



ISSN: 2036-5438

## **Federalism in post-conflict states: Assessing Somalia's challenges and the way forward**

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Perspectives on Federalism, Vol. 11, issue 2, 2019





## Abstract

The prime objectives of this study are to examine the perceptions and attitudes of Somalis toward federalism, as well as the challenges related to its adoption. The study gathered data via a self-administered online survey using social media. A total of 1,073 respondents nationwide participated in this study. The major variables studied were: perceptions of federalism adoption; legislative power sharing; executive power sharing; judicial power sharing; and fiscal federalism. According to the research findings, poor knowledge of federalism, considering federalism as a clan-based system, and political corruption are the most challenging factors to federalism adoption in Somalia. Other challenges relate to the provisional Somali constitution, such as power distribution, fiscal management, regional boundary disputes, and the status of Mogadishu. The paper concludes with a series of recommendations to overcome these challenges. The study seeks to contribute new ideas to the current discussion on federalism in post-conflict states, and Somalia in particular. The findings of this study will inform Somali policymakers, the Somali populace, the international community, and academia concerning the performance and the practical challenges of Somalia's federal agenda.

## Key-words

federalism, post-conflict states, Somalia, federal government; federal member states, power sharing, governance, Africa



## 1. Introduction

Somalia is a country located in the eastern Horn of Africa. It was once known as the Somali Republic but now it is called the Federal Government of Somalia. It gained independence from the UK and Italy on June 26 and July 1, 1960, respectively. Immediately following independence, the two regions (North and South Somalia) joined and became the Somali Republic and a new centralized government was formed. The country's first elected president was the famous politician Adam Abdullahi Osman, who was followed by Abdul Rashid Ali Sharmarke on June 10, 1967. Surprisingly, and tragically, Sharmarke was assassinated by a member of Somali Police Force in Lissanoud city on October 15, 1969. As a result, the parliament was forced into discussions regarding the election of a new president; however, these discussions were unfruitful and yielded no result (Ingiriis 2017).

A few days later, a military coup, led by Mohamed Said Barre, took control of the whole country. He suspended the constitution, abolished the national parliament, dissolved political parties, and prevented many politicians from participating in politics. He declared a socialist state and the country has been subsequently subjected to a scientific socialist ideology (the Utopian Socialism doctrine developed Karl Marx, which is distinguished from other socialist doctrines). He created a very strong bond with the then Soviet Union and other socialist states globally (Payton 1980).

After 20 years of Siad Barre's strict dictatorship, in 1988, resistance began to occur, and military conflict broke out. The national army began engaging various armed insurgent groups (militia), i.e. the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) in the northeast of the country, the Somali National Movement (SNM) in the northwest, and the United Somali Congress (USC) in the south. These militia groups eventually overthrew the Barre government on January 26, 1991. As Barre was forced out of office, the governmental system of the country collapsed. He subsequently made several attempts to come back to power but failed (Lyons & Samatar 2010).

Civil war broke out in almost every part of the country. All efforts to establish a constitutional government in the country failed and the Northwest Territory (Somaliland) declared secession. The collapse of Siad's government led to continued political struggle



and civil war, resulting in the adoption of a federal system in the country in early 2000s (Powell et al. 2008).

The federal system had been a long-standing dream of tribes and political leaders, both before and after independence, as the best method to fairly share power and wealth. One of the first advocates of federalism in Somalia was the Independent Constitution Party, which was founded in 1948 (Mukhtar 1989). The party believed that the only option to unite Somalis, who were divided into small groups because of the primitive tribal system, was to develop a constitution based on a decentralized or federal system, which would ensure the democratic autonomy of the various Somali regions (Abubakar 2016). This vision, however, had not been achieved during the 30 years that followed independence because the prevailing political atmosphere was set against it. For example, a decentralized or federal system was considered by many Somali politicians at that time as a conspiracy to divide the country.

Somalia is now witnessing political, social, and demographic changes following a long and difficult political struggle. During the civil war, the fight for power and governance between tribes created mistrust and divided the country. Therefore, federalism became the only solution to keep Somalia united. This idea was put forward in all the reconciliation conferences held between 1991 and 1998 before being formally and legally approved at the Mbegatti Conference in Eldoret, Kenya between 2002 and 2004 (Hammond 2013).

Since the declaration of adopting federalism in 2004, most Somalis and the majority of policymakers are yet to understand the nature and effects of federalism, including the campaigners who had been leading the transformation of the Somali Republic into a federal government. In addition, Somalis have long been suffering from conflict and war and are yet enjoying the political and social stability that are fundamental to every individual's liberty and freedom of expression (Elmi 2014).

Furthermore, the transition from a central to a federal system has been problematic and beset by many complexities and difficulties. The Somali tribes had fought for a federal system and had shed a lot of blood in the process; a federal system suited the tribal situation prevailing in the country. The idea of a federal system and the justifications formulated by the political decision-makers in Somalia were mostly focused on such a system's ability to overcome political schisms by motivating and engaging politicians. This, however, served to increase mistrust among the tribes. Every tribe was increasingly



convinced not to trust the others, preferring to manage their own affairs without interference or blackmail. Some politicians argued that the day Somalia adopted federalism was the day that political will and decision-making was taken out of the hands of Somali politicians and placed in the hands of the regional powers (Ghedi 2015).

This seems to be borne out by the fact that Somalia requested foreign help in the form of 22,000 African Union (AU) troops from Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, as well as a United Nations (UN) mission to rebuild national transitional institutions (Williams 2013). Their presence provided an adequate environment for Somalis to discuss their issues and develop their political system without the constant fear of armed Islamist movements and tribal conflicts, allowing the expansion of the government in the country (Lotze & Kasumba 2012). Furthermore, service delivery to cities, villages, and rural areas was made through federal administrations.

In general, Somalia had been witnessing the creation of federal states since the term of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud (2012–2016). The Ministry of Interior and Federal Affairs, which had been led by Minister Abdurrahman Odawa, had successfully created the southern-central states of Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South West, and Jubbaland. Prior to that, the northern states (Puntland and Somaliland) had already been managing their own affairs. Somalia thus has six functioning states plus the Benadir region, which is home to the nation's capital and is under the direct control of the Federal Government.

The Federal Member States are now striving to shoulder their responsibilities towards their citizens, with the support of the international community, and to carry out their tasks without the need for direct federal assistance, achieving self-sufficiency at all levels. However, the federal member states and the central government do not cooperate with respect to the provisional constitution. States do not provide services to their people efficiently. Rather, they always challenge and challenged by the central government, hindering the overall development of the country. In extreme cases, some federal member states have released press statements declaring that they have cut ties with the central government on matters that fall in the latter's jurisdiction. This creates uncertainty and a threat to the unity and cohesion of Somalia (Hassan 2018).

Foreign policy and relations with foreign countries have, however, traditionally been the responsibility of the central government alone, according to the Provisional Constitution of Somalia. The Federal Government manages external relations to safeguard



national interests. This has been emphasized in the constitutions of all federal states. Similarly, the Constitution of Somalia does not grant the constituent units of the Federal Government any powers in international relations. Globalization, however, has led the states to play an increasingly important role in the fields of trade and investments, as stipulated in the Transitional Federal Constitution of Somalia in 2012.

