

The Role of Traditional Leaders in Conflict Resolution among the Tribes of Koh-e-Suleman

Shahid Nadeem, Farhan Ahmad Faiz

School of Sociology, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan

Abstract: This study examined the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution within the Baluch tribes of Koh-e-Suleman, with a particular focus on their perceived effectiveness in promoting justice and maintaining social order. A total of 384 respondents were surveyed, and the results indicate strong community support for the Tumandari system. Specifically, 67.39% of respondents strongly believed that traditional leaders are effective in promoting justice for all, while **50%** perceived the system as moderately effective in maintaining social order.

The study also compares the effectiveness of the Tumandari system with formal state courts. The findings reveal a significant lack of trust in the state judiciary, with 75.31% of respondents rating state courts as ineffective or very ineffective in conflict resolution. In contrast, traditional leaders were overwhelmingly viewed as more effective and trusted, highlighting the gap between formal legal institutions and community-based governance.

The study concludes that traditional leaders enjoy higher levels of trust and perceived effectiveness compared to government courts. Based on these findings, the study recommends that the government should invest in training local leaders and reforming state courts to foster greater public confidence in formal legal institutions. Future research should consider employing a mixed-methods approach to further explore the dynamics of traditional leadership and its integration with modern legal systems.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Traditional Leadership, Government Courts, Tumandari Sytem, Koh-E-Suleman

Email: shahid.32313001@soc.qau.edu.pk

1. Background of Conflict and Traditional Leadership

Conflict is an unescapable share of human civilization in its numerous practices, and its resolution remains an essential concern for maintaining social stability and consistency. In rural and urban settings, communities face various challenges, ranging from family, tribal, ethnic, and land conflict and political strife. Modern institutions, like police, courts, and international organizations, are essential, but the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution cannot be ignored. These leaders include tribal chiefs, elders, and other influential figures who have historically played an essential role in conflict management. Their role remains influential in the stability of society. This method is deeply embedded in native customs and cultural practices. This method of conflict resolution is still relevant to contemporary societies, particularly in third-world countries where formal institutions are very weak.

Traditional leadership is profoundly entangled with the cultural and social fabrics of societies, mainly in Africa, Asia, and indigenous communities globally. In such societies, traditional leaders are not only political figures but are custodians of cultural practices, religion, and justice. Their power is derived from ancestral traditions, and their authority is based on the trust of their communities. Traditional leaders are mediators, arbitrators, and peace-making figures. This method of conflict resolution is informal based on collective consensus-building, negotiation, and reconciliation. The formal justice system in underdeveloped countries is rigid, corrupt, and non-functional, but the traditional method is effective fast and focuses on social agreements rather than punishments.

The conventional justice system has been in existence since centuries in various cultures. It was community-oriented with the elder in the community taking the center stage when it comes to disputes. The doctrines of this system mainly focused on restoring the relationship, as compared to punishing. It was very crucial in enhancing social cohesion and reconciliation amongst the groups. The traditional system of justice is based on cultural norms and values and so it represents the general ethos of the communities. The scholar suggests the assimilation of the traditional justice system into the contemporary system of formal laws. The former is more focused on restorative justice whereas the latter is mostly characterized by a retributive approach. The conventional justice system is of special importance in conflict management, particularly where institutionalized bodies are weak (Koulen, 2009) [1].

Tribal societies follow the conventional systems of resolving conflict, government, and preservation of power. Politics, law and ritual in such societies are closely dependent. The rituals tend to be the basis of the tribal politics and they provide legitimacy to the political power. In the conventional communities, rituals are important in conflict resolution and decision making. The elders usually hold power and authority and mediate the conflicts, support the social order, and make the political decisions (Gluckman, 2017) [2].

Iwuh (2020) [3] claims that modern conflict resolution mechanisms can help in resolving conflicts but most individuals still use traditional mechanisms. The degree of confidence in the traditional modes of conflict management is great. In other instances, contemporary ways can be a cause of conflicts, not its solution, and in most cases, it will result in more enmity and competition within the societies.

The importance of traditional leadership is evident in post-colonial societies where the modern court system is weak in maintaining social harmony in marginalized communities. In these situations, traditional leaders provide not merely an ethical compass but serve as a source of stability in society. They represent their culture and have the legitimacy to guide the individual in all matters. This justice system is based on trust and is reflected as a keystone of dispute management.

