T.C.
ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

FEDERALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN SOMALIA

PhD THESIS

Mustafa Mohamed Ali

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Ankara, 2024

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Supervisor
Prof. Dr. Yılmaz Bingöl

Ankara, 2024

CONFIRMATION PAGE

The thesis titled “Federalism and National Identity in Somalia”, prepared by Mustafa Mohamed Ali, has been approved unanimously by the following jury members as a PhD thesis at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Jury Member</th><th>Institution</th><th>Signature</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Prof. Dr. Yılmaz Bingöl</td><td rowspan="2">Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Approved ☑</td><td>Denied ☐</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assist. Prof. Başak Akar Özer</td><td rowspan="2">Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Approved ☑</td><td>Denied ☐</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assist. Prof. Murat Ulubay</td><td rowspan="2">Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Approved ☑</td><td>Denied ☐</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assoc. Prof. İdil Tunçer Kılavuz</td><td rowspan="2">İstanbul Medeniyet University</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Approved ☑</td><td>Denied ☐</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assoc. Prof. Emrah Ayhan</td><td rowspan="2">Anadolu University</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Approved ☑</td><td>Denied ☐</td></tr>
</table>

Thesis Defense Date: 09/02/2024

I confirm that the requirements for the PhD thesis at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, have been fulfilled.

Doç. Dr. Muhammet Enes KALA
Director of the Social Sciences Institute

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work, that I have not engaged any unethical behaviour violating patent rights and copyright throughout all stages from planning to writing, that I have obtained all the information in this thesis within academic and ethical rules, and that I have cited all the information and opinions used in this thesis.

Date: 01/02/2024

Mustafa Mohamed Ali

DEDICATION

To my parents, who laid the foundation for my academic journey, and whose unwavering support, sacrifices, and inspiration have been my guiding light that led me to where I am today.

To my dear wife, who selflessly cared for our children and managed our home, allowing me the time and focus to immerse myself in this study.

To my children, whose laughter and innocent smiles have been my driving force.

To my country, with a steadfast commitment to making a meaningful contribution, even in a small way, to overcoming its enduring state-building challenges.

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ABSTRACT

Somalia is grappling with the complexities of post-colonial statehood, deeply marred by a legacy of authoritarian rule, which has left a significant imprint on its contemporary social and political dynamics. Following the collapse of the central government in 1991, Somalia's political landscape has been restructured into a federal system, ostensibly to address a protracted clan-based power struggle and to foster a sense of national unity. Employing a quantitative research methodology, this study examines the correlation between the degrees of autonomy within federal constituent units and various dimensions of national identity, including citizens' sense of belonging, national attachment, social cohesion, and political participation. The findings indicate a paradox within the federalist approach: while increased autonomy correlates with greater political participation, it also associates with weakened national identity and social cohesion. This suggests that the federal system, while politically empowering, may inadvertently intensify societal divides. The study concludes with recommendations that suggest a recalibration of federal structures to balance regional autonomy with national unity and cohesion, an approach that is crucial for the long-term stability and development of Somalia. This research contributes to the discourse on federal governance in fragmented societies and offers insights that are pertinent for other nations grappling with similar challenges of identity politics and state-building. The significance of this study lies not only in its scholarly contribution, which bridges theoretical constructs with the lived realities of Somalia’s federal governance but also in its practical implications. It provides an evidence-based foundation for informed policymaking aimed at reinforcing a cohesive national identity while respecting the autonomy of federal units—a narrative that, while unique to Somalia, has echoes in other divided societies grappling with similar governance challenges.

Keywords: Federalism, National Identity, Somalia

ÖZET

Somali, çağdaş sosyal ve siyasi dinamikleri üzerinde önemli bir iz bırakan otoriter yönetim mirasıyla derinden gölgelenen sömürge sonrası devlet olmanın karmaşıklıklarıyla boğuşmaktadır. 1991'de merkezi hükümetin çöküşünün ardından, Somali'nin siyasi manzarası, görünüşte uzun süreli bir klan temelli güç mücadelesini ele almak ve ulusal birlik duygusunu teşvik etmek için federal bir sisteme yeniden yapılandırılmıştır. Nicel bir araştırma metodolojisi kullanan bu çalışma, federal kurucu birimler içindeki özerklik dereceleri ile vatandaşların aidiyet duygusu, ulusal bağlılık, sosyal uyum ve siyasi katılım dahil olmak üzere ulusal kimliğin çeşitli boyutları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Bulgular, federalist yaklaşım içinde bir paradoksa işaret etmektedir: artan özerklik daha fazla siyasi katılımla ilişkiliyken, aynı zamanda zayıflamış ulusal kimlik ve sosyal uyumla da ilişkilidir. Bu, federal sistemin siyasi olarak güçlendirici olsa da, istemeden toplumsal bölünmeleri yoğunlaştırabileceğini düşündürmektedir. Çalışma, Somali'nin uzun vadeli istikrarı ve kalkınması için çok önemli bir yaklaşım olan bölgesel özerkliği ulusal birlik ve uyumla dengelemek için federal yapıların yeniden ayarlanmasını öneren önerilerle sona ermektedir. Bu araştırma, parçalanmış toplumlarda federal yönetişim söylemine katkıda bulunmakta ve kimlik siyaseti ve devlet inşasının benzer zorluklarıyla boğuşan diğer uluslar için geçerli olan içgörüler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın önemi, yalnızca teorik yapıları Somali'nin federal yönetişiminin yaşanmış gerçekleriyle köprüleyen bilimsel katkısında değil, aynı zamanda pratik sonuçlarında da yatmaktadır. Federal birimlerin özerkliğine saygı gösterirken uyumlu bir ulusal kimliği güçlendirmeyi amaçlayan bilinçli bir politika oluşturma için kanıta dayalı bir temel sağlamaktadır- Somali'ye özgü olsa da, benzer yönetişim zorluklarıyla boğuşan diğer bölünmüş toplumlarda yankıları olan bir anlatı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Federalizm, Ulusal Kimlik, Somali

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMISOM - African Union Mission in Somalia.

AVE: Average Variance Extracted

CFA: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CR: Composite Reliability

IGAD - Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

ISSP - International Social Survey Programme.

MaxR: Maximal Reliability

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

TFG - Transitional Federal Government.

TNG - Transitional National Government.

UN - United Nations.

UNITAF - Unified Task Force.

UNOSOM - United Nations Operation in Somalia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The second half of the 20th century has witnessed a strong wave of political movements shaped by a collective consciousness of marginalization, fear of domination, and other forms of injustice by various social groups (Young, 1990). These groups are conceptualized under a broad philosophical body of literature that examines the origins, nature, and features of the particular identities that are being defended by different groups in the society. In the realm of politics, identity serves as a central theme due to its prominent connection with powerful explanations for the organization of social groups and its reflection on critical aspects such as violence, exploitation, cultural imperialism, and marginalization (Heyes, 2000). It also provides recommendations on how to redescribe, reclaim, or transform stigmatized account of group membership by providing a contextual analysis of various forms of social injustices. Within the political context in states, identity is an important tool that is not only used to frame political claims, but also propagate political ideologies, and stimulate and orient political actions in a manner that attempts to assert a sense of group distinctiveness, belonging, and claim to political power and recognition. Indeed, these fundamental tenets of identity politics and the intersection with power, and statehood, are embedded within the Somalia case.

Since obtaining independence in 1960, Somalia is yet to realize the vision of its founding heroes of independence. Apart from a period of relative peace and stability between 1960 and 1990, Somali's post-independence history is shrouded with memories of chaos and instability. The fall of the Somali government in 1991, following the overthrow of Siyad Barre led to the emergence of a vicious cycle of power struggle between clan-affiliated political elites and terrorist groups such as al-Shabab that also emerged allegedly to establish an Islamic state governed by Sharia law. The ensuing conflict devastated the nation, leading to a significant loss of life and displacement of civilians. Crucially, the unique structure of Somali clans has been instrumental in both perpetuating and intensifying the country's instability, illustrating the complexities of political organization in Somalia from the onset of its independence. Federalism, stemming from the Latin word 'foedus', meaning obligation or covenant, aptly describes the contemporary political structure of Somalia (Moller, 2010). At its core, federalism is a legal arrangement between political units, designed to preserve stability and integrity through bargaining and compromise, fostering cooperation among fragmented groups to achieve collective goods like development and political stability.

Federalism mandates the central government to focus on major roles in sectors such as foreign policy, defence of the country and developing fiscal policy and it shares other roles such as generation of revenue, healthcare, education, infrastructural development, law and order, public administration, among others, with the regional governments (Samatar, 2008). As such, by decentralizing political power, federalism facilitates the participation of all groups in the society in politics. For Somalia, decentralization was a vision that was established during its independence in 1960. The first constitution of the country provided for the decentralization of administrative roles to local leadership units whenever possible despite describing Somalia as a unitary state (Zoppi, 2018). Following the independence, the nascent state delineated its territorial governance structure into eight administrative regions. However, the core element of a unitary state remained largely untouched because there were no significant measures in terms of formulating policies of power decentralization that followed at any given time during the short-lived period of "democratic" politics between 1960-1969.

When Siad Barre came to power through a military coup in 1969, his government established additional eight administrative units thereby bringing the total administrative units in Somalia to sixteen each equipped with a Revolutionary Council that acted as the representation of government at the local level (Uluso, 2014). However, this process of decentralization of political power rapidly transformed into widespread allegations of misuse of power by the political elite. Specifically, the Revolutionary Council increased used force to coarse the local communities into submitting and adhering to the regime's ideology of Scientific Socialism. The council was also used as a deterrent institution in preventing the further spread of clannism which was allegedly considered as an obstacle in establishing a national identity and building a modern state (Lewis, 2011). Consequently, political power was centralized and the efforts to partly decentralize power through the Revolutionary Council was merely to facilitate the consolidation of loyalty of the local communities to the socialist vision. It is in this context that the military regime led by Siad Barre is largely characterized as unitary, centralized and highly authoritarian. The total collapse of government and the subsequent outbreak of a vicious civil war put the unitarist structure of Barre regime into question (Samatar, 2008). As a consequence of the experiences of the military reign, more Somalis disfavoured the centralization of power and instead opting to support a decentralized structure of state power. Subsequently, the self-declared state of Somaliland become the first to use this premise to declare autonomy in 1991.

After Siad Barre's fall in 1991, Somalia transitioned from a centralist state structure to a federal system. The tricky journey began in chaos, as warlords and clan-based factions filled the power vacuum. While details of this transition involve various reconciliation efforts and conferences, the overarching narrative remains focused on the need to construct a political structure that harmonizes the complex social fabric of Somalia with the principles of shared power and regional self-determination. For Somalis, federalism is understood as the only alternative of 'unitarism' and was thus adopted as a framework to disperse authority more equitably, engage diverse groups in political processes, and mitigate the historical clan-based conflicts (Elmi, 2014). Despite challenges in its implementation, Somalia's federalism continues to evolve, aiming to balance the complex interplay of clan loyalties and regional interests.

The study examines how the federal structure has influenced the identity perceptions Somali citizens amidst significant ethnic homogeneity and clan-based political structure. It investigates the relationship between the degree of autonomy possessed by the federal constituent units in Somalia and its effects on various dimensions of national identity and socio-political integration. The study unfolds across six chapters. The first chapter provides the background of the study, examining the significance of identity in politics and its profound implications in the Somali context. It navigates through Somalia's turbulent history, the complex clan system, and the centralization of power, which have collectively shaped the national identity and political structure. The second chapter explores the conceptual underpinnings of federalism and national identity. It analyses historical precedents and contemporary applications, assessing how federalism has been employed to foster national identity and the implications of these frameworks within Somalia's socio-political history.

The third methodology chapter outlines the research approach, detailing the quantitative methods used to investigate the relationship between the autonomy of the federal constituent units and aspects of national identity in Somalia. It describes the study's design, data collection, and analysis, framing it within the epistemological and ontological considerations pertinent to the research. The fourth chapter provides the empirical findings are presented. The chapter analyses the autonomy levels of Somalia's federal constituent units, interpreting how varying levels of autonomy correlate with national identity aspects, including citizens' sense of belonging, national attachment, social cohesion, and political participation.

The fifth chapter discusses and ventures into the interpretation of the findings against the theoretical background. It discusses the nuanced implications of federal autonomy on national identity in Somalia, offering insights into potential socio-political outcomes and policy directions. The final sixth chapter concludes the study with recommendations derived from the findings. It suggests policy directions for federal structures that could harmonize regional autonomy with national identity, unity, and citizen engagement, particularly in the Somali context. As Somalia continues to navigate the waters of federalism and identity politics, this study offers a beacon of understanding, shedding light on the path taken and the road ahead. It is a narrative that, while deeply rooted in the Somali experience, resonates with broader themes of federal governance and identity politics that are of relevance to divided societies worldwide seeking a cohesive path forward.

1.1. Theoretical Framework

Federalism, in its many manifestations, has been a salient feature of discussions on state structure, particularly in societies with diverse identities. At the heart of these discussions lie notions of power, governance, and identity. James Madison's perspective on federalism springs from a foundational quest to balance power and protect against tyranny. He conceptualized federalism as a system designed to break and control factions to ensure the public good, emphasizing the structural-functional advantages of this system. In Federalist No. 10, Madison (1787) articulated his belief that a federal system would make it harder for any one faction to dominate, thereby preserving liberty and individual rights. Contrasting with Madison's structural emphasis, Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde delved into the tension between state and identity. The Böckenförde Paradox, as it's known, centers on the idea that a liberal state lives on conditions that it cannot guarantee by itself. This perspective emphasizes the inherent challenge in fostering national identity: while a state may create conditions conducive to shared identity, the genuine feeling of unity must emerge organically and cannot be mandated (Böckenförde, 1976). In the context of nations navigating multiculturalism and diverse identities, the contributions of Will Kymlicka becomes particularly relevant. Kymlicka (1997) underscores the rights of minorities in federal systems. His stance is that while federalism serves as a governance mechanism, it also must recognize and accommodate the ethnocultural diversities fundamental to a state. Kymlicka (1995) posits that minority rights, especially in federal systems, are essential to ensuring justice and cohesion in diverse societies.

Michael Burgess (2006) expands upon this by seeing federalism as a tool for managing diversity. He stresses the value of federal principles in integrating diverse communities into a cohesive whole, thereby ensuring stability in states with multiple nationalities. In parallel to the theme of integration and cohesion, Daniel Elazar (1987) introduces his covenantal theory of federalism. Federalism, in Elazar's eyes, is not just a matter of administrative convenience but a profound covenantal relationship based on consensual decision-making and mutual commitment. Here, federalism transforms from a mere structure to a deeper bond of shared values and aspirations. Michael Keating (2001) approaching from a plurinational angle, offers a perspective where identity and sovereignty intertwine within federal arrangements. Keating's plurinational federalism reflects the multifaceted identities that might exist within a singular state and how these identities negotiate space within the federal construct. Elazar (1987) introduced the pivotal concepts of 'self-rule' and 'shared rule' to encapsulate the fundamental principles of federalism (Villiers, 2012). These terms, as Elazar articulated, distinguish the dual dimensions of autonomy and cooperation within federal systems. Watts (2006) aptly refers to Elazar's classification as the 'epigram of federation,' underscoring its significance in encapsulating the essence of federal arrangements. For Elazar (1987), federalism is simultaneously about self-rule (autonomy of individual units) and shared rule (collective governance). This duality often presents complexities, especially when individual identities of federal units are robust and distinct.

