

Local Government Decision Making and Socio-Economic Development in Galkio City, Puntland-Somalia

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between local government and socio-economic development in Galkio City, Puntland, Somalia. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of local government decision making on socioeconomic development in Galkio City, Somalia. The study was anchored on Marxist theory of socio-economic development advanced by Laszlo (2012). A descriptive cross-sectional research design was employed, with data collected from a sample of 398 respondents out of a target population of 91,260. Using regression analysis, the study found that accountability ($\beta=0.629$, $p=0.000$), transparency ($\beta=0.562$, $p=0.000$), and rule of law ($\beta=0.741$, $p=0.000$) significantly affects socio-economic development. Suggesting that effective decision making involving transparency, accountability and rule of law are crucial for local government socio-economic development. The study concludes that enhancing local government socio-economic development entails stronger institutional frameworks that significantly improve socio-economic outcomes through effective decision making. The study recommends that the local government decision makers should use structured approach in including gathering information for appropriate decision making targeting development.

Keywords: Development, decision making, accountability, transparency, rule of law

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Globally, the fight against poverty and economic development has been debated for centuries. Socio-economic development is the process of social and economic development in a society. Socio-economic development is measured with indicators, such as GDP, life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Changes in less-tangible factors are also considered, such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety and freedom from fear of physical harm, and the extent of participation in civil society. Industrialization had brought forth permanent changes in the economic and human activity. After depression of 1929-1933 spans, the importance of these processes increase. Overcoming any economic difficulties, whether we speak about decreasing of the unemployment rate or about the external equilibrium, a correlation was made with the economic development and development. Any decision made at a state or sub state level aimed at reaching these two objectives. Today more than anytime, in recessionary, liberalized economy, in a world marked by strong demographic increase, by the depletion of natural resources, by changes of climate and ecosystem destruction we are more preoccupied than ever by the problems of socio-economic development.

In Africa, between 1980-1990s' there has been little empirical research on developing countries with regard to the argument that decentralization promotes demand responsiveness of government services. The existing research tends to focus on the effect of decentralization on expenditure allocation or on the impact of public services provided, and tends not to address whether the resource allocation is tailored to local demand. The

results of this research are mixed. For example, some studies examined decentralization in Eastern and Central Africa and their results suggest that public services can suffer as a result of decentralization, at least in the short run (John, Chathukulam & Jose, 2013). By contrast, other studies explored the impact of decentralization on education outcomes in Mali and found that in South Africa, where national minorities formed local majorities after decentralization, decentralization improved service delivery outcomes. In 1988 the Provisional National Defence Council of Ghana put in place an administrative and political structure that aimed to support a greater degree of popular participation in rural development. Power has been devolved to District Assemblies to enhance service delivery for poverty alleviation, and since 1992 it has channelled not less than 5% of national revenue to these Assemblies for development. The District Assemblies (Local Government bodies in Ghana) are now the fulcrum of political and administrative authority in Ghana.

Somalia's political class appears to lack consensus and a comprehensive understanding of the concepts of 'federalism' and 'decentralization'. Federalism is commonly understood to represent the only alternative to unitarism. Interestingly, many Somalis, following past experience, broadly associate the unitary state system with authoritarianism. There is little acknowledgement of alternative models of decentralization, including those within a unitary framework. Somali and non-Somali experts have debated the suitable government model for the country for many years. Various media outlets carry these discussions on a regular basis.

In Galkio State, decentralization is widely considered to offer the community greater participation and representation in government. Previous governments appointed governors to each region, and mayors and police commissioners to each city. There is strong demand for democratic participation people want to elect their local, regional, and national leaders. Greater local democratic participation was act, it is commonly held, as a safeguard against under-representation in national politics. Aspiring politicians have proven apt at exploiting the common desire for greater local participation and representation by conceptualizing clan-based fiefdoms before declaring themselves president. In the State, people have to still travel to Galkio to acquire a passport or other vital services (Lockwood & Ben 2012). The desire for greater access to government services is often cited in the argument for greater decentralization in Somalia. Somali citizens should not be required to travel long distances to gain access to basic services that could be offered locally. Attempts to limit access to basic services are commonly viewed as further evidence of central government's desire to consolidate control over the country.