1.1 Historical Background of Traditional Leadership and Conflict Resolution

In 1857, the colonial government was established in India. Prior to this, the British had defeated the Sikhs in 1849 and annexed Punjab. Their desire to extend their rule made them move towards the Indus River in 1839. In 1854, after they entered Baluchistan, they were faced by resistance of the Baluch tribes. In their policy of advancement, the colonial administration sought to discredit tribal leaders through giving them privileges that were bestowed on tribal heads. Constant opposition did, however, make the British negotiate with tribes in Dera Ghazi Khan. Robert Sandeman was put in charge of dealing with these tribes. After consultation, Sandeman introduced the Tumandari system in 1866 whereby the tribal chiefs were reinstated as Tumandars. He added to the responsibilities of the Tumandar, revenue collection, the preservation of law and order, the authority to call a jirga, and ilaqa magistrate (Akhtar, Nazeer, Fatima, and Amjad, 2023) [4].

The role of traditional leaders in conflict management is deeply rooted in the historical development of societies. In pre-colonial societies, the traditional leaders often considered localized procedures of governance, where the judge was a chief of a tribe or local elders. They were representative of their clans, tribes, and ethnic groups (Shapiro, White, and Shackleton, 2019) [5]. These leaders were not only political figures but custodians of justice. The power of traditional leaders was inherited and usually involved complex web and cultural practices. The conflict was resolved through communal discussion, aiming for peace-building (Sithole, 2012) [6].

With the advent of British colonialism, the modern system influenced the traditional system and was replaced by formal systems alien to the local people. However, conventional leaders reserved their power in rural areas by imposing Western laws. In rural areas, the role of traditional leaders still exists in conflict resolution, especially in places where government laws

are ineffective (Chigwata, 2016) [7]. In many African countries, chiefs and elders were influential in conflict resolution that involved land disputes, family issues, and other disputes.

1.2 The Role of Traditional Leaders in Contemporary Conflict Resolution

In modern societies, the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution has changed in reaction to globalization and modernity. In many countries, the role of traditional leadership is still significant, particularly in rural areas where the government role is weak; for instance, in countries like Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, and Nigeria, traditional leaders are still serving as mediators in local conflicts (Mamdani, 2020) [8]. In such circumstances, traditional leaders play an important role in alleviating violence, restoring social order, and facilitating reconciliation.

One of the good features of traditional conflict resolution is restorative justice rather than punishment. The restorative justice system believes in healing the damages caused by disputes, concentrating on rehabilitating criminals and rebuilding affiliations. People usually trust traditional leadership and use proper cultural methods to solve conflict and promote social cohesions (Gabagambi, 2018) [9]. The focus is restoring relationships rather than punishing, as courts punish and break relationships.

In spite of the continuing reputation of traditional leadership in conflict resolution, these systems face major encounters in the global world. There is a tension between state laws and traditional governance systems. In various countries, the legal system is based on Western laws, which underscore individual rights and recognized trials, but traditional conflict management focuses on census building and community role (Tamanaha, 2011) [10].

1.3 Challenges Faced by Traditional Leaders in Conflict Resolution

The role of traditional leaders throughout history cannot be denied. They played a important role in the stability of society and peace-building. The authority of traditional leaders challenged the colonial legitimacy. Traditional leaders face marginalization in their roles in the legal and political process. Many countries' governments view it as outdated and unharmonious compared to modern democracy (Mutisi, 2012) [11]. Additionally, the global legal system and international organizations sometimes practice the traditional resolution method for gender and human rights issues.

Furthermore, traditional leadership usually faces criticism associated with gender and authoritarian propensities. In customary societies, the male is the dominant figure, and the women have restricted and no contribution to conflict resolution (Toulmin, 2007) [12]. This

gender inequality raises questions about traditional leaders' conflict resolution mechanisms. In addition, many conventional leaders have been suspected of maintaining a male-controlled structure that overwhelms the privileges of marginalized communities, mainly women and minorities.

1.4 Integrating Traditional Leadership with Formal Conflict Resolution Systems

With the development of democracy and the formal institutions of the law has made conflict resolution more complex. Thus, the role of traditional leaders in conflict management nowadays needs to be taken into account. The addition of conventional leaders into the dispute resolution initiatives is critical in promoting peace and harmony in the society. Therefore, it is still important to investigate and apply these native systems in conflict management. Although western methods of legal practices are present, traditional methods still enjoy a lot of trust by the people. Negotiation and mediation are both common approaches of establishing dispute resolution in the Koh-e-Suleman regions.

