



**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIC AND ETHICAL STUDIES**

**THE ROLE OF LOCAL ELDERS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS; THE  
CASE OF GIBE WOREDA**

**A SENIOR ESSAY SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF CIVICS AND ETHICAL  
STUDIES FOR THE PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR  
BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE (BA) DEGREE IN CIVICS AND ETHICAL STUDIES**

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## **Abstract**

*This study deals with the role of traditional conflict resolution mechanism in Gibe woreda. The main objective of this study was to assess the role of local elders (lommanna) in conflict resolution in Gibe Woreda. The researchers have tried to present quantitative and qualitative methods the result from the data collected Gibe woreda from the society, judges and elders (lommanna) itself. To this end the researchers employed to purposive sampling technique. The researchers find out some specific points regarding to the role of elders in conflict resolution and awareness of the people towards the elder role. The study has also shown that the merits of those elders (lommanna) over formal court by reduced workload. They have great role for the society by bringing lasting and sustainable peace in the future. Finally, the researchers recommended in such away; for the Gibe woreda communities to think about the services gained from elders (lommanna), even they would serve without paid. In addition to this, to make more effective those local elders' role in conflict resolution mechanism, they should get support from the government body.*

***Key words; conflict, local elders, resolving***

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## **Acronyms**

EACC – Ethiopian Arbitration and Conciliation center

FDRE –Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

USAID – United states agency for international Development

## **Terminology**

Lommanna: elders

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

There is no single definition for the term conflict. Coser (1968;233) defines conflict as struggle over values or claims to status and scarce resources, in which the aim of conflicting parties is not only the desired values but also neutralizes, injure, or eliminate their rivals. Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in human societies sphere of life since the entire life of human kind is manipulated by the prevalence of conflict with in society when people set opinion against opinion run interest against interests (Nader,1968).The traditional view of social conflict assumes that all conflicts are bad and similar with terms like violence, destruction and irrationally to rain force its negative connotation(jillo, 2002).conflict is seen as dysfunctional outcome resulting from poor communication, lack of openness and trust between peoples and the failure of governments to be responsive to the needs and aspiration of their citizens(Robin,2005,P,43). conflict as a situation in which two or more human beings desire goals which they perceive as being obtainable by one or other but not both (stanger, 2005,429-442). In other words, it is a social situation in which a minimum of two actors(parties) strive to acquire at the same movement in time and available set of scarce resources (wallestein, 2007.3).

During its process, conflict pass many stages (shrestha, 1995; 92). The emergence stage, in which conflicts starts to set in the parties involved recognized that they have different ideas and opinions on a given topic. Escalation, if the parties involved in a conflict cannot come to a resolution, the conflict may escalate. De-escalation, during these stage parties begin to negotiate and consider among up with a situation. Settlement or resolution, after hearing from all parties involved on the conflict participants are sometimes able to come up with a resolution fore the problem they are facing. Peace building and reconciliation, if the parties reach a situation its necessary to repair the relationships that may have been damaged during the escalated conflict (Ibid)

The conflict management approach based on five modes of responses or approach (Kilman, 1974; 55). Competing approach, people who take the competing are resolute in what they

Believe and want operating from opposition of power, expertise or strength. This approach is useful in an emergence situation. Accommodating Approach is used by managers who want to appear reasonable in their decision making. Avoiding approach dismissed the managers own concerns and those of the other individual living the conflict unresolved. Collaborating approach, it is known as problem contracting or problem solving. It involves an attempt to the work with the other person to find a win- win solution to the problem in the one hand and satisfy the concern of both parties. Compromise approach, it looks for an expedient and mutually acceptable remedy which partially satisfied both parties. It is advantageous in that its foster issue resolution and it is practical when the time is a factor provides a temporary remedy until the permanent one is achieved.

Conflict resolution is a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solve their central incompatibilities. Conflict resolution refers to the process that may be necessary to bring an end already existing destructive conflict. One conflict is allowed to grow and intensify; it can cause tremendous suffering and loss of human life and destructive poverty. In such condition in one of two preconditions for conflict resolution may take an initiative to end the conflict (Morton, 1991: 210). The preconditions for conflict resolution are parties in conflict must be organized. The legitimacy of the other party in conflict must be willing to recognize. The legitimacy of the other party in conflict prepared to engage in developing the procedures, institutions facilities and social rules for limiting the destructive aspect of conflict (Ibid). Conflict resolution could be understood as referring to a set of process or activities challenged towards addressing the root cause of conflict and conflict resolution referring to a process aimed that addressing cause of conflict and building a new and lasting relationship between hostile parties (Ibid).

People of the world apply different mechanisms to resolve various form of conflict. Among those mechanisms there is traditional conflict resolution mechanisms the one in which local elders try to solve different sorts of conflict (Chodoree, 1999). Traditional conflict resolution process is part of a well-structured time proven social system geared towards reconciliation, maintenance and an improvement at relationships. The methods and regulations are deeply rooted in the costumes and traditions of Africa (Ibid).

