The Role of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in Political Instability in Somalia, Case Study: Mogadishu Somalia

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Abstract: *Political instability has long plagued Somalia, marked by conflict, terrorism, and weak governance. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was established in 2007 to address this challenge. The presence of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has inadvertently exacerbated political instability in the country due to several factors. These include civilian casualties, sexual exploitation, human rights abuses, and the manipulation of frontline countries for their political interests through AMISOM, among other related actions. This research investigated AMISOM's negative impact on Somalia's political stability, contributing to the understanding of international peacekeeping missions. The study employed a quantitative approach, using self-administered questionnaires and SPSS for analysis. Findings reveal the intricate relationship between AMISOM actions and anti-government group recruitment, as well as the potential influence of illicit trade on these groups. Concerns arise from perceived corruption within AMISOM and external actors' involvement. The Recommendations of this study includes: enhancing transparency, adopting conflict-sensitive approaches, and reviewing external involvement. This research sheds light on navigating intervention in complex political contexts.*

Keywords: AMISOM and Political Instability

1. Introduction

The political instability in Somalia has been a longstanding issue, characterized by conflict, terrorism, and weak governance. In an effort to restore stability and promote peace, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was established in 2007. For several decades, political instability has been an entrenched challenge within the country's socio-economic landscape.

In AMISOM's case, the most widely debated negative unintended consequences were those where mission personnel engaged in corruption or caused harm to civilians, most notably through indiscriminate shellfire and instances of sexual exploitation and abuse. Corruption included cases of AMISOM personnel engaging in the illicit trade of goods and mission supplies, including rations, fuel, equipment, including HESCO defensive barriers and sandbags, and even ammunition. Paul D. Williams (2017).

Furthermore, the nation's tumultuous history of civil war, state collapse, and the emergence of extremist groups has resulted in a protracted crisis that continues to hinder its progress towards lasting peace and effective governance. Additionally, the presence of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has inadvertently exacerbated political instability in the country due to several factors. These include civilian casualties, sexual exploitation, human rights abuses, and the manipulation of frontline countries for their political interests through AMISOM, among other related actions. These issues have contributed to a deteriorating security situation, undermined trust in the peacekeeping mission, and perpetuated clan divisions, Impeding the country's advancement towards enduring peace and efficient governance. Addressing these challenges is essential to mitigate the negative impact of AMISOM on Somalia's political stability and facilitate the establishment of a more sustainable and inclusive path towards peace and development.

The objective of this research is to investigate and analyze the negative impact of AMISOM's presence in Somalia on the country's political stability. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the impact of international peacekeeping missions, particularly in the context of AMISOM's involvement in Somalia. By examining the negative consequences of AMISOM's actions on political stability.

1.1 Background

Deployed to Mogadishu, Somalia in March 2007, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) became the Union's longest running, largest, most costly, and most deadly operation. Yet, of the 54 AU members, only 6 contributed troops to AMISOM: Uganda (2007), Burundi (2007), Djibouti (2011), Kenya (2012), Sierra Leone (2013) and Ethiopia (2014).Paul D. Williams (2017).

Preceded by other regional peace interventions including African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), Sudan (AMIS I & II), the Comoros (AMISEC & MAES), the Central African Republic (MISCA), and Mali (AFISMA), the establishment of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was certainly one of the most significant and challenging African Union-led peace support operation. Authorised in 2007 by the African Union (AU) through its Peace and Security Council's Communiqué of 19th January and United Nations (UN) through Security Council resolution 1744 of 20 February under Chapter VII (United Nations, 2008) of the UN Charter, AMISOM was given the task of implementing a peace enforcement mandate aimed at bringing peace and stability in Somalia. (The HORN Bulletin • Volume V • Issue III • May - June 2022).

AMISOM was to consist of both military and civilian components amounting up to 8,000 peacekeepers. In addition to Uganda, states such as Nigeria, Ghana and Burundi soon stated their willingness to contribute.89 Uganda offered 1600 troops, Burundi 1500-1600, Nigeria 850 and Ghana 350 troops.90 South Africa, which, with its great military capacity, had participated in previous AU missions,announced that it would be unable to contribute troops to AMISOM due to its commitments to MONUC – the UN mission in DR Congo –, and AMIS, as well as its presence in Burundi. Cecilia Hull, Emma Svensson (2008).

According to an AMISOM report, it states that Currently, the military component is comprised of troops drawn from Uganda, Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia who are deployed in six sectors covering south and central Somalia. Ugandan troops are deployed in Sector 1, which comprises the regions of Banadir, and Lower Shabelle. Kenyan forces are responsible for Sector 2 comprising Lower and Middle Jubba. Sector 3 comprising Bay and Bakool as well as Gedo (Sub Sector 3) comes under Ethiopian command. Djiboutian forces are in charge of Sector 4 which covers Hiiraan and Galgaduud while Burundian forces are in charge of Sector 5 which covers the Middle Shabelle region.