Theoretical review

This study is anchored in two complementary theoretical perspectives: the Marxist theory of socio-economic development and Public-Choice theory. These frameworks provide distinct yet valuable lenses for examining issues of development and governance.

The Marxist perspective, as articulated by Laszlo (2012), offers a critical analysis of socio-economic systems through the prism of class relations and material conditions. This approach emphasizes how economic structures (the base) fundamentally shape social institutions and ideologies (the superstructure). Central to this theory is the concept of dialectical materialism, which views societal progress as emerging from contradictions within economic systems, particularly through class struggle under capitalism. As productive forces evolve, existing social arrangements become obstacles to further development, creating tensions that ultimately drive systemic transformation.

Public-Choice theory presents a contrasting but equally insightful framework for understanding governance and service delivery. This theory posits that decentralized systems better respond to diverse local needs because individual preferences for public services vary significantly across regions due to cultural, historical, and geographic factors (Klugman, 1994). The theory highlights several advantages of decentralization: improved information flow between decision-makers and communities, reduced service delivery costs through streamlined local processes (Allen, 1987), and enhanced efficiency through competition among multiple service providers. By allowing local institutions to tailor services to specific community needs, decentralization is seen as a mechanism to overcome the inefficiencies of uniform, centralized provision.

These theoretical approaches complement each other in important ways. While Marxist analysis reveals the structural constraints and inequalities inherent in economic systems, Public-Choice theory offers practical insights into institutional arrangements that can make governance more responsive. Together, they provide a comprehensive framework for examining both the systemic barriers to development and potential institutional solutions. The Marxist focus on economic structures helps explain persistent inequalities, while Public-Choice theory suggests how decentralized governance might address service delivery challenges within these structural constraints.

Objective to examine the effects between local government decision making and socioeconomic development in Galkio City, Puntland, Somalia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

local decision making and socio-economic developments.

Local decision-making serves as a fundamental mechanism for shaping socioeconomic development through its ability to tailor policies to community-specific contexts. As Vo et al. (2020) demonstrate, the localized nature of municipal governance allows for precise alignment between policy initiatives and constituent needs, resulting in higher implementation success rates and greater public satisfaction. This responsiveness forms the foundation for effective community development, where Arnstein's (2019) concept of participatory governance further strengthens outcomes through direct citizen engagement in decision-making processes. The inclusion of marginalized groups in these processes, as noted by Rojas et al. (2021), creates more equitable policy solutions that address systemic disparities in resource distribution.

The economic implications of local decision-making reveal its transformative potential. McGuinness and Kavanagh's (2021) research establishes clear connections between municipal policy priorities and regional economic growth, particularly through strategic investments in infrastructure and business development programs. These findings are reinforced by Bahl and Martinez-Vazquez (2021), who emphasize how decentralized fiscal authority enables more targeted poverty alleviation efforts. The OECD (2004) framework contextualizes these economic benefits within broader political dimensions, where decentralization enhances representation of historically excluded populations while improving service delivery efficiency.

Beyond economic metrics, local governance significantly influences quality-of-life indicators. Gollust et al. (2021) document the public health benefits of community-based policy implementation, while Dempsey et al. (2022) highlight how municipal environmental initiatives create sustainable living conditions. This multidimensional impact is amplified through technological integration, though Kitchin (2020) appropriately cautions about the digital divide's potential to exacerbate existing inequalities if not properly addressed.

The efficacy of these systems ultimately depends on institutional capacity and leadership quality. McAllister's (2021) analysis of local governance emphasizes the critical role of transparent, accountable leadership in converting policy frameworks into tangible community benefits. This perspective tempers the optimistic view of decentralization presented by OECD (2004), aligning with Crook and Sverrisson's (2001) more measured assessment that cautions against assuming automatic developmental benefits from administrative decentralization alone.

