

Effects of Civil War on Higher Education Service Delivery in Somalia

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Abstract: *The civil war in Somalia, which started in the early 1990s, has had a deep impact on various sectors of the country, including higher education service delivery, health, and infrastructure, the country characterized by decades of conflict, resource competition, political instability, and economic challenges. These factors have significantly impacted higher education service delivery, this abstract aims to provide a summary of the effects of the civil war on higher education service delivery in Somalia. During the civil war, Somalia experienced widespread violence, political instability, and the collapse of state institutions. The higher education system, once a failing sector, was severely disrupted as a result. Numerous challenges emerged, hampering the ability of high school education service delivery and to deliver quality education to students. Besides of frequent closures of institutions, displacement of students, and the breakdown of administrative systems created a fragmented learning environment resulted the hardship of stability and continuity negatively affected the students' ability to pursue their studies effectively. Moreover, one of significant effect of the civil war was the destruction of infrastructure and campuses that has resulted many educational institutions were targeted, looted, and damaged, reduced into unworkable. This destruction not only disrupted ongoing academic activities but also hindered the reconstruction of the higher education system. Additionally, the conflict resulted in a significant brain drain as qualified professors, scholars, and professionals fled the country seeking safety and opportunities elsewhere. The loss of experienced faculty members had a damaged the impact on the quality of education provided in the post - war period. Furthermore, the socio - economic consequences of the civil war, such as poverty, unemployment and limited resources, made it challenging for students to access higher education. Many families were unable to afford tuition fees, textbooks, and other essential resources, resulting in decreased enrollment rates.*

Keywords: Civil war, Higher education. Service delivery, Somalia

1. Introduction

Early in the 1990s, a civil war broke out in Somalia, which had far - reaching effects on the nation's sociopolitical background. Higher education is one of the areas that has been severely affected by the fighting, with major service delivery interruptions. This article aims to investigate how Somalia's civil conflict has affected the country's ability to provide higher education services. Moreover, Somalia had a somewhat active higher education system before the civil war broke out, with a number of universities and colleges offering instruction in a variety of subject areas. But the war also brought with it a number of difficulties that seriously hampered the nation's higher education institutions' ability to operate and be effective, (Smith, J., & Johnson, 2022). Moreover, one of the primary effects of the civil war on higher education in Somalia is the physical destruction of infrastructure and campuses. The fighting and violence that characterized the conflict led to the deliberate targeting and destruction of educational institutions. Many universities and colleges were looted, vandalized, and reduced unworkable. This destruction not only disrupted ongoing academic activities but also created a significant barrier to the resumption and revitalization of higher education services, (Abdi, A., & Yusuf, 2019). Besides, another critical consequence of the civil war is the brain drain that ensued as a result of the conflict. Qualified professors, scholars, and professionals were forced to flee the country in search of safety and opportunities elsewhere. The loss of experienced faculty members had a detrimental impact on the quality of education provided in the post - war period. Moreover, the absence of skilled personnel made it challenging to rebuild and maintain academic programs effectively, (Abdi and Yusuf, 2019). Furthermore, the civil war led to substantial

disruptions in the academic calendar, resulting in prolonged interruptions in the education process. Frequent closures of institutions, displacement of students, and the breakdown of administrative systems created a fragmented learning environment. The lack of stability and continuity negatively affected the students' ability to pursue their studies effectively, leading to delays and gaps in their education.

2. Background of article

The civil war in Somalia, which started in the early 1990s, the civil war brought about a wave of destruction and instability that severely disrupted higher education service delivery. One of the primary effects was the physical destruction of infrastructure and campuses. The conflict led to the deliberate targeting and destruction of educational institutions, leaving many universities and colleges in ruins. This destruction not only disrupted ongoing academic activities but also created a significant barrier to the continuation and revitalization of higher education services. Furthermore, the civil war in Somalia has significantly impacted higher education service delivery in the country. The destruction of infrastructure, brain drain, disruptions in the academic calendar, and limited access to resources have all contributed to the challenges faced by higher education service delivery on institutions. Efforts to rebuild and revitalize the sector are underway, but sustained support and investment are needed to overcome the enduring effects of the conflict and ensure the provision of quality education to Somali students, (Ahmed, M., Hassan, A., & Ibrahim, 2020). Earlier to the outbreak of the civil war, Somalia had a relatively developed higher education system, with several universities and colleges spread across the country. These institutions played a crucial role in producing skilled professionals, fostering intellectual growth, and

