition to this, the study has the following benefits to the study areas and other areas with similar problems.

The finding of this study may also be useful for the people of the study areas by creating extra awareness about the role of indigenous communication in resolving ethnic conflict in a simple and cost-effective manner. It was giving clear understanding about the role of indigenous communication and it gives direction for the new generation of the two ethnic groups to work reconstructing new social relations and to enhance the revival indigenous way of conflict resolution among groups.

Besides, the findings of this study intended to inform and assist the government and nongovernmental bodies to protect indigenous communication system of conflict resolution mechanism. More to the point, it helps public, organizations and any interested bodies of the field as a benchmark for doing further investigation in the area of indigenous communication system in settling/handling ethnic conflicts.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study was only circumscribed to Gedeo and West Guji Zones, to investigate the role of indigenous communication system in resolving the current conflict of the two ethnic groups. Accordingly, any of the analysis and the findings of this study are specific to the two study areas. Thus, members of ethnic groups found in these Zones are subjects of the study.

The time bounded that was used 2018 conflict of West Guji and Gedeo. The reason why the researcher chose the stated time is because; in this time West Guji and Gedeo peoples are in conflict and there was a conflict with several property destruction, the loss of life, and displaced a huge number of people in the study areas.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

Some challenges and limitations were faced in this study. One of the major challenges was, the shortage of time to deeply investigate the indigenous communication in conflict resolution in the area. Another challenge was the researcher's inability to speak and listen to the language of Gedeo, (Ged'offa) and language of Guji, (Oromiffa) were faced communication barrier. However, the researcher managed this problem by using professional translators.

Gender dimension were another challenge, the researcher faced in collecting data among West Guji and Gedeo people. Both West Guji and Gedeo peoples are male dominant in many socio-cultural affairs and women has low participation. That is why, women are not participated in this study. Because, they had no ideas on topics related to the study.

1.8. Organization of the study

The study structured in to five chapters. The first chapter is introductory part. The second part is the review of related literature and theoretical frameworks, the third part is the methodology of the study, chapter four presents the analysis and discussion of study, the last part, chapter five is the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review Literature

2.1. Introduction

This part of the study investigate the role and practice of indigenous communication system in resolving ethnic conflicts in special focus on ethnic Gedio and West Guji (ethnic Oromo). In specific, it reviews the cause of the conflict, indigenous communication conflict resolution strategies, the role of indigenous communication system and challenges and weakness of indigenous communication in the time of conflict resolution. Therefore, to strength this, the researcher discusses related theoretical frameworks and literature. Accordingly, the concept of conflict causes of conflict, ethnic conflict, identity and conflict, conflict resolution, indigenous conflict resolution, indigenous communication system and communication and conflict. Finally discusses indigenous communication conflict resolution strategies.

2.2. Concept of Conflict

The word conflicts derive from Latin word “confligere”, which means “to strike together” to clash or engagement in a fight: confrontation between one or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends (Schmid, 2002). Individuals and groups can confront when there is already developed negative attitudes and wrong emotional feelings to each other. Attitude includes the parties’ perceptions and misrepresentations of each other and of themselves. Attitudes are often influenced by emotions such as fear, anger, bitterness and hatred and it includes emotive (feeling), cognitive (belief) and conative (will) elements. Behavior is the third component. It can include cooperation and coercion, gestures signifying conciliation or hostility.

Violent conflict behavior is characterized by threats, coercion and destructive attack (Woodhouse and Kumel, 2011). Conflict is ubiquitous part of personal, organizational and social life. The ever and wherever existing nature of conflict in that Conflict is everywhere. Conflict is a normal part of human relations and pervasive element in every society.

Conflict is often defined as a struggle between individuals or collectivist over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the conflicting parties are to assert their values or claims over those others (Schelnberger, 2005; Draman, 2003).

Different scholars define the word conflict in various ways but almost all of the definition seems to share similar ideas. Most of definitions of conflict focus on a serious of controversy or disagreement between two or more persons, between groups, between organization, regions or even nations with opposing needs, beliefs, interest, ideas, value, goal or principals. Some of the scholar, such as, Wilmot & Hocker, (2011), Nathan (2007), Tahir (2009) and Jeong (2000), have defined conflict as a felt struggle between two or more interdependent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals, or over differences in desires for esteem, control, and disconnected.

In similar contexts, Tonah (2007) also defines conflict broadly as a struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Such conflicts may take place between individuals, between collectives, or between individuals and collectives. "Conflict is a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party" James A, & Ronda R, (2009: 517).

Conflicts may also arise from misinformation, stereotype, prejudices, contradictory perception of justice, differing socio-cultural traditions, personal belief or ideology; and they are of many dimensions: racial, sectarian, ethnic, religious, ideological, cultural, economic, political, social, and others (Kriesberg, 2006). Conflict surfaces in different contexts, and occurs at the intra-personal, interpersonal, intergroup, organizational, and international levels.

Conflict exists when incompatible goals develop between persons, groups, or nations (Deutsch and Coleman, 2000:29). It is important to pay attention to the origins, development, and life cycle of conflict as well as the factors that lead to conflict escalation and de-escalation, and the attitudes, behaviors, situations, goals, and values that influence individuals' interaction and intervention styles (Rubin et al.1992:42).

Conflict is not always distractive, if handled effectively it can lead to a more strong relation between parties involved in conflict. The parties choose contending, yielding, withdrawing, inaction, or problem solving strategies to cope with incompatible goals, emotions, and images of the other that escalate the conflict (ibid.). Bargaining, threats, and pressures are used to influence the other party's decisions and behaviors, and either escalate or through third party intervention de-escalate the conflict (Pearson 2001:21).

Destructive conflicts tend to expand and escalate as competition, poor communication; hostile attitudes, misjudgment, and misperception take hold so that the parties get stuck in a situation that makes no logical sense (Kriesberg 1998:42). Deutsch and Coleman (2000:22) argue that the perception of any act is determined by an individual's image of the act and by that person's perception of the context in which the act occurs. When there is a power asymmetry in a relationship, conflict may escalate as the disempowered party seeks to redress grievances against the more powerful party.

Generally, conflict could be taken as opposition between individuals, groups, institutions, that arises because of incompatible wishes or interests. Conflicts could be economic, political, social, cultural, struggles within humans at all levels of interaction.

2.3. Main Cause of Conflict

Conflict, by definition is often conceived as a straggle over power or scarce resources. This is also true for ethnic conflicts. Disputes between ethnicities, clans, or tribes and religious about the distribution of scarce resources, power, ideology, goal and value among ethnic communities within inter-ethnic group often considered to be the cause of ethnic conflicts.

Economic cause: Economic factors which cause conflict between two different groups/communities. One of the main causes of conflict has been the depreciating of economic achievement such as crisis of production and distribution of resources and the competition arising (Macartan, 2003). And also economic conflict involves competing motives to attain scarce resources. Each party wants to get the most that it

can, and the behavior and emotions of each party are directed toward maximizing its gain (Daniel Katz, 1965).

Cultural conflict: Cultural Factors Not only political and economic problems caused inter-ethnic conflicts, but also culture has its own significant contribution. Kymlicka states that a societal culture is defined as: a culture which provides its members with meaningful way of life across the full range of human activities, which including social educational, religious, recreational and economic life encompassing both public and private spheres. These cultures tend to be territorial concentrated and based on a shared language (Kashmir, 2017).

Power conflict: occurs when each party wishes to maintain or maximize the amount of influence that it exerts in the relationship and the social setting. It is impossible for one party to be stronger without the other being weaker, at least in terms of direct influence over each other. Thus, a power struggle ensues which usually ends in a victory and defeat, or in a “stand-off” with a continuing state of tension. Power conflicts can occur between individuals, between groups or between nations, whenever one or both parties choose to take a power approach to the relationship. Power also enters into all conflict since the parties are attempting to control each other (Daniel Katz, 1965).

Collective interest: The existence of intra state conflicts consists of fighting between groups, group interests, resentments, and ambitions provide motivation for conflict. Societies may divide alongside cultural or religious lines, by topography, or by class. Grievances stimulated by group dissimilarities would result in inequalities and become a major cause of conflict. These group differences have many dimensions like economic, political, and social. In addition to these, relatively privileged groups may also be motivated to fight to protect their privileges against attack from relatively deprived groups (Stewart, 2002).

Private interest: This hypothesis elaborates that individual's costs as well as benefits which can motivate people to fight. Where alternative chances are less and less because of limited incomes and poor employment, the occurrence and extent of wars are likely to be greater (Adeleye, 2012).

Value conflict: may also be a cause of conflict. Conflicting values are a common and difficult-to-resolve source of conflict between people. This conflict arises from differences in religious beliefs, attitudes towards diverse others, clashes in family values, or in work ethic might result in interpersonal differences that surface in the work environment differences or differing standards for evaluation of ideas or behavior. The actual or perceived differences in values do not create conflict. It is when values are imposed on groups or groups are prevented from upholding their value system that conflict arises (Gary B, 2003).

Ethnic Conflict: Ethnicity refers to the behavior and feeling about oneself and others that supposedly emanates from membership of an ethnic group. According to Lukong Stella (2013:25) ethnicity is a social phenomenon that describes “the condition of belonging to an ethnic group, the sense of ethnic identity felt by members of an ethnic community.” Ethnic conflicts are troubled between groups of historical, linguistic and cultural features. Mulatu A. (2017) calls, ethnic conflict is conflict among two ethnicities, nation, tribes or clans and religious in the country. Rudolfo Stavenhagen argues that, ethnic conflict as such does not exist. What does exist is social, political and economic conflict between groups of people who identify each other in ethnic terms: color, race, religion, language, national origin. Very often such ethnic characteristics may mask other distinguishing features, such as class interests and political power, which on analysis may turn out to be the more important elements in the conflict. Still, when ethnic differences are used consciously or unconsciously to distinguish the opposing actors in a conflict situation particularly when they become powerful mobilizing symbols, as is so often the case then ethnicity does become a determining factor in the nature and dynamic of the conflict. In similar definition, Yuriy Matsievsky (2000:63) explain, “Ethnic conflict may be expressed as an extreme form of competitive relation between two or more ethnic communities about mutually important political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial issues.”

Ethnicity and ethnic feelings are used by politicians to various ends. The social differentiation along the ethnic lines, unequal access to government structures, legal and cultural discrimination, persisting ethnic hierarchy and negative ethnic

stereotypes and prejudices give rise to ethnic tension. At the same time, they are the necessary conditions for the ethnic mobilization (Ismagilova, 2004).

Ethnicity also has become the primary means of mobilization. Since political representation is organized on ethnic groups, groups are encouraged to claim “ethnic rights” at the expense of others. Since ethnic mobilization is a rewarding strategy, numerous conflicts, both political and violent, have been sparked by decentralization. These are routinely described as “ethnic conflicts”, but they are more often the result of rivalry over state resources than of irreconcilable ethnic differences (Ismagilova, 2004).

Ethnic conflict is a new phenomenon that exploded worldwide mainly, after the end of the cold war. Since then, conflict within states has become more prevalent than conflict between states. Ethnic conflict is a consequence of ethnic pluralism. Ethnic pluralism occurs when two or more ethnic groups are presented in the same political space. Political space normally refer to the area under the jurisdiction of the same political authority when ethnic groups encounter one another, their contact provides the necessary condition for conflict. Ethnic conflict may occur at any level of society interactions, from localities and neighborhoods to the central government (Lumpur, 1969).

Ethnic conflicts in modern societies, conflicts between different groups invariably involve perception of scarcity and struggle to retain or attain hegemony or equality. Conflicts in the Balkans, Rwanda, Chechnya, Iraq, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Darfur, as well as in Israel, the West Bank, and the among best-known and deadliest examples from the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The destabilization of provinces, states, and, in some cases, even whole regions is a common consequence of ethnic violence. Ethnic conflicts are often accompanied by gross human rights violations, such as genocide and crimes against humanity, and by economic decline, state failure, environmental problems, and refugee flows. Violent ethnic conflict leads to tremendous human suffering (Eriksen, 2001).

Africa’s numerous wars and conflicts are caused by ethnicity. As many African countries are multi-ethnic, political instability and violent and prolonged social conflicts in more than half of Africa’s conflict societies are believed to be largely

rooted in ethnic cleavages, disharmony and inequalities. Interethnic and intra-ethnic relationships are often clouded by incompatible interests; inequitable access to political space, economic and other opportunities; and intergroup identity competition. They can also be accompanied by bigotry and conflict, which can and has, in most cases escalated into civil wars. Conflicts in countries such as Rwanda, Kenya, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sudan, for example, have predominantly been presented as revolving around competing opinions of ethnic identity, manifested in political, economic and socio-cultural inequality's (Lukong Stella, 2013).

The wars in the Horn of Africa have had ethnic dimension. Ethnic problem has been a long and pervasive problem in Ethiopia. The country has gone through a long history of ethnic suppression, discrimination and ignorance (Sarah& Yidnekachew, 2012).

Ethnicity is observed in Ethiopia in various spheres of life, such as activity of parties, functioning of the government bodies, army, social and economic relations, culture, etc. To most of the Ethiopians, their ethnic belonging is much more important than their Ethiopian identity (Ismagilova, 2004). Diversity-related issues such as the right and equality of ethnic groups has been the historic and prevalent questions of Ethiopian society (Adamu, 2013). Moreover, its modern history is characterized by ethnic competition and conflicts (Keller, 2002; Valfort, 2007). In order to address this and other long existing political and social problems in the country, in 1991 the present government of Ethiopia introduced ethnic federalism that underpins ethnic pluralism as an organizing principle.