Abotchie (2006) [13] also called attention to the fact that the chief has a major position and the community believes that the chief is a creator and father to the community. The lack of the chief results in the leadership vacuum which stresses the strong belief of the community in traditional authority. The chief acts as an agent between the people and the government as he interprets the policies of the state and the interests of the communities. Therefore, the chief plays a significant role in connecting the state and the citizens.

The amalgamation of traditional dispute resolution with modern legal frameworks presents both opportunities and challenges. Combining the strengths of both systems could be more effective in conflict resolution. In some African countries, traditional leaders are included in legal frameworks, and their decisions are legal, aiming that traditional leaders protect human rights (Bonthuys, 2024) [14].

The integration between these two is challenging. Critics argue that hybrid systems that combine traditional and formal systems may lead to legal pluralism, where various justice systems exist without any written rules. This creates confusion and can lead to bias and injustice in conflict resolution (Rapatsa, 2015) [15].

2. Literature Review

The theory of restorative justice was postulated by Zehr (2002) [16] and aims at healing and rehabilitation of interpersonal conflicts instead of punishing them. The given approach implies

the inclusion of communities in the process of resolving disputes in the form of victim-offender dialogues and restorative circles where people can learn to understand and cooperate with each other. The system of restorative justice focuses on working together, encourages compassion, and increases the degree of trust among victims. Similarly Wachtel (2016) [17] also asserted that the restorative justice system focuses more on restoring relationships rather than punishment. Conflict is considered to be a break in relationships and restorative practices are supposed to mend them. Restorative justice has been extended to assisting both the victims and the offender families that had a loved one since the 1990s. It promotes the engagement of the larger community as well as all the interested parties in conflict mediation to foster healing and shared responsibility.

According to Metoui (2007) [18], a large number of communities in America prefer individual level of resolving disputes. Although formal system of law is effective in certain areas, it fails to meet the needs of the people who are concerned. Conversely, the Native Americans groups use traditional cultural systems to manage conflicts. Such societies have formed traditional and tribal courts which are in tandem with the culture and values of the society. Instead of addressing the state-administered court systems, most people opt to solve conflicts using traditional methods, which are regarded to be more effective in promoting reconciliation and maintaining social cohesion. Metoui highlights how these culturally implicated methods have a healing effect in keeping communities together.

Charles (2016) [19] studied conflict resolution practices in Nigeria and concluded that even though the government advocates the use of a modern judicial system, the traditional forms of conflict resolution are still prevalent. The official system of courts is considered to be not very effective and time-consuming, which results in the overall mistrust of society. Conversely, the conventional approaches, which are deeply entrenched in cultural values and practices of a society, have been effective in solving many violent disputes. Such traditional systems are perceived to be more available, and effective and acceptable by the locals. Compared to the modern Western court system, the traditional method of conflict resolution is more significant to the preservation of social peace and reconciliation.

Okulski (2017) [20] found that the systems theory is applied to resolving tribal conflicts, noting that these systems are inherently complex and adaptive processes. Flexibility, responsiveness to the community, and conformity to the cultural norms defined the traditional conflict resolution

that led to the wide spread satisfaction and legitimacy among the members of the community. Conflict resolution was frequently done by cooperation and formation of coalitions among the conflicting parties. But with the introduction of modern or western legal systems and structures, these systems have become more intricate and thus, modern peacemaking involves more challenges and is inaccessible by most communities. These developments notwithstanding, the conventional ways of settling disputes remain popularly considered as working and valid channels of attaining justice especially in communities where cultural persistence and social unity are still very high.

Kariuki (2018) [21] pointed out that the basic framework of conflict resolution is based on social norms, values, and beliefs. The social capital theory suggests that interconnectedness, ties of mutual energies and trust holds individuals together making them coexist in the society. These community bonds create social tranquility and the basis of the restorative character of the dispute settlement by community elders. In the same vein, social solidarity theory regards people as social actors who are dictated by social facts, and the resolution of disputes is one of the social facts that augurs well to the society. These social facts are played by the seniors, who, through experience and wisdom, solve conflicts.