In areas of deep division or historical conflict, O'Leary and McGarry (2006) introduce federalism as a tool for conflict resolution. Their work, particularly in post-conflict societies, highlights the power-sharing potential of federal systems, emphasizing how federalism can be tailored to address unique challenges of deeply divided places. However, Norman (2006) injects a note of caution. He acknowledges federalism's potential in harmonizing national discords but also points out the unique challenges it might introduce, especially concerning citizenship and identity. Federal systems, while addressing certain divisions, might inadvertently emphasize others or create new points of contention. In many nation-states, a federal structure of government often emerges as an outcome of a political compromise between different groups to “resolve both real and anticipated conflicts amongst citizens that emanate from a geographically based notions of political identity and the various realities of political power. By decentralizing power, federalism offers a deep concession by the central government in the sense that a political sub-unit is mandated to adopt policies that the central government itself considers as undesirable or morally objectionable (Feeley & Rubin, 2008).

In other words, the general arrangement of federalism can be considered as "tragic" because neither of the parties- central or regional governments is adequately satisfied with the arrangement. The central government perceives the authority granted to the autonomous regions perhaps as a 'misfortune' while the federal states who prefer not to be ruled by the center also consider their situation as a misfortune. On the other hand, Tarr (2013) highlighted that federalism has a great impact on the political identities of individuals. When individuals are attached to more than one governing authority such as a federation and a component entity, one attachment is likely to be paramount and the other secondary. As a consequence, when conflicts occur between the two or more levels of government over issues such as distribution of power and sharing of natural resources, then a given form of federalism will shape the political identity of individuals under these types of circumstances.

In federal systems, it is common to find individuals or groups whose first attachment is to a national political identity and the secondary attachment is to the regional government and vice versa. But in other federal systems, the situation can also be very complex. Feeley and Rubin (2008), emphasized that the political identity of individuals may change over time and should not be considered as a fixed preference. In Somalia, there are different factors that can perhaps explain how federalism impacts on the political identity of individuals, groups, and regions. First, it is likely that most of the Somali citizens are identified naturally with the constituent units of the federal system. The collapse of the central government in 1991 and the inability of the transitional governments in Somalia to exercise authority throughout Somalia means that most of the citizens have become dependent on the smaller political units for basic public services and goods. Consequently, a weak central government for over three decades can influence political identities, specifically, by perhaps strengthening allegiance to the regional governments.

Federalism can also influence political identity based on the benefits accrued. Duchacek (1970) argues that people usually support and identify with persons and institutions that largely satisfy their fundamental demands for identity. Gratitude for benefits received and expectation of more to come constitute the foundations of political loyalty. When a political unit is able to deliver better public policy, provide better public services, and manage government affairs properly then the experience of citizens with the federal and regional governments may also determine their affiliation, allegiances, and ultimately political identity.

On the other hand, many federations are often divided along cultural, ideological, linguistic, religious, and racial lines. It is common that in many federations the differences between groups are concentrated territorially and create the premise for politically mobilized and national self-defined identities which cannot be changed through constitutional frameworks (Moreno & Colino, 2010). But even in cases where there are various groups within the federation, it is possible for these groups to be accommodated by creating other constituent entities that reflect the existing differences if it identifies and accommodate their interests (Burgess, 1991). The existence of multiple constituents of political identity within the federation may reinforce each other. When the composition of groups within a federal system has a shared history because they are of a distinctive ethnic group, linguistic or religious background, then these may influence them to define themselves or identify as a people. Moreover, if individuals within a constituent unit do not have a shared ancestry, there can still be a feeling of common identity rooted in shared awareness of the bonds of identification rooted in the history of their past, present, and future of their territory. As this study examines the Somali context, these aforementioned theoretical perspectives provide a lens through which to interpret and understand Somalia's federal experiment and its implications for national identity and cohesion.

1.2. Problem Statement

Somalia is often perceived as a socially homogenous nation, characterized by shared ethnic heritage, language, religion, and a common historical narrative. Despite this apparent homogeneity, Somalia has been facing persistent challenges in establishing a unified and functioning government since the collapse of its central government in 1991. Several national and international efforts have been made to reconstitute the Somali government, predominantly through a series of peace and reconciliation conferences. Some of these conferences, held in Kenya from 2002 to 2004, catalysed a strategic shift from the unitary system that had been in place since Somalia's independence in 1960, to a federal system. However, the shift to federalism has been fraught with controversy. On one hand, proponents argue that federalism facilitates better political representation, resource-sharing, and equitable power distribution, which are essential for peace and stability in a society with deep-rooted divisions. They suggest that a federal system allows for the accommodation of diverse interests, thereby preventing any single group from dominating the state. This approach is seen as a path toward more effective and more stable political environment.

On the other hand, opponents criticize it for being a foreign conspiracy, which they argue was adopted without adequately considering the unique socio-political fabric of Somalia, thus posing a threat to the nation's unity. They criticize the system for deepening divisions instead of promoting unity and cohesion. They claim that loyalties to local regions and clans remain rooted, posing significant barriers to the formation of a singular national identity. Federalism is perceived by the opponents to have intensified the competition for resources and power among the clans instead of facilitating integration and cooperation, thereby undermining national integration efforts.

The situation is further complicated by the introduction of the unique and controversial 4.5 power-sharing formula. The formula assigns equal representation to four major clans— Dir, Daarood, Hawiye, and Digil iyo Mirifle— while grouping together minority clans as a collective half status 'point five,' effectively relegating them to a status of lesser political significance. This system has sparked significant controversy, with allegations that it institutionalizes inequality and perpetuates a hierarchy among clans, potentially worsening existing inequalities, and social tensions. The complexity of the federalism debate in Somalia is intensified by the contentious issue of 'Greater Somalia'— a concept rooted in pan-Somalism that envisions the unification of all ethnically Somali regions, extending into neighbouring countries. Critics contend that such decentralization could potentially undermine those nationalistic ambitions by prioritizing regional interests over a collective national identity. There is concern that a federal structure might also overshadow national priorities and escalate inter-regional rivalries, setting a precedent that could compromise national unity and sovereignty.

Opponents further argue that the delineation of federal administrative units along clan lines, rather than by geographic or demographic considerations, heightens the risk of further divisions and conflict. They claim that aligning federal boundaries with clan territories has reignited historical conflicts over land and resources. In their view, the adoption of federalism introduces an additional layer of complexity to the already complicated political landscape of Somalia, potentially fuelling the longstanding cycle of violence. These critics assert that when federalism is tied to identity politics, it can bolster separatist tendencies, and weaken the fabric of the collective national identity. This study examines whether the federalist approach has facilitated unity or deepened societal divides. It provides a comprehensive understanding of the federalism-national identity nexus and its implications for social cohesion and political participation in Somalia.

1.3. Hypotheses and Research Questions

1.3.1. Hypotheses

1. Increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with citizens' identification with the national government.
2. Higher autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively correlated with national attachment among citizens.
3. Greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with a diminished sense of national belonging among citizens.
4. Greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with social cohesion among its citizens.
5. Increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be positively correlated with political participation among citizens.

1.3.2. Research Questions

1. How does increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia relate to citizens' identification with the national government?
2. In what ways does higher autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia associate with national attachment among citizens?
3. What is the relationship between greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia and the sense of national belonging among citizens?
4. How does greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia associate with social cohesion among its citizens?
5. How likely is increased autonomy within federal constituent units in Somalia to correlate with the level of political participation among citizens?

1.4. Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the degree of autonomy possessed by the federal constituent units in Somalia and various dimensions of national identity, social cohesion, and political participation. Federalism which was adopted in 2004 as a solution to the Somali conflict, has paradoxically emerged as a significant challenge, threatening social cohesion and stability by creating new frontiers for conflict.

These conflicts have manifested in disputes over the powers of the federal and regional governments, delineation of boundaries among regional states, the equitable sharing of power and resources, and the political participation of citizens. The study seeks to understand how the federal structure has influenced the identity perceptions Somali citizens amidst significant ethnic homogeneity and clan-based political structure. To achieve this aim, the study is guided by several specific objectives:

1. To investigate the relationship between the degree of autonomy possessed by the federal constituent units in Somalia and various dimensions of national identity and socio-political integration. It aims to reveal how varying levels of autonomy influence citizens' identification with the national government, their sense of belonging, national attachment, social cohesion, and political participation.

2. To enrich the literature on Somalia's political system and social structure, offering an academic contribution that bridges the gap between theory and the lived realities of Somalia's federal governance.

3. To contribute to the body of knowledge on federalism in fragmented societies by providing a case study of Somalia, which can serve as a reference for comparative analysis with other federal states facing similar identity-based challenges.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The impact of federalism on the national identity in a society characterized by ethnic homogeneity and a clan-based political structure remains underexplored. The significance of this research extends across academic and practical domains. Academically, it enriches the discourse on federalism by incorporating perspectives on identity and socio-political integration, thus contributing to a more nuanced understanding of federal governance in post-conflict societies. The findings offer a new layer of knowledge regarding the interaction between federal structures and traditional clan systems, which is pivotal for Somalia and applicable to other contexts with similar social fabrics. Practically, the study has the potential to inform policy decisions in Somalia by providing evidence-based insights into the efficacy of the federal system. As Somalia seeks to establish a more inclusive and stable government, understanding the relationship between federalism and national identity could guide the development of governance strategies that foster unity and enhance civic engagement.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF FEDERALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

2.1. Introduction

This chapter discovers the concepts of federalism and national identity, their theoretical underpinnings, and practical applications. At the heart of its exploration is an examination of the conceptual and practical dimensions of federalism, a governance model that allocates power between central and regional authorities, thereby influencing the formation and expression of national identity. It commences with a detailed look into the historical evolution of federalism, tracing its origins and development across various contexts and periods. This historical perspective sets the stage for understanding the theoretical foundations and definitions of federalism, offering insights into its diverse interpretations and applications. Furthermore, the chapter delves into the types of federalism, distinguishing between the models based on their operational principles and the implications for governance and regional autonomy. This typology reveals the flexibility of federalism as a concept and its adaptability to different societal and political environments.

Transitioning from the structure of governance to the essence of belonging, the chapter then focus on the conceptual framework of national identity. This section unpacks the complex layers of national identity, examining how it is constructed, expressed, and evolved within the context of federal arrangements. The interplay between national identity and federalism is analysed, highlighting how federal structures can both foster and challenge a cohesive sense of identity among diverse populations. The discourse extends to the role of federalism in influencing social cohesion and political participation, vital components for the sustainability of a democratic society. Through this lens, the chapter explores how federalism might affect citizens' engagement with the political process and the development of a national fabric that encompasses diversity and inclusivity

Finally, the chapter provides a comprehensive case study highlighting the interplay between federal structures and traditional clan systems. It sheds light on how the course of Somali history, from precolonial political structures to postcolonial governance challenges, have influenced the nation's path to federalism and the implications it holds for identity and unity within a deeply divided society.

2.2. Conceptual and Practical Dimensions of Federalism

2.2.1. The Historical Evolution of Federalism

The historical evolution of federalist theory is intrinsically linked to the broader narrative of state formation, beginning with the philosophical groundwork laid by Aristotle. In his seminal text "Politics," Aristotle describes the state or 'polis' as the ultimate community, aiming to facilitate a 'good and happy life' based on justice for its citizens (Nussbaum, 2000; Aristotle, 1999). For Aristotle, the state was the highest form of political life, capable of fostering an environment conducive to the good life and happiness for all members of the political community. Aristotle's advocacy for a polity—a constitutional republic—emerges from his critical examination of governance structures, favouring a balanced system where power rests with a robust middle class, thus averting the extremes of tyranny and oligarchy (Mijuskovic, 2016; Hodgkinson & Foley, 2003).

Aristotle's vision of the state, while foundational, did not encapsulate the complexities of the emerging European societies during the medieval period, which bore witness to a multifaceted power struggle between the secular and the sacred. This era was characterized not by the absence of statehood but by a plurality of contending authorities, with the 'Res publica Christiana' characterizing a collective of European societies bound by shared faith yet politically distinct (Figgis, 1911; Brand, 2001). The philosophical landscape of this period was dominantly shaped by St. Augustine, whose treatise 'City of God' posited a theocratic view of the state, asserting the divine origin of all political power and relegating that the state's purpose was not to achieve Aristotle's good life but to maintain social order in a sinful world (Agostinho et al., 1984).

As the medieval era gives way to modernity, political structures evolve, particularly in Italian and German city-states, laying the groundwork for modern statehood. This period is marked by Niccolo Machiavelli's practical views on governance, emphasizing power and control, which form the core of early modern political theory and signal the departure from the classical and medieval paradigms (Machiavelli, 1995, 2019; Nelson, 2006). These changes in political thought were concurrent with the consolidation of monarchic power in parts of Europe, where monarchs began to create centralized legal and economic systems, despite eventual resistance from the mercantile classes leading to significant political upheavals like the French Revolution (Strayer, 2011; Anderson, 1979; Xenos, 1976).

The ideological struggles of the time culminated the Westphalian Treaty of 1648, laying the foundational principles of modern states— sovereignty, territorial integrity, and community belonging (Wilson, 2008). The philosophical debate on the nature of the state continued with subsequent theorists like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau who contributed nuanced perspectives to the evolving concept of the state. Hobbes, in ‘Leviathan,’ painted a picture of the state of nature as a 'state of war' necessitating a sovereign power to ensure peace (Hobbes, 1996; Voigt, 1989; Hobbes & Missner, 2016). Locke's ‘Second Treatise on Civil Government’ presented a contrasting view, advocating for a state that protected life, liberty, and property, positing a more liberal and constitutional state framework (Locke, 1990). Rousseau's ‘The Social Contract’ aimed to reconcile Hobbes' absolutist with Locke's liberalist strains, advocating for a state that emerged not from rational calculation but to donate moral character upon individuals in nature, thus creating an ethical community (Rousseau, 2010; 2018).

The advocacy for a federal governance structure has been a prevailing theme in postmodern state development, particularly evident during state-building phases and in the formulation of peace accords in ethnically divided states, where the authority of a centralized government frequently encounters resistance from various ethnic groups (Esposto, 1997). Revisiting the philosophical foundations of the state, it becomes apparent that one of the essential motivations for the state's evolution was the assurance of common goods for its people, with life, liberty, and property being of utmost importance (Frankfurter and Katz, 1931). The federal concept, with its North American and European origins, has been a response to the critical concern of balancing state's capacity to secure these common goods without violating the autonomy of its constituents. This historical puzzle found its resolution in the evolution of federalism in the 18th and 19th-century United States and Germany.

