ETHNICITY/ ETHNIC IDENTITY VS DEMOCRACY IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THE SOMALI EXPERIENCE IN POST 1991.

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ABSTRACT

Africa is one of the most ethnicitydiversifiedcontinentin the world. Its people have and followdifferent cultures and traditions. Ethnicity forms a basis for ones origins, beliefs and way of life. The continent has experienced more violent conflicts than any other. In many instances social cleavages has been found to be root cause. As such African people are categorized in groups belonging and believing in different religions, origin,culture, traditions etc and thus form the basis of their identity. This means that ethnicityis naturally a divisive tool, in that Africans are divided as they have differing views and convictions. In an African culture there are certain roles that only the privileged can fulfill and undertake. People's movements, abilities and influence are restrained by cultural norms and practices. Democracy on the other hand, is a system of government that unites the people of different diversities; free them from all kinds of oppression in such that everyone has the right to do and become whatever they desire provided that it is in the confines of democratic norms, principles and the international laws. Democracy advocates for freedom and equality; it offers many opportunities to every individual who is capable. This study will therefore examine the relation between democracy and ethnicity, particularly focusing on how ethnic identity has affected the institutionalization of democracy

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and governance in Somalia. The study will assess this relation and attempt to understand and interpret the Somali political problems and instability that characterized the country for over two decades.

Keywords: Ethnicity, Democracy, Religion, Ethnic clans, Cultural differences

Introduction

In many African countries ethnicity has been in contradiction with democratic principles, and thus leading to conflictinginterests. As a result one had to be sacrificed for the benefit (the usage) of the other. Many journalistic writings present that this practice emanated from the colonial era whereby the colonizers imported their policies and practices into the continent and thus overruled African norms and practices. In most cases the two has not been able to work together cohesively because the Western and European powers have allegedly looked down on African cultural practices and many African believes. The challenge has been to operate simultaneously and on equal basis. This has been the case in countries such as Rwanda, Ivory Coast, Burundi, Kenya, Nigeria, and Somalia to mention a few. In these countries ethnic identity (which forms a crucial aspect of culture characterized by ones believes and origins) has been a major impediment to the institutionalization of democracy. There exist paradoxes between the two. The implication is that in the 21st century the introduction of democracy meant the erosion of African culture particularly in the decision-making processes such as elections, political representatives and the operation of nations (government). The central issue here is that before the arrival of colonial powers and western civilization Africans had their way of managing their affairs including ruling their nations, interaction with each other and the issues of separation of powers. The Africans alleges that the problem emerged because the western civilization imposed ways of governance on Africans and in many instances those ways are totally different from the Africans. This phenomenon remains a challenge in many African countries even today as they struggle with 'utopian' way of controlling their states. Most of the leaders in the continent lack focus and initiative to manage democracy and ethnicity, thus compounding the problem of governance and development of the continent. As such African countries have been embroiled in protracted and intractable violent conflicts. Peace, stability and development in this instance became compromised and thus the ordinary men and women were the ones affected in most of the affected countries as they suffer as the casualties. This paper argues that the Somali culture has

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been a major obstacle in institutionalizing democracy in the country, and thus identifies ethnic differences such as ethnic identity (tribes/clans) and religion as main factors.

Background of the Study

Somalia is a country located in the horn of Africa. It has been bested by civil unrest characterized by famine, power struggles, failed interventions, pirates and terrorism, among others. The Somali problems became prevalent after gaining independence from the British colony. Ethnic identitybecame a factor and phenomenon used for political contest and narrow selfish gains by ethnic groups. Ethnicity became a crucial element for political mobilization; political parties were established along ethnic formation and interests, and this gathered recognition in the country's political stratum. As a result Somalia ended up with many political parties making political competition tough and intense. This translated into deep rooted rivalries and instability across the country.