Lundy, Collette, and Downs (2021) [22] studied how effective indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms were amongst different communities in Africa. Their work underlines that the conventional conflict-solving approach has strong cultural background and values. African communities often use the traditional ways of dealing with and solving conflicts, which are perceived to be more expedient and long-term than legal systems. These mechanisms are usually preferred as they provide timely resolutions and these are seen to be more accessible and fair. Conversely, the modern day legal system is perceived to be bureaucratic, expensive and less sustainable to the values of the communities and local traditions are more relied upon within the communities.

Similarly Ullah, Saeed, and Ali (2021) [23] studied the efficiency of Jirga system in Pakistan by using a survey of 357 households across five villages. Their results show that there is high community confidence in the Jirga as a very common method of resolving conflicts. The Jirga decisions are regarded as just and they are based on the Islamic concepts and Pashtun culture. The system is not only effective in enhancing social cohesion but also is a cheap and quick replacement of the formal judicial process. In contrast to the court system which in most cases

involves extended procedures, the Jirga can settle a dispute within one day, which makes it even more popular and perceived as legitimate by the rural society.

Qerimi, Maluku, and Maluku (2022) [24] examined the origins and persistence of customary law and emphasized its origins in tribal organization, which does not necessarily depend on the formal government. This is an oral tradition of the law and is passed down through the generations and is used as a social control in the tribal societies. The paper indicates that people still refer to these culturally entrenched norms and values in the settlement of conflict, which illustrates how valid customary law still is. Even though certain governments have tried to institutionalise or indeed, scientificise the customary law, the studies have shown that individuals tend to consider the traditional practices more convenient and effective in settling of disagreements.

2.1 Conceptualizing Traditional Leadership and Conflict Resolution

Conflict occurs in different forms, and it is challenging to define it. It is part of society and often occurs in relationships. Conflicts are of various forms, like family, national, international, and assaults (Olaoba, 2005). A traditional leader is defined as someone who is embedded in native governance structures and customary laws. Conflict resolution is based on the rules of mediation, reconciliation, and the restorative justice system.

In contrast, the formal courts are based upon a retributive justice system. Traditional leaders try to build relationships and social agreement. The traditional leader's decisions are not based on punishment but on the consent of the community (Zulu, 2007) [25].

Numerous authors have conceptualized traditional conflict resolution as inherently based and striving for collective healing rather than punishment. Traditional leaders are selected for their wisdom, spirituality, and experiences (Sithole, 2009) [26].

Traditional leaders are also based on culture and the power of traditional leadership resides on the social umbrella of the traditional leaders. They are highly involved in settlement of conflicts in the entire of Africa and South Africa. Traditional leaders are highly appreciated because they are said to be wise enough to solve conflicts (Achieng, 2015) [27].

Although conflict is a constituent part of all the societies, it comes in different forms depending on the situation and so are the resolution techniques. The traditional leadership of the Indigenous people has avoided the erosion of their authority by ensuring the culture, traditions and social

norms remain intact. In the pre-colonial days, the African societies had traditional leaders as their main organizational structures (Eberbach et al., 2017) [28].

Baldwin and Raffler (2017) [29] contended that chiefs within the local communities would be significant in the delivery of public goods. These chiefs are usually involved by the community organizations in assisting them in delivering their services, and people usually depend on the regional chiefs to deliver these services. The traditional leaders have in most instances been more successful as compared to the politicians in service delivery.

2.2 Measuring the Effectiveness of Traditional Leaders

A key question in the quantitative study is whether traditional leaders are more operative or government institutions. Multiple studies used survey data and field experiments to measure the efficiency of conventional leaders in managing conflicts. For example, a study by Kaufman (2004) [30] analyzed the survey responses from rural communities in Kenya to compare the disputes resolved by traditional leaders and government courts. The study found that people prefer conventional leaders for conflict resolution over formal courts. The findings showed that 78% of respondents responded that customary leaders are active in conflict resolution.

Yaro (2024) [31] studied the influence of conventional leaders in dispute management in Northern Ghana. Using cross-sectional research, the data were collected through a questionnaire from 364 respondents. The findings revealed a positive association between conventional leaders and conflict management, highlighting the significance of orthodox leaders in maintaining social order. Similarly, Kapata et al. (2023) [32] analyzed the effectiveness of traditional conflict resolution in Zambia. Through descriptive analysis, the data were collected from village members, committee members, and traditional leaders. The study found that the respondents favored the conventional method of conflict resolution over the government's courts. The study also found a higher satisfaction level of people with traditional leaders.