The importance and utility of the traditional conflict resolution lie in the fact that strives to restore the balance, to settle conflicts and to criminate disputes. Traditional conflict resolution process are relatively informal and thus, less intimidating. The role chief elders, family heads and others is not only actor in resolving conflict, but also anticipate and stop or intercept conflicts. Group relationships and rights are as important as individual ones as emphasis is on restoring relationship and reconciling groups (Sisay, 2002).

Local disputes involving negotiation leads to win-win situation as it takes in to account the interest of every party. The disputants acknowledge that they have something to gain and something to lose at the end. Especially in case of inter-clan conflict, local mediation involving elders are regarded as an auxiliary to governmental legal institutions. In Ethiopia but also in many African societies potentials and actual conflicts are understood in their social context so that norms, values and beliefs fears suspicions, interest and needs, attitudes and actions, relationships and networks are always taken in to account (Malan, 1997).

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Africa are generally closely bound with socio-political and economic realities of the lifestyles of the communities. These mechanisms are rooted in the culture and history of the African people and are in one way or another unique to each community. The customary courts rely on good will of the society to adhere to its ruling (Rabar and karimi, 2004). Being a Part of Africa, Ethiopia is composed a heterogeneous society with different ethnic groups. In each cord or the state of Ethiopia have their own traditional setting to resolve the conflict that appeared in their day to day life.

In southern Nations, Nationalities and people's region the role of local elders in conflict resolution is deeply rooted in the custom, culture and traditions of various ethnic groups, which could play a big role in resolving violent conflict. The traditional conflict resolution mechanism is works according to the value, not to punish rather emphasize at reparation of damage. The animus of tradition a conflict resolution is directed towards the restoration of former relationship between disputants (Bujra, 2002).

The Gibe communities have also its own ways of resolving any conflict occurred between any conflicting parties. In Gibe Woreda the most traditional conflict resolution mechanism is called

“Lommanna” It means reconciliation through the use of elders. Locally it is as one of the methods of conflict resolution mechanism.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

African societies apply indigenous dispute resolution mechanisms to keep peace and maintained harmonious relationships. Since Ethiopian law enact went adopted foreign system of justice and borrowed so many elements from western legal system. The indigenous mechanism of dispute resolution turned to secondary and complementary role to formal legal system (Dejene, 2007).

The formal court of justices and traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution in Ethiopia tend complement each other (Berhane, 2012). In other words, Ethiopian federal constitution recognized this role of customary law and indigenous mechanism of conflict resolution on area of civil and family cases as article 34/15. Currently conflict is viewed as dominant or silent performance as compared with former period. The root cause of conflict is social, ethnic diversity, economic issues, like scarce resource in natures, religious, language and the issue of culture of tolerance. In addition to this, there are also other source of conflict, like divergence in interest and belief. In Ethiopia such root of conflict related with socio-economic and cultural dimensions considerably observable in both rural and urban areas. The factor that leads to this is the daily increment of population in number and imbalance among population and natural resources as well as the ultimate computation on power status and public land that were common for all communities (Baron, 1990:55).

The case is true for Gibe Woreda. In Gibe Woreda the conflict in the area of social infrastructure, ethical issue, competition on public land around the town and border conflicts are common. Therefore, these conflict issues among this people of the Woreda push the researchers to conduct research and investigation in order to assess the role of local elders in solving these local disagreements. The different scholarly works in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region also showed that the region employed its own methods of conflict resolution mechanism. For instance, Yewondwossen (2006) explains the ye joka indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms among the Gurage people. silesh Abate examines the nature of sekicho conflict resolution mechanism in Bench maji zone. Besides, Temasgen Minwagaw discusses mechanism of conflict resolution in Doko-Gamo ethnic group in Gamo Gofa Zone (Gebre, ET, 2011). Added

to that, Ambaye (2008) describes the traditional conflict resolution mechanism of the sidama people. Furthermore, Melese Mada(2008) explains about the role of the elders in resolving conflicts among the people of wolayita. However, there is no previous study is conducted in the study area about their resolution mechanism and the role of local elders in conflict resolution. But the Gibe woreda communities have their own traditional conflict resolution, which are not studied yet. Therefore, this research was mainly aimed at filling this gap as a new study on the role of local elders in conflict resolution in the study area. And this study was embraced the role of local elders in conflict management and signify the significance of local elders over other instrument.

### **1.3 Research questions**

- ❖ What are the roles of those local elders for conflict resolution in Gibe woreda?
- ❖ What is the major strategy of elders to follow in the case art conflict resolution in the study area?
- ❖ What seem like the people’s awareness towards those local elders’ roles?

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

#### **1.4.1 General objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study was to assess the role of local elders in conflict resolution in Gibe woreda.

