



An Insight into the Catholic Church's Contribution to Peace Building among the Youth: Case of Shashemene Catholic Parish 04 Kebele, Meki Diocese, Ethiopia

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Abstract: *Peace building is a global issue that the world seeks significantly. In Ethiopia, conflict and violence among the youth have increased than ever before. To achieve peace Shashemene Catholic Parish has a critical role in contributing to peace building among the youth aged 15-24 through different activities. The study's general objective was to examine how the Catholic Church has contributed to peace building among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish, Meki Diocese, Ethiopia. The specific objectives were: (1) To explore the nature and dynamics of the existing conflict among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish. (2) To investigate how Mahiber youth association helps to shape identity among the youth in peace building in Shashemene Catholic Parish. (3) To examine how football activity among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish assists in peace building. (4) To examine how life skills training can help to strengthen peace building among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The researcher used Mixed-Method research design. Data were collected using a questionnaire and interview guide employing simple random and purposive methods. Quantitative data were analyzed by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and qualitative data were analyzed by thematic content narration and direct quotation. The study concluded that Shashemene Catholic Parish activities contributed to youth peace building, and played a significant role. The study recommended that Shashemene Catholic Parish has to work in coordination with Meki Diocese Justice and Peace office and with government officials of Shashemene town to bring peace among the youth.*

Keywords: *Peace building, Youth, Life skill training, Mahiber Youth association, Football, dynamics of conflict*

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1. Introduction

This study was motivated by continuous tension, conflict, and violence among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The study dealt with the activities of the Catholic Church, showing its contribution to peace building among the youth of age from 15-24 years in Meki Diocese, Ethiopia. The global Situation of Peace: According to Ismail (2020), around 408 million youth live globally where conflict and violence occur. About 1 in 4 youth globally was affected by conflict. Around 23% of the

world's population youth live in places where conflict or violence took place (Hagerty, 2017). Such conflicts had destabilized the country, the continent, and the world at large. It also weakened all society's services, like quality education, good health, and basic human needs. Worldwide, there are millions of people displaced from their areas and their homes. These affect the well-being of society, especially children and women, physically and psychologically. As a result conflict and violence, economy will be weakened, and there still be destabilizati of society (Yigzaw & Abitew 2019). In the world, nearly 34,000 people are affected every day because of conflict

or persecution (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee, 2016). In 2018, on average, 37,000 people were affected and displaced every day (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee, 2018). Nearly from 2016 to 2018, the number of victims has increased by 3,000 people per day. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (2018), the number of people affected by conflict and violence continues increasing.

The situation of Peace in Africa: According to Ismail (2020), the numbers of conflict events recorded were 17,105. The majority of conflict was in Somalia, which were 2,718 events that were equivalent to 16% and then followed by Nigeria 1492 conflict events, which was 9%. In South Africa and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the numbers of conflict were 935 and 834 respectively, in percent of 5.5% and 5%. Africa has the most significant social, ethnic, and religious bond. The countries like Rwanda, Nigeria, and Mali have all suffered from conflict identity issues. From African countries, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo were the top three in 2018, mostly affected by conflict and violence (Ismail, 2020). Ethnicity is rooted in Ethiopia because it is a geographical division based on the language and ethnic tribe, and in addition to that, it is because of political conflict. Because of weak governance and the political instability Democratic Republic of Congo, the numbers of conflicts and violence were high throughout the year. In Asia, Syria is always in conflict and people are displaced from their homes and lost properties because of conflict and violence (Yigzaw & Abitew, 2019).

