

**BARRIERS TO YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN MOGADISHU, SOMALIA**

**BY**

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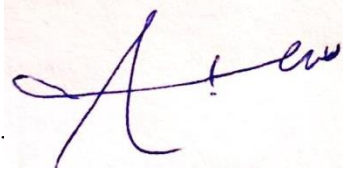
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## DECLARATION

This dissertation is my original work and it has not been presented for a degree or any other academic award in any university or institution of learning.



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## APPROVAL

This is to confirm that the work in this dissertation has been done under my supervision and is ready for submission to Kampala International University with my approval as the Supervisor.



.....12/05/2022.....

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation firstly to Almighty Allah, my parents for moral and financial support they have offered me during my studies.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to acknowledge and be grateful to God for enabling me to reach this point in my academic life and I am so thankful for his unconditional protection.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AU	African Union
EU:	European Union
UN:	United Nations
UNFPA:	United Nations Fund for Population Affairs
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
FGS:	Federal Government of Somalia
NYP:	National Youth Policy
NYC:	National Youth Council
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
UNSOM:	United Nations Somalia Mission
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study was to investigate barriers to Youth political participation in Mogadishu, Somalia through three specific objectives to: find out how social barriers influence youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu, Somalia.

To examine how economic barriers influence youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu Somalia, to assess how institutional barriers influence youth participation in Mogadishu, Somalia. This was carried out using interpretivist (qualitative) approaches based on desk research and interviews. The sample of the study was drawn on Robinson's guideline of 3 to 16 participants for a single study, with the lower end of that spectrum suggested for undergraduate projects and the upper end for larger-scale funded projects. The study reports three key findings. First, Mogadishu youth participate in politics through both conventional and no institutionalized forms. Online participation is increasingly gaining prominence. Second, a major barrier to youth political participation in Mogadishu arises from institutional structures which by their very bureaucratic nature are too formalistic to allow free expression. Coupled with this are the conditions by the donors who design and fund these institutions. Donors provide a predetermined framework within which youth participate. Third, while several interventions to foster youth political participation in Mogadishu exist, the outcomes are minimal. The study concludes that barriers to effective youth participation in Mogadishu are systemic and structural issues at play, rather than the fiat of individual political actors. Current youth participation institutional structures and agendas are chiefly about controlling youth, rather than generating participatory democracy, hence participation policies sustain rather than remove elitism. The study recommends that FGS and donors should reposition their preference for formal institutional participation mechanisms to local and culturally purposeful modes of participation. Expanding and deepening the growing vibrant e- participation between government and both youth-serving and youth-led community-based organizations will provide the groundwork for both inclusion and recognition.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

This study reports an investigation on barriers and to youth political participation in Mogadishu, Somalia. In contemporary times participation of youth in politics is a buzz word both in academia and international democracy development. Nowhere is the question of youth participation more significant than in states reconstructing from a conflict situation such as Somalia where a liberal democracy is being constructed amid peacebuilding. Thus the input of young people, individually or collectively, to democratic politics is critical. This chapter provides the background to the research. It is structured to include: background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope, hypothesis and definition of terms.

### 1.1 Background of the study

For purposes of clarity, this section is structured in four perspectives namely: historical, theoretical perspective, conceptual perspective and contextual.

#### 1.1.1 Historical perspective

Youth's participation in politics is of ancient vintage. Since the 1830's youth have been key actors in leading political revolutions against oppressive forms of government or social injustice worldwide to demand changes in society (Braungart, 1984). Youth movements or associations are a common feature throughout African history. In the first part of the twentieth century, 'the colonial administration did not recognise the youth as a special age group with specific needs' (Resnick & Casale, 2011). For instance, while Kwame Nkrumah's 'verandah boys' helped mobilize support around his Convention People's Party (CPP) at the time of independence (Clapham 2006), the party's message was no longer relevant to the youth of the 1990s (Nugent, 1999).

After independence the youth were seen as a promising generation that held the future in its hands and education would give them an even better chance of reaching prosperity. However, during the first two post-independence decades (1960s and 1970s), the youth continued to

participate in politics, but essentially as operatives of political parties without effective decision making power(Resnick & Casale,2011).

In Somalia, the Somali Youth Club (SYC), later renamed Somali Youth League (SYL), formed on May 15, 1947 is the oldest youth expression of political participation in the country (Sheikh-Abdi, 1981; Mukhtar, 1989). It was a nationalist liberation movement which fought for the eventual independence of Somalia. Its legacy continues to inspire Somali youth.

After independence, the revolutionary military regime which overthrew the civilian government in 1969 gave special attention to the youth and established a national youth organization called Somali Revolutionary Youth Organization (SRYC) which played an influential role in the power consolidation of the military regime Sheik-Abdi (Mukhtar, 1989). In addition, the Siad Bare regime established a Cabinet Ministry for Youth and Sports which became a fix cabinet position in any Somali government thereafter.

At international level, youth participation has received the attention of the United Nations. Far back in 1965, the UN acknowledged that young peoples' imagination, ideals and energies are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live( UN,2013;Angel,2014). Two decades later, the General Assembly declared 1985 as the International Youth Year, drawing international attention to the role of young people in the world and their potential contribution to development. Ten years later, 1995 the General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) that remains the basis for United Nations policies in the field of youth development till now (UN,2013) and in Security Council. Since then the UN initiatives have put youth participation on global policy platform which has influenced member states to formulate youth policies and programmes.

### **1.1.2 Theoretical perspective**

Various theories have been developed to explain political participation. Among the most common theories are those directed to demographic variables such as age (Cumming and Henry's "political disengagement",Streib and Schneider's "selective withdrawal", Jennings and Markus's "cohort composition theory"); and sociological theories that include the well-known "resource model" or "standard SES model" (Campbell et al. 1960, Wolfinger & Rosenstone

1980; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady 1995). This model talks about the effects of socioeconomic status (SES) on political participation behavior and explains that the SES is the major influencing factor that affects level of participation (Verba & Nie 1972; Verba et al., 1995). The SES facilitates individuals in gaining civic skills and knowledge and promoting positive attitudes and participatory norms that lead to an effort to influence the government and political system (Traut & Emmert 1993: 241). Therefore, individuals with high socioeconomic status or individuals' resources are more likely to participate in politics than individuals with low levels of socioeconomic status.

This study was informed by Bourdieu's concept of "habitus" (1992) stating that youth is the possession of youthful habitus, and underlines how youth arises not only from the specific social position between being a child (being dependent) and being an adult (having dependents), but is also socially acquired. According to Bourdieu, habitus is an ensemble of acquired, unconscious interpretive schemes that govern practice, and are developed over time through experience.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus has the advantage of flexibility, allowing individuals to be as agents who, within the field of civil polity, can dynamically shape their behaviour in light of their "capital" and within specific constraints. The idea of habituated forms of conduct in political participation underscores that individuals act as innovative agents within the same field and may well share predispositions and constraints. Habitus is dynamic, thus the occasional changes across the lifespan of individuals, in as long as habitus "is not fixed or permanent, and can be changed under unexpected situations or over a long historical period" (Lamprianou, 2013: 34). Bourdieu's concept of habitus thus provides a framework within which to identify and analyse barriers and opportunities to youth political participation. These barriers and opportunities could be formal and informal ranging from state structures, political parties, cultural, generational, and religious to class this theory will inform the proposed study.

### **1.1.3 Conceptual perspective**

Under this subsection the key concepts: political participation, politics, youth, forms of political participation and barriers to political participation.

#### **Political participation**

Political participation is a contested concept over which there is no universally accepted definition. Common definitions include: Huntington and Nelson (1976) who defined political participation as an “activity by private citizens designed to influence government decision-making while Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995, 38), defined it as an “activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action, either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies”. For van Deth, Political participation can be loosely defined as citizens’ activities aimed at influencing political decisions. Norris conceptualizes political participation as “... any dimensions of activity that are either designed directly to influence government agencies and the policy process, or indirectly to impact civil society, or which attempt to alter systematic patterns of social behavior” (2001).

Some authors define political participation from the perspective of praxis and others from telos or conventional and unconventional. Representative of the former approach, Uhlaner (2015) sees political participation as “political engagement” or “public involvement in decision making”. As Riley et al. (2010) have pointed out, political engagement has traditionally been thought of as “a set of rights and duties that involve formally organized civic and political activities such as voting or joining a political party.

Although Verba, Schlozman and Brady’s definition remains the most quoted, political participation, in essence, is related to the notion of empowerment and how this can change societies.

#### **Youth**

In attempting to define “youth” many conceptualizations can be found, demonstrating that there is no universal way to define it. Youth is a concept that is rooted in western thinking, and it can have different interpretations depending on the context where the concept is studied. The concept

is constructed as a social category according to social expectations (Furlong, 2009:5). So far a way of defining youth has been as a path to adulthood, ignoring their agency (Ansell, 2005).

According to Bourdieu (1978), youth is just a word that has been an evolving concept, layered upon layers with values which reflect contemporary moral, political and social concerns (Bourdieu in Jones, 2009:1). This definition emphasizes the dynamism of the word youth, it is not a static phase with a static definition, on the contrary, it changes through time and it reveals the concerns and way of thinking of society at a given moment.

It can be said that Bourdieu's conceptualization coincides with the UNESCO's definition of youth, since it explains youth as a heterogeneous ever-changing group in which the idea the experience of "being young" differs across regions and within countries (UNESCO, n.d). In its definition UNESCO establishes youth as members of a community- a social group with common characteristics. The role of the context in these definitions is very significant, because it recognizes the fact that youth behave in different ways in different places worldwide, stressing the notion mentioned before that youth is a dynamic concept. This underpins how young people perceive the reality they live in and how they respond to maintain, improve or change their social, economic, and political situation.

