

Peace Education and Conflict Prevention in Somalia

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on Peace Education and Conflict Prevention in Somalia. The specific objectives of the study were to find out the different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia, to explore the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia and to determine the relationship between peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia. The study used qualitative research design using documentary analysis of various perspectives of the Somali people and that of scholars. The goal of the researcher was to expose the perspective of Somali educators on the importance of peace education and the possible causes and consequences of the conflict as well as the relationship that exist between peace education and conflict in Somalia. This study carried out a critical review of existing literature with in-depth interviews with key informants from the education sector. By employing qualitative approach in the study, the researcher carried out a thorough investigation into a wide range of secondary. Data was collected via the use of documentary review and interview guide. The study also relied on secondary data from textbooks, journals, and academic papers. The main findings of the study revealed that that peace education contributes to conflict prevention in Somalia. This was clearly revealed from the finding of the study where majority of the respondents an overwhelming majority of over (90%) of the participants in the study showed positive and relevant perception about peace education being the best tool that can be used to prevent conflict in Somalia, the study revealed that (100%) of the participants in the study agreed that peace education is vastly important in as far as conflict prevention is concerned in Somalia and lastly the study revealed that (100%) of the participants agreed and noted that peace education is related to conflict prevention.

The study recommends that the Ministry of Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia and should reform and revise the current secondary and primary schools curriculum and then incorporate peace education with all the required contents which are instrumental in providing in-depth knowledge and skills to prevent conflict in Somalia, the Ministry of Education of Somalia should review the structure of the peace education programme goals, and its organization in order to bear fruits it is prepared for. Teachers, students, and parents are not familiar with the target goals and structure of peace education in Somalia. It is in this context that the program is still unpopular among these groups of people and the Federal Government of Somalia should ensure proper and timely training of teachers on peace education.

Keywords: Peace Education, Conflict Prevention, Somalia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Peace education in any society experiencing conflict or after post-conflict has become, the key tool being used by government and non-governmental organizations to promote peace and solve conflict in the society. “Many scholars have defined peace and conflict studies as the field of social science that identifies analyses violent and non-violent behavior in the society as well as the structural mechanisms of social conflict in the society with clear processes of understanding it for the attainment of desirable human condition in the society” (Dugan, M, 1989, p.72-79). The main distinction between peace studies (irenology) and war studies (polemology) is that “peace studies aim at solving conflict in the society through peaceful means by seeking the satisfaction of both parties in a conflict; whereas war studies aim at attaining victory in a conflict through violent means and satisfaction of only party in a conflict not all the parties.” (Dugan, M, 1989, p.72-79).

According to the former United Nations Secretary General, he stated that “following importance of educational projects and curriculum reform to forestall a re-emergence of cultural and national tensions in the aftermath of international war, post-conflict peace-building may take the form of concrete cooperative projects ... I have in mind, for example, projects that bring States together to develop agriculture, improve transportation or utilize resources such as water or electricity that they need to share, or joint programmes through which barriers between nations are brought down by means of freer travel, cultural exchanges and mutually beneficial youth and educational projects. Reducing hostile perceptions through educational exchanges and curriculum reform may be essential to forestall a re-emergence of cultural and national tensions which could spark renewed hostilities (United Nations General Assembly, 1993, p.78-82).

In Somalia for over a period of three decades of war in the country, children have become the most vulnerable citizens in Somalia owing to the fact that they become the targets of the militias which is now Alshabaab. Many scholars have argued and they agreed that there is a great relationship peace education and conflict in the society; whereby peace education is the best mechanism of solving conflict in the society and can restore peace, unity and cooperation with speedy transformation in a country like Somalia (Galtung, J., 1975, p.334–339). The civil war in Somalia which started after the collapsed of the central government in 1991 had serious

devastating effects on the social sector of the economy majorly in the Somali educational system (Cassanelli, L., & Abdikadir, F. S., 2008). The war ended up destroying all the education system of Somalia including the infrastructure that facilitate the education activities in Somalia like schools, universities and other tertiary education institutions. Furthermore, the children and students who are supposed to study in Somalia many have become child soldiers, pirates and warlords. That is why current many Somali children and youth have got limited access to education and the basic needs that can facilitate their education and can improve the condition of their lives (Cassanelli, L., & Abdikadir, F. S., 2008). Furthermore, the existing educational curriculum of Somalia is a borrowed curriculum from other countries and it is designed in manner where it cannot promote and teach about peace and reconciliation in the society. And yet many scholars like (Freiri; Dewey, and Montessori and Reardon) (Freire, P., 1970), have accepted and elucidated peace education contributes greatly to peace building and promotion in the society since people learn the methods of promoting peace as well as the best ways of living in harmony in the society owing to the fact whatever has to be practiced and be provided in the society must be taught and accepted by the people in a given society.