Peace Situation in Ethiopia: When the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia regime took political power in 1992, it introduced the new Ethiopian Geographic map within the country (LeVan et al., 2015). According to the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD), in 2019 and 2020, the numbers of conflicts in Ethiopia were 105 and 136, respectively. The number of death increased from one hundred and nineteen (119) to three hundred and forty-one (341) people in 2019 and 2020 respectively (ACCORD, 2020). In Ethiopia in 2018, the number of people affected by conflict was one hundred and eighty-seven thousand five hundred ninety-two (187,592) people. The following year (2019) showed a massive increase compared with 2018, which was 1,431,682 people. These were happening because of the political instability in the country. Many were displaced from their homes and start to live under the government's protection (Yigzaw & Abitew, 2019). In these five years in Ethiopia, the numbers of conflict, violence, and internal displacement have been increasing extremely than ever before.

The situation of Peace in Shashemene Town: According to the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (2020), in Oromia in 2019, there were 31 events of conflict and 49 death cases. In 2020, this increased to 38 conflict cases and 40 death

incidents (Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation, 2020). This showed that the gap increased from 2019 to 2020 from 31 to 38 conflict cases in the regions. In Shashemene Town in 2020, many innocent women were slaughtered because of ethnic political differences. The youth did this; Schools were burned; hotels and shops were burned where many innocent people lost their property. In the Oromia region in the year 2018, there were around 112,930 people who were affected by conflict, and during 2019, around 674,209 people were affected (Yigzaw & Abitew, 2019).

The cause of conflict among the youth in Ethiopia is unemployment, lack of land (land grabbing), ethnicity, lack of opportunity, and others (Ababe, 2020). The majority of the conflict dynamics in the Shashemene Catholic Parish are among the youth and disturbs the whole community. The researcher has experienced conflict in Shashemene Town that many different ethnic tribes live together, but ethnicity issues are increasing from time to time. Those who are majority dominate and reject the service for minorities. Those who are in the government offices working groups were the majority and dominated minority ethnic groups. The language difference becomes the main issue within the community. Shashemene Catholic Parish contributes to peace building among youth through different activities like football activity, Mahiber youth association shapes the youth identity, life skills training, instead conflict increases in the Parish. This is why the researcher aimed to examine Catholic Church's contribution to peace building among the youth.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Youth unemployment in Ethiopia is high; educated and non-educated youth are highly involved in conflict and violence. According to Yigzaw and Abitew (2019), globally, around 10.8 million youth aged between 15 and 24 years were affected by conflict and violence. In 2019, around 429,504 youth aged between 15 and 24 were affected by conflict and violence (Yigzaw & Abitew, 2019). In the year 2019, in the Oromia region, around 202,262 youth of the age from 15-24 were affected by conflict and violence (Yigzaw & Abitew, 2019). The number of youth who were involved in conflict and violence was the majority in Ethiopia (Abebe, 2020). Hayward (2012), attested that religion plays important role in preventing and solving conflict and building peace in non-violent way in community. However, the Pastoral office of Meki Diocese (2018), in Diocesan Annual Report, around seven conflicts occurred among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish. Hence, the research intended on why conflict and violence among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish still high despite the

profound contribution of the parish in peace building. Shashemene Catholic Parish is carrying out football activities, Mahiber youth association, and life skills training to open up peace building opportunities among youth and transform and curb the youth's mindset. Even though conflict and violence increase among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish more need to be done by the Church. This is why the researcher examined Catholic Church's contribution to peace building among the youth.

1.2 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study is to examine how the Catholic Church contributions to peace building among the youth aged between 15 and 24 in Shashemene Catholic Parish 04 Kebele, Meki Diocese, Ethiopia.