In Africa the national youth policies of different countries define the youth in different ways. For example, the South African youth policy (NYP) defines youth as those between 14 and 35 years of age, and the Kenyan NYP uses 15-30 as a marker. According to the Whatever the definition one chooses to use, it is important to bear in mind that youth are significant social actors and they remain a very important point of investment for society as a whole (Ansell, 2005). This study adopted Bourdieu's definition of youth and the implication it can have on social phenomenon, as he quotes: "Youth" is a social construction with social meanings and it is the task of the sociology of youth to understand how and why these have developed" (Bourdieu in Jones, 2009:1). The definition captures the barriers in youth political participation.

#### **1.1.4 Contextual perspective**

For more than quarter of a century, Somalia has been embroiled in one of the world's most complex and protracted conflicts which continues to afflict Mogadishu region (Ahmed, 1999). To establish comprehensive peace and stability in the entire Somalia cannot be achieved without building an inclusive society, where all people feel empowered and have the capabilities and opportunities to improve their lives. Achieving this requires, fresh dynamics which could come from recognizing and harnessing the full potential of Somalia's youth. Somalia is one of the youngest countries in the world where seven out of every ten Somalis are younger than 35 (approximately 81.5% of the population according to the Population Estimation Survey 2014 (UNFPA, 2014). And hence, the youth are a significant part of the total population that should not be ignored if Somalia is to realize social, political and economic development.

The twenty-seven years of conflict has left many in the current generation with deep psychological wounds in which the majority of youth face blocked transitions to adulthood due to multiple social, economic and political exclusions. Conflict, natural disaster, and poverty is what they have experienced all their lives. Young people have been one of the worst afflicted groups to suffer inter-generational historical exclusion (World Bank, UN and Habitat, 2018). Avenues for youth to obtain education and gainful employment opportunities are limited and opportunities to engage politically, economically, or socially remain weak. The space and opportunities are even further restricted for girls and young women. Exclusion has created frustration and demoralization among youth forcing many young joining armed groups, embark on an often dangerous journey across borders searching for better lives. Those that stay behind are often vulnerable to crime, drugs, radicalism and piracy.

In Mogadishu political participation of young people in decision-making has been challenging due to issues related to clan and cultural affiliations, gender, age, illiteracy and poverty, among other factors, including the prominence of Elders in the political system. The Somali youth like many in Africa and elsewhere are a complex category, not homogeneous. There are differences in age (teenage groups within the age bracket 15-35), educated and illiterate, class, gender, and regional, clan and diaspora youths. The diaspora Somali is great significance considering that the current Prime Minister and a third of the parliament hold foreign passports (Dahir, 2017)



Many policies have been generated geared towards supporting Somali youth not only in political participation but in other aspects as well of which the most significant include: The UN Inter-Ministerial Committee on Youth Affairs and the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth; The Somali Youth Fund, administered through the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund to provide funding to Somali youth-led projects (World Bank, UN and Habitat, 2018) and many bilateral interventions from major donors notably, USAID, European Union GTZ, UK Department of International Development, Norwegian Development Agency.

At the national level, the Federal Draft Constitution guarantees youth representation in the Federal Parliament (Federal Republic of Somalia, 20). In the 2017 parliamentary elections, almost half the 54 members of the upper house of parliament were under the age of 50. The increase in the lower house alone puts Somalia ahead of other African countries like Kenya (where 19% of lower-house members are women) and Nigeria (5.6%) (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017). Also, the Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire, is 49-year-old Somali-Norwegian. In 2017, the Somali government promulgated a youth policy (FGS, 2017). Somalia is a signatory to the AU Youth Charter (2009) and the UN Amman Youth Declaration, 2015(Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, 2015). On their own the youth, in 2011, adopted a Draft Youth Charter covering six key areas: Policy and institutional reform, social empowerment, economic empowerment, political empowerment, peace building, and greening human development (UN Somalia: Youth, 2011).

Clearly there appears to be policy support both at the international and national levels. But do they translate into empowering youth to effectively participate in politics? Ambassador Minata Samate Cessouma, the Commissioner for Political Affairs, AU, aptly summarises the answer when she recently observed

These elections evidently offer significant opportunities to young Africans so that they bear the full weight to have an influence on governance processes. However, with the exception of a number of countries, the participation of young people in democratic processes is just limited to voting during elections (AU press release, 11 November 2017)

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

There is consensus that youth political participation is a critical variable in state building and economic development in Somalia's peace-building and reconstruction. The youth constitute 70-80% of Somalia's population. Meanwhile, their participation in the political praxis is remains constrained. Over the past years, there has been increased recognition of the challenges that young people are facing and the need to create opportunities for youth political participation.

The Federal Republic of Somalia's Draft Constitution 2012 introduced provisions to its legal framework to support the increased participation of youth, by guaranteeing fundamental rights(). In 2017 FGS, with the support of donors, formulated the NYP and subsequently established the NYC. These mechanisms institutionalized support and strengthening of youth political participation among other considerations.

These mechanisms notwithstanding, the outcomes are not visible. Government bodies charged with ensuring full compliance, including the parliament and regulatory bodies, have failed to ensure that these obligations are fully achieved. Nevertheless, the youth remain eager to participate as candidates, voters, civic volunteers, active and informed citizens, and should be supported by all stakeholders.

Despite this, political participation of young people in peace-building in Mogadishu has attracted scanty in-depth scholarly study. Understanding the interactions between political agents, institutions and young people in Mogadishu remains limited. Given that the social and political experiences of contemporary youth in the reconstruction of Somalia varies from those of the older generations who grew up during the post-independence regime, and that current political engagement habits will likely influence the nature of political involvement chosen by future generations, remain under-researched. This represents a serious knowledge gap, yet this information is vital for the drawing up youth responsive institutional regimes to encourage greater youth political engagement in Mogadishu in the future.

The central aim of this study is to address this gap through a Bourdieusian theoretical lens to disentangle the structure of opportunities and barriers, and the complex motivations that underlie youth political participation or non-participation in Mogadishu.

### **1.3 Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

The general objective for this study is to investigate barriers to youth political participation in Mogadishu, Somalia.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

- i. To find out how social barriers influence youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu, Somalia.
- ii. To examine how economic barriers influence youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu Somalia.
- iii. To assess how institutional barriers influence youth participation in politics of Mogadishu, Somalia

### **1.4 Research questions**

- i. How do social barriers influence youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu, Somalia?
- ii. How do economic barriers influence youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu Somalia?
- iii. How does institutional barriers influence youth participation in politics of Mogadishu, Somalia?

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

#### **1.5.1 Geographical Study**

The study was conducted in Mogadishu, Somalia. Mogadishu, locally known as Xamar or Hamar, is the capital of Somalia, located in the southeast in Banadir region. It is bordered to the northwest by the Shabelle River, and to the southeast by the Indian Ocean. According to The World Urbanization Prospects Mogadishu has an estimated population of 2, 388, 00, which includes nearly 400,000 internally displaced persons (UN, 2018). The youth constitute over 60% of this population. Socio economic condition of Mogadishu though relatively better compared with the rest of the regions, is characterized by poverty, high unemployment and poor social services. Mogadishu is constantly under Al-Shabab threat

### **1.5.2 Content Scope**

This study carried out an investigation on barriers and forms to youth political participation in Mogadishu, Somalia. Political participation will be conceptualized in terms of forms of participation (voting, running for political/public office and political activism, online participation).

### **1.5.3 Time Scope**

The study covered a period starting from 2012 when the Provisional Federal Constitution was promulgated to 2020. This is because, these years witness heightened efforts to establish a quasi-liberal democracy in Somalia. Importantly, it is during this period that the youth question received intense policy attention both at international and national level([https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p\\_isn=72421&p\\_lang](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_isn=72421&p_lang)).

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Since 2012 and 2017 when the Provisional Federal Constitution and the NYP were promulgated, there has been no critique or comprehensive assessment of the several processes towards enhancing youth political participation in Mogadishu. There is significant energy and interest devoted to youth participation in Mogadishu and outcomes need to be visible.

This study is expected to contribute to existing knowledge on youth political participation, through filling the gap on youth participation in the already existing studies that have hardly emphasized the influence of participation of youth in politics.

The government will use this study to revise governance structures and ways in which participation in politics within informal settlements is addressed.

The research findings will also provide reference for further research for the improvement of youth political participation in Mogadishu, Somalia.

## 1.7 Operational definition of Key Terms

**Political participation** is defined as citizens' activities aimed at influencing political decisions. Norris conceptualizes political participation as "... any dimensions of activity that are either designed directly to influence government agencies and the policy process, or indirectly to impact civil society, or which attempt to alter systematic patterns of social behavior" (2001).

A **youth** is defines one between 14 and 35 years of age, According to the Whatever the definition one chooses to use, it is important to bear in mind that youth are significant social actors and they remain a very important point of investment for society as a whole (Ansell, 2005).

**Barrier.** A barrier is something such as a rule, law, or policy that makes it difficult or impossible for something to happen or be achieved ([www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/barrier](http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/barrier))

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviewed literature on the topic. It is organized to comprise of: theoretical review, conceptual framework, political participation (definition and forms), and barriers to political participation.