The constitution gives the states the right to be consulted with in the field of international relations, especially if the treaty affects or relates to a specific federal state. Article 53 (I & II) of the Provisional Federal Constitution reads, “In the spirit of inter-governmental cooperation the Federal Government shall consult the Federal Member States on negotiations relating to foreign aid, trade, treaties, or other major issues related to international agreements ... [w]here negotiations particularly affect Federal Member State interests, the negotiating delegation of the Federal Government shall be supplemented by representatives of the Federal Member States governments” (Hussein 2011).

In addition, the most challenging aspects of Somalia’s federalization, both within the federal parliament and the population as a whole, are the high expectations regarding security and social dimensions. These challenges are undoubtedly signs of a real crisis that Somalia has been facing since it adopted federalism. It is an obstacle that hinders good governance in Somalia. Moreover, given the rise in tribal discourse and the emergence of polarization and tribal blocs, federalism has been considered by some as a harbinger of a return to tribal fighting.

In summary, federalism in Somalia requires regional coalitions and careful management of competition based on integration, incorporating national and tribal factors, which makes federalism in Somalia problematic and leads to other problems. The reality now proves that the intense exploitation of the principle of federalism, based on the desire for containment and supremacy and including the dissemination of conspiracy theories and tribal interpretations of events, does not help create what the country needs most in the present period, i.e. to improve the lives of Somali people by fostering tolerance and national reconciliation and by replacing the desire for domination, containment, and tyranny with the desire for participation and interaction.

This study aims to investigate the research question: Has the federalism system of governance been successful in Somalia and what are the challenges related to this system that the country faces? To address this question, the paper attempts to present the



constraints faced by the application of federalism in Somalia and, by providing in-depth research and analysis into various federalism models, to increase awareness and knowledge of both the Somali people and leaders regarding different federalism models and their possible challenges and advantages. It also addresses the questions regarding the compatibility of the federal system with the Somali people and its appropriateness in the current situation. In conclusion, to address differing national and strategic interests, the paper presents some policy recommendations to meet current challenges.

The researchers faced multiple study limitations that have impacted the results and conclusions. First, the time in which the study was conducted coincided with high tension between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMSs). During the data collection, five FMSs (Puntland, Hirshabelle, Galmudug, Jubbaland, and Southwest) severed ties and suspended their cooperation with the FGS. The regional leaders accused the FGS, among other things, of failing in its responsibilities towards the states in accordance with the country's federal structure (Hassan 2018). The researchers believe this tension have impacted the views of the study participants, which majority of them hail from the FMS. Second, the complex nature of Somalia's federal project and the lack of clarity regarding its process make it difficult for the respondents to genuinely assess its performance and general applicability to the country. Finally, one of the major limitations in the study was that male participants outnumbered females due to cultural factors in Somalia, which cause males to have more opportunities than females. Males have access to education and are favored by parents, thus they dominate in almost every sector. Future research conducted in times of low tension among the FGS and the FMSs, as well as following the provision of adequate information and discussion on federalism in the public arena, would help significantly in exploring the changes in public perception regarding the federal system in Somalia.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Power distribution

Power sharing is a core feature of federalism; the constitution is supposed to create the power-sharing mechanisms for the federated states to enable them overcome power-based conflicts that could emerge between the levels of the government. The model for sharing



power depends on the preference of the constitution's creators, taking into account the contiguous circumstances of federalism (Kttafah & Hassan 2017).

Among several theories that have been proposed regarding federalism, the work of William Riker is one of the most known. Riker (1975), who proposed a more viable theory on federalism, described the main features of a “federal government” as a central administration and another set of governments that exercise their authority over the same population and territory, with every side having some degree of jurisdiction to decide on its own matters, “independent” of the other. In all types of federations, conflict among its components is inevitable. The constitution must create the appropriate discretionary mechanisms for settling these issues as they arise. This includes the separation of state and federal powers among the levels of the government and the setting up of an independent judiciary to mediate between the different areas of the administration (Hersi 2016).

It has been reported in the literature that many states in Africa have been engaged in establishing power transfer to sub-national governments politically, financially, and administratively. Among the African countries that have embraced some form of decentralization, although most of their political systems are inefficient, are Ethiopia, South Africa, Nigeria, Malawi, Senegal, and Uganda. As far as decentralization is concerned, there are justifications everywhere in Africa for power devolution that exist for three main reasons: diversity; democracy; and development (Fessha & Kirkby 2008).

Despite the arguments of some scholars who believe that federalism is not compatible with underdeveloped countries for two reasons (first, the lack of social transformations so the concept of nation state is new and, second, low economic development and distribution of resources) and that federalism is dangerous to the unity of the country/state (Mawhood 1984), the most populous African countries [Nigeria (since 1966) and Ethiopia (since 1991)] use federalism as system of governance. In Nigeria, some literature asserts that federalism was imposed by the British, under colonial rule, in order to safeguard their national interests and sustain their neocolonial links by establishing weak and unstable states (Afigbo 1991); in contrast, Chief Obafemi Awolowo argues that Nigerian federalism came from a choice given to representatives between 1949 and 1950 (Uche 1967).

In terms of power distribution, power is biased toward the Federal Government rather than the individual states' governments. The logic behind this is that, when dealing with external threats and safeguarding the national unity, for example, if the individual states are



more powerful than the Federal Government, divisive forces could take advantage of the situation (Committee of Experts on Public Administration [CEPA], 2011). The Federal Government has responsibilities that it performs exclusively, including defense, foreign affairs, regulation, security services, and monetary policy. On the other hand, some responsibilities are concurrently shared with states and local government authorities, such as education and technological research, health, infrastructure, agriculture development, and industry. Individual states also have exclusive legislative power in residual matters (Khemani 2001).

In contrast, the federalism in Ethiopia was driven by giving full self-determination to ethnic autonomies (Habtu 2003). As stated by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, the Federal Government has 21 exclusive functions. According to Tsegaw (2009), these powers fall in to four groups. The first comprises powers regarding a common interest for all constituent units. These powers include national defense, international or foreign relations, citizenship, and immigration. The second comprises commercial powers. This group includes the largest number of powers, including postal and telecommunication services, domestic currency coinage and foreign currency usage, banking, insurance, patents copyright, and interstate commerce. The third group comprises a number of laws regarding law-making powers being kept central while, in practice, reserving the regulating and adjudicating power to the states. The finally group concerns legislating social and political issues, including electoral laws and procedures, as well as ensuring the political rights established by the constitution.

A study in the US regarding the lessons to be learnt from modern federalism questioned whether the federal system ought to decentralize or centralize and whether the federal system should be made competitive or cooperative (Shin 2018). The study found that a mixture of more federal- and state-oriented policy yielded the best results. Federalism in the US is required to be embedded in a balanced and effective association and cooperation among the different tiers of government to achieve a more productive public policy.

A study conducted by the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies stated that there is little disagreement among Somalis that decentralization of power is “necessary” for the reconstruction of the governance of collapsed institutions and structures (Elmi 2014). However, any consensus on the right and appropriate kind of decentralization for the



country is an illusion. The study suggested that there is no “panacea” as to the type of government that could meet all of the political challenges that Somalia has faced since the system’s collapse in the early 1990s. Also, another huge challenge lies in finding a balance for the “contradictory trends” that exist in the Somali people.