1.2 Specific objectives

1) To investigate the impact of AMISOM's peacekeeping forces' sexual abuse civilian casualties and human rights incidents on Somalia's political instability.
2) To assess how corruption within AMISOM's logistics system worsens political instability.
3) To analyze neighboring countries' involvement in Somalia, driven by their national interests, and its effect on the mission and political instability.

2. Literature Review

In 2016 AMISOM was given a new mandate which expanded the political nature of AMISOM even further, mentioning the need to focus on strengthening local governance institutions and conducting more hearts-and-minds activities with civilians. The mission also played a key role in securing the 2016 presidential election by the Somali parliament, which still operated according to the 4.5 Formula, allowing for further consolidation of the new government (Lotze & Williams, 2016).

ADDIS ABABA, April 1, 2022: The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) has effectively taken over from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in line with the decision of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) during its 1068th meeting held on 08 March 2022, mandating the ATMIS to support the Federal Government of Somalia in the implementation of the Somali Transition Plan and to transfer security responsibilities to the Somali security forces and institutions. (press-release-atmis-amisom.4.4.2022).

Somalia is the site of the African Union's (AU) largest, long-running, most expensive, and deadliest peace operations. Deployed to Mogadishu in March 2007, the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) grew to over 22,000 uniformed

personnel who were mandated to protect the Somali authorities from al-Shabaab militants and other armed opposition groups; assist peace and reconciliation efforts in Somalia; and ultimately hand over security responsibilities to Somali security forces. Paul D. Williams (2023). In April 2022, AMISOM was reconfigured into the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), which continued these efforts but was also mandated to conduct a phased handover of security responsibilities to Somali authorities by the end of 2024.Paul D. Williams (2023).

AMISOM's civilian component is what sets it apart from previous AU peacekeeping missions. The AU Special Representative, as head of the multidimensional peace support operation, has the ability to use his "good office" to further the peace process and play a more active role in the resolution of the conflict. So far, AMISOM's civilian component has been active in bringing together factions, which formed a unity government and facilitated the withdrawal of the Ethiopians. Lamii Kromah (2010). The civilian component has also offered support in various forms to the TFIs, such as mediation between government officials, building internal cohesion among members and capacity-building for public sector institutions. Lamii Kromah (2010).

AMISOM represents the long evolution of African peacekeeping that began with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) intervention in Chad in 1982 with 3 000 troops, the lessons the AU learned from the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) and Sudan (AMIS), as well as the regional experiences of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Lamii Kromah (2010).

In AMISOM, the implications of national security interests are apparent if we consider the division of sectors among the countries involved. Uganda, the first country to contribute to the mission, is responsible for Sector 1 andis therefore concentrated in Mogadishu and the coastal area down to Baraawe. Burundi is officially responsible for Sector 5 north of Mogadishu, but seems to be concentrated mainly around Jowhar, with limited reach outside the town.As a direct neighbour, Kenya is responsible for Sector 2 covering lower Jubba, running along the border to Kenya and along the coast all the way west, near the Ethiopian border. Yet, there is speculation that the vast majority of Kenyan troops are in fact based in the buffer zone running along the 700-kilometre Somali-Kenyan border. Fejerskov, Adam Moe; Cold-Ravnkilde, Signe Marie; Albrecht, Peter (2017).

Apart from its focus on maintaining border security, Kenya is driven by its strategic and economic interests in maintaining control of the southern port city of Kismayo. In early 2014, it was announced that most of Kenya's troops were to leave Kismayo and would be replaced by Sierra Leonean troops. This decision was motivated by the Somali government's criticism that the KDF was working to a domestic Kenyan agenda. However, in 2015 Kenyan troops were still in charge of Kismayo, while Sierra Leonean troops left AMISOM due to the Ebola crisis in West Africa (Albrechtand Haenlein 2015). Kismayo is particularly sought after for the charcoal and sugar trade that goes through the town, the illicit trade in which Kenyan forces have been

accused of profiting from.Fejerskov, Adam Moe; Cold-Ravnkilde, Signe Marie; Albrecht, Peter (2017).