#### **2.1 Theoretical review**

##### **2.1.1 Cognitive engagement theory**

Cognitive engagement Theories of cognitive engagement hold that a process of cognitive mobilization has been occurring in advanced industrial societies over the past fifty years owing to education, media exposure and political awareness. Cognitive mobilization is characterized by two separate trends the declining cost of political information and a growth in the public's ability to process political information. Consequently, more citizens have the political resources and skills to allow them to deal with the complexities of politics and to understand how decisions are made in a democratic society (Jasper, 2015).

As a result, levels of engagement and activity are affected such theories predict that engagement and voluntary activity will be a choice people will not always engage. Furthermore, people may engage more in certain activities since their decision to participate is influenced by their sense of efficacy: if some types of activity are perceived as unproductive then cognitively engaged individuals will be less likely to participate in them as a consequence. They may, for example, engage more in activities such as protesting while becoming less engaged in other activities such as voting (Carreras, 2016).

##### **2.1.2 Rational choice theory**

Rational choice theories of participation focus entirely on the individual and the choices they make, the influence of wider society on such choices is minimal. Instead, choices of political action are based on a calculation of costs and benefits. When used to explain participation, rational choice theories produce a paradox. As participation is designed to produce collective benefits, rational individuals are unlikely to participate since once collective benefits are achieved, their use cannot be restricted to those people who originally campaigned for them.

Free-riders can also benefit. Thus, theories of rational choice would predict that very few people are likely to vote, something which is at odds with evidence (Hechter, M. (2018). 'Soft rational choice' theories, such as the general incentives theory of participation, take into account a wider set of incentives other than just the policy benefits of voting to explain participation. These wider incentives include those derived from the process of participation itself such as the opportunity to meet similar-minded people and the possible career benefits which might ensue from those interested in pursuing a political career.

### **2.1.3 Civic voluntarism theory**

The civic voluntarism model is the most widely researched model in the empirical analysis of political participation. Whiteley states that it is essentially a structural theory of participation in that it gives an account of participation in terms of the individual's social characteristics, rather than in terms of the choices which they make about involvement (Gauja, 2015).

Proponents of the theory argue that people get involved if they have the resources (education, social class, family income and leisure time), the motivation (the individual's level of interest in politics which is often derivative of resources), and are mobilised (the extent to which they can be induced to participate by others) to do so. The theory asserts that if people are embedded in their communities with many social ties they are more likely to get involved, when asked by others, than individuals with few social ties (Clarke, 2019).

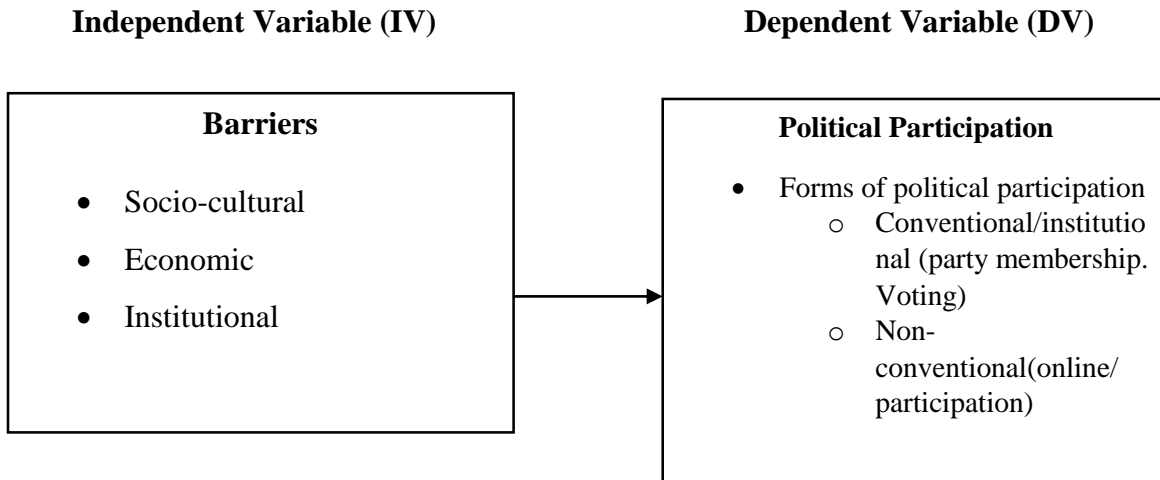
### **2.1.4 Equity fairness theory**

Like civic voluntarism models, equity fairness theories are also structural theories since they emphasise the role of social structure in motivating people to engage. This type of theory suggests that individuals evaluate how equitably they are treated in relation to members of reference groups who they feel a sense of affinity or rivalry towards. The bigger the gap between expectations of treatment and actual treatment, the more relatively deprived individuals will feel, and this in turn can produce protest behaviour. With regard to voting, individuals may be motivated to vote for opposition parties if they feel the government is treating them unfairly (Viterna, J., Clough, E., & Clarke, K. 2015).

## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

The research is conceptualized as depicted in figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



Source: Adapted from the theory of empowerment and participation by Pettit (2012)

The conceptual framework depicted in figure 1 above shows the hypothesized relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Barriers to political participation arise from three major areas: socio-cultural, economic and institutional. These elements constrain youth political participation dialectically. Political participation is conceptualized in terms of forms or modes of participation which are conveniently broken in two broad categories: conventional and unconventional. The conventional-nonconventional division is a matter of academic debate as shown in subsequent sections. However, current research shows that the divide between conventional and unconventional is blurred and outdated, if not ideologically driven (Verba et al. 1995; Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Lamprinau, 2013).

## 2.3. Defining Political Participation

Political participation is universally acknowledged as the central element of democracy since the old. Whilst there is no consensus on its definition, Huntington and Nelson (1976) defined political participation as an “activity by private citizens designed to influence government decision-making” whereas Verba et al. (1995) characterized it as an “activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action – either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make



those policies.” For (Uhlener, 2001) political participation is “political engagement” or “public involvement in decision making”. Political engagement has commonly been represented as “a set of rights and duties that involve formally organized civic and political activities (e.g., voting or joining a political party)” (Riley et al, 2010). Munroe (2002) defined political participation in terms of the degree to which citizens are exercising their right to engage in political activities (e.g., to protest, to speak freely, to vote, to influence or to get more energetically involved). Such definitions clearly establish a frame of reference with the available repertoire of political praxis within the conventional political norms, although these norms are not necessarily uniform across countries or across time.

From a revisionist perspective, however, political engagement as a key component for enacting citizenship needs to be untwined from traditional theorization of individualist democratic culture and conventional indicators (electoral turnout, associational unionism, party membership) and broaden on the domain of “informal politics” or spheres of political democratic activities that present the “political” as a dimension “inherent to every human society . . . that determines our very ontological condition”(Mouffe, 2005). This is a novel perspective that incorporates other valid spheres of political participation that are fast unfolding in contemporary times. Prominent in the sphere is the media, new social movements and associations and NGOs, internet activism, and multiple structures of associationist experience that promote communication and coordination (Li & Marsh, 2008; Weiss, 2020). Thus, current neoliberal democracies are characterized by alternative forms of political participation. Although existing definitions of political participation are adequate to capture youth participation, the current literature is inconsistent in the inclusion of new modes of participation that are increasingly common among young adults. The aforementioned new tendency requires for a more inclusive understanding and re-imagining/recomposing of political participation that would encompass multi-dimensional and multi-interactive social and cultural perspectives because political participation is a form of social engagement or activity and cannot be investigated outside this contextual parameter (Weiss, 2020; Lamprinau, 2013).

#### **2.4. Forms of Youth Political Participation**

Forms of political remain a subject of intense academic debate, reflecting debates on varying definitions of political participation (Lamprinau, 2013; Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Weiss, 2020). Over time studies in political theory have developed different classifications of the forms of political participation (Verba, Nie & Kim, 1978). According to Gibson & Cantijoch (2013), the debate centers on two central and interrelated concerns, namely what qualifies as a valid act of participation and how can acts of participation be classified? For long, modes of political participation were defined in terms of conventional and unconventional activities (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013). Conventional modes were considered political and non-conventions modes were outside the political sphere. These conventional forms were confined to voting, party membership and election-related activities (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Lamprinau, 2013) are institutionalized or legal voting. Subsequently, these forms of participation were expanded to include extrainstitutional activities: turnout, campaigning, communal, and particularized contacting activities, strikes and demonstrations (Verba & Nie, 1972; Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013).

From the 1990s several studies show a growing diversification of repertoires of political participation (Burns, Schlozman & Verba, 2001; Gribson & Cantijoch, 2013). Norris (2002) argues that political participation has undergone a significant transformation – from the involvement of interest groups to new social movements, from conventional repertoires to protest politics, and from state orientation to a multiplicity of target agencies, both non-profit and private. Consequently, new forms of political participation have emerged. Similarly, García-Albacete (2014) has observed that citizens’ political involvement has changed in recent times, leading to distinction between institutionalized and non-institutionalized political participation. Today, in addition to the categorization of political activities as conventional and unconventional, other forms of participation have been specified and characterized in terms of “alternative participation”. Such alternative forms of participation have also been defined as unofficial and informal by other researchers ( Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Lamprinau, 2013; Weiss, 2020).

The advent of the Internet has aided the rapid growth new types of political action and expression through online participation. Recent research in communication and Internet identifies “online participation” as one of the major global themes (Rice & Fuller, 2013). Despite its popularity, there is no consensus of the definition of meaning of online participation (Lutz,Hoffman & Meckel,2014). Generally online participation is the creation and sharing of content on the Internet addressed at a specific audience and driven by a social purpose. Thus social media can increase an individual’s exposure to political information and social mobilisation when friends and family post links to news stories or express political opinions (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014).As a result the Internet can provide a space in which new voices are heard and previously marginalised groups can express their views and lobby for change multiple social spheres.