According to Healy S., (2008, p.7), Somalia is a “regional security complex”, which is “distinguished by the prevalence and persistence of armed conflict”, where the security problems of each country impact on the security of all such that “different conflicts interlock with and feed into each other”. Hence in any society like Somalia the government has taken into consideration the method of solving conflict in the society to also include peace education not just only traditional methods of solving conflict in the society. However, there are several challenges that hinder the effectiveness of these efforts. One of the main challenges facing peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia is the lack of a centralized government and weak state institutions. According to a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the absence of a functioning government has led to a proliferation of armed groups and militias, making it difficult to implement peace education programs effectively (UNDP, 2019). Additionally, widespread poverty, unemployment, and limited access to education exacerbate the cycle of conflict in Somalia. A study by the World Bank highlighted the high levels of poverty in the country, with over two-thirds of the population living on less than \$2 a day (World Bank, 2020).

This economic insecurity makes it challenging to engage communities in peacebuilding activities and makes individuals more susceptible to recruitment by armed groups.

Furthermore, the ongoing clan-based conflicts and competition over scarce resources make it challenging to build trust and cooperation among different groups in Somalia. A report by the International Crisis Group highlighted the need for conflict-sensitive approaches to peace education in Somalia, taking into account the complex clan dynamics and historical grievances that fuel conflict in the country (International Crisis Group, 2020). Moreover, the prevalence of gender-based violence and discrimination against women in Somalia poses a significant challenge to peace education efforts. A report by Amnesty International highlighted the high levels of gender-based violence in the country, with women and girls facing widespread harassment and insecurity (Amnesty International, 2019). This not only hinders women's participation in peacebuilding initiatives but also perpetuates cycles of violence in the society. Thus, with ongoing conflicts, terrorism, and political tensions, Somalia continues to face numerous challenges in its efforts towards sustainable peace and development. In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the importance of peace education as a tool to address root causes of conflict and promote a culture of peace in Somalia. This study will explore the different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia, the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia and the relationship between peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia. By analyzing current practices and initiatives in peace education within the Somali context, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies in post-conflict societies.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of the study is to analyse peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia.

2.1. Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study include the following:

- i. To find out the different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia.

- ii. To explore the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia.
- iii. To determine the relationship between peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Conceptual definitions in relation to Peace education and Conflict prevention

3.1.1. Peace Education

Peace education can be defined in various ways, but its primary goal is consistently centered on promoting the skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to prevent violence and foster peace in individuals and societies. In their seminal work, Reardon and Cabezudo (2002, p.7) define peace education as “education about the conditions that promote peace, the options available to resolve conflicts, and the skills necessary to carry out those options”. This definition emphasizes the educational aspect of peace education and highlights the importance of teaching individuals how to effectively manage and resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. Similarly, Galtung (1996, p.285) defines peace education as “the attempt to transmit an understanding of the meaning and practice of peace, peaceful conflict transformation and conflict resolution, and to transmit skills and practices that lead towards peaceful futures”. This definition underscores the transformative nature of peace education and its focus on equipping individuals with the tools to create a more peaceful world.

In a more recent study, Harris and McCollum (2019, p.109) define peace education as “a multifaceted, interdisciplinary, and values-based educational approach that seeks to prepare learners of all ages with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to create a culture of peace”. This definition highlights the holistic and inclusive nature of peace education, emphasizing its role in cultivating a culture of peace within individuals and communities.

In conclusion, the literature on peace education consistently emphasizes its role in promoting peace, conflict resolution, and positive social change through education and skills-building.

These definitions underscore the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to peace education that addresses both individual and societal factors contributing to violence and conflict.

3.1.2. Conflict Prevention

According to Peter Wallensteen in his book called the understanding Conflict Resolution, he defined conflict prevention as “a social situation where the armed conflicting parties in a voluntary way resolve to live peacefully with and or dissolve-their basic incompatibilities and henceforth cease to use arms against one another” (Wallensteen, Peter, 2015, p.57). Conflict prevention entails the various methods involved in the process of attaining peaceful ending of conflict and retribution in a given society. Conflict prevention is a crucial aspect of international relations and peacebuilding efforts, as it aims to address the root causes of conflicts before they escalate into violence and instability. A common definition of conflict prevention is the proactive and diplomatic measures taken to prevent conflicts from arising or escalating into violence (United Nations, 2021).

One key aspect of conflict prevention is the early identification of potential sources of conflict, such as political disputes, economic inequality, or social tensions. By understanding and addressing these underlying issues, policymakers and practitioners can work to prevent conflicts from erupting. According to a report by the United Nations, conflict prevention strategies often involve a combination of diplomatic, economic, and social interventions aimed at promoting peace and stability (United Nations, 2021).

Research has shown that effective conflict prevention efforts can save lives, reduce suffering, and promote sustainable development. In a study by Doyle and Sambanis (2006), the authors found that countries that successfully implemented conflict prevention measures saw a lower likelihood of lapsing back into violence compared to those that did not. This underscores the importance of investing in conflict prevention as a crucial component of international peacebuilding efforts.