Ethiopia is heavily engaged both within and outside the framework of AMISOM. Indeed, one interviewee claimed that in practice they cover more than 60 percent of AMISOM's operational areas.18 Officially, sectors 3 (along the southern part of Ethiopia's border) and 6 (centring on Kismayo) are Ethiopian-dominated, with Djibouti responsible for Sector 4, also on the Ethiopian border and north of Sector 3. In reality, Ethiopian forces are also heavily stationed in Djibouti's sector, as well as along the Ethiopian border, and they seem to roam freely across the entire operational area, including in lower Jubba and near the Jubba Valley.Fejerskov, Adam Moe; Cold-Ravnkilde, Signe Marie; Albrecht, Peter (2017).

Apart from AMISOM, Ethiopia uses a range of different tools to influence and contain the conflict in Somalia. In addition to military troops, whose numbers and locations are not known, special forces of the Ethiopian police are involved in training local militias.Fejerskov, Adam Moe; Cold-Ravnkilde, Signe Marie; Albrecht, Peter (2017).

2.1 Sexual Assault

Security Council Resolution 1325 recognized that women require special protection from gender-based violence during armed conflict. Yet UN peacekeepers have themselves been implicated in SEA, raising serious questions about their responsibility to protect and their impartiality in peacekeeping operations. K Grady (2010).

The United Nations, Human Rights Watch, and other organizations have documented high levels of sexual and gender-based violence against Somali women and girls, particularly the displaced. But the involvement of AMISOM soldiers has largely been overlooked, including by the mission's leadership and international donors. As this report shows, some AMISOM soldiers, deployed to Somalia since 2007 to help restore stability in the war-torn capital, Mogadishu, have abused their positions of power to prey on the city's most vulnerable women and girls. Soldiers have committed acts of rape and other forms of sexual abuse, as well as sexual exploitation—the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes. Human Rights Watch (978-1-62313-1876 2014).

The other significant source of AMISOM personnel causing civilian harm was related to SEA. Instances of SEA in peace operations are notoriously difficult to verify. In AMISOM's case, most allegations of SEA that attracted the attention of international media and other organizations emerged after the mission had been on the ground for several years. It was only in March 2013 that the UN Security Council called on AMISOM to take measures to prevent SEA and address allegations of abuse. Paul D. Williams (2017).

Members of African Union (AU) forces, making use of Somali intermediaries, have employed a range of tactics to get private access to Somali women and then abuse them. Some AMISOM soldiers have used humanitarian assistance, provided by the mission, to coerce vulnerable women and

girls into sexual activity. A number of the women and girls interviewed for this report said that they were initially approached for sex in return for money or raped while seeking medical assistance and water on the AMISOM bases, particularly the Burundian contingent's base. Others were enticed directly from internally displaced persons (IDP) camps to start working on the AMISOM base camp by female friends and neighbors, some of whom were already working on the base. Some of the women who were raped said that the soldiers gave them food or money afterwards in an apparent attempt to frame the assault as transactional sex or discourage them from filing a complaint or seeking redress. Human Rights Watch (978-1-62313-1876 2014).

The most detailed set of investigations into this issue occurred during 2014 and 2015. Based on research conducted in 2013 and 2014, in September 2014, Human Rights Watch released a report detailing twenty-four allegations that AMISOM personnel had sexually abused and exploited local women and girls. The report alleged that AMISOM personnel used a range of tactics including using humanitarian assistance to coerce women and girls into sexual activity; approaching women and girls while they received medical assistance or water on AMISOM bases; enticed IDPs to work on the AMISOM base using Somali intermediaries; and giving women official badges to facilitate their entrance into AU bases. This chimed with that year's report by the UN Monitoring Group, which identified SEA occurring against female interpreters waiting for employment in AMISOM, soldiers exchanging humanitarian supplies for sex, or demanding sex in return for access to medical assistance, and using shopkeepers on AMISOM's main base to bring women onto the base for use as prostitutes. Paul D. Williams (2017).

"According to USDOS Somalia Human Rights Report, AMISOM forces 'were implicated in rapes and other unspecified grave abuses of human rights while conducting military operations against al-Shabaab in Lower and Middle Shabelle, according to an advocacy organization.''

2.2 Corruption and Misconduct in AMISOM's Mission

In AMISOM's case, the most widely debated negative unintended consequences were those where mission personnel engaged in corruption or caused harm to civilians, most notably through indiscriminate shellfire and instances of sexual exploitation and abuse. Corruption included cases of AMISOM personnel engaging in the illicit trade of goods and mission supplies, including rations, fuel, equipment, including HESCO defensive barriers and sandbags, and even ammunition. Paul D. Williams (2017).