Contemporary youth have grown up with the Internet, and have become the fastest adopters of new technologies. Variously labelled as the ‘Dotnet generation’, ‘Netizens’ or ‘digital natives’, it is posited that this generation of young adults not only have the digital skills to use new technologies effectively but also that these technologies have become so integrated into their lives that the online realm is the ‘natural’ world in which they will choose to act on or express their views (Kim & Amna, 2015).

The emergence of novel or virtual” forms of participation blurs the distinctions between traditional or conventional (institutional) and unconventional (extrainstitutional) modes. Nevertheless, the debate remains regarding the use of forms of political participation by young adults.

## **2.5. Barriers to political participation**

Youth face a myriad of obstacles in their attempt to participate in politics. Despite variations, theorists underline three broad barriers to youth participations as: social-cultural, economic and institutional or political (Verba et al., 1995). First, the prevailing societal attitudes towards young people is often that they are troubled and troubling, which gives justification to “act upon them without their agreement” (Checkoway, 2011; Schiavo, 2017) and are represented as negative, fearful and violent, prone to terrorism- a serious threat to social and economic well-being worldwide: a ‘ticking time bomb’( Sukarieh & Tannock,2008; 2014). Youth agendas set by

adults who hold this opinion might focus on young people's shortcomings and problems rather than invest in youth's potential as a positive source of change (Horowitz, 2007). Discrimination based on other factors, such as gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or even age, constitute significant inhibitions to participation.

Second, economic and social inequalities, constitute a major obstacle to youth political participation. Poor living conditions, schooling or lack of it, social networks, access to political forums, decent working environment (Mijana, 2013). This is particularly the case with rural youth who suffer various aspects of structural exclusion. Youth generally lack resources to undertake political activities which demand availability of finances; voluntary non-remunerated engagement of young people requires time, but time always has opportunity costs. When engaging civically, young people forego the opportunity of pursuing a paid activity. Not all young people can afford this, resulting in the involuntary exclusion of poorer young people, which distorts the representativeness of the active youth. Financial constraints also endanger the sustainability of youth associations.

These constraints are underpinned in Verba et al.'s resource theory that citizens need different resources to participate in various political activities (Verba et al. 1995). The scholars argue that time, money and civic skills are fundamental personal resources that citizens need to participate in political activities. Furthermore, different political activities require different combinations of resources as well as different quantities of these resources. All forms of political participation require a personal input of either money or time. How effective an individual could use these two resources depends on which level of civic skills the individual possess (Verba et al. 1995). The scholars refers to citizen's civic skills as "organizational and communication capabilities" (Verba et al. 1995). Citizens who possess civic skills are for example good in organizing and leading a meeting or are good at writing and orally presenting convincing arguments.

Third institutional barriers are a major barrier to youth political participation in a variety of ways. Both at the international and national levels, institutional frameworks and programmes have been established to support youth participation. Despite this mainstream acknowledgement of the desirability and import of engaging with youth, these policies are shaped by a collection of actors with different agendas and ideologies (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2008; 2014). As a result participation youth is constrained. This is particularly the case, given that youth policies,

especially in the developing world are designed and funded by international and bilateral donors including NGOs (Ansell, et al, 2012; Sukarieh & Tannock, 2014). Driving these policies is the ‘democracy industry’, which has been instrumental in diffusing normalised set of democratic ‘best practices’ (Kothari, 2005; Nagel & Staeheli, 2015) and such depoliticize and stifle alternative viewpoints of the youth. Youth policy, as always, tends to serve as vehicle for the existing dominant political and economic ideologies. By institutionalizing promotion of ‘universal’ values these institutions reinforce inequalities through selection processes that favour the privileged and educated youth (Ansell, et al, 2012; Sukarieh & Tannock, 2014; Nagel & Staeheli, 2015).

Notwithstanding good intentions, institutional constraints exist in form of: unclear expectations and outcomes; complicated formal decision making structures and processes (overly formal meeting procedures, lengthy meetings, complicated or long agendas, vast amounts of technical documentation and papers requiring substantial reading and comment; lack of information and knowledge of the organisations, its issues and jargon (Ansell, et al, 2012; Sukarieh & Tannock, 2014; Nagel & Staeheli, 2015). This is particularly true in a large international organization where the distance between world structures and the grassroots level is enormous and difficulty of the circulation of information. With few exceptions, the dominant policy approach to participation is structured, formalized and institutionally driven. This is consistent with mainstream literature that notes that young people rarely influence the structure, substance or outcomes of their participation (Vromen & Collin, 2010; Sukarieh & Tannock, 2014). Often, it is observed that this lack of agency and persistent structural barriers limit the forms of participation introduced and impact that young people can have on youth policy generally (Vromen & Collin, 2010). Typically, the organizational mind-set creates barriers to positively embrace the concept of active youth participation.

In addition implementation is the other obstacle to youth political participation. Often there is difficulty of creating and acting upon outcomes from participation processes. Government and donor tend to concentrate on the design and implementation of the participation process, rather than the follow through to meet outcomes, objectives or intentions of participation processes (Ansell, et al, 2012; Nagel & Staeheli, 2015). Many organizations give service to involving youth and there is disparity between words and action within many activities.

Although vast amounts of resources have been deployed to facilitate youth political participation in Somalia, the role of these in erecting barriers to youth participation in Mogadishu. This research was an effort to fill this academic lacuna.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology that was applied to gather data to address the research problem. It is structured to include: the research design; study population; sample size; sampling techniques; data collection methods, data collection instruments; quality (validity and reliability); research procedure; data analysis techniques; ethical consideration.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

A research design gives a framework for data collection and analysis which guides the whole research process (Bryman, 2012). It enables a researcher to make meaning of the phenomenon by being able to understand the social interactions between the phenomenon and the people. The research design which was applied in this study was both descriptive and analytic. The reason for choosing these research designs was because they are open and flexible; they provided opportunity for diverse perspectives into the research topic and were good for the open-ended data collection instruments.

The study used interpretivist (qualitative) approaches essentially based on desk research and interviews. According to Halcolm's Laws of Inquiry in Patton (2002), qualitative inquiry cultivates the most useful of all human capacities: the capacity to learn. The central assumption of interpretivism is that understanding is predicated upon "grasping how people interpret and make sense of their world and act on their interpretations" (Hammersley, 2012). Therefore, the study sought to explain the experiences and perspectives of its participants, and make sense of their attitudes. As such, the study was designed as a qualitative desk and interview study, suitable for "...for depth rather than breadth" (Denscombe, 2010).

#### **3.2 Target Population**

The sampling frame or population in this study was the list from which the sample was selected (Robinson, 2014). A properly drawn sample provides information appropriate for describing the population of elements composing the sampling frame. This study considered officials in government agencies, academics, youth organisations, clan leaders, international organizations

and civil society. The target population is the specific pool of cases that the researcher wants to study. Thus the population should fit a certain specification, which the researcher is studying.

### **3.3 Sample**

Regarding the sample size, this study is idiographic rather than nomothetic. Idiographic studies seek to ensure “locatable voices for individual cases within the study” (Robinson, 2014: 29). The size of the sample is 5 participants, which is within the size interval that “provides scope for developing cross-case generalities and permits individuals within sample to be given a defined identity” (Robinson, 2014). For these reasons, researchers using interpretative phenomenological analysis are given a guideline of 3 to 16 participants for a single study, with the lower end of that spectrum suggested for undergraduate projects and the upper end for larger-scale funded projects (Robinson, 2014).

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques**

The sampling was done following Robinson’s four-point approach to sampling in qualitative interview-based studies (Robinson, 2014:25). The researcher applied non-probability sampling method of purposive or judgmental sampling because the sample selection was based on the nature of the research objectives. Non-probability sampling implies that the sample is chosen due to its relevance to the study topic rather than their ‘representativeness’, which determines the way in which people to be studied were selected. Specifically the sampling strategy employed was quota sampling. Relevant demographic or social categories of participants were identified, and a minimum number of cases was required for each one (Robinson 2014: 34). Thus, to ensure that key groups were represented in the sample, at least one participant each from each of the five groups (Government, Clan leadership, youth, academia, and civil society) were included. The sample size was five.

Purposive approach was used, an approach which is extremely favorable in qualitative research. The issues or topics for research are chosen based on similar characteristics that they portray. The method it uses is quite simple, when taking a part of the sample, reject or ignore the participants who do not fit the required profile for the study. This approach usually starts with a



rationale in mind, the sample is designed to include the people who fit the criteria of the research and exclude those participants who fail to achieve this target.

Snowballing sampling or referral processes was used to source the sample. This involved asking participants for recommendations of acquaintances who might qualify for participation, leading to 'referral chains'. This is so because studies on youth political participating in conflict environment such as Mogadishu are by definition sensitive which makes prospective respondents reluctant to participate in such studies (Heckathorn, 2002). So I used my contacts to link me to credible participants.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods and Instruments**

The study relied on primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained in two phases; the first phase utilized primary documents and interviews. Secondary data was obtained through analysis published sources such as reports. Data for the study was generated through two methods: document analysis and semi-structured interviews. This involved interviewing youths.

#### **3.5.1 Interviews**

The interviews were all set up at times and locations convenient for the young people and where they felt comfortable.