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contributing to the overall development of the nation. Despite these efforts, the effects of the civil war continue to cast a long shadow over higher education service delivery in Somalia. The sector faces ongoing challenges in terms of infrastructure rehabilitation, faculty capacity building, and ensuring equitable access to education. Continued investment, both domestic and international, is crucial to overcoming these challenges and restoring the quality and effectiveness of higher education in Somalia, (Hassan, S., & Ali, 2018). In addition, the civil war caused the academic calendar to be interrupted for extended periods of time. A fragmented learning situation was brought about by frequent institution closures, student dislocation, and administrative system failures. The student's capacity to properly shadow their studies was severely hampered by the lack of stability and continuity, which resulted in educational delays and gaps. In response to these challenges, various initiatives have been undertaken to revive and rebuild the higher education sector in Somalia. Efforts have been made to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure, attract qualified faculty members, and establish partnerships with international institutions. Scholarship programs and financial assistance schemes have also been implemented to increase access to higher education for disadvantaged students, (UNDP, 2017), Finally, despite these efforts, the effects of the civil war continue to cast a long shadow over higher education service delivery in Somalia. The sector requires sustained support and investment to overcome the enduring impact of the conflict and ensure the provision of quality education to Somali students.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

A literature review on the effects of the civil war on higher education service delivery in Somalia would involve examining existing scholarly works, research articles, and publications that have explored this topic.

3.2 Overview of the Civil War in Somalia

Somalia gained independence from colonial rule in 1960 and experienced a period of relative stability in its early years. The civil war in Somalia, which began in 1991, has been a protracted and complex conflict that has had significant consequences for the country and its population. However, political tensions, clan rivalries, and regional disparities began to emerge, leading to a decline in governance and stability. (Bradbury, M.2013) The main conflict parties Main of the civil war involved various armed groups, factions, and clan - based militias vying for power and control over territories. Moreover, the driving factors leading to the civil War includes political repression, economic inequality, and grievances related to governance contributed to the eruption of the civil war. The collapse of the central government in 1991 following the ousting of the leaders of central military government further intensified the conflict. The civil war in Somalia drew regional and international involvement, with neighboring countries and external actors supporting various factions like Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Kenya, among others, played active roles in supporting intervening in the conflict. At the other angle the civil war resulted in a severe humanitarian crisis, with widespread displacement, famine,

and loss of lives of millions of Somalis were internally displaced, and large numbers sought refuge in neighboring countries (Menkhaus, K. (2006). In addition to the absence of a functioning central government led to the fragmentation of Somalia into different regions and territories controlled by different factions, of these divisions contributed to ongoing conflicts and challenges in establishing political stability and national unity. Equally important, the consequences of the civil war, including its effect on higher education service delivery, continue to shape the country's present - day realities.

3.3 Higher Education System in Pre - War Somalia

Compared to many other African nations, Somalia had a reasonably advanced higher education system before the civil war broke out in 1991. The University of Somalia in Mogadishu and a number of other universities and colleges distributed throughout the nation's various regions comprised the core of the country's higher education system. For instance, the University of Somalia established in 1954, was the oldest and largest university in the country. The University offered a wide range of degree programs in fields several multidisciplinary such as engineering, medicine, agriculture, social sciences, and humanities. The university attracted students from Somalia as well as other African countries, (Farah, A. O., & Hassan, L. A.2012). In addition to, Somalia also had technical and vocational institutes that provided specialized training in areas such as commerce, agronomy, corporate, and health sciences. These institutes aimed to equip students with practical skills and prepare them for specific professions or trades. Moreover, the higher education system in pre - war Somalia had collaborations with international partners, including universities and organizations from various countries and facilitated academic exchanges, research collaborations, and the sharing of educational resources and expertise, (Ayanle, A. O., & Danaher, P. A. (2014). Finally, the higher education system in pre - war Somalia objectives was to provide access to quality education, produce skilled professionals, and contribute to the socio - economic development of the country. It was a vital component of the educational infrastructure and played a significant role in shaping the intellectual and professional landscape of Somalia before the onset of the civil war. I here, suggest that link of general sources that will contain updated information on the higher education system in Somalia United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) - The UNESCO website provides valuable information on education systems and developments worldwide. You can visit their website and search for reports, publications, or data related to higher education in Somalia.

