Examining Potentials of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Institutions in Creating Cohesive Community Beyond Resolving Conflicts: The Case of Arsi Oromo, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT
The study deals with examining potential of indigenous conflict resolution institutions in Oromo society: The case of Arsi Oromo People. The objective of this study was to indicate the role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in creating cohesive communities beyond resolving conflicts. Qualitative data collection approaches (interview, focus group discussion, observation and document analysis) as primary and secondary data sources respectively employed. Furthermore, purposive sampling method was employed to select respondents in order to get reliable data pertinent to the study. The finding of the study revealed that indigenous conflict resolution institutions in Oromo society plays a crucial role in creating cohesive communities beyond resolving conflicts. Likewise, the finding of the study showed that besides resolving any forms of conflict, this institution ensures trust-based relationship among and between the conflicting parties which resulted from a win-win solution, sustaining relationship through realizing justice, healing conflict-traumatized parties. Furthermore, the result revealed that these institutions play a role in transforming destructive conflict to long lasting peace and also maintains mutual coexistence and prosperity. The result also confirmed that in spite of its contributions these institutions was not be properly recognized and strengthened by the legal system of the country. The finding of this study also indicated that due to the impact of globalization, generations are overwhelmed by trends of global culture and becoming reluctant to these institutions. In order to make peace sustainable across the country, these traditional institutions should get legal recognition by the government as well as conducting awareness campaign to bring back the society to its roots and customs so as to practice indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms to make peace durable.

Keywords: Conflict, Courts, Indigenous, Institutions

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BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

There is no universally agreed upon definition regarding conflict given by scholars (Ugwu, et al., 2015). The complexity of the term by itself forced scholars of the field to give different definition. For instance (Coser as cited in Abebe, 2015) attempted to define conflict as a struggle or incompatibility over values, claims to status and scares resources, in which the aim of the conflicting parties is not only the desired value but also neutralized injuries or eliminate their rivals. Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in human society’s sphere of life since the entire life of human kind is manipulated by the prevalence of conflict within the society when contradicting opinion, interest and values among the people (Dagnachew, 2018). Whenever incompatibility of goals or values exists between two or more parties in their relationship which followed with attempts to control the antagonistic feelings of each other’s conflict become inevitable (Abebe, 2015).

Conflict is a relationship between parties in which each of them perceive the others goals, values, interest or behaviors as sharply contrasted to its own advantages. It is a social situation in which a minimum of two parties in conflict strives to acquire at the same movement in time, an available set of scare resources which is impossible. Hence, conflict is the mean to solve and overt complete fission, thereby preserving some kinds of unity (Filicha, 2012). The conditions of scarcity of resources and value incompatibilities can become a continuing source of contention which ultimately manifested through adversarial social action, involving two or more actors with the expression of differences often accompanied by intense hostilities (Ho-won jeong, 2010). Most of the time failure or inability to manage antagonistic relationships, significantly contribute to arise protracted conflict in a particular society.

In order to fill the gap in modern legal systems to handle disagreement and tensions bottom-up approach are more effective to rectify diverse interests, conflicts and polarized views arise within or among groups (Gonfa, 2014). Applying selected traditional dispute resolution mechanisms therefore is essential to heal conflicts across communities, corporations, and governmental agencies (Endalkachew, et al., 2015). Likewise, it also is helpful to transform the peacebuilding approach more institutionalized to promote a more rule-governed society by handling complaints arising from employment relations, poor quality of services, claims over property ownership or opposition to development projects (Mehari, 2015).

In support of the aforesaid fact, Abebe (2015) argued that indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in Africa mainly bounded with socio-political and economic realities of the communities. These mechanisms directly or indirectly rooted from their culture and history of the people; however, the approach is peculiar to each community. Ethiopia, as one of the oldest nations in Africa, holds various ethnic groups living together for centuries, as conflicts inevitable, these people have adopted their own traditional conflict resolution mechanisms which are unique to each ethnic group (Abebe, 2015). Nevertheless, the legal system which adopted from the western philosophy is highly influenced by individualistic orientation and doesn’t fit with the Africans social orientations on the ground where it is implemented (Meron, 2010). The bases of this assertion came from various research findings regarding the suitability of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms to heal protracted conflicts amicably (Tamene, 2013; Meron, 2010; Jemila, 2014 and Dejene, 2011) but these research findings lack to show the far-reaching potential of these institutions beyond conflict resolution. Therefore, this paper attempted to examine the potential impacts of indigenous conflict resolution approaches in creating socially cohesive communities by taking the Arsi Oromo Society as a case study.
RATIONALITY OF THE RESEARCH

Ethiopia is a museum of diversified societies where various ethnic groups lived together having their own unique culture, religion, custom and traditions (Meron, 2010). This makes the country as a home of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms as well as a melting-pot to nurture intertwined customs, culture and traditions of the various ethnic groups (Desalegn, et al., 2005). Thus, these institutions play irreplaceable role in transforming intra and inter group’s conflict of any type (Daniel, 2016). A notable example, in this regard, the Oromo people are known as legalistic societies in Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular in their laws which are consciously crafted rules, not customary evolved habits (Asmarom, 2006). In the nutshell, Oromo society is governed by a democratic and an all-inclusive system known as the Gadaa. The Gadaa system is the most known organizational structure which governs the political, social, cultural and judicial practices of the Oromo society (Ibid). Among the Oromo communities, the Arsi Oromo is played role guardians of the Oromo cradle land for those Oromo who are mainly Barenttuma descent. The Arsi alone remained tied to Barenttuma cradle lands until they too lost their political and ritual institutions under the state formation process of the imperial regime (Gemechu, 2013).