Semi-structured interviews was one of the two methods applied to generate data. As noted by Dörnyei (2007: 132), qualitative data are 'most often' collected by researchers through interviews and questionnaires. However, interviews -compared to questionnaires- are more powerful in eliciting narrative data that allows researchers to investigate people's views in greater depth (Kvale, 1996; 2003). In a similar vein, Cohen et al (2007: 29) add that interviewing is "a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting". There are advantages and disadvantages in the interview methods. Advantages include: high return rate, fewer incomplete answers, can involve reality, controlled answering order, relatively flexible. The disadvantages include: time-consuming, small scale study, never 100% anonymous, potential for subconscious bias, potential inconsistencies.

The interviews lasted on average 90 minutes each. All interviews were recorded with the consent of participants. The interviews were semi-structured, which allowed the interviewee leeway on how to reply, and allowed to capture “how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events” (Bryman 2012: 471). The interview guide ensures that all important points would be touched upon during the interview. The form of the guide was changed over the course of research. Its structure becomes simpler and questions more succinct, reflecting the fact that open, short questions and total flexibility in the order of questions yields better results, allowing the interviewee to drive the conversation to a greater extent. An interview guide was developed (Appendix).

### **3.5.2 Document analysis**

Documents were a central data gathering method in this study. A document is defined as “any written material other than a record that was not prepared specifically in response to some requests from the investigator” (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Documentary research method refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon to be studied (Bailey, 1994). The documentary research method is used in investigating and categorizing physical sources, most commonly written documents, whether in the private or public domain (Mogalakwe, 2006).

Like any other method of scientific inquiry, document analysis has its advantages and disadvantages. Advantages include: ‘Non-reactivity’ - records unbiased by data collection process. Documents are readily available, researcher does not have to be present during data collection, saves time, useful for hypotheses formulation, inexpensive and economical form of data. On the other hand disadvantages of this method include: Limited by the availability of data, inaccuracies in original material, Bias and ‘selective deposit’ and ‘selective survival’ - missing/incomplete data.

### **3.6. Quality: Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability of research instruments are central to the findings of any scientific research as they serve as guarantees of the results of the participants’ performances (Hamza Alshenqeeti, 2014). In its broader context, validity refers to the degree to which a study reflects

the specific concepts it aims to investigate. Two types of validity are discussed in social science literature: internal and external (Berg, 2007). Internal validity refers to the extent to which an investigation is actually measuring what it is supposed to measure. On the other hand, reliability refers to the extent to which a research instrument yields the same results on repeated trials (ibid).

### **3.6.1 Interviews**

To ensure validity and reliability in interviews the following techniques were applied: avoiding asking leading questions; taking notes not just depending on tape recorders; conducting a pilot interview; and giving the interviewee a chance to sum up and clarify the points they have made (Alshenqeti, 2014).

### **3.6.2 Document analysis**

Under document analysis validity was ensured by strictly applying Scott's (1990) quality control criteria for handling documentary sources. These are: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. Authenticity refers to whether the evidence is genuine and from implacable source; credibility refers to whether the evidence is typical of its kind; representativeness refers to whether the documents consulted are representative of the totality of the relevant documents; and meaning refers to whether the evidence is clear and comprehensible. Handling documentary sources are not different from those applied to other areas of social research.

## **3.7 Research Procedure**

### **3.7.1 Before data gathering**

1. An introduction letter was obtained from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences for the researcher to request approval to conduct the study from the respective respondents and sources in Mogadishu.
1. Upon approval, the researcher confirmed a list of the qualified respondents.
2. The respondents were briefed about the study and requested to sign the Informed Consent Form
3. Appointments were discussed with the relevant respondents and librarians
4. Sources of documents were ascertained

### **3.7.2 during data gathering**

1. The respondents were requested to fix appointments at places of their convenience for the interviews.

### **3.7.3 after data gathering**

The data gathered was appropriately collated and encoded

## **3.8 Data Analysis**

The data collected was first coded. The interviews were transcribed in their entirety. Coding involved giving all statements numeric codes based on their meaning for ease of analysis. After coding, data was entered and analysed using content analysis based the specific objectives.

## **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

In order to ensure that participants did not suffer any kind of harm, social or otherwise, as a consequence of taking part in this study, it was essential to ensure confidentiality of their identities. To that end, pseudonyms were used for the participants, the names of their organizations were omitted, and all data was kept in security throughout the writing process and subsequently destroyed.

At the beginning of each interview, respondents would be asked to sign a consent form informing them that interview was to be recorded unless they demanded otherwise, as well as of the possibility of abstaining from answering any question or of discontinuing the interview at any point. The consent form also stated that I as the researcher have an obligation to confidentiality. For the documents I offered to give them a signed document in which I stated that I am responsible to keep the data confidential. I requested respondents to consent to recording the interviews.

## **3.10 Limitations of the study**

The major limitation of the study the issue of accessing documents all the necessary documents. The researcher made all reasonable efforts to get access to required documents. On interview, the researcher provided incentives to interviewees to participate. In addition the snowballing selection ensured that only qualified respondents interested in the study will participate.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

#### **4.0. Introduction**

In this fourth chapter, data collected from the field is presented, analyzed and interpreted. The study aimed at to determine the forms of youth political participation, barriers to this participation and interventions aimed at to facilitating this participation in Somalia, Mogadishu. The researcher applied the qualitative retrospective study where interviews and documentary analysis on data gathering was more suitable. Present data were examined to address the research objectives. The analytical procedures are structured according to the sequence of specific objectives.

#### **4.1 The respondents and documentary sources**

Five respondents were interviewed for this study. Appendix 1 indicates the participant demographics that represent minimum requirements sought as described in Chapter III. All the five interviews went on well and were very informative. Each Interview ran for 90 minutes. Participants talked a lot and all were clearly interested in the topic and the research. For primary documents, their authenticity was verified. Interviewees spoke both in Somali and English languages, the researcher being Somali was able to clearly understand and translate Somali to English. All interviews were coded manually during open coding. The interviews were analyzed in batches of five participants. The researcher coded each batch and analyzed for categories or themes. Since the respondents were few, transcripts were manually analysed and each interview was coded again. Coding the interviews again aided comparison of the five interviews. This process helped the researcher to remain consistent in emphasizing key points during coding.

#### **4.2 Objective one: Social barriers influence on youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu, Somalia.Somalia.**

From the survey of literature in chapter two, three broad thematic barriers are prominent in youth participation scholarship in politics: social barriers and cultural barriers, and; political barriers. The data on these elements was generated through interviews and document analysis.

##### **4.2.1 Social and cultural barriers**

These barriers are defined as those obstacles that exist as a result of the varied interpretations and the uses of perceptions and symbols in different social groups. The concern here is where youth are placed within the societal hierarchy and the impact of that placement on their ability to participate in politics. Analysis of the interviews and documents revealed four types of cultural

barriers: (1) concerns over gender-specific activities that preempt participation in youth political engagement programs, (2) familial responsibilities and obligations, (3) religious norms (4) the cultural norms. These barriers can be gender-specific as well culture specific.

### **Interviews**

The question put to the participants was: What are the social and cultural barriers to youth political participation?

AY attributed barriers to youth political participation to socio-economic and current unresolved conflict. He said

In Mogadishu obstacles which young people face are basically socio-economic problems and current political conflict. The socio-economic obstacles comprise of poverty or structural inequalities, historically rooted. Many youth in Mogadishu are unemployed. The conflict has made this complicated...the narrative that associates youth with terrorist activities restrain our participation...

The view that in order for the youth to exercise their political rights, there is a need to also secure their social rights and autonomy resonated with all the respondents.

Respondent AC noted that in Somalia young women are not expected to go to social clubs. This is an obstacle to their involvement in public affairs including politics.

Respondent AC explained social barriers in Mogadishu in this way:

Traditionally in Somalia, youth are not considered capable of taking meaningful participation in matters political. When older people are discussing matters political youth are kept away. It was even worse for female youth; their involvement verges on taboo. But since the conflict this has changed a lot. Today, however, youth, particularly male, are taken seriously, although there are still reservations. Some fear that the youth do not have the experience to understand the intricacies of politics. They are impatient and bring imported ideas.

Respondent AT explained that: “In Mogadishu, and indeed Somalia, engaging in politics is still problematic for young women. It is deemed to corrupt them morally. Their participation is received with mixed feelings”. This view was echoed by respondent AS who explained that

“Politics subverts our family values. Women’s roles in customary Somali society have been heavily constrained by xeer (customary) which preserves male political dominance in Mogadishu. This is further justified on religious grounds which limit women public spaces”.

The five respondents from this research broadly agreed that there is significant ‘cultural stigma’ attached to women entering government, and in particular vying for leadership positions. Thus Women’s participation in political affair remains constrained, particularly the young ones. Respondent AS observes that “... Women in rural areas and small clan are indifferent to political office...they get no family and clan support...they are also marginalized...”.

### **Political barriers**

Political barriers, are obstacles that impede access, opportunity, or support required to engage in politics. The respondents were asked the question: What are the political barriers to youth participation?

Respondent AT noted:

In recent times there have been policies to facilitate youth participation in Mogadishu youth have opportunities, but there remain many political barriers to youth participation in Mogadishu. Some of these are within the very policies which create legal and bureaucratic hurdles. Some are related to funding where the political leadership at the national level does not prioritise youth participation programmes and funding is dependent on donors. The youth policy is an example in which the National Youth Council has received minimal funding. Because of this youth have a sense of disillusionment, resentment and distrust.