The root cause of the Somali problem has been found to be politicization and manipulation of ethnicity.The practice began with the country's first president Aden Abdullah Osman. Osman led the country from 1 July 1960 to June 1967 and lost power in a democratic election to his former Prime Minister Abdirashid Ali Shermarke (Sachs, 1988: 290). Ethnic politics continued with the regime of Major General SiadBarre who became the president of Somalia in 1969 after the assassination of President Sharmarke. At inception of power the presidents attempted to practice inclusive politics and promised to alleviate clan-based politics, but this did not last for long with the challenge ethnicity imposed on Somalia's government and politics. In the case of Barre, he became a dictator; enriched and promoted members of his clan-family. His government was called M.O.D, Mareehaan, Ogaden and Dulbahante, a codename used for the clans that benefited from it. All the public services were controlled by the members of the M.O.D. In Barre's regime repressive tactics were utilized against all those who wished to challenge him. Throughout his rein thousands of Somali people were arrested, tortured, killed, while many fled the country. During Barre's regime "tribalism, nepotism, corruption and misrule" became widespread and intensified swiftly sowing deeper divisions among Somali clans (Metz, 2009). Menkhaus (2007) argues that Barre used a divide and rule tactic, leading to increased hatred and distrust among the Somali people, thus increasing disputes and making national unity illusive.

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Barre was overthrown in 1991 and the country was left without a central government. Different ethnic groups formed an alliance to topple him, and after they achieved their goal they did not agree on who and how to govern the country based on lack of trust among ethnic groups. Under such circumstances the country became a playground for greedy militias, warlords, Islamic insurgencies who each wanted the control of the state. This resulted in lawlessness and anarchic situation (Menkhaus, 2003; 1).

The Somali crisis badly affected the way the country is governed, most especially because the triggers were rather ethnical than political. The result has been that bad governance began to characterize the political spectrum as the control of the state became a central issue. The practice of democracy, which includes inclusivity and transparency,was hampered and thus badly affected the ability of post 1991 governments (TNG/TFG) to make and implement sound policies. The capacity and influence of both governments became limited as many clans maintained some kind of self-governance/autonomy apart from the national government. As such the post 1991 government was never able to provide good governance and positive change to the situation.

In aaddition, Nyambura (2011: 181) observes that since 1991 it has been very difficult to restore and maintain law and order. He further argues that "the emergence of warlords and other interest groups who are thirsty for power; the destruction of major institutions like courts of justice, and social disconnection are the factors that escalated and prolonged the crisis".

Theoretical framework

The paper employs liberalism and conservatism theories. The theories will unpack the topic and provide a better understanding of the phenomenon the paper intends to address. Each theory provides a distinctive approach to understanding and analyzing the topic. Liberalism focuses on democracy. It defines democracy andexplainswhy it is the correct political system to adopt. Conservatism theory focuses on ethnicity.It explains the involvement of ethnicity in the Somali politics. As such these theories complement each other and thus give a thorough understanding of the current situation in the country.

Liberalism: is an ideology that advocate for freedom and choice in any democratic society. It assumes that every individual is entitled to champion and safeguard their own interests and should have equal rights and opportunities. Its central theme is individual liberty and thus maintains that every individual should live in a society where they can live peacefully and reach

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their personal fulfillment. In the words of Heywood "Liberalism undoubtedly favors openness, debate and self-determination". The core assumption of the liberal thought include: the individual, freedom, reason, justice and toleration (Heywood, 2007: 23, 27 & 37).

Most importantly liberals advocate for a sovereign state that have a system of laws that restrict and limit individual liberty from becoming destructive and infringe on other people's right to ensure equality. The theory regards "the state as the neutral arbiter amongst competing individuals and groups within a society" and thus proposes a central government formed by "agreement or consent of the governed" based on the democratic constitution. Liberals believe in centralized authority as argued by Lord Actons, quoted by (Heywood 2007: 38) "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely and in his conclusion; great men are almost bad men".