Frankfurter and Katz's (1931) exploration of American federalism illuminates the dynamic interplay between federal and state powers, with public debates reflecting a continuum of ideas stretching back to colonial experiences. The American War of Independence catalysed the need for a unified national identity, a shift from the localized governance praised by De Tocqueville (1835) in "Democracy in America". The subsequent Articles of Confederation in 1781 were a testament to the states' sovereignty while recognizing the need for a centralized government donated with limited powers, a delicate balance shaped by the fear of restoring the autocratic colonial regime (Young, 1977; 2004).

Yet, the Articles of Confederation revealed inherent tensions. The central government's limited authority over trade, taxation, and military organization led to operational challenges, exemplified by the Potomac River conflict, revealing the fragility of the confederation and the need for a more resilient union (LaCroix, 2011). The fragility of the Articles of Confederation was underscored by interstate disputes and financial insecurities, necessitating a constitutional framework capable of maintaining state sovereignty while ensuring the functionality of the Union on a national and international stage (Hammond et al., 2007). The ensuing debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists hinged on the nature of government power distribution. The Anti-Federalists' fear of an overreaching central authority was met by Federalists' arguments for a balanced system, as explicated in "The Federalist Papers" (Hamilton, 1788; Madison et al., 1987).

The Federalist Papers, penned under the pseudonym 'Publius,' condensed the debate between federal and state powers in post-Independence America. These essays were instrumental in shaping the U.S. Constitution, advocating for a balance of power between the national and state governments to ensure liberty and stability (Scott, 2013). The Constitutional Convention of 1787 thus marked a decisive turn from amending the Articles to framing a new constitution that established a strong federal government with separated powers. The ratification process, particularly in New York, highlighted the victory of the Federalists, contingent upon the incorporation of the Bill of Rights, which James Madison crafted in response to concerns over individual freedoms (Madison, 1787). The ratification of the Bill of Rights by 1789 signified a foundational commitment to civil liberties within the framework of the new American Constitution.

Similarly, Switzerland's transformation into a federal state began on September 12, 1848, with the creation of a federal constitution in response to the Sonderbund War (Stephen, 2012). This constitution, influenced by the United States Constitution—shaped by its own struggles for balance between state sovereignty and federal power, established a central government, replacing the previous autonomous cantons bound by treaties (Stephen, 2012). This mirrored the American experience where the War of Independence catalysed the need for a unified national identity and a shift from localized governance, leading to the creation of the Articles of Confederation in 1781 and eventually the US Constitution, and solidified by the Bill of Rights by 1789 (Hamilton, 1788; Madison et al., 1987; Scott, 2013).

On the other hand, the German approach to federalism and nation-state unification presents a stark contrast to the American experience. In Germany, a collection of independent monarchic states, each with its distinct legal and administrative systems, embarked on a grand political project to form a cohesive nation-state. This effort was largely driven by the Prussian leadership, which sought to harness the economic and manpower resources of these mini states to build a strong, unified Germany (Ziblatt, 2004). Esposto (1997) notes that the unification process was not only about national consolidation but also about positioning Germany as a formidable power in Europe. The creation of a federal system, where the previously autonomous ministates retained significant degrees of policy-making and administrative autonomy, was seen as a means to this end.

Riker's (1964) seminal work on federalism underscored the strategic nature of federation-building, predicated on the dual goals of territorial expansion and mutual benefit from shared resources. The Prussian strategy hinged on creating a federative bargain that balanced the desire for collective security and economic prosperity with the states' willingness to sacrifice some degree of sovereignty. This federal structure allowed for a balance of power where both the central authority and the constituent states could coexist with relative autonomy while pursuing common goals. The Prussian strategy, guided by Bismarck's realpolitik, emphasized negotiation over conquest, securely integrating these states into a federal system, respecting local particularities (Bismarck and Scheler, 1965). This strategy not only mitigated resistance from the southern states but also avoided potential conflicts with other European powers that were wary of a rapidly expanding Prussia (Craig, 1967).

The legal and institutional continuity following the unification was crucial. The North German Confederation and the subsequent establishment of the German Reich in 1871 did not dismantle the existing governance structures of the mini states but rather integrated them into the broader federal framework. This approach facilitated a smoother transition and minimized the disruption that could accompany such a profound political transformation (Stehlin, 1973). Dilcher (1986) and Sheehan and Sheehan (1993) underscore the importance of the institutional and societal stability that characterized the German mini states at the time of unification. These states, largely free from revolutionary fervour and possessing well-developed systems of governance provided a strong foundation for the new federal system.

In the broader context of federalism, Germany's path to unification through negotiation and the preservation of institutional continuity represents a calculated effort to build a strong nation capable of asserting itself on the European stage. The legal frameworks that governed the German states prior to unification were largely retained, ensuring a degree of continuity that eased the transition into a federal nation-state. The pre-existing laws, administrative structures, and even personnel were incorporated into the new system, which allowed for a smoother amalgamation of the various mini states (Bismarck and Scheler, 1965). This continuity was critical in maintaining public order and administrative efficiency during a period that could have otherwise been marked by chaos and resistance to the new government. Jacob (1963) highlighted this approach as a sensible alternative to the centralization efforts seen in other nations, such as Italy, where unification efforts were marked by coercion and the consequent need to establish entirely new systems of governance. The German experience with federalism highlights the adaptability of this system of governance in diverse political contexts and its potential to address the challenges of uniting disparate political entities into a cohesive state (Grimm, 1988). This historical analysis of federalism's evolution in Germany provides a nuanced understanding of how federal structures can be designed to accommodate diverse political entities. It offers valuable insights into the mechanisms that can enable a balance between unity and diversity, a central challenge in federal system design.

Despite the core aims of federalism in mitigating secessionist sentiments, Hofmeister and Tayao (2016) observed that federal structures do not always entirely eliminate such sentiments. For instance, in Canada, French-speaking regions like Quebec have held two referenda on secession. However, the Canadian constitution not only facilitated debates but also provided a robust framework for conducting them both safely and legally. It is essential to recognize that the establishment of a federal system may not satisfy all individuals or groups. Federal systems serve as platforms where diverse nations within the federal framework can engage in debates and resolve conflicts without resorting to violence.

2.2.2. Theoretical Foundations and Definitions of Federalism

Federalism, at its core, is a system of government in which two or more levels of government share authority over the same territory and people, while each level retains its sovereignty and has a certain degree of autonomy in its respective spheres. This division of

powers is enshrined in a constitution and typically defines the roles and responsibilities of each level of government (Riker, 1964). The foundational theories of federalism have emerged as intellectual responses to the practical demands of governing large and diverse territories. These theories formed around the idea of balancing power between a central authority and constituent political units, aiming to gain the benefits of unity without sacrificing local autonomy. Early federalist thinkers like Johannes Althusius conceptualized a form of governance that would later influence the structures of modern federal states. By the 18th century, the Federalist Papers in the United States further developed these ideas, advocating for a federal system that could manage common interests and individual liberties.

Althusius (1603) articulated the idea that political authority should be divided and shared among multiple levels of government. He believed that a federal system, where power is dispersed between a central government and lower-level political entities, is essential for maintaining order and protecting individual liberties. The federal theory of Althusius was rooted in a social contract framework. He argued that individuals come together to form political communities voluntarily, entering into social contract to establish a system of governance. This contract-based method laid the foundation for later social contract theorists like Locke and Rousseau. Althusius (1603) introduced the idea of divided sovereignty, which is a central concept in federalism. He posited that sovereignty should not be concentrated solely in the central government but should be shared between the central authority and the constituent political units, such as provinces or states. This division of sovereignty serves as a safeguard against tyranny and promotes self-governance at the local level. He emphasized the principle of subsidiarity, which holds that decisions should be made at the lowest level of government capable of effectively addressing them. This principle ensures that local authorities have the autonomy to handle local matters, while higher-level governments focus on broader issues.

Althusius (1603) stressed the importance of representative government and the consent of the governed. He argued that political authority should be exercised by representatives chosen by the people through a participatory process. This idea laid the groundwork for democratic principles that underlie many federal systems today. Althusius' ideas on federalism and governance had a profound influence on later political thinkers and theorists, including Enlightenment philosophers and framers of modern constitutions. His work contributed to the development of federal systems in various countries, particularly in Europe and the Americas (Hoekema, 1998).

Charles-Louis de Montesquieu also captured the spirit of federalism in his discourse on how republics could provide for their safety. The dilemma of safeguarding the security of the republic raised an important theoretical consideration. If a republic was geographically too small, there could be a high risk that a foreign power could destroy; on the other hand, if a republic was too vast geographically, then there was an equal risk that it can undergo disintegrate due to its internal imperfection (Manicas, 1981). To reconcile this, Montesquieu envisioned a constitutional framework that combined the internal governance advantages of a republic alongside an external force of a monarchical government, a constitution that Montesquieu referred to as a confederate republic (Wolfe, 1977). His idea of a confederate republic was a federation of small states that voluntarily united into a larger entity, capable of providing comprehensive security against external threats (Karmis and Norman, 2016).

A republic, as Montesquieu (1748) argued, fashioned in such a federalist manner, would mitigate both internal turmoil and external dangers (Ward, 2007). In this system, should a state attempt to overreach its power, the others would form a counterbalance. Likewise, if an insurrection emerged within a member state, the other states would act to suppress it, maintaining the stability of the republic (Wolfe, 1977). He underscored the importance of homogeneity in the nature of the constituent states of a federal system, advocating for a union of republican states. Because a confederate republic is ultimately comprised of small republics, it benefits from the domestic happiness of each republic and on the foreign front, by its character of association, acquires all the advantages associated with large monarchies. Drawing from the experience of the Canaanites, Montesquieu highlights that their destruction was result of a character of being small monarchies without a confederation for the purposes of common defence. The fundamental sprit of a monarchy is war and dominance while that of a republic is peace and moderation (Shirk, 1972).

Bridging from Montesquieu's insights on confederate republics, Immanuel Kant's philosophy offers a complementary and expansive view on international relations and federalism. Kant (1795) envisioned a federalism rooted in a consortium of free states. He analogized nations to individuals in the state of nature, suggesting that just as individuals would form a civil society to ensure mutual security, nations too could form a voluntary union—not a superstate, but a federation—to secure peace. This federation, or league of peace (foedus pacificum), according to Kant, differs fundamentally from a temporary peace treaty (pactum pacis) in that its objective is not merely to end a single war but to create the conditions for perpetual peace.

Kant (2005) emphasized that such a pacific league would not seek to accumulate power but rather to preserve the freedom and independence of its member states. In this league, states would not be subject to a single, overruling authority as individuals are under civil law but would instead cooperate to maintain their liberties and security. The gradual spread of this federalist notion, Kant believed, would be evidenced by the ensuing perpetual peace, arguing that the establishment of republican forms of government, inherently inclined towards peace, could serve as the basis for this federative union (Cavallar, 2020). Thus, Kant suggested that an international civil society, based on the principles of free federalism, could enable states to avoid warfare without the need for a supreme legislative authority to enforce peace. This international civil society would transform the lawless state of affairs between nations into a community of nations (civitas gentium) potentially encompassing the entire globe (De Federicis, 2013). Yet, he acknowledged the resistance some states might have towards a global republic, positing instead that a durable league of nations could provide a viable alternative, one capable of preserving peace and deterring the tendencies towards war.

Transitioning from the philosophical underpinnings of Montesquieu and Kant, the Publius, a collective pseudonym of James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and Jon Jay, wrote 85 articles and essays popularly referred to as the Federalist Papers, presenting a comprehensive argument for American federalism. At the centre of their theory, a union of the American states was fronted as a protection against the threat of domestic factions and revolution (Federalist Paper No. IX). The Publius argued that if knowledge was inferred from history, then the horrific experiences of the Greek republics and Italy served as a strong reminder of how easily states could be thrown into the extreme ends of battling revolutions on the one hand or dealing with tyranny on the other hand. In response to the vicious criticism launched by the Anti-Federalist against a republican federal constitution, the Publius argued that the idea that the Anti-Federalist who advocated for greater liberty had about a republican government were conceived misguided because the science of politics had undergone significant improvement. Specifically, the Publius drew to the attention of Anti-Federalists that knowledge about various principles which were either unknown or imperfectly known in the ancient had now been well examined and understood. To stress on this argument, the Publius noted that there was enhanced understanding of distribution of power between different arms of government, courts of law were introduced, people were represented in the legislature through election of deputies, and the legislature was empowered to provided checks and balances over government.

In Federal Paper No. X, the Publius restated the previous hypothesis in Paper No. IX that a well-made union is capable of dealing with the problem of how to control the violence of factions in which two key methods are highlighted. One, by eliminating its causes, or secondly, by controlling its effects. Factions were understood to be groups either existing as majority or minority united by shared passions or interests, but which are contrary to the interest of other groups or the community at large. However, in order to eliminate the causes of factions, the only strategic options would either be the destruction of liberty, which is fundamental to its existence, or giving every citizen the same passions, opinions, and interests (De Tocqueville, 1835).

Eliminating liberty would be unwise because it would lead to more the emergence of more factions, while giving people the same opinions, passions, and interests is practically impossible. The Publius thus theorised that the existence of factions as part of the human nature that is epitomised in different aspects of social activity depending on varying conditions of the civil society. Variations in passions, opinions, and interests are demonstrated in the zeal for different religions, support of leaders competing for political power and ideas on government, and it is these differences that increase animosity and drive individuals to the tendencies of seeking to oppress each other instead of cooperating to achieve common good. As a consequence, the best strategy to deal with the problem of factions is not to eliminate the causes, rather it is to address its effects (De Tocqueville, 1835).

However, even the existence of pure democracy constituted of a society with a few numbers of citizens who partake in the administration of government in person cannot provide the cure to the problem of faction because under such circumstances, common interest or passion can only be felt by a majority of the whole. It is because of this that democracies have often experienced contentions and turbulence. Thus, the Publius advocated for the establishment of a republic in which the “scheme of representation” takes place as the best cure for the problem of factions (Karmis and Norman, 2016). In this regard, the Publius drew to the attention of their readers the key differences between a republic and a democracy. In a republic, there is the delegation of the government compared to the small number of citizens elected by the rest in a democracy. Secondly, a republic encompasses a larger number of citizens and there exists a bigger sphere of country over which the republic can be extended (Madison et al., 1987).

The consequence of these differences is that the republic provides a better platform to enlarge and refine public views by subjecting them to a review by a chosen group of citizens donated with the pre-requisite wisdom to identify the true interest of the country because of their love for justice and patriotism (Hamilton et al., 2005). Thus, the public voice as echoed by people's representatives will be more aligned with the public good than if echoed by people themselves. In a democracy therefore, it is very easy for individuals may be easily deterred by corruption, prejudices, and factious tempers to betray the interest of public. Therefore, the question emerging form these considerations is whether large or small republics are the best suited for the election of the proper custodians of public good.