2.3 Methods engaged in the resolution of conflict

The methods used in conflict resolution are as follows: mediation, reconciliation, arbitration, and negotiation.

2.3.1 Mediation

Mediation is an ancient method of conflict resolution. It is non-coercive and involvement of mediators with the consent of third parties to resolve conflict. Mediation is an essential method of conflict resolution in traditional societies. The mediators try to build harmony and peace

among the parties. This also refers to not winning, no losing (Isurmona, 2005). In Koh-e-Suleman, the mediators are tribal chiefs or sub-chiefs of different clans. The local elders are also playing their role as mediators. Elders are the most trusted mediators because of their wisdom and experience. The mediators try to pressurize both parties for an agreement (Bright-Brock, 2001).

Mediation entails third party intervention in conflict resolutions where an impartial elder mediates the discussions with both parties consenting to the mediation. This is necessary because in most cases, the mediators have status, recognition, and experience in the community, and therefore, should be a third party. Mediation is an important issue of solving conflicts especially in the Indigenous communities where it is a widely used process (Okrah, 2003) [33].

2.3.2 Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a critical aspect of conflict management. It is often a restorative process that seeks to repair the harm done to individuals. Traditional leaders, with their unique position within communities, usually reconcile conflict among parties (William, 2000).

2.3.3 Negotiation

Harmonizing the interests of concerned parties is often called negotiation. It is a popular form of conflict resolution and frequently involves dialogue between two parties with the goal of reaching mutual objectives. This is a win-win approach. Traditional leaders are often involved in negotiations between two parties. Traditional leaders follow collective good and societal well-being.

3 Material and Method

3.1 Research Design

This study is a quantitative design to investigate the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution in the Koh-e-Suleman region. The research aims to study the effectiveness of traditional conflict resolution. The population of interest comprises the tribes of Kh-e-Suleman. Nine Tumans (tribes) were under study.

3.2 Sampling Method

The study used a stratified sampling method, which allowed all the tribes equal representation. The sample size was 384, calculated using Cochran's formula.

3.3 Data Collection

The data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among different tribes. The questionnaire focused on types of conflict, conflict resolution methods, trust in traditional leaders, and the effectiveness of resolution.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through SPSS using descriptive statistics. The inferential statistics were used to study different variables.

3.5 Results and Discussion

This table gives the role of traditional leaders and shows how people are satisfied with conventional leaders.

S#	Questions	Frequency	Percent
1	Do you believe that the Tumandari promote justice for all		
	Not at all	38	9.89
	Slightly	22	5.72
	Moderately	142	36.97
	Strongly	182	47.39
2	Do you believe that Tumandari system is effectively for maintaining social order		
	Not at all	22	5.72
	Slightly	40	10.41
	Moderately	192	50.00
	Strongly	130	33.85

The results revealed that people strongly believed that the tumandari system (traditional leaders) promoted justice for all. With a percentage of 47, 9% in the same way, people think that conventional leaders are best at maintaining social order, with a rate of 50.0%. Matsiliza (2024) [34] assessed the strategic role of traditional leaders in endorsing good governance. The study revealed that conventional leaders' role is inspiring in maintaining social order, community development, and conflict resolution.

Percentage Distribution of Respondents on Dispute Resolution, Tumandari System, and Its Effectiveness for Maintaining Social Order

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Who Resolves Conflict in Their Area	Sardar	40	10.4%
	Wadera with Bordered Military Police	113	29.4%
	Government Court	41	10.6%
	Wadera	190	49.4%
Who They Favor to Resolve a Dispute (On Their Behalf)	Local Jirga	262	68.2%
	Government Court	122	31.2%
Whether They Favor the Tumandari System	Yes	241	62.7%
	No	143	31.7%
Whether They Trust the Tumandari System is Active for Keeping Social Order	Not at all	22	5.7%
	Slightly	40	10.4%
	Moderately	191	49.7%
	Strongly	131	34.1%
Total		384	100.0

The table provides the frequency and percentage of the opinions of the respondents on who are most likely to resolve conflict in their locality. Most of the respondents (49.4%) reported that Wadera resolve conflicts implying the fact that they have the social authority or power in the society. Also, 29.4% indicated that conflicts are solved using a mixture of Wadera and military police at the border, which implies the application of hybrid systems, which are a mix of traditional and formal solutions. The assertion of dispute resolution by Sardars was only highly credited (10.4%) and government courts were credited by 10.6% indicating low confidence in the legal institutions. These observations demonstrate the long lasting significance of traditional leaders when it comes to conflict resolutions and the stability of the informal justice systems. Even with the efforts by the colonial period to substitute the traditional courts with the formal courts, the traditional courts are still used in most African societies in resolving disputes (Zartman, 2000) [35]. Moreover, Staller, Zaiser, and Koerner (2022) [36] discussed the impact of cognitive biases in police officers on the occurrence of favoritism when resolving conflicts by using examples of perceptual biases in the formal law enforcement process.