During the Somali crisis the interventionists took more of the liberal approach by providing peacekeeping mechanisms that advocated for the establishment of central government. They argued that the country needed a centralized authority that could address and manage the divisions and fragmentations among the people. Their main focus was to bring peace and stability through the restoration of law and order. Their belief was that central government could contain the situation and end the power struggle. However, Menkhaus (2007; 395) alludes that there has been 14 failed attempts to resuscitate the troubled state. As such Transitional National Government (TNG) established in 2000 and Transitional Federal Government (TFG) established 2004 failed to contain and restore the situation to lasting stability. Despite of their shortcomings, however, both governments faced strong opposition from various groups in the country and operated under difficult and challenging conditions without cooperation of any kind from the clans.

Conservatism: "is the desire to conserve, reflected in a resistance to, or at least a suspicion of, change" (Heywood, 2007; 74). The people who adhere to this theory are called traditionalist in that they sought to preserve and defend their cultural roots; values, convictions, norms and practices. Traditionalist are said to be protecting the societal values, belief and make up to secure security and identity.

According to Mclean and McMillan (2009) "some conservatives seek to preserve things as they are, emphasizing stability and continuity, while others, called reactionaries, oppose modernism and seek a return to the way things were". The theory emphasizes the importance of

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history and experience, and thus supports only the tried and tested ways of managing their affairs. The core values of the belief include tradition, human imperfection, organic society, hierarchy, authority and property.

Conservatives contradict the liberals in number of ways. First, they believe that human beings need each other for survival and for protection as they are naturally dependent on one another. This implies that "they do not and cannot exist outside society, but desperately need to belong to a society, to have 'roots and identity' in society, hence the need for societal groups or community" (Heywood, 2007: 74). The emphasis here is that conservatism is predicated on symbiotic relationship among individuals and groups in the society. Second, the conservatives believe that "the society is naturally hierarchical, characterized by fixed or established social gradations". Social equality is therefore rejected as undesirable and unachievable; power, status and property are always unequally distributed in any human organization. Hence, he submits that inequality is an inevitable feature of the organic state" (Heywood 2007: 76). Despite his advocacy for symbiotic relationship among the people in a society, he do not foresee an egalitarian society where there will be equality for all.

In the case of Somalia, the oppositions to the central government took more of a conservative doctrine. During conflict, for example, other parties (warlords, clan militias, Islamic insurgents) did not welcomeany foreign intervention in conflict resolution. The insurgents argued that the intervention was just used to undermine the Islamic religion. They fiercely rejected the intervention and claimed that it was interference in the internal matters of their state, therefore violating their sovereignty. These parties agreed that they did not want any foreign intervention as they believe it was a way of spreading Western doctrines, which they strongly oppose. Based on this believe they started attacking everything that is Western influenced including schools, government, humanitarian aids, peacekeeping personnel among others. The post 1991 Somalia witnessed the emergence of many Islamic insurgencies, most notable being the Al-Shabaab. The Insurgencies submit that they are fighting to protect and promote their religion, their believes, values and customs. As such they did not recognize the TFG government and argued that it represented foreign interests.

Al Shabab even went to the extent of labeling the TGF president as the puppet of the Western countries based on its disposition and programmes. The Shabaab sought to resist change and preserve traditional ways of life and how things are been done in the Islamic states. As a

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result they fought and seized number of towns and imposed strict Sharia law on the parts of the country they controlled.

As said by one of the Al-Shabaab commanders "Our goal is to have Sharia as the permanent law of our country, and to get the infidels out of our country, whether they are Ethiopians or Americans" (BBC, 28/4/2008). The Shabaab resorted to guerrilla tactics to intimidate their oppositions and to assert their authority in the country. They targeted parties that backed and supported the Transitional Federal Government (TGF). The insurgents stood to their values by waging jihad war against what they perceived as 'American-made government' (TGF) and Ethiopians (Terror Journal, 28/2/2009).