Most often, governments in Africa use a rhetoric that is related to democracy and development to justify the decentralization of power, but it is seldom strongly linked to diversity issues. Adamolekun (2005), as cited by Fessha and Kirkby (2008), stated that Nigeria is a good, if not ideal, example of an African states practicing subnational autonomy. According to Nahum (1997), Ethiopia is another country in Africa that has adopted subnational autonomy to find a solution for ethnic conflict.

In politics, there are commonly disagreements regarding the distribution of power and, in many federal states around the world, the judicial branch of the government is an essential tool in interpreting the various responsibilities and duties of the three tiers of the government. Therefore, an understanding of the dynamics of federalism makes the development and inception of constitutional courts indispensable and necessary in most countries, in particular in countries that have adopted a federal (Hessebon & Idris 2017).

According to Simeon (2009), the constitution of federal states should address in its design the following issues: vertical and horizontal division of powers (legislative, judiciary, and executive); fiscal management and resource distribution; the number and character of the constituent units; and inter-governmental relations.

In Somalia’s fragile, nascent federalism, there are complications, such as contradictions within the constitution, ambiguities, and other mistakes resulting from neglecting essential issues. There are important elements that are crucial for a federal system and whose definitions have been omitted, including power divisions of governance and revenue, as well as resource sharing among the different levels of government, the appropriate model of the electoral process, and a number of other essential issues (Galvanek 2017).

Somalia has been dealing with a hybrid political system for which it has been hard to create a consensus among the various branches of the government. According to Hassan (2017), the current system has mixed quite indistinct roles and responsibilities that overlap with each other, making it complicated and prone to the rise of conflicts among the major political actors and stakeholders since its inception.



## 2.2. Lack of social cohesion

Social cohesion refers to the willingness of the people a given society to work together to form meaningful partnerships and create the means to achieve the preset goals of the society. It helps the members of society to work together for their shared wellbeing, to reject marginalization, and to engage with each other to generate a sense of belonging, increasing trust and confidence among the members of the society (Stanley 2003).

There are many studies regarding secessionism and the emergence of break-away regions. Deiwiks et al. (2012) provided a substantial proof that both the wealthy and less developed constituents of federal systems are have higher tendencies toward secessionism and the rise of self-proclaimed break-away sections than the more equal areas or regions. This study was conducted in 31 independent federations globally.

Somalia's adoption of a federal system differs from that of many countries in Africa. The choice of federalism was based on satisfying the requirements of different clans in Somalia; it was not due to ethnic diversity. Therefore, a federal government is not suited to a country like Somalia and does not promote stabilization and peace building but, rather, might lead to the loss of social cohesion (Abubakar 2016).

In recent times, it has been stated that federalism is equated with "territorial pluralism" because there is a multitude of territorial subdivisions in a federal system, given different names, including "states" in the US, "cantons" in Switzerland, and "Laender" in Germany. The federal constitution assigns each unit in a federation its respective authority, which leads to relative semi-parallel sovereign states in one territory. Thus, neoclassical state theorists claim that federalism creates disunity and breaks the homogeneity and territorial integrity of the state. In this way, federalism becomes a major root of political conflict and disharmony, as both the center and the periphery seek and claim to possess their own relative share of sovereignty (Preuss 1997).

Previous research has suggested that there are two potential arguments regarding Somalia's federalism regarding the weakening of social cohesion and the likelihood of federalism leading to secessionism. The first is that it will encourage clan-based politics and, in the worst-case scenario, might lead to the dissolution of Somalia's statehood. The second argument puts the blame on foreign actors with specific respective interests whose political agenda is to exploit the fragmented nature of the people (Mohamed 2015).



Many existing studies in the broader literature have examined the importance of the proper mechanisms for societal integration. Unless equal access to resources, as well as an even power distribution, is granted to all citizens, irrespective of race, religion, color, or creed, ethnic conflict and the dismantling of the social fabric will continue to affect the people. Being a homogeneous nation culturally, ethnically, and religiously fails to stop the demise caused by a civil war like the one in Somalia (Mengisteab 1997).

A study on constitutional reform and federalism in Spain conveyed a narrative about the issue of secessionism in the Basque region and Catalonia, which are very similar in some respects to the case of Somaliland, which has been seeking political recognition as an independent state. This study mentioned that the constitutional court of Spain denied the “right to decide” on the independence of Catalonia, in line with the Spanish constitution (Alberdi 2018).

### 2.3. Fiscal management

Fiscal federalism involves the allocation of the governmental activities and financial shares among the tiers of government. It is related to fiscal management and decision-making, which entail the distribution of taxes, spending, and other fiscal-policy-related issues among the different orders of the administration. Large and diverse countries have usually been associated with federal fiscal policies because there are incentives for the various levels of government to ensure the provision of services, efficiently and competitively, for their own citizens (Shah et al. 2007).

Another study found that, regarding jurisdictions in federal systems, sub-central governments compete to obtain more capital on the grounds of relatively lower tax rates. Furthermore, both spending and taxation are higher in centralized systems than decentralized systems. Nevertheless, both proponents and opponents of “fiscal federalism” do share a common point of view in terms of anticipating that the size of the government is inversely proportional to the adoption of fiscal federalism. Lessmann (2009), as cited in Sorens (2011), found that economic inequality was reduced by the decentralization of taxation.

The issue of fiscal-based conflicts is highly prevalent in almost all current federations, in particular newcomers to the federalism experiment, and huge challenges arise in terms of dealing with them, with different approach to addressing them in every context. Afonso



(2007) recommends reconciliation of contradictions and the careful coordination of political differences. In addition, the assignment of tax to the respective levels of the government needs to be clearly defined.

As Williams and Orokpo's (2014) article on fiscal federalism states, it is crucial that a federal system should develop a consistent financial-relations-management system to mitigate the contradictions that arise in the allocation of resources in all three tiers of the government. There is usually an essential question about "who gets what of the national cake, when and how" because the development of a formula for just and fair distribution of resources is what usually takes center stage in socio-political and economic public debates. In most federations, the "constitutional wrangling" most often arises from the sharing of resources, as there are both relatively rich and poor sectors in the constituent units of the federation.

#### **2.4. Regional boundary disputes**

One of the most critical challenges facing the reconstruction of Somalia's federal state has been the demarcation of disputed areas along clan boundaries. For instance, the South West State of Somalia claims that six regions belong to it: Lower Shabelle; Bakol; Bay; Gedo; Lower Jubbaland Middle Juba. There are also similar boundary disputes between the self-proclaimed State of Somaliland and the Puntland state over the regions of Sool and Sanaag. Galmudug and Puntland states also have border disputes (Mohamed 2016).

According to Lockhart (2014), what is fascinating about federalism is the uniqueness of each country's own version, suited to its particular shared interests and circumstances. Switzerland, for example, is an extraordinary example of a state that has adopted a successful version of federalism to build a lasting peace and end conflict among its "multi-ethno-linguistic-religious society." Somalia is not, however, a multi-ethnic state, which is the "theoretical justification for a country to combine self-rule with a shared rule." Unlike other federal states in the world, there are more uniting factors in Somalia than the dividing lines.

#### **2.5. The status of Mogadishu**

Mogadishu, the biggest city and probably one of the oldest cities in Somalia, has been plagued by violence and destruction for the past three decades. It used to be inhabited by



diverse people from all corners of Somalia. Some Somalis questioned the possibility of Mogadishu gaining the status and glory it used to enjoy several decades ago amidst claims that Mogadishu has turned into a “clan enclave” that can no longer “symbolize” the national identity of the Somali people (Farah 2015).