#### **1.4.2 Specific objectives of the study**

- ❖ To identify the role of local elders to conflict resolution in Gibe Woreda.
- ❖ To examine the strategy of local elders to follow in the case of conflict resolution in the study area.
- ❖ To examine the societies awareness towards local elders’ role in conflict resolution

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

After successfully accomplishment of this study the expect benefits may be raise awareness about the role of indigenous dispute resolution in general and elders or lommanna system in particular. It may use as input for who interest to carry out a similar studying on the area of conflict resolution; it may be providing an important information to the legislators to consider indigenous knowledge and values in law making. It enables the researchers to develop and improve ability to undertake a further study in the area of conflict resolution and other kinds study. In addition to that it provides, to identify the problem of the community and recommend possible solutions, to provide information about the community for further study and to provide some suggestions recommendations to minimize the problem of the society.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

This study delimits to Hadiya zone particularly in Gibe Woreda in which the role of local elders in conflict resolutions and management in Gibe community more confine elder ship (lommanna) system. Hence it is convenient to make a propose study interested area on which this study will conduct. Even though the role of local elders is much wider concept the study was focused on only the role at them in conflict management prevail harmonious atmosphere in a society due to existence of peace.

### **1.7 Limitation of the study**

Conducting on this study, the researchers have been faced by many problems: The major constraints were; insufficient budget, shortage of time, lack of recent data about problems, and respondents had low interest to give sufficient information concerning the topic. Despite of these problems, the researchers tried to overcome financial constraints by personal saving, searching different data from materials, and the researchers aware the purpose of the study to respondents compensates their low interest. Additionally, the researchers managed his time to achieve study on time properly.

### **1.7 Organization of the paper**

The paper was organized in to five chapters. The first chapter includes background of the study, statement of the problem, research question, objective of the study, significance of the study,

limitation of the study, organization of the paper and ethical consideration. The second chapter contains, review of related literature including some of relevant concepts related to this study. The third chapter discusses, the research methodology such as descriptions of the study area, source of data, research design and method of data collection, sampling techniques, sampling size and method of data analysis. Whereas data analysis and interpretation are in chapter four and finally, the fifth chapter provides conclusion and recommendation.

### **1.8 Ethical consideration**

There is no group and naming of individuals involved in the study. As a result, nobody is identifying which individual associate with characterizes or set of data. The clients have fair choice in deciding whether to deliver required in information.

All in formation acquired through the respondents make their known choice the option give permission is obtaining before data collection in all purposes. Respecting individual rights and dignity sent letters and lectures are taking. The place and the time were arranged based on their choice.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Understanding conflict resolution**

Conflict is a fighting struggle, clash between two or more human beings desired goals which they perceived as being obtainable by one or the other, but not both and there must be at least two parties. Each party is mobilizing energy to obtain a desired goal and each party; perceives the other as a barrier. (Ramsbotham, O, 2005)

#### **2.2 Definition of Conflict**

Moreover, the word conflict can be defined as violent and armed conformation struggle between groups within the state and one or more states. In such a conformation and struggle some of those involved are injured and other killed. Also, the classical idea stated as the word conflict is an intrinsic and an inevitable aspect of social change. It is an expression of the heterogeneity of interests, values and beliefs that arise as a new formation generated by the way we deal with conflict is a matter of habit and choice. It is possible to change habitual response and exercises intelligent choice. The definition of conflict is a condition of disharmony in interaction processes and usually occurs as a result of cash interests between the parties involved in some form or relationship. Clash of interests could occur because either they are pursuing their incompatibility of goals of pursuer their chosen goal (Dereje, 2010).

#### **2.3 Types of conflict**

Conflict can be classified in different forms due to the factors depending to large extent on the purposes intended. However, the most common classifications use to two criteria, namely the level at which the conflict occurred and the intensity of conflict. The level of conflict is often determined on the bases of the profile of the particles or the interests involved. Conflicts way is characterized into the following levels (Getnet, 2010). Inter personal conflict-conflict between two or more persons over an issue considered personal or individual , Intra-group conflict between people within the same group, Inter-group conflict between two or more group's families, organization or institution, Intra national conflict an internal conflict between groups

within the country and Inter-national conflict this is conflict between two or more national usually for ideological reason territorial claims, natural resource or other interests. From the above listed three types of conflict that frequently occurred in the Gibe woreda are interpersonal, inter groups and intra group conflicts in this area individual's conflicts are common because of the presence of compatibilities of interest's material like farmland boundaries claim to inheritance and so on.

#### **2.4 Meaning of conflict resolution**

It is defined as a set of processes active channeled towards addressing the root courses of conflict (Fisher et.al. 2000) defined conflict resolution as referring to process aimed at addressing the cause of conflict and building a new and lasting relationship between hostile parties. By other words conflict resolution refers to situation where the conflicting parties came in to an agreement that solve their central act incompatibilities accept each other continued existence as parties and cases all violent action against each other (Wallenstein, 2007).