The republic therefore offers the best probability of choosing proper custodians and the Publius based this conclusion on two premises. First, that regardless of how small a republic is, representatives must be quantified to a certain number that is capable of providing protection against the faction of a few; and regardless of how extensive a republic may be, it must be restricted to a certain number to safeguard against the tyranny of the many. Therefore, due to the fact that the quota of representatives in both small and large republics are not proportionate to the constituents, then in large republics there is higher probability that custodians of public good who are of fit character are more. Secondly, because of the in a large republic, representative is chosen by a larger number of people than in a small republic, then it presents a much difficult scenario for incompetent candidates to successfully navigate the election processes because suffrage enables citizens to make free choices, so, it is more likely to choose candidates with the best merit (Hamilton et al., 2005).

However, the Publius additionally noted that there are inconveniences if the number of electors is enlarged too much in which a representative is denied the ability to be well communicated in local matters, or by reducing it to much in which a representative can equally become improperly attached to local matters at the expense of the national interest. It is in this context that the Publius proposed a federal constitution which provides the mean between the great and aggregate interests (national interest) and the local and interests distinct to the state legislatures (Karmis and Norman, 2016). Reflecting on the comparative merits of a republican government versus a pure democracy, Publius asserts in Federalist Paper No. X that a well-structured Union provides a republican solution to the typical difficulties faced by republican systems. The enthusiasm with which we embrace our identity as republicans should be equally manifested in our dedication to fostering the principles and upholding the integrity of federalism (Gibson, 1991).

Expanding upon the core concepts of federalism theory, William Riker, one of the prominent theorists of federalism, brought the rigor of scientific methodology to the study of political science, particularly federalism, as noted by scholars such as Filippov (2005), Hickey (2013), and Gradstein (2004). Riker (1964) put forth the theory that federalism is essentially an outcome of institutional bargaining between politicians, each holding divergent views influenced by their roles within the political sphere. The essence of this bargaining theory is to navigate and resolve the institutional negotiations amongst rational, self-interested political actors. The failure to achieve this could precipitate instability and the risk of dominance by either federal or state governments.

Riker (1964) warned of a high risk of collapse if state governments overpower the federal system. Equally, federal dominance could lead to the gradual centralization of power, stripping away the territorial autonomy of states and moving toward a unified national political system. Riker contended that it is crucial for rational politicians, especially those representing state interests, to avert constitutional arrangements that could diminish the states' autonomy, except in exceptional circumstances like an external military threat. Riker (1964) advocated for the development of robust political institutions that balance the federal government's dominance with protections for the political independence of state governments. Riker had the view that constitutional mechanisms alone are insufficient for the preservation of federalism. He advocated for a more profound decentralization of the political process and the establishment of competitive structures, such as elections, to create incentives for federal politicians to actively defend the federalist structure.

The significance of this view is further illustrated by the influence state politicians exercise over their federal counterparts, thereby highlighting the role of incentives in maintaining the autonomy of state governments, with political competition being the driving force. According to Riker, it is through the dynamics of political parties that interventions can be most effectively made. Elster (1989), addressing Riker's work, pointed out that his analysis of federalism is rooted in methodological individualism, which seeks to explain social institutions and changes through the actions and interactions of individuals. Riker's focus was on individual incentives and the conflicts over federal principles, diverging from earlier studies that placed importance on the incentives of both political elites and the masses in the creation of federalism. He critiqued the traditional view that federalism was a product of social conditions that foster a common interest within society.

Instead, Riker (1964) emphasized the political aspect, noting that while a sense of common interest is necessary, the essential condition is the predisposition to engage in political bargaining, which is pivotal for the formation of federal associations. Riker's analysis further underscores that politicians are the primary actors at the political level, with their strategic and rational choices significantly influencing political outcomes. He posited that politicians' views on federalism are intrinsically linked to their interests of political survival and competition, thereby framing federalism as primarily a political construct. The strategic incentives that drive politicians to either forge or dismantle federal systems became a lens through which Riker examined political competition as a critical component in the study of federalism. He observed that while politicians might recognize the overall benefits of a union, their opinions on the specifics of the federal arrangement often diverge. These differences stem from their political positions or ambitions, leading some to advocate for a stronger federal government and others to set boundaries on federal power.

This dichotomy is especially pronounced among politicians who envision themselves as future national leaders compared to those who see their future within state governments. Serving the same citizenry, these two factions advance differing strategies in relation to federalism (Riker, 1975). In his analysis of the dynamics of federal systems, Riker introduces a third proposition that suggests politicians' bargaining is driven by individual or constituent unit interests rather than national ones. Riker (1975) argued that politicians are motivated to form or preserve federalism only when the political gains outweigh the political costs, irrespective of the potential economic benefits to the country. This implies that economic advantages alone are insufficient to incentive the creation of a federal union.

Riker (1975) also viewed the constitutional drafting process in federal systems as a form of bargaining. Politicians may agree on the value of a federal system, but their preferences for its specific form can vary widely, necessitating a process of institutional bargaining. This process may involve, for instance, negotiations between prospective national leaders and officials of constituent governments. The outcome of such negotiations is reflected in the enacted federal constitution. Riker's focus was on the autonomy dispute between federal and state governments as a core issue in these negotiations. Following the establishment of a federal union, Riker (1964) posited that the benefits attached to the union become rooted, with different constitutional choices leading to varied distributions of winners and losers, setting the stage for federal bargaining.

Nash's (1950) definition of bargaining underscores this as a situation where individuals collaborate for mutual benefit, with various outcomes possible, and where no agreement can be imposed without mutual consent, as further explained by Osborne and Rubinstein (1990). This concept highlights the importance of consent and collaboration in reaching federal agreements, as well as the inherent conflicts of interest that need to be navigated. The bargaining theory of federalism, as articulated by Riker, is viewed as a constitutional negotiation concerning the form of the federal constitution, where politicians endeavour to reach a compromise on its implementation which has already gained mutual agreement.

A primary complication in this process is that bargaining over constitutional principles is, in essence, a negotiation over the very institutions tasked with upholding the constitution's implementation. Often, there's an underlying presumption that the execution of the federal constitution is a secondary concern, or that there will be an effective enforcer, like the judiciary or the state apparatus. Given that the enactment of federal constitutional agreements can be subject to further dispute, questions arise about the certainty of constitutional implementation. The dynamic nature of federal bargaining means that decisions made at the inception of a federal system can alter the landscape for future bargaining, potentially tilting the balance of power towards the federal or state governments. Riker (1964) believed that establishing a robust federal centre capable of asserting itself over state governments was essential for the successful execution of federal agreements, suggesting this approach was central to the American model of federalism.

Livingstone (1952) on a distinct perspective noted that majority of the theories of federalism had been preoccupied with the assumptions that the main problem of the federal government was concerned with formal legal formalism and formal jurisprudence. This consequently influenced federal theorists to focus on federal constitution which links distinct political and constitutional entities such that the outcome of the entity that is established is above as well as different from the ones that have come together. However, Livingstone also pointed that the institutions that are established during this process may not even tailored to the real needs of society. This necessitates therefore, that in order to understand how such institutions are operationalised, then it would be possible to gain a better understanding of the nature of society. He argued that the essence of federalism is not found within constitutional or institutional frameworks but within the fabric of society itself, where federal governments act as vehicles for expressing and maintaining the federal qualities inherent to society.

According to Livingstone, the degree of societal integration, whether cohesive or loose, is influenced by unique historical, political, cultural, and economic factors. Societal elements differ from one community to another, often manifesting in a demand for self-expression across various domains, such as religion, history, economics, or race. These differing elements, when geographically clustered, can lead to the formation of a federal society. Conversely, if these elements are dispersed, the society may not necessarily be federal in structure. In either case, Livingstone (1952) posited that societal coherence relies on the decentralization of functions that reflect the diversity inherent in the society.

Livingstone (1952) further argued that federalism should not be considered the ideal solution for every circumstance, noting that the constituent units of a federal system exist due to their significant diversities, which are important enough to warrant protection through a federal structure. He suggested that it is common for regional alignments to emerge on day-to-day issues, and in such cases, regionalism can be seen as a manifestation of the federal principle, reflecting the geographical grouping of societal diversities. Conversely, if these diversities are not territorially grouped, the essence of federalism is lost, as there are no territorial units to underpin the federal structure. If the distribution of power within a country is shared with functional units like religious groups, trade unions, or industries rather than territorial entities, then, according to Livingstone, the characteristic quality of federalism is absent.

In his sociological theory, Livingston (1952) thus emphasizes that the external forms of constitutional and political arrangements reflect the society, and that the degree to which a society is federal can be measured by degreed to which the external forms are federal. Institutional patterns for example, manifest the federal qualities of society in the sense that societies differ in their federal qualities depending on how diversified or integrated they are. However, the task of measuring the diverse forces involved in creating and sustaining a political community is difficult because even those who devise the political institutions are not themselves absolutely sure that their institutions would ultimately represent the nature of society or be adequate enough to meet the needs that such institutions are designed to fulfil. Institutions also represent different understandings to different people; hence, they may not produce the same outcomes when operationalised in different societies. Therefore, there is never a guarantee that institutional patterns align with the interests of the society (Livingston, 1952).

Building on the foundational theories of federalism, Richard Musgrave's introduction of the term "fiscal federalism", which was later popularized by Oates (1972) set the stage for a deeper understanding of the financial aspects of federal systems. Rao and Singh (2005) describe fiscal federalism as a theory that clarifies the optimal degree of fiscal decentralization, the delegation of roles and government finance sources across different governmental tiers, and the ideal framework for intergovernmental transfers to achieve efficiency and equity in service delivery. Jha (2015) marks the evolution of this theory into two distinct phases: first-generation and second-generation theories of fiscal federalism.

Oates (2005) recounts that first-generation theories, particularly influential during the 1950s and 1960s, provided detailed guidance on the functioning of federal systems and the allocation of fiscal instruments. Musgrave and Musgrave (1984) highlighted the role of public sector in resource allocation, income redistribution, and macroeconomic stabilization. These first-generation theories recognized the strengths and weaknesses of centralized and decentralized government systems, aiming to combine their advantages by proposing a structural framework for role allocation across government levels. As such, they allocated income redistribution and macroeconomic policy roles to the federal government, deemed more capable of maintaining high employment levels and wage stability than sub-national governments (Oates, 1972).

First-generation theorists advocated for centralized taxation to avoid negative inter-jurisdictional tax competition that could undermine public goods and services provision (Musgrave & Musgrave, 1984). They argued that intergovernmental transfers, should address fiscal capacity gaps, spill-over effects, resource distribution disparities, and vertical fiscal imbalances (Jha, 2015). Second-generation theorists broadened the scope of fiscal federalism to include insights from political science, economics, public policy, and management. They shifted the focus to developing countries' challenges, calling for a re-evaluation of governmental structures and fiscal relations (Wildasin, 1998). This approach explored the functions of state governments and international fiscal interactions, with implications for European integration (Brochner et al., 2007; Buettner and Wildasin, 2007). While the first-generation theories emphasize generous decision-making in governments, second-generation theories argue that political institutions often drive self-interested decision-making, contrary to the public welfare goal (Weingast, 1995). They also advocate for decentralized taxation to incentivize sub-national governments, with transfers primarily aimed at equalization (Inman & Rubinfeld, 1997).

The emergence of second-generation theories signified a recognition that earlier models were inadequate for contemporary challenges, as expressed by Oates (1999), who acknowledged the need for ongoing learning and adaptation in the field. This realization was particularly important in Latin America, where fiscal mismanagement at the sub-national level demanded new approaches (Oates, 2008). Qian and Weingast (1997) were instrumental in developing the second-generation theory, which extends beyond public economics to include public choice theory, contract theory, and organizational theory (Oates, 2005). This body of work is divided into two variations: one grounded in historical context, emphasizing the destabilizing effects of federalism on public sectors (Rodden et al., 2003), and the other focusing on a political economy approach, representing the public sector's evolution (Rao et al., 2011). Within the second-generation theory, the political economy approach dominates, scrutinizing the trade-offs between centralized coordination benefits and the localized provision of public goods and services (Besley & Coate, 2003). Lockwood (2006) contributes to this analysis by examining the impact of pressure groups and individual incentives on fiscal decentralization, finding empirical evidence that decentralization leads to increased preference matching and accountability. Inman and Rubinfeld (1997) critique first-generation theories for granting excessive power to the federal government and suggest the political economy approach.

The principal-agent model within this framework casts the federal government as the principal and state governments as agents, implementing directives and reporting local needs (Levaggi, 2002). Another model considers electorates as principals and elected officials as agents, with decentralization enhancing local control and accountability (Tommasi & Weinschelbaum, 2007). Yet, the principle-agent model in government has its limitations, often leading to policies that may not align with local needs or public welfare. Mookherjee (2014) advocates for decentralizing public goods and services to local governments to mitigate such issues. Seabright (1996) proposes that merging decentralization with local democracy imposes disciplinary constraints and enhances government accountability, as locals are better positioned to assess the performance of public service providers. Proponents of competitive federalism like Breton (2006) emphasizes the potential of competition within federal structures to influence policy formulation and fiscal efficiency.

The prevailing theoretical approach in public finance argues for clear delineation of economic functions in federal systems. Evidence supports effective macroeconomic management at the federal level, emphasizing the federal government's advantage in economic stabilization (Moges, 2020; Majocchi, 2016; Oates, 2008). Local governments have limited capacity for economic interventions, such as tax reductions. The central government's role in redistribution is crucial, with risks associated with devolving this function to state or provincial levels (Banting, 2006). Garrett and Rodden (2003) support this claim, cautioning against potential reductions in the tax base and undermining local governments' ability to manage redistribution. The federal system's capacity for regional risk-sharing, particularly in responding to differential economic shocks, is highlighted, with Persson and Tabellini (1996) suggesting federal transfers as a viable solution. Critics challenge the economic theory of federalism, particularly the view advocated by Boadway (2002). Banting and Boadway (2004) argue that public goods, beyond income transfers and taxes, including healthcare, impact redistribution. Empirical studies, involving Castles (1999), Swank and Duane (2002), and Huber et al. (1993), present a nuanced view of federalism's impact on social expenditures. Research, exemplified by Bremer et al. (2021), Sorens (2014), Swank and Duane (2002), and Schram et al. (1998), indicates that federalism can hinder social spending in welfare states. The debate on the impact of welfare benefits on the mobility of the poor is ongoing, with skepticism expressed by scholars like Allard and Danziger (2000). Rodden (2003) highlights variations in public goods and service expenditures based on the degree of revenue mobilization and spending decentralization.

2.2.3. Types of Federalism

The federalist debate has gained immense prominence in contemporary discussions surrounding democratization, the protection of ethnic minorities' and individual rights, decentralization of power (Watts, 1999). Federalism occupies a central position in these debates, reflecting efforts to control the excessive centralization of power within modern nation-states. Historical precedents have shown that highly centralized states often exhibit aggressive external behaviour and oppressive tendencies domestically (Elazar, 1987). However, it is essential to acknowledge the flip side of this reality, where federalism has proven itself as a successful, and in some cases, an exceptional form of democratic governance. Federalism has been instrumental in safeguarding individual liberties and national security within states (Tiebout, 1956).