Ethnicity conceptualized

Ethnicity is a community solidarity based on shared ideas of origin, ancestry, tradition and culture (Thompson, 2010: 73). In societies where ethnicity is deemed as a basis for societal make up, it usually serves as ones identity in that it classifies people into groups by categorizing them "as speakers of a particular language, belonging to a particular religion, being able to preserve and express their heritage and having access to positions of power and wealth or not" (Wolff, 2006). When ethnicity is interpreted in this manner it therefore becomes inevitable to mobilize people along ethnic/tribal lines in order to preserve certain incentives for a particular group. Ethnic identity is, in this instance, utilized as a vehicle by ethnic groups to have more influence, acquire power and ultimately gain dominance.

In the 21st century the involvement of ethnicity in African politics has been considered to be detrimental particularly to the development and stability of many states. The utilization of ethnic differences by political class for marginalization and oppression of other units have become a norm rather than exception in the ethnically divided countries of the third world. People are divided and classified in groups known as ethnic groups or tribes. Each have different believes, origins, traditions, culture, religion and/or language. According to Thompson (2010) social cleavages are bound to produce conflicting interests as different groups wants and compete for one goal, that which in most cases, is perceive as only attainable to one. Mostly the groups lack the will to share and compromise because of ethnic preservation.

In Somalia ethnicity has been exploited for political reasons. Leaders have been using their ethnic groups for political mobilization to garner more support for power domination. They use their beliefs to rally 'ethnic likes' anddecamping politicians and exclude others. This has had

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negative impact on the stability of the state and thus affecting the development and the social fabric of the country. As such the country has been divided into three independent regions; the Puntland, Somaliland and South-Central-Somalia. Based on this division, the country and has been embroiled in violent conflict over the control and leadership of the country.

Ethnicity and democracy

In the 21st century the two concepts have not been yielding a mutual or successful outcome that will be of benefit particularly in ethnically diverse societies. Ethnicity prioritizes a particular group and that group progresses at the expense of others. Ethnicity involves suppression and oppression; it divides people and categories them as 'us' against 'them'. The members of a particular group look out for each other and perceive others as threats to their goals and objectives. Mostly in societies where ethnicity serves as a base for political contestations political leaders are not accountable to their subjects, they just dictate what to happen and that shall be done without questions. Leadership is hereditary and therefore evolves in one family and close associates of the leader. This implies that one is actually born to be a leader if belong to such a family but a follower if not born in such family. In most cases the system of governance becomes a dictatorship and/or authoritarian where leaders and representatives utilizes iron fist tactics to control their people, preserve their power and suppress rebellion. In most cases one ethnic group becomes dominant and controls the state and its resources. The dominant group in question dictates and influences foreign and domestic policies; in clan-based states like Somalia, it usually makes laws favorable and beneficial to them. In addition, ethnicity aids ethnic or regional political parties in which those that belong to other political parties different from the party that has its strong hold in the region are referred to as anti-progressive and enemies of the people.

According to Diamond (2004) democracy is a system of government with four key elements: (1) a political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections,(2) the active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life, (3) protection of the human rights of all citizens and (4) a rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens.

The implication of the above elements is that democracy is characterized inclusiveness, equality and transparency. In a democratic state everyone has equal rights and opportunities, and everybody is equal before the law. Privileges are accessible to anyone based on merit and not on

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one's origin or influence. It also advocates for separation of powers whereby every arms of government can operate effectively and independently without one being subjected to manipulation of the other. Under this condition, everyone has equal chance of attaining power and/or improving their living conditions for self-fulfillment. There are rules and regulations on how things are done. Every decision-making process should be within the confines of the international law, human rights, and should be based on consensus so that they could be legally binding on all parties involved. Transparency and accountability are the key features of a democracy. Democratic principles dictate that people should be taught and informed about their leaders' actions, government procedures and decision-making processes such as policy formulation, election process, and finances of the government among others.