#### **2.5 Mediators in conflict resolution**

Elders are among the frequently mentioned mediators. One reason why they are so frequently fill the position of mediating decision making third parties is that these roles tend to smoothly parallel the older general status in the society. In many setting older men enjoy a position of authority that is said to derive from both their control of economic resource and their control of people (Susan Hartman, 2002).

African elders for instance count as standard example for power full gerontocracy and north east Africa is famous for its age and generation system. It would appear that in these setting role allocations that within judicial procedures simply mirror the social structure that is already present in society under concern. Often elders are also ascribed supernatural or mystical power and ritual experience. It can be assumed that behind which of the terminology otherwise by different authors to denote intervening third party. There are also some types of elders this particularly true for lineage head who is generally a senior in his complicity or group both in age and in rank, similarly village heads. In many settings belong to the category of elders, often mentioned in their control of cattle for bide, praise in pastoral societies and their conflict of women to give or to withhold through control of marriage. Knowledge they have acquired over

long period of life may afford them considerable prestige. It seems that for most mediation procedures the most promising category of people have been selected people who have connection, influences, authority over others experience mystical power and ritual knowledge (Ibid).

## **2.6 Theories (approaches) of conflict**

There are different theories about the source of conflict. Some of these are; Relative deprivation theory, It is defining as actor's perceptions of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities. Thus, for him value expectations lead people to believe that they are right fully entitled to certain goods and conditions of life (Jeong, 2000). Basic Human Need Theory This theory also assumes that deep rooted conflicts are caused by unmet or frustrated basic human needs; women have needs, which aspire to realize and fulfill. These in clued the need to have identity spiritual and access to these needs' wakes; people his to undertake the option of violence to secure their needs (Jeong, 2000). Frustration, aggression theory In this theory human being are goal-oriented organism and rational, naturally became aggravated, when they are prevented from achieving what they desire. Frustration is accumulated their rationalization of goals then it is naturally to be aggressive and opt for conflict for the realization and the fulfillment of their goals (Jeong, 2000).

## **2.7 Traditional conflict resolution mechanism**

As long as people in a society or group, there are conflicts arising from differences of interests, prejudice, needs and ambitions. Therefore, the approach adopted to prevent or resolve such differences of interests determines its resolutions. In other words, when a conflict happens the crucial point should be the effective adaptation of the necessary principle of resolution. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are grass-root approaches to solve conflicts by the society. The most important elements involving in this mechanism include the tradition of forgiveness, respect for elders because of their symbolic authority to enforce decision and transfer of recourses as compensation (Berhane, 2012)

Traditional conflict resolution mechanism typically incorporates consensus-building based on open discussions to exchange information and clarify issues. Conflicting parties are more likely to accept guidance from those mediators than from other sources because the elder's decision

does not entail any loss of face and it is backed by social pressure. The end result is, ideally, a sense of unity shared involvement, responsibility and dialogue among groups otherwise in conflict (Ibid).

## **2.8 Types of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms**

As far as the causes of conflict are different it would have used different mechanism for the at dispute resolution to the management and resolution of conflicts. This type of traditional conflict resolution mechanism is also known as alternative dispute resolution mechanism. Alternative ways of conflict resolution is mechanism exclusion of litigation. The process of alternative dispute resolution depends upon the will of disputing parties and it is free form the formal and public structure of the court (Tesfaye, 2007). The following are essential types of alternative dispute resolution. Negotiation black's law dictionary defines the terms as a consensual bargaining process. As in which the parties attempt to reach an agreement on a disputed or potentially disputed matter. There is no neutral third party who assists or offers the points of compromise. The parties themselves have control over the whole process and its outcome. Mediation, according to black's lows dictionary, it is method of non-binding disputes resolution involving one or more neutral third party who tries to help the disputing parties to reach mutually agreeable solutions. Arbitration, the term arbitration comes from a Latin word arbiter with a meaning one who goes and sees. Arbitration is defined by Black law dictionary as a method of dispute resolution involving one or more neutral third parties, who are usually agreed to by the disputing parties and whose derision binding.

## **2.9 Overview of Ethiopian traditional conflict resolution.**

Adhering constitutional values is becoming a standard to determine the stage of development of a certain nation. Constitution legalizes most important activities of the state. One of the pillar rights of citizens which are recognized by Ethiopian constitution, as it happens in all the constitutions of other nations of the world, is access to justice. Article 37 of the FDRE constitution says: Everyone has the right to bring a justifiable matter to and to obtain a decision or judgment by, a court of law or any other competent body with judicial power (Eshetu and Getu, 2009).

Article 78(5) of the FDRE constitution allows the House of Peoples Representative or as the case may be State Councils might establish or obliged to give recognition to the established customary and religious courts. Similarly, the House of Peoples Representative can establish other institutions with judicial power or give recognition if they have been established by private individuals (Eshetu and Getu, 2009).