"According to VOA (Voice of America), the sentence is notable as the first time a soldier with the AU mission, AMISOM, has been publicly prosecuted in Somalia, and a rare example of soldier being punished for selling guns and ammunition, a common practice among both AMISOM and Somali National Army soldiers.In June, Somali security officers arrested five AMISOM soldiers from Uganda, which has the largest number of troops in the 22,000-strong mission, and ten civilians for selling military supplies and fuel in the black market in Mogadishu. They were found in a

garage in Mogadishu with improvised detonators, fuel, sandbags and empty ammunition boxes.''

"According to VOA, for years, soldiers with AMISOM and the Somali National Army have made extra money by selling military supplies to Mogadishu arms dealers or even their opponents in Islamist militant group al-Shabab.''

Some AMISOM personnel were accused of corruption and misconduct; most frequentlythe illicit selling of rations, fuel, equipment and even ammunition, some of which was said to end up in the hands of al-Shabaab. A specific series of allegations about corruption were made against Kenyan forces after they joined AMISOM in 2012. The UN Monitoring Group and several NGOs accused Kenyan Defence Forces personnel of engaging in the illicit trade in charcoal, which was in breach of a UN embargo established by Security Council resolution2036 (February 2012). AMISOM-Report 1-(2018).

In contrast, external observers suggest more compelling explanations lie with Kenya's desire to be seen as a reliable partner in the US-led 'global war on terrorism', institutional interests within the KDF, and key political elites within the Kenyan government, notably Minister for Internal Security George Saitoti, the Defence Minister Yusuf Haji and several senior security chiefs, who advocated for intervention to advance their own economic and political interests. Paul D. Williams (2017).

2.3 Civilian causality/ AMISOM's Impact on Civilians

In September 2008, for example, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed accused AMISOM of 'brutality', 'war crimes', and indiscriminately killing 'over 100 people, including children, women, and elderly'. Paul D. Williams (2017). Even in 2010, after the ENDF's departure, one Somali peace activist in Mogadishu summarized the perspective of many local civilians by saying: 'What is the difference between AMISOM and al-Shabab . . . AMISOM are killing me. And they [al-Shabaab] are also killing me. Paul D. Williams (2017).

Among the most vocal critics of the mission are some local Somalis who accused AMISOM of causing harm to local civilians. In the early years, these complaints focused most prominently on AMISOM's practices of indirect fire, which usually entailed firing into residential or other civilian populated areas after they had come under attack from al-Shabaab. AMISOM-Report 1-(2018).

Direct and physical violence remains one of the most imminent security threats facing individuals in conflict-afflicted regions. The biggest source of insecurity to civilians in Somalia has been the ongoing fighting between various local, regional and international actors. During periods of intense fighting in Somalia, civilian casualties and fatalities increased dramatically and proportionally. Evidence shows that the period from 2007-2017 was more violent than any other period in post-independence Somalia, surpassing even the violence of the post-Barre years. AMISOMs role and response to physical violence against civilians does show some nuance. It continued to evolve over time, reflecting the

mission's successes and failures in addressing civilian insecurity (Willaims et. al. 2018).

Failing to address the issue of violence against civilians further played an indirect role in exacerbating the conflict, further increasing levels of violent insurgency. Crouch (2018) highlights in interviews with civilians that some community and clan leaders grew increasingly sympathetic to Al-Shabaab in the years after AMISOMs deployment, due to their frustration with the violence perpetrated by Ethiopian and TFG forces. In turn, these leaders allowed Al-Shabaab to recruit youth from their clan groups to fight what they perceived as a common enemy (Crouch, 2018).

In 2015 AMISOM soldiers were accused of killing 24 civilians after opening fire on a football field during a public match. In its defence, AMISOM officials claimed that the civilians had been caught in the cross-fire between AMISOM and Al-Shabaab fighters (Mohamed, 2015). Ethiopian forces operating under AMISOM were also accused of killing 14 civilians in 2016 after opening fire on a crowd outside a religious gathering (Hagmann & Seid, 2018).

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Based on the evidence and analysis presented in a study it can be concluded that one of the primary weaknesses of AMISOM has been its inability to identify and account for its role in shaping the outcome of the conflict through its relationship with key domestic actors. Reon van der Merwe (2022).

As a result, AMISOM contributed to fueling clan animosities by creating a perceived zero-sum dynamic in the eyes of clan elites. By supporting some clans over others, in the hope of fighting Al-Shabaab, the narrow focus of the mission did not reflect on the nuances of how such support might be perceived by local actors. This has driven some clans to support Al-Shabaab, withhold support for the mission or even behave in a retaliatory manner, increasing the threat posed to civilians by cycles of inter-clan violence. Reon van der Merwe (2022).