As we have seen from literatures, conflict is not only destroying the physical property but it also erodes psychological and social capital of a society. As of Tamene (2013) whether interpersonal or intra group conflict have a potential to leaves mistrust and animosity between conflicting parties. He further adds, any sustainable conflict resolution mechanisms often aimed to reintegrating forsaken communities through restoring their interpersonal, intergroup or intercommunity relationship (Tsega, 2002). Consequently, scholars such as ...... emphasized that conflict resolution mechanism should target on repairing broken relationships and restoring of the lost trust between conflicting parties to make peace long-lasting (Gumi, 2016). The challenges, however, is not about the occurrence of conflict, rather creating a mutually agreed platform between disputants to defy the root cause of the conflict amicably is a difficult puzzle (Ibid). Literature wise, there are a lots of research findings that shows the significance of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in deterring violent conflicts, but all of them lacks to show role of indigenous conflict resolution approaches in creating a socially cohesive community. I investigate empirically and theoretically with the aid of conflict theories, the role of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in creating socially cohesive communities beyond conflict resolution. To be able to conduct this research empirically, the following research questions are to be answered: (1) To examine potentials of indigenous conflict resolution institutions in creating cohesive communities beyond conflict resolution by taking the Arsi Oromo as a case study? (2) To evaluate contribution of indigenous conflict resolution institutions in restoring trust in conflict prone communities? (3) Exemplifying the ways how indigenous conflict resolution institutions plays crucial role in realizing just society? And (4) To evaluate perceptions of the new generations on indigenous conflict resolution institutions?

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Conceptual Definitions
Conflict by its nature is a fluid concept and defines differently for academic purpose (Galtung, et al., 2010). According to (Ho-won jeong, 2010) defines conflict as a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility with the wishes of the others. While, Chappell (2017) on the other hand, states conflict as some considers as something only negative and to be completely avoided due to the fear they have, it may threaten their existing status quo which they like to maintain. The self-ego on a certain position that tries to keep the personal interest at the expenses of the others.
leads some individuals to give the negative concepts to conflict, although there is also another possible way to consider conflict as a constructive outcome which could give courage in certain tasks for better accomplishments (Filicha, 2012).

Conflict is a natural phenomenon and occurs as a result of incompatible goals of human beings which can be driven by the unfulfilled needs and fears of the society expressed in different situations and forms (Galtung, et al., 2010). Indeed, it is very natural to have different interests among people. What pleases one person does not always please the others. Happiness is in a way that in every individual’s perception. Therefore, even if it is not always, occasionally being unhappy could lead a person to have a conflict with the other/others as a matter of searching for self-desires (Bonta, 1996). Of course, it does not totally mean that people’s idea or interests will never be compatible at all; and is always end in an unhappy way. Indeed, people can come up with certain arrangements based on their desire to understand one another by building a sense of tolerance in their minds (Ho-won jeong, 2010).

Conflict is inherent in society, and thus crafting mechanisms to deal with needs a mutually agreed upon platform. Sadly, the decline of traditional authority and its role in conflict mediation has contributed to the proliferation of large-scale conflicts. Conflict is an inevitable process of social life, a continuing reality of social existence (Cassandra, 2015). In summary, the term refers to a situation where incompatible interests between persons, groups, organizations or nations lead to a struggle between them. The notion of a clash of interests presupposes something more than what is typically implied by such terms as disagreement. This clash is an evidence of a gap in communication (Mustefa, 2018).

According Daniel (2016) conflict are inevitably normal, positive and even sometimes necessary and useful for societal changes which causes as a factor of life and often creative. In our day-to-day interaction with others, either observed or pass-through conflict, which range from the very interpersonal quarrel, family and neighbors dispute, ethnic and inter-state conflict to the global war (Ugwu, et al., 2015). To sum up, the definitions confirmed that conflict is inevitable in human life. Indeed, difference in human being is one of a social and natural incident, which ranks among all age in human life, which leads to disagreement that results conflict (Cassandra, 2015).