Ethiopia also several violent conflicts between neighboring ethnic groups erupted owing to contested boundaries in the post-1991 period (Asnake 2004). Therefore, there have been many ethnic conflicts surrounding regional boundaries. For example, conflict between the Afar (Afar) and the Issa (Somali), the Borana (Oromiya) and Gerri (Somali), and the Gedeo (SNNPR) and the Guji (Oromiya) (Assefa, 2012, Assefa, 2006, Abbink, 2006, Abbink, 2011).

2.4. Identity and Conflict

The issue of ethnic identity has recently seems to be bought by a large many groups of the society in Ethiopia and seems to be the contributing factor for the creation of ‘others’ and ‘non others’ saga. Accordingly scholars affirm the role identity plays in social conflict.

Identity is fundamental to how individuals and collectivities see and understand themselves in conflict. Identities delineate who is “us” and who is “them,” mobilizing individuals and collectives, and providing legitimacy and justification for individual and group aspirations. Identities are themselves created and transformed in processes of social struggle. Understanding how identities impact conflict and conflict processes, and the ways they are constructed within conflicts, informs us about the emergence, escalation, and potential transformation of social conflicts (Celia Cook, 2009:19).

As a theoretical concept, identity is used to understand various aspects of identification processes and to explain their impact on social relationships and social conflict within the literature on identity, three key perspectives shape theorizing about the relationship between self and society.

The first argues that people use the raw materials of their lives to “make” themselves, thus social identities are projects whereby individuals come to a narrative sense of self by creating an integrated whole of their past, present, and future. Identities are symbols of meanings created from social interactions (Collins, 1997:43).

The second perspective focuses on how identity is constructed within specific relationships and in a particular time and place, and the importance of social comparisons in this process. Researchers study how groups use differences and similarities among and between groups to manage the social implications and consequences of specific categories and how individuals negotiate, reconstitute, and represent identities through talk and interaction (ibid)

The third perspective focuses on issues of salience. If one assumes people can inhabit number of identities, the concept of salience allows theorists to explore when and how particular identities become meaningful for individuals and collectives, how people manage the intersection of a number of potentially salient identities, and how individuals negotiate the borders and boundaries of identity categories (ibid).

Hence, identity has emerged as a dominant concept for understanding and analyzing social conflict. From the interpersonal to the international area, and at various levels along the way, researchers use the concept of identity to understand conflict dynamics and explain behaviors.

2.5. Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Conflict is natural and unavoidable part of human existence. It always exists as long as human beings live together and it is an inescapable human experience. There are conflict arising from differences of interests, emotion, prejudice, needs and ambitions. For all these conflicts happen we have conflict resolution methods.

Conflict resolutions the process of settling conflict and has apart of human experience for centuries. Fred (2005) is define a conflict resolution is peace building, peacemaking and a means of handling conflicts in a society to create peace when conflicts occur either in a family, groups or interpersonal relations.

Conflict resolution is the cause of disagreement, settle clashes and facilitate to mend and re-establish broken down relations. Conflict resolution was to decreased disputes, grievances, confrontation, aggression, violence, increased peace, harmony, cooperation, positive communal relationships, social justice, innovation, high levels of positive efforts, and identification with the communities' goals and objectives towards sustainable peace and equanimity. Where it has been applied haphazardly, conflict resolution mechanisms have resulted in more dysfunctional circumstances for the communities associated with increased loses, failures, violence, deaths and poor relations (Terrence& Gilbert, 2010).

The aim of conflict resolution is to transform actually or potentially violent conflict into Peaceful processes of social and political change (Ramsbotham et al. 2005: 29-30). Conflict resolution includes fostering positive attitudes and generating trust through reconciliation initiatives, and building or strengthening the institutions and processes through which the parties interact peacefully. Conflict resolution indicates a process where the root causes of conflict are dealt with and transformed, and where conflict behavior changes from violent to friendly and peaceful. Conflict resolution is the best

instrument to be used to minimize and mitigate conflictual situations into peace - building process. And also Murthi, (2006) explain conflict resolution is a community process involving the identification of the root cause of the problem, and bringing all parties involved to address the underlying issues. The process of conflict resolution has to do with how indigenous structures and systems ensure action in bringing peace at the individual and community level relationships. In this respect conflict resolution procedures are generated from general cultural life and daily experiences of living.

Generally, different ethnic groups have gone through disagreement, which are caused by different interest, they are endowed, with different indigenous way of mechanisms having different procedures to manage their conflicts. Indigenous conflict resolutions are largely seen in terms of social control designed to minimize the social challenges to the core values of the system. If conflict resolution is conceived in its integrative form, it would include a broad array of actions: prevention, mitigation and resolution.

2.6. Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism

An indigenous conflict resolution mechanism refers to community based, traditional or local, indigenous mediation, conflict mitigation; grassroots approaches to peace. Fred (2005) calls is the ability of social norms and customs to grasp members of a group together by effectively setting and making possible the terms of their relationship, sustainability facilitates collective action for achieving mutually beneficial ends. Murith (2006) similarly define that, indigenous conflict resolution mechanism focus on the idea of empathy, sharing and cooperation in dealing with common problems which underline the essence of humanity.

Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms comprise social, economic, cultural and religious spiritual dimensions in accordance with the entirety of traditions, customs and world views of a society within the different spheres of societal life. The methods involve negotiations, mediation and reconciliation based on the knowledge, customs and history of the community. The methods involve negotiations, mediation and reconciliation based on the knowledge, customs and history of the community (Nwolise, 2005).

Indigenous conflict resolution processes uses local actors, local elders local institutions, and extended families to manage and resolve conflicts within or between communities. Local mechanisms aim to resolve conflicts without resorting to state-run judicial systems, police, or other external structures (Volker, 2007). Indigenous conflict resolution enhances harmony through active involvement of all the stakeholders involved in the disputes (Brock-Utne, 2001).

Indigenous arbitration by elders of the community is one of many African customary modes of settling disputes and once it satisfies the necessary requirements, the decision would have binding effect on the parties. Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms comprise social, economic, cultural and religious spiritual dimensions in accordance with the entirety of traditions, customs and world views of a society within the different spheres of societal life. (Oraegbunam, 2009).

Indigenous conflict resolution mechanism has enormous importance and relevance, in the day to day lives of many ethnic groups. Without any confusion that only through conflict resolution mechanism, conflict, competition disagreement and incompatibilities can be minimized and peace can be established (Meron, 2010). Because of this reason, the great leaders, academicians, civil society, police maker and media have laid much trust upon the practice of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism. And also local leaders and traditional community have used indigenous laws to manage and resolve conflicts within or between communities (Volker, 2007). So, Conflict resolution as a discipline of peace building lays emphasis upon that all conflicts of traditional societies through with variations across ethnic groups should have to be resolved by peaceful and non-violent methods such as, through diplomacy, communication, negotiation, summits conciliation, arbitration, mediation and through cooperative and confidence-building measures, etc.

The different societies of the world have developed their own mechanisms to resolve conflict. Like in the other part of the world Africa is the main. According to Eaton, (2008) Conflicts in Africa, including East Africa emanates at two levels and in different forms; it is either at state (national) or local (ethnic and clan based), resource-based,

ethnic or politically instigated conflict types. African societies are well-established mechanisms for conflict management, peace-making; peace education, peace building, conflict monitoring and conflict prevention (Ademowo, 2015).

As a part of Africa, Ethiopia is a Mather lands of different ethnic groups live together in harmony, cooperation and some time in conflict. Almost all ethnic groups have established and using its own conflict resolution mechanisms. Different ethnic groups like Amhara, Oromo, Afar, Amhara, Somale, Benishangul- Gumuz, Hareri, Tigray, Sidama, Wolayta, Gamo, and others develop their own indigenous mechanisms of conflict resolution with certain peculiar features.

These features, which comprise social traditions, values, norms, beliefs, rules, and laws, communicated and accepted among the respective communities for peaceful co-existences. And others develop their own traditional conflict resolution. Abera, (2000) calls the use of ingenious conflict resolution mechanisms in Ethiopia is deeply rooted in the traditional cultures, custom, and tradition of various ethnic groups, which could play a big role in resolving violent conflict. This implies that cultural, social, political and other social issues are resolved by using traditional communication and cultural means of conflict resolution mechanism.

2.7. Indigenous communication mechanism

Indigenous communication is one of the human communications which is carried out different occasions. AnsuK. (2005:16) view, indigenous communication system are virtue of its origin from and integration into a specific culture, serves as a channel for messages in a way and manner that requires the utilization of the values , symbols, institutions, and the host culture through its unique qualities and attributes.

Wilson (1997) calls indigenous communication are a multichannel communication system which is employed in most rural areas such as, villages, clans, towns and woredas. Indigenous communication systems are local people communicated with one another in the primitive era. These systems of communication are passed from one generation to another. Such communication systems are derived from society's

experience and thoughts over a long period of years (Ogunjimi, 2015). Ugboajah, (1985) describe “indigenous communication system as prime disseminators of culture.”

This indigenous communication system the messages or ideas are transmitted by means of news, theater, drama, dance, storytellers, folk tales, proverbs, and other soci-cultural issue, ceremonial occasions like initiations, funerals, wedding, announcements etc. Its important aspect of culture and the means, by which a culture is preserved, handed down and adopted. Further, it has the value its own right, the channels being used in indigenous communication have high credibility and offer opportunities for participation by the local people. If the indigenous communication is ignored, the result might be difficult (P.Mund & J.Lin, 1991:4). Thus, by this indigenous systems of communication which have relied historically on informal channels to convey information and transmitted the culture, norm, traditions, and customs of people.

As to Mundy and Compton (1995) the role of indigenous communication systems lies in the fact that people are familiar with them and can understand, trust, accept and handle them better than externally introduced ones. They are heterogeneous, flexible in time, location specific, suited to local socio-cultural conditions, are already in place and so involve less cost, and are accessible to the majority of a community. And also the other role is, indigenous communication can be applied in resolving conflict situations to avoid it escalating to conflict. The verbal mode of communication can be used locally to resolve issues through the use of dialogue between the conflicting groups (Temofeh Catherine Isioma, 2017).

Generally, indigenous communication system is the social, political and cultural lifestyle of the society to express and transmit from one society to the other. And indigenous communication system is resolve the conflict between, individual, family and groups based on the culture and custom of the society. Thus, indigenous communication system has played a significance role for rural communities.

2.7.1. Forms and Channels of Indigenous Communication System

Indigenous communication can have different forms. Paul Mundy (1993:3) puts down the indigenous communication type and channels as follows:

1. Folk media: Folk media are the indigenous equivalents of mass media. They are used primarily for entertainment, but also to promote education, values and cultural continuity. They include festivals, plays and puppet shows, dance, song, story telling, poetry, debates such as the Filipino balagtas, parades and carnivals. Many have been adapted to transmit messages about family planning, politics and other exogenous topics.

2. Indigenous organizations: include religious groups, village meetings, irrigation associations, mothers' clubs and loan associations. These organizations orchestrate much communication: through formal meetings of members, by messages sent about activities and obligations, and through work activities.

3. Economic relationships and service suppliers: such as traders, forms input suppliers, and indigenous specialists such as healers and midwives are important sources of information important for local people.

4. Deliberate instruction. When we are children, our parents, families and peers teach us how to eat, how to behave, how to cook, plough and plant.

5. Unstructured channels. Indigenous communication occurs in many other settings: talk at home and at the well, in the fields and on the road, in the teahouse and chief's house, and wherever else people meet and talk. A major part is communication among kin and peer groups. This communication is not organized or orchestrated but spontaneous and informal.

2.8. Indigenous Communication Conflict Resolution Strategies

Conflict is apart of human life and inevitable, this is need resolution. The process of conflict resolution to achieve constrictive rather than destructive result, to build sustainable peace. Different scholars have suggested different modes of conflict resolution. According to Wilmot and Hocker (2001:129-177) identify five basic ways of addressing strategies of conflict as follows:

Collaboration: the most preferred style of conflict, a high level of assertiveness and cooperation. It is when both parties agree to a positive settlement to the conflict and attends

fully to the others concerns while not sacrificing or suppressing their own. Hence, communication is an important part of this strategy.

Accommodation: is low assertiveness and high cooperation. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Compromise: it has a degree of both assertiveness and cooperation and so it is both accommodation and competition. It is a give and take way of resolving conflict. This conflict style is often chosen because it is expedient in finding middle ground while partially satisfying the concerns of both parties.

Competition: is high assertiveness and low cooperation. It can be useful when achieving one's objectives outweighs one's concern for the relationship.

Avoiding: is low assertiveness and low cooperation. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation. Avoiding by not engaging in conflict, this can be in form of withdrawal or inaction. Therefore, communication and interaction becomes the mitigating factor and the go between to ensure smooth relationships.

2.9. Communication and Conflict

Communication and conflict are in an interdependent relationship. To manage or prevent conflict, the first key is communication. Conflict is not inherently bad, but it is the way in which conflict is managed that determines its outcome. Bocos and Marcu (2008) state that "communication is the central element in all levels of conflict." communication can engender conflicts can escalate disagreements and it also can prevent conflicts, help in conflict management and resolution activities.

As to Nnorm (1990), communication is the sharing of ideas and thoughts between individuals or groups of people. It is also imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions or information in the process of sharing thoughts, noise occurs which affects the meaning receiving or sent. As such, communication is not linear. Conflict on the other

hand occurs when goals between individuals or groups are not shared or meanings between participants of a group are not shared. According to Bocos and Marcu (2008), communication and conflict are related in three ways:

- Communication behavior often creates conflict
- Communication behavior reflects conflict and
- Communication is the vehicle for productive and destructive of management of conflict.

Communications play a great role in handling conflict to find out ways of minimizing the destructive aspects of conflict and maximizing healthy relationship between or among individual and groups. Shedrack (2004) opines that: “Communication is a non-adversarial, cheap method of preventing and removing conflict situations, quite within the grip of the parties. Once communication is lost, parties risk getting into deeper crisis that cannot be easily resolved. Thus, communication is invaluable for conflicts prevention in the first instance, and then for conflict resolution”. Generally, effective communication in a group builds a sense of trust, cooperation, and productivity.