In the literal sense, democracy means "rule by the people"; it is a government instituted by the people in a particular society based on agreed rules and principles that will guarantee peaceful leadership succession and peaceful co-existence of all the citizens within such society. In representative democracy which is practiced across Africa, the people choose politicians through elections to represent them; the representatives, however, are expected to account to citizens. Representatives are chosen through general elections that are held within the intervals of four or five years in most countries practicing democracy in the continent. The rules that govern these elections should be transparent, known and respected by all. There must be fair and open campaigns to mobilize support and convince citizens to vote for candidates of their choice. According to Thompson (2010: 244-245), to achieve this multiparty competition is encouraged on one hand and on the other hand to strengthen democracy. This will give citizen right of choice and sense of belonging when allowed to take part in decision making process. In the contemporary world, no society can survive in isolation, hence the pre-condition for foreign aids in the continent and elsewhere is the practice of democracy as a system of government and ways of life of its people.

Kimanuka(16/7/2012) observes that western democracy and democratization became the pre-condition for African countries that sought foreign aid and loans, especially from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in order to redress their dire socio-economic and political crisis.

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Islamic Religion

Islam is one of the largest religions with many followers found across the world. The religion is influenced by the teachings and the practices of Prophet Mohammed who was regarded as the conveyer of messages between the people and God. Its adherents are known as Muslims; and are categorized into two groups- the Sunnis and the Shia after the death of Mohammed (Cavendish, 2010). As a result the Sunni Muslims follow the practices of Mohammed and believes that he did not appoint a successors, the Shias follow Ali IbinTalib, whom they believe is a successor to Mohammed (Headden, 2008). Islam is a very strict religion; the Muslims have solid and firm belief in their religion. The religion uses Quran as its guarding tool and advocate for the practice of Shiria law in all society where it is practiced. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica Online, "the Quran set the rights, the responsibilities and the rules for people and for societies to adhere to". Its values are binding on any individual member and cannot be compromised. The religion dictates everything including how the nations should be run. Muslims have their unique way of living; most of its members are considered by many critics to be very judgmental to people of other religions. As such this behavior led most analysts to believe that Muslims consider their religion to be the only appropriate and acceptable religion than others and thus define them as being unable to be accommodative. Islam stems mostly from the Arab world, it is considered to be the most radical and militant religion because in many instances its members has used violent measures to raise their opinions and show their opposition which is mostly done by wagging a jihad war. Jihad can be defined as a holy war fought by Muslims to defend Islamic religion. It entails the use of warfare tactics that includes killings, destruction of property and the disturbance of peace.

Owing to the belief in jihad for settlement of differences there exist a sour relationship between the (radical and extremist) Muslims and the West, whom are dominantly Christian and the inventors of democracy. In most cases the Muslims have been alleged to be threats to the world peace and that has been advocated for by the West. As such the two actorshave always been at war with each other. It has been alleged that most of the West's oppositions are Muslims including the likes of Osama Bin Laden, Osama Hussein and were associated with the terrorist group called Al Qaeda. This group had claimed many lives in violent attacks across the world all in the name of defending and asserting their religion. As such, there have been situations where the West associates Islam with terrorism and thus vowing to stop them. The September 11 incident escalated the rift and hatred between these two parties as lives were wasted in the attack.

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On the other hand the Muslims regard the West as people who want to take control of the world and thus eliminate them. They believe that the West want to own and dominate everything. In many instances where the West is involved in any issue, as was the case in Somalia, the Muslims have always been in the defense mode. They claim to be defending Islam which is their identity and the West argues that they are policing the world against any threats to peace and stability that will disrupt world peace. As a result of these two are always at each other's throat, looking for opportunity to outdo one another. In addition, the other factor that influences this rival is that the two stands for extremely varying ideals and objectives when it comes to managing the state affairs. The west belief in democracy and rule of law while the Muslims belief in jihad and sharia law

Critics of Islam have always centered on its laws that is constituted in the Quran. They argue that they are extreme, harsh and thus undermine the international obligations of safeguarding human rights. As such the treatment of women, punitive measures such as stoning a person have always been under scrutiny. Others went to the extent of questioning the "authenticity and morality of Quran" (Spencer, 2003).