Causes of Conflict
The discourse about causes of conflict is very often limited to very few reasons. This is due to the limited perception of the dynamics of conflicts and it tends to limit the perspectives of those involved in the conflict to explore the right remedy to rectify their conflict (Tamene, 2013). It is important, however to go beyond addressing the causes of the conflict, instead needs to understand the root causes of each conflicts to heal the trauma and mistrust of the conflicting parties (Ibid). This is because various research findings indicated that there will be a probability of existing multiple causes of conflict, but most people are often looking the subsidiary element of the causes of the conflict due to their inability to see the much-hidden causes of the conflict (Meron, 2010). Various empirical studies conducted by Asefa (2009); Tamene (2013) and Tirsit (2014) indicated that there has been intermittent conflict among Ethiopian communities in general and Arsi Oromo in particular. Their persistent causes of conflict mainly associated with killing for honor, social status, sense of enmity, competition for scares resources such as grazing land and water, marginalization, seeking social recognition and deliberate exploitation of some political leaders.
Indigenous Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is all about process-oriented activities that aim to address the underlying causes of any conflicts (Bonta, 1996). Accordingly, there are various types of processes of conflict resolution and they can be seen on a continuum ranging from mediation, conciliation and third-party negotiation which are characterized by collaborative, participatory, informal, non-binding processes to the process of courts and tribunals institution which focus on adversarial, fact oriented, legally binding and imposed decisions (Bonta, 1996). Basically, non-adversarial process such as mediation, negotiation, arbitration and conciliation are practices which have been associated with conflict resolution or alternative dispute resolution (Mutisi, 2012). In a more comprehensive way, Bonta (1996) stated that conflict resolution implies different pathways to deal with, transform and to change the underlying causes of conflict to the extent where behaviors will no longer be violent, attitudes no longer hostile, and the structure of conflict will be changed.

Indigenous institutions are known by different terms such as traditional mechanisms or traditional approaches. For the purpose of this research, indigenous institutions are defined as those institutions that have been experienced for long period of time and have developed within societies, rather than being the product of external importation (Gonfa, 2014). In essence, these institutions are implanted in the culture, traditions and history of societies, and are embedded in the socio-political and economic setting of a given society (Ibid). For many scholars, customary institutions of conflict resolution basically exist within a particular cultural context and are unique to particular societies, and reactive to the justice desires of societies (Mutisi, 2012). Oruwari (2006) also confirmed that since societies have diverse cultures and historical experiences, the processes of conflict resolution mechanisms that have been developed by various societies eventually are different. In terms of essence, indigenous institutions of conflict resolution are not only about adjudication of who is right or wrong and the punishment of offenders. In addition, they reconcile the conflicting parties to avoid reoccurrence of conflict. In other words, these institutions are aimed at transformation of conflict in which both parties are satisfied and ready to let go their pain and forgive each other (Mutisi, 2012).

As Ethiopia is the oldest nation in Africa, indigenous conflict resolution institutions have long-held roots. It was and still is many customary institutions of conflict resolution widely practiced across the country (Tirsit, 2004). People peacefully obey to indigenous institutions, leaders and elders than modern government system. Although many ethnic groups of Ethiopia have their own distinct indigenous institutions of conflict resolution, council of elders is a common institution in almost all communities in Ethiopia (Tirsit, 2004). From 86 ethnic groups in the country, the Oromo society is very rich and diverse in culture, history and legal traditions. There are indigenous conflict resolutions that serve the role of judicial activities in Oromo society (). To mention some of them are Jaarsumma, Guma, Galluu System, Siinqee, Ilaafilaame, Harmahodha and Guddifacha. Oromo people are one of the communities that use traditional ways of conflict resolution which they call ‘Jaarsumma’ (Miressa, 2018). These people have an extensive and very rich culture and tradition which have been accumulated for centuries and have been handed down from generation to generation as a source of pride of the people. The community elders’ conciliation (Jaarsummaa) as an informal method of conflict resolution whereby elders of a given community willingly or upon the request of disputants, mediate parties through Jaarsummaa, which has been used across all Oromo clans for centuries (Gonfa, 2014). In the Oromo society, as it could be true in other societies as well elders have moral
responsibilities to resolve conflict and establish peace in their community. They are supposed to resolve any kind of conflict that they may come across in their community (Miressa 2018). Some of the well-known indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms among the Oromo people are explained as follows.

**Gumaa:** it is one of the Oromo indigenous institutions of conflict resolution mechanism whereby justice is administrated, peace-building and social healing instrument that often persist and functions to-date (Asmarom, 2006). The conceptual understanding of *Gumaa* requires knowledge about the exemplary democratic system of the Oromo society known as the Gada System which is a complex and comprehensive institution that permeates the political, social, cultural, and economic aspects of the Oromo’s (Tamene, 2013). As of Dibaba (2012) Gumaa is a ritual and ceremonial institution of settling blood feuds between two persons, families, groups, clans, communities or even nations. It is a unique indigenous conflict resolution mechanism drawn from the cultural knowledge of the Oromo which often used to address irreversible conflict via Western approach to conflict resolution (Dejene, 2011). However, it was meant since its inception and applicable contemporarily as, or even more applicable than models imported from western cultures in addressing homicide in context but Gumaa is indigenous because it is rooted in and from local contexts, experiences and practices (Jemila, 2014). Gumaa is a mechanism to settle disputes among different Oromo class as well as those arising with in clans and families who entered in to conflicts against one another particularly when life is lost. It is a mechanism which restores peace and stability based on justice and truth (Mustefa, 2018).