2.10. Theoretical Framework

2.10.1. Human Needs Theory

The main assumption of human needs theory, is that humans have basic needs which they seek fulfill and that denial and frustration of this needs by other group or individuals could affect them immediately or latter, these by leading to conflict (Rosati et al, 1990). Human needs theory mentioned that deep-rooted conflicts are caused by unmet or frustrated human needs in divided society. Humans have needs that they strive to satisfy. These needs have been frustrated due to the evolution of society in such a way as to distance decision makers from those affected by the decisions. This has led to the creation of institutions that do not meet the needs of those who exist within their reach. Coercion and punishment can never prevent individuals or groups seeking to fulfill these needs. The denial of these human ontological conditions entails the

suppression of human fulfillment. Basic needs are ontological, while interests are relatively temporal and socially determined (Walsh, D. 2015).

Conflict is likely to be caused by the need for identity, recognition, cultural security and other such human, societal values and feelings of personal fulfillment (Marker, 2003). The unsatisfied needs of individual and groups engaged in ethnic and identity struggles, unless satisfied, needs will spawn behavior outside the legal norms of society. Conflict involving needs and value can easily become deep-rooted conflict. For example, individuals cannot be coerced to accept majority rules that theory, the most intractable sources of conflict in the modern era is the desperate needs experienced by members of socially and politically dis-empowered groups for a recognition and defensible group identity and security (Jeong, 2000:70 and 2008:52).

Similarly, Azar (1991), identified the denial of basic human needs of identify and security as the underlying source of protracted social conflict. He describes the “Communal content” of such conflict as “These identity groups, whether formed around shared ethnic, racial, religious, cultural or other characteristics will act to a chive and ensure their distinctive identity within society. When they are denied physical and economic security, political participation and recognition from other groups, their distinctive identity is lost, and they will do whatever in their power to regain it particularly territory. In conflict involving ethnic identity, minorities or challenges to the state structure, it is very structure of the state is at the issue (Maall, 2004). Identity, security and similarly powerful collective needs, and the fears and concerns about survival associated with them, are often important causal factors in inter-group and inter-communal conflict (Walsh, D. 2015)

2.10.2. Problem Solving Theory

Problem solving theory was developed by John Burton in 1974. Problem solving theory related to techniques on human needs theory of conflict. Burton argued the root cause of conflict are human needs such as y the need for identity, recognition, security of the identity group and other such human, societal values"(Marker, 2003).

He argues that, it is only through radical restructuring of society to meet these human needs that conflict can be resolved. People are incapable of existing peacefully without

the fulfillment of their needs. They cannot be persuaded, bribed or threatened into giving these up. The concept of non-negotiability may instinctively suggest a pessimistic outlook on the possibility of conflict resolution, but this is not accurate. The means to meet these basic human needs are not scarce, but unlimited. The interconnected need for identity recognition and security are the most fundamental of these. Burton argued that the fulfillment of such a need for one party does not have to frustrate it for any other party. He argued that the appropriate institutions within a society can fulfill these needs for all parties and thus create a sustainable peace .

In all human relationships, there are inevitably constant disagreements over resource allocations, roles and rights. In some cases, there can be acceptable compromises and adjustments made. This is usually so when material resources are the source of differences. In these cases, the traditional means of settlement such as power bargaining, negotiation, mediation and arbitration may be appropriate.

The failure of power method must be acknowledged by the society and they come up with other strategies of filling violated human needs. Then by identifying the underlying needs that are lacking, parties in conflict are often able to redefine the conflict in a way that facilitates joint problem solving and collaboration, when such was impossible before. But there are other cases in which it seems that there can be no compromise. These are cases in which there are values and goals, such as group identity and personal recognition, which cannot be divided up, as can material resources.

Therefore, human needs and problem solving theory's to understand and comprehensively address the issue of conflict and how to resolve the conflict of humans, the researcher has selected human needs theories of conflict and problem solving theory. So, the researcher preferred in these theoretical frameworks, because they go inline with and fit, the cause of conflict and the resolution approach in the study and what the researcher investigate.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The focus of this study was to investigate the role indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts: West Guji-Gedeo. The methodological approaches are discussed below in details about research design, sampling techniques, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, techniques of data analysis and interpretation and ethical considerations taken in the course of this study work.

3.2. Research Design

The study used qualitative descriptive research design. The reason is that, descriptive research design is used as objectives, research questions and nature of the problem under investigation require in depth analysis of indigenous communication of resolving conflict in natural setting. In addition, using descriptive research design enabled the researcher to collect the detail information by using focus group discussion and in-depth interview data.

And also descriptive research design focus with describing in detail about the characteristics of a particular experience of individual, group, community or institutions. Particularly, the study concerned the description of the cause, the role of indigenous communication system in conflict resolution, the strategies of indigenous communication in the study areas and weakness and challenges of indigenous communication in conflict resolution mechanism.

In order to attain the intended objective of this study, qualitative research approach was used as it is relevant for this particular study due to the objective and the nature of the research problem addressed. Since, the study aimed to understand human experiences like, value, norm, attitude and behavior from the prospective of those how experience it, how was the role indigenous communication resolve the conflict between Gedeo and West Guji ethnic group. And also, this study begins without hypotheses but use only general questions because the study issues need to be described.

According to Creswell (2009) and Dawson (2009), qualitative research is it seeks to understand the meanings of individuals or groups describe to social or human problems. Qualitative research is does not involve counting and dealing with numbers but is based more information expressed in words descriptions, accounts, opinions and feelings. Qualitative researches describe attitude, behavior and experience of the people through interview or focus group discussion. In addition, it also attempts to get an in-depth opinion from study participants. Qualitative research is to collect data about human life realities, experiences, behavior, emotion and feeling, organizational function, social movement, cultural phenomena and their interaction with nature (ibd).

Therefore, in this study the perspective of the participants of each group were important. Thus, the study attempted to describe reliable and important information about value, opinion and the socio-cultural experience of the people through interview or focus group discussion of West Guji and Gedeo people in relation to their indigenous communication for conflict resolution which can not be measured numerically.

As a result, qualitative research method enabled the researcher describe the views, perspectives and experiences of the participants about the cause, strategies of indigenous communication system, role of indigenous communication mechanism in conflict resolution and challenge and weakness of indigenous communication for resolving conflict in the study areas. Hence, the study deals with the role of indigenous communication in conflict resolution among West Guji and Gedeo ethnic groups.

3.3. Description of the Study Areas

3.3.1. Gedio Zone

Gedeo People are living in the South Nation, Nationalities and People Regional State of Ethiopia (SNNPR), in the area of Dilla, which is the capital of Gedeo Zone. The Zone is located to south of Sidama and the zone is bordered to the south east and west by Guji and Borena Zone of Oromia region. And also, it is located 365 Km South of Addis Ababa, capital city of Ethiopia. The location of the area lies between 5^o and 7^o North latitude and 38^o and 40^o East longitudes in the escarpment of the South Eastern Ethiopia highlands overlooking the Rift Valley. The people of Gedeo lives in the surrounding

zones of Oromia region and Sidama zone and scattered throughout the country. While about 700,000 Gedeo live in Gedeo Zone, there are also about 300,000 Gedeo living in Oromia regional state, particularly in Guji and Borana administrative Zones (Tadess, K. & Tilahun, E. 2000). The total population of the Gedio zone is more than 986, 977 (2007 census).

Gedeo Administrative Zone covers an area of 134,700 hectares. The Zone contains six Woredas: Bule, Dilla Zuria, Gedeb, Kochere, Wonago and Yirga Chafee. Gedeo people speak their own Cushitic Gedeo (locally as Gede'uffa) language. The language shares some synonymous vocabulary with Ester Highland (Cushitic Speakers), namely Hadiya, Sidama, Kembata, Buriij (Tadess, Tilahun, Tsegaye and Hayilu, 2000).

The basic economic livelihood of the Gedeo people was agriculture. They commonly cultivate crops like Wesse (Ensete, false banana), maize, barely and fruits and vegetables. Coffee is a major cash crop and a vital source of income for a large number of households. The Gedeo people, like other parts of Ethiopia ethnic groups, are organized under the Gada /Baallee system. The people had their own social, political, cultural and legal systems.

3.3.2. West Guji Zone

The Guji, one of the Oromo sub groups, inhabit the southern part of Ethiopia, predominantly, they live Borana and Guji Administrative Zones of Oromia Regional State. The people speak Oromo language; one of the most widely spoken languages in Ethiopia and practice the original Oromo culture. The Guji live in a large territory found in South Ethiopia. And also, approximately located 450 Km away from Addis Ababa, capital city of Ethiopia. The area is bordering with the Borana Oromo in the south, Burji, Koyra and Gamo in the Southwest, Bale and Aris Oromo in the East, Walayta and Gamo Gofa in the west, and Sidama and Gedeo in the North. The significant number of Guji also lives in the SNNPR. The Guji live in a fertile and natural resource rich region in Ethiopia: the Guji Zone in the Oromia Region, which is named for them. The known gold mining area of Adola (or Kebir Mangest), the dense natural forest of Bada Magada (West Guji), the Nechisar National park and Shakiso

Adola evergreen forests are the natural areas which have been conserved by the Guji Oromo.

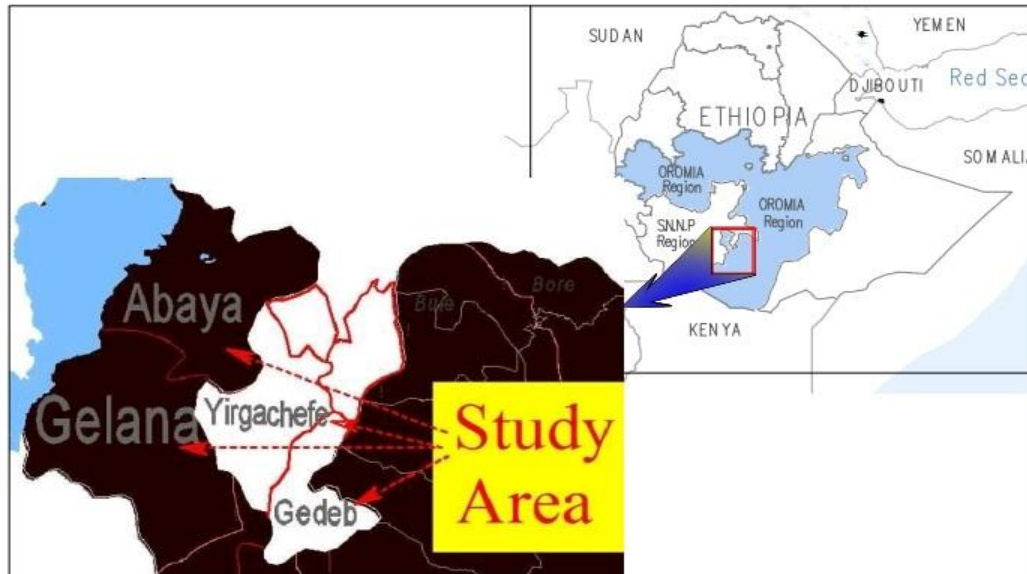
Oromia Regional State Government formed the new West Guji Zone in 2016 and the zone was made of districts and Kebeles detached from Guji and Borana Zones. West Guji zones are nine districts and two Zone municipalities; Karcha and Bule Hora. The districts are Dugda dawa, Malka Soda, Bule Hora, Galana, Abaya, Hambala Wamana, Karcha, Birbisa Kojuuwa and Soro. The West Guji Zone is in the area of Bule Hora Town (formerly called Hagere Mariam). And also, approximately located 450 Km away from Addis Ababa, capital city of Ethiopia. The area is bordering with the Gedeo Zone in the North, in the West by Sagan peoples special zone (Burji) in SNNPRS. According to West Guji Zonal Administrative office (2016), the total population of the zone is more than 1.4 million. The dominant inhabitants of the zone are the Guji Oromo, but small number of Gedeo, Burji, Konso, Gabra and other lives in some Towns in the new Zone.

The climate condition of the West Guji Zone, half part of the Zone is desert area where shortage of rain and water claim large number of animals and the remaining parts of the zone are semi-arid and high land. The basic economic practice of the West Guji people was animal breeding in pastoral area of the Zone and mixed farming where people bread domestic animals on small farmland. The zone is also known by coffee production as large amount of coffee exported from northern part districts such as Qarca, Hambala Wamana, Bule Hora, etc. And also, the Zone is endows by a variety of natural resources like, fertile soil, minerals, natural forest, etc.

The Guji people like other part of Oromo groups have their own Gadaa system and Qalu institution. Aba Gada is the head of the system. The Guji people have used different indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts.

Therefore, this study was conduct at West Guji and Gedeo zone. At West Guji Zone include, Abaya and Galana Woredas and at Gedio Zone include, Yirga Cheffe and Gedeb Woredas respectively. The reason is that, select these Woredas as target areas for the study was, first, the Woredas were selected parts of the conflict zones and many

people displaced from these area. Second, is most of study participates were selected from these Woredas. The third reason in these areas especially at Abaya and Galana Woredas Gedeo and Guji people located respectively. That is why the researcher selected by these reason.



Map1, map of study areas.

3.4. Sampling Techniques

The study were applied purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The study participants was selected from Gedeo and west Guji ethnic group.

Thus, In this study, the selection of key informants was through purposive sampling. Because, the relevant respondent from the target group were selected by researcher carefully, to seek relevant, rich and reliable data. As to Silverman (2000), purposive sampling is a technique commonly used in qualitative research that permits the researcher to carefully select participants as it illustrates some feature or process the researcher was interested in describing. Thus, the informants should be experienced and knowledgeable about the causes of the conflict and the role indigenous communication in conflict resolution mechanism in the study area. To qualify this purpose, snowball sampling technique was employed.