1.3 Specific Objectives of the Study are:

1. To explore the nature and dynamics of the existing conflict among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish.
2. To investigate how Mahiber youth association helps to shape identity among the youth in peace building in Shashemene Catholic Parish.
3. To examine how football activity among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish assists in peace building.
4. To examine how life skills training can help to strengthen peace building among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by two theories namely, Karl Marx Conflict Theory and Johan Galtung Peace Theory. Karl Marx's was German philosopher and founded Conflict Theory in the year 1848. Karl Marx Conflict Theory says "Due to society's never ending competition for finite resources it will always be in a state of conflict" (Nomarwayi et al., 2020, p.3). Karl Marx's Conflict Theory emerged because of social class struggle between rich and poor. Those in possession of wealth (rich) are constantly protecting, and gathering resources while the poor will be struggling to obtain finite resources. The economic, social, and political implications of the rise of capitalism in Europe, the powerful minority class (the Bourgeoisie), and the oppressed majority class (the proletariat) created class conflict because of finite resource interest (Nomarwayi et al., 2020). Karl Marx's Conflict Theory in relation to this study implies that in Shashemene Catholic Parish those who do not have opportunity for job, they do whatever they can to get benefits from the Shashemene Catholic Parish. There were constant struggle and competition among the youth of

Shashemene Catholic Parish when opportunities were offered for limited number of youth. Although this study could have been grounded in Karl Marx Conflict Theory, the theory could not explain the problem positively and this is why the study grounded in Johan Galtung Peace Theory. Johan Galtung Peace Theory: Johan Galtung is a Norwegian (Norway) sociologist and founder of peace and conflict studies. He founded Peace Theory in 1969. Johan Galtung's Peace Theory says that "Negative peace is absence of war and Positive peace is achieving the absence of structural and cultural violence" (Galtung, 1996, p.14). Structural and cultural violence according to Johan Galtung illustrates how human rights are violated through unfair distribution of opportunities (injustice), power and wealth. Thus, structural and cultural violence are invisible and ending up in direct violence, threats and trauma among the youth and in community at large. For Johan Galtung structural violence focuses on social, cultural and economic institutions that result into denying people, the right opportunity, right to economic, social and political equality (Tilahun, 2015). The Shashemene Catholic Parish has different activities which assist for peace building among the youth, instead of conflict and violence. Therefore, the research was guided by Johan Galtung Peace Theory.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Nature and Dynamics of the existing Conflict among the Youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish

Conflict affects the entire community of the region or state. It is essential to admit that everyone is affected directly or indirectly by conflict (Meadam & Abouya, 2017). It is the process of understanding conflict based on the history of conflict, what its root causes, and how it started. In Guinea, Conakry the research done by Medam and Abouya (2017), on conflict analysis, showed that ethnic affiliation is found as the root of all the preoccupations and the identity issues of the people of Guinea. According to Medam and Abouya (2017), land for settlements is becoming extremely difficult to find for the growing population. The research carried out by Medam and Abouya 2017, on conflict analysis showed that the youth which forms 50.7% of the population was both victim and first principle actor of conflict in Guinea.

In Gonder University, a research done by Alemie and Mandefro (2018), on conflict analysis in North West of Ethiopia, on the conflict between the tribes of Amhara and Gumuz, showed that the cause of conflict is unemployment and the youth were the principal actors, and this led to ethnic conflict (Alemie & Mandefro, 2018). In Ethiopia, Oromia region, the research which was done by Ababe on the lost futures, finding showed that the cause of the conflict was land grabbing by government, local and

international investors; at the same time, the majority actors of the conflict were youth (Ababe, 2020).

2.2 Mahiber Youth Association in Shaping Identity among the Youth for Peace Building in Shashemene Catholic Parish

Mahiber youth association is voluntary. Indigenous associations are many and differ from cultural, religious and socio-economic context. Mahiber is a religious association which provides members spiritual support and enable them to develop social interactions among the members (Asfaw & Mekonen, 2015). In Ethiopia, the research which was done by Asfaw and Mekonen in Debre Markos Town on Mahiber youth association, the findings showed that Mahiber youth association in assisting to shape the youth identity crises, contributes to community to open the door for positive thinking and living life regardless of tribe, sex and religious differences (Asfaw & Mekonen, 2015).