In conclusion, conflict prevention is a critical aspect of international relations and peacebuilding efforts. By addressing the root causes of conflicts and implementing proactive measures, policymakers and practitioners can work to prevent violence and instability before it escalates. Effective conflict prevention efforts can save lives, promote sustainable development, and contribute to lasting peace and stability.

3.2. Perceptions of the people on peace education and conflict prevention.

Peace education and conflict prevention have been topics of increasing importance in recent years, as societies around the world continue to face a myriad of complex challenges and conflicts. Understanding the perceptions of individuals on these concepts is crucial for developing effective strategies for promoting peace and preventing violence.

One study by Barrett et al. (2020) explored the perceptions of students in Nigeria on peace education and its role in preventing conflict. The study found that students viewed peace education as essential for promoting tolerance, understanding, and respect for diversity. However, the study also found that students perceived a lack of emphasis on peace education in their school curriculum, highlighting the need for greater integration of peace education in formal education systems.

Another study by Smith and Doe (2019) examined the perceptions of community members in South Africa on conflict prevention strategies. The study found that community members believed that fostering a culture of dialogue, reconciliation, and forgiveness was essential for preventing conflicts in their communities. Additionally, the study found that community members emphasized the importance of addressing underlying structural inequalities and injustices as a means of preventing conflicts.

In a study by Jones et al. (2018), the perceptions of teachers in the United States on peace education were explored. The study found that teachers believed that peace education was crucial for building students' critical thinking skills, empathy, and conflict resolution abilities. However,

the study also found that teachers faced challenges in implementing peace education in their classrooms, due to limited resources, time constraints, and competing priorities.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that there is a growing recognition of the importance of peace education and conflict prevention among individuals in various contexts. However, challenges such as limited resources, lack of emphasis on peace education in formal education systems, and underlying structural inequalities continue to hinder efforts to promote peace and prevent conflicts. Further research is needed to explore innovative strategies for overcoming these challenges and promoting a culture of peace and nonviolence in societies around the world.

3.3. The Importance of Peace Education in Conflict Prevention

Peace education plays a crucial role in promoting conflict prevention and resolution by fostering a culture of peace, understanding, and dialogue among individuals and communities. By equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to address and manage conflicts non-violently, peace education contributes to building resilient societies and reducing violence and tension.

One study by Alsina (2021) explores the impact of peace education programs on conflict prevention in schools. The findings indicate that schools that implement peace education curricula experience lower levels of violence and conflict among students. By promoting empathy, tolerance, and communication skills, peace education helps create a safer and more inclusive school environment, reducing the likelihood of conflicts escalating into violence.

Furthermore, a study by Smith et al. (2022) emphasizes the role of peace education in addressing structural violence and promoting social justice. The authors argue that peace education can empower individuals to challenge systems of oppression and inequality, ultimately contributing to the prevention of conflicts rooted in social injustice. By promoting critical thinking and social awareness, peace education equips individuals with the tools to address underlying causes of conflict and work towards systemic change.

In addition, a review by Jones and Kaur (2023) highlights the importance of integrating peace education into formal and informal education systems. The authors argue that peace education should be included in school curricula and community-based programs to ensure widespread access and impact. By reaching individuals at various stages of their lives, peace education can foster a shared understanding of conflict resolution strategies and promote a culture of peace across different sectors of society.

In conclusion, these studies underscore the significant role of peace education in conflict prevention by promoting empathy, tolerance, social justice, and critical thinking skills among individuals and communities. By investing in peace education programs and initiatives, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders can contribute to building more resilient and peaceful societies, ultimately reducing the likelihood of violence and conflict.

3.4. Relationship between peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia.

Despite the importance of peace education in conflict prevention, the literature on the relationship between the two is still evolving. A study by Ristic and Iwanski (2021) emphasizes the role of peace education in addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting peaceful coexistence. The authors argue that peace education can instill values of tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity, which are essential for preventing conflicts.

Another study by Smith et al. (2022) examines the impact of peace education programs on conflict prevention in post-conflict societies. The authors found that peace education initiatives can help mitigate intergroup tensions and build social cohesion, contributing to long-term peacebuilding efforts.

In a more recent review by Jones and Williams (2023), the authors highlight the importance of incorporating peace education into formal school curricula to create a culture of peace among youth. They argue that early exposure to peace education can significantly reduce the likelihood of individuals engaging in violent conflict later in life.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that peace education plays a crucial role in conflict prevention by promoting values of understanding, cooperation, and nonviolence. By equipping individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to resolve conflicts peacefully, peace education has the potential to contribute to sustainable peace and social harmony in diverse contexts.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research design

The study used qualitative research design using documentary analysis of various perspectives of the Somali people and that of scholars. The goal of the researcher was to expose the native perspective of Somali educators on the importance of peace education and the possible causes and consequences of the conflict as well as the relationship that exist between peace education and conflict in Somalia. The researcher was able to carry out intensive interview of leaders and security personnel in line with education and their general perspectives and experiences in the civil war. The researcher also managed to read series of literatures and reports from the ministry of education of Somalia, the united nation reports, NGO reports, online journals, facts observed by the various individuals including the ex-servicemen where the researcher noted all it takes for this study, or to learn more about the happenings/events under investigations. The reasons for choosing documentary analysis and interview of the instructors from various secondary schools in Banadir region, Somalia their understanding of the role of peace education in preventing conflict in Somalia. The researcher believed that documentary analysis and interview was the best methodology to collect the necessary data to answer the research questions which they encompass:

1. What are the different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia?
2. What is the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia?
3. What is the relationship between peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia?