The status of Mogadishu as the capital city will be decided through a constitution review process by the two chambers of Somalia’s federal parliament. As far as the status of Mogadishu is concerned, there are two points of view on this issue. One argument proposes that Mogadishu remains the capital city of the country and comes under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government of Somalia. The other argument considers that Mogadishu be given a federal-member-state status. The arguments are held both by opponents and proponents from within the Somali political elite and the general populace (The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies 2017).

There are many capital cities whose countries have adopted a federal system where the capital is part of a province and has its representation in the parliamentary seats. For example, Ottawa is the capital city of Canada, while also a part of the Ontario Province. Mogadishu, being the home of many Somalis should, therefore, not be underrepresented in the federal structure while smaller cities with less than one-tenth of the population in Mogadishu have more seats in Somalia’s federal parliament (Ulosso 2010).

### 3. Methodology

The target group of this study comprised Mogadishu residents who have some experience with federal government, state members, and other districts in Somalia. We utilized social media users as the sample frame of this study.

The research design for the current study involved a survey to tap on the uniqueness of gathering primary data for unbiased representation of the population of interest, and for the standardization of measurement. The study employed a questionnaire consisting of 69 items as the main instrument for data collection. Before the collection of the data, the researchers pilot tested the tool and checked the internal consistency of the items and found that the tool was fine and easy to understand, since we translated into the Somali language.



Descriptive techniques were used in this investigation. Since descriptive is conclusive in nature, meaning that descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be used for statistical inference on the target audience through data analysis. In this survey, the researchers gathered the data from different sectors including Politicians, Members of Parliament, University lecturers, Public Servants and Scholars. Also, the researchers collected the data from Mogadishu residents and regional capital cities.

This study employed purposive convenience sampling due to lack of availability of the information of the population. However, the study selected participants from five Federal Member States, Somaliland and Benadir Region to provide somewhat representativeness regarding issues under study. The prime objective of this study was to examine the perceptions and attitudes of Somalis as well as the related challenges of adopting federalism. The study used a self-administered online survey. A total of 1,073 respondents nationwide participated in this study.

A reliability test was conducted for the major study variables, i.e. perception of federalism adoption, legislative power sharing, executive power sharing, judicial power sharing, and fiscal federalism. This was to ensure that the items were sufficiently reliable and coherently captured the intended meaning. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to test the reliability of these variables.

A variable is considered reliable if its items receive a score of above 0.70, while a score of 0.50 is acceptable in exploratory contexts. The study also tested whether the normality assumptions were achievable before conducting additional tests. The results suggested that all variables demonstrated an acceptable level of reliability: perception of federalism adoption ( $\alpha=0.703$ ); fiscal federalism ( $\alpha=0.662$ ); executive power sharing ( $\alpha=0.649$ ); judicial power sharing ( $\alpha=0.611$ ); and legislative power sharing ( $\alpha=0.597$ ). Skewness and kurtosis were employed to examine normality. A variable is considered to fulfill normality assumptions if the scores for skewness and kurtosis are below 2 and 7, respectively. Scores for both techniques were below the required threshold. As the study variables, were sufficiently reliable (see Table A1 in the Appendix), further analysis could be performed.

Research ethics the investigators considered included being honest with the potential respondents regarding all aspects of the project, such as providing clear and concise description of the study to make sure the respondents were fully informed about the project. Additionally, the researchers utilized all the information gathered only for the



intended purpose of the study. The investigators signed a pledge of confidentiality that none of the responses would be connected to any identifying information. The study participants were informed about this and were then politely asked to fill out the online form.

## 4. Data analysis and findings

### 4.1. Demographic profile of respondents

The demographic profile of the study participants is presented in Table 1. The majority (89.5%) of respondents were male (10.5% were female). The participants' ages ranged from below 20 years to above 50 years, with the highest percentage (59.6%) aged 20–30 years, followed by 31–40 years (24.7%). Very few participants were below 20 (4.4%) or above 41 (11.3%) years old.

Regarding educational background, 55% of the participants had a bachelor's degree and one-third held a master's degree. A very small number (2.2%) of the participants had a PhD, while the second least percentage (8.6%) held only secondary education certificate. Approximately 50% of the respondents were married, 48% were single, and only 1.5% were either divorced or widowed. Regarding regional background, all states were well represented: Benadir (24%); Galmudug (17.1%); Somaliland (14%); Hirshabeelle (13.1%); Puntland (12.9%); Jubbaland (10.8%); and South West State (8.1%).

*Table 1: Demographic profile*

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	960	89.5
	Female	113	10.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Age</b>	Less than 20	47	4.4
	20–30 years	639	59.6
	31–40 years	265	24.7
	41–50 years	81	7.5
	Above 50	41	3.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Education Level</b>	Secondary	92	8.6
	Bachelor	590	55.0
	Master	354	33.0
	PhD	24	2.2
	Other	13	1.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	515	48.0
	Married	542	50.5
	Widow/divorced	16	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>State of Origin</b>	Jubbaland	116	10.8
	South West State	87	8.1
	Benadir	257	24.0
	Hirshabeelle	141	13.1
	Galmudug	184	17.1
	Puntland	138	12.9
	Somaliland	150	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100.00</b>	



#### 4.2. Reasons and potential benefits for adopting a federalism system

Four items were made available to the respondents to solicit their feedback on possible reasons for adopting federalism in Somalia. As shown in Table A2 in the Appendix, 44% of respondents believed that federalism was suitable in Somalia, compared to 56% who believed the opposite. More than half of the participants (56.8%) believed that a federal system was a laboratory for democracy and 56.7% believed it strengthened regional economic autonomy. About six in ten of respondents believed that federalism was an obstacle to Somali unity.

#### 4.3. Potential benefits of a federalism system

Close to half (47.1%) of the participants believed that a federalism system could help overcome civil war and inter-clan conflicts, while 44.2% believed that this system encouraged a separation of powers and prevented dictatorship, which the country had been experiencing during military rule (see Table A3 in the Appendix). In addition, almost, four in ten of the participants believed federalism contributed to democratization and enhanced political participation among citizens. Finally, more than 23% of the respondents believed that adopting federalism kept the country together and boosted pluralism, i.e. leadership access and minority representation in government.

#### 4.4. Perceptions of federalism adoption in Somalia

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for perceptions of the federal system's adoption. Almost two-thirds of respondents believed federalism boosted competition between regional states, which in turn raised economic prosperity (64%). In contrast, almost two-thirds (62.4%) believed that federalism led to the uneven distribution of wealth among the states. Moreover, respondents also provided positive feedback regarding federalism enhancing regional accountability (59.4%), while about six in ten, perceived federalism as having a negative impact as it could erode national unity and lead to secession. Generally, however, respondents provided positive feedback on these items, as 56.6% believed that federalism led to peace and political stability, 56.4% that it rendered clan reliance obsolete, and 59% that it fostered state loyalty. They also perceive federalism adoption positively as an effective governmental system for Somalia (56.8%). Finally, the aggregated concept of perception was high: 60% of the total respondents agreed on the overall concept.