Respondents noted that political participation in Mogadishu as elsewhere in Somalia is formal and institutionally driven. Respondent AC’s view that “this top–down approach to youth political participation led by decision-making bodies is a serious structural barrier. It robs youth of their agency and limits forms of participation to only those that are institutionally defined.” Because of this “it becomes difficult to change institutions and share power with youth”. This suggests that successful participation interventions with youth invariably challenges policy makers and institutional structures to change.

### **Other barriers identified**

Besides social and cultural barriers that the literature amply underlines, respondents also identified other significant barriers: time and resources, difficulty of creating and acting upon outcomes, lack of knowledge, diversity of youth; donor policies. As respondent AT put it “... limited financial resources and dependence on donors for youth organizations and government agencies severely constrains the implementation of effective youth political participation processes”. He adds that often time allotted for youth participation is limited...also, youth ownership is weak...limits participation...” the respondents agreed with AC that “government policy intervention on youth political is not effectively acted upon...youth don’t see good outcomes...”

The other major barrier that the respondents stressed was the difficulty in changing institutions and sharing power. As AC observed that “these institutions are static yet the National Youth Policy is a reform that requires institutional changes. The NYP requires the Ministry of Education and Sports to give autonomy to the National Youth Council, but this is not the case...” Respondent AC brought out the issue of youth diversity. She said: “In Mogadishu, like the whole of Somalia, there are many types of differences: gender, educated, uneducated, social class, rural urban. All these created inclusion and exclusion barriers to participation in many ways”. These barriers play a significant role in constraining youth political participation.

### **Document analysis**

The main documents analyzed were the FGS Youth Policy, the UN. The National Youth Policy of Somalia acknowledges challenges to youth participation which include “... political and administrative institutions dominated by adults in which youth are underrepresented” (FGS, 2017). The policy recognizes the unique case of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists who have “limited education...” it also underscores Somali patriarchal structures which inhibit young people’s participation, particularly young women (FGS, 2017). By enacting a national youth policy, the Somali government recognized the legal/institutional barriers to youth political participation. The UN agencies and other donor documents underpin the same barriers. The UN Security Council Resolution 2250 Placing social, political and economic (UNSOM, 2020). In its report of UN-Habitat noted that “Youth inclusion in political decision making remains critical as over two-thirds of Somalis are under the age of 35 and are currently underrepresented in Somalia's political processes”. A study commissioned USAID, identified among other youth



challenges “that young people had few opportunities for agency or to develop leadership roles even in places where they described opportunities to participate” (Rutherford, Farah, Walanwal, Woolf & Cassandra, 2020).

Youth political, participation in Mogadishu takes diversity of forms. Conventional and unconventional and is gaining strong e-participation characteristics

Another obstacle to youth participation identified was “the difficulty of implementing outcomes from participation processes”. Respondent AY suggested that “...a major barrier is the tendency for Somali government and donors to focus on the design and implementation of the participation process, rather than follow through to meet outcomes, objectives or intentions of participation processes...”She pointed out that participation is underutilized, as organizations do not know what to do with output. Another respondent argued that “government might not want to consult with young people because it requires them acting on the outcomes of consultation” adding that there is also ‘participation fatigue’ as there is workshop after workshop activities.

The barriers to effective youth participation as brought out through interviews and document analysis above suggest that there are complex systemic issues at play.

### **4.3 Objective Two: Economic barriers influence on youth participation in the politics of Mogadishu Somalia**

#### **To establish forms of youth political participation in Mogadishu, Somalia.**

This objective focused on finding out the predominant modes or forms of political participation in Mogadishu. Data was gathered through key respondent interviews as well an analysis of available documents. Interview data is presented first, followed by documentary data.

#### **4.3.1. Themes from the Interview and document Data**

In the review of literature three themes of political participation emerged: Involvement in institutional politics (elections, campaigns and membership); protest activities (demonstrations and new social movements); civic engagement (associative life, community participation, voluntary work). These themes are also consistent with youth research (Chisholm & Kovacheva 2002). Siurala (2000) defines these types of participation as “postmodern” types, including expressive, emotional, aesthetic, casual, virtual and digital participation. These themes are in two broad categories: conventional or institutional participation and unconventional forms.

### **4.3.2 Involvement in institutional politics**

#### **Interviews**

The participants were asked the question: Are Somali youth involved in institutional politics (elections, campaigns, party membership)?

Respondent CL had this to say. “Our youth have jumped into politics. They see politics as a road to immediate access to power and resources. Many of the political parties are owned by the youth. You can imagine our president is a youth ...less than 50 years...”

The desire of youth to participate in formal politics was echoed by all the respondents. This general view was expressed by civil society respondent participant (PA) who said:

Many youths believe that change that favours them can only occur when they are involved in political decisions. So quite many have joined political parties which they deem proactive to youth issues or formed their own parties. They are pushing for adult suffrage. Some youth want elders to “retire” to make room for youth to lead. Youth want elders to make space for them to be heard and act.

An academic respondent, AC, observed:

Currently there are numerous ways in which youth can participate in the decision-making process. There are numerous youth organisations in which youth channel their inputs to the political parties and other decision makers that can influence the outcome. Importantly many Mogadishu youth have taken to e-participation. They demand for legislation changes such as the removal of the age restrictions, by working with the younger ones in the House of Representatives who have sympathy for youth issue. They join political parties they see can bring immediate employment opportunities. However, they see the voting formula as limiting since it is not based on universal adult suffrage. It is dominated by the elderly.

A youth leader underlined the above by observing that “...the structures such as the Youth Council remain under tight bureaucratic control...the agenda is predetermined by bureaucrats and donor agencies. We are expected to participate within this framework and deviations are not entertained...”

From the above it seems clear that the motivation of youth participation on formal politics is not only by employment prospects but also the desire to control the agenda.

## **Document analysis**

Youth participation in politics in Somalia was institutionalized in 2017 through the adoption of the Somalia Federal Youth Policy (FGS, 2017). One of the key objectives of the Youth Policy is to create a proper condition for youth to participate in democratic processes in the country through, among other things, youth representation in political structures and school educational programmes (FGS, 2017). The Youth Policy led to the establishment of the Youth Council which carries out a range of programmes including youth civic engagement activities (FGS, 2017). The activities are primarily focused on keeping the youth from joining violent political groups. USAID-funded Somali Youth Learners' Initiative (SYLI) focuses on secondary education and civic engagement opportunities. Since the Global War on Terror was declared, support for global education from the United States has been rising steadily. It is based on the theory that education funding would combat terrorism by promoting economic growth and providing a gateway to productive activity and livelihood options for youth who might otherwise fall prey to terrorist organizations.

### **4.3.3 Civic engagement**

In scholarship about the relations between young people and their communities, the term civic engagement is often used. There are numerous definitions for this term (Adler & Goggin, 2005) but it is often used as a broad term referring to a set of constructs such as civic skills, knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and goals. In the present study, the term civic involvement is used to refer specifically to the civic activities that youth participate in. Civic engagement is one of the key forms of youth political participation in Somalia.

## **Interviews**

Interviews reveal that Somali youth are engaged in a variety of civic activities.

Respondent PA summarises the dominant view of respondents thus: "Today in Mogadishu, youth are active and participate in a range of civic activities. They are doing this through informal and formal organization such as Banadir, Somali Youth Frontiers, Somali Girls development Association... They are involved in volunteerism, peacebuilding efforts and sporting activities." Despite this general view, there were reservations on youth civic engagement. One of these relates to motivations to civic engagements by youth. Respondents were in agreement that short term gains mostly employment opportunities were a major factor. The other concern was what respondent AC explained as 'unequal access to civic participation'.

He said: “most civic programmes target educated and privileged and those perceived to be potential trouble makers. Rural and uneducated receive peripheral opportunities to civic engagement.”

### **Documentary analysis**

The Federal Government has formal policies aimed at facilitating youth civic engagements based on the Federal Youth Policy. Among these is the National Youth Council which has a number of youth programmers (FGS). These programmes are largely driven by international organisations, notably UNSOM, UNICEF UNDP, and bilateral donors such as USAID who design and fund a wide range of civic related activities. The United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development developed a set of “Guiding Principles for Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding (UN,). USAID, for example, implements Youth PowerLearning which generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) and cross-sectoral approaches youth development.

#### **4.3.4 Other Forms of youth political participation**

In Mogadishu the youth use multiple ways in political participation other than the traditional or classic means. Respondent YA captures this point when he says that

Online participation is growing rapidly among youth, not only in Mogadishu, but all Somalia. Mobile computing is facilitating youth to access the Internet and enjoy lowered coordination costs. The youth of Mogadishu young have created media and build the tools and platforms through which they are made, shared and organized. Youth use social-media-based political activities such as posting to a blog or joining a social-network group, mobilizing, or Crowdsourcing or peer production via Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, and other networks.

### **4.4 Objective Three. Institutional barriers influence on youth participation in Mogadishu, Somalia**

The previous objective identified barriers that constrain political youth participation in Mogadishu. This third and final objective looks broadly at the specific policies and strategies

initiated to address these impediments. In this respect the research focused on state and CSOs initiatives. The data is generated through document analysis and interviews.

#### **4.4.1 State initiatives**

##### **Document analysis**

The state has been active at the federal, state and local levels with large numerous initiatives designed to raise levels of youth participation. Document analysis shows that state initiatives are hugely dominated by donor inputs in terms of policy design and funding. At the outset youth participation is generically entrenched in the Federal Transition Constitution which in part two deals with rights, freedom and duties of the citizen and person (FGS, 2012). In legal/institutional terms, the most significant intervention is the institutionalization of youth participation through the enactment of the National Youth Policy by the Federal Government of Somalia in 2017 and the subsequent establishment of the National Youth Council (FGS, 2017).