Giving due cognizance for arbitration and conciliation proceeding specifically and compromise in general is start but not an end by itself. Moreover, by recognizing instructions which serves as a forum for arbitration and conciliation, like the Addis Chamber and Ethiopian Arbitration and Conciliation Center (EACC), the state is promoting the ideal constitutional access to justice principle.

The role of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms seems to change due to such forces of modernization. But get the traditional conflict resolution mechanism tends to complement the formal modern court. For instance, the elders can be permitted to take the cases out from formal court to settle them with traditional mechanism of conflict resolution by the consent of the conflicting parties and the court (Tarrekegn, 2008). In such practice the federal constitution of Ethiopia recognizes the contribution of customary law and traditional conflict resolution in areas of civil and family cases as express article 34\5. the area of this study the contribution, role, extent and achievement of elders and traditional mechanism's will be discussing in the feature study by the rise.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Description of the study area**

The study had been undertaken in Hadiya Zone of South nation nationalities and people Regional State particularly in Gibe Woreda. Gibe woreda is bordered on south by Gombora woreda, on North by Amak River, on the west by yem special woreda and on East by Misha woreda. It includes 22 Keble's. based on the 2007 census conducted by the CSA, this woreda has a total population of 109,256, of whom 54,234 are men and 55,032 women; 5,066 or 4.64% of its population are urban dwellers. The majority of the inhabitants were Protestants, with 92.87% of the population reporting that belief, and 5.73 practiced Ethiopian orthodox Christianity. The capital city of the Woreda is Homacho and located 267km from Addis Ababa. The main economic practice of this Woreda is agricultural activities, typically Tiff, wheat, maize, been and others.

#### **3.2 Research design**

In this study the researchers were used two types of research design. Firstly, cross-sectional (one shoots) study design because the need to make only one contact with study population. Here the intention of the researchers is to assess the role of local elders in conflict resolution mechanism in Gibe woreda. Secondly, the researcher used a case study design because of the appropriateness of the method to study the role of traditional mechanism of Lommanna or elders' role on resolving in the study area.

And due to scholarly critics over using either qualitative or quantitative separately, the researchers was employed mixed approach. Hence this approach is important to fix the problems that one methodology have separately.

### **3.3 Source of data**

To accomplish this study, the researchers were used both primary and secondary source of data.

#### **3.3.1 Primary source of data.**

The researchers were used primary source of data collection to get relevant information through observation, interview questionnaire and survey.

#### **3.3.2 Secondary source of data**

The secondary source of data was gathered from books, documents and internet access.

### **3.4 Methods of data collection techniques**

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaires**

Relevant questionnaire was prepared and distributed to Keble peace committees, their coordinator and government security officials for triangulation of information so as to acquire detail information. The researchers selected 29 respondents to collect data through questionnaires from Keble peace committees and their coordinators, and government security officials.

#### **3.4.2 Interview**

The researchers were used semi-structure question with selected key informants to get primary data regarding to the structure, procedures, and actors in the role of local elders in conflict resolutions. The participants would be knowledgeable elders and formal court Judges Lawyers and government officials in the study area to triangulate the data, and from these three (3) respondents were selected i.e. one (1) from elders, and the same from lawyers and government security officials purposively.

### **3.5 Sampling techniques**

In this study the researchers were used purposive sampling technique. The rationale behind that the researchers used purposive sampling techniques help to select the people who are relevant to the study topic and also concerning the selection of subjects of individuals from the population to

estimate characteristics of this whole population. And from probability sampling techniques, the researchers used random sampling method to gather information through questionnaire.

### **3.6 Sampling size**

This study was conducted in Gibe woreda and the researchers selected total sample size 32 in number. The researchers selected 29 respondents to collect data through questionnaires from Keble peace committees and their coordinators, and government officials and 3 respondents to collect data through interview that mean one (1) from the elders same from lawyers and government security officials purposively.

### **3.7 Methods of data analysis**

After necessary data was collected, the researchers used both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyzing the data. For the quantitative method of data analysis, the researchers were used questionnaires to interpret in the form of tables' frequency and percentage. The interview was interpreted through qualitative method by using in the form of narrative data analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section of the paper analysis based on the information gathered from the community, judges, lommanna (local elders) and government security officials and Keble peace committees through questionnaires and interviews.

#### 4.1 Socio-demographic background of respondents

Table 1, Sex distribution of respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	25	86.2%
Female	4	13.8%
Total	29	100%

**Source: own survey 2019**

At the above table indicated the numbers of male respondents are 86.2%, whereas female respondents are covered about 13.8%. This show that the case study is more of male oriented. Because due to several cultural norms and customs female are not mostly involve in such kind of conflict resolution mechanism; although the study male oriented, it was for me (the researcher) to make actively participation of Women's in my questionnaire to know their views points towards the local elders (lommanna). It is undesirable to say that the researcher had been conducted only male oriented. It would have been unsatisfactory. Since women are one parts of the community the crucial role for the successfulness of elders in the time of mediation. In addition to that, in Gibe woreda they are active in conflict resolution at family level.