This synthesis reveals local decision-making as a complex but indispensable mechanism for socioeconomic progress, where success depends on balancing participatory inclusion, strategic economic planning, and institutional accountability (Smoke & Paul, 2013). The literature collectively suggests that when properly implemented, localized governance structures can simultaneously address immediate community needs while fostering long-term, sustainable development trajectories (Yates, Gebreiter & Lowe, 2019). Future research directions might explore comparative analyses of decentralization models across different political and economic contexts to identify optimal implementation frameworks.

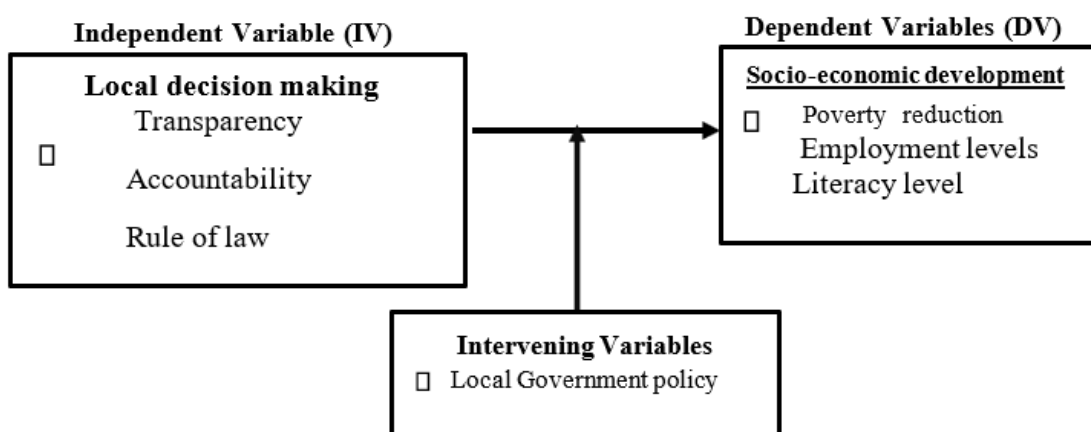
Socioeconomic development is a way of strengthening civil society by prioritising the actions of communities, and their perspectives in the development of social, economic and environmental policy (Blair, 2016)

Accountability pertains to the obligations of persons or entities entrusted with public resources to be answerable for the fiscal, managerial and program responsibilities that have been conferred on them, and to report to those that have conferred these responsibilities (Conyers, 2016). From this definition of accountability it is clear that the public entities that utilize public resources have an obligation to account for the way these resources are allocated, used and the results these spending have achieved. In other words, the main objectives of all accountability initiatives are to ensure that public money is spent most economically and efficiently, that there is minimum of wastage or theft and finally that public actually benefit from public finance.

Transparency can be defined as public's unbound access to up-to-date and trustworthy information about the public sector institution's performances and decisions. It also means that the organization provides adequate disclosure and timely information to its stakeholders regarding its operations and activities (Fuller, 2015). This information relates to the financial performance, the corporate government, the ownership structure, the voting rights, the directors profiles, the key executives and their remuneration. The whole essence of transparency is that government processes and actions should be visible to citizens. This means government making available more official information, making the available information more useful, and making that information easy to access (Galaa, 2014).

The doctrine of rule of law has its origin in England and it is one of the fundamental characteristics of the British constitutional system. It lays down that the law is supreme and hence the government must act according to law and within the limits of the law. It is the legal principle that law should govern a nation, as opposed to being governed by arbitrary decisions of individual government officials. It primarily refers to the influence and authority of law within society, particularly as a constraint upon behaviour, including behaviour of government officials (Hyden & Court, 2016).

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework



Source: Researcher modified from Ahmed, (2023)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed mixed method to examine the effects of Local government decision making on the socioeconomic development in Galkio, Somalia.

Research design

The study employed descriptive correlation research design to describe the situation as it is, and correlation design measured the correlation between the variables.

