



## Research Article

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## The Aspiration of the Multi-Party-Political System (Pluralism) on Peace-Building: The Case of Somalia

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**Abstract:** The multi-party-political system has become a vital framework for promoting peace, democracy, accountability, and transparency globally. This study aimed to evaluate the aspirations of the multi-party-political system (pluralism) in fostering peace in Somalia. It employed a descriptive cross-sectional design, using a qualitative questionnaire to assess the system's role in peacebuilding. Conducted over four months, the study collected primary data from political party leaders, academicians, civil society members, and elders. The findings revealed that demographic factors such as age, sex, marital status, and living conditions have no significant impact on perceptions of the multi-party system's influence on peacebuilding. However, the system demonstrates a strong capacity to promote peace, democracy, transparency, and good governance. It plays a significant role in enhancing peace, stability, governance, and democratization in Somalia. This study underscores the multi-party-political system's essential contributions to advancing peacebuilding, democracy, accountability, and good governance. It highlights its potential to improve peace, stability, democratic processes, transparency, and the conduct of free and fair elections in Somalia.

**Keywords:** Multi-party-political system, Democracy, Peace Building, Stability

## INTRODUCTION

The term "multi-party-political system" refers to a political framework where multiple political parties across the ideological spectrum compete in national elections with the vision and capability to gain governmental offices (Gardbaum, 2017). In many cases, these parties either form coalition groups or remain independent. In the contemporary world, most multi-party systems see several major and minor political parties having a realistic chance of holding office (Garry, 2014; Weller & Young, 2020). A multi-party-political system is characterized by the existence of multiple political parties within a country, each having the potential to lead the government (Karpat, 2015). Typically, in a multi-party system, no single party holds a majority of the seats (Freier & Odendahl, 2015). As a result, coalition-building and bargaining between parties become essential, often shaped by the particular set of critical coalitions formed during political campaigns (Khrennikova, 2016).

To understand the role of the multi-party-political system in peacebuilding in Somalia (Ahmed & Özoral, 2020), it is important to have some background on Somalia itself (Farah, 2017). The Somali Republic was established in 1960 through the union of the British Somaliland Protectorate and Italian Somaliland (Farkah & Kampala, 2021). Somalia's political troubles began in 1969 when a group of far-left military officers from the Supreme Revolutionary Council successfully carried out a coup (Khayre, 2016), overthrowing the democratic

government. This event marked the beginning of military rule in a country that was one of the first democratic nations in Africa (Markakis, 2021).

Somalia, located in the Horn of Africa, has faced and is recovering from a civil war caused by rebel movements (Markakis, 2021) and clan clashes in 1991 (Atalay, 2019). The peacebuilding process in Somalia has involved a range of experiences, actors, and interventions (Rokhideh, 2017). While reconciliation efforts have succeeded in some parts of the country, particularly in the Puntland and Somaliland regions (Ingiriis, 2021), challenges persist in other areas. Nonetheless, these efforts have laid the foundation for the nation's recovery in various aspects.

Political parties can play a significant role in nation-building in countries like Somalia, which have struggled with conflict but are now on the path to recovery (Nur *et al.*, 2017). These parties can act as crucial brokers in conflict-related issues (Salmon, 2020), mediate bargaining processes concerning political resolutions, and shape the post-conflict state (Zenelaj *et al.*, 2015). However, in practice, political parties always play such a positive role. In some contexts, they may even hinder peace efforts (Caplan, 2019). This challenge arises from both the broader political and institutional context (Lodato & DiSalvo, 2018) and the internal weaknesses of the parties themselves (Castillejo, 2016). This study is to explore the aspiration of the multi-party-political system or pluralism, in peace-building efforts in Somalia. This research examines how political parties

contribute to or hinder the peace-building process in a post-conflict setting, focusing on Somalia as a case study.

## METHODS

### Study Design & Setting

This research was designed as a descriptive cross-sectional study using a quantitative questionnaire. Primary data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire administered to specifically selected respondents. The main objective of this study was to assess the perspectives of political party leaders, academicians, civil society members, government officials, youth representatives, women’s group leaders, business community members, and other key stakeholders.

### Study Period and Population

The study was conducted from the beginning of November 2019 to January 2020. The study population was categorized into four groups: political party leaders, elders, civil society members, and academicians from various higher education institutions.

### Sample Size Estimation

The sample size for this study was determined to be 70 respondents. The researcher used Slovin's Formula, where  $n = \frac{N}{1 + (N \times e^2)}$ , with  $n$  representing the sample size,  $N$  the population size, and  $e$  the margin of error (5%). Substituting the values,  $(N = 85)$ , the calculation is  $n = \frac{85}{1 + (85 \times 0.0025)}$ , resulting in a sample size of 70. This sample was distributed across the four different groups to ensure an effective sampling technique.