*Table 2: Perceptions on federalism adoption in Somalia*

Item label	Items (N=1,073)	Mean	SD	%
<b>Percep1</b>	Federal system leads to peace and political stability	2.83	1.52	56.6
<b>Percep2</b>	Federalism enhances regional accountability	2.97	1.40	59.4
<b>Percep3</b>	Federalism renders clan reliance obsolete	2.82	1.30	56.4
<b>Percep4</b>	Federalism erodes national unity and leads to secession	3.01	1.37	60.2
<b>Percep5</b>	Federalism fosters state loyalties	2.95	1.22	59.0
<b>Percep6</b>	Competition between states raises economic prosperity	3.20	1.34	64.0
<b>Percep7</b>	Federalism leads to uneven distribution of wealth among states	3.12	1.25	62.4
<b>Percep8</b>	Federalism is an effective governmental system for Somalia	2.84	1.51	56.8
	<b>Overall perception (composite variable)</b>	<b>2.97</b>	<b>0.780</b>	<b>59.4</b>

#### 4.5. Federalism challenges and solutions

The study also examined both internal and external challenging factors, as well as applicable solutions, to the federalization of the country. Table 3 presents the prominent internal and external challenges as well as potential solutions as perceived by the study respondents. The top three internal challenges facing federalism were perceived to be a poor understanding of federalism (71.2%), clan-based federalism (64%), and political corruption (49.5%). Respondents also raised concerns over the poor and deteriorating relationships between the Federal Government and regional states (46.8%), constitutional confusion (45.6%), and misunderstandings between the government and the public regarding matters associated with federalism (36.9%). However, boundary disputes (21.7%)



and lack of resources (20.9%) were not perceived as pertinent factors hindering the adoption of federalism.

Regarding external challenges, the study participants demonstrated more positive perceptions of the potential external factors that could influence the country's adoption of a federal system. Table 3 reveals that the two top external challenges were conflicting interests of the international community regarding Somalia (83%) and constant interventions from neighboring countries (74%). In addition, about one-third of the participants believed that insufficient funds, particularly from the donors as the current Federal Government is partially funded by these donors, could be a potential external challenge (33.2%).

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a number of items pertaining to probable solutions. As shown in Table 3, participants perceived the formation of honest and reliable justice system (66.5%), the establishment of constitutional courts (51.7%), and the finalization of constitutional reforms (48%) as the top contingent solutions to the current federal crisis in the country. Allowing the public to vote for their representatives for local, state, and federal posts (46.7%), organizing a public referendum on federalism adoption (32%), and choosing the right type of federalism (37.8%) were among other possible solutions. Only about one quarter of the respondents agreed that creating strong relationships with neighboring countries (20.3%) and the international community (18.4%) were viable solutions.

*Table 3: Federalism challenges and solutions*

Items	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Most challenging internal factors (N=1,073)</b>		
Misunderstanding between the people and government	396	36.9
Poor knowledge of federalism	763	71.2
Clan-based federalism	686	64
Political corruption	531	49.5
Demarcation disputes (boundary disputes)	233	21.7
Poor relationship between federal and regions	502	46.8
Constitutional confusion	489	45.6
Lack of resources (shortage of funds)	224	20.9
<b>Most challenging external factors (N=1,073)</b>		
Different interests of international community	890	83
Intervention of neighboring countries	793	74
Insufficient funds from donors	356	33.2
<b>Most appropriate solutions (N=1,073)</b>		
Formation of honest and reliable justice system	713	66.5
Creating strong relationship with international community	197	18.4
Creating strong relationship with neighboring countries	218	20.3
Choosing the right type of federalism	405	37.8
Finalizing constitutional reforms	515	48.0
Creating constitutional courts	554	51.7
Referendum for federalism adoption	343	32.0
Democratic election (one man, one vote)	501	46.7

#### 4.6. Status of Mogadishu City

The study attempted to gauge the respondents' perceptions of the status of the capital city of Mogadishu because of the existence of different and conflicting ideas, apparently



represented in media narratives and the political discourses of elites from government and opposition blocs. The results in Table A4 in the Appendix reveal that 69.1% of the nationwide participants agreed that Mogadishu should remain a federal city, directly administered and financed by the Federal Government. In contrast, about a quarter of the participants felt that the city should be a city in a state (24.7%) while one-fifth believed it should be a regional state (Benadir state) with the same mandate as other regions (21.5%).

#### 4.7. Power sharing

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement towards seven items that measured legislative power sharing. The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4 suggest that seven out of ten respondents agreed that laws of the country should be formulated and enacted by the Federal Government or that it should formulate and enact framework legislations, leaving details to the federal member states. Also, slightly more than two-third of the participants agreed that both levels of government (federal and state) should clearly have exclusive, concurrent, joint, and shared powers of law making with regard to each level's relevance of service provision.

Respondents also agreed upon the necessity of upper-house representation, standing for the interests of federal member states (67.8%). Six in ten respondents believed that the representation may vary depending on population, area, or revenue, while they also provided similar positive feedback on equal representation in the second chamber, regardless of their size and source of revenue. Finally, only half the respondents agreed that every state member should formulate and approve its own laws independently, achieving the lowest score among items in this variable (52.8%).



Table 4: Power sharing

Item label	Legislative power sharing items (N=1,073)	Mean	SD	%
Legis_power1	Laws of the country should be formulated and enacted by the Federal Government	3.62	1.205	72.4
Legis_power2	Central government should formulate and enact framework legislations leaving details to the federal member states	3.48	1.238	69.6
Legis_power3	Both levels of government (federal and state) should clearly have exclusive, concurrent, joint and shared powers of law making with regard to each level's relevance of service provision	3.26	1.322	65.2
Legis_power4	Every state member should formulate and approve its own laws independently	2.64	1.401	52.8
Legis_power5	Upper-house legislative is necessary to represent and stand for interests of federal member states	3.39	1.304	67.8
Legis_power6	Federal member states should have equal representation in the second chamber regardless of their size and source of revenue	3.06	1.316	61.2
Legis_power7	Upper-house representation may vary, depending on population, area, or revenue	3.22	1.305	64.4
Item label	Executive power sharing items (N=1,073)	Mean	SD	%
Exec_power1	The country should have parallel administrative institutions at federal and state levels, with each of them implementing their own programs	2.73	1.379	54.6
Exec_power2	State administrations should implement laws and policies made by the central government	3.70	1.270	74.0
Exec_power3	Federal and federal member states should cooperate and implement together	3.82	1.191	76.4
Exec_power4	Division of power and responsibilities should be based on state demand and capacity	3.22	1.294	64.4



Exec_power5	Division of power and responsibilities should be shared equally	3.07	1.376	61.4
Exec_power6	All armed forces and intelligence should be under the Federal Government	4.05	1.278	81.0
Exec_power7	States may have regional police	3.75	1.196	75.0
<b>Item label</b>	<b>Judicial power sharing items (N=1,073)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>%</b>
	According to the three layers of the government			
Jud-power1	(federal, state, and local), each of them should have its own court system	2.95	1.384	59.0
Jud-power2	There should be a unified judicial system in the whole country	3.79	1.240	75.8
Jud-power3	States should have trial and appeal courts only while the Federal Government has the supreme court	3.56	1.229	71.2
Jud-power4	There should be one constitutional court	3.92	1.189	78.4
Jud-power5	Each state should have its own constitutional court that protects the regional constitution only	2.83	1.377	56.6
Jud-power6	Somalia should have federal prosecution services only	3.13	1.159	62.6
Jud-power7	Each state should have its own prosecution services	2.99	1.227	59.8

Executive power sharing was the second dimension of power sharing variable measured, with seven items using a five point Likert scale for agreement/disagreement. Table 4 reveals that the majority (81%) of respondents agreed that all armed forces and intelligence should be under the Federal Government. However, they also believed that federal member states could have regional police (75%). Regarding policy implementation, about three-quarters of participants agreed that the Federal Government and federal member states should cooperate and implement policies together, while states basically implemented the laws and policies made by the central government.