According to Gemechu (2007) Guma proceedings in homicide cases are categorized in to three on the bases of the cause of the act and other circumstances surrounding the offence. These categories are Gumaa Adi which applies when the murder is committed intentionally by one of the rival groups against the other. Gumaa Barru is a Gumaa applicable to cases of homicide which were unintended but somehow contributed by negligence of the perpetrator. In this case there is no sense of enmity between the killer and the killed. The last but not least, Gumaa Gurraati in this category the Gumaa happens when a person kills another friendly person without using any sort of deadly weapons. Here, homicide is committed by unforeseen situation but the offender is acted in normal circumstances or undertakes practices accepted as usual in the society.

**Sinqee:** it is a stick symbolizing a socially sanctioned set of rights exercised by Oromo women (Jemila, 2014). Women are also able to convince their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers to stop fighting and settle their cases through negotiation. They have a special skills and power in settling conflicts. As a result, Oromo women formed collective struggle through building the Sinqee solidarity. Gemechu, (2007), Kuwe, (1997), Desalegn et al. (2007) asserted that there was a check and balance mechanism built into the Gadaa system by which Sinqee was institutionalized, and women formed parallel organizations of their own which actively excluded men. The most important principle of Sinqee, therefore, is building sisterhood and allying to fight against oppression. It plays social, economic, religious and political roles among Oromo women. When their rights are violated; conflicts arise between the same or different groups, clans, the *Sinqee’s* takeover a mediator role to control a conflict and also serve as preachers of peace and unity (Kuwe, 1997). To sum up, the Gadaa and Sinqee institutions greatly influenced the Oromo value system in Oromo society. These two institutions helped maintain Saffu (Oromo moral codes) in Oromo society by enabling Oromo women to have
control over resources and private spaces, social status, sisterhood and solidarity by deterring men from infringing upon their individual and collective rights (Aseffa, 2009; Dirribi, 2011).

**Qaalluu:** it is the Oromo indigenous religion that serves as the preserver and protector of Oromo culture. According to Gemechu, (2013) Oromo indigenous religion is centered on a belief in a supreme deity called *Waaqa* (God). *Waaqa* is considered as pure, intolerant of injustice, crime, sin and falsehood, the source of everything, the source of all life and knowledge. It is believed that *Waaqaa* speaks through the *qaalluu* to the people. Qaalluu guards and interprets the law of *Waaqaa* and ayyaana. Qaalluu is also said to be knowledgeable about the customs and laws of the Oromo. As Kuwe (1997) and Asmarom (2006) underlined that whatever its origin the qaalluu institution has been in function since time of immemorial, as one of the most important institutions in guarding and interpreting the law of the creator (*Waaqa*).

According to Assefa (2005), there is also a belief among the Oromo people the qaalluu penalizes a party who give false statement during rectifying conflicts. This belief forces the conflict parties to present accurate and true cases concerning the conflict before qaalluu institution that helps to provide justice and fair decision. Although Qaalluu institution is historically native to Oromo culture (Kuwe, 1997). It is serving to resolve conflicts across different ethnic groups of Ethiopia either with the same name or another. The Wofa spiritual institution among North Showa of Amhara Region (Meron,2010) qaalluu among Ma’o, qoollaa among Shinasha and Gafia among the Gumuz of Benishangul Gumuz Region (Tsega, 2002) and are believed to come from transformed Maccaaa Oromo Qaalluu institution with spirit medium ship role.

**Reason to Prefer Indigenous Conflict Resolution**

Many African citizens have lost faith in the ability of their nations’ courts to provide timely justice to grievances (Bukari, 2013). In support of this fact, Obi (2007) and Asogwa (2009 describing the character of Alternative Traditional Dispute Resolution is unique for its informality, equity, direct participation and communication between disputants. This African strand of search for peace encourages community ownership of the conflict resolution where traditional rulers and their cabinet, council of elders, family members, town unions, and age grades and women groups have unique roles and significance. It is generally faster and less expensive and based on more direct representation by the disputants rather than being run by lawyers, judges and the state (Oruwari, 2006). The disputants are involved in out lining the processes to be used and also define the substance of the agreement. This enhances people’s satisfaction with the outcome as well as their compliance with the agreement (Bukari, 2013). It is based on an integrative approach. They are more cooperative and less competitive than court-based methods like litigation that are adversarial. It tends to generate less escalation and ill-will between parties (Dev Raj, etal., 2008). Ultimately improves friendship, rather than worsen the relationship between the disputing parties. This is a key advantage where the parties must continue to interact after settlement (Ibid).