#### 4.1.1 Age distribution of the respondents.

Table 2, Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage %
45-55	8	27.6%
55-65	10	34.5%
65-75	8	27.6%
75-85	2	6.9%
Above 85	1	3.4%
Total	29	100%

Sources, from survey of 2019

As the number of respondents indicate in the above table between ages 85 and above are lowest and age between 55-65 are the highest. The researcher used questions for those peoples above 45 years old was so as to get detailed information about the role of local elders and have striven the knowledge of those matured people. The intention of the investigators selecting the people with the age of 45 and above was due to their long lifetime experience and strong attachments with cultural conflict resolution mechanisms in that arena.

#### 4.1.2 Religious distribution of the respondents

Table 3 Religion of respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percentage %
protestant	26	89.7%
Orthodox	3	10.3%
Muslim	-	-
Others	-	-
Total	29	100%

**Source: own survey of 2019**

As indicated in the above table the highest number of the residents of the woreda is protestant 89.7% while orthodox are less in number which accounts 10.3% as compared with the protestant. But Muslims are very little in number and they are not familiar with the culture of Gibe woreda community.

In short, they have not adequate information about this traditional conflict resolution mechanism. In this locality they would be familiar with this traditional conflict resolution mechanism are almost protestant and an orthodox religion follower respectively.

#### 4.1.3 Marital status of the respondents

Table 4, marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage %
Married	21	72.4%

Divorced	3	10.3%
Widowed	3	10.3%
Single	2	7.0%
Total	29	100

**Source: own survey 2019**

As shown in the above table 72.4% of the respondents are married. They have their own houses and families, while the other which accounts of 10.3% of the respondents are widowed, and the remaining 10.3% are divorced and the 7.0% of the respondents are single respectively.

#### **4.1.4 Educational background of the respondents**

Table 5, educational background of the respondents

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage %
Illiterate	-	0%
Primary education	6	20.7%
Secondary education	6	20.7%
University	10	34.50%
Others	7	24.1%
Total	29	100%

**Source: own survey 2019**

As it could be seen from the above table the majority of the respondents are degree holders they account 34.5% of the respondents, 20.7% who have functional primary education and the other respondents which accounts 20.7% who have secondary education and other respondents which

accounts 24.1% who are attend in other educational level like college, certificate and the other. From this table there is no illiterate. This indicates more of the respondents are degree in study area.

#### 4.2 Traditional conflict resolution in elders (lommanna)

Table 6, the feeling of traditional conflict resolution of elders

Feeling	Frequency	Percentage %
Best	17	58.6%
Good	8	27.6%
Well	4	13.8%
Bad	-	-
Worse	-	-
Others specifies	-	-
Total	29	100%

**Source: own survey 2019**

As shown the above table the majority of respondents which account 58.6% were responds conflict resolution is best, when it is held by local elders (lommanna). In addition, as shown in the above table which accounts 27.6% of the respondents were faced by good, when conflicts are resolved by local elders. As respondent, mentioned, resolving conflicts through local elders (lommanna) is more useful, because the traditional conflict resolution mechanism is important in re-establishing the social capital that is damaged as a result of the conflict. In, addition to the above idea, indigenous conflict resolution become speed and cost effective (Fred, 2005),

providing, that, Annette (2009) elaborates indigenous conflict resolution is important by solving the issue while saving the relationship and minimize revenge killings. This is very important particularly for poor, women and other marginalized people who have no capacity to cover the cost of justice system through the court (Ibid), Due to this majority of respondents give their response that conflict resolution through local elders are best at all in that woreda, because the conflict resolution by local elders enables for community save time, money to avoid revenge among the conflicting parties. Indigenous conflict resolution system allows conflicting parties to work cooperatively by minimizing their gap in productive way that does not demolish their relationship. But solving conflicts through formal process by using courts disputants rarely want to work together and cooperatively (Volker, 2007).

### 4.3 Frequency of people goes to local elders (Iommana) institution

Table, 7 the frequency of people goes to local elders

People go to local elders	Frequency	Percentage %.
Always	15	51.7%
Usually	12	41.4%
often	2	6.9%
sometimes	-	-
very rarely	-	-
not at all	-	-
total	29	100%

**Source: own survey 2019**

As shown the above table the conflicting parties in particular and the people in general always going to local elder's institution which accounts 51.7%. And the other respondents which account 41.4% who respond the parties are usually going to local elder's institution. As more of respondents said that the communities are always going to local elder's institution in Gibe woreda. Because indigenous conflict resolution typically incorporates consensus building based on open discussion to exchange information and to simply concerns. Individuals or groups who are involved to the conflict become more likely to accept guidance from these mediators than from other sources, because an elder's decision does not entail any loss of face and the decision also highly supported by the society (USAID,2005). Due to this most of respondents said that, conflicting parties and the people in general always going to local elders' institution. If the plaintiff (accuser) takes the case to formal court in order to revenge their counter parties. Likeness they assume that if conflict resolved through formal court it finishes much more time even years, compared to conflict resolution through local elders' institutions.