Target population

Galkayo is divided into four main quarters: Garsoor, Horumar, Israac, and Wadajir. Puntland fully controls Garsoor, Israac, and Horumar (The neutral areas are cited by the Old Galkayo market and the loose boundary, while Galmudug controls Wadajir in the South. The research was carried out in Galkio-Somalia, the target population of this study was consist of 91260 respondents and the sample size of the study was 398.

Sample Size

The sample size from the target population of study was made of 398 respondents selected based on Slovenes formula see table below

Table 3.3.1: sampling, population, simple size and sampling techniques.

Category	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Garsoor	40,815	178	Sample random sampling
Israac	25,220	110	Sample random sampling
Hormar	10,000	44	Sample random sampling
Wadajir	15,225	66	Sample random sampling
Total	91260	398	Sample random sampling

Sources : Galgalo city local government, 2025

Data Sources

The data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources including already published documents mainly government documents, publications and statistical data. While primary data was from the raw data, interviews and other original documents

Reliability of instruments

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 and above was considered to be the criteria for demonstrating internal consistency of new scale and established scales respectively.

Data analysis

Data was entered into SPSS statistical tool the researcher is designed questionnaire on 4 point likert scale self-administered questionnaire comprising of statements and responses ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree was formulated. Data analysis on the first to the third objective was taken into consideration of the analysis of the constructs on the variables through descriptive statistics of means, standard deviation.. The total number of respondents who constitute the sample used in this dissertation are summarised in Table 4.1

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

Table 4.1: Showing the Response Rate

Nature of Response	Frequency	Percentage
Response	392	94%
Non-response	6	6%
Total	398	100

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 2 indicate the response rate for both the questionnaire and interview components of the research. Questionnaire: Out of the planned 6 respondents, 392 individuals completed the questionnaire, resulting in an 80% response rate. Interview guide: Of the 27 individuals targeted for interviews, 23 participated, yielding an 85% response rate.

Table 3: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	272	69.2%
Female	126	30.8%
Total	398	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025.

The Table 3 above indicates that (69.2%) were male while (30.8%) were female respondents. This suggests that most respondents were men, reflecting societal beliefs that they are more capable than women in the area of local government and socio-economic development in Puntland Somalia.

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age category of respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
19-25	95	24%
26-30	77	19.6%
31-35	73	18.6%
36-41	63	16%
42-46	45	10.2%
Above 46	45	11.6%
Total	398	100.0

Sources: Primary Data, 2025)

The findings in Table 4 show that majority of the respondents belonged to the age group of between 26-30 years and had 77 (19.6%). This was followed by those between 42 and 46 years as they had 40 (10.2%) composition. The third category under this parameter was those between 36-41 years, as they claimed 63 (16%) composition. Fourth, came also those between and 31-35 years with 73(18.6%) composition. Respondents between 19-25 had 95 (24%) and finally the least populated age category was for those above 46 years of age at 45 (11.6%). The results imply that majority of the respondents were mature and having adequate and critical understanding of the youth.

Table 5: Education Level of Respondents

Educational level of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Master	70	17.8%
Bachelor	183	46.6%
Certificate	60	15.3%
Diploma	36	9.2%
Other	49	11.1%
Total	398	100.0

The presented study findings in Table 5 show that the majority of the respondents at 183 (46.6%) were bachelor's degree holders, 70 (17.8%) were holding Master's degree, these were followed by 60 certificate holders at 15.3%. Those in other section were 36 at 9.2% and the least respondents were diploma holders at 7%. The findings imply that many respondents were highly educated implying that this had adequate and proper information needed by the researcher.

Table 6: Experience of the respondents

Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	116	29.5%
1-3 years	126	32%
4-6 years	97	24.7%
7 years and above	59	13.8%
Total	398	100

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Furthermore from the results in table 6 shows that majority of the respondents had stayed in the local government for 1-3 years with 126 (32%), followed by, less than 1 year with 116 (29.5%), followed by 4.6 years with 97 (24.7%) and lastly 7 years and above 54 (13.8%) had stayed in the organisation for less than 1 year. Thus indicating that majority of the respondents had clear information on the wellbeing of the Galkio Local government because of the long stay in the organisation.