In this study, snowball sampling was used to find the right people who were knowledgeable to describing or performing the cause of the conflict and cultural

practice of the society. In this technique the researcher first identified contact persons from West Guji and Gedeo culture and tourism bureau i.e. culture bureau chiefs in turn introduce the researcher to the knowledgeable and experienced persons about the cause of conflict, the role and strategies of indigenous communication mechanism of resolving conflict and generally, the cultural practices of the society in the study areas. The Gedeo and West Guji cultural bureau chiefs were acting as a contact persons to identify the Aba Gadas (Gada leaders), local elders (community leaders), and cultural institutions members like, Iddir, Ikub, religious leaders from the two ethnic groups.

Hence, the selection of participants in the study was based on their knowledge and experience on conflict resolution. Based on the purpose, the researcher selected mainly Aba Geda, local elders, cultural institutions members (Ikub and Iddir) religious leaders (Orthodox and Protestant) and culture and tourism bureau experts were chosen as key informants. On the current conflict between Gedio and West Guji, the informants were directly or indirectly participated in the conflict resolution process. The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select a participant that was best help the researcher understand the objective and research question. This does not necessarily suggest random sampling or selection of a large number of participants, as typically found in quantitative research (Creswell, 2014: 239).

3.5. Data Source

Data for this study was collected from primary source.

3.5.1. Primary Data Source

The study used primary data source. The reason is that, primary data is firsthand information and the information collected by a researcher, to achieve the intended objective of the study. As to Kothari (2004:5), primary data are those which are collected as a fresh and for the first time and thus happen to be original in character.

The most important primary source of data for this study was in-depth interview and focus group discussion. Data from the two tools, crosschecked to enhance the credibility of the data. The data collected by using both in-depth interview and FGD, thirty individuals participated in focus group discussions and twelve key-informants

were interviewed in the in-depth interview. Totally 42 participants were used as source of primary data collection. Some photographs related to the study taken on the field have been used as supportive information for the data (see appendix 4 & 5, photo of participants).

3.6. Data Collection Instruments

The important data were gathered by using different types of qualitative data collection techniques which include; in-depth interview and focus group discussion (FGD). The focus group discussions and in-depth interview were conducted in three languages such as, Afan Oromo, Gede'uffa and Amharic. English language was not used in the field. The researcher prepared the English version questions, to make clear for the reader what types of questions were used in the field (see appendix 1 & 2, attached English version questions). The researcher used in the field work such as, tape recorder, photo camera, pen and notebook. Moreover, the data collection instruments are briefly discussed as follows.

3.6.1. Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

In this study, focus group discussion was used as a major technique of data collection. Because, different individuals can have different concerns on the issue of indigenous communication system in conflict resolution mechanism. As to Bohnsack (2004), FGD is useful for deeper understanding of cultural practices in a qualitative research. Based on this, the researcher and several participants meet as a group to discuss a given research objective. The researcher leads the FGD discussion as a moderator, by asking participants to respond to open-ended questions that is, questions that require an in-depth response rather than a single phrase or simple “yes” or “no” answer.

A principal advantage of focus groups is to make use of participants' feelings, perceptions and opinions and that they yield gain greater insights information over a relatively short period of time. FGD is effective for accessing a broad range of views on a specific topic, as opposed to achieving group consensus. According to Christine Daymon and Immy Holloway (2005:187), a focus group involves a group of people often with common experiences or characteristics who are interviewed by a researcher.

The ultimate goal in focus group interviewing is to see the topic or issue from the participants' point of view.

The study, four focus group discussions were organized in the two study areas namely, Gedeo and West Guji Zone. The reason for used informants from both Gedio and West Guji Zones. Because, the participants of the two ethnic groups were involved in the conflict resolution process. And from the two ethnic groups the researcher, to gain clear and credible information about the causes and role of indigenous communication system in conflict resolution.

As Creswell (2009) stated, the focus group discussion size is six to eight in each group. Therefore, the number of participant in each focus group discussion was six to eight persons. Regarding this, the researcher used four focus groups discussion with seven participants in each group. Two Aba Gadas, Ten community elders, Six cultural institutions members from Ikub and Iddir, Four religious leaders from Orthodox and Protestant church respectively and eight cultural and tourism bureau experts selected from Gedeo and West Guji Zone. Totally thirty individuals participated in focus group discussions based on the objective of the study. This helped the researcher to get wide and important information about the indigenous communication system in conflict resolution mechanism.

The reason for used, Aba Gadas, community elders, cultural institutions members, religious leaders and culture and tourism bureau experts as FGD participants. Because, participants reflect their own as well as the views of the people at large, who they represent and who enforce the traditional values into the community, who are at the forefront in the conciliatory process. And also the knowledge of culture, know indigenous communication system of the Gedeo and Guji community and who are experienced and knowledgeable in conflict resolution.

Hence, the aim of FGD was to collect information from a wide range of people. Thus, appropriate discussions were made with participants of the West Guji and Gedeo ethnic groups. In this part, the researcher role was leads the FGD discussion as a moderator by asking participants. And during the time of discussion giving equal chance for all participants and time for the participants and giving compliments, respect and getting

the consent of the participants before collecting data. Necessary, cultural protocols like, cultural cloth of the society were used the participants during the FGD. During the time of FGD, the researcher was take field notes, record the sound and took photographs.

3.6.2. In-depth Interview

In-depth interview was the main data gathering instrument as well. In this study, a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to describe their perspectives on a particular idea or issues. Bryman (1984:78) calls, “for a contextual understanding so that behavior is to be understood in the context of meaning systems employed by a particular group of society. In-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant’s perspective on the research issue.”

As to Denscombe (2007) and (Kothari: 2004:97), the researcher’s interviewing techniques are motivated by the desire to learn everything the participant to share their experience, attitudes, and beliefs in their own words depend on the research topic and objectives. Researchers engage with participants by posing questions in a neutral manner, listening attentively to participants’ responses, and asking follow-up questions and probes based on those responses. They do not lead participants according to any preconceived notions, nor do they encourage participants to provide particular answers by expressing approval or disapproval of what they say. The interview method of collecting data involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. This method can be used through personal interviews and, if possible, through telephone interviews.

Hence, the researcher chooses the interviewee from the focus group discussion participants. The choose was based on the participants who have detailed and ample information about the study objectives. Therefore, twelve respondents were interviewed in the in-depth interview, i.e. two Aba Gadas, four local elders, two religious leaders, two cultural institution members and two cultural and tourism bureau experts from study areas. The duration of each interview range from 40 to 50 minutes. Giving compliments and getting the consent of the participants before collecting data.

3.7. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher was asking Addis Ababa University School of Journalism and Communication department to write recommendation letter for Gedeo and West Guji Zone head administrators office, the place where this study is going to be conducted. After acquiring formal letter from department, the researcher submitted the recommendation letter to Gedeo and West Guji Zone chief administrators' office and then Gedeo and West Guji Zone chief administrator's office to write recommendation letter for Police chief administrator's office and culture and tourism chief administrators office to get full permission in order to work on this issue.

After receiving required permission from police office and culture and tourism office in both West Guji and Gedeo zone, the researcher visited the two study areas for two days and the researcher identified contact persons from West Guji and Gedeo culture and tourism bureau chiefs and they informed for the researcher the location of the well known Aba Gadas, local elders, religious leaders and cultural institutions office. But, it was very challenging to get the respondents especially Aba Gadas and elders from both sides easily. In the time of researcher to collect the data from the study areas, Aba Gadas and elders were moved from place to place for a purpose of the current conflict of the two ethnic groups, they discussed with regional and federal level of the country about the issue. Because of this, the researcher was not getting Aba Gadas and elders timely and properly. In general, researcher field work was somewhat challenging.

Finally, the researcher got Aba Gadas and elders, then interview and focus group discussion was made by using Oromifa, Gede'uffa and Amharic language, that the Oromifa native language for the West Guji people and the Gede'uffa native language for Gedeo people. Then after, the collected information in Oromifa and Gede'uffa was translated into Amharic language by the professional translator. Gede'uffa language translator, he is from Gedeo Zone culture and tourism office and Oromifa language translator, he is from West Guji Zone head administrators office. Finally, the researcher translated and transcribed into English version.

3.8. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Interpretation of the gathered data by the above mentioned methods managed in the field to be on the safe side of any information loss. The data were collected through the qualitative method in order to analysis the role ingenious communication in resolving ethnic conflict. The data collected in Oromifa, Gede'uffa and Amharic language was transcribed and translated in to English. All notes and tape recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim. After data collection and reading the transcription of interviews, the result from the qualitative data was described and analyzed the cultural value of the people in the study areas. In-depth interview and focus group discussion were analyzed and crosschecked the findings and conclusion in the lens of the research objectives and research questions. The data was analyzed descriptively.

3.2. Ethical consideration

Ethical consideration is essential in the process of conducting a research for its significantly affect the success of the study. With regard to this study, a researcher considered ethical standards of the host community on which the research was conducted. Thus, the researcher was avoiding bias, to be as objective as possible. The researcher respected the soci-cultural norms of the society, the privilege and privacy of participants. Further, secured the anonymity of the study informants. Generally, the collected information was carefully kept.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1. Introduction

The data analyzed, presented and the major findings of the study are found in this chapter. For the purpose of anonymity, clear codes were given by the researcher. The code refers to the key informants who participated in in-depth interview such as KI1, KI2, KI3, KI4, KI5, KI6, KI7, KI8, KI9, KI10, KI11, KI12. Where as the FGD participants, an attempts to give simple code to make it easily understandable in the process of data FGDG1, FGDG2, FGDG3, FGDG4, FGDG5, FGDG6, FGDG7, FGDG8, FGDG9, FGDG10, FGDG11, FGDG12, FGDG13, FGDG14 and for the rest FGDW1, FGDW2, FGDW3, FGDW4, FGDW5, FGDW6, FGDW7, FGDW8, FGDW9, FGDW10, FGDW11, FGDW12, FGDW13, FGDW14.

The researcher collected primary data by using in-depth interview and focus group discussions in the study areas. The following objectives of the study are analyzed, what are the main causes of the 2018 West Guji-Gedeo conflict, what are the common indigenous communication conflict resolution strategies within the two ethnic groups that help to resolve conflicts, the study further analyzed what is the role of indigenous communication system to resolve the West Guji-Gedeo conflicts. Finally, the study gives emphasis on, what are the challenges and weakness of indigenous communication system in conflict resolution between Gedeo-West Guji ethnic groups.

4.2. Guji-Gedeo Relationship

Guji and Gedeo have a long history of cooperation, interdependence and friendly relations. Both are speakers of the Cushitic language family. Where the Guji are from Oromiya regional state and Gedeo are from SNNPR. Informants from both the Guji and Gedeo agree that Guji-Gedeo friendly relations have exhibited in the form of the myth of ‘common ancestry’, cultural, social and economical relations. Thus, it is necessary to have a look at the forms of longstanding cooperation and interdependence that existed between the two ethnic communities one after another.

The study participants from both side; witnessed this fact as follows; the Guji and Gedeo have had blood relationships. Gujo (ancestral father of the Guji) and Darasso (ancestral father of the Gedeo) have considered each other as brothers where the Gedeo was even seen as an elder brother of the Guji and respects the former in social interactions and cultural practices that they shared in common Gondoro ceremonies such as drinking milk and Boka (Ceremony honey Wine) used for ceremonies.

Guji and Gedeo have a common ancestry used to emphasize on their commonality rather than their differences. In recent years, both groups have tended to contest their unity and the history of living together in the same area in relative harmony. There is strong communal relationship between Guji-Gedeo with as they share the same traditions, culture and as well as the proximity of language they have.

Economic Relations

Economical interdependence of the two groups are the most important forms of harmonious interaction. While the Gedeo inhabited the highland ecological zone of the eastern escarpment of rift valley, the Guji occupied the lowland areas to the south and the west. The Gedeo and Guji people have mutually dependent in terms of exchange product. A pastoral community, the Guji supplied the agricultural Gedeo people with livestock and livestock products in exchange for crop products, particularly Weese (Enset/false banana). In other words, they lived in distinctive ecological zones and were engaged in different but interdependent economic activities (McClellan, 1988).

The study informants from Guji and Gede stated that; the Guji have had a long peaceful and brotherhood, cooperation and friendly relationship with the Gedeo who may be considered 'distinct' on the basis of such criteria. It was also said paradoxical that the Gedeo and Guji fought in alliance against the other ethnic groups in the area. The Gedeo with Guji shares closer linguistic affinities and other cultural, economical and social practices. Guji peoples are pastoralist and the Gedeo are agriculturalist so the there were exchanges of different products between them. Unfortunately, politicians and local government leaders pushed the community to stand against the other one.

The Gedeo and Guji do not kill each other as they have come from a common ancestor. If the Gedeo and Guji kill each other, that breaking the curse leads to dangerous consequences like, loose of life and property destruction (McClellan, 1988). The above findings shows that the two groups have mutual economic interdependence, but at recent time the relation between them is not friendly and has not been in peaceful way due to different reason.

Social Interaction

Other social interaction between Guji and Gedeo is that they have intermarriage relations. One informant from FGD said,

A few Guji women marry to Gedeo men but, Guji men rarely marry to Gedeo women. Because, a marriage relation that exists between the Gedeo and Guji communities are practiced by the poor and the rich alike that means the poorest Guji men marry to Gedeo women, they may not get Guji women(FGDW2).

Social interactions between the Gedio-Guji are playing a great role for creating intermarriage relationship among the two communities. However, the marriage relation exist between the two peoples depends on their economical level. Poor Guji men may not get women from Guji so that they forced to marry Gedeo women.