Thus, it is evident that the performance of federalism is influenced by both structural and procedural differences, and the specific form of federalism adopted depends on the nature of the constitution and government structure (Elazar, 1987). One common element that transcends various federal systems is the existence of general procedures that govern the distribution of roles within the federal framework. These procedures typically revolve around issues of accountability and equity (Tiebout, 1956). However, it is crucial to recognize that there is no clear assertion regarding the superiority of any single form of federal system, government, or constitution (Elazar, 1987; Watts, 1999). Likewise, there is no definitive list that dictates precisely which functions should be delegated to the central government versus regional state governments. Furthermore, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the amalgamation of inherent, enumerated, exclusive, delegated, reserved, or implied powers within a federal democratic system (Tiebout, 1956; Watts, 1999).

Federal systems like Canada have chosen to place reserved powers, which constitute constitutionally reserved political authority exclusively within the jurisdiction of the federal government. In contrast, the United States has opted for a different approach, with reserved powers being vested in the constituent states (Riker, 1964; Elazar, 1987). According to Shah (2007), federal systems can generally be categorized into two main types: dual federalism and cooperative federalism. In the context of dual federalism, the functions or duties of a federal government and state governments are clearly distinguished with minimal overlap. Both levels of government govern the same people and territory, but each possesses distinct spheres of autonomous authority, safeguarded by constitutional provisions (Riker, 1964).

On the other hand, in a cooperative federalism system, functions between the federal and state governments are intricately interconnected, fostering collaboration and joint decision-making. However, it's important to note that there are certain commonalities shared by both dual and cooperative federal systems. Notably, in both of these overarching models, fiscal arrangements are structured to preserve independence within their respective areas of responsibility and to promote an equitable partnership (Shah, 2007). The dynamics of the relationship between national and state governments can further develop and adopt distinct forms within the framework of dual or cooperative federalism (Grodzins, 1966). For instance, within the dual federalism system, one can observe the implementation of either a "layer cake" or a "coordinated authority" approach (Derthick,1999).

This dichotomy is evident in countries such as Mexico and Russia where the layer cake approach is practiced. There exists a unitary type of relationship where the national government is at the top of the hierarchy and it has the choice of either dealing with the local government directly, or through the state governments (Grodzins, 1966). Conversely, within the framework of the coordinate-authority approach, state governments gain a higher degree of autonomy from the national government. In this context, local governments primarily maintain official ties with state governments, without formal engagements with federal governments. This arrangement resembles federal systems found in countries like Canada, Australia, and the United States (Riker, 1964; Watts, 1999).

Under the cooperative model of federalism, three different approaches are identified: independent spheres, interdependent spheres, and marble cake. In Brazil, which uniquely adopts the independent approach to cooperative federalism, all levels of government enjoy autonomy, possess equal status, and engage in both vertical and horizontal policy coordination (Serra and Afonso, 2007; Love, 2018). In the independent approach, Brazil stands out as the sole example where each level of government benefits from autonomous decision-making. Furthermore, all levels engage in policy coordination both vertically and horizontally (Serra and Afonso, 2007; Love, 2018). Conversely, in the interdependent approach to cooperative federalism, as seen in countries like South Africa and Germany, the federal government assumes the primary role in policy formulation, which is subsequently passed down to state and local governments for implementation (Schwella, 2016; Benz, 1999). Here, state governments play a significant role in contributing to the policy formulation process through upper Houses of Parliament, such as the Council of Provinces and the Bundesrat (Schwella, 2016; Benz, 1999).

Lastly, the marble cake approach, exemplified by Belgium, involves various levels of both federal and state governments sharing overlapping responsibilities (Gerard, 2001). In this model, the two tiers of government perceive each other as equal partners within the federation, fostering collaboration and shared governance (Gerard, 2001). In acknowledging the diversity of federal systems, it is imperative to highlight some fundamental and shared characteristics that are present in nearly all forms of federal systems. Scholars widely recognize these key elements that underpin the essence of federal systems across various manifestations. These features encompass (Riker, 1964; Elazar, 1987; Watts, 1999; Derthick,1999; Grodzins, 1966; Walker, 2000):

- Dual Levels of Government: At a minimum, federal systems consist of two tiers of government, each responsible for addressing the direct needs of citizens. There exists a formal distribution of authority at both legislative and executive levels, accompanied by mechanisms for resource allocation.

- Written Constitution: Federal systems typically rely on a written constitution that cannot be unilaterally amended by any level of government. This constitution serves as a foundational document, outlining the framework of governance.

- Regional State Representation: Federal systems acknowledge and provide representation to regional state concerns in the policymaking process. This ensures that the diverse interests and needs of various regions are considered.

- Dispute Resolution Mechanisms: Federal systems incorporate mechanisms for dispute resolution, often involving third parties such as courts of law or international organizations. These entities mediate disputes that may arise between different levels of government.

- Intergovernmental Cooperation: Frameworks are established to facilitate interactions and cooperation between different orders of government, particularly in areas of shared or overlapping responsibilities. These mechanisms promote collaborative decision-making.

- Distribution of Authority: Federal systems typically allocate specific areas of authority to the federal government, such as national security, citizenship, foreign policy, monetary systems, immigration, and protection of intellectual property rights. Concurrently, state governments are responsible for matters such as public utilities, healthcare, state and local infrastructure, management of foreign aid to local governments, regional courts, and enforcement of state laws.

While the precise manner in which power is distributed between the two tiers of government in a federal system may vary, it underscores certain key domains where the allocation of authority is typically situated. As Eckart Klein (1983) articulated, all federal systems feature a constituent component, often referred to as a written constitution. This foundational document serves as the basis for fundamental laws, holding a paramount status that supersedes any other legal provisions or executive actions.

This constitutional foundation plays a pivotal role in a federal system, as it prescribes the boundaries and constraints that apply to both levels of government. The significance of delineating and defining these limitations in a federal context cannot be overstated. Nevertheless, when it comes to federal institutions, two critical issues come to the forefront, revealing the existence of potentially problematic approaches to the amendment and implementation of federal constitutions. The foundational principle that elevates the constitution as the supreme basis of law, surpassing all other legal provisions and executive actions, also underscores the notion that amending a federal constitution should not be the prerogative of a single tier of government. However, as witnessed in countries like India, Germany, and Australia, this principle is not universally applied. In these three states, while special majorities in the federal legislature can indeed amend a federal constitution, there exist requirements for the involvement or contributions of state governments, especially when an amendment seeks to alter the structure of the federal system (Saunders, 1995).

In the context of Australia, a constitutional amendment requires approval from the federal parliament and then subjected to a nationwide referendum, where an overall majority of support is required across all states (Monahan, 2019). In contrast, certain other federal states, such as Canada, follow a different approach. In Canada, the amendment of a federal constitution requires approval in the federal legislature and in a subset of provincial legislatures. This approach has drawn criticism, with concerns raised that it leaves room for amendments to be compromised through behind-the-scenes negotiations and lobbying efforts. A notable example illustrating this dynamic is the fate of Canada's Meech Lake Accord, which sought to amend the constitution through closed-door processes (Boase, 2019; Swinton, 1992).

In the majority of federalist systems, the responsibility for enforcing the constituent elements of a federal system typically rests with the judiciary, with a notable exception being Switzerland. However, there is a significant deviation in practice as both the legislature and executive branches of each layer of government assume the role of self-policing each other (Fisher, 2014). The judicial role in ensuring the enforcement of the federal constitution can take shape through two distinct approaches. Firstly, some federal systems, such as Germany and Belgium, establish specialized tribunals tasked with deliberating on critical constitutional issues. In other federal systems operating under common law traditions, such as India, judicial review is conducted within ordinary courts (Saunders, 1995).

Another critical issue pertains to the relationship between the two tiers of government and the selection of the tribunal responsible for examining constitutional matters. In certain instances, specific federal constitutional questions are reserved for the highest court within the federal court hierarchy. Consequently, the judges of this apex court are appointed by the federal government. This scenario raises questions about the potential bias of apex courts when deliberating on critical issues involving both levels of government. In Australia, these concerns led to the establishment of a legislative requirement, albeit weak, mandating that the federal government consult with regional governments when making appointments to the High Court (Patapan, 2000).

Saunders (1995) underlined that federal systems inherently provide a framework for representation at the central level of government, primarily due to the territorial basis upon which constituent units of federal systems are founded, with the noteworthy exception of Belgium. Consequently, these territorial entities also enjoy representation at the federal level of government, often through the election of representatives by state governments to the legislative body of the federal government. In the United States and Germany, this representation is manifest in the form of the Senate and the Bundesrat, respectively. The primary role of these chambers is to safeguard the autonomy and rights of regional or state governments, ensuring that the federal government does not unduly encroach upon them. They serve as essential mechanisms for upholding the principles of federalism by providing a voice for subnational entities in the central decision-making processes. The division of power constitutes an important feature of federal systems. There is an inherent need for the division of power firmly rooted in a constitutional framework which empowers each level to carry out specific administrative functions. This division extends across the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government, forming the basis of federal systems.

The division of power serves as a remedy to the challenge of overlapping jurisdictions between the different levels of government, thereby enabling the effective functioning of a federal system (Riker, 1964; Elazar, 1987; Watts, 1999; Grodzins, 1966). Neglecting the establishment of a division of power can yield profound implications, particularly in areas such as the judiciary, where judicial rulings carry binding consequences. It is for this reason that certain federal systems choose to institute diverse judicial models. In some countries, such as Germany, a unitary court system prevails, while in others, like the United States, a separation of courts is observed (Saunders, 1995).

Kneupling (2016) highlight that federal systems also incorporate mechanisms designed to safeguard the rights of national minorities. In many federal systems, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, dedicated institutions like the Ombudsperson's office collaborate closely with other human rights bodies to protect the rights of minority groups within the country. Conversely, in countries like Canada, the responsibility for ensuring human rights for minorities was vested in the courts following the introduction of the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The protection of human rights and freedoms has become a paramount concern in the contemporary state, marked by migration and demographic shifts, where ethnic homogeneity is rare. Federal systems respond to this imperative by guaranteeing linguistic freedom, preserving cultural heritage, and safeguarding religious freedoms, thus fostering an environment where the rights and identities of minority populations are upheld.

Stone (2016) emphasized that economic union constitutes another main feature of federal states. The establishment of numerous federal systems has been motivated by the pursuit of greater economic benefits derived from the creation of a larger internal market and regulatory frameworks that promote not only economic development but also international competitiveness. The responsibility for establishing such a conducive environment has often rested with the federal government, which possesses the authority to enact customs duties, implement common tariff policies, and handle regulatory powers that facilitate open internal trade. However, the landscape of federal economic unions has evolved over time, presenting challenges to the federal system itself. Firstly, the nature of internal markets has evolved significantly, encompassing not only the movement of goods but also the mobility of capital and services. Saunders (1995) aptly argued that the free movement of goods, capital, and labor can present challenges to internal markets if not properly managed. To address these challenges, robust infrastructural and financial systems, alongside constitutional guarantees of free interstate trade, have become essential.

Secondly, both federal and state governments have distinct roles in economic management aimed at fostering economic development. These roles may vary from one state to another, giving rise to significant implications for the entire federal system. Variations can be attributed to factors such as the fiscal powers of states, including taxation for internal revenue, borrowing capacity through public debt, and expenditure policies. Moreover, the effectiveness of policy coordination between the federal government and state governments can vary, impacting economic management outcomes (Commission of the European Communities, 1991).

Fiscal federalism also stands as a central aspect of federal systems, encompassing financial relations between the federal and state governments, taxation policies, financial grants, borrowing mechanisms, and expenditure. At its core, fiscal independence empowers constituent units of a federal system to exercise autonomy. It enables them to pursue their own development initiatives, even when such initiatives may seemingly conflict with the interests of the federal government (Stone, 2016). Consequently, tax collection rights, covering personal tax, income tax, ownership and management of public resources, property taxes, and corporate income tax, are vested in these autonomous units (Saunders, 1995). Since fiscal arrangements are typically preserved within the constitution, unilateral amendments are precluded. However, differences persist in how revenue is generated, distributed, and allocated. In federal systems like Canada, resources are owned by the provinces (Tiryakian & Rogowski, 2020). Conversely, in systems such as Nigeria, the federal government retains ownership of key resources like oil, with revenue allocation determined by a specific formula (Uche and Uche, 2004; Ikeji, 2011).

Kenneth Wheare's (1946) publication 'The Federal Government' marked the initial earnest effort to delve into the study of federal political systems, even though some scholars critiqued the work as having a somewhat 'legalistic tone' and limited insight into the political realities of the time (Watts, 2006). Watt's critique, largely influenced by the ongoing behavioral revolution within the social sciences in the 1960s mirrored a changing perspective (Vile, 1977). Subsequently, studies have contributed fresh insights into concepts suitable for precise and comprehensive comparative analysis of federal systems. As Burgess (2006) elucidates, there exist five fundamental bases for the comparative examination of federal systems, serving as conceptual prisms that empower researchers and scholars to not only discern but also explore the differences and similarities among two or more federal systems.

These fundamental bases encompass the structure of federations, the sociological underpinnings of federations, the political economy of federations, constitutional reform, and judicial review. Each of these distinct principles offers a pathway to comprehend the diverse aspects and dimensions of various federal arrangements, elucidating their functionality, priorities, sources of variation, and adaptability in response to evolving circumstances (Burgess, 2006). Three primary and overarching types of federations emerge based on distinct models: the Westminster model, the republican-presidential model, and a hybrid model that draws from both (Lijphart, 1999).

The Westminster model, predominantly embraced by countries such as Canada, India, and Australia, is built upon a representative and accountable parliamentary system of government. In contrast, the United States adopts the republican-presidential system, while countries like Switzerland, Germany, and Austria have adopted a hybrid model. While this categorization based on internal structures is efficient Friedrich (1962) aptly asserts, 'the greater the degree of homogeneity in a society, the more extensive the powers allocated to the federal government, and conversely, the greater the degree of diversity, the more substantial the powers assigned to the constituent units. Nonetheless, Watts (1999) acknowledged that the complexities involved, recognizing that this generalization does not hold true in highly diverse countries like India and Malaysia. India, for instance, introduces the Emergency Provision, a reflection of the federal government's potential power resources. When the President declares a state of emergency due to internal disturbances or external aggression, there is a substantial alteration in the distribution of powers, rendering the constitution more unitary than federal (Watts, 1999).

Furthermore, India's Westminster federal system differs significantly from those in Canada or Australia. India's Constituent Assemblies incorporated various experiences from different federations to create a constitution tailored to India's unique needs (Watts, 1999). Similarly, in Malaysia, Burgess (2006) emphasizes how the distribution of power has been adjusted to align with the federal government's preferences. Article 75 of the Federal Constitution asserts the supremacy of the federal government in cases of inconsistency between state laws and federal law. It empowers the federal government to intervene in any state legislation whenever conflicts arise. Additionally, powers such as the Proclamation of Emergency, which grants the federal government extensive authority, have been invoked multiple times. Notable instances include the 1964 confrontation with Indonesia, the 1966 constitutional impasse, the 1969 racial riots, and the 1977 Kelantan political crisis.