**Preconditions to Make Indigenous Conflict Resolution Successful**

Despite the commitment of the parties in addressing to the problem, susceptibility to a win–win solution is contingent on the constellation of interests and the availability of alternative options (Daniel, 2016). The mechanisms of reducing structural inequalities create a more tolerant social environment within a community (Mustefa, 2018). The improved inter-group relations could not emerge in an insecure social, economic, political, and military environment which creates uncertainty.
(Tirsit, 2005). Furthermore, it is centered on the value of truth, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, addressing the affected relationship and voluntary participation (Daniel, 2016 and Tamene, 2013).

However, if there is refusal of the decision which is given by the elders’ punishment extends to isolate perpetrators from the entire communities, refusal to bury him if he dies, not to let him marry, not to let anyone marry his daughters and not to let him water his cattle in any hora (dam) or ela (well) in the land (Tamene, 2013). He was banished from the society and forced to live among the neighboring people outside his Maddas (original place) until he/she submit peacefully to the elders (Dirribi, 2011). Peace is a pervasive and sustained concern in human life. The long blessings that are given daily by Oromo elders are prayers for peace (Dirribi, 2011). The theme of peace is everywhere which referred as “river of blessings” a felicitous phrase which is appropriate when it refers to the Oromo’s deep concern with and prayers for peace (Asmarom, 2000). In addition, Oath, blessing, Cursing and Spiritual mechanism are used to enforce the decision and also the mediators are trusted by the parties to a conflict, honorable, good reputation, wisdom, exemplary, experienced and talented (Kuwe, 1997).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS
This research subscribes qualitative research approaches so as to forward a sound and practically implemented recommendations to make indigenous conflict resolution mechanism effective in creating sustainable peace among communities. In this study qualitative survey research design based on contextual discourses analysis with respect to conflict resolution institutions used. For the accomplishment of any research the design selected by the researcher is crucial because the methods selected directly affect the findings of the study. Hence, this research is designed and employed a qualitative approach. Due to its capacity to examine; understand and explain social phenomenon, interpretation of the phenomenon in its natural settings to make sense in terms of the meaning peoples are given to the settings (Rogers, 2010).

According to Kothari (2004) qualitative research is useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon. It also helps the researcher to ask participants broad and general questions, collects the detailed views of participants in the form of words or images, and analyzes the information for description and themes. From this data, the researcher interprets the meaning of the information drawing on personal reflections and past research (Zoltan, 2007). Furthermore, relevant and necessary data is needed for any research to reach to the final conclusion and to answer the research questions. To collect the necessary and relevant data various methods like key informant interview, focus group discussion and observation are used (Cresswell, 2003).

Data Collection Tools
For this study, both primary and secondary data sources employed and explained as follows. The primary sources: the primary sources were the Arsi Oromo community living in the Oromia National Regional State who has different societal status such as elders, Abba Gada, kebele, woreda and zonal administrative personnel, leaders of indigenous social institutions and other organizations working on similar social and cultural issues.

The secondary sources: included different research works, documents, journals, printed and unprinted master thesis which is relevant to the topic under study and related literatures to enrich the primary data.
Procedures of Data Collection
With regards to collecting the primary data, key informant interviews; structured and semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions conducted depending on the type of information I intended to gather. And finally, personal observation methods employed for collecting data on specific issues and research targets, the attitude and perception of the target, and the existence of supplementary method such as systematic interview was utilized. The researcher also prepared a list of questions for all interviews before hand, however, more questions were asked depending on the rapport between me and interviewees. All interviews was conducted in Afan Oromo as it is the local language, I and informants speak and did not used the service of translators which is audio taped and translated and transcribed as necessary.

Key Informant Interview
Interviews can give chance for informants to express the situation in their own ways. It is a method of data collection that involves researchers asking respondents basically open-ended questions (Cresswell, 2003). There were peoples selected in a purposeful sampling who have an ample knowledge and experiences regarding the role and real status of indigenous conflict resolution institution and its process.

In-depth interviews are an essential part of this research, therefore, significantly relied on informant interviews for its primary data. In-depth interviews with key informants who are well acknowledged in the society and playing their role in social, economic and cultural issues to come up with, a brief, reliable and up-to-date account on the topic under study (strenger, 2007). The researcher uses note taking as a technique during the interview because this helps the interviewees to think they have something important to say if they see you are taking notes while you write they may add more information and note taken properly is not easily fail (Rogers, 2010).

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)
Focus group discussion is one among the crucial techniques of qualitative data collection in social sciences. According to Longhurst (2007) stated that focus groups discussion was useful for researchers wishing to orientate themselves to a new field and enhance the role of the research participants in regulating the research findings. I conducted FGD at Ogolcho, Chafe Jila and Dugdabatu Kebeles from Zeway dugda woreda and Gobesa and Tareta kebeles from Shirka Woreda. Participants of focus group discussion were selected through purposive sampling technique in cognizant to age, roles in the community, participation in the conflict and conflict resolution mechanisms and work on gender issues.