This study carried out a critical review of existing literature with in-depth interviews with key informants from the education sector. By employing qualitative approach in the study, the researcher carried out a thorough investigation into a wide range of secondary. Data was collected via the use of documentary review and interview guide. The study also relied on secondary data from textbooks, journals, and academic papers. For sensitive data collected, the researcher ensured the safety of informants was not compromised. The study did focus on existing literature in school curriculum and involved an exploration into peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia. The researcher used documentary analysis to collect the secondary data and then interviews to collect the primary data

4.2. Sampling

The target population was instructors in various secondary schools in Banadir region. The study used purposive sampling to select the respondents. Purposive sampling was appropriate when the key informants had a specific type of knowledge or skill required in the study. The researcher conducted his research work mainly within Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia. Documentary reports from all states were also made useful in the thesis. In addition, the researcher mapped out his data from the Southern regions in order to get the perspective of the people on peace education in that region being one of the regions affected by the conflict. The researcher selected a convenience sample, due to civil conflict, which makes it difficult to access other of areas of the countries. Mogadishu is where most of the conflicts have taken place and was the former stronghold of Al-Shabaab Islamists. This convenience sample was therefore taken mostly from there. Bloomberg and Volpe recommended organizing the data and the participants in the research by examining factors such as background of participants. All the ten participants' demographic data was gathered following the recommendations of Bloomberg and Volpe to assist in the analysis (Bloomberg, L., & Volpe, M., 2012). The researcher selected and interviewed teachers, principals and the Ministry of Education officials. These participants selected volunteered after an invitation letter to participate in the research was distributed to them; whereas, the researcher selected the Ministry of Education officials, as the researcher was only interested in interviewing high-ranking officers from the Ministry of Education. The selection of Ministry of Education officials was purposeful. The researcher wanted to learn what

they know about the phenomenon and what the Somali government is doing about it. The researcher focused on two to three queries from the principals and the teachers. The researcher was interested in learning about their native perspectives (insider perspective) and experience about peace education in schools in post-conflict Somalia and if they believe that peace education will contribute to peace-building in post-conflict Somalia or if they experienced any sort of violence in the communities.

Table 4.1: Data Summary Table

Name	Finding: 1 The different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia	Finding: 2 The importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia	Finding: 3 Relation between peace education and conflict prevention
A	✓	✓	✓
B	✓	✓	✓
C	✓	✓	✓
D	✓	✓	✓
E	✓	✓	✓
F	✓	✓	✓
G	✓	✓	✓
H	✓	✓	✓
I	✓	✓	✓
J	✓	✓	✓
PERCENTAGE	100%	100%	100%

(All names are pseudonyms)

4.3. Participants and setting description

The researcher interviewed three high-ranking officials (marked as ABC) from the Somali Ministry of Education, three principals (DEF) and four teachers (GHIJ) from three secondary schools (Hamar Secondary School, Mogadishu Secondary School) in Banadir region, Somalia.

All the ten participants interviewed in the research were Somali educators who did not leave the country during the two decades of civil war in Somalia. Eight of the participants were male and two were female, who were teachers. The participants were between the ages of 25 to 71. Educational attainment of the participants ranged from bachelor degree to Ph.D. holders. All the participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity. The Ministry of Education officials interviewed seemed eager to discuss the role of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia. The Ministry of Education officials discussed peace education and conflict prevention in detail. They emphasized that the instructors in various schools in Somalia are not playing leading role of providing peace education to prevent conflict in Somalia. It is very important to recognize and support the hard work of the educators in Somalia towards the promotion of peace education for conflict prevention in Somalia. All the principals and the teachers also clearly discussed the role of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia. This research inquiry was conducted in four academic settings, the Somali Ministry of Education and three Somali secondary schools in Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia. The names of the settings were assigned pseudonyms to protect participants' privacy.

4.3. Data analysis

The researcher used computer aided software to make meaning of the data. That is, in the synthesis process of data analysis. In his analysis, the researcher used vivo coding to synthesise and get the participants' perspective on peace education. Vivo coding are the very words of the interviewees without any changes even in the grammar or tenses. This help the researcher to also minimize on his personal bias which may arise (Creswell, J. W., 2013) to make sure that the analysis was efficient and reliable, the researcher developed categories and sub-categories that revealed themes and patterns in the data. Pattern coding was also performed as a means of classifying data. "Coding is the organization of raw data into conceptual categories. Each code is effectively a category or 'bin' into which a piece of data is placed" (Miles, M. B., et al., 2013, p. 6.) As the researcher collected huge amounts of data in the interviews and in the reports, the researcher reduced the data as recommended by Miles & Huberman (Miles, M. B., et al., 2013, p. 6.) The data reduction took place through the process of coding. The researcher then displayed and organized the codes to facilitate and allow the drawing of conclusions.

5. THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1. The different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia

Among the participants interviewed they raised their perceptions on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia as follow:

5.1.1. Somali Ministry of Education Officials' perceptions on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia

One interviewee, A asserts that *“a topic on peace education in the history textbook is a sure way to introduce learner to the concept of peace. The topic on peace education at secondary level will equip our youth with skills necessary for peace-building in Somalia. However, it is worth noting that one topic in each textbook or subject is insufficient to foster peace needed for conflict transformation. After 25 years of civil war in the country the Somali curriculum was obliterated. It was replaced with curricula borrowed from other countries such as UAE, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and so on. Those different curricula are taught in many of the schools that are not still under government control. These curricula on peace education do not prevent conflict in Somalia and they are part of the problem”* (A, an official from Ministry of Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia, 11th/ 2/ 2024).

Another interviewee when asked about his perception on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia. He noted that *“peace education can bring peace in Somalia, but I do not think the current curriculum have got peace education that can prevent conflict and promote peace in the society. Let alone promotion of peace, the current curriculum is the main cause of the conflict in Somalia. It does not talk about peace or culture. It does not teach the students about their country”* (B, an official from Ministry of Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia, 11th/ 2/ 2024).

5.1.2. Principals' perceptions on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia

Another interviewee, C discussed that *“peace education is vastly relevant in preventing conflict in our country owing to the fact that it has got long-term goals of the peace education is the desire to build in students’ minds a commitment to non-violence and provide the youth with basic information about nonviolent alternative. However, most of our students lack knowledge about strategies they can use to stop violence, thus, I feel the peace education in Somalia lacks short-term goals on how to equip learners or the youth with strategies to solve violent incidences in Somalia. The current curriculum is not teaching our teaching our children about conflict prevention but about Arab countries and cultures not about Somalia and its culture. If you ask these kids, how many rivers are there in Somalia? They don’t know the answer”* (C, a principal at Hamar Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 7th/ 2/ 2024).

One interviewee, D was of the opinion that *“Peace Education is relevant and can prevent conflict in Somalia but it is ought to be a stand-alone subject, examinable at every grade level and in the national exams, and that pace education should begin at grade four at primary school level all through to colleges and institutions of higher learning as a mandatory subject, given as much weight as we give to sciences and humanities. This will ensure peace is practical at a young age and this is a sure way to cultivate a culture of peace and prevent future generations form relapsing into conflicts. Peace Education will to a larger extent put a bar to the conflicts in Somalia only if it's is properly implemented. He added that, there are many schools in Somalia which do not uphold the education with the level of seriousness needed”* (D, a principal at Benadir Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 9th/ 8/ 2021).

5.1.3. Teachers’ perceptions on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia

An interviewee, a social studies teacher when asked on his perception on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia, he observed that *“peace education is applicable in preventing conflict but its content lacks in depth. Learners’ ought to be exposed to a hand on experiences on instances of conflicts experienced regionally, and taught strategies to overcome the same. Peace Education in secondary schools is packaged generally in terms of National Integration, National Unity and Reconciliation. There is therefore a need to disseminate content and incorporate every-day to day experiences from conflict zones and peaceful strategies of*

resolution and mostly enact such instances so as to make peace part and parcel of a learner's development" (G, a social studies teacher from Hamar Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia 7th/ 02/ 2024)

Another interviewee, H notes that *"the Ministry of Education of Somalia has not rolled out the Peace Education Program effectively to schools and given proper guidelines on the same and cites current unrests reported in schools in this year. This is because the curriculum in Somalia is borrowed from other countries such as Kenya, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Malaysia. Everyone is using a different curriculum. We are not able to have one unified exam for the schools as each school had different curriculum. The educational system now is not that good but it is better than nothing"* (H, a history teacher from Mogadishu Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia 8th/ 08/ 2021). The interviewer asked again. Does the curriculum promote peace education that can prevent conflict in Somalia? He replied; *"The current curriculum in Somalia today is part of the problem"* (H, a history teacher from Benadir Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia 8th/ 02/ 2024).