Islamic religion vs democracy

Due to the history between (radical and extremist) Muslims and the West the Islamic religion has always been at the odds with democracy. Islamic values are completely different from what democracy is advocating for. For example democracy advocate for many rights and freedoms, which implies that everyone have the right to choose how they live their lives. In Contraction, however, Islam control its members in that it dictates what people wear, eat and who they associate with and mainly it stresses that states should be ruled with Sharia law which encompasses strict laws. Furthermore, Islam still uses strong and rigid measures to discipline their subjects which are considered to be violation of human rights in democracy. After the cold war, the United States emerged as a victor with its ideology (capitalism which includes democratization). They sought to spread this believe across the globe as the ideal system and standard of governance, particularly in Africa, through many different processes such as globalization, provision of aid and humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping efforts. As such the presence and influence of the United States has been felt all over the world and the Muslims as the opposing party feel threatened and thus retaliates by launching atrocious attacks and

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opposing everything Western including the practice of good governance and western education which are critical base of institutionalization of democracy.

The central issue between Islamic religion and democracy is that Islam does not believe in the separation of the state and religion. It treats them as the same entity and has the same laws on how they should be managed. As noted by Thompson (2010: 70) "Some Muslims, however, broadly termed as Islamists, disagree that religion and the state should exist separately, rather Islamists argue that religion without authority is worthless (rejecting the contrary liberal argument that religion without individual freedom is worthless). Islamists point to the West, where religion has become detached from government, and argue that they are decadent societies where greed, crime, materialism and lack of communal living are endemic. With church separated from the state, the argument runs, public life in the West takes on an amoral outlook".

Therefore, Islamists believe that the solution to the world's problem of immorality is the introduction of religion in public policy and social conduct. According to them, religion orders and teaches people to obey, love, and respect each other and this could spread in all sectors of the society. They believe religion should be the core foundation for maintaining law and order, leading to the restoration of peace, hence the advocacy of the state that is guided and determined by the Sharia law as against the advocacy for democracy and rule of law in all countries of the world by the West as being championed by the United States of America.

The Somali experience

The use of ethnicity in Somalia has proved to be a double edged sword that could be both constructive and destructive depending on the usage. Before the introduction of multiparty system in Somalia, ethnicity played a vital role as the key feature that contained and united the Somali people. It gathered them as a unified nation advocatingfor one goal of national solidarity against external forces. However, in post 1991,when multi-party democracy was introducedit became evident that ethnicity was utilized as an instrument for championing narrow selfish gains and thus served as a source of conflict. This was found to be destructive in that it has "divided the Somalis, fuel endemic clashes over resources and power sharing among the people, used to mobilize militia and make a broad-based reconciliation difficult to achieve. Most of the Somali's armed clashes since 1991 have been fought in the name of clan, often as a result of political leaders manipulating clannism for their own purposes" (World Bank, 2005).

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In Somalia the political processes unfolded along tribal lines; jobs, positions in government and political offices were issued not based on merit, experience and skill like it's done in most democratic states but based on one's origin, loyalty and believes. Ethnic groups became important entities in the social and political stratum as they guaranteed one's protection, safety, and welfare. Tribal lines and religious beliefs determined relations. There exist a traditional hierarchy influencing how things are done and in most cases many people are excluded. This is to mean that there is no transparency, accountability and inclusiveness; political decisions were made in the interests of those in power and their ethnic groups. The country became anarchic to such an extent that many characterized it as 'survival of the fittest'. The control of the state became the central issue and was pursued by all irrespective of the cost. Factionalism, corruption, nepotism and maladministration came to the fore as leaders and those who were in power served and prioritized their cronies and close alliances at the expense of other ethnic groups the poor and the vulnerable. This furthered the divisions and fragmentations as everyone was trying to secure their survival and existence within the same country. Conflict intensified as different and destructive strategies and tactics were employed to attain and retain power, and thus resulted in atrocious incidents.

Economic and political interest has ruined peaceful relations in Somalia. Those who were in power became more powerful and feared; the rich became richer while the poor drowned into more devastating conditions.This played a crucial role in escalating the tensions and rivalries as such, it resulted in a bloody civil war that crippled the country's political and economic structures.