Observation
The researcher gets the chance to participate in actual Sinqee ritual while I was on the field, participated on Guma Ceremony in Chafejila on killing incident 2016 and Jaarsummaa on Shirka Woreda when I was there for field work 2010. In addition, I got the chance to observe the Faragasa ritual ceremony of Ayyo Mominia 2012 which helps me to observe how these institutions are practiced. According to O’ Leary, (2004) observation provides an opportunity to get beyond people’s opinions and self-interpretation of their attitudes and behaviors towards an evaluation of their actions in practice. It also enables researchers to record necessary information that become the basis for making descriptions from which participants bring their explanation (Stringer, 2007). In addition to what will be gathered from informants from the emic point of view, observation allows the researcher
to formulate his/her own view of at least part of the issue the researcher aims to research. Beside the information obtained from the participants in various mechanisms above (Gray, 2004).

**POPULATION, SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

The total population represents this study were 85 respondents selected from the Woreda’s chosen for this research. Unfortunately, there is no hard and fast rule in setting the optimal sample size. However, the larger the sample the more accurate the result and helps to make generalizations (Zoltan, 2007). Therefore, for this study 35 community elders, 13 Gadaa officials (Abbaa Gadaa), 28 women’s and 9 expertise from culture and tourism office were drawn as a sample which researcher believes the number of this respondents were manageable.

Sampling techniques: for this study purposive sampling is administered by the researcher to select sample respondents of Elders and women. Availability sampling (convenience sampling) is administered by the researcher to select Gada officials and expertise, because it helps to select members of the targeted population for the purpose of the study in which they are available, accessible and frequently take part in conflict resolution institutions. Thus, purposive sampling was favored in this study as it allowed for variation and enabled particular choices to be made relative to a particular research situation. In order to arrive at an in-depth investigation of the potential of conflict resolution institutions practice in the study area. The respondents or selected peoples who are represent the society by their knowledge and skills of conflict resolution and about the cultures, tradition of the society was taken from the target population with employing the sampling techniques, preferred for this study.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

Since the target populations of the study were elders from three selected Woreda’s of the Arsi Zone very well informed, having lived experiences and expertise from cultural and truisim office who were accumulated knowledge on indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms purposefully selected for this research. Therefore, 85 of the total population of the study were taken as the population of the study out of which 29 respondents from Zuway Dugda Woreda, 34 respondents from Shirka Woreda and 22 respondents from lode Hetosa Woredas. Accordingly, I interviewed 4 groups interviews such as 15 interview of elders, 10 Womens and all Gada officials and Woreda expertise participants. 5 focus groups discussion was conducted and each having 5-10 participants one at Zuway Dugda, Lode Hetosa and Shirka Woreda. I conducted personal observation.

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
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Legend: P-population, S- Sample
ANALYSIS OF DATA
In line with the qualitative research design paradigm planned to adapt in this study, qualitative data analysis methods were employed. I conducted document analysis to get the necessary and reliable information by reviewing the available documents. This method then helps me to cross check and triangulate the data obtained through interview and focus group discussions and observation. So, the qualitative research method is the most selected method that is used in the course of conducting this study. The method is preferred in its ease for analyzing and interpreting non quantitative data that are to be gathered on social, cultural, and gender-based parameters of the study (Omeji, 2014 and Sara, 2016).

Result and discussions
This part of the study dealt with presentation of data through narrative analysis which procedurally includes practices and experiences related to conflict resolution institutions and empirical research studies (Chappell, 2017). In the analysis reference was made to units such as the challenge and prospect, the potentials of the institutions and findings which were stated to solve the overwhelming reluctance of the generation related to the institutions and prospective solution to conflicts (Omeji, 2014). The points were, so far related to conflict prevention, resolution and the potential of transformation mechanisms in the post-conflict situation were looked into (Sara, 2016).

Background Information of Respondent’s Responses
In order to identify the potential of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms beyond conflict resolution different cases and reasons raised by the researcher to five focus group discussion in which all the group involves 38 respondents and four groups of interviews in which 47 respondents are take part in the interview. In addition, the interview and focus group discussion responses were supplemented by personal observation. Hence, different analysis is done based on the responses of the interviewee and focus group discussion

Analysis on Building Trust Based Relationship among the Conflicting Parties
According to my informant indigenous conflict resolution institutions are effective and efficient in resolving conflict and results in building trust-based relationship among the disputants indicated that traditional conflict resolution institutions drive its legitimacy from the participant and consensus of the community. In addition, the institutions based their power on the customs of the society and also accepted by the community as governing principles. Hence, it is deeply rooted in the culture, custom and tradition of the society that is why it is believed to binds the society. Furthermore, the institutions focus on reconciliation to reduce tensions and rebuild social relations which is pivotal in the restoration of social agreement and community interconnectedness.