FGDG4 (from Gedeo elder) Gedeo men were able to afford bride for marrying to Guji women, depends on the agreement between the two couples families. Based on the perspective of the two groups, intermarriage between Guji and Gedeo has limited. Because, both ethnic groups were different interpretation about intermarriage between the two, have had its own restrictive impact on intermarriage between the two.

The marriage relation exist between the Gedeo and Guji peoples are the Gedeo men marry to Guji women depend on the agreement between the two couples and their families. Economical level of the individual who marry is not considered in Gedeo people. Therefore, they have intermarriage relationship. Thus, women or men adopt their husbands or wife customs and traditions. Even their children will adopt the different culture and social value of their two families. Marriage relations may have been created a great contribution to Guji-Gedeo harmonious relationships.

Cultural Relations

Cultural interdependence of Guji-Gedio, also played a significant role in holding the groups together. Informants from both sides agree that; The Guji and Gedeo peoples participated in common traditional practices and other rituals. The Gedeo used to pay regular visits to the Guji Qaalluu institution that was used as a common platform for religious practice and conflict resolution. The two people were made mutual traditions to avoid homicide and any kind of disagreement against each other. However, disagreement or uncontrolled loss of life happened among the two communities, the curse had to be removed through the traditional conflict avoidance and conflict resolution mechanism called the Gondoro tradition has been given due respect from both sides.

Generally, the Gedeo and Guji have had along peaceful, cooperation, interdependence, brotherhood and friendly relationships. Several factors contributed to the historically peaceful coexistence of the two groups. One important factor is a mutual interdependence embedded in economic and cultural interconnections, myth of common ancestry and Guji's sense of self-pride. In the past distinct economic activities enabled both the Guji and Gedeo to live in complementary rather than competitive relationship; this is integration through difference. Their myth of cultural, economic interdependence, social interaction and the common traditional conflict resolution mechanism like, Gondoro rituals altogether contributed to the harmonious relationships between the two communities. Thus, it helps the elders and the communities to keep their cultural, economical as well as social interactions forever and transfer in to their new generations.

4.3. Background of Guji and Gedeo Conflict

Conflict is inevitable; nature cannot avoid it but it is manageable. The cause of conflict is different from place to place, from community to community. The cause for conflict in one area may not be a cause for other area. But, economical, political and socio-cultural issues are common issues that can cause conflict in different areas. Kriesberg (2006) stated that, conflicts may also arise from misinformation, stereotype, prejudices, contradictory perception of justice, differing socio-cultural traditions, personal belief or ideology; and they are of many dimensions: racial, sectarian, ethnic,

religious, ideological, cultural, economic, political, social, and others. And in Gedeo and Guji, ethnic group conflict started to be seen.

The researcher discussed in the above analysis about the Guji and Gedeo along history of cooperation, interdependence and friendship relations. And the social interactions and cultural practices (Gondoro ceremonies) that they share in common are discussed. Consequently, the relations between the Guji and the Gedeo have not been friendly until recent times.

According to the FGD informants from both sides, Guji and Gedeo were under the same administrative province, which is Sidamo province during the imperial regimes and until of the military government. However, during military regime in 1987 some parts of Guji inhabited territories were included under the Gedeo sub-province of the Sidamo. While the larger portion of the Guji territories remained under Borana administrative region (Jemma, 2002:3). In the new federal structure by EPRDF, the Gedeo became part of the SNNPR and the Guji part of the Oromiya Regional State. In this manner the Guji were divided in to two regional states: Oromia and SNNPR regional state in 1992 (Girum, 2011). One informant from elder's side as follows;

The new structural arrangement of the federal government Guji were deeply dissatisfied and felt that they were dominated by the Gedeo on 'their own land'. This is created competitive natures of relationships between the two ethnic communities, are thus experiencing new dimensions the formation of the two adjacent Regional States. Thus, the conflict of Guji and Gedeo transformed in to territorial conflicts first in 1995, then in 1998 and still. The conflict over border issues lead to violent conflicts, which leads to death of many people and distraction of resource and displacement of huge number of people from both areas (KI3).

Both Gedeo and Guji informants agree that in 1995 the cause of conflict between Guji-Gedeo was a question of 'referendum' in some contended kebeles such as Hagere Mariam (now Bule Hora), Wonago, Kochore and Yirgacheffe of the SNNPR and Oromiya Regional State respectively. As to Asebe (2007), the referendum was in principle designed to be conducted by fair and free votes of the peoples concerned in the contentious Peasant Associations. By the so-called referendum, four Peasant Associations like, Harooressa, Ciccu, Oddo and Wonago - were incorporated to

Gedeo Zone while Guangua and Oddo-Miqe were dissociated from the Gedeo zone and joined Borana Zone. Except in the case of Haroressa, where the Gedeo are in fact the majority, the other cases where the Gedeo referendum were flawed. At Ciccu for example, Guji inhabitants were intimidated by the Gedeo forces not to identify themselves as Guji. Other ethnic groups were bribed to vote on the side of the Gedeo in areas like Oddo. According to informants;

Many Guji peoples are dissatisfied with the process because they feel they have lost their land by referendum that they considered as unjust and unfair. Because of this contradiction happened, there was a huge damaged among Guji and Gedeo people. The conflict between the two peoples were stopped by military intervention after loss of human life, displacement of people and destruction of resource. And the 1995 conflict of the two peoples was resolved by the military force which is not the indigenous way of conflict resolution system (KI1).

The above ideas show because of the new federal structural arrangement the Gedeo and Guji peoples were disagreed of the question of referendum. These causes of conflict between the two people are still continuing. In 1995, the conflict was resolved by the military intervention; traditional way of conflict resolution was not used. After 1995 conflict the traditional methods of conflict resolution called Gondoro (a common conflict resolution mechanism of the Gedio and Guji people) recognized by government authorities (Asebe, 2017).

4.4. The 2018 Cause and Consequences of the West Guji and Gedeo Conflicts

According to the informants, the Guji and Gedeo people are living in cooperation and conflict for a long period of time. Major clashes have erupted twice before. In 1995 and 1998, the conflict broke out between the two ethnic groups. The 2018 conflicts between Gedeo and West Guji are the third wave of violence.

In April 2018, disagreement emerged between Gedeo Zone (SNNPR) and West Guji Zone (Oromia Region). The respondent from both FGD raised that, different cause of conflicts were involved the conflict between the two selected areas. One informant responded that;

The one cause of 2018 Gedeo and West Guji conflict was a question of 'referendum'. The Gedeo people ask question of referendum in the Kercha Woreda of West Guji Zone. The reach man and politician from Gedeo side exacerbated the referendum question. This question was creating contradicted among both sides. Here upon, there is Mr.X who was from the Guji side and owned coffee grinding mill. In this coffee grinding mill compound one of the elders who lived in the area and from the side of the Gedio community was found dead and this made the Gedio who lived there to burn into ground the coffee grinding mill of Mr.X believing that this is done by him. This incidence escalated the fighting in different district of Gedeo and West Guji Zone. This caused and paves the way in to conflicts to occur among the two people.

As FGD informants from Gedeo raised that Gedeo people who have been living in West and East Guji Zones since 1952 under Emperor Haile Silassie who gave the land that had no owner except the government at that time. In fact, conflicts were witnessed between Gedeo and Guji since 1995 which were occurred due to political, social and economic interests. But, the current conflict among the two peoples was the Gedeos people in Guji zone have been raised questions of the right to use their own language in schools and to reflect their own culture.

The Oromia Regional State wrote letter to the hands of the local leaders of West Guji Zone, but when the letter reached to the hands of the local leaders of west and East Guji Zone, it was wrongly interpreted by some local government leaders and business man from Guji. They have distributed false information as the Gedeos in Kercha Woreda West Guji Zone asked to have referendum and then to own lands of Guji, and mobilize the Guji people with wrong intention and message giving to the quest of the Gedio people. This was absolutely wrong; they did for the sake of their personal benefit not for the people. This was the major cause of conflict between Gedio-West Guji 2018 G.C conflict.

Based on the above idea, referendum question was triggering factors from 1995 to 2018 conflict of Gedeo and West Guji people. So, to minimize the referendum questions of the two people, the Woreda administration together with the regional and federal government shall immediate enter in to new demarcation process. As a result, difficult to stop the conflict between the two people. A question of referendum, economical interest of individuals and cultural conflict become a main cause of conflict between

these two ethnic groups. In addition to this, some rich individuals in the area and government structure were also involved for the repeatedly occurrence of the conflict. Similarly; one informant said;

After three months of the conflict, I have been in the area for investigation on conflict and its consequence. The causes of conflict among these ethnic groups were occurred due to political, economical and cultural factors. This Inter-ethnic relation has taken the form of hostility and conflict. In this area, ethnicity is an enormously complex issue of concern since the past decades. Inter-ethnic tensions and conflicts over issues of identity and political interest of local administrator were common phenomenon for the conflict between West Guji -Gedeo (KI10).

This idea implies that the other cause of conflict between the two peoples were political intervention of some local government leaders. To fulfill their political interest they disseminated false information for the people.

FGDW8 (Protestant religious leaders of West Guji) around Kercha Woreda (found at West Guji Zone) Kalehiwot and Wengelawi protestant churches are founded. In this church the Gedio ethnic groups cult at Kalehiwet and the Guji Protestants cult at Wongelawi church. Once up on a time the followers of Wongelawian (West Guji) people look different weapons (like Temenja, Klash) in Kalehiwot church. Due to that the West Guji peoples believe that they are ready to harm them. Finally conflict aroused between both sides. This aggravates the conflict already happened in the two ethnic groups.

Based on the above analyses the current conflict among West Guji-Gedeo people are not only the question of referendum, political interest of some individual, economical interest and cultural conflict. Even in this conflict the religious institutions were involved as a cause of conflict.

Informants of Gedio and West Guji agree that from both sides the political elite's disseminating false information to destroy the relations between the two groups. These individuals provide an easily accepted explanation for some conflicts, but there are other factors that can lead to violent conflict between Gedeo and West Guji ethnic

groups. The researcher was asked questions for respondents, the reason why it takes long time to resolve the conflict. One informant said;

The Guji and Gedeo communities are rich in cultural value like, traditional conflict resolution mechanism. The two ethnic groups are much known in resolving conflict before it caused damage. The elders or Aba Gadas have a great position in solving conflicts in both ethnic groups. But, the current conflicts were not resolved as quickly. Because of this, the conflict has ravage high degree of property destruction, leaving their properties devastating of Churches and school by burning, loss of life, huge displacement of people from their house and resources, affected economic well being, moral smash up were some consequences of conflict in the study areas. Thus, there is difficult to resolve the conflict between two ethnic groups (KI1).

Informants from Gedeo elders claim that the conflicts between the two peoples are not resolved quickly. Due to the current politic climate of the country clearly politicized ethnic difference so, the West Guji and Gedeo people not think about the brotherhood relations think about the difference. Because of delayed happened a lots of consequences in Gedeo and West Guji Zone.

The above ideas shows in the previous many of conflict among Guji-Gedeo people were resolved as quickly as possible. However, the current conflict between West Guji-Gedeo people were more delayed than ever. Because of this, conflicts lead a lot of consequence, the borders of Gedeo (SNNPR) and West Guji (Oromiya region) zones conflict leads death of human life, houses were burnt down, damaged, looted and livelihoods destroyed and displaced huge number of people from both conflicting areas. The Gedeo people displaced from West Guji zone and also the West Guji people displaced from Gedeo zone.

4.5. How is conflict perceived?

As in anywhere else, conflict in Gedeo and West Guji may be differing from minor disagreements between individual to serious conflicts which is the end lead to killing. In order to know their level of understanding, on how conflict is perceived the people of Gedeo and Guji. One informant explained that: conflict is disagreement between two or more parties or among friends, neighbors, family or between groups. The cause of

conflict might be difference of interests (IK1). One informant described conflict as follows:

To me, Conflict is a situation in which two or more actors pursue incompatible goals. It is not necessarily violent, but the use of tension, dispute or disagreement more common in a nonviolent context. A violent internal conflict is generally called a civil war or armed conflict when casualties and destruction are substantial, the conflict has certain duration, the protagonists are organized, and military operations are used to achieve political goals (KI10).

Similarly, one informant described that;

Conflict happened difference between two or more people ideas, interest, culture, beliefs or norms. If two ideas, or interest are in conflict and a single conflict to resolve easily/timely too difficult resolved easily. It growth group conflict as well as ethnic violence. So, resolving the conflict, timely by their own mechanism (KI7).

Conflict in different areas has varying sources by different people, there is one thing that makes common for all sources, most of the time the means of conflicts is benefit. The resources in this world are very limited, however our wants are unlimited. Therefore, to fulfill needs, human beings want to have better advantage than other people. On the other hand, the other people will not allow to be taken away their resources. So these differences lead to conflict. Then, the conflict can have a devastating role in the socio-economic and cultural context. One informant from culture and tourism office explained that:

Ethnic conflict means the disagreement between two or more ethnic groups. While the cause of conflict is different interests, may be economical, cultural, border, identity, political, religious even the individual conflict from different ethnic group, it leads ethnic conflict. Example, our country Ethiopia facing different challenging ethnic group conflict because in Ethiopia living diverse ethnic groups (KI9).

Ethnic conflict is inevitable in any community with diversified or the same culture and language. Look, Ethiopia has multi-ethnic groups, as groups that share common

heritage, interests, beliefs, historical experience, and cultural traits. So, ethnic conflict arises if ethnic groups compete for the same goal notably power, access to resources, or territory. The interests of a society's elite class play an important role in mobilizing ethnic groups to engage in ethnic conflicts. Ethnic conflict is thus similar to other political interest of conflicts. The major causes of conflict between Gedeo and West Guji are briefly discussed below.