2.4 Misused Mandate: AMISOM and Local Perceptions

Kenya and Ethiopia—which had some of their forces integrated into AMISOM in January 2014—were also regularly accused of pursuing nefarious political agendas in Somalia and using AMISOM as a vehicle to legitimise and camouflage their activities. In addition to the illicit trading noted above, specific accusations involved picking winners in the competition to create the new regional administrations and, in Ethiopia's case, acting as the power behind the throne of the FGS. AMISOM-Report 1-(2018).

Friction within AMISOM is first and foremost the consequence of how Kenya and Ethiopia operate in Somalia.

They exploit a weak mission to access funding and equipment and garner some level of legitimacy internationally through the mandate given to AMISOM by the UN Security Council. Peter Albrecht & Signe Cold-Ravnkilde (2020).

Interviews conducted by Crouch (2018) with community elders also shows that the death of civilians from AMISOM bombardments served as a motivating factor for why some communities sympathised with and tolerated Al-Shabaab's occupation, viewing AMISOM as an ally of Ethiopian forces with little regard for the security of locals (Crouch, 2018).

Perceptions about AMISOM's credibility also vary. After a bad period during 2009 and 2010, when many locals blamed AMISOM for indiscriminately harming civilians in Mogadishu, perceptions of the mission improved significantly during 2011 until about 2015, as reflected in opinion polls conducted by the AU-UN Information Support Team. However, during 2016 and 2017, similar surveys saw AMISOM suffer from a considerable drop in the levels of support expressed by local Somalis. AMISOM-Report 1-(2018).

As summarized by one analysis, in the mid-2016 survey, "there was a significant overall decline in perceptions of security and AMISOM engaging in less constructive ways with the local population. Overall, support for AMISOM reduced by over half from 64% to 28%, and nearly half of Somali citizens polled (48%) wanted AMISOM to leave immediately."These trends were confirmed by UNSOM's internal analysis of citizen perceptions. AMISOM-Report 1-(2018). In the most recent survey of public opinion conducted by Farsight Africa of 1,505 Somalis across six regions, the level of local confidence in AMISOM had dropped from 59% in 2017 to 39% in 2018. Members of Somali civil society consulted for this report suggested that AMISOM was least credible when over-exaggerating its gains against al-Shabaab, investigating abuses and corruption perpetrated by its own personnel, and when reporting about its own casualties. AMISOM-Report 1-(2018).

As the empirical findings point out, all the troop-contributing countries joined AMISOM for their interests. There is no single country that joined AMISOM for solidarity and good faith it has to Somali people. Most of the respondents agreed that AMISOM TCC, especially those who share borders with Somalia, benefit from joining AMISOM for their advantages. M Osman (2021).

As neighbours, Ethiopia and Kenya have keen strategic and political interests in Somalia's security situation. It has long been noted that for both Addis Ababa and Nairobi 'foreign policy in Somalia has a strong domestic dimension – even though the two countries often disagree about how this should be managed'. As such, there was a fear that involvement in a Somali mission would provide these states with a politically and financially useful vehicle to pursue their own interests. These fears proved well founded, as suggested from the start by the two countries' irregular entry into AMISOM. Peter Albrecht & Cathy Haenlein (2016).

The two countries only joined AMISOM following unilateral interventions into Somalia. They did so to legitimise their presence in Somalia and gain access to EU funding that has underpinned the mission. Peter Albrecht & Signe Cold-Ravnkilde (2020).

Leaders in Nairobi and Addis Ababa came round to seeing benefits in joining AMISOM – two of the most important being that some of the financial and material costs of intervention could be shifted to the AU, UN and donors, and that working within AMISOM provided UN Security Council and AUlegal cover for their forces' operations (Joselow, 2014; Thomas, 2013). More importantly, the AMISOM 'security system' actually works to meet Kenya and Ethiopia's national security considerations with regard to Somalia. Brian J Hesse (2014).

As KDF forces flagrantly ignored the UN charcoal ban and contravened AMISOM's formal position by taking the unilateral decision to allow charcoal exportsto recommence. In July 2013, the FGS accused KDF forces of violating AMISOM's mandate and operating in opposition to SNA personnel.81 The FGS then requested that Kenyan forces in Kismayo be replaced by more neutral troops who would respect AMISOM authority. Peter Albrecht & Cathy Haenlein (2016).

As one military adviser noted, and the integration of Ethiopian troops into AMISOM might be viewed as much as a problem for the mission as a benefit. The Ethiopians are considered an effective fighting force –a brutal one, in fact. Yet such considerations call into question the extent to which Ethiopia merely views AMISOM as means to gain political legitimacy and resources in pursuit of its own interests. Peter Albrecht & Cathy Haenlein (2016).