A comprehensive analysis of constitutional amendments in Malaysia since 1957 suggests that the Constitution has been handled casually. Amendments are often pursued for short-term political gains or to increase executive powers in the long run. This trend has made maintaining a two-thirds majority in the Federal Parliament a priority, blurring the line between constitutional government and authoritarianism (Elazar, 1987). In both Malaysia and India, the focus on security, both internally and externally, has greatly influenced the federal structures chosen. This emphasis has led to the expansion of federal powers, raising concerns about the role of liberal democratic constitutionalism in these federations.

Furthermore, Watts (1999) emphasizes that shifting the focus from the distribution of power to the administrative-executive procedures within a federal system broadens the scope of categorization and comparison. Legislative processes empower state governments to implement federal legislations, granting them policy latitude and influence during implementation in different regions of the federation. Countries like Germany and Switzerland offer valuable comparative case studies in this regard. The perspectives presented here regarding the structure of federations highlight crucial aspects in the comparative study of federal systems. However, an even more pressing issue revolves around the role of constitutional and institutional designs in federations. While this is a multifaceted question, it is essential to examine the origin and establishment of each federation and the interplay between the complex federal institutions and their social context.

This approach enables an understanding of the fundamental purpose of each federation and the intricate ways in which they interact with their societal milieu. Indeed, federations are often a reflection of the nature of society (Friedrich, 1962), as evident in the interchangeable use of terms like federal state and federal societies (Elazar, 1987). Addressing structural issues related to the institutional designs of federal systems necessitates a comprehensive examination of federation-society relations (Hamilton et al., 2005). While assessing the role played by political elites in the establishment of federal systems, their motives, and identities is important, the interplay between constitutions, political institutions, and the societies in which they operate requires a long-term developmental approach.

Vile (1977) highlights that the most challenging aspect of conducting a comparative analysis of federations is understanding change and development. Conceptualizing development and change relies on distinguishing between different social diversities that are politically relevant. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate traditional state-society relations to avoid oversimplifying the significance of institutional design. Simeon (1988) argues that while institutional designs matter, federal institutions alone do not guarantee failure or success. However, federalism must be supported by other institutional, procedural, and societal factors. Simeon (1988) identifies the bare-minimum prerequisites for a successful federal institutional design requires the coexistence of sub-state identities, loyalties, and values alongside shared mainstream identities and values across the entire federation. Additionally, dual values, loyalties, and identities should be integrated into the core institutions of the federation to ensure proper representation of interests in policy matters.

2.3. Conceptual Framework of National Identity

Before exploring the conceptual framework of national identity, it is imperative to establish a solid understanding of the foundational concepts of identity. The concept of identity, deeply rooted in traditional philosophy and logic, underwent a transformative journey into the realm of psychology. Erikson, building upon Freud's foundations, extended the notion of 'identity' beyond an individual's self-concept to encompass collective and social dimensions. In Erikson's theory, identity is not a mere individual construct; it permeates the collective and social spheres, finding expression in interpersonal interactions and group dynamics (Erikson, 1994; Stets & Burke, 2000).

In the contemporary world, discussions surrounding identity have become highly prominent. Various modern media outlets, including television stations, social media platforms, radio broadcasts, and newspapers, offer platforms for these identity debates to unfold. Malesevic (2006) argues that while identity has become a pervasive topic in today's discourse, it is not something easily observable or tangible. Although identity enjoys widespread acceptance, it has also taken on a normative dimension. In essence, there is a societal expectation that every individual possesses an identity. However, an ongoing debate persists regarding whether identity is singular or multiple, existential or essential, and constructed or primordial (Malesevic, 2006). In the realm of social sciences, the concept of identity serves as a fundamental tool for understanding the complexities of social reality. Lyotard's (1979) exploration of postmodernism highlights the centrality of identity in explaining individual and group behaviors, interpreting social transformations, and making sense of the outcomes of unpredictable events (William, 2013).

Social scientists draw upon diverse sources such as literature (Manning, 2013), theology (Conger, 1993), or even architecture (Swer, 2003) to glean insights into the multifaceted nature of identity. However, one of the most pervasive frameworks for understanding identity has been Durkheim's theory of mechanical and organic solidarity (Durkheim, 1897). While there may be noticeable variations in the philosophical, logical, and even mathematical interpretations of identity, a fundamental commonality exists in its operational formalism and precision. According to Copi (1979), the modern logical conception of identity entails an ‘asymmetrical, transitive relation.’ In simpler terms, ‘x = y’ holds true only when x is, in fact, equal to y.

Philosophical observation of identity encompasses both qualitative and numerical aspects. Qualitative identity pertains to arbitrary objects that share identical characteristics in every dimension. For instance, consider two black trousers produced in the same factory on the same day. In contrast, numerical identity signifies the unique and unparalleled nature of an object. An illustrative example is that despite wearing different attire at work, an individual remains the same person (Parfit, 1995). Consequently, Goddard (1998) concisely defines identity as the inherent and intrinsic nature of something that is not depending upon external relationships but is instead the result of internal self-similarity. In the broader domain of social sciences, the concept of identity has developed a bi-mathematical-logical meaning. On one hand, it signifies a profound similarity to a particular group, while on the other hand, it implies differentiation from another group (Ahmet = Kennedy, Ahmet ≠ Can).

However, this dualistic application of the concept of identity, especially in the realm of social science, has been criticized for its rigidity and absoluteness, which often do not align with the nuanced and dynamic nature of social realities. Boudon (1989) and Harris (1995) argue that the social sphere is dynamic, unpredictable, and ever-evolving often leading to unintended consequences. Consequently, the conventional understanding of identity, rooted in logical, philosophical, and mathematical approaches that emphasize equivalence or substitution, is inadequate when applied to the social sciences. It becomes evident that there can never be an absolute absence of differences in human world, rendering the application of a purely formalist understanding of identity impractical in social sciences.

However, despite these challenges, the 1950s and 1960s witnessed a notable proliferation of identity discourse within the social sciences. Aiming to provide conceptual clarity to the multifaceted notion of identity, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) proposed five distinct ways in which the concept of identity can be employed in social sciences:

- Identities as a Profound Form of Selfhood: This perspective views identities as deeply ingrained aspects of an individual's sense of self.

- Identities as Non-instrumental Forms of Social Action: Here, identity is seen as a driver of social behaviour that is not solely guided by instrumental motives.

- Identities as Evolving, Fragmented, and Unstable Versions of Self: This viewpoint acknowledges the dynamic and evolving nature of identities, which can be fragmented and subject to change over time (Sorsbji, 2006).

- Identities as a Shared Phenomenon of Group Sameness: In this context, identity is conceived as a collective experience shared by individuals who perceive themselves as part of a specific group or community.

- Identities as Interactive and Processual Outcomes of Social Actions: This perspective emphasizes the interactive nature of identity formation and highlights that identity is not static but emerges through social interactions and processes.

The realm of psychology offers valuable insights into the intricate concept of identity (Westle, 2011). Henry Tajfel et al. (1979), in their work 'An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict,' introduced the Social Identity Theory. In this theory, social identity is viewed as an individual's perception of themselves in relation to their membership in a group. These groups can encompass various facets, including ethnicity, familial bonds, or broader social structures to which individuals belong. These affiliations serve as significant sources of both security and self-esteem, offering a profound sense of belonging to the complex fabric of the social world. Tajfel et al. (1979) posit that group membership plays a pivotal role in the emergence of the 'us' versus 'them' phenomenon within the dynamics of social categorization. This process of social categorization explains through a structured series of steps that involve discerning the distinctions and commonalities between different groups. Consequently, it results in the formation of in-groups and out-groups (McLeod, 2019).

The inherent design of federal systems is to facilitate self-governance through a constitutional allocation of authority between the federal government and constituent units, enabling local autonomy while preserving distinct identities and interests (Friedrich, 1962). The division of power within federal systems can manifest in either territorial or non-territorial frameworks. In all federations, a minimum of two orders of government operates within a written constitutional framework subject to judicial review and specific procedures for amendment. Consequently, the precise nature and allocation of powers tend to diverge from one federation to another, contingent on their particular contexts (Friedrich, 1962). In social and political discourses, identity serves as an external framework for delineating and defining groups. Scholars who adopt this approach often focus on the concept of self-interest or as a foundational factor for potential social actions. Within this context, there is an underlying assumption that the social actions of individuals are influenced not only by instrumental rationality but also by shared values and norms projected through their political and cultural identities (Delanty, 1996).

However, the use of this form of identity has been a central theme in contemporary debates, particularly in discussions about national identity, multiculturalism, and citizenship. Delanty (1996), for example, argued that identities are distinct from interests and claimed that nationalism in Europe had shifted from being primarily driven by interests to being rooted in identity. This perspective differed from Rex's (1996) viewpoint, which emphasized the continued relevance of interests in shaping the new nationalism in Europe. The application of the concept of identity to notions of group sameness, forms of selfhood, and evolving self-conceptions aligns with an unconditional understanding of the nature of identity (Issacs, 1975; Smith, 1999). For example, Issacs takes a view of 'absolute zero difference' and defines identity as arising from one's affiliation with a distinct ethnicity, either acquired at birth or inherent to an individual. Smith (1999) echoes this position by asserting that the formation of new communities and cultural identities tends to be challenging, especially in situations where these emerging identities lack clearly defined boundaries and must compete with well-established existing identities.

The conception of ethnicity as traditional communities and nations as their modern counterparts, linked by genealogical ties, is in alignment with Emile Durkheim's perspectives on the transformation of solidarity. Durkheim (1933) distinguishes between traditional and modern societies. In traditional societies, diversity is limited, interactions are minimal, and structures are simplistic. In contrast, modern societies exhibit higher levels of interdependence, driven by processes like the complex division of labor, which provides superior operational efficiency compared to traditional societies. Nonetheless, both traditional and modern societies share a ‘conscience collective,’ denoting the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society that forms a determinate system which has its own life. However, Smith (1999) challenges Durkheim's definition of ethnicity as dominant collective sentiments and beliefs. According to Smith, ethnicity comprises symbolic, normative, and cognitive elements that endure across generations and are influenced by long-standing practices. He argues that ethnicity is shaped by shared attitudes and sentiments that differentiate one group from another. In the modern era, these foundational elements undergo evolution and transform ethnicity into a nation (Smith, 1986). Nations, while built on ethnicity, represent a significant change in collective identity. They become more dynamic and complex, characterized by universal written laws, unitary economic systems, a shared public culture, and a growing sense of interdependence (Smith, 1986).

Smith (1995) stands out for his thematic, conceptual, and historically grounded theory within the context of nationalism. Smith's focus encompassed the emergence of ethnicity and nations, their interplay, the genesis of nationalism, and the role of ethnic memories, myths, and survival within a universalist framework. To understand the doctrine of nationalism and the spirit of myths surrounding ethnicity, one must consider the core premises regarding social actions, human beings, and group solidarity (Malesevic, 2004). While Durkheim did not extensively delve into nationalism, Smith (1986) drew significant insights from Durkheim's arguments, particularly in understanding the social world and the formation of nations. Smith's (1986) theory on the ethnic origins of nations acknowledges that nationalism, although predominantly associated with the enlightenment revolution, does not wholly align with modernist assertions about the complete novelty of nations.

In contrast to the modernist perspective, which conceptualizes nations as products of developments in the 17th and 18th centuries leading to the emergence of cross-class cultural identities, Smith contends that there are essential elements of continuity between earlier forms of cultural identity and the emerging nations (Smith, 1991). Smith (1986) characterizes nations as evolved pre-modern ethnics, denoting communities distinguished by collective names, shared myths of origin, common historical memories, a shared cultural identity, a sense of solidarity, and an attachment to specific territories. Central to Smith's theory is the notion that ethnic solidarity takes precedence over all other forms of collective or individual affiliations, such as political ideologies, religious beliefs, or social class. Smith further observes that genuine ethnicity entails a sense of solidarity and community, primarily among the educated upper strata, who, if necessary, can impart this sentiment to other strata and regions within the community (Smith, 1986).

The core assertion within Smith's (1986) theory of ethnic identity and nationalism revolves around the idea that, irrespective of the distinctive or unprecedented character of the modern era, which established the structural conditions favorable to the emergence of nationalism as an ideology and the formation of nation-states, this process fundamentally builds upon earlier forms of ethnicity or communal identities. Consequently, it is essential to recognize that the stability and continuity of ethnic cores, along with their distinctive modes of expression, have played a pivotal role in shaping nation-formation processes. These factors determine the nature of social mobilization, whether through civic-based nationalism rooted in territoriality or ethnic-based nationalism grounded in ethnic identity.

Smith (1986) underscores his conviction that nations have evolved gradually from ethnicity, reflecting a transition from tradition to modernity. In the contemporary context, ethnic groups have become increasingly politicized, making them more likely candidates for transformation into nations. Consequently, nations are regarded as modern, heterogeneous, highly intricate, sometimes impersonal, and dynamically evolving collectives that have emerged from processes of social change, commencing with pre-modern ethnicity. As a result, nations, stemming from ethnic cores, share certain fundamental attributes such as common myths, shared memories, territorial attachments, and common language. Smith ultimately concludes that, unlike ethnicity, which are primarily characterized by shared myths of common origins, a nation can be defined as a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy, and common rights and duties for all members (Smith, 2001).

When examining social identities grounded in ethnicity, they frequently exhibit conservative traits and reflect inclinations towards homogeneity. This inclination is often coupled with a preference for anti-multiculturalism, the presence of ethnic prejudices, and, in specific contexts, demands for autonomy or anti-immigration stances. In the realm of politics, the construction of social identity as either ethnic or national identity is often associated with right-wing ideologies and policy conservatism, as noted by Windari (2021). Korostelina (2007) underscores that social identity significantly influences social perceptions and behavior. Sherif (1966) sheds light on the potential consequences of group identification, indicating that when individuals identify with distinct groups, intergroup competition over limited resources can give rise to conflict.

However, Tajfel et al. (1979) introduce a rich perspective by highlighting that group identification and intergroup rivalry may persist even in the absence of material conflicts. The mere perception of distinct groups can suffice to trigger intergroup discrimination. Furthermore, this perception can lead to the unequal allocation of resources due to the influence of in-group favoritism. In essence, Tajfel et al. conceptualize social identity as a product of social categorization, intrinsically competitive through intergroup comparisons, and fundamentally distinct from threats stemming from competition over material resources (Kalin and Sambanis, 2018).

2.3.1. National Identity

National identity, a product of modern nationalism that gained momentum since the French Revolution, encapsulates the collective identity of inhabitants within a nation-state. This profound connection involves citizens' engagement with historical and cultural traditions, moral values, ideals, beliefs, and the overarching concept of national sovereignty, fostering a deep sense of belonging to a political community (Zheng, 2004; Liu & Turner, 2018; Han, 2010). A more nuanced perspective considers national identity as an individual's profound sense of belonging to a state or nation. It reflects the unity of a nation, encompassing distinctive traditions, culture, and language. This psychological viewpoint emphasizes the awareness of differences and the recognition of 'we' versus 'they' within the context of national identity (Ashmore, Jussim, & Wilder, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Guibernau & Smith, 2004; Lee, 2012).