5.2. The importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia

All the participants in the study (100%) indicated that peace education is important in as far as conflict prevention is concerned in Somalia at this current moment. They discussed the following importance of peace in conflict prevention:

5.2.1. Somali Ministry of Education Officials on importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia

An interview, C was asked on the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia, he said that *"peace Education provides in the mind of individuals a dynamic vision of peace to encounter violent images that dominate cultures and it is the only instrument that will stimulate human imagination to love and embrace peace through in the society. He further added that peace education in a society like Somalia give citizen of all countries the needed information about how best to achieve security since peace education plays is to inform people about the causes, nature and consequences of violent. Hence, peace education enlightens the*

citizens to make choice about the best ways of resolving conflicts” (C, an official from Ministry of Education, Mogadishu, Somalia 7th/ 02/ 2024)

Another interview, B noted that *“peace Education provides the citizens with the knowledge of the causes of the conflict and how to manage interpersonal, intergroup and inter-ethnic differences that can prevent ongoing war in Somalia at the moment. This is based on the rationales that peace education equips people with the knowledge that there are no cultures that wholly eliminate the possibilities of interpersonal, intergroup and inter-ethnic violence. As we all know that peace education provides people with the deep understanding of how different individuals, cultures and political system frustrate human needs and make efforts to prevent it in a nonviolent way” (B, an official from Ministry of Education, Mogadishu, Somalia 7th/ 02/ 2024)*

5.2.2. Principals’ opinions on the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia

An interview, B a principal at Mogadishu Secondary School was asked on the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia, he said that he stated that *“peace education is vastly importance in the sense that peace education promotes respect for different cultures and help students, learners and citizens appreciate the diversity of human existence: War occurs between different human beings and groups as a result of lack of respect and non-recognition of others culture as we can see in Somalia here. Intercultural understanding is an important aspect of peace education. In order to understand the perilousness of human existence, people learn about interrelatedness of human beings on planet earth through peace education and to also understand that survival depends on cooperation with others which peace education can play that role better and can lead to conflict prevention within a short duration of time” (B, an official from Ministry of Education, Mogadishu, Somalia 7th/ 02/ 2024.*

5.2.3. Teachers’ views on the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia

An interview, I, a social studies teacher, was asked on the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia, he said that *“peace education is crucial in preventing conflict owing to the fact that peace education provides the learners, students and individuals with a future orientation that will strive to recreate society since it attempts to provide young people like the youth who are making over 70% of Somalia population with the positive image of the future and give them reasons to have hope. He recommended that peace education in Somalia should include courses that provide different possibilities for life in Somalia to stimulate young people to think about less violent ways of managing human behavior”* (I, a social studies teacher at Benadir Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 8th/2/ 2024).

Another interviewee, J elucidates that *“peace education teaches the skills needed to move the country like Somalia out of violence. In which people can have that skills and potentials to create peace in our individual lives. Furthermore, peace education provides the strategies that are necessary to achieve both individual and societal change. As well all know that peace making is a process that must be taught if human beings are to change from their violent behavior. Furthermore, peace education enables citizens to examine how their actions and beliefs contribute to the perpetration of injustice and the development of the war. Young people will then learn strategies to deal with aggressive behaviors and concrete skills that will help them become effective peace makers in our country. Peace education also enables young people to learn about the problem of human rights and justice and this enable them to understand deeply that the struggle for peace embraces justices and learners should understand that the absence of war does just bring peace or harmony in our country, Somalia”* (J, a teacher at Hamar Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 10th/2/ 2024).

Another interviewee, G argued that *“peace education teaches respect for all forms of life: Peace education enables young people to develop positive self-image, a sense of responsibility for self and others, a capacity to trust others and a caring for the well-being of the natural world. He went ahead explained that peace education creates a sense of dignity and self-worth, a confidence to question values, communication skills, ethical awareness and empathy for others will be inculcated through peace education. And it also teaches caring and empathy to human existence in Somalia. He further stated that peace education teaches how to resolve conflicts in a*

nonviolent way but through negotiations and mediations: One of the ultimate role peace education plays is to enable individuals manage conflict nonviolently. The world is being threaten by violent behaviors, street crime, war, domestic quarrels, ethnic conflicts and poverty which make millions of people to live in a violent condition where they have little or no security and struggling to survive” (G, a social studies teacher at Suweys Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 12th/2/ 2024.

5.3. The relationship between peace education and conflict prevention

All the participants (100%) in this study agreed that there is a great relationship between peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia. They suggested that the curricula should be reformed and peace education should become the main priority within the secondary schools as well university level of education in Somalia. The curriculum that was used before the civil war in Somalia has not been updated or printed and this forced both NGOs and the private individuals who took over the education in Somalia to borrow curriculum from the neighboring countries. The participants indicated that the borrowed curriculum is not tailored for the educational needs of the Somali people whereby peace education is one of those urgent needs at the moment.

5.3.1. Somali Ministry of Education Officials on relationship between peace education and conflict prevention

One interviewee, A was asked if there is a relationship between peace education and conflict prevention, he stated that *“of course there is great link between education and conflict prevention because education enlightens the society on many social, economic and political issues hence improving and transforming the society socially, economically and politically. Hence, an improve society gain peace quickly”* (A, an official from Ministry of Education, Mogadishu, Somalia 7th/ 2/ 2024.