The policy has seven goals, the most pertinent for this research is goal (b) "To nurture the active participation and leadership of young women and men, and youth organizations in the duties and responsibility of both individual and national development" which prioritizes "... improving youth participation and citizenship" (FGS, 2017). To meet this goal the FGS, working with donors, has undertaken reforms in the education curricula to increase overall literacy, but also civic education. This has expanded access to education through construction of more class rooms with particular focus on rural and nomadic areas along with teacher training and education materials (UNICEF, 2020; Rutherford, 2020). The youth policy was also operationalized by the establishment of Somalia National Youth Council (SNYC) with the goal of institutionalizing youth participation at governmental levels (FGS, 2017).

In the specific context of political participation, Somalia is not an electoral democracy based on adult suffrage although it is a multiparty democracy. 'The Mogadishu Model', as it is called, is an indirect clan-based model of representation (BTI, 2020). However, electoral participation of the youth is partially institutionalized clan-base system in which the electoral law provides 25 years as a minimum eligibility to Parliament, while that of the President is 40 years. The electoral law, however, reserves 30% of seats for women. There is no provision for specific youth quota as is in some countries such as Uganda, but the Somalia Parliament is generally

young. The 2016 elections produced a surge in the proportion of MPs under 35, increasing from 5.6 per cent in 2012 (15 out of 275 MPs at that time) to 19 per cent at the end of 2016 (51 aged under 35 out of 275 MPs). This was accompanied by an increase in women elected to national parliament, from 14 per cent in 2012 to 25 per cent in 2016 (there are now 67 women MPs) (Saferworld, 2017; BTI, 2020).

As pointed out above the FGS relies heavily on donors for generation and implementation of policies. The key donor players include the UN, USAID, and EU. Today in Somalia, the UN presence consists of 22 agencies in addition to UNSOM, UNSOS, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF and the World Bank. All these agencies are engaged in a variety of youth programmes that contribute to enhancing youth participation by providing information, participation skills and empowerment (UN, 2017)

The United Nations systems in Somalia operates a combined strategy that builds on the recommendations of resolution 2250, which recognizes the role of young people as players in the UN's development work, rather than being passive recipients of UN support (UN, 2017). As part of the UN Youth Strategy for Somalia, the UN is supporting structural reform mechanisms of youth participation that ensure young male and female Somalis have a say in decision-making at different levels (UN). At a national level, they created National Youth Council and youth parliament to entrench decision making and representation. Other structures supported include a sports program, and a forum for dialogue that takes place at universities in Mogadishu. Also created is a blog project and radio training spaces for young people to air their voices, and make their own pod-casts on a variety of issues that concern them, including radicalisation and peacebuilding. In addition the UN also aided the establishment of the UN Youth Advisory Board with 13 young people representing different regions as well as thematic expertise to directly advise the UN leadership in Somalia (UN,).

Among the most outstanding bilateral youth participation projects is the USAID's sponsored YouthPower Learning which generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) (Rutherford, 2020). Positive Youth Development engages youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that

youth are empowered to reach their full potential. Positive Youth Development approaches build skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems (Rutherford, 2020).

The question as to how far these initiatives have facilitated youth political participation in Mogadishu is debatable. Implementation is a major problem. For a variety of reasons including inadequacy of resources, bureaucratic bottlenecks and the unresolved conflicts has negatively impacted on the policy outcomes.

#### **4.4.2 CSOs initiatives**

##### **Document analysis**

Apart from governmental institutions, CSOs in Somalia generally are playing a significant role in furthering youth participation generally. Major donors include: the UN system, EU, USAID, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Somali diaspora. There are over 60 CSOs currently in Somalia performing different roles at micro levels which are expected to contribute to macro policies(). Although these organizations address a variety of issues, not directly political youth participation, they contribute to building political awareness. Many of these CSOs are externally supported and run by youth. Some of the prominent CSOs include: Somali Public Agenda and Youth Peer Education Network (Y-Peer), Somali Youth Frontiers, Somali National Youth Organisation (SONYO), Centre for Peace and Democracy (CPD), Somalia Girls Development Association among numerous others . Y-Peer for example, focuses on governance. On November 2020 it co-organized a forum that took place in Mogadishu under the theme: The role of the Somali youth in the upcoming Somalia parliamentary and presidential elections: opportunities and challenges aiming to debate prospects for young people and constraints they may encounter in this electoral cycle. Mercy Corpsman, a US NGO, is one of the prominent International organizations. Funded by the United States Institute of Peace, it has been active in civic education programmes in Somalia (Tesfaye, McDougal, Maclin, & Blum, 2018).

An analysis of the documents shows that while CSOs in Mogadishu have raised the voice of the youth, they operate within the so-called ‘democracy industry’, which is instrumental in disseminating a relatively standardized set of democratic ‘best practices’ as a means of fostering

societal reconciliation and long-term stability in post-conflict settings worldwide. The participation agenda is controlled by donor experts and is intended at ordering of dissent

#### **4.4.3 Interviews**

Recent practice globally has been to urge governments to take deliberate policy steps to institutionalize youth political participation. This has led to creation of youth policies constitutionalizing specific youth representation in parliaments and other political decision making bodies. As shown above, Somalia has made progress along these liberal reform directions. During the interviews participants were asked to comment on these government initiatives to facilitate youth participations. There was a general agreement that these initiatives, in face value, were good, as an acknowledgement of youth citizenship. All the participants had reservations on the motivations and effectiveness of government interventions. Participant AC was concerned that “ the youth policy of Somalia was developed by with little input from Somali Youth”. In any case added participant CL “... Somali Youth are assumed to be terrorist that must be countered”

All participants agreed government policy intervention were positive but expressed reservations on their effectiveness, a point summarized by AS in this way

In paper the policies are excellent, but there is implementation gap between statements and promises on one and actual practices on the other hand. Policies largely depend on donors. The projects have increased youth participation in many ways. Today you hear loud voices of youth everywhere. However, we are still far behind; there is a big problem of the rural youth and the marginalized ones. They are still behind. The Federal Government is preoccupied with politics than addressing civic education issues. The Youth Council, for example, has no independent budget... it has to depend on handouts from the donors... This limits their autonomous agency in the decision-making processes”. The agenda is determined by the donors...even government Youth Policy was designed by donors

When asked about the role of the CSOs in empowering youth political participation, respondent AS remarked:



Donors must be commended for facilitating the growth of CSOs in Mogadishu and Somalia generally. These CSOs play a very important role in building youth capacity to participate, but they are so fragmented and often driven by external ideologies which fund them. This creates differentiation in terms of region, clan, and class. It fragments us the youth and we lose unity and a broader national focus...in addition

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this closing chapter, the report summarises the key findings of the study, provides conclusions and recommendations.

#### **5.1 Summary of the key findings**

The findings are presented in accordance with the study objectives.

Objective one was directed to forms of youth political participation. From the data generated through interviews and document analysis and discussion of the results, the dominant forms of participation were both traditional/conventional and postmodern. Conventional forms included: Involvement in institutional politics (elections, campaigns and membership). Nonconventional ways find expression in protest activities (demonstrations and new social movements); civic engagement and online or e-participation (associative life, community participation, voluntary work). However, what comes out prominently, among Mogadishu, is the fusion of e-participation and institutional forms of political forms of participation. This is particularly so in terms of communication and mobilization.

The second objective dealt with barriers to youth political participation. The findings in this objective underlined three broad barriers to youth political participation in Mogadishu: social barriers and cultural, and; political. In Mogadishu social barriers arise out of societal hierarchy and the impact of that placement on the ability of youth to participate in politics. This is particularly so for young women who are heavily constrained by xeer (custom) which preserves male political dominance in Mogadishu. Notwithstanding this, the findings reveal an ongoing fundamental transformation in favour of young women and youth generally.

At the political/institutional level key findings locate barriers at the bureaucratic and donor policies and praxis. Government policies and programmes structured within a bureaucratic framework which constrains youth agency from effective decision making process. A top-down approach to participation that focuses on institutionalized or formal participation processes led by decision-making bodies. The design of these policies is top-down. This is typical with NYP and the NYC which were designed by external experts and bureaucratically institutionalised.

addition these policies by their very nature exclude the less educated and hence reinforce structural inequalities. Related to this, is the nuanced barriers imposed by the donors. Through the ‘democracy industry in which donors have provided ‘standardized universal democracy values’ and as such, discussions are confined to this framework. Consequently, the Mogadishu youth are suppressed from putting forward alternative visions since these are considered deviations and associated with terrorism.

Implementation of participation outcomes is another important barrier that the study found. This barrier is least discussed in the literature. It is a result of non-follow up of the decisions agreed on during participation processes. The other major barrier that the study found out was the difficulty in changing institutions and sharing power. Government and donor institutions are structurally rigid static yet the National Youth Policy is a reform that requires institutional changes, yet suggesting that successful participation initiatives with young people often challenged decision makers and institutional structures to change.

The study found that there are inherent limitations within the FGS and other exiting organizations using youth participation processes. This especially included limited financial resources of community organizations and government agencies to establish effective participation processes.

The third objective assessed the existing interventions to youth political participation. The FGS with the aid of multilateral and bilateral donors have established legal/institutional frameworks such as the Draft Federal Constitution, the NYP and NYC along with programmes and projects to facilitate youth political participation. As a result, their youth voice is heard, and progress has been made to address the young women’s issues. However, have not gone far enough to provide youth with autonomy to effectively exercise their agency and tackle structural inequalities. The interventions are formalistic and receive little implementation follow-ups.