According to (Haldén, 11/2008; 10) Somalia became a failed state and has been ranked as one of the world's poorest, most violent countries, plagued by warring militias, bandits, warlords and pirates" (New York Times, 17/5/2012).

The ethnic factor has led to fierce power struggles in the country. The state was seen as the quickest way of enriching oneself. The control of the state was interpreted and understood negatively in that those in power saw it as an opportunity to suppress others.In most cases power struggle was pursued for the wrong reasons such as oppression of other clans and wealth accommodation. Stability and development were not everyone's priority and this hampered the country's chances of growth and development and thus drove investors away. The security situation continued to deteriorate, Somali people continued to dig their graves by destroying their

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country through unabated ethnically motivated violent conflicts. There has not been central government since the government of Barre was toppled in 1991.

Menkhaus (2003a) summarized the situation in these terms: "the regime collapsed in 1991, yet the legacy of deep clan divisions, poor governance, and myopic political leadership continues to haunt the country and prevent the formation of a government of national unity".

Conclusion

The total institutionalization of democracy remains a major challenge in Somalia. Democracy in Somalia became a difficult and painful process because not everybody was willing to embrace it. As such democratic principles got stalled, hijacked and misinterpreted to accommodate varying groups. There existdifferences inunderstanding and interpretation ofthe system. The culture of clan-based system has been a major obstacle to practicing and achieving good governance as clan interests took priority over national solidarity. The political instability has affected many lives as well as the ability of government to carry-out its duties. The politicization of ethnicity has derailed and redirects the implementation of many democratic practices such as transparency in the public offices, fair and equal chances, equality among men and women, respect for human rights among others. Ethnic identity took precedence over the democratic principles and international laws. People were harassed, killed and tortured for wanting and advocating for democratic rights.The situation in Somalia provided clear indication that ethnicity served as a divisive tool and as a result democracy floundered. However, it must be taken into cognizance that ethnicity forms a crucial aspect of Somali challenges; therefore for democracy to be embraced and succeed itshould be acknowledged and respected. The solution is to make peace with the fact that Somalia is a clan-based state so that democratic process would be erected based on this concrete reality to avoid rebellion. Power sharing and process of decision making should be democratized to encourage and allow majority participation in a way that governance in Somalia will be seen as a collective responsibility of all against the responsibility of only the advantaged as witnessed since 1991.

Recommendations

Considering the peculiar situation in Somalia the following recommendations are carefully suggested:

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- There is a need for a good and mutual relationship and respect regarding the importance of ethnicity and democracy. The two could be used to strength each other, and unite the Somali people.This could result in or encourage peaceful and harmonious co-existence among differing groups with the state as a neutral and impartial arbiter.

- There is need for a democratic constitution that could serve as the highest law that will protect all the Somali people. This could enforce firm and thorough democratic institutions that couldrestore a lasting peace, security, stability and development.

- The Somali people should adopt a culture of communication, negotiation, compromising, accommodation and respect for each other as well as foreign institutions. This might become the basis for overcoming the divisions among the clans without creating new ones. It could also serve as a basis to attract foreign investment for the growth and development of the Somali state. No foreign investor will invest in a conflict ridden country, hence, there can not be development of any kind where there is violence.

- The role of the traditional leaders should be fully acknowledged in the constitution. They could play a meaningful role in unifying the Somali people. This could be vital in keeping and maintaining democratic, inclusive and balanced approach. The traditional rulers should go back to history to know where they miss the existing peace among the clans before 1991. In a bid of restoring the peace to allow for unity, peace and development among the clans

- The national government should be inclusive and transparent so as to avoid rebellions, corruptions, mistrust, abuse of power among others. This could be advantageous for the advancement of democracy, provision of good governance, and allow for a much needed stability and development.

- The international community should adopt a collaboration measure in assisting the Somalia people to restore peace and orderliness in one hand and institutionalize democracy on the other hand, it is only when the Somalia people are involved in the peace process that they will have confidence in the process and give it the needed support.

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