3.4 Effects of the Civil War on Higher Education

The effects of civil wars on higher education has deep and influential specific impact will vary depending on the context and duration of the conflict some common effects of civil wars on higher education includes the destruction of educational infrastructure, including universities, colleges, libraries, and research facilities. Buildings damaged or completely destroyed, realizing campuses unusable and disrupting academic activities, (UNESCO, 2015). In addition

to, civil wars force students, faculty, and staff to flee their homes and seek safety elsewhere and displacement top to the disruption of academic careers, loss of educational opportunities, and the dispersal of skilled professionals. Moreover, the chaos and disruption caused by civil wars undermine the quality and relevance of higher education and leads to lack of resources, qualified faculty, and stable institutional frameworks can lead to compromised educational standards, outdated curricula, and the inability to meet the evolving needs of society, (World Bank, 2006). Finally, civil wars often result in a breakdown of government structures and public services, including education funding. Higher education institutions had struggle to secure adequate financial resources and support, limiting their ability to provide quality education and invest in research and infrastructure development.

3.4.1 Physical Destruction and Infrastructure Damage

Physical destruction and infrastructure damage are significant consequences of civil wars that have a profound impact on higher education. Civil wars frequently result in the physical destruction of educational facilities, including universities, colleges, research centers, libraries, and laboratories including buildings had directly targeted and damage during conflict, leading to their complete destruction. This loss of infrastructure severely hampers the functioning of higher education institutions, (World Bank., 2006). Furthermore, the destruction of educational facilities disrupts academic operations and the overall learning environment, and classes could not be held, laboratories and libraries become inaccessible, and administrative systems collapse on this issues disrupts the continuity of education and impedes the progress of ongoing research projects. (United Nations University. (2009). Additionally, Infrastructure damage during civil wars results in the loss of learning resources. Libraries with valuable collections of books, journals, and research materials had been destroyed and severely damaged. Laboratories and equipment required for scientific research can be rendered unusable. This loss of resources impedes students' access to knowledge and inhibits the pursuit of research and innovation. And also campuses become unsafe or unreachable due to conflict zones, checkpoints, or physical obstructions. Students and faculty turn into displaced from their homes and forced to seek safety elsewhere, further deterring their ability to access education.

3.4.2 Brain Drain and Faculty Loss

The prolonged instability and insecurity caused by civil wars was prime to a "brain drain" phenomenon of skilled academics, professors, and researchers leave the country to seek safety and better opportunities abroad, resulting in a loss of expertise and knowledge within the higher education sector, (Bhargava, V. K., & Docquier, F. (2008). Moreover, civil wars disrupt research activities and knowledge generation within higher education institutions. Research projects had abandoned, research facilities destroyed, and collaboration with international partners hindered, resulting in a loss of valuable contributions to scientific advancement and societal development.

Civil wars often create a situation of instability, insecurity, and limited opportunities, which had prompt skilled individuals to seek safety and better prospects abroad,

(Kingma, B. R. (2001). Additionally, brain drain will hamper research and innovation in higher education institutions affected by civil wars. The loss of talented researchers and scholars can disrupt ongoing research projects, reduce institutional capacity for new research endeavors, and diminish the overall quality and productivity of scientific output. The brain drain weakens the overall institutional capacity of higher education institutions in conflict - affected regions, and the departure of skilled academics can result in a shortage of qualified faculty members, leading to larger class sizes, reduced mentorship opportunities, and a decline in the overall quality of education, (Beine, M., Docquier, F., & Rapoport, H. (2001). Therefore, this article examines the relationship between civil wars and the migration of highly skilled individuals, including academics and researchers. It discusses the factors that contribute to brain drain during conflicts and explores the implications for the higher education sector.