In Wolaita Sodo Town, the research which was done by Sudhakar on Mahiber youth association the findings showed that, Mahiber youth association inspires members and improves behaviors among the youth (Sudhakar, 2019). Overall, Mahiber youth association assists to shape youth identity among association to develops the youth to be active in spiritual, intellectual, emotional abilities in holistic character of the youth for peaceful society. It also helps promotion of human dignity. The association helps to make the youth peace ambassadors and peace makers in the Shashemene Catholic Parish and in the area where they live, but this has not solved conflicts.

2.3 Football Activity among the Youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish in Peace Building

Football is recognized as modern low-cost and high impact tool in community, bringing the spirit of unity and peace (Gilbert & Bennet, 2012). In the higher and lower economic community it is also possible to organize different football activities for the relationship and the community coordination among the youth and different ages of boys and girls in the society. In the history of the world, in 1914 at time of World War I on Christmas day, Germany and British soldiers played football and agreed not to fight. It was in western part of France the German were fighting both British and French, it was not official cease fire. The place is called No man's Land they /German and British soldiers/ exchanged Christmas gift. The truce (agreement) was soon over because the generals and commanders in charge were angry; the agreements of soldiers were without recognition of the generals and commanders of war (Crocker, 2016). In the mid night of

Christmas day, a flame was off to show that the truce was over and soldiers to start fighting again.

In South Africa a study done by Daniel and Sellstrom (2010), on football activity, the finding showed, that football is a way of rebuilding or reconciling the community together. To mitigate the problem of apartheid in South Africa, football was the key activity to bring the youth together.

In Cairo (Egypt), Ain Shams University, research done by Mostafa on football activity, showed that football promotes peace, unity and understanding to the youth and the society (Mostafa, 2018). Football activities bring relationship beyond social, economic and cultural diversity in society, this is because talents or skills developed make the relationship among the team stronger. The research which was done in Thailand, by Ian Macdonald on football activities showed that, football activates are repetitive in nature, as a results, youth feel a sense of belonging and start to forget the harm which was done by the enemies (Ian Macdonald, 2015). Football activities heal war-related traumas and promotes victims to guarantee a sense of security.

2.4 Life Skills Training in Strengthening Peace Building among the Youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish

When the youth acquired life skills training, they develop knowledge and ability to solve problems which assists them to strengthen peace building. Life skills training is the ability for adaptive and positive behavior that helps the young people to deal effectively in every day challenges and problems (Prajapati et al., 2017). Life skills training helps and promotes mental well-being of the young people. Life skills training addresses not only knowledge and attitude change but more significantly behavioral change (Prajapati et al., 2017). Further, the youth life skills training assists to acquiring ability to minimize the risks and adopt healthy behavior that improves the lives of the young generation to form positive relationship. A study done by Prajapati of Fiji National University, on life skills training, showed that life skills training for the young people, provides opportunities to learn and in solving problem and building peace among the youth was effective (Prajapati et al., 2017). In Ethiopia the research which was done by Toro in Addis Ababa University on life skills training, showed that the young people who have trained in life skills were effective in living in society, and developed social skills, compared to those who do not practice life skills training (Toro, 2018).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A research design is a plan which helps to find the answer to research problems as accurately and economically as possible (Kombo and Tromp, 2016). The study adopted mixed-method research approach. The study was conducted in Shashemene Catholic Parish, Meki Diocese, Ethiopia.

3.2 Study Population and Sampling

A target population is a total group of individuals from which the sample might be taken, and the target population share some attributes in common among the members (Asiamah et al., 2017). The total population of Shashemene Catholic Parish. According to the Pastoral Office of Meki Diocese annual report (2018), the number of Christians was 2700. Sampling is the process of selecting the part of the population for study (Taherdoost, 2016). The researcher was used Slovin’s formula to calculate (found) sample size (Rono, 2018). Therefore, the sample size of the study was 342 and non-probability purposive sampling and probability random sampling methods was implemented.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

The validity of instruments measures what is intended to measure in the context (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Data collection tools were checked to ensure that they are free from error. A pilot test was done to different group from

Shashemene Catholic Parish members who assisted the researcher to correct instruments.