Remarkably, the division of power received much contradictory feedback from the study participants. Almost one-third perceived that the division of power and responsibilities should be based on state demands and capacity or shared equally between federal member states. Finally, the item regarding having parallel federal and state administrative institutions received the lowest score (56.6%).

The final dimension of power sharing concerned the judicial system, using seven items. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with these items using a five-point Likert scale. Table 4 shows that more than three-quarters (78.4%) of respondents believed that the country should have only one constitutional court and, in general, a unified judicial system in the whole country (75.8%). Respondents agreed that state members should have trial and appeal courts only, while the Federal Government should maintain the Supreme Court (71.2%).

Nevertheless, about two-thirds (62.6%) believed that the country should have prosecution services at the federal level, while close to six in ten believed that each state should have its own prosecution services. On the other hand, 59% of participants suggested that the three levels of government (federal, state, and local) should maintain their own court system. Finally, more than half (56.6%) of respondents believed that each state should have its own constitutional court, protecting the regional constitution only.

#### 4.8. Fiscal federalism

Fiscal federalism concerns the management and distribution of resources including tax, natural resources, and debt. This variable was measured with 12 items. As shown in Table 5, around three-quarters of participants agreed that the Federal Government should manage and take the revenue from natural resources. Two-thirds of participants believed that the revenue from natural resources should be shared equally by all states (65.4%). In contrast, below average, 49.4% of respondents believed that natural resources should be managed by regional governments, with 50.4% believing that this revenue should belong only to the state of origin.

*Table 5: Fiscal federalism*

Item label	Items (N=1,073)	Mean	SD	%
Fiscal1	All taxes should be assessed and collected by the Federal Government	3.11	1.451	62.2
Fiscal2	Federal and state governments should assess and collect taxes together	3.39	1.334	67.8
Fiscal3	Each level should have exclusive tax collections	3.12	1.255	62.4
Fiscal4	Revenue from natural resources should belong to the state in which they have been found	2.52	1.296	50.4
Fiscal5	Natural resources should be managed by the regional government of where they have been found	2.47	1.308	49.4
Fiscal6	Revenue from natural resources should belong to the central government	3.47	1.369	69.4
Fiscal7	Natural resources should be managed by central government	3.83	1.261	76.6
Fiscal8	Revenue from natural resources should be shared by all states equally	3.27	1.366	65.4
Fiscal9	The central government should take largest portion of revenue from natural resources	3.44	1.303	68.8
Fiscal10	State governments can borrow money from international banks	2.25	1.374	45.0
Fiscal11	Provinces can borrow money from other provinces within the country	3.23	1.174	64.6
Fiscal12	State governments can borrow money from national banks only	3.44	1.122	68.8
	Overall variable	3.13	0.600	

Table 5 also describes the feedback related to tax management and loans. About two-thirds (67.8%) believed that the Federal Government and states should assess and collect



taxes together and that each level of government should have exclusive tax collections (62.4%). In contrast, two-thirds believed that all taxes should be assessed and collected by the Federal Government only (62.2%).

Finally, in relation to loans, about seven in ten respondents believed that state governments should only borrow money from national banks (68.8%), as well as other states within the country (64.6%). Only four in ten agreed that state governments should borrow money from international banks (45%).

#### 4.9. Research objectives and hypothesis testing

##### 4.9.1. Bivariate correlations among the study variables

Bivariate correlation was conducted to examine the inter-correlations among the major study variables (Table 6): perceptions of federalism adoption; legislative power sharing; executive power sharing; judicial power sharing; and fiscal federalism. The perceptions of federalism adoption were found to positively and strongly correlated with legislative power sharing ( $r=0.500$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) and positively and moderately correlated with executive power sharing ( $r=0.403$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), judicial power sharing ( $r=0.366$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and fiscal federalism ( $r=0.310$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This indicates that those who demonstrated higher agreement towards federalism adoption also demonstrated higher agreement level towards both power sharing dimensions and fiscal federalism.

Table 6: Inter-correlations among major study variables

No.	Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1	Perception of federalism adoption	1				
2	Legislative power sharing	0.500**	1			
3	Executive power sharing	0.403**	0.589**	1		
4	Judicial power sharing	0.366**	0.492**	0.628**	1	
5	Fiscal federalism	0.310**	0.419**	0.472**	0.476**	1

Note: \*\*  $p < 0.000$ .

The dimensions of power sharing were also found to have higher positive inter-correlation indices. The results suggested that legislative power sharing was strongly correlated with executive power sharing ( $r=0.589$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), but moderately correlated with



judicial power sharing ( $r=0.492, p=0.000$ ). In addition, executive and judicial power sharing were strongly and positively correlated ( $r=0.628, p=0.000$ ). Finally, fiscal federalism was found to have a positive and moderate relationship with perceptions of federalism adoption ( $r=0.310, p=0.000$ ), legislative power sharing ( $r=0.419, p=0.000$ ), executive power sharing ( $r=0.472, p=0.000$ ), and judicial power sharing ( $r=0.476, p=0.000$ ).

#### 4.9.2. Differences in perceptions on power sharing

A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to examine differences among the study respondents in terms of their perceptions of power sharing dimensions. The results, presented in Table 7, showed a significant difference between legislative and executive power sharing ( $t=-12.01, p=0.000$ ). This means that the respondents showed higher levels of agreement towards executive power sharing ( $M=3.48, SD=0.729$ ) than towards legislative power sharing ( $M=3.24, SD=0.703$ ). In addition, a significant difference between legislative power sharing and judicial power sharing was observed ( $t=-3.41, p=0.001$ ) and between executive power sharing and judicial power sharing ( $t=8.83, p=0.000$ ). This indicates that the study participants perceived judicial power sharing ( $M=3.31, SD=0.690$ ) more positively than legislative power sharing ( $M=3.24, SD=0.703$ ), but not executive power sharing ( $M=3.48, SD=0.729$ ).

Table 7: Paired sample *t*-test for respondents' perceptions of power sharing

No.	Variables	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
Pair 1	Legislative power sharing	3.24	0.703	-12.01	1072	0.000
	Executive power sharing	3.48	0.729			
Pair 2	Legislative power sharing	3.24	0.703	-3.41	1072	0.001
	Judicial power sharing	3.31	0.690			
Pair 3	Executive power sharing	3.48	0.729	8.83	1072	0.000
	Judicial power sharing	3.31	0.690			



#### 4.9.3. Demographic differences in perceptions of federalism adoption, power sharing dimensions, and fiscal federalism

The study examined demographic differences in relation to the major study variables of perceptions on federalism adoption, power sharing dimensions, and fiscal federalism. One-way ANOVA test was performed with a post hoc Scheffe test with state of origin as variable of interest to determine if participants from different regions held the same opinions on federalism-related concepts.