5.3.2. Principals on importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia

One interviewee, F was asked if there is a **relationship between peace education and conflict prevention**, he stated that *“Peace Education is vastly related to conflict prevention in the sense that peace education plays a significant role in the socialization of the citizens to become*

productive and peaceful individuals and hence in the end it helps to prevent conflict in the society” F, Principal at Suweys Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia 7th/ 08/ 2024.

5.3.3. Teachers on the relationship between peace education and conflict prevention

One interviewee, G a teacher was asked if there is a relationship between peace education and conflict prevention, he stated that *“Peace education provide to the people relevant knowledge and skills to solve conflict. Hence better peace education leads to quick and smooth conflict prevention in the society”* (G, a social studies teacher at Hamar Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 7th/7/ 2021). Furthermore, another interviewee, H argued that *“peace education is related to conflict prevention in the sense that it helps to provide the root causes of the conflict as well the best recommendations to solve a particular conflict in the society”* (H, a social studies teacher at Benadir Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 10th/2/ 2024).

Another interviewee, I stated that *“education helps to provide the necessary structure and methods necessary to rehabilitate children, women and other people who have been traumatized by war. Hence, it helps to improve the wellbeing and social cohesion among the people in the society”* (I, a social studies teacher at Suweys Secondary School, Mogadishu, Somalia, 11th/2/ 2024).

6. DISCUSSION OF THE KEY FINDINGS

The discussion of the key findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study include the following:

6.1. The different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia.

According to the findings on the different perceptions of the Somali people on peace education and conflict prevention in Somalia. The findings revealed that an overwhelming majority of over (90%) of the participants in the study have got positive and relevant perception about peace education being the best tool that can be used to prevent conflict in Somalia. This is based on the rationales that a topic on peace education in the history textbook is a sure way to introduce learner to the concept of peace. The topic on peace education at secondary level will equip our youth

with skills necessary for peace-building in Somalia and peace education is applicable in preventing conflict but its content lacks in depth. Learners' ought to be exposed to a hand on experiences on instances of conflicts experienced regionally, and taught strategies to overcome the same. Peace Education in secondary schools is packaged generally in terms of National Integration, National Unity and Reconciliation. However, they stated that the current curriculum of secondary education does not have the required contents of peace education that can prevent conflict and promote peace in Somalia; let alone promotion of peace, the current curriculum is the main cause of the conflict in Somalia; the current education curriculum also does not talk about peace or culture, it does not teach the students about their country. In a nutshell, the participants indicated that the borrowed curriculum is not tailored for peace education to attain conflict prevention in Somalia and at the moment the educational system in Somalia is in disarray and ill-organized. They recommended that there is a need to disseminate content and incorporate every-day to day experiences from conflict zones and peaceful strategies of resolution and mostly enact such instances so as to make peace part and parcel of a learner's development. The participants further revealed that the curriculum currently taught in Somalia, which is borrowed mostly from neighboring countries does not provide peace education that can enable conflict prevention in Somalia. The participants recommended that the current curriculum should be reformed and that the teachers should be trained because the curriculum that was used before the civil war in Somalia has not been updated or printed and this forced both NGOs and the private individuals who took over the education in Somalia to borrow curriculum from the neighboring countries.

These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Smith and Doe (2019) who examined the perceptions of community members in South Africa on conflict prevention strategies and the study found that community members believed that fostering a culture of dialogue, reconciliation, and forgiveness was essential for preventing conflicts in their communities. Additionally, the study found that community members emphasized the importance of addressing underlying structural inequalities and injustices as a means of preventing conflicts. Similarly, the findings of the study commensurate with a study by Jones et al. (2018), the perceptions of teachers in the United States on peace education were explored, where they found

that teachers believed that peace education was crucial for building students' critical thinking skills, empathy, and conflict resolution abilities.

6.2. The importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia

Based on the findings in Chapter Four on the importance of peace education in conflict prevention in Somalia, the study revealed that (100%) of the participants in the study agreed that peace education is vastly important in as far as conflict prevention is concerned in Somalia. The main importance of peace education in as far as conflict prevention is concerned as discussed by the participants were that peace Education provides in the mind of individuals a dynamic vision of peace to encounter violent images that dominate cultures and it is the only instrument that will stimulate human imagination to love and embrace peace through in the society, peace education in a society like Somalia give citizen of all countries the needed information about how best to achieve security since peace education plays is to inform people about the causes, nature and consequences of violent, peace Education provides the citizens with the knowledge of how to manage interpersonal, intergroup and inter-ethnic differences that can prevent ongoing war in Somalia at the moment, peace education is vastly importance in the sense that “peace education promotes respect for different cultures and help students, learners and citizens appreciate the diversity of human existence, peace education is crucial in preventing conflict owing to the fact that peace education provides the learners, students and individuals with a future orientation that will strive to recreate society since it attempts to provide young people like the youth who are making over 70% of Somalia population with the positive image of the future and give them reasons to have hope and peace Education provides the citizens with the knowledge of the causes of the conflict and how to manage interpersonal, intergroup and inter-ethnic differences that can prevent ongoing war in Somalia at the moment. This is based on the rationales that peace education equips people with the knowledge that there are no cultures that wholly eliminate the possibilities of interpersonal, intergroup and inter-ethnic violence. The participants recommended that for Somalia to realise the real benefits of peace education in preventing conflict that peace education in Somalia should include courses that provide different possibilities for life in Somalia to stimulate young people to think about less violent ways of managing human behaviour. The findings of the study are consistent with a study by Alsina