3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher used convergent mixed method approach. The data were analyzed in quantitative and qualitative ways. Quantitative data was analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 25), and the qualitative data was analyzed by thematic content analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The Response Rate

The sample size of the research was 348 participants. Of these, 342 respondents filled the research questionnaire and returned it. The rate of response was 98%, which was a very good response rate, 70.4% of the respondents were aged between 14-24 years old, while 22.5% of respondents were between 25-35 years old, 5.8% of the respondents were 36-49 years old, and 1.1% were above 50 years. On education level of respondents, 48.2% of respondents had finished technical school and 20.4% of respondents had finished secondary school. Those who finished primary school and university were 15.5% and 15.7%, respectively.

4.2 Nature and Dynamics of the Existing Conflict among the Youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish

Table 1: Dynamics of Conflict

Do you think there is any dynamics of conflict among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish?	Percent
Yes	75.4%
No	24.6%
Total	100.0%

Data in the Table 1 showed that 75.4% of the respondents said there was a dynamics of conflict among the youth, but 24.6% of respondents said no dynamics of conflict in Shashemene Catholic Parish. Most of the respondents agreed that the kinds of dynamics of conflict were from individual conflict to group conflict. Individual conflict is manageable and solvable compared to group fights, but individual conflicts have a high potency to become a group conflict among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish. The other dynamics were from group fights to ethnic conflict. Basically, the conflict starts at an

individual level, then changes to group conflict, and then it changes into ethnic conflict.

The study findings showed that conflict dynamics were high which changed from individual to ethnic conflict. At the same time, it changed from individual to community conflict. Most of the time, the youth conflict has a high dynamic. It changed from a youth conflict to a tribal conflict in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The parish contains many different ethnic tribes because Shashemene town is located at the high way junction to Addis Ababa,

Awassa, Bale, and Arabamich cities. The other dynamics were that youth conflict leads to a family crisis.

Table 2: Willingness to speak any language

Are the youth willing to speak any language different from their mother tongue in Shashemene Catholic Parish?	Percent
Yes	55.6%
No	44.4%
Total	100.0%

Data Table 2 above showed that 55.6% of the youth were willing to speak different language from their mother tongue in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The rest, 44.4% responded that the youth were not willing to speak other languages rather than their mother tongue. The youth were influenced by hate speech of activists, and politicians. As a consequence, they were not willing to speak different language from their mother tongue.