Fragmentation as a consequence of how the national interests of Kenya and Ethiopia unfold in Somalia, combined with and permitted by a weak force headquarters, are defining characteristics of AMISOM. They have had a harmful impact on the ability of the AU to exercise command and control, and to set an overall strategic direction. This has arguably damaged AMISOM's ability to achieve its core objectives of stabilising Somalia, through degrading the capability of Al-Shabaab, and of meaningfully building the capacity of the SNA. Peter Albrecht & Cathy Haenlein (2016).

3. Methodology

The research article adopts a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach to investigate the impact of AMISOM on political instability in Mogadishu, Somalia. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires, and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized for descriptive analysis.

The study population consisted of Somali National University lecturers and staff, civil service members, and Civil Society, with a total of 100 participants. The minimum sample size of 80 respondents was determined using the Slovin's formula, which is $n = N/(1+N*e^2)$, where n represents the sample size, N is the study population, and e^2

represents the level of significance margin of error (Amin, 2005).

4. Data Analysis

Demographic Characterisation of the Respondents
The study obtained demographic information of the respondents, the samples consisted of 80 participants of these,with 68.8% being male, indicating a male majority. The majority fell within the 25-37 age group (76.3%), highlighting a youthful demographic. 65.0% were married, with a noteworthy proportion of youth embracing marriage, while 35.0% were single. In terms of education, 50.0% had master's degrees, 45.0% had bachelor's degrees, and 2.5% held both PhD and secondary education, emphasizing a prevalence of higher education over secondary education and PhD degrees.

Table 1: The cases of sexual abuse and civilian casualties committed by AMISOM have contributed to the recruitment of Al-Shabaab volunteers, exacerbating political instability in Somalia

		Frequency	Percent
	Strongly agree	33	41.3
	Agree	27	33.8
	Neutral	7	8.8
	Disagree	8	10.0
	Strongly Disagree	5	6.3
	Total	80	100.0

The above table provided illuminates participant perspectives on the interplay between AMISOM's actions and the recruitment of Al-Shabaab volunteers, impacting Somalia's political stability. Notably, 41.3% of respondents strongly agree and 33.8% agree that instances of sexual abuse and civilian casualties linked to AMISOM have contributed to such recruitment. Conversely, 10.0% disagree and 6.3% strongly disagree, while 8.8% hold a neutral stance.

The respondents were questioned about whether there is a direct link between the occurrence of sexual abuse and civilian casualties by AMISOM and the willingness of some individuals to support Al-Shabaab, thus leading to political instability in Somalia.Notably, 28.8% strongly agreed, and 40.0% agreed with this connection, reflecting a collective recognition. Conversely, 15.0% disagreed, and 5.0% strongly disagreed, while 11.3% held a neutral stance.

The respondents were also asked The actions of AMISOM causing civilian casualties have had serious consequences for the stability of Somalia and inadvertently supported anti-government groups. and they generally agreed with the presented idea. Notably, a significant 27.5% strongly agreed and 43.8% agreed. On the other hand, a smaller fraction adopted a neutral stance, comprising 15.0% of respondents. Conversely, a modest 7.5% expressed disagreement, and 6.3% strongly disagreed.

The participants were inquired whether AMISOM's actions have contributed to a lack of trust and legitimacy among local civilians in Somalia. The respondents' feedback underscores this impact, with a significant proportion agreeing – 42.5% strongly agreeing" and 35.0% "agreeing."

A smaller fraction, 8.8%, held a "neutral" stance, while 11.3% "disagreed," and 2.5% "strongly disagreed." This distribution indicates a noteworthy consensus among participants regarding the influence of AMISOM's actions on diminishing trust and legitimacy among local civilians in Somalia.

Table 2: The illicit trade of goods and mission supplies, including ammunition, has strengthened the capabilities of anti-government groups by providing them with vital resources.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	33	41.3
	Agree	27	33.8
	Neutral	12	15.0
	Disagree	6	7.5
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.5
	Total	80	100.0

The above table reflects participants' viewpoints on the nexus between the illicit trade of goods and mission supplies, including ammunition, and the reinforcement of anti-government groups' capabilities through the acquisition of crucial resources. Notably, a substantial 41.3% strongly agree and 33.8% agree with this premise, indicating a collective recognition of the proposed relationship. Conversely, 15.0% remain neutral, while 7.5% disagree and 2.5% strongly disagree. This spectrum of opinions underscores the diversity of interpretations regarding the extent to which illicit trade contributes to empowering anti-government groups by providing vital resources.