Marschelke (2021) introduces three critical challenges in the study of national identity. Firstly, on an analytical level, the terms 'nation' and 'identity' are broad, transdisciplinary, and controversial, associated with additional complex concepts such as nationalism, ethnicity, and culture. Secondly, ‘national identity’ is not confined to academic discourse but also pervades political and everyday discussions. Thus, any academic inquiry into national identity must navigate this interplay between academic and everyday perspectives. Thirdly, nationalistic ideas exhibit chameleon-like qualities, finding support across a spectrum of ideologies, from liberals and conservatives to Marxists and fascists. These challenges underscore the intricate nature of national identity as a concept in flux. On this regard, Gamble and Wright (2009) presented two primary ways to approach the concept of national identity. First, it can be viewed as an individual's identity, such as Turkish, or Somali. Second, it can be regarded as a state identity.

Max Weber's work defines national identity, linking it with ethnicity and common descent (Roth & Wittich, 1978; Dahbour, 2002). However, Weber acknowledged the complexity of considering the nation as a specific form of political community, noting that the nation cannot be defined solely in terms of empirical qualities common to its members (Dahbour, 2002). Connor (1994) advanced this perspective by differentiating ethnic groups from nations, stating that a nation is not simply an ethnic group unless its members are aware of their uniqueness. Connor introduces three factors: self-definition, ancestral or kinship ties, and a political process leading to a distinct claim to a political community.

Sociological theories illuminate the social construction of national identity, offering valuable insights into its formation and dissemination. Anderson's (1983) 'Imagined Communities' introduces the notion that nations are socially constructed entities existing in the collective imagination of their citizens. Anderson's (1983) thesis is the idea that shared cultural symbols, a common historical narrative, and advancements in communication technologies contribute to the creation of a sense of belonging among individuals within a nation. Smith's (1991) ethno-symbolism theory complements this perspective by emphasizing the role of symbols, myths, and traditions in fostering a collective identity among diverse populations. Ethno-symbolism highlights the interplay between cultural continuity, historical memory, and the creation of a national ethos, prompting an exploration of national identity's symbolic dimensions and their unifying force.

National symbols have emerged as potent instruments capable of stimulating enthusiastic emotions, a phenomenon recognized by scholars across various disciplines, including history, political science, anthropology, psychology, and sociology (Curti, 1946; Laswell, 1935; Kelman, 1969; Mills, 1961). Schatz et. al. (2002) assert that national symbols can serve as sources of political influence and power by mobilizing support for the state through the evocation of emotions tied to national identity, self-sacrifice, and allegiance. Additionally, politicians and political parties often harness national symbols to rally support, employing patriotic songs, flags, political party conventions, and political advertisements.

Furthermore, symbols also serve as vehicles for expressing political dissent or protest. Schatz et al., (1999) argue that due to the significance of national symbols, they are frequently associated with notions of blind patriotism, which may entail the rejection of national criticism, an intensely emotional identification with the nation, and unwavering, sometimes irrational, allegiance to the nation (Sullivan, 1992). In the various attempts to conceptualize patriotism, 'symbolic patriotism' has been associated with a range of attitudes and behaviours, such as support for increased defence spending (DeLamater et al, 1969). It also correlated with aggressive attitudes towards national out-groups, heightened relevance attributed to military power, and support for conservative values and traditional morals (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989). Group identity symbols frequently endure over extended periods, serving as lasting representations of a collective identity. Kammen (1991) explains that whether these symbols are explicit, such as collective memories, or implicit, like flags, national symbols possess the capacity to transform and historicize group identities. They enable romanticization, glorification, and mythologization of a group's history and identity.

Consequently, national symbols offer individuals a psychological connection to a broader, more profound meaning and purpose that transcends their personal experiences (Pyszczynski et al., 2004). Cos and Schatz (1999) assert that this characteristic grant national symbols a quasi-mythical significance, which is why any violation or perceived disrespect of these symbols can evoke strong emotional responses, including anxiety and outrage. Symbolic rituals, including national anthems, patriotic songs, parades, and national celebrations, play a vital role as national symbols (Cialdini, 2001).

These rituals go beyond tangible symbolic objects, allowing people to express their identification through actions. Behaviours like waving national flags or singing the national anthem serve as explicit demonstrations of an individual's or group's affiliation with their nation. According to Cialdini (2001), these activities often occur in the presence of fellow members of the national group, reinforcing the prominence of in-group membership and deepening the commitment to nationhood and national identity. Moreover, Michael Billig's (1995) 'Banal Nationalism' delves into the everyday, often unnoticed ways in which nationalism is reinforced through routine activities, symbols, and language. This perspective challenges the idea that nationalism is solely expressed through grand ceremonies and overt displays, emphasizing its subtler, pervasive manifestations in daily life.

The political science perspective adds to this discourse by emphasizing the influence of state institutions and power dynamics in shaping national identity. Ernest Gellner (1983) theorized a connection between industrialization, the emergence of modern states, and the homogenization of culture, indicating how political elites leverage nationalism to legitimize their authority and cultivate a unified national identity. This view highlights the interplay between economic and political forces in the construction of national identity. However, the constructivist approach further challenges static notions of national identity, positing it as a socially constructed and evolving phenomenon, shaped by political agendas (Brubaker, 2004; Smith, 1991). David Smith's distinction between 'Civic Nationalism' and 'Ethnic Nationalism' enriches this analysis by demonstrating the diverse pathways through which nations can define themselves: one emphasizing shared political values and institutions, the other rooted in ethnic and cultural commonality (Smith, 1991).

Cultural studies add another dimension, emphasizing the agency of individuals in its construction. Stuart Hall's 'cultural identity' concept suggests that identities are not fixed but are subject to constant negotiation and redefinition within specific historical and social contexts (Hall, 1990). This view invites us to see identity as a dynamic process, challenging fixed interpretations. The notion of cultural citizenship expands on Hall's ideas, highlighting the active role of individuals in shaping and contesting the narratives and symbols associated with national identity (Rosaldo, 1996). Cultural citizenship recognizes the diversity of experiences within a nation, emphasizing how individuals actively participate in the construction of their identities. This perspective prompts an examination of the ways in which citizens engage with and contribute to the evolving narratives of national identity, enriching our understanding of the lived experiences of diverse populations (Rosaldo, 1996).

Arjun Appadurai's (1996) exploration of 'Globalization and Cultural Identity' reveals the impact of global processes on national identity. He introduces 'scapes' – ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes – as landscapes shaping cultural identities, suggesting globalization's dual effect. On one side, globalization is viewed as a transformative force that gives rise to a new cosmopolitan identity. Conversely, another school of thought asserts that globalization serves to reinforce national identity, spurred by reactions from various segments of society (Tonnesson, 2004; Calhoun, 2007; Roudometof, 2014). Globalization as defined by Held et al. (1999), comprises the increasing cross-border flow of people, businesses, culture, and information, fostering deeper global interconnection.

Critics of globalization underscore its potentially destabilizing effects on the foundations of national identity. As the movement of people, goods, and services intensifies, the pursuit of a homogeneous society within a globalized world becomes increasingly challenging (Guibernau, 2001). Furthermore, even for political leaders, maintaining exclusive cultural control within their territories, and more crucially, over their citizens, becomes a more complex endeavour. National boundaries blur, and the promotion of a cosmopolitan identity often takes precedence over efforts to safeguard national identity (Brown & Held, 2010). Hobsbawm (1992) boldly predict that nationalism is becoming historically less important and envision a gradual shift toward a largely supranational world. Scholars argue that waves of immigration have prompted host communities to reaffirm their national identity, enhancing its significance and role (Calhoun, 2007). The persistent existence of national identity in a globalized world serves as a self-reinforcement of the need for and the significance of structured public life with a sense of belonging (Kaldor, 2004).

Predicting the death of national identity in the face of globalization may be premature. Smith (1995) argues that a global culture lacks the capacity to offer the qualities of collective faith, dignity, and hope that only a religious surrogate, with its promise of a territorial cultural community across generations, can provide. Castells (2009) echoes this sentiment, stressing how different societal segments might respond to globalization by accepting a cosmopolitan identity or reinforcing nationalistic identities. National identity acts as counterforce against perceived insecurities generated by globalization (Kinnvall, 2004). In Europe, globalization has faced criticism for creating both winners and losers. Some people have gained benefits from it, while others have faced reduced access to resources in terms of employment and income (Kriesi et al, 2006).

Turning to psychological theories, Erikson's (1968) stages of psychosocial development, particularly the stage of identity formation during adolescence, provide insights into how individuals grapple with questions of belonging and identity within the larger framework of a nation. Erikson's perspective complements sociological and cultural theories by emphasizing the personal dimension of national identity, acknowledging that the formation of a cohesive national identity is, in part, a deeply individual and internal process. Social identity theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), offers a psychological framework for understanding how individuals classify themselves and others into social groups, including those based on nationality. McAdams' (1985) concept of Narrative Identity enriches the psychological understanding of national identity, suggesting that individuals craft their sense of self over personal life narratives, where national identity becomes linked with personal experiences, contributing to a sense of personal and collective coherence.

In discussions surrounding national identity, it is a common practice to link identity to the concept of a 'polity' – a legally and internationally recognized territorial entity. This bond assumes a shared connection among individuals or groups within a polity, rooted in factors like territorial boundaries, race, religion, ownership of political institutions, or unified behaviors and thoughts. Additionally, the pursuit of common goals, rights, and responsibilities also shapes this connection among a nation's members (Parekh, 2008). Yet, people's understanding of their nation or polity is frequently varied and unclear. Political leaders may exploit this uncertainty, promoting their own ideal visions of a nation that citizens should aspire to. These visions, influenced by personal interpretations of moral and political issues, lead to diverse nation concepts (Parekh, 2008).

Dahbour (2002) presents a realistic view of nationhood, suggesting that a nation's definition hinges on beliefs about social facts, especially kinship ties. Thus, national identity is an ethnic identity that has gained political expression. This raises questions about the nation-state relationship, as political and national boundaries don't always align. Recent philosophical debates favor a more flexible approach to defining nations. Paul Gilbert (1998) argues that nationalism, or the belief in a group's right to self-rule defines a nation. Thus, national identity cannot be separated from nationalism, challenging traditional distinctions between nations and states. Ross Poole (1999) takes a wider view, considering national identity as a mix of personal identity, political community views, and moral commitments. He regards nations as 'imagined communities' formed by shared beliefs, not necessarily rational ones. This suggests that nations, as social constructs, are defined by their impact on individuals and communities. The relationship between different social groups is deeply shaped by ethnicity and the concept of nationhood (Banton, 2000; and Hechter, 1995). When conflicts between ethnic groups arise, they're often seen as rational actions by individuals leveraging cultural similarities for personal advantage. Support for causes like ethnic nation-states or federal systems are then seen as rational choices by actors seeking political, economic, or cultural autonomy (Malesevic, 2004).

In neo-Marxist theories, the concept of nationhood and ethnic relations is closely tied to the capitalist production system (Miles, 1989; Solomos, 1995). Here, cultural differences are seen as tools to maintain class inequality through domination. However, Malesevic (2006) notes that this view is limited, especially in socialist contexts like the former Yugoslavia, where class conflict explanations for ethnic strife fall short. Similarly, internal colonialism theories, which focus on economic disparities and ethnic divisions of labor, struggle to fully explain situations like Yugoslavia's breakup (Hechter, 1999). Secessionist movements in Yugoslavia arose from both economically backward and advanced regions, suggesting that regional inequalities alone don't account for its collapse. Instead, the instrumentalization of economic perceptions about the exploitation of certain regions within the federation offers more insight into the collapse (Malesevic, 2006). Elite theory, as discussed by Brass (1991), explores how elites use ethnic identity to gain political power and material advantages. Ethnic or cultural identities can be harnessed to unite people against perceived threats from other groups. Ethnic self-consciousness and conflict often emerge in societies experiencing radical and uneven social change. In socialist societies, where politics dominate all life aspects, elite theory is particularly relevant.

Michels (1962) underscores the significant insight that it is not merely the individual characteristics or qualities of people that confer power within societies but, rather, the structural positions they occupy. This perspective challenges the common assumption that personal attributes alone determine one's influence and authority. Building on this foundation, Cohen (1969) delves into the nature of ethnicity, revealing its essence as predominantly a political phenomenon rather than a simple aspect of cultural diversity. He posits that traditional customs and practices, far from being mere remnants of cultural heritage, act as potent instruments for political alignment and mobilization. This notion is further elaborated by Brass (1991), who identifies the conditions under which ethnicity becomes a focal point of political strategy, particularly noting that such politicization is more probable in contexts of dramatic and uneven social transformations.The discussion reaches a critical juncture with the examination of how these dynamics played a pivotal role in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. It becomes evident that the mere existence of diverse ethno-national groups was not sufficient to cause such a collapse; rather, it was the extreme politicization of cultural differences that served as the catalyst. Malesevic (2006) emphasizes this point, suggesting that the case of Yugoslavia exemplifies a broader phenomenon where the politicization of ethnicity and culture acts as a powerful force, transcending specific political or social contexts.

The latter part of the discussion transitions to the realm of social identity theory, which has emerged as a vital framework for understanding political behaviors. This theory illuminates how individuals' sense of belonging to various social groups influences their political actions, including voting patterns. It highlights the importance of ethnic politics as a central factor in shaping political landscapes, particularly in contexts where ethnic affiliations are a significant aspect of individuals' identities. O'Leary & Sambanis (2018) contribute to this discussion by focusing on the non-material origins of social identity, such as shared values and beliefs, and how these intangible connections can drive individuals to acts of self-sacrifice for group causes. Extending this analysis, scholars like Smith (1991), Gellner (1983), and Kedourie (2000) engage with the concept of nationalism, exploring the extent to which human agency and material conditions influence the formation of national identities. While acknowledging the role of individual and collective actions in shaping nationalism, they differ on how much material factors influence national identification. Kalin and Sambanis (2018) argue that individualistic or utilitarian explanations are not enough. They don't fully explain the pre-existing collective identities that elites can mobilize.

Once a group starts identifying as a nation, this identity tends to solidify and dominate other interests (Dardens, 2018). The creation of a national identity is a slow process, often involving education and military service. This helps explain why people's national identification remains stable over time, regardless of material changes (Kalin and Sambanis, 2018). It also sheds light on why out-group animosity can exist without material reasons. Understanding the construction of 'nationhood' demands an exploration of how personal, political, and moral beliefs intertwine to form the fabric of national identity. Scholars have proposed that the sense of belonging to a nation is as much a matter of shared experience and sentiment as it is about political or economic structures. This multiplicity of factors implies that national identity is not a static concept but a dynamic and living process, responsive to the ebb and flow of societal changes.