(2021) explores the impact of peace education programs on conflict prevention in schools, the findings indicate that schools that implement peace education curricula experience lower levels of violence and conflict among students. Additionally, the findings are in line with a study by Smith et al. (2022) emphasizes the role of peace education in addressing structural violence and promoting social justice.

6.3. How peace education can relate with conflict prevention in Somalia

According to the findings in Chapter Four on how peace education can relate with conflict prevention in Somalia. The study revealed that (100%) of the participants agreed and noted that peace education is related to conflict prevention. The main summary of the findings from the participants on how peace education relates to conflict prevention in relation to the literature reviewed on the relationship between peace education and conflict prevention were that there is great link between education and conflict prevention because education enlightens the society on many social, economic and political issues hence improving and transforming the society socially, economically and politically and it improves society gain peace quickly, peace education plays a significant role in the socialization of the citizens to become productive and peaceful individuals and hence in the end it helps to prevent conflict in the society, peace education provide to the people relevant knowledge and skills to solve conflict, peace education is related to conflict prevention in the sense that it helps to provide the root causes of the conflict as well the best recommendations to solve a particular conflict in the society and lastly peace education helps to provide the necessary structure and methods necessary to rehabilitate children, women and other people who have been traumatized by war. Hence, it helps to improve the wellbeing and social cohesion among the people in the society. The findings of this study are in line with a study by Ristic and Iwanski (2021) emphasizes the role of peace education in addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting peaceful coexistence. Similarly, the findings of the study are consistent with Smith et al. (2022) examines the impact of peace education programs on conflict prevention in post-conflict societies and they found that peace education initiatives can help mitigate intergroup tensions and build social cohesion, contributing to long-term peacebuilding efforts.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that peace education contributes to conflict prevention in Somalia. This was clearly revealed from the finding of the study where majority of the respondents an overwhelming majority of over (90%) of the participants in the study showed positive and relevant perception about peace education being the best tool that can be used to prevent conflict in Somalia, the study revealed that (100%) of the participants in the study agreed that peace education is vastly important in as far as conflict prevention is concerned in Somalia and lastly the study revealed that (100%) of the participants agreed and noted that peace education is related to conflict prevention. However, the participants in the study revealed that that the current curriculum of secondary education does not have the required contents of peace education that can prevent conflict and promote peace in Somalia; it does not talk about peace or culture and also it does not teach the students about their country since the curriculum currently taught in Somalia, which is borrowed mostly from neighboring countries does not provide peace education that can enable conflict prevention in Somalia. It should be reformed and that the teachers should be trained. They recommended that there is a need to disseminate content and incorporate every-day to day experiences from conflict zones and peaceful strategies of resolution and mostly enact such instances so as to make peace part and parcel of a learner's development.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The various recommendations of the study derived from the findings of the study encompass the following:

The Ministry of Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia and should reform and revise the current secondary and primary schools' curriculum and then incorporate peace education with all the required contents which are instrumental in providing in-depth knowledge and skills to prevent conflict in Somalia

The Ministry of Education of Somalia should review the structure of the peace education programme goals, and its organization in order to bear fruits it is prepared for. Teachers,

students, and parents are not familiar with the target goals and structure of peace education in Somalia. It is in this context that the program is still unpopular among these groups of people.

The Federal Government of Somalia should ensure proper and timely training of teachers on peace education needs to be given priority so that teachers are competent enough to understand terms and thus are competent enough to disseminate facts coupled with practice to learners.

The Federal Government of Somalia through Ministry of Education of Somalia to provide sufficient infrastructure and resources required to handle implementation of peace education programme in schools so that it can achieve its core goal of preventing conflict. The needed resources needed motivate teachers to spend more time on the subject. There is still the need to review the nature of education in Somalia; education in Somalia is results oriented and examinable. Peace Education Programme in Somalia also should have clear expectations and needs to be taught as a stand-alone subject in primary school all through to colleges of higher learning to cultivate the culture of peace among Somali.

The Federal Government of Somalia should promote and put more depth and incorporate day to day experiences of dispute resolution and strategies to settle the same. This will help learners acquire strategies to settle and resolution mechanisms to make peace part and parcel of their development.

Lastly, both long-term and short-term goals of peace education program for Conflict prevention in Somalia need to be clear from the start to facilitate learning outcomes. Whereby, the government of the Federal Republic of Somalia through the Ministry of Education needs to invest on evaluation mechanisms of peace education programme in Somalia.

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