Regarding the realization of justice and transform destructive conflict to long last peace the informants confirms that the value of the indigenous conflict resolution institutions is not to punish the wrongdoers rather emphasized at reparation of damage, restoration of the former relationship among the conflicting parties. Hence, decision is based on disclosing the truth through facts not by coercion. The mediators are elders who are truthful and elegant to convince the conflicting parties and there are devoted to restore relationship without any benefit from either side of the disputant this further strength the reconciliation process for not providing room for being corruption (in-depth interview held on March 05, 2019).
According to my informants the nature and characteristics of the conflict situation determines the reconciliation process and even the procedure to choose elders depends on the interest of the conflicting parties where both sides choose elders from their side and forward their comment where the disputants have trust on the elders selected. In addition, the conflicting parties are active participant, raising public interest and awareness and also the elders expected to be actively participating in all essential community activities, having the knowledge of the cultures and laws. Hence, this helps them to employed non-discriminatory approach in dealing with conflict which makes the reconciliation process more effective and build trust-based relation and repair the former bondage of the disputing parties (Ibid).

**ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES MEASURES TAKEN BY THESE INSTITUTIONS**

According to the responses of my informants’ indigenous conflict resolution institutions characterized by reconciliation not litigation where one party is being rewarded and the wrongdoer bear the punishment. The objective is to restore justice through win-win solution where no part in the conflict being victim of coercive measures taken by the mediators. Attempts to healing conflict traumatized parties, avoiding revenges, transparent, unbiased and participatory. Therefore, the decisions passed by the mediators are enforced through custom and values of the society such as oath, blessing, cursing, stigmatization and ostracism of the disputant who denies the measure given by the elders. Furthermore, the researcher also confirms that in its observation elders are highly respectful and knowledgeable about the customs and values of their communities and make wise decision after making an in-depth investigations from both the disputants and even refer other neutral concerned body who may have information about the cause and the incidents in the form of confession after an oath is made by taking fresh grass, bullet, metal, cereals, bone and dust which ensures impartiality and unbiased witness in the verdict. Therefore, this process of mediations facilitates the reconciliation process more effective and the measure taken by the elders accepted by both the disputants.

The elders have the knowledge and wisdom of their culture and beliefs and also respected and feared by the society because elders have the power and ability to pursued the disputant to reach an agreement as well as their natural skill to resolve conflict makes indigenous conflict resolution institutions contribute significantly in the overall affairs of the society beyond conflict resolution. In addition, the mediators are accountable, transparent and legitimate by both the community at large and the conflicting parties in handling conflict cases (Interview held on April 10, 2019).

**ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES CONCERNING RECOGNITION**

Regarding the acceptance of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in formal legal institution the FDRE 1995 constitution recognizes the validity of these indigenous conflict resolution institutions but, still the institution is not properly recognized and strengthened by the legal system. According to my informants even though structurally culture and tourism office at all level mandated the effective implementations of these institutions still there is a need to reconsider and establish strong follow up and support strategy to strength the socio-cultural values of these institutions playing a pivotal role in transforming conflict in to lasting peace in the local community in particular and the society at large. Furthermore, court officials indicates that the courts have the responsibility to encourage the society to establish institutionalized reconciliation elders who deals with the conflicting cases based on their knowledge and wisdom of their indigenous laws and customs. In addition, the federal democratic republic of Ethiopian constitution 1994/5 claims that indigenous conflict resolution institutions work cooperatively with the court and should be providing with legal recognition. However, there is still a
gap that there is no effectively established mechanism that recognized these institutions especially in the process of formalization of the decision made by indigenous conflict resolution institutions. In support of the responses of respondents Teressa (2010) states that indigenous conflict institutions are vital in resolving conflict and sustain lasting peace but, there is still a gap in recognizing the proceeding and decisions measures taken by elders in these institutions should not be formally recognized by legal courts and the judicial administration as stated in the constitution.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN
Concerning the role of women respondents said that in Ethiopian traditional communities, women make an immense contribution to peace building and unity. They preach the value of peaceful co-existence and unity. According to my informants, Ethiopian women are the first teachers of their children. As primary caretakers for children, they have more frequent contact with them than men. As a part of responsible upbringing, women socialize the children. In addition to this focus group discussion confirmed that Arsi Oromo women teach their children about their communities’ ethos and values using folk tales like stories, riddles, sayings and proverbs to indoctrinate decency, trustworthiness, and solidarity which they expect to be demonstrated in their children’s socio-economic interactions. Women plays crucial role to ensure true change and endurable peace and in peace process brings a more inclusive and sustainable peace (Cassndra, 2015). Through this steady training and socialization, they instill a culture of peace and unity in the young generation could strengthen their solidarity and which gives them an opportunity to have a chance to come together to address their complaints against unfair treatment by men in their society. To conclude women plays a crucial role in solving conflict and maintaining lasting peace in their society by using their respectful stick known as the Sinqee. The Sinqee used not only to solve conflict only rather it also used by women to force men to respect the right of women (in-depth interview held in Feb 12, 2019 with women’s, Abbaa Gadaa and Woreda experts).