## **5.2. Discussion**

From the data generated above Somali youth participation combines both traditional and non-conventional modes which is consistent with earlier research (e.g. Verba & Nie 1972; Gibson, & Cantijoch, 2013; van Deth, 2014). Contrary to most academic Anglo-Saxon disengagement discourse that portrays youth as apathetic to traditional forms of political participation (Deželan,

2015; García-Albacete, 2014; Kitanova, 2020) data above strongly suggests that Mogadishu youth are optimistic and active in institutional politics (elections, campaigns and membership); civic engagement strongly employ online participation. This is important as it cautions against universalizing the specific trends in the Anglo-Saxon democracies to the rest of the world. The debate about how and if online participation fits into existing concepts is ongoing and vibrant (Weiss, 2020). In this view, non-traditional civic and political engagement signal complementarity of traditional forms of participation and postmodern ones. In Mogadishu online youth political participation is unmistakably apparent, particularly by the Somali diaspora and the educated urban youth. While political youth engagement in e-participation in Mogadishu is expanding, the differences observed across countries indicate that the context matters. E-participation takes different shapes and some types are more popular than others. The implication here is that e-participation in Somalia could be reinforcing exclusion of the rural and marginalized youth who invariably have low access to the internet and thus leaving the youth agenda to be driven by the urban and diaspora youth elite.

According to literature social, cultural and political factors are three major broad constraints to youth political participation (Verba et al., 1995). The findings of this study are largely consistent with these earlier studies, but differ in detail. Document analysis reveal that a key nuanced barrier to youth political participation lies in government policies on youth programmes by donors and NGOs. While these policies, at face value, espouse liberation of youth, they structure participation to occur within a predetermined liberal trajectory. The policies are guided by the ‘democracy industry’, which has been instrumental in disseminating a relatively standardized set of democratic ‘best practices’ as a means of fostering societal reconciliation and long-term stability in post-conflict settings worldwide (Kothari, 2005; Nagel & Staeheli, 2015). ‘Democracy industry’ disseminates a standardized set of democratic ‘best practices’ worldwide. Promoting ‘universal’ values often means dampening, or excluding, those practices and political identities that are perceived to threaten these ‘universal’ values. Thus youth participation in Mogadishu is formulated from anti-terrorism framework which design ‘smarter’ strategies of forms of involvement to promote wholesale societal transformation (Nagel & Staeheli, 2015). Participation outside this framework is considered deviant or negative. This is the underlying logic of National Youth Council which was established within the neoliberal trajectory but with anti Alshab

objective. The NYC operates within government bureaucracy which guides the decision making process. A key component of the 'smart power' strategies pursued over the past decades in Mogadishu has been the establishment and funding of youth local non-governmental organizations dedicated to the promotion of democracy. 'Smart power' strategies are based on the assumption that Somalia's conflict stem from a democratic deficit. Therefore, the solution to create peace and stability security in Somalia and Mogadishu in particular is to fundamentally shift values and socio-political norms among the Somali people. This is best done through the various youth programmes.

List discussed in the literature is the implementation barrier which is a result of non-follow up of participation outcomes. Drawing on policy documents and interviews, objective three of the study sought to generate data on the political/institutional intervention framework and CSOs on youth political participation. The review of available government, donor (international, supranational and bilateral) and CSOs documents provided important information about the perspectives of these institutions on youth political participation. An important part of youth political participation intervention policies in Mogadishu is the deep involvement of donors (international organization/supranational organizations and bilateral)((). While some of these cooperations have brought forward issues of youth policy onto the agenda, some others are effective in the development of national, regional, and international youth programmes. This cooperation has made youth organisations in Mogadishu and Somalia generally popular. But the effectiveness of these interventions remains debatable.

With few exceptions, the dominant policy approach to participation is structured, formalized and institutionally driven. For example, the national youth council is overseen by Ministry of Education and Sports that controls the Council's agenda and interaction with policymakers. This demonstrates how youth are seen as 'becoming' citizens in need of guidance and control, rather than already 'being' active political citizens. This is consistent with mainstream literature that notes that young people rarely influence the structure, substance or outcomes of their participation ( Vromen & Collin, 2010). Often, it is observed that this lack of agency and persistent structural barriers limit the forms of participation introduced and impact that young people can have on youth policy generally ( Vromen & Collin, 2010).

The interview data in this research shows that existing forms of youth participation in Mogadishu are too bureaucratic and ought to be more informal to attract young people from more diverse backgrounds. Although policymakers contend that youth participation should be youth-led, long term, purposeful, fun, creative and responsive to young people's lives, in practice, governments (national and state), donors, organizations and services tend to use formal and adult-led processes to engage with young people. In addition to limiting the kinds of young people these strategies appeal to, opportunities are often only available to a select few. Therefore, the future challenge lies in bridging the gap between both policymakers' and young people's ideas about what makes for effective participation in existing practice.

In the existing literature, there is an ongoing debate on recognition of the sociopolitical citizenship status and practices of young people. There is also ample critique of existing forms of youth participation and consultation implemented by governments (Barber, 2009; Vromen & Collin, 2010).

However, recent research examines whether contemporary young people approach politics and their participation within it in new and/or different ways. Most international literature now suggests that there has been a generational shift away from traditional citizen-oriented (or institutional) forms of participation to cause, or issue-based participation — labelled as a 'politics of choice' (Norris, 2003; Dalton, 2008; Marsh et al., 2007; Zukin et al., 2006). In other words, citizens — particularly young citizens — are no longer mobilized in relation to the state, but in relation to causes or issues (Bang, 2005). Furthermore, young people's political thinking and acting is primarily shaped and formed within the 'micro-territories of the local', including home, friendship groups, school and neighbourhood — and not within or by the traditional institutions of the state (Harris & Wyn, 2009). For others, this focus on distinctive spaces created by and/or for young people focuses on their use of information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet (for example, Bennett, 2007; Collin, 2008; Olsson, 2008; Vromen, 2008).

A top-down approach to youth political participation focuses on institutionalized or formal participation processes led by decision-making bodies.

Acknowledged that the needs of policymakers are not always aligned with the needs of participants and recognizes that minimal time and resources, and lack of youth ownership sometimes limit existing participation initiatives. Respondents from both government and community organizations articulated this perspective by focusing on ownership by the individuals who are involved in the participation process

### **5.3. Conclusion**

This study finds evidence that while the Mogadishu youth apply both traditional and traditional forms of political participation, they tend to fuse them with increasing application of online participation. What is clear in the views of the respondents that took part in this research and documents analyzed is that Mogadishu youth are interested, and are engaged in political issues. In these processes there is dominance of donor and local experts who considerably drive the agendas. This elite approach has resulted in exclusion of the marginalized in Mogadishu. Thus institutional and donor preferences constitute key constraints to youth political participation in Mogadishu. Donors, in nuanced ways, stricture space for youth political participation and reinforce structural inequalities. The study concludes that barriers to effective youth participation in Mogadishu are systemic and structural issues at play, rather than the fiat of individual political actors. Current youth participation institutional structures and agendas are chiefly about controlling youth, rather than generating participatory democracy, hence participation policies sustain rather than remove ‘elitism.’

### **5.4. Recommendations**

From the conclusions the study makes the following recommendations aimed at policy makers FGS and donors should reposition their preference for formal institutional participation mechanisms to local and culturally purposeful modes of participation. Governmental and donor bureaucratic mechanisms tend to be unresponsive and unaccountable to youth views. This requires paying attention for the arenas and discourses in which youth are engaged, such as youth-led networks, local, community and interest-based groups and settings, such as the Internet, where youth are voicing their circumstances and perspectives. Therefore rather than stipulating how youth should participate, policies should address how Mogadishu/FGS and donors should respond.

Therefore the future is open to Mogadishu government and donors to respond to viewpoints and experiences of all youth within the policy processes that govern them. By expanding and deepening the growing vibrant e- participation between government and both youth-serving and youth-led community-based organizations will provide the groundwork for both inclusion and recognition

### **5.5. Suggested areas for further research**

First this study addressed youth political participation broadly with specific reference to Mogadishu. It is thus limited in its geographical scope. Hence the study could be expanded to cover the whole of Somalia. Secondly, the study identified USAID as key actor that significantly impacts the direction and effectiveness of youth political participation in Mogadishu. Its role has not been academically interrogated. Therefore this study recommends research on USAID and youth participation in Somalia.



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## APPENDICEIS

### **Appendix 1: Interview Guide**

#### Forms of political participation

1. Are Mogadishu youth involved in institutional politics-electoral politics, party membership?
2. In what other ways do Mogadishu youth participate in politics- online, civic and others?
3. Would you say any of these forms is preferred by the youth?

#### **Barriers to political participation**

1. What are the socio-cultural barriers to youth political participation in Mogadishu?
2. What are the political/institutional barriers to youth political participation in Mogadishu?
3. Donors play an important role in youth policies and programmes in Mogadishu, are there any barriers they create?

#### **Interventions**

1. What interventions has government done to foster youth political participation in Mogadishu?
2. What is the role of donors in promoting youth political participation in Mogadishu?

What are your reflections on Youth political participation in Somalia in general>

## **Appendix 2: Respondents**

LA Interview, female, civil society gender activist

MA Interview, male, official of National Youth Council

NA Interview, male, Clan Leader

OA Interview, female, (former) Member of Parliament

QA Interview, male, an Academic