4.6. Gedeo and West Guji Ethnic Groups of Conflict Resolution Strategies

According to Wilmot and Hocker (2001), there are five basic ways of strategies in conflict resolution, these are: accommodation, collaboration, avoidance, compromise and competition strategies. These are work together for mutual benefit. Therefore, the Gedeo and West Guji ethnic groups were used different types of conflict resolution strategies to resolve different level of conflict. One informant from elders said;

To resolve the current disagreement between Gedeo-West Guji ethnic groups are, the peace dealing process is done by indigenous communication system of conflict resolution mechanism called Gondoro. The Aba Gadas and community elders of the two ethnic conflicting parties attempts to resolving the disagreement, by dealing with from both conflicting parties to resolve the conflicts. And local leaders, elders and conflicting parties create a solution to building relations, the solution that would not have been generated by a single person/individual. Thus, in the current Gedeo and West Guji ethnic based conflict the local leaders/elders were used collaboration conflict resolution strategies. They used win/win strategies that means no one is loser or no one is winner, both conflicting parties were judged equally. However, the conflict resolution by indigenous way is failed.

Based on the above idea when the indigenous communication system of conflict resolution in the study areas, the conflict resolved by Aba Gadas and community elders. They used to resolve the conflict between the West Guji-Gedeo conflict collaboration conflict resolution strategies, in this way of indigenous conflict resolution strategies no one is the loser or winner, the elders judged equally.

Thus, this way communication that helps disputants to live together in peacefully. This supported by; Wilmot and Hocker (2001) the most preferred style of conflict, a high level of assertiveness and cooperation. It is when both parties agree to a positive settlement to the conflict and attends fully to the others concerns while not sacrificing or suppressing their own. Hence, communication is an important part of this strategy. One informant as follows;

The local leaders and elders attempts to resolving the current conflict of West Guji and Gedeo ethnic groups, by used collaboration conflict resolution strategies. However, the collaboration conflict resolution strategies or the conciliation is not successful and the Aba Geda and elders intervention was failed. The youth generation, some politician and some rich mans in the area not accepted the conciliation and they are distributed false information in to the society of the two ethnic groups. Thus, challenging for both ethnic groups to live peacefully and friendly with together. After a month the people displaced from both sides, were not voluntary to return into their origin of land. Therefore, the current conflict between West Guji-Gedeo ending Competing (win/loss) conflict resolution strategies. Aba Gadas and elders tried to resolve this challenged conflict (KI6).

The above idea implies the Gedeo-West Guji conflict, Aba Gadas and local elders used collaboration way of indigenou communication conflict resolution strategies, and the conciliation is not successful in the study areas. According to the data, after a month the conflict aroused again and the peoples from both sides were displaced from the origin of land. Finally, the resolution ending by using the win/loss approach.

Generally, difficult to lasting solution in the study areas because of, the modernization affect the new generation, the politician interfere in the society of life, local leaders and elders handled by some local administrator. So, the long lasting conflict history among the two people of West Guji-Gedeo triggers to urge the concerned bodies of the government especially the federal government of the country to inculcate the issue in to policy consideration to bring lasting solution for it, rather simply running after the problems when they occurred.

4.7. The Role of Indigenous Communication Mechanism in Conflict Resolution

Ethnic conflict resolution mechanism plays a key role in creating harmonic relationship among the ethnic groups who were involved into conflicts. Conflict resolution mechanism could help us to settling and resolving conflict, minimize tension and re-establishing social relation through resolve the conflict among ethnic groups. To achieve, the rural societies to develop their own traditional conflict resolution mechanism. Like this, the Gedeo and Guji cultural values have played vital roles in creating friendly relationships between the groups for a long period in the history. The two ethnic groups in the study areas are practicing the Gada system. Still the Gada system was effective to resolve conflicts within and with other ethnic group. Therefore, conflict in Guji and Gedeo has been resolved through different indigenous conflict resolution mechanism. Members of both ethnic groups participated in common ritual practices like the Gondoro rituals. This study focused on the role Gondoro tradition, religious institution, elders, intermarriage relations, and organization based institutions on the study areas.

4.7.1 The Role of ‘Gondoro’

Gondoro is the most influential conflict resolution mechanism, which is handling/settling and peace building draw from the cultural knowledge of the Gedeo-Guji and also their neighbors such as Sidama, Arisi and Borena. The Gondoro tradition has managed or to resolve ethnic conflicts and to improve inter-cultural relations among these ethnic communities.

‘Gondoro’ is common term both in Afan-Oromo and Gede’uffa languages with the same meaning. Literally it implies declaring or concluding something or an event not to happen again. The tradition has complex ritual procedure and strong symbolic representation of purification of the ‘curse’ and reconciliation of conflicting individual or groups. The tradition is performed not only as a mechanism of purifying the ‘curse’ from the guilty. And also as a method of conflict resolution for ending enmity. The Gondoro tradition works both inter-personal as well as inter-ethnic conflict resolution.

The Gondoro can be considered as a conflict resolution mechanism that is essential to the peaceful coexistence among Guji and Gedeo ethnic communities and their neighbors.

FGDG6 (elders from Gedeo) during the time of conflict between individuals, groups and neighboring ethnic groups the role of Gondoro tradition is the best way in building sustainable peace among conflicting parties. The Gondoro ritual was preformed according to the tradition of the two ethnic communities. The Aba Gadas of the Gedeo and Guji people, local elders of the two ethnic communities, conflicting parties, representatives of West Guji and Gedeo masses, representative of religious institution from both ethnic groups, and also other third neutral party from the neighboring ethnic communities are presented in the time of Gondoro rituals.

The above idea shows the Gondoro traditions are the common indigenous conflict resolution systems of the two people. Even the name of Gondoro shares the two ethnic languages. This traditional way of conflict resolution mechanism resolve the different causes of conflict such as individuals, group as well as ethnic conflicts. In the time of Conflict resolution process the Aba Gada, elders, conflicting parties, were attended. Therefore, this was to create favorable conditions for a peaceful resolution of the dispute through the Gondoro tradition that the two communities share in common.

Anifowoshe (2010) argues that, there are some topics, issues, and feelings that can be communicated only through rituals. This is the case as individuals learn and communicate to each other by doing. Peace-building should emphasize ritual action and communication rather than focusing solely on rational discussion. Through ritual, humans try out new ways of being together and create a new reality for themselves. During conflict resolution process different ceremonials take place to indicate the conclusion of the resolution process. Concerning this, one informant stated as follows;

When two conflicting parties decided the time and the pace of the ritual ceremonies, Aba Gadas and elders were perform traditional ceremonies to show that the problem is solved in peaceful manner. Because, in Gedeo and Guji, rituals have symbolic and practical significance. Rituals have spiritual meaning and interpretation.

Ritual symbols in the two communities are ways of transforming the conflict into peaceful relationship (KI10).

The ritual symbol is a land mark in the study areas. The process of Gondoro ritual is symbolized it's audible, visible and it expressed the culture of the society. Symbolic forms or communication were used in conflict resolution by the traditional communities in Gedeo-Guji and this was illustrated. According to one informant;

The time of Gondoro ritual activity the Aba Gadas, elders, conflicting parties, and other neutral third party are presented. On the day they come together, they prepared traditional ritual ceremony. Both conflicting ethnic groups were brought the following materials for rituals process like an Ox, Milk, Sheep and Honey. The sheep was bought for the Waata (who performs the rituals). The materials have their own attached meanings and symbols based on the custom and tradition of the people (KI9).



Figure1: In West Guji-Gedeo common Gondoro ritual ceremonies; Sheep and Ox prepared for a sacrifice.

Informants from both sides agree that during ritual the Waata rounds the sheep for three times and slaughtered. The motive behind rounding the sheep for three times, because, the society believed a conflict never arouse again among them. Since, the sheep is slaughtered representatives from both side was asked two walk over the blood believing that this will be the last bloodshed among them. Then the Waata give the slaughtered sheep to other communities, who were not engaged in the conflict. Because, they believed that if the sheep were eaten by the people who from the conflicting parties, the ritual is not successful and the conflict may happen again. And Aba Gadas was from

both conflicting parties drink Milk and Honey together. In this traditional ritual, oxen were slaughtered and making them to eat and drink together.

This symbol represents reconciliation and restoration of friendship and the Gondoro ritual was undertaken. Finally, Aba Gada has concluded the ceremony by blessing the peace to be durable and at the same time cursing any attempt of retaliation or revenge. In doing so, the two sides declared the conflict was ends up officially and pledged not to fight against each other in the future.



Figure2; Gedeo and West Guji Aba Gadas performed the common Gondoro ritual ceremonies.

In fact, the above analysis shows that indigenous conflict resolution process were the custom and tradition of both Gedeo and West Guji communities and the rituals to created peaceful relations among conflicting parties and also both conflicting parties are respected the Gondoro tradition. As the informants from both areas, the indigenous way of conflict resolution was not the end of hostility and restoration of good relations between West Guji-Gedeo communities. The researcher was asked the informants, why the Gedeo and West Guji current conflict not resolved by the Gondoro tradition.

FGDG2 (elders from Gedeo); after Gondoro was takes place the two people have not been peaceful or friendly relations. Even people displaced from both sides were not volunteers to return into their origin of land. Thus, concerning the current conflict between West Guji and Gedeo, which the Gondoro ritual practiced for several time by the people but not resolved the conflict. Because, Aba Gada and elders have been tried

to resolve this violent conflict it was not succeeded due to the unwillingness from some of conflicted parties. Furthermore, local government leaders have been distributed false information to their community that plays negative role do not be solved the conflict.

Informants from both sides agree that the problem is not among the two brotherhood people. The politician, reach mans and some local administrative leaders has been interference on the practice of Gondoro and they distributed false information from both side. This was the main reason for the repeated occurrence of conflict among the two ethnic communities. Generation gap is the other problems that affect this traditional communication. So, these are a big challenge for Aba Gadas and elders to hold Gondoro and to solve the conflict. The informants said that, eventually, after loss of life and distraction of resources the government (Minster of Peace) interfered and prepared conference; the Aba Gadas, elders, selected government experts and both conflicting parties attended the conference in Dilla Town and Bule Hora (formally Hagere Mariyam). After heaps of exertion, the conflict between the two ethnic groups was stopped and the displaced people returned in to their residence.

The Gondoro tradition has relatively played a better role as compared to other indigenous communication system in resolving the conflicts between West Guji and Gedeo in restoring peace. The Gondoro tradition would appear to account for the preservation of local peace and normal relations between the two ethnic communities. However, the intervention of Aba Gada and local elders by traditional way was 'unable' to control the 2018 West Guji-Gedeo conflict, the conflict ended by intervention of government.

Considered this, the indigenous leaders such as Aba Gadas and elders of both sides is expected to site and communicate in depth on what has to be done regarding to such problems because they striving for the well-being of their people. And the culture and tourism bureau of the two Zones to create awareness about the role and significance of cultural value like Gondoro tradition and to transfer the other indigenous communication system for the new generation through written materials. Further, the regional and federal government take action in political leaders should protect their hand from such acts and do to maintain rule of law in the areas by which they are

governing. The regional and federal government should give recognition for indigenous institutions.

4.7.2 The Role of ‘Elders’

Elders played great role to resolve individual, family, group and inter ethnic conflict. According to elders from Gedeo; in Gedeo and Guji people conflict occurs between the ethnic groups, elders the initiative may be taken either by Guji or Gedeo send five elders to the war front where they stand at the middle of the fighting groups and shout. Following the shouting of the elders both groups hold down their arms.

The elders then cross to the opposite territory and talk with elders. They return with five elders who also discuss with the elders of the other side. Finally, elders communicate to their combatants to stop fighting and sit for reconciliation. In this case, elders from their neighboring ethnic groups would also be involved. Therefore, elders are the main participants in indigenous conflict resolution process. According to the data obtained, the elders selected in conflict resolution process by different selection criteria.

FGDG14 (Cultural and tourism bureau expert from Gedeo); the selection criteria of elders, in Gedio and Guji based on the norm and culture of the societies. Elders should be an old age because the society belief, in this age becomes more matured, wise and who have good knowledgeable and experience on the process of conflict resolution process who understand the culture and tradition of the conflicting parties preferred. Elders who are believed to have ability to solve conflicts are frequently invited and selected to solve different conflict cases in the study area. And also, the personal quality of elders like, neutrality, truthfulness, fairness, personal conduct, cultural knowledge, and his harmonious relation with the community.

Based on the above idea in the study areas elders are the main participants in the indigenous conflict resolution process. When the elders selected in conflict resolution process based age, experience, knowledge of culture and tradition of the society, potential of looking things from different dimensions and also personal qualities of elders were support the conflict resolution process.

FGDW14 (Cultural and tourism bureau expert from West Guji).....like in any traditional societies of Ethiopia, elders in Guji and Gedio are play a bigger role to resolve the conflict between individual or inter-ethnic conflicts. The key role of elders is manifested in the process of using different tactics to enforce decision and to detect the deniers of the resolution process. Who are influential from the community and know both conflicting parties. Elders in highly respected and feared by the society. They participate as a conciliators and decision makers for the high level of conflict cases like property destruction and lose of life. The elders are considered in communities as the good persons for resolve conflict and creating peace.

According from the above idea elders in the study areas influential and greatly respected by the communities. During decision making process, the elders asked the conflict parties to come and discuss their problem and also solve their problems between them. They have a power ability to persuade others and they reach natural skills to resolve conflicts because of knowing their culture, belief, values, custom and norms and they are good relationship with communities. Therefore, the elders have been well experienced in conflict resolution process. This supported by Ewa (2006), the poor and marginalized people using different type's indigenous conflict resolution methods and it depends on the specific culture of the society. Especially in developing countries some uses local elders, others religious leaders and still others use both in different times. What role play elders to resolve the current conflict between Gedio-West Guji. One respondent from elders reflect as follows:

Elders are played a vital role to resolve the conflict between Gedio-west Guji ethnic based conflicts. When we are talking about effective indigenous conflict resolution mechanism and the importance of peace by dealing the representatives of the people from both sides we try to make peace. This helps we elders to resolve conflicts in peaceful manner. We are to teach the society about the consequence and disadvantages of conflict. And finally we make a pledging not to return to a conflict. We make Gondoro tradition in both ethnic societies to resolve the conflict with out any biased. But it doesn't succeed the traditional way of conflict resolution to resolve the Gedeo and West Guji conflict. Because, due to different reasons like, unwillingness of some conflicting parties, political interference of some individual (KI6).