Chijoko et al. (2020) [37] also claimed that the police are important in preserving the social order because they deal with disputes at various levels. Despite the fact that there are those who go to the formal authorities with an aim of settling disputes, the police at times turn out to be the initial contact point. They play the role of engaging various communities in resolving conflicts and the role of state agencies in maintaining peace in society. The table also shows the preferences of the respondents over conflict resolution mechanisms. There was a strong majority (68.2%) in favor of local Jirgas versus government courts, which was supported only by 31.2%. This shows high faith of the community in traditional and culturally based justice systems as opposed to the formal state institutions. The choice of the Jirga system is also influenced by cultural norms, availability, and conformity to the local values in determining conflict resolution decisions. The Jirga is ingrained in the Pashtoon culture as the ancient and most revered form of justice. It operates without written codes, but its decisions have a tremendous weight and are effective in dispute resolution. Although the Jirga is a place where justice is affordable and readily available, a study carried out by Ali (2021) [38] suggests that sometimes it can be biased. Further, the Jirga is usually made up of admired senior citizens who adjudicate and administer justice in cases concerning land or property and even blood money (Taizi, 2007) [39]. The table brings light also about the opinions of the respondents about the Tumandari system. Most (62.7%) indicated support for the Tumandari system, and (31.7%) of the total indicated against the Tumandari system. This shows that even in the light of the existence of modern substitutes, most individuals still prefer tribal rule, and this is probably due to the strong social and cultural underpinnings. The ratio of anti-system is possible to show the increasing awareness or dissatisfaction and indicate the changing political culture. The elders in traditional societies are of great power and are respected, and their decision is agreed to as definitive (Yacob, 2002) [40]. Moreover, the table would show how people viewed the Tumandari system in terms of its effectiveness in keeping social order. Many (49.7%) rate it as moderately effective and (34.1%) as strongly effective in maintaining social harmony. This highlights the key place that the Tumandari system plays in ensuring community stability. A smaller percentage, however, (10.4%), regard it as being somewhat effective, and (5.7%) do not believe that it works at all. The Tumandar is a tribal leader who inherits the position of solving conflicts and maintaining peace in the tribe. Tumandars, together with the Waderas, guard law and order, and find it quite easy to promote

social cohesion due to a high degree of community trust (Anwar, Usman, and Akhter, 2021) [41].

3.6 Perceived Effectiveness of Traditional Leaders vs. State Courts in Conflict Resolution

Method of Conflict Resolution	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Neutral	Effective	Very Effective	Mean Score
Traditional Leaders	5%	7%	17%	43%	28%	4.18
State Courts	45%	21%	13%	15%	6%	2.95

The results revealed that traditional leaders are effective, with a percentage of 43% and a mean score of 4.18. The respondents also indicated that state courts are very ineffective, with a rate of 45%. The difference highlights the stronger perception of effectiveness and community perception. Sakala and Kalilani (2023) researched to study the efficacy of traditional conflict resolution. The study interviewed local community members, village heads, and court officials. The findings revealed that typical disputes like marriage, family issues, land disputes, and minor assaults were resolved by traditional leaders. The respondents reported that they trusted traditional leaders rather than government courts. The participants also responded to the effectiveness of traditional leaders over statutory courts.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study investigated the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution and the contribution of elders in dispute management. The results from the analysis reveal the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution within the Koh-e-Suleman tribes. Traditional leaders are considered highly effective in conflict resolution compared to government courts. People trust local elders. Based on the findings, the study suggests that the government should enhance training for traditional leaders and promote gender equality in traditional societies. The government should improve the formal system so that people's trust in the legal framework increases. The state should also collaborate with conventional leaders to maintain social order. Future research should use a mixed-method approach to study conflict resolution and its interaction with modern legal systems.

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