Table 7: Responses about the effect of local decision making and socioeconomic development of Galkio Local government, Somalia.

Effects of local decision making and socioeconomic development	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Does decisions making on socio economic development of Local government are transparent	3.35	1.830	Very Good
Decision making on budget formulation process ensures accountability on socio economic development	3.05	1.746	Good
Decisions making on socio development strategies and process ensures the application of the rule of law	2.78	1.667	Good
Actions and decisions taken by officials are subject to scrutiny and transparency	2.46	1.568	Poor
Actions are taken on officials when they make wrong decisions that affect local government development activities	3.27	1.288	Very poor
Average Mean	3.07	1.671	Good

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The following mean ranges were used to arrive at the mean of the individual indicators and interpretation:.

Mean Range	Response Mode	Interpretation
3.26 – 4.00	Strongly Agree	Very Good
2.51 – 3.25	Agree	Good
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree	Poor
1.00 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree	Very Poor

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.623a	.388	.381	.49354

a. Predictors: (Constant),

Local Decision making

ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression Residual	13.874	1	13.874	56.956	.000a
	21.922	397	.244		
Total	35.796	98			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Decision making

b. Dependent Variable: socio economic development

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant) Decision making	1.103	.244		4.513	.000
	.629	.083	.623	7.547	.000

a. Dependent Variable: socio-economic development

Source: Primary Data, 2025.

Regression analysis results in the Model Summary table revealed that decision making accounted for 38.8% on socioeconomic development of Local government in Somalia indicated by r-squared of 0.388, implying that to small extent local decision making as an aspect of socio economic development contributes to the socio-economic development of Local government, Somalia. The ANOVA table indicated that local decision making as a system significantly affects the socioeconomic development and this was indicated by the F-value=56.956 and Sig-value=.000, since the sig. value (0.000) was less than 0.05 and which is the maximum level of significance required to declare a significant effect. This implies that Accountability of Local government as an aspect contributes to the Socio economic development of Local government, Somalia. The coefficients table indicated that considering the standard error, Accountability of Local government significantly influence the Socioeconomic development of Galkio Local government, Somalia ($\beta=0.629$, Sig=0.000).

DISCUSSIONS ON THE FINDINGS

Results in table 4 indicates the effects of Accountability of Local government on Socioeconomic development of Galkio Local government, Somalia was rated good and this was indicated by the overall mean of 3.07, implying that there is a formalized system intended to help the Galkio Local government, Somalia on how Accountability of Local government effectives on the Socio-economic development after consulting the members and respondents were asked to give their view on whether does accountability enable the Local government to ensure that leaders are accountable for their actions and this was indicated by the average mean of 3.35, implying that accountability enables the Local government to ensure that leaders are accountable for

their actions thus Local government and Socio-economic development. This was in line with Cohen & Uphoff, (2015), both scholars noted that the accountability principle of governance ensures that leadership is accountable for their decisions. It is also defined as the predisposition of an organization to provide explanations and justifications for the key stakeholders, concerned by its judgments, intentions, acts and omissions, if they call to do so (Cohen & Uphoff, 2015). Accountable decisions pertains to the obligations of persons or entities entrusted with public resources to be answerable for the fiscal, managerial and program responsibilities that have been conferred on them, and to report to those that have conferred these responsibilities (Conyers, 2016). From this definition of public accountability it is clear that the public entities that utilize public resources have an obligation to account for the way these resources are allocated, used and the results these spending have achieved. In other words, the main objectives of all public accountability initiatives are to ensure that public money is spent most economically and efficiently, that there is minimum of wastage or theft and finally that public actually benefit from public finance.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that enhancing local government socio economic development entails stronger institutional frameworks that significantly improve socio-economic outcomes through effective decision making

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that the Local government decision makers should use structured approach in decision making to enhance accountability, transparency and the rule of law

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