The respondents were asked whether AMISOM's involvement in corrupt practices, such as selling military supplies to arms dealers and militant groups, undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the peacekeeping mission. The respondents revealed a significant consensus, with 37.5% strongly agrees and 38.8% agreeing that such involvement has indeed eroded the mission's credibility and effectiveness. This alignment underscores a widespread recognition of potential negative repercussions. Conversely, 15.0% maintain a neutral stance, suggesting a degree of uncertainty, while 8.8% disagree, signaling a divergence in opinions.

The participants were questioned ''Corruption and misconduct in the AMISOM mission contributed to the difficulty of fighting anti-government forces in Somalia'' The participant's answers indicate that 47.5% of participants strongly agree, and 27.5% Agree with the idea that corruption and misconduct within the AMISOM mission have played a role in exacerbating the difficulties of combatting anti-government forces in Somalia. Moreover, 10.0% remain neutral in their stance, while 12.5% disagree, and 2.5% strongly disagree with this perspective.

Table 3: The involvement of Kenya and Ethiopia in AMISOM is taking advantage of the fact that they are carrying out perverted political plans in Somalia, which further undermines the objectives of the mission

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	38	47.5
Agree	29	36.3
Neutral	7	8.8
Disagree	3	3.8
Strongly disagree	3	3.8
Total	80	100.0

Table3 revealed a prevailing sentiment among participants regarding the involvement of Kenya and Ethiopia in AMISOM. A substantial 47.5% strongly agree and 36.3% agree that the actions of these countries take advantage of the situation to execute their self-serving political agendas within Somalia. This perception is underscored by the fact that a combined 83.8% of respondents' express agreement with this viewpoint. Meanwhile, 8.8% hold a neutral stance, suggesting uncertainty about the assertion. Conversely, 3.8% disagree and another 3.8% strongly disagree with this perspective.

The researcher further asked the respondents whether Kenya and Ethiopia's actions within AMISOM indicate a desire to keep Somalia in a fragile state and promote political instability, hindering Somali political development. A substantial combined percentage of 41.3% strongly agree and 42.5% agree that the actions of these countries within the mission imply a desire to maintain Somalia's fragility and foster political instability, thereby impeding its political progress. This viewpoint is supported by a notable consensus of 83.8% among respondents. In contrast, 6.3% hold a neutral stance, 7.5% disagrees, and 2.5% strongly disagree. The prevalent agreement among participants underscores the prevailing perception that Kenya and Ethiopia's roles may hinder Somali political development and perpetuate instability.

The respondents were queried about the manipulation of AMISOM for political interests has had a negative impact on Somalia's governance and stability. The result indicates that the majority of respondents were 37.5% strongly agree and 36.3% agree, while 15.0% were neutral, 5.0% disagreed, and 6.3% strongly disagreed. The considerable agreement among participants, totaling 73.8% who strongly agree or agree.

Lastly, the researcher asked the participants whether AMISOM's interference in Somalia's political affairs negatively impacted the country's political stability and hindered its development. A considerable combined percentage, 45.0% strongly agree and 31.3% agree, underscores the belief that such interference has had a negative influence on the country's political stability and developmental progress. This viewpoint garners strong support from 76.3% of respondents. Conversely, 10.0% remain "neutral," while 7.5% disagree, and 6.3% strongly disagree. The consensus among participants reflects the prevailing belief that AMISOM's interference has hindered Somalia's political stability and developmental trajectory.

5. Findings and Discussion

The research's first objective aimed to explore the influence of AMISOM's peacekeeping forces' actions, specifically instances of sexual abuse, civilian casualties, and human rights incidents, on the political instability in Somalia. The data collected provided valuable insights into participant perspectives, revealing the intricate interplay between AMISOM's actions and the recruitment of Al-Shabaab volunteers, ultimately impacting the country's political stability. The responses showed a significant range of viewpoints, with a notable proportion acknowledging the link between AMISOM-related issues and the recruitment of Al-Shabaab members, leading to heightened political instability. Similarly, participants recognized a possible connection between instances of sexual abuse and civilian casualties attributed to AMISOM and the inclination of individuals to support Al-Shabaab, further affecting Somalia's political stability. These findings were reinforced by a table that illustrated a considerable alignment of respondents with the presented ideas, highlighting a widespread concern about the unintended support for anti-government entities due to the repercussions of AMISOM's actions. Moreover, the data emphasized the impact of AMISOM's actions on local civilians' trust and perceived legitimacy in Somalia. A significant portion of participants agreed with this perspective, while a smaller fraction remained neutral, and others disagreed. This distribution of opinions underscored a consensus among participants regarding AMISOM's actions contributing to a sense of diminished trust and legitimacy among local civilians.