**Table of The Respondent Categorization**

The respondent categorization	Group identification	Number of the respondent
Political party members	Politician experienced	25
Elders	Traditional mediation experienced	15
Civil societies	Bureaucratic experienced	20
Academicians	Knowledge experienced	10

### Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed stratified sampling to select respondents for this study. In stratified sampling, the population is divided into distinct groups (strata) based on relevant characteristics. Each group is then randomly sampled. This method ensures that specific subgroups are adequately represented within the sample, allowing for greater precision and accuracy in analyzing subgroups. Stratified sampling is a probability sampling technique where the population is divided into subgroups or strata based on certain characteristics relevant to the research question. The aim is to ensure that each stratum is represented in the final sample. This approach is advantageous for increasing precision, improving representativeness, enabling comparative analysis, enhancing cost-efficiency, and minimizing sampling bias.

### Data Collection Method:

Primary data was collected directly from 70 respondents across all four categories of the population. A structured questionnaire was used as the research tool to gather data from the targeted respondents in these areas.

### Quality Control of the Study

To ensure the quality of this study, several measures were implemented to confirm that data collection was complete, reliable, neat, and accurate. These measures contributed to both the internal and external validity of the study. The questions in the questionnaire were explained verbally in the local Somali language by a researcher fluent in the language, ensuring that respondents fully understood the content. Additionally, the competence and accuracy of the completed data collection forms were checked at the end of each day during the data collection process.

### Ethical Considerations

Before data collection began, the researcher obtained permission from the supervisor of the Department of Public Administration at Stamford University Bangladesh. Respondents were provided with adequate information about the purpose of the study, the procedures that would be followed, the benefits of contributing to the research, and how the results would be used. This process was designed to ensure the credibility of the research and respect for the participants' rights.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The data was analyzed using SPSS software, version 16. The data was thoroughly cleaned and checked to ensure accuracy and completeness before processing. The results were then organized into an open spreadsheet to produce high-quality tables with a focus on descriptive statistics.

## RESULTS

According to the findings of this study, 65.7% of the respondents were male, while the remaining 34.3% were female. Additionally, 64.3% of respondents were between the ages of 15 and 30, 22.9% were between 30 and 50, and 12.9% were between 50 and 65. These results indicate that more than three-tenths of the respondents were teenagers. Regarding marital status, nearly two-

thirds (64.3%) of the respondents were single, while the remaining 35.7% were married. Lastly, the respondents in this study were categorized into four groups: political party leaders, elders, members of civil society, and academicians.

**Tables of the study**

**Table 1:** The Distribution of The Respondents According to Socio-Demographic Characteristics (N=70)

Socio-demographic	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	46	65.7
Female	24	34.3
<b>Age</b>		
15 – 30	45	64.3
30 – 50	16	22.9
50 – 65 Above	9	12.9
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	39	55.7
Married	31	44.3
<b>Level of Education</b>		
Secondary	6	8.6
Diploma	3	4.3
Bachelors	13	18.6
Masters	48	68.6
<b>Occupation</b>		
Political party members	6	8.6
Elders	9	12.9
Civil societies	30	42.9
Academicians	25	35.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>

According to the findings of this study, just over half (51.4%) agreed, while slightly under four-tenths (38.6%) strongly agreed that the "multi-party-political system in Somalia contributes to strong peacebuilding and good governance." One-tenth (10.0%) disagreed. Additionally, slightly under half (48.6%) agreed, while nearly four-tenths (38.6%) strongly agreed, that "multi-party-political systems support freedom of speech, accountability among the people, and good governance as well." Just over one-tenth (11.4%) disagreed, and the smallest proportion (1.4%) strongly disagreed. Also, slightly more than three-tenths (31.4%) strongly agreed, while just under four-tenths (38.6%) agreed that "political party leaders play a role in mediating within Somali society to resolve issues remaining from the civil war." Meanwhile, just over one-fifth (24.5%) disagreed, and finally, a small portion (5.7%) strongly disagreed (Table 2).

**Table 2:** The Assessing the Correlation Between the Dependent Variable and The Independent Variable

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Multi-party-political systems contribute to effective peace-building and good governance.		
Strong Agree	27	38.6
Agree	36	51.4
Disagree	7	10.0

Multi-party-political systems support freedom of speech, accountability among the people, and good governance.