4.3 Mahiber youth Association helps in Shaping Identity among the youth for Peace Building in Shashemene Catholic Parish

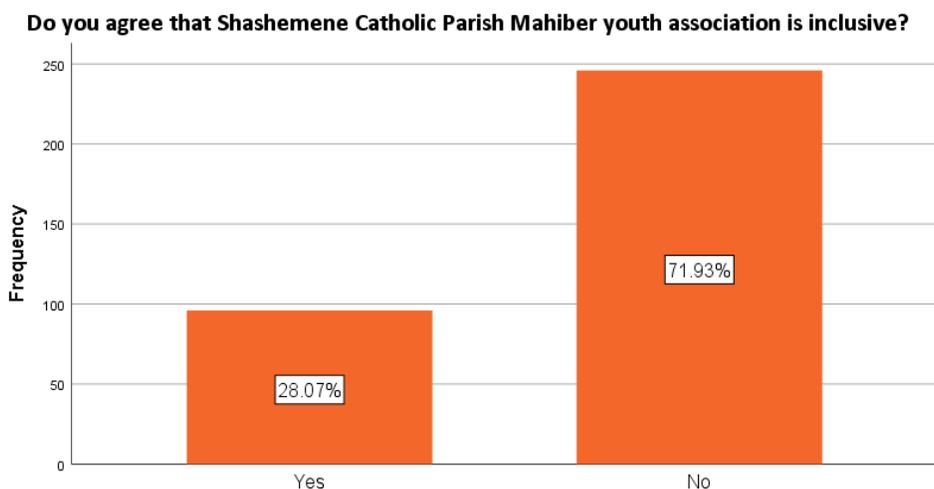


Figure 1: Inclusiveness of Mahiber Youth Association

This section found out the inclusiveness of the Shashemene Catholic Parish Mahiber youth association. The study result showed 71.9% of the respondents said the Mahiber youth association was not inclusive. The identified reasons were: first, the majority of the respondents indicated that Mahiber youth association was not open to everybody. This led the Mahiber not to

increases in numbers in Shashemene Catholic Parish. Secondly, the Mahiber youth association was not welcoming the new members. This is an indigenous association, but those who were members must open the door for others, because 71.9% of respondents said it was not inclusive. The data showed that 28% of respondents agreed that the Mahiber youth association was inclusive.

Do you think Mahiber youth association members of Shashemene Catholic Parish live peacefully?

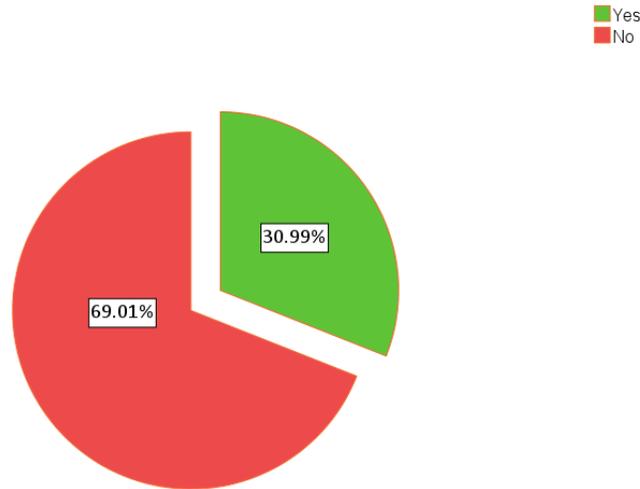


Figure 2: Mahiber youth association peacefulness

The finding in Figure 2 showed 69% of the respondents agreed that Mahiber was not living peacefully. The above data showed various factors that contributed to the unpeaceful environment in Shashemene Catholic Parish Mahiber youth association. The majority of the respondents indicated the miscommunication gap was the main one. Communication makes relationships smooth among the community and society. Communication from the youth association leaders and the parish priest has to flow in a clear way. Communication is a tool to pass messages and help the youth understand each other. The findings showed respondents mentioned lack of well-trained Mahiber youth association leaders. In the Mahiber youth association, when the coordinators of Mahiber

speaks about their own interests only. As a consequence, this leads to group division. The lack of well-organized meetings for the Mahiber youth association leads to conflict, disagreements, and quarrels among them. However, 30.9% of the respondents agreed that the Mahiber youth association lives peacefully in Shashemene Catholic Parish.