3.5 Socio - Economic Consequences and Access to Higher Education

Socio - economic consequences and access to higher education are deeply intertwined, and civil wars can have a significant impact on both aspects. Civil wars have been deep socio - economic consequences that affect individuals, communities, and the overall development of a country. These consequences could have direct and indirect effects on higher education this includes that Civil wars disrupt economic activity, leading to job losses, decreased productivity, and reduced economic growth and result in financial instability, reduced public funding for education, and limited resources for higher education institutions, (UNESCO. (2011). Additionally, civil wars disrupt educational systems at all levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary education and this disruption has created gaps in educational pathways, making it challenging for individuals to progress to higher education and more on disrupted schooling and limited academic opportunities during conflict can have long - term consequences for access to higher education. Civil wars often result in large - scale displacement of people, both internally and across borders. Displaced individuals, including refugees, face significant socio - economic challenges, such as limited access to education, healthcare, and basic services. This displacement can disrupt educational pathways, including access to higher education, for those affected. Finally, efforts to address socio - economic consequences and improve access to higher education in conflict - affected areas require a various approach that include providing financial support and scholarships, rebuilding educational infrastructure, creating safe learning environments, promoting inclusivity and diversity, and fostering partnerships with international organizations and donors.

3.6 Initiatives and Efforts for Rebuilding Higher Education

Rebuilding higher education in post - conflict situations is a complex and multifaceted process that requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders this includes International organizations, governments, and non - governmental organizations (NGOs) will play a crucial role in supporting

the rebuilding of higher education. Stakeholders will provide financial assistance, technical expertise, and capacity - building initiatives to help restore and strengthen educational institutions. Examples include UNESCO, World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and various bilateral aid programs. Moreover, rebuilding damaged and destroyed infrastructure is a fundamental step in revitalizing higher education institutions. Efforts will have made to repair and reconstruct buildings, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and other facilities that have been affected by conflict involving partnerships between local authorities, international organizations, and funding agencies, (World Bank, 2014). Finally, post - conflict higher education often requires curriculum development and adaptation to address the specific needs and challenges of the affected areas. This will involve incorporating peacebuilding, reconciliation, and conflict resolution components into existing programs, as well as introducing new courses that address the socio - economic and cultural context of the post - conflict society.

3.7 Gaps and Challenges

When it comes to rebuilding higher education in conflict - affected regions, there are several significant gaps and challenges that need to be addressed. These gaps and challenges will vary depending on the specific context.1) Infrastructure and Resource Gaps that conflict often results in the destruction of educational infrastructure, including buildings, laboratories, libraries, and IT infrastructure. Rebuilding and restoring these facilities require substantial financial resources and technical expertise. Inadequate funding and limited access to resources will create significant challenges in rebuilding higher education institutions, (Gallagher, A. M., & Hanson, J. (Eds.). (2019). Additionally, second is human Capital and Brain Drain at the conflict have led to the displacement of skilled faculty members, researchers, and administrators, leading to a loss of human capital and expertise in higher education institutions. And many professionals leave the country in choosing alternative career paths due to security concerns or limited opportunities, therefore, rebuilding higher education requires efforts to attract and retain skilled personnel who will contribute to the recovery and development of the sector. Third, Security and Safety Concerns is other gaps and challenges in post - conflict settings, security and safety concerns will persist, creating challenges for higher education institutions. Campuses have been vulnerable to security threats, and students and staff may face risks while commuting in attending classes. Ensuring a safe and secure learning environment is crucial for rebuilding higher education and attracting students and faculty members. Finally, addressing these gaps and challenges requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that involves the commitment and collaboration of various stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, donors, higher education institutions, and local communities. In addressing these challenges, higher education will contribute to the broader social and economic recovery of conflict - affected areas.

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