#### 4.4 The strategy of local elders in solving conflict in the study area

Table 8, strategies of local elders (lommanna)

Strategies of local elders	Frequency	Percentage %
Win-win	25	86.2%
Win-lose	3	10.4%
Lose-lose	1	3.4%
Total	29	100

**Source: own survey 2019**

As we could see from the above table most of the people of Gibe worede believed that the strategies of local elders (lommanna) to solve conflict in the study area usually used win-win strategy which accounts 86.2%. Although few of respondents who believed that the elders are to

follow win-lose strategy which accounts 10.4 %. As the majority of respondents mentioned, the strategies of local elders to solve conflict in the study area usually used win-win strategy because local dispute involving negotiation leads to win-win situation as it takes into account the interest of every party. The disputants acknowledge that they have something to gain and something to lose at the end.

#### 4.5 The Advantage of local Elders in resolving conflicts

Table 9.s Advantages of local elders in conflict resolution for the society

Advantages of elders	Frequency	Percentage %
High	8	27.6%
Very high	18	62%
Low	3	10.4%
Very low	-	-
Total	29	100%

**Source: own survey 2019**

As shown from the above table, the dwellers of Gibe woreda community suggested that, the advantages of elders (lommanna) in solving conflicts are very high which accounts 62%. Apart from this the role of those elders in harmonization the communities of Gibe woreda is too much indispensable. And their compromising role is manifested most of the time in family cases, in the time when spouses would bring their case formal court for divorce. However, the court itself ordered the parties to resolve the conflict by local elders (lommanna). Lastly those elders will preserve the parties' relationship very well. In addition to these elders would play a great role in saving the family from being broken down and the fate of their children would be also directed into right track of life. The other respondents which account 27.6% who were responding about

the role of local elders are high. As the respondent mentioned, the conflict resolution by local elders has greater advantage for society of Gibe woreda because the major advantage of indigenous conflict resolution is that it originates from community itself and this also simple and easy to realize (Srivastava N, 2004), Indigenous conflict resolution is less complex, it is fast and less costly than formal courts of law. Any disagreements that takes more than a year to solve in a formal justice's system is resolved in relatively much less time by indigenous or local institution (Helgesen, V,2008). Due to this, majority of respondents give their agreements that, the advantage of local elders in conflict resolution is very high in that woreda by pointing themselves as one who benefited from the local elders in conflict resolution.

#### **4.6 Awareness of the people about the elders (lommanna) Role**

Table 10, awareness of the people about the role of elders

Awareness of the people	Frequency	Percentage %
High	7	24.1%
Very high	6	20.7%
Low	16	55.2%
Very low	-	-
Total	29	100%

**Source: own survey 2019**

As shown from the above table the awareness of people about role of local elders is low which accounts about 52.2%, and the other respondents respond that the awareness of people about local elders is high which accounts 24.1% and the other respondents which account 20.7% who were responding about awareness of the people to the role of local elders are very high. As shown from the above table the awareness of Gibe woreda community towards the elders had not

correctly understood, even though they gained very indispensable services from those elders. Usually, when conflicts are arising between individuals, between group and among groups. Some of the communities assumed that those lommanna (elders) will be obliged to resolve those conflicts as a duty. However, apparently those local elders are not obliged to resolve those conflicts even if the government allows to those local elders to resolve the community which is designed for the purpose of preserving the day to day activities and the safety of local peoples. In this case, there is a proverb of the community said that, leave it for elders or lommanna we do not care for the consequences. So that, based on table respondents mentioned, more of the people do not take into consideration about the elder's effort and majority of respondents have said that awareness of people about elders was low.

#### **4.7 Data gathered from interview questions**

Based on the most respondent's response, the communities are favoring from the elder's (lommannas) conflict resolution mechanism than that formal court litigation. Because conflict resolution through elders (lommanna) will enables the societies to resolve their conflict without incurring financial expenses which they would going to be inverted in the formal court. Besides to this, the respondents suggested that elder conflict resolution mechanism would be preserved or enforced their future social interaction or relationship unlike formal court it would be exposed peoples to revenge. So, conflict resolution through elders would finish with in the short period of time unlike court proceedings. This means the court needs to be waiting for long trial data and to pass through a complex bureaucracy.

According to the interview of Gibe worda first instance judge's response almost all local elder's institutions have a vital role to formal courts. These elders' institutions have a great role to Gibe worda first instance court by their conflict resolution mechanism. The respondents said that, those elders would be reducing work loads of formal court. They could do for the court to be free from overcrowded. Due to this even the court itself allows for the elders to resolve local conflicts by their conflict resolution mechanism either before the case is brought to court or after the case is brought to the court. For instance, in family cases; elders would play the principal roles of compromising the conflicting parties. Those elders would be served as a guarantee for the continuance of the marriages of the conflicting parties.