The research's second objective delved into the complexities of corruption within AMISOM's logistics system and its contribution to political instability. Participant perspectives were presented without specific numerical values, revealing a notable consensus on the link between illicit trade, mission supplies, and their empowerment of anti-government groups by acquiring vital resources. This diversity of viewpoints underscored the intricate interpretations surrounding this connection, highlighting the need for nuanced considerations. Another table allowed participants to collectively acknowledge AMISOM's alleged involvement in corrupt practices, eroding the mission's credibility and effectiveness. The mix of viewpoints indicated varying degrees of awareness and opinions about corruption's impact, illuminating the overarching notion that such activities could compromise the mission's integrity, underscoring the importance of addressing corruption to maintain effectiveness. Furthermore, the data underscored AMISOM's role in shaping local civilians' trust and perceived legitimacy in Somalia. The consensus among respondents who agreed, those who remained neutral, and those who disagreed reflected a shared awareness of the potential impact of AMISOM's actions on the trust and legitimacy held by the local population, emphasizing the critical importance of fostering a positive relationship between peacekeeping forces and the communities they serve for long-lasting stability.

The research's third objective reveals participants' perceptions concerning the roles of Kenya and Ethiopia within AMISOM, alongside potential political manipulation of the mission's activities. It seems evident that a prevailing

consensus exists among respondents, indicating a belief that both Kenya and Ethiopia exploit their positions within AMISOM to advance their distinct political agendas within Somalia. This viewpoint gains traction, while a minority holds neutral or opposing opinions. Similarly, the data suggests a prevailing inclination towards the idea that the involvement of these countries contributes to perpetuating Somalia's instability and hampers its political advancement. The notable agreement among those who concur with this perspective contrasts with a smaller group expressing uncertainty or disagreement. Furthermore, my analysis of the data underscores the shared sentiment among participants that political manipulation has led to adverse consequences for Somalia's governance and overall stability. The marked consensus observed among those who align with this notion points to a collective understanding of the detrimental impact of political interests on the nation's political landscape. Lastly, the findings offer insight into participants' perspectives on AMISOM's intervention in Somalia's political matters. It seems that there is a prevailing belief that such involvement has yielded unfavorable outcomes for the country's political stability and developmental trajectory. While some respondents maintain a neutral stance or hold differing opinions, a significant portion seems to endorse this view.

AMISOM was established with the noble objective of promoting political stability in Somalia, the involvement of Ethiopia and Kenya in the mission, driven by their geopolitical interests, presents challenges that may work against this goal. The potential for historical tensions, economic pursuits, and fragmented approaches among contributing countries could lead to unintended consequences that hinder progress towards political stability in Somalia. Addressing these issues requires a careful and balanced approach that prioritizes the long-term interests of the Somali people and fosters trust, cooperation, and inclusivity in the peace building process. Only through genuine commitment to the well-being of Somalia and its citizens can AMISOM truly contribute to lasting political stability in the region.

5.1 Recommendation

1) Enhance Transparency and Accountability: ToPrioritize transparency and accountability in AMISOM to combat corruption and misconduct. This involves clear reporting mechanisms and effective oversight to ensure efficient resource use for mission goals.
2) Conflict-Sensitive Approaches: AMISOM should adopt strategies that carefully consider the potential unintended consequences of its actions on Somalia's political stability. By evaluating the broader impact of interventions, the mission can avoid inadvertently exacerbating existing tensions and conflicts.
3) Strengthen Civilian Protection: Given concerns regarding the impact of AMISOM's actions on civilians, placing renewed emphasis on civilian protection is crucial. This involves providing comprehensive training to peacekeeping forces on respecting human rights and minimizing harm to civilians during operations.
4) Review Involvement of External Actors: Considering the perceived negative effects of Kenya and Ethiopia's involvement on AMISOM's objectives and Somali stability, it is advisable to reassess the nature and extent of their engagement within the mission. This review should assess whether their contributions align with the mission's goals and whether their presence could potentially worsen local dynamics.
5) Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement: To counter suspicions of self-interest and political motives, AMISOM should engage in meaningful consultations and collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders in Somalia. This approach will foster trust, promote local ownership, and better align the mission's activities with the needs and aspirations of the Somali people.
6) Local Capacity Building: To contribute to long-term stability, AMISOM should invest in building local capacities and institutions in Somalia. This can be achieved through training and empowering Somali security forces, promoting good governance practices, and supporting sustainable development initiatives.
7) Regular Monitoring and Evaluation: Implementing a robust system for continuous monitoring and evaluation of AMISOM's activities is crucial. This process should involve gathering feedback from local communities and stakeholders to gain valuable insights into the mission's effectiveness and its impact on Somalia's political stability.

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