4.4 Football activities in Shashemene Catholic Parish and Peace Building among the youth

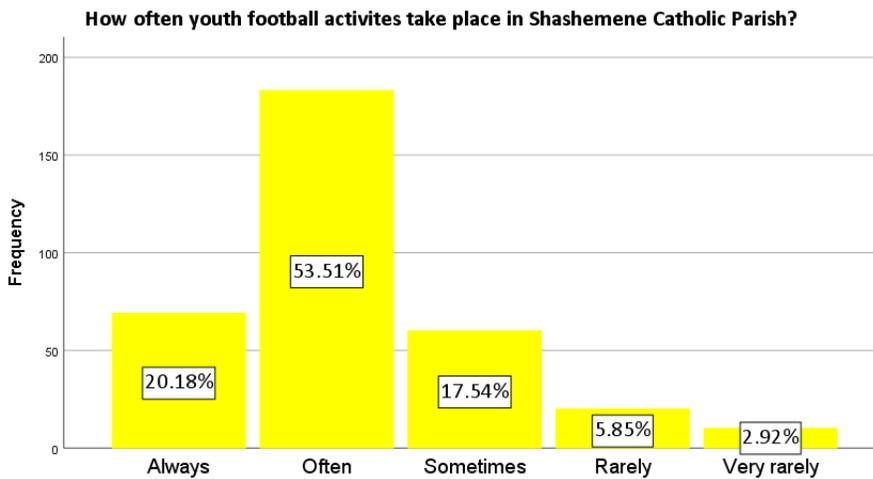


Figure 3: How often football takes place

The data on Figure 3 showed that 53.5% indicated that football activities take place in Shashemene Catholic Parish often. 20.1% of respondents said always, and 17.5% of respondents said sometimes, and only 5.8% and 2.9% indicated that football activities take place in the parish rarely and very rarely, respectively. This finding

clearly demonstrated that football activities often take place in Shashemene Catholic Parish. Having established the frequency of the use of football activities in Shashemene Catholic Parish youth, the study furthermore sought to establish how to build peace.

Table 3: Repeated football activities

In your view, repeated football activities help the youth to forgive each other in Shashemene Catholic Parish?	Percent
Yes	73.1%
No	26.9%
Total	100.0

Data in Table 3 showed that 73.1% of the respondents agreed that repeated football activities help in forgiving each other, frequent contact leads to forgiving each other. Having repeated football activities gives a sense of belonging and communion assists in forgetting the harm done to him/her. Therefore, togetherness is a step towards

peace building. Repeatedly, football activities help to have essential communication between football members, hence, creating peace among the youth and the rest of the society. However, in the finding, 26.9% of the respondents did not agree that repeated football activities assist youth to forgive each other.

Do you think the community support youth football activities in Shashemene Catholic Parish among the youth?

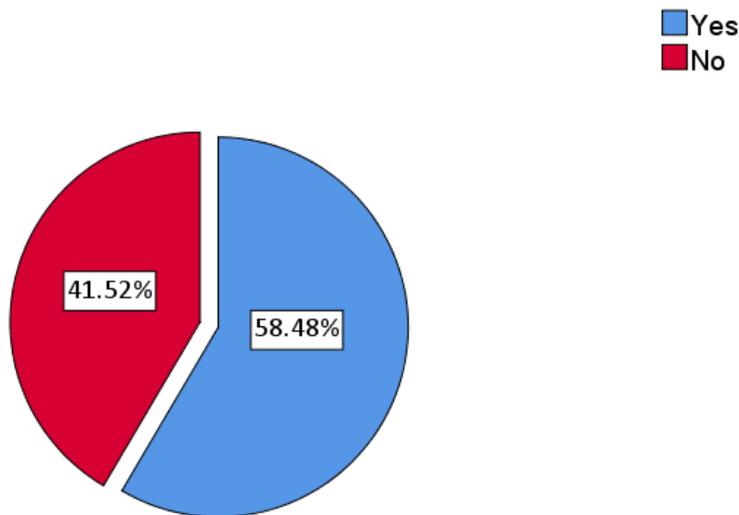


Figure 4: Community supports football

The data in Figure 4 showed that 58.4% of respondents indicated that communities support youth football activities in the parish. Hence, 41.5% responded that the communities did not support the football activities. Football activities keep the youth from bad habits like

drugs, addiction, and alcoholism. The community sends their young people to the sports areas to support the football activities of the parish. The community insists on the parish leader's follow up, not the youth to be involved in the conflict and violence. In addition to that, the

community supports football activities by being a fan of them. Therefore, the youth needs sports equipment, like balls and T-shirt uniforms.