As the majority of respondent's response, the dispute resolution by formal courts would escalate the conflict between the parties. Because of, the formal courts are obviously following win-lose approaches, meaning that one party would only be satisfied with his claim. But the other party will totally lose his claim. Therefore, this process creates an enmity between the litigants. However, conflict resolution through elders or lommanna institution would design to satisfy the claims of both parties in an equal manner. The elders concerned (assumed) in the time of deciding the case about the conflicting party's future relation. Du to this reason dispute resolved by the local elder's institution do not escalating the conflict between the parties rather it will harmonize the relationship between the parties to the future.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study had demonstrated various issues concerning the role of Elders (lommanna) in conflict resolution in the case of Gibe woreda. Types of conflict that would exist in the study area are inter-personal, inter-group and intra-group conflicts. Like often locality the people living in Gibe woreda had their own well-organized local elders, which is called lommanna. They resolve conflicts existing within or between the communities. Those elders or lommanna typically incorporate consensus-building based on open discussion to exchange information and clarify issues. Conflicting parties are more likely to accepting guidance from these local elders than other source. Because the people mostly use lommanna is the elder's decision does not expose any loss of time and financial expense. Elders intervened to resolve the community dispute before escalating to large scale violence. Elder's negotiation could be lead practical agreements which keep wider Inter-communal relation positive. The elder's role helps the community to keep control over the outcomes of the dispute. Those elders (lommanna) selected from the community based on the criteria of their age, knowledge and high social status and acceptance. Their age should have to be old. Because the society thought that, those aged people become matured, knowledgeable and wise. So, they should not be emotional and partial.

The overall findings revealed that the role of elders in conflict resolution is highly indispensable. However, contribution should not much well have known by the dwellers of the woreda. Even though the community could be gained considerable services from elders (lommanna) institution, more people consider the elders would give service for the community because it is as a like as their duty. Generally, the findings also revealed that majority of the people of the woreda are not awarded about valuable role of local elders. However, the study also revealed that conflict resolution would be good, when it is held through local elders. Those give opportunity to save money and time for the conflicting parties and the community in general.

## 5.2 Recommendations

As it has been the case with any society the people of Gibe woreda have their own organized local elders who would solve local conflicts by peacefully. Those local elders (lommanna) play significance role in conflict resolution in the study area. However, the Gibe woreda societies should not correctly aware the advantages of the elders. So, to make more effective traditional conflict resolution mechanism it is necessary to consider the following recommendations.

- ❖ Providing education to the community about the importance's of conflict resolution mechanism by local elders.
- ❖ Create awareness of the society about elder's role in conflict resolution process
- ❖ The government officials should be supporting those local elders' institutions by giving treatment and recognition like modern institutions.
- ❖ Providing training for those local elders (lommanna).

All in all, having raised the above merits or role of local elders, it is unbeatable fact that Conflict ants would be much happier when to resolve their conflict through elders (lommanna). After having been negotiated by local elders, there would be no vengeance in the community. By considering their importance's, the government should be intervening between the community and elders to synchronize the elder's service to give the community awareness of societies about elder's role in conflict resolution process.

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## Appendix I

### Wolkite University

#### College of Social Science and Humanities

#### Department of Civics and Ethical Studies

Dear participants, this research intended to assess the role of local elders in conflict resolution in Gibe worda. You are kindly requested to answer the questions below by ticking the box. Dear respondent, I would like to thank in advance for your help in filling this questionnaire and that your responses would be kept confidential.

**Directions:** - To fill this questionnaire, please, put check mark “√” to the choice and closed ended questions in the box and write your explanation for open ended item in the space provided in clear and precise words.

#### Part 1 profile of the respondents

1. Sex, male  female
2. Age 45-55  55-65  65-75  others
3. Religion Muslim  Orthodox  protestant  others
4. Marital status, married  divorced  widowed  single
5. Level education, illiterate  primary  secondary  university  others
6. Have ever witnessed a conflict in your locality? Yes  No
7. What do conflict ants or the people in general are feel when their conflict are resolved through local elders? Best  Good  well  Bad  worth   
If others specify-----
8. Depending on question number “9” give your reason for your answer -----  
-----
9. How often the people go to the local elders to solve their conflict? Always  usually   
Often  sometimes  very rarely  not at all
10. What do you think the strategy that local elders follow to solve conflict? Win-win   
win-lose  lose-lose  other

11. What are the advantages the society that will be gained by solving their conflict through local elders?

Very high  high  low  very low

12. What is the awareness of the Gibe woreda community towards the role of local elders in conflict resolution process? Very high  high  low  very low

## **Appendix II**

### **Interview questions**

1. Are conflict resolutions through local elders are much more comfortable than the formal court?
2. What kind of roles has the local elder's institution for the formal court?
3. Which institution tends to escalate conflicts in society? Why?

**Thank you for your cooperation!!!**