Analysis of Responses Factors Negatively Impacting These Institutions
According to the responses of the interviewee indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in most cases undermined by the generations which are overwhelmed by trends of global culture and show reluctant to this institution. Furthermore, there is very weak emphasis given by concerned body like tourism office established at different levels focusing to attend, organize and reports of rituals and ceremonial activities when the community performs instead of giving continuous follow up, support and regular training regarding these institutions so as to strength the attitude and knowledge of the generation. In addition, lack of support from stake holders and not comprehensively addressed specially the educational sector miss out to include in teaching curriculum which plays a significant role in shaping the future generation towards cultivating their unique and indigenous institutions instead of admiring the imported artificial and damaging culture of the foreigners which is damaging and against these vital institutions of the society. Regarding this response I personally confirms that most of the attendants the different ritual ceremonies of these institutions are elders and aged groups even if very few young boys and girls are attending. Therefore, due concern should be given to indigenous conflict resolution mechanism so as to ensure societal norms to govern the future generation which is the basis of nurturing ethical generation. (In-depth interview with Abbaa Gadaa and experts held on February 8, 2019 in Zuway Dugda, Shirka and Hetosa).
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion
Conflict is an incompatibility of goals or values among two or more groups in their relationship combined with attempts to control the antagonistic feelings of each other’s (Asefa, 2005). Indigenous conflict resolution institutions are generally closely bound with socio-political and economic realities of the life styles of the communities where these institutions are rooted in the culture and history of the people and in one way or the other unique to each community (Dejene, 2007).

On the basis of this assertion and the finding obtained, the following conclusion has been made. According to the majority of respondents’ indigenous conflict resolution institutions practiced in Arsi Zone of Oromia regional state have been fruitful in resolving conflict and restoring justice. The institutions are also more advantageous as compared to the legal proceedings of courts which lack to provide permanent and sustainable solution to the conflict as indigenous institution deeds.

The formal court system focuses on rigid procedures which is discriminatory and coercive measures (win-lose) to enforce its decision while indigenous conflict resolution institutions enforce non-discriminatory approach where both side of the disputing parties are equally involved in the process and also the reconciliation elders are emphasis to find the truth not to punish the wrongdoers based on facts. Furthermore, the active involvement of the conflicting parties in the process and knowledge and wisdom of the elders to handle conflict based on the custom and beliefs of the society which bind and strength the trust-based relation of the community ensures to restore justice and sustain former relationship among the disputing parties and avoid avenges.

These institutions rigorously address the dynamics of conflict and set the intervention which results in building peace, stability and long-lasting relationship. The institutions focus on creating stronger form of altruism and social cooperation, before reconciliation made the mediator made an in-depth understanding of the nature of the conflict and importantly the nature of societal changes caused by the conflict which helps to speeding up the process of stabilization of relationship that broke up during the conflict. Furthermore, addressing conflict issues of these institutions go beyond the immediate cessation of hostilities rather it emphasizes to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse in to conflict.

Generally, the Oromo society like any other people certainly have for long time developed their own unique system that governs and administer the over all aspects of the society life in which indigenous conflict resolutions are one of the many institutions the Oromo society used in his day-to-day life. Hence, indigenous conflict resolution institutions serve beyond conflict resolution to strength trust-based relationship among the conflicting parties’ and peace building process in the society. Asefa (2005) asserts that the Gada in Oromo society and other specific methods are effective to manage any source of conflicts among the society so that harmony, peaceful coexistence and smooth relations would be maintained in the society. Hence, indigenous conflict resolution in Oromo of Arsi emphasize to nurture the culture of peace among society through shaping the value, attitude and behavior of its community and the young generation which base its frame on basic principles such as freedom, justice, respect, and solidarity. Developing a culture of peace helps to prevent conflicts by tackling its root cause and by solving problems through dialogue and negotiation.
Recommendation
Culture as the set of distinctive intellectual, spiritual, material and emotional features of society or a social group which is also learned, shared and symbolic plays significant role in shaping and molding relationship. This study reveals that indigenous conflict resolution mechanism plays a significant role beyond conflict resolution in maintaining the societal, cultural, and economical progress through ensuring harmony and trust-based relationship among the disputing parties in particular and the general society at large. The institutions also help in reducing the burdens of the legal litigation process which time consuming and demands more costs. The other reason the mediator are elders who are accountable, transparent and legitimate stabilized a peace agreement in a short run and sustain the peace in the long run. Hence, there is a need from the concerned body to act responsibly to reconsider the recognition of these institutions beyond superficially declaring that indigenous conflict resolution institutions are equally recognized to the legal courts system rather there is a need to formulate and implement effective strategy supported both formal structure and budget like other institutions. Furthermore, the researcher recommends further study on the Faraqasa indigenous pilgrimage center is one of the most popular pilgrimage centers in Ethiopia. It was founded by a woman named Ayyo Momina in the first quarter of the twentieth century and it is situated at a place called Faraqasa, in Arsi zone of the Oromia regional state.

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