Elders have a great contribution in resolving conflicts through indigenous way. Elders attempts to resolve the Gedio and West Guji current conflict through Gondoro traditions but not succeed. Since, in Gedeo and Guji indigenous conflict resolution mechanism is highly implemented by the elders.

In general, elders can play great role in terms of contributing implementation of indigenous conflict resolution method and also promoting peace and preventing disagreement. However, the conflicting parties in the study areas not accepted the indigenous way of conflict resolution due to different reason. Therefore, elders in the study areas respected and feared by the society. So, elders influence and teach the societies, and the elders are responsibility to transfer this endemic culture of the society for the new generation.

4.7.3 The Role of “Religious Institutions”

Religious institutions attempt to maintain requisites for building peace across national and regional boundaries. The same is true in the West Guji-Gedeo conflict play a role. The respondents from FGD in reported that, the church was involved in various conferences in peace building, including humanitarian assistance such as the provision of food and materials to those who were internally displaced and psychological support to relieve to those affected by the conflict through counseling and performing arts. In efforts to promote peaceful co-existence at the local levels. Informants from interview in both study areas, religious leaders claimed as follows:

The religious leaders, such as the Orthodox, Protestant and the Muslim communities work to promote peaceful co-existence among conflict parties through peace meetings and dialogue forums. At the national level the religious institutions were involved in various peace building efforts, such as engaging in dialogue with the two key disputants of the crisis and being involved in Ethiopia led mediation efforts, as well as advocating for transitional justice mechanisms.

The researcher asked a question for religious leaders, what is the role of the religious institutions to resolve the current conflict between Gedeo-West Guji? One informant confirmed that:

The Gedio and Guji communities consider religious leaders as those who can act on behalf of the will of God and who could speak for truth. No one expects them to speak false because they are God envoys who are respected, trusted. Because of this, the main role that the religious institutions can play is that by teaching to their followers to resolve the two brotherhood conflicts in peaceful manner and they teach about the disadvantages of conflict, as conflict was bad and that killing person and take the property of other persons were strictly forbidden in the eyes of God and this isolates them from heaven. The main role of communication in delivering about the importance of dealing conflict in indigenous means is done by teaching the followers in contentious manner to make it inclusive. Religious institutions always take proactive measures in terms of teaching the followers about the importance of peaceful co-existence. In other way that religious institutions can play great role in terms of participated, to support the Gedio-West Guji displaced peoples through provision of foods, clothes and other necessary materials (KI7).

As the above ideas implies that the role of religious institutions in the study areas start from teaching their followers about the importance of indigenous conflict resolution in sustainable peace and standing the process of promoting peace in the study areas. Religious institutions in current West Guji-Gedeo conflict was play a better role next to Gondoro traditions and elders. Aquiline (2002) claim that, religious institutions contributions are often ignored by local governments and foreign policy practitioners, which, if properly used, could be an incentive to the process of peace building. Politicians and policymakers fail to recognize the role that religious peacemakers can play in building trust and facilitating processes of reconciliation and peace building.

The researcher opinion since, some of the traditional values of religion, including honesty, justice, fair play, tolerance and respect for others are necessary for the maintenance of any society. Even more, for Ethiopian society in general and the study area in particular that has no single cultural tradition. In addition, actors in a conflict may employ religious authorities or religious language to mobilize followers and widen their base of support. Religious actors engaged in peace building can draw on a common perspective, the logical language, and shared values by adherents to gain support for peace. In general, conflict resolution based on religion and religious

institutions should be enhanced in Ethiopia. Since, Ethiopians have been characterized by religiosity. In fact, there has been growing trend in Ethiopia to solve conflicts on the base of religion.

4.7.4 The Role of Community Based Organization

Guji and Gedeo ethnic communities are rich in indigenous communication way of conflict resolution mechanism. Iddir is the other indigenous communication, which is the community based organization among the community. Iddir admits as its members mostly married peoples who are economically self-sufficient and that it is held at the places its member chooses. It may be at home or somewhere else, each hosting the others turn by turn. Its main purpose is advance preparation for an eventual death in one of the member's families. They collect cash, grains, fire woods which are needed for funeral events for mourners of the members (Jemal Adem, 2014:38).

In the west Guji-Gedeo ethnic conflict, the same with the religious institutions, this community based organizations have been participated to help displaced peoples from both side. The researcher has conducted in FGD with four respondents from selected 'Iddir' leaders.

FGDW12 (from West Guji Iddir members); clothes, money, foods and other necessary materials were collected from members of their organization and then provided to displace peoples. Mesrak Tsehay Iddir is one of the most famous Iddir in Dilla town. In this Iddir the Guji, Gedio and other ethnic groups were a member and this Iddir play a role.

One informant from Iddir confirmed that;

Actually we didn't participate in the regular conflict resolution process but indirectly participated to solve the conflict between two ethnic communities. Because, some elders from our Iddir were gave teach and advice for displaced peoples in order to return in to their original place by making peace with their brothers as before and the importance of living together in peace and tolerance. Our members helping the displaced peoples from both ethnic communities by collected necessary materials. But in the conflict resolution process our institutions play very weak role due to different reasons (KI12).

The various organization forms associated with traditional institutions may provide a basis for mobilizations, give humanitarian assistance during the emergency, assist long term recovery and build peaceful relationships in the long term (Best and Rakodi, 2011). Another informant from Iddir argued that:

Regarding the immediate responses to the Post conflict, steps taken initially after the eruption of conflict were to mount a humanitarian response in the provision of food and non-food items. Then, there was the provision of psychosocial support to address issues of peace occasioned by loss of lives and infliction of emotional and physical harm. Progressively, community forums with the involvement of church leaders and local elders were held to restrain the youth in particular to stop engaging in conflict (KI11).

In general, Iddirs were involved voluntary practice not participated in conflict resolution process as a mediators. However, their participation in resolving the conflict between the two ethnic groups was weak. As the data shows, the reason behind here is, political manipulation and weak coordination from local leaders are constraints that affect their objectives and missions as well as. Not only that those community based institutions were not recognized as a vital by other institutions in resolving the conflict. Understanding this, the government is motivation, giving supporting and giving recognition for the traditional community based organizations.

4.7.5. The Role of Intermarriage

The other indigenous communication in conflict resolution is intermarriage relation. Relation established as a result of inter-marriage and social integration restoration people from using violent means of resolving differences. Marriage is one way of bonding two travel groups in the process of peace building and conflict resolution. Marriage is a relation of men and women which is recognized by the custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both in the case of the parties entering the union.

Pretty and Ward (2011) explain, marriage is one way of bounding two travel groups in the process of peace building and conflict resolution. Ethnic marriage secretes diplomatic relations between groups and respected with each other. Inter-marriage

relation are strengths social relationship between lineages and creates a great interaction among different groups of conflicting parties.

Therefore, cross ethnic marriage relations are important, to solve conflict among ethnic communities. People who have marriage from different areas could play great role in the communities through building social relationship and towards sustainable peace. Through marriage, kinship relationships can be established between clans as well as ethnic groups.

In Gedeo and Guji society, marriage across Woredas, clans and also ethnic groups are very common. One of the Gedeo and Guji relations is inter-marriage interaction. So, marriage relations may have been created a great contribution to harmonious relationships in Gedeo and West Guji ethnic groups.

So, what role plays to resolving the two people current conflict? One informant discuss about the role of intermarriage as follows:

FGDW1 (West Guji Aba Gada); marriage has been common among factors that contributed to Gedeo and Guji harmonious relations. They have used bilateral intermarriage relation between the two groups. Today there is rare condition for both group to marry from each other because of the two groups are now in conflict. The inter-marriage relations of the two groups are not play a role to resolve the conflict between them.

One participant from FGD argues that;

FGDG2 (elders from Gedeo); the people of Guji and Gedio have respected as a intermarriage with each other. These people have got a marriage one another. Hence, Guji people marry with Gedio and Gedio vis verse. So, these ban them not to harm one another. However, in the current conflict even the society never understood that marriage relation is a big social institution to resolve the conflict. And the new generation rather than respect this cultural value they prefer to harm each other.

According to the above analysis inter-marriage relations between groups are play vital role in resolving conflict, and they promote peace and socialization. Gedio and Guji people are inter-marge with together. But, inter-marriage relations between the two groups are never play a vital to resolve the current conflict among two ethnic groups.

So, in the future the government and cultural office must give attention for inter-marriage relation in clans as well as ethnic groups. And to promote the value of culture as well as the role of indigenous communication systems for the society.

4.8. The Advantages of Indigenous Communication in Conflict Resolution

Communication is a very necessary element for resolving conflict between individual, groups or ethnic based conflict. Indigenous communication can be applied in resolving conflict situations to avoid it escalating to conflict. The verbal mode of communication can be used locally to resolve issues through the use of dialogue between the conflicting groups (Temofeh Catherine Isioma, 2017). Indigenous communication in conflict resolution mechanism is important means of resolving different conflicts in the study area. One of key informant forwarded the advantages as follows:

Indigenous communication mechanism plays a decisive role in maintaining peace from individual, clan or inter-ethnic levels of conflicts. Indigenous conflict resolution mechanism is easily accessible to the local community and gives quick response without delaying. Indigenous way of conflict resolution mechanism is resolve the conflict based on the culture, norm, and values of the society. The societies are believed as well as practiced the indigenous cultural system. So, the societies prefer the traditional communication mechanism for conflict resolution. And also the societies are believed the traditional conflict resolution mechanism. Because, the indigenous way of conflict resolution not biased for both conflicting parties, the elders judged equally. But, if conflict resolution by the modern court is happened, only one side of the conflicting parties is the winner and other side of conflicting parties is the loser. And ethnic based conflict are in resolve by formal court is too difficult. So, the people are selected the traditional one (KI9).

The above idea implies that in Gedeo and Guji communities' traditional communication system are more preferable than modern court and the societies practiced and respected the indigenous one. The indigenous communication lies in the fact that people are familiar with them and can understand, trust, accept and handle them better than externally introduced ones. They are heterogeneous, flexible in time,

location specific, suited to local socio-cultural conditions, are already in place and so involve less cost, and are accessible to the majority of a community (Negussie and Musebe, 2010).

The main important of indigenous communication in Gedio and West Guji communities are to restore peace and strengthen social relationship within and with other community. This traditional way of conflict resolution method is necessary for the re-establishment social relationship or bringing together of the society in general and conflicting parties in particular (Volker, 2007). The other features of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in the study area are minimizing cost, time, energy, developing social relationships and accessibility of justice. Regarding this, informants from FGD said:

FGDG1 (Aba Gada from Gedeo); the communication way of conflict resolution system has to minimize the cost, time and energy to resolve the conflict and the conflicting parties can solve their disagreement in their local area. And also the indigenous conflict resolution systems are resolving the conflict successfully without harming relationship. After resolve the conflict the disputants are not injured each other. Because, the indigenous conflict resolution strategies are the collaboration one, no one the winner and loser. Further more, in the current conflict resolution Gedeo and West Guji communities can have access to get unbiased, fair justice by local elders, in their local areas. Because, the local elders decisions are trusted by the people and the elders not hurt both conflicting parties. However, due to different problems, the current conflict between Gedeo-West Guji ethnic groups was not resolved by indigenous way.

The above ideas, the indigenous communication way of conflict resolution in the study areas are more advantages. Because, in terms of time, energy, cost and strengthen social relations between conflicting parties, the indigenous mechanism are more advantageous for the societies. According to data, the societies using modern/formal court method are expensive. It takes very long period of time and leads to time, energy and economic crisis. And solving conflict through formal court are conflicting parties rarely wanted to re-establishing social relationship and there might be doesn't creating everlasting peace. According to Birgit (2001), indigenous conflict resolution is important to ensure the full incorporation of parties into their societies again and

restoring social relationship. Indigenous conflict resolution system cultivates the relationship of conflicting parties towards the future. Helgesen, V. (2008) implies that, indigenous system of conflict resolution is less complex; it is fast and less costly than formal courts of law. Any disagreement that takes more than a year to resolve in a formal justice system is resolved in relatively much less time by indigenous or local institutions. In General, the indigenous way of conflict resolution system has many advantageous. Among the advantages; timely, economically, and cultural related way to treated the conflict.

4.9. The Challenges and Weakness of Indigenous Communication in Conflict Resolution

Indigenous communication mechanism has its own advantage for conflict resolution processes between individuals, family, group or ethnic communities. According to the respondent, the indigenous communication system of conflict resolution mechanism is better than formal court. And also, re-establishing the social relationship. However, the indigenous communication systems have facing many challenges from different directions and their own weakness. Despite these, the indigenous communication in Gedio and West Guji ethnic groups, which have played better role in conflict resolution process. However, the current Gedio and West Guji conflict resolution process are not effective as old times. The data obtained that, the resolution mechanism is incapacitated due to different reasons. There are challenges and limitations. According this one key informant said:

FGDG2 (Elders from Guji) stated that; first, in the effect of modernization, by which cultural value of the societies are blamed by the new generation. This is because, the new generation might not understanding and respecting indigenous cultural values, that followed by the society low level of understanding their societal values. That emanates from lack of culture and tourism office, local elders and religious leaders missed up teaching and promote about the role of indigenous communication mechanism for young generation. Second, before and during the time of conflict resolution process politicians and rich people is interference. Because of this, after few months the conflict aroused again and became a cause to displaced large amount of people from the two Zones.