Regarding the perception of federalism adoption (Table 8), the results suggested that respondents from different states differed significantly in their perceptions of federalism adoption ( $F_{6,1066}=7.320, p=0.000$ ). The post hoc Scheffe test determined differences within categories and suggested that respondents from the Puntland region ( $M=3.26, SD=0.757$ ) had a more positive perception of federalism adoption than those from the Benadir ( $M=2.96, SD=0.768$ ), Galmudug ( $M=2.87, SD=0.748$ ), and Somaliland regions ( $M=2.72, SD=0.829$ ). Moreover, respondents from South West State demonstrated higher positive response on this variable compared to those from Somaliland region ( $M=2.72, SD=.829$ ). The rest of the respondents hold similar opinions on the federalism adoption.

Table 8: One-Way ANOVA and post hoc Scheffe test showing differences among state of origin groups in terms of perception on federalism adoption

Variable	State of origin	N	M	SD	F	df	P	Comparison
Perception of federalism adoption	Jubbaland	116	2.98	0.797	7.320	6, 1066	0.000	South West
	South West State	87	3.15	0.711				-Somaliland,
	Benadir	257	2.96	0.768				Puntland-
	Hirshabeelle	141	2.97	0.731				Benadir,
	Galmudug	184	2.87	0.748				Puntland-
	Puntland	138	3.26	0.757				Galmudug,
	Somaliland	150	2.72	0.829				Puntland-
Total	1073	2.97	0.780	Somaliland				

Regarding the dimensions of power sharing, ANOVA tests were also conducted to examine whether state of origin had an impact on perceptions held by the respondents towards legislative, executive and judicial power sharing. A statistically significant difference regarding legislative power sharing in terms of state of origin was observed ( $F_{6,1066}=6.128, p=0.005$ ) (Table 9). The post hoc test revealed a significant difference



between respondents from Somaliland and the states of Hirshabeelle and Puntland. This means that respondents from Puntland (M=3.34, SD=0.780) and Hirshabeelle (M=3.33, SD=0.703) held more positive opinions on legislative power sharing than Somaliland respondents, who demonstrated less agreement to the items (M=3.05, SD=0.702).

*Table 9: One-Way ANOVA and post hoc Scheffe test showing differences among state of origin groups in terms of power sharing dimensions*

Variable	State of origin	N	M	SD	F	df	P	Comparison
<b>Legislative power sharing</b>	Jubbaland	116	3.17	0.735	3.128	6, 1066	0.005	Somaliland–Hirshabeelle, Somaliland–Puntland
	South West State	87	3.25	0.642				
	Benadir	257	3.23	0.723				
	Hirshabeelle	141	3.33	0.703				
	Galmudug	184	3.30	0.588				
	Puntland	138	3.34	0.780				
	Somaliland	150	3.05	0.702				
<b>Total</b>		<b>1073</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>0.703</b>				
<b>Executive power sharing</b>	Jubbaland	116	3.47	0.762	3.305	6,1066	0.003	Somaliland–South West, Somaliland–Hirshabeelle
	South West State	87	3.67	0.692				
	Benadir	257	3.44	0.697				
	Hirshabeelle	141	3.57	0.655				
	Galmudug	184	3.48	0.646				
	Puntland	138	3.52	0.787				
	Somaliland	150	3.29	0.845				
Total	1073	3.48	0.729					
<b>Judicial power sharing</b>	Jubbaland	116	3.18	0.702	2.255	6, 1066	0.036	No significant differences were observed
	South West State	87	3.45	0.643				
	Benadir	257	3.32	0.652				
	Hirshabeelle	141	3.40	0.625				
	Galmudug	184	3.30	0.599				
	Puntland	138	3.34	0.777				
	Somaliland	150	3.21	0.821				
Total	1073	3.31	0.690					



Executive power sharing was tested in the same way. The results presented in Table 9 reveals significant difference among respondents from different states regarding executive power sharing ( $F_{6,1066}=3.305$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). The results of the post hoc test reveals revealed significant differences between respondents from Somaliland compared to those from the South West and Hirshabeele sates. This denotes that respondents from the South West ( $M=3.67$ ,  $SD=0.692$ ) and Hirshabeele ( $M=3.57$ ,  $SD=0.655$ ) sates had more positive perceptions towards executive power sharing than respondents from Somaliland ( $M=3.29$ ,  $SD=0.845$ ). Respondents from the remaining regions held similar opinions regarding this variable.

The results of the ANOVA analysis judicial power sharing (Table 9) showed a significant difference among respondents from different states ( $F_{6,1066}=2.255$ ,  $p=0.036$ ). However, further post hoc testing did not produce any significant differences within the categories. This indicates that the differences among respondents from different states were minimal. Thus, it can be concluded that there were no significant differences among respondents regarding their perceptions of judicial power sharing.

Fiscal federalism was the last variable tested against state of origin (see Table 10). Results revealed that respondents from different states were statistically different in terms of their perceptions of fiscal federalism ( $F_{6,1066}=2.643$ ,  $p=0.015$ ). However, these differences were not across all regions. The post hoc test revealed a significant difference between Benadir and Somaliland, where the respondents from the former ( $M=3.19$ ,  $SD=0.571$ ) held more positive opinions towards fiscal federalism than the respondents from the latter ( $M=2.99$ ,  $SD=0.721$ ). The remaining states held similar opinions on this variable.



Table 10: One-Way ANOVA and post hoc Scheffe test showing differences among state of origin groups in terms of fiscal federalism

Variable	State of origin	N	M	SD	F	df	p	Comparison
<b>Fiscal federalism</b>	Jubbaland	116	3.04	0.672	2.643	6,1066	0.015	Somaliland– Benadir
	South West State	87	3.16	0.596				
	Benadir	257	3.19	0.571				
	Hirshabeelle	141	3.18	0.560				
	Galmudug	184	3.16	0.522				
	Puntland	138	3.11	0.561				
	Somaliland	150	2.99	0.721				
	Total	1073	3.13	0.600				

## 5. Discussion of the findings

The purpose of study was to highlight the challenges and advantages of applying federalism to Somalia as well as the Somali people's perceptions of the suitability of a federal system; the discussion and analysis of various federalism models was also provided. In accordance with existing literature on federalism in Africa (for example, that conducted by Fessha 2010), this study has shown that the logic for federal arrangement in post-conflict Somalia has been to reconcile the conflicting interests of the clan-based Somali society, and to maintain the country's political and territorial integrity.

In reference to the significant results of the study, it was found that the Somali people are still afar from having a deep understanding of a federal system. The findings of the study also suggested that there are both possible negative and positive impacts of federalism in Somalia in terms of national unity, distribution of wealth, economic prosperity, and several other important issues regarding the people's overall perception of federalism. In addition, the results provided further evidence to support the notion that poor knowledge of federalism, combined with clan-based federalism (internal issues) and the conflicting interests of the international community and neighboring countries (external



factors), are among the major challenges that face the adoption of a federal system. In federal African states, courts have played a leading role in arbitrating intergovernmental conflicts (Dickovick 2014; Kimenyi et al. 2010). In Nigeria, for example, the Supreme Court has been involved in federal–state conflict litigation and arbitration (Suberu 2009). In line with these studies the results of this research showed that an honest and reliable justice system and the creation of a constitutional court are necessary for the smooth functioning of, and presumably reducing friction among, the Federal Government and its member states. However, it must be acknowledged that there is considerable debate both among Somali political actors and scholars regarding the status of Mogadishu. The results of the study demonstrated, to some extent, these disagreements among the political class and the general populace.