Strong Agree	27	38.6
Agree	34	48.6
Disagree	8	11.4
Strong Disagree	1	1.4

Political party leaders play a mediating role in Somali society to address the lingering issues caused by the civil war

Strong Agree	22	31.4
Agree	27	38.6
Disagree	17	24.3
Strong Disagree	4	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the findings of this study, nearly four-tenths (38.6%) strongly agreed that the "multi-party-political system helps to eradicate tribalism in Somali society, one of the main causes of Somalia's 1991 civil war, although other causes also existed." Additionally, slightly more than three-tenths (34.3%) agreed, while about one-quarter (24.3%) disagreed. Furthermore, slightly more than six-tenths (61.4%) agreed that "the multi-party-political system prevents any single party from dominating the legislative chamber without opposition." A small minority (1.4%) strongly disagreed, while more than four-tenths (45.7%) agreed that "the primary role of the multi-party-political system is to promote peace in Somalia through transparency and strong democracy." Just over four-tenths (42.9%) strongly agreed, and finally, less than one-tenth (11.4%) disagreed (Table 3).

**Table 3:** The Analysis of The Degree of The Respondents Who Agreed the Multi-Parties Can Strengthen the Peace-Building in Somalia.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
A multi-party-political system helps eradicate tribalism in Somali society.		
Strong Agree	27	38.6
Agree	24	34.3
Disagree	17	24.3
Strong Disagree	2	2.9

A multi-party-political system prevents a single party from dominating a legislative chamber without challenge.

Strong Agree	13	18.6
Agree	43	61.4
Disagree	13	18.6
Strong Disagree	1	1.4

The role of the multi-party-political system in transforming Somalia into a peaceful nation through transparency and strong democracy.

Strong Agree	30	42.9
Agree	32	45.7
Disagree	8	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

## DISCUSSION

In essence, the main findings of this study indicate that a multi-party-political system can play a significant role in peace-building in Somalia. According to the results, just over half (51.4%) agreed that multi-party-political systems contribute strongly to peace-building in Somalia. Additionally, nearly half (48.6%) agreed that multi-party-political systems support freedom of speech and accountability among the people (Mulatu, 2023). Furthermore, about four-tenths (38.4%) agreed that political party leaders play an effective role in mediating within Somali society, with other respondents acknowledging this as well (Ogwari, 2015). The multi-party-political system has also been generally regarded as the most reliable framework for peace-building and state-building in Sierra Leone (Dowuona, 2020). Similarly, it promotes accountability, good governance, and freedom of speech in Burundi (Ndikumana, 2023).

This study found that slightly more than six-tenths (38.6%) of respondents strongly agreed that a multi-party-political system could help eradicate tribalism in Somali society. Additionally, 61.4% agreed that a multi-party system prevents the dominance of a single party from controlling the legislative chamber unchallenged in Somalia (Farah, 2017). Similarly, the transition to a multi-party-political system in Turkey began in 1945, leading to the formation of a government that was more accountable to society (Ünal, 2024). Likewise, multi-party systems have played a key role in facilitating financial reforms in dominant competitive party systems (Lee-Jones, 2022). Opposition parties remain essential, despite challenges in dominant-party systems, in supporting democratic functions such as legitimizing, encouraging electoral participation, and ensuring accountability in countries like Botswana and South Africa (Parkin, 2022).

Finally, more than four-tenths (45.7%) of respondents agreed that the primary role of a multi-party-political system is to promote peace in Somalia through transparency and a robust democracy (Assair, 2024). Other authors support this view as well. Multi-party electoral processes, which include as many contesting parties and interests as possible, have long been recognized as crucial building blocks for peace and a smooth transition in Somalia (Mathonsi & Tshishonga, 2024). The democratization of Somalia's political institutions is essential for the country's long-term stability, peace, and prosperity (Ahmed A., 2024). Furthermore, the Somali Constitution mandates a transition to a multi-party system and a one-person, one-vote electoral process (Aawed M., October 16, 2024). Finally, a strong democracy requires a multi-party-political system as a key factor in shaping ideas on governance and development, particularly in the concept of democratic governance (Cheema, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the multi-party-political system plays a crucial role in fostering peace, democracy, and good governance in Somalia. It strengthens freedom of speech, societal representation, and reconciliation among the Somali people. According to the study's findings, the majority agree that the multi-party system significantly contributes to peacebuilding, governance, transparency, accountability, and the reduction of tribalism in Somali society. Furthermore, the multi-party system has promoted political discourse on key national issues, prevented single-party dominance, ensured free and fair democratic elections, and supported the establishment of legitimate governance. Although Somalia still faces challenges in democratization, a strong commitment to the multi-party system is essential for achieving lasting peace and stability in the country.

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