FGDW9 (from West Guji Iddir informants) stated that; the current political climate in the country clearly politicized ethnic differences because of this, the current West Guji and Gedeo conflict has not resolved easily by the traditional way. And some local government leaders in the study area controlled the local leaders of indigenous institutions for political or economical interest. Hence, their credibility and acceptance by their respective people had minimized.

According to FGD participants from both side elders are great capacity and ability in resolving conflict and build social relationship of the people by increasing social harmony, addressing common problems of the communities in the study areas. But, the federal and regional government has did not give recognition for local elders and indigenous institutions. And there is no intensive from the government side. Even some local government administrators undermine the local elders and indigenous institutions. And also, the women and young males are excluded from conflict resolution and decision making process. These are the main limitation of indigenous conflict resolution mechanism.

In general, indigenous communication way of conflict resolutions in the study areas were faced some challenges and drawbacks. Because of the challenges and drawbacks the indigenous conflict resolution system was filed. Understanding this challenges and limitations, Aba Gadaas, the local elders, culture and tourism office as well as the Gedeo and Guji society are responsibility, to teach the significance of ingenious communication mechanism, about strengthen social relationship and peace building process and to transfer for the new generation. Furthermore, the Federal and regional governments giving recognition for elders and indigenous conflict resolution institutions.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations are presented.

5.2. Summary of Findings

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving the Gedeo and West Guji conflict. To conduct this study, descriptive research design employed. Qualitative research approach was used. The data collected by using in-depth interview and focus group discussions composed in different locality of the people from the Gedio and West Guji Zones. Totally 42 individuals participated as source of primary data collection. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to generate rich information. Thus, the study aimed to clarify how to resolve the Gedeo and West Guji current conflict by using indigenous communication for conflict resolution. The major findings gained through the above techniques are summarized as follows:

- The 2018 conflict between the West Guji-Gedeo ethnic groups were the question of referendum, political and economical interest of individuals and cultural conflicts were the main cause of conflict.
- The West Guji-Gedeo conflicts lead to a lot of consequence, which include the death of people, destruction of property including schools, church, looted and displaced huge number of people from their house and resources from both sides.
- Indigenous communication in conflict resolution play great role in conflict resolution and maintaining peace for a long period of time.
- The common indigenous communication way of conflict resolution mechanism of the two ethnic groups are, namely called ‘Gondoro’ tradition.

- The Gondoro tradition played a crucial role as compared to other indigenous communication in resolving the current conflict of the two ethnic groups.
- Next to Gondoro tradition, elders and religions institutions relatively played a better role.
- Iddir and inter-marriage relations played a weak role in resolving Gedio and West Guji current conflict. But, Iddir play a crucial role to support the displaced people from both ethnic communities by collecting food and necessary materials.
- Elders participated as a conciliators and decision makers in the process of conflict resolution process in the study areas. And they are considered as a good person for resolving the conflict and creating peace in the communities.
- The Gondoro tradition is performed ritual activities doing different ceremonies: they slaughtering sheep and Ox and Aba Gadas from both ethnic groups drink Milk and Honey together.
- Aba Gadas, local elders, conflicting parties, representatives of religious institutions from both ethnic groups and other third neutral party from neighboring ethnic groups were attend during conflict resolution process.
- The intervention of Aba Gada and local elders by indigenous way of conflict resolution mechanism was 'unable' to control the current conflict.
- The 2018 West Guji-Gedeo conflict were not resolved by indigenous communication way of conflict resolution mechanism. Due to different reason; politician, rich mans and local administrative leaders in the study areas has been interference the practice of Gondoro and they distributed false information in to their community, did not resolved the conflict. Unwillingness of some conflicting parties, generation gap and weak coordination of local leaders is the other problems that affect the indigenous communication of conflict resolution. These are the main reason for the repeated occurrence of conflict among the two ethnic groups.

- The West Guji-Gedeo current conflict was stopped by intervention of government.
- Collaboration (win/win) conflict resolution strategies were used. But, the conciliation is not successful and ending by using win-lose conflict resolution strategies.
- Finally, the challenge and limitations of indigenous communication in the study areas. Women and youth males were excluded from decision making process. The current political climate in the country clearly politicized ethnic differences because of this, the current West Guji and Gedeo conflict has not resolved easily by the traditional way. The local leaders were influenced by some local administrative leaders for political and economical interest. Hence, their credibility and acceptance by their respective people had deteriorated. Furthermore, the effects of modernization, in which cultural value of the societies are blamed by the new generation.

5.3. Conclusions

The Gedio and West Guji ethnic groups are facing different causes of conflict; the main cause of 2018 conflict in the study area were the questions of referendum, cultural conflict, political and economical interest of individuals.

In the study areas are using different types of indigenous communication way of conflict resolution mechanism to resolve the conflict among them. The two ethnic groups have lived for a long period of time with their own indigenous communication system for conflict resolution and maintaining peace. Indigenous communication in both ethnic groups gives a great value; it is respected and feared by the societies.

Indigenous communication in conflict resolution is important for the re-establishment of social relationship or bringing together of the two ethnic communities in general and conflicting parties in particular. After using indigenous way of conflict resolution mechanism, the conflicting parties or displaced people from Gedeo-West Guji Zone returned to their own homestead. However, after a month this reconciliation did not sustained; the conflict between the two ethnic groups aroused again; became a cause of conflict to displaced huge number of people from both sides.

The indigenous communication in conflict resolution method was fail in the study area. Due to different problems; Which include, the interface of politician, reach man, and local administrative leaders in the study areas and they distributed false information in to society of the study areas. And Generation gap and unwillingness of disputant are the other problems. Finally, the conflict between the two ethnic groups was ended by the intervention of government. And after intervention of government the conflicting parties from both sides were returned in to their residence. But, still to difficult for sustainable peace in the study areas and they were not re-establish or harmonized their relationships.

Elders participated as a conciliators and decision makers in the process of conflict resolution process in the study areas. The finding shows that the Gedeo-West Guji people belief, elders are wise, knowledgeable and experienced in conflict resolution process and also they are not emotional and partial. They are considered as a good person in resolve conflict and creating peace. The key role of elders is manifested in the process of using different tactics to enforce decision and to detect the deniers of the resolution process.

Youth males and women were not participated in the decision making process in the current conflict. In both Gedeo and West Guji people male dominant in many socio-cultural affairs and women had less participation. As a result, women are assumed to share similar perspective with their husband. But, it does not mean that women's nothing contribution for peace building process.

There are many challenges and limitations that indigenous communication mechanism facing 2018 Gedeo and West Guji conflict. First, in the effect of modernization, by which cultural value of the societies are blamed by the new generation. Because, the new generation might not understanding and respecting indigenous cultural values, that followed by the society low level of understanding their societal values. That emanates from lack of culture and tourism office, local elders and religious leaders missed up teaching and promote about the culture of the society. Second, before and during the time of conflict resolution process politicians and rich man was interference. Thus, after few months the conflict arouses again and displaced people from both sides. Third, the current political climate in the country clearly politicized ethnic differences because of this, the current West Guji and Gedeo conflict has not

resolved easily by the traditional way. Fourth, some local government leaders in the study area controlled the local leaders of indigenous institutions for personal political or economical interest. Hence, their credibility and acceptance by their respective people had minimized.

5.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings, to bring sustainable peace and harmonious relationship among the Gedeo and West Guji ethnic groups, the researcher attempted to forward the following recommendations.

- ❖ Regional and local governments should promote, enhance and facilitate the societies to work together with local elders so as to enable communities to handle their problems by themselves through their own indigenous communication way of conflict resolution mechanism practiced by the society for along years.
- ❖ The federal government must support or use exiting different media, especially community radio programs to educate and inform the rural people about the culture of the society and the role of ingenious communication system to resolve conflict and promote peaceful solutions for conflicts.
- ❖ Local elders, local administrative leaders and cultural and tourism bureau experts should work cooperatively and they should teach the new generation about the indigenous culture of the communities and role of indigenous communication conflict resolution mechanism in terms of sustainability of peace in the two brotherhood ethnic groups. This is important to transfer for the new generations.
- ❖ The regional and federal governments should give recognition for local elders and indigenous institutions.
- ❖ The politician, rich man and local administrative leaders should protect their hand for such acts and do to maintain rule of law in the area by which they are governing.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Interview Guideline for both the in-depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion (for West Guji and Gedeo informants).

Introduction:the purpose of this interview is to gather information related to conflict and indigenous communication in conflict resolution mechanisms. This interview guide is prepared to MA thesis entitled: **“The role of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving inter-ethnic conflict: Gedio and West Guji in focused.”**The data to be collected from this interview will be used only for educational purpose. Your response will be kept confidential. So, I kindly request you to participate in this study voluntarily. The quality of this study will greatly depend on your responses. Therefore, I would like to ask your consent to record your voice through the tape recorder, because it is difficult to jot down your response. Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation!

Research site identification and background of key informants

Full name ----- Sex----- Age-----

Woreda -----

Kebele -----

Marital status -----

Educational Level -----

Occupation-----Religion-----

Role in the community -----

For how long you have been living in the area-----

Place of interview -----

Time and duration of interview -----

Interview for ethnic Gedio and West Guji (ethnic Oromo) informants

Interview for Aba Gadas and Local Elders

1. What is conflict for you?
2. What are the major causes of conflict between West Guji and Gedio community?
3. What types of conflict existed among the two ethnic community?
4. Who are the main actors among Gedio and West Guji conflict resolution process?
5. How was the conflict resolved?
6. What are the common indigenous conflict resolution methods between the two ethnic groups that addressing the conflict?
7. How is Gondooro selected for resolve conflict among the two ethnic groups?
8. What materials are involved in performing ritual? Does that symbolize?
9. What kinds of conflict resolution strategies are used for resolving conflict between West Guji and Gedio conflicts?
10. What is the role of indigenous communication in resolving the two ethnic group conflicts?
11. What are the acceptances of the conflicting parties the indigenous communication system of conflict resolution mechanism?
12. How long Guji and West Guji conflicts resolved quickly? What were the observed crisis in the conflict are not resolved quickly?
13. How do you assess your effectiveness concerning the use of Indigenous communication mechanism in addressing conflicts?
14. What are the challenges and weakness of indigenous communication mechanism in resolving Gedio and West Guji conflict?

Interview for Religious Leaders

1. What is conflict for you?
2. What are the major causes of conflict among West Guji and Gedio community?
3. What types of conflict existed among the two ethnic community?
4. What is the role of religious institution in resolving West Guji and Gedio conflict?
5. How do you communicate among conflicting parties about conflict resolution?
6. How does church promote peace after and before the conflict resolution?
7. How do you assess religious institutions effectiveness in addressing conflicts between Gedio and West Guji current Conflict?
8. What are the challenges and weakness of religious institutions in resolving Gedio and West Guji conflict?

Interview for Community Based Organization

1. What are the major causes of conflict among West Guji and Gedio community?
2. What types of conflict existed among the two ethnic community?
3. How do you communicate among conflicting parties about conflict resolution?
4. What is the role of your institution in resolving West Guji and Gedio conflict?
5. How does your club promote peace after and before the conflict resolution?
6. What are the acceptances of the conflicting parties this indigenous communication channels?
7. How do you assess your effectiveness in addressing conflicts among West Guji-Gedio current conflict?
8. What are the challenges and weakness of your organization in resolving Gedio and West Guji conflict?

If you have any additional points related to the issue under discussion, please forward.
Thank you very much for providing me valuable information!

Appendix B: Focused group dissection (FGD) for Participant

1. What are the main causes of conflict between West Guji and Gedio ethnic conflict?
2. What are the common indigenous communication conflict resolution strategies within the two ethnic groups that resolve conflicts?
3. Who are the main actors within the indigenous communication in conflict resolution process?
4. What are the acceptances of the conflicting parties the indigenous communication system of conflict resolution mechanism?
5. How long Guji and West Guji conflicts resolved quickly? What were the observed crisis in the conflict are not resolved quickly?
6. What are the challenges and weakness of the indigenous communication in resolving conflict?
7. What are the challenges and weakness of indigenous communication in resolving Gedio and West Guji conflict?

If you have any additional points related to the issue under discussion, please forward. Thank you very much for your active participation and providing me valuable information!

Appendix C: Profile of Study Participants

Profiles of key informants in this study are listed under the following table. For the purpose of collecting the necessary data in-depth interview and focus group discussion were used.

No	Code	Sex	Age	Place of interview	Date of interview	Occupation
1	KI-1	M	70	Bule Hora	26/5/2019	Aba Gadaa (Guji)
2	KI-2	M	28	Dilla	7/5/2019	Aba Gadaa (Gedeo)
3	KI-3	M	70	Dilla	12/4/2019	Elders (Gedeo)
4	KI-4	M	86	Dilla	12/4/2019	Elders (Gedeo)
5	KI-5	M	64	Gerba	24/5/2019	Elders (Guji)
6	KI-6	M	56	Kercha	24/5/2019	Elders (Guji)
7	KI-7	M	53	Bule Hora	25/5/2019	Religious leader (Guji)
8	KI-8	M	55	Dilla	13/4/2019	Religious leader (Gedeo)
9	KI-9	M	35	Bule Hora	24/5/2019	Expert (Guji)
10	KI-10	M	38	Dilla	13/4/2019	Expert

						(Gedeo)
11	KI-11	M	68	Dilla	14/4/2019	Iddir member (Gedeo)
12	KI-12	M	40	Buli Hora	24/5/2019	Iddir member (Guji)

Appendix D: Focus Group Discussion with participants



Figure2: Focus Group Discussion with Gedeo participants at GLM



Figure3: Focus Group Discussion with West Guji participants at Bule Hora Hotel