4.5 Life Skills Training can help to Strengthen Peace Building among the Youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish

Table 4: Life skills strengthen peace building

Do you think life skills training in Shashemene Catholic Parish strengthen peace building among the youth?	Percent
Yes	71.3%
No	28.7%
Total	100.0

The finding of the data on the Table 4 showed that 71.3% of the respondents were indicated that the life skills training in Shashemene Catholic Parish strengthens peace building among the youth. Furthermore, life skills shape youth behaviors in the parish. Life skill training opens the youth’s mind, and the youth acquire different talents, like decision-making skills. The findings showed that only 28.7% responded that life skills will not strengthen peace building in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The respondents gave the following reason; the youth participate in life skills training of the parish because they get an allowance (money) for participation. Therefore, instead of getting life skills, the youth focused on money.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study’s first objective was to explore the nature and dynamics of the existing conflict among the youth of Shashemene Catholic parish. The 69.8% of the respondents indicated the existence of conflict among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The root causes of this conflict were a lack of job opportunities, unemployment, and a lack of settlement land. These conflicts among the youth have a dynamic character in nature. The study findings showed individual conflict has changed to group conflict. Group conflict has dynamics of ethnic conflict among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish.

Second objective of the study was to investigate the Mahiber youth association and how it helps in shaping the identity of youth for peace building in Shashemene Catholic Parish. The results indicated that 71.9% of respondents said the Mahiber youth association was not inclusive, it was not open door or well-coming to the other youth groups. Nevertheless, the church has played a great role in formulating the Mahiber youth association for the parish youth for their integral development.

The findings showed that the services that the Mahiber youth association gives is still high. There is significant limitation between the parish priest and the chairperson of the Mahiber youth association. The study showed that 63.1% of respondents indicated the parish priest and the chairperson of the Mahiber youth association did not work together. Therefore, when the chairperson reflects his own

opinion, it would end up with a poor performance of Mahiber. The Shashemene Catholic parish Mahiber youth association is led by the chairperson of the Mahiber. A lack of togetherness with the parish priest limited the progress of the Mahiber youth association.

The third objective of the study was to examine how football activities among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish assist in peace building. Over 66.7% of the respondents expressed football help to build peace in Shashemene Catholic parish.

The study showed that football increases smooth relationships and unity among parish youth. Furthermore, football activities keep away the youth from drugs and different addictions. It creates an atmosphere of tolerance among themselves. The data showed 53.5% of the youth football activities took place often in Shashemene Catholic Parish. Therefore, 73.1% of respondents indicated that repeated football activities significantly promote youth forgiveness. The community supports football activities mainly, because football keeps the youth from involving in bad habits. Therefore, the community sends their young people to parish football activities. The respondents indicated that group disagreement and conflict can be managed by good follow up by the parish priest and youth leader, and football coordinator teamwork.

The fourth objective of the study was to examine how life skills training can help to strengthen peace building among the youth in Shashemene Catholic Parish. Data showed 71.3% of the respondents said life skills training as strengthening peace building among the youth of Shashemene Catholic Parish. In addition, the study

revealed that 79.5% of respondents indicated that the youth were interested in life skills training. The respondents mentioned that life skills training is key for the attitude change of youth. It increases the ability of dialogue to learn how to solve the conflict and violence among the youth. Life skills training is a pathways to strengthening peace building. Furthermore, life skills training drives the youth out tribal differences.

5.2 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Shashemene Catholic Parish work with the Meki Diocesan Justice and Peace office to minimize conflicts and violence among the youth. This would help

to build long-term peace and sustainable relationships among the youth.

2. That the Shashemene Catholic Parish work together with local and international NGOs, with government official leaders of the Shashemene town for the unity of youth.

3. That there is a need for the Shashemene Catholic Parish to revisit the activities among the youth. The researcher would propose that the parish leaders must provide ongoing training regularly for youth leaders.

4. That the parish work together with the Gada culture (traditional Oromo Culture of peace building) of peace building. When the parish involves the respected Gada cultural leaders, it might contribute a lot to peace building among the youth.

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