As far as legislative power sharing is concerned, the results showed that the consent of a substantial number of the people rests on giving more constitutional power to legislate to the federal parliament. This does not conflict with the notion of decentralization and the substantive nature of federalism and power sharing, as there is an upper house in the parliament that represents the voice of the member states when it comes to the matter of legislation. But there seemed to be a slight difference in the case of executive power sharing, as the results showed conflicting opinions regarding the executive distribution of power, which might be due to the poor understanding of federalism-related contradictory issues in the principle of the separation of powers. Similarly, judicial power distribution was found to demonstrate a relatively slight level of conflict regarding the creation of a constitutional court, both at the federal level as well as the state level.

The adoption of federalism in Somalia faces many considerable challenges, one of which is the management of resources between the central government and the federal member states, as well as among the states themselves, because some states claim that the distribution of wealth should be based on size rather than equally, while others already had access to more physical resources than others. The results revealed a difference of opinion as to how the fiscal revenue from all sorts of tax and other non-tax sources should be distributed. This conflicting scenario, which is evident in the study results, might lead to fiscal wrangling that could possibly cause major disruptions in the fragile peace process of this war-ravaged country. Problems related to the equitable division of national resources, such as revenue-sharing or the distribution of large, but regionally concentrated, resources,



are constant points of political contention in federal African states (Suberu 2009). In Somalia, for that reason, fiscal-federalism issues, as well as debt financing through borrowing both by the central government and the federal member states, need to be dealt with and considered seriously both in the federal constitution and the other laws of the land.

Regarding the correlation results of the major variables in the study, it was found that federalism adoption was positively and significantly correlated with legislative power distribution, executive power sharing, judicial power distribution, and fiscal federalism. Similarly, all dimensions of power distribution were found to be correlated significantly and positively among themselves and with all other variables in the study. This is in line with several other previous studies. Conversely, the study result also suggests that there was significant difference among the dimensions of power sharing.

Despite ongoing criticism, the federalization process in Somalia continued with the hope that it will end the decades-long civil war that has claimed the lives of thousands of innocent Somalis. The current federal states cut across “clan lines” such as Puntland and Galmudug states (Tawane 2017).

Comparison of the results from the ANOVA analyses supports previous literature on Somalia’s adoption of federalism. There is an argument that state of Puntland, and most of its residents, support the creation of a federal state more than the other states in Somalia, although it has often been claimed that the inhabitants of the South West state of Somalia suggested the adoption of a federal system in early 1960s following Somalia’s independence.

There seems to be considerable consensus between the results of the current study and the previous notion of federalism with respect to its proponents and opponents among Somaliland, Puntland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Benadir Province, South West State, and Jubbaland. The desire for the adoption of the researched key variables of federalism (power distribution, perception of federal adoption, and fiscal federalism) was relatively higher in Puntland and South West State but relatively lower in Somaliland, Galmudug, and Benadir regions.



## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

Subsequent to decades of dictatorship and 28 years of chaos, Somalia adopted a federal system as a governance method to bring back trust and resolve grievances among Somali people. This new system has faced both internal and external challenges, as found in this study.

According to the research findings, poor knowledge of federalism, considering federalism as a clan-based system, and political corruption are the most challenging factors to federalism adoption in Somalia. Other challenges relate to the provisional Somali constitution, such as power distribution, fiscal management, regional boundary disputes, and the status of Mogadishu.

Thus, the formation of an honest and reliable justice system, creating constitutional courts, and finalizing constitutional reforms are the most appropriate solutions, as suggested in the study.

To overcome the above challenges, this paper provides the following recommendations to the Somali leadership both at federal and state level:

- 1) Finalize the national constitution to put an end to conflicts between the various levels of government (i.e. between the center and the peripheries).
- 2) Make every effort to forge a national reconciliation (politically and socially) to put an end to accusations among various sections of society.
- 3) One of the primary federal challenges in Somalia is the public's poor understanding of the federalism. Both the Federal Government of Somalia and its member states should provide proper civic education and public awareness, which can play a significant role in the successful adoption of federalism in Somalia.
- 4) The Federal Government should facilitate the federalization of the governance by giving the state administrations major roles in making decisions regarding socioeconomic development and the building of democratic structures
- 5) The federal state authorities should accelerate political as well as fiscal decentralization by creating local administration at village level and also ensuring the participation of the local communities.



- 6) Communities and polities in each federal member state should gain the freedom to choose their leaders and the Federal Government should refrain from intervention of the federal states affairs.
- 7) The most convincing proposition is that post-conflict state building is a bottom-up process. Somali authorities must embark genuine reconciliation, which effectively addresses and rehabilitates clan/tribal grievances to achieve inclusive federal polity in Somalia.
- 8) Poor governance (i.e. rampant corruption and nepotism in public institutions) is a leading challenge to Somalia's federalization agenda and its recovery process, as this study revealed. Somali officials should take a critical stance against corruption by taking and implementing anti-graft measures to restore the country's prestige in the eyes and minds of its people and strength their hopes and aspirations for recovery.
- 9) The federal governance system was adopted to bridge the trust deficit among Somali people and reconstitute the unity and territorial integrity of the Somali Republic. In this regard, the Federal Government of Somalia should, in good faith, re-start the unity talks with Somaliland.
- 10) The Federal Government of Somalia as well as Federal Member States should commission, and utilize, more studies related to federalism and state formation.

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**Acknowledgement:** The authors wish to thank SIMAD University, Center for Research and Development for funding this research project under Research Grant No-SU-DA-RG-2018-001.

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## Appendix

*Table A1: Reliability and normality tests*

No.	Variables	Number of items	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's alpha
1.	Perception of adoption of federalism	8	2.9682	0.77950	-0.172	-0.425	0.703
2.	Legislative power sharing	7	3.2375	0.70303	-0.380	0.286	0.597
3.	Executive power sharing	7	3.4760	0.72937	-0.898	1.374	0.649
4.	Judicial power sharing	7	3.3106	0.69030	-0.564	1.223	0.611
5.	Fiscal federalism	12	3.1281	0.60012	-0.328	2.025	0.662

*Table A2: Reasons for adopting federalism system*

No.	Items	Categories			
		Yes		No	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.	Federalism is not suitable to Somalia	600	55.9	473	44.1
2.	Federal system is a laboratory for democracy	609	56.8	464	43.2
3.	Federalism is an obstacle to Somali unity	629	58.6	444	41.4
4.	Federalism strengthens regional economic autonomy	608	56.7	465	43.3

*Table A3: Potential benefits of federalism system*

Items (N=1,073)	Frequency	Percentage
It contributes to democratization and political participation among citizens	432	40.3
It overcomes civil war and inter-clan conflicts	505	47.1
It is a bridge that can keep the country from falling apart	251	23.4
It encourages pluralism – leadership access and minority involvement in government	249	23.2
It encourages separation of powers and prevents tyranny	474	44.2

*Table A4: Status of Mogadishu City*

Items (N=1,073)	Frequency	Percentage
Federal city which is directly administered and financed by the federal government	741	69.1
Regional state, with the same mandate as other regions	230	21.5
City in state	265	24.7