Building on our broader exploration of 'national identity,' the concept emerges not as a static construct but as an evolving phenomenon, reflecting a myriad of influences from the very fabric of society itself. Anderson (2016) aptly notes that national identity is forged through the complex interplay of social forces, manifesting across the political, economic, cultural, and social dimensions that shape individual and collective lives. Indeed, the economic underpinnings of national identity are significant. Inglehart (2018) posited in his post-materialist values theory, material security can greatly influence societal values and, by extension, national identity (Varty, 1999). Inglehart's ‘scarcity hypothesis’ suggests that in times of economic scarcity, materialistic values become paramount, fostering a strong sense of national identity as people unite in the pursuit of economic growth and stability.

This link between economic conditions and national identity is further evidenced by empirical research. Chunling and Senlin (2020) have illuminated how economic factors consciously shape individuals' societal positioning and sense of belonging. Studies have shown that in lower-income settings, people tend to hold their national identity in higher regard than their counterparts in wealthier nations (Inglehart, 1997). Harttgen and Opfinger (2014) also observed a negative correlation between personal income and the intensity of national identity, indicating that wealthier individuals may experience a weaker sense of national belonging. Chunling and Senlin (2020) acknowledged that social positions can lead to contrasting perceptions of what it means to be part of a nation. Empirical study by Hay et al. (2009), Fligstein (2008), and Gabel (2009) has shown that those aligned with cultural, social, or economic elites often identify less with the national identity and more with a global identity, in contrast to other societal groups.

The forces of globalization have heightened this divide. Hooghe and Marks (2009) discuss how globalization benefits elites in a way that encourages a global rather than national identity. These benefits are not equally distributed, often leaving the working and lower-middle classes to face the negative aspects of globalization, such as job competition and reduced welfare, which can intensify nationalistic sentiments among these groups. Huntington (2004) further delves into the socioeconomic stratification influenced by globalization, highlighting that engagement with global processes is often contingent upon one's social standing, with elites increasingly viewing themselves as part of a transnational community rather than a localized one.

The cultural dimension, too, is pivotal. Huntington (1996) and Legge (1996) have discussed the challenges multiculturalism and cultural diversity pose to national identity. They argue that exposure to foreign cultures, whether through migration or media, can weaken a nation's cultural uniqueness. This is further validated by studies like Kunovich (2009), which show a negative correlation between education levels and national identity, suggesting that higher education may expose individuals to a diversity of perspectives that could weaken their national identification. Modern media, as described by Ball-Rokeach (1985), plays a crucial role in shaping national identity. The variety of content available through different media outlets can influence how individuals perceive their national belonging. Wiley (2004) notes that the globalization of media might weaken established national identities, while McChesney (2001) highlights the impact of Western cultural dominance on national cultures, particularly in developing countries.

In response to these influences, states have taken proactive measures to reinforce national identity, such as promoting national culture through media and educational programs that emphasize patriotism. Yet, the rise of social media has introduced new complexities to the preservation of national identity, exposing people to a vast array of foreign influences. Finally, the intergenerational component of national identity cannot be overlooked. According to Chunling and Senlin (2020), the values and beliefs instilled during one's formative years significantly shape their perspective on national identity throughout their life. This is supported by Inglehart's socialization hypothesis and observed in the differences between older generations, whose formative years were marked by material scarcity, and younger generations, who tend to prioritize post-materialistic values and consequently may have a weaker national identity (Smith & Kim, 2006).

Navigating the complexities of national identity within the rich tapestry of multicultural societies, one can discern that the dialogue on identity and recognition transcends theoretical discussions. It resonates with the energy of social movements and individuals' deeply held quests for respect, which fuel and sustain them. Taylor (1994) in his pivotal work 'The Politics of Recognition', traces the evolution of these quests within the modern fabric of society. He observes how various movements, from nationalist to feminist, are connected by their mutual desire for acknowledgment. Taylor's analysis is insightful, mapping the transition from an age of inflexible social structures to one where the universal virtue of human dignity prevails. This shift has brought about a renaissance of authenticity, urging both individuals and groups to celebrate their uniqueness. According to Taylor (1992), the pursuit of authenticity isn't about imitating others but rather about fostering an authentic expression of cultural identity. This drive is crucial to modern nationalism and carries the potential for both constructive and destructive outcomes (Nicholson, 2018).

In this pursuit, the politics of recognition becomes a dance of dialogue and affirmation, where success is not guaranteed, and the risk of misrecognition or non-recognition poses a constant threat (Nicholson, 2018). Fraser (2020) further complicates this picture by highlighting the interwoven claims of cultural and socioeconomic injustices that characterize the post-socialist world, where the demand for recognition often accompanies calls for broader societal transformations. Taylor (1992) warns of the dangers of non-recognition, a subtle form of oppression that can diminish and distort, imposing the kind of psychic damage that fosters a harsh self-hatred. Indeed, recognition is not a matter of mere politeness but a vital human need, essential for the full realization of one's identity.

The concept of victimhood nationalism, as discussed by Lerner (2020), exemplifies a contemporary application of this quest for recognition, where narratives of suffering and victimhood become powerful tools in the arsenal of nationalist movements. These narratives serve not just as expressions of identity but as strategies to claim legitimacy and rally support for national causes. The discourse on identity and recognition, as engaged by scholars such as Lindemann and Ringmar (2012), Weiming (1996), and Maclure (2003), underscores the complexity of national identity in our times. It reveals a landscape where the politics of recognition navigates between the universalist ideals of equality and the particularistic claims of difference, a navigation fraught with conflict but also suitable with the potential for societal growth and understanding.

The conceptualization of identity is often a politically charged process that is inherently dynamic and subject to reinterpretation and contestation (Connolly, 2002). In this view, identity is not a static entity but a discursive occurrence, perpetually evolving and open to political challenges. This dynamism inherent in identity makes it a political lightning rod, as it gives rise to disagreements over what precisely defines identity. Public discourse on identity frequently issues divergent reactions. One such reaction attempts to suppress alternative voices, either by painting them as irrelevant or by precluding their participation in the dialogue altogether. Conversely, a more inclusive approach strives to integrate diverse perspectives into the prevailing narratives, albeit with varying degrees of influence (Dabirimehr & Fatmi, 2014).

As individuals and groups engage in articulating their own and others' identities, they venture into interactions fraught with the potential for conflict. Identity politics, therefore, arises from the resistance of competing identity assertions. Yet, it would be simplistic to assume that conflict is an unavoidable result of such interactions. On one hand, the likelihood of reaching a unanimous consensus on the inclusion and exclusion criteria that define identities within discursive distributions of subjectivities, as well as the perpetuation of particular identity narratives, is quite low. On the other hand, there exists the possibility that dissenting groups or individuals may establish their form of complete hegemony (Gad, 2010). Delving into identity politics, a complex landscape where political movements rooted in distinct group identities—cultural, gender-based, ethnic, religious, or social—navigate the nexus of group interests. These movements are often linked with liberal principles advocating for minority rights and self-determination (Gumbo, 2014).

A thorough examination of identity politics, as presented by Zweiri and Zahid (2007), illuminates its role as a political movement driven by various ethnic, religious, and cultural groupings. These groups are united in their quest for enhanced economic, social, and political rights, particularly the right to self-determination. This movement aspires to represent and advance the interests of specific societal groups. Identity politics gains prominence when members or groups who share common historical, religious, or ethnic bonds perceive themselves as subjected to injustices relative to other segments of society. Numerous conflicts have erupted across regions such as Europe, Africa, North America, and the Middle East, due to such identity-related grievances (Umar et al., 1983; Herb, 1999; Matthiesen, 2010; Alenezi, 2019; Dawisha, 2003; Kaplan, 2005; Odeh, 1985; Prpa-Jovanovic, 2000; & Tsai, 2021).

2.3.2. National Identity, National Attachment and Sense of Belonging

National identity, while being a collective phenomenon, is experienced on a profoundly personal level through national attachment and a sense of belonging. These dimensions offer critical insights into the emotional and psychological ties that bind individuals to their nation, extending beyond the mere acknowledgment of shared cultural or historical attributes. The study of these concepts is crucial for dissecting the complex dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, loyalty, and the varying degrees of engagement with national narratives. It is here that the abstract notion of national identity translates into tangible experiences and attitudes that shape social cohesion, political mobilization, and the resilience of communities against internal and external challenges.

National identity is conceptualized as a sense of belonging to a nation, a deeply felt connection shared by a group of people, based on common historical, cultural, and linguistic ties (Smith, 1991). It encompasses the subjective feeling of being part of a national community, often expressed through symbols, traditions, and collective memories (Anderson, 1983). National identity plays a crucial role in unifying individuals by creating a shared sense of history, culture, and values. This shared identity fosters social cohesion, facilitating a collective understanding and appreciation of the nation's heritage and aspirations (Smith, 1991). It serves as a foundation for national solidarity, influencing how communities perceive their past, navigate the present, and envision their future (Anderson, 1983).

Anderson (1983) posits that nations are 'imagined communities' where members, most of whom will never meet, share a deep solidarity. This theory highlights the constructed nature of national identity, emphasizing the role of media and communication in shaping collective imaginations (Anderson, 1983). Smith (1991) argues that ethnic elements, such as myths, memories, and values, are central to the formation of national identity. Smith (1991) further articulates that historical events, cultural heritage, and political ideologies are significant factors influencing national identity. Pivotal moments in history, such as wars, revolutions, and independence movements, play a critical role in shaping national consciousness and identity. Cultural heritage, including language, religion, and customs, contributes to the uniqueness of national identity, while political ideologies inform the values and principles that guide national narratives (Anderson, 1983).

In the era of globalization, national identity faces challenges and transformations. The increasing interconnectedness of the world raises questions about the sustainability of distinct national identities, as global flows of capital, people, and ideas cross borders, potentially diluting national cultures and values (Appadurai, 1996). The rise of multicultural societies, migration, and transnational connections challenge the traditional notions of national identity, prompting debates over inclusion, citizenship, and belonging (Kymlicka, 1995). However, globalization can also reinforce national identity through the differentiation from global norms and the reassertion of local distinctiveness (Castells, 2004). These developments necessitate a reevaluation of national identity, accommodating diversity while maintaining a sense of unity (Taylor, 1994).

National Attachment

National attachment refers to the emotional and psychological connection individuals feel towards their nation. It encompasses various dimensions, including affective, cognitive, and evaluative components, which together reflect the depth of an individual's bond with their national identity (Theiss-Morse, 2009). At the heart of national attachment lies the emotional and psychological ties that bind individuals to their nation, transcending mere citizenship to embody feelings of pride, love, and profound connection (Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999). While national identity focuses on the collective aspects and shared characteristics of a group, national attachment focuses on the individual's emotional and psychological investment in the nation. It is a personal experience that can vary in intensity among members of the same national identity group (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006). Individual interactions with national symbols, participation in national events, and personal identification with national achievements or failures can all influence the level of attachment one feels towards their nation (Sears & Funk, 1999). Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979) suggests that national attachment can be understood through the lens of social identity, where individuals derive part of their self-esteem from their national group membership. It explains how categorizing oneself as part of a nation lead to emotional attachment to that national identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The portrayal of national narratives, symbols, and events in the media and education curriculum significantly influences national attachment by shaping perceptions of national identity, evoking emotional responses and promoting a sense of shared experience (Couldry, 2002; Ichilov, 1998; Cerulo, 1993).

Sense of Belonging

The sense of belonging represents a fundamental human need to be part of something larger than oneself. It transcends mere identification with a nation or emotional attachment by embedding individuals within a web of relationships and communities (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A sense of belonging reflects the desire for acceptance, inclusion, and recognition within social groups. It can intersect with national identity and attachment but also operates independently, allowing for personal connections that may not be tied to national narratives or symbols (Maslow, 1943). This concept underscores the importance of social bonds and networks in fostering individual well-being and societal cohesion. While national identity and attachment highlight the connections individuals have with their nation, the sense of belonging extends further, incorporating a broader spectrum of affiliations. It encompasses relationships with local communities, social groups, and even global collectivises, reflecting the multifaceted nature of human social existence (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

The immediate environment, such as neighborhoods or towns, where every day social interactions contribute to a tangible sense of community and belonging (Putnam, 2000). Similarly, a more abstract level of belonging tied to shared history, culture, and values provide a collective identity (Anderson, 1983). Social inclusion, where individuals feel welcomed and accepted within their communities; recognition, which involves acknowledging and valuing individuals' identities and contributions; and participation, the active involvement in social, cultural, and political activities are among key factors that contribute to a sense of belonging (Taylor, 1994; Honneth, 1996). However, multiculturalism, social polarization, discrimination among other significantly impede the development of a sense of belonging, making it harder for individuals to find common ground and fostering a shared sense of belonging among all community members (Kymlicka, 1995; Crenshaw, 1991; Putnam, 2000).

Intersections and Distinctions

The comparative analysis highlights the unique yet interconnected roles these concepts play in shaping social dynamics, with national identity providing a shared framework of historical, cultural, and value-based references. National identity provides the cultural and historical context within which national attachment and a sense of belonging can develop.

In turn, national attachment personalizes and deepens this connection through emotional and psychological bonds and motivation for engagement with the nation. However, a sense of belonging extends these notions to encompass broader, more universal aspects of social inclusion and identity. It transcends national boundaries, embodying the universal need for connection and recognition in various social settings. Yet, distinctions are equally evident. National identity and attachment are specifically tied to the nation-state, concerned with collective history, culture, and emotional bonds to the nation. In contrast, a sense of belonging encompasses a wider range of affiliations, from local communities to global networks, highlighting the diverse avenues through which individuals seek connection and recognition. In synthesizing these insights, it becomes clear that while national identity, national attachment, and a sense of belonging share overlapping realms, each plays a unique role in shaping individual identities and collective experiences. Understanding these distinctions and intersections is crucial for comprehending the complex layers of social identity and the myriad ways individuals navigate their connections within and beyond the nation-state.

2.3.3. National Identity and Federalism

Federalism allows for a diverse range of national identities to be accommodated within a single sovereign state by constitutionally allocating specific powers to sub-national units. Regions with distinct cultural, linguistic, or ethnic identities can exercise self-governance in certain domains while remaining integrated within the national framework. The United States federal system exemplifies this, designed to balance the sovereignty of individual states with their adherence to a collective constitution delineating the distribution of powers and responsibilities (Hamilton, Madison, & Jay, 1788). Similarly, countries like Canada and India, which feature significant ethno-cultural diversity, employ federalism as a governance strategy to serve to the unique needs and aspirations of various groups. The Canadian model, for instance, accommodates linguistic communities by recognizing French and English as official languages and granting provinces such as Quebec special powers to preserve its French-speaking identity (Tierney, 1999). Further, federalism is instrumental in the protection of minority rights, integrating specific constitutional safeguards for regional languages, cultural practices, and local political representation. Kymlicka (1995) posits that such measures are indispensable for fostering an inclusive sense of participation among minority groups, which in turn fortifies the national identity fabric.

Federal structures offer flexibility to adjust and reform in the face of demographic or political changes, which is crucial for managing national identities (Burgess, 2006). Mechanisms within federalism balance regional autonomy and national unity. The constitutional division of powers defines federal and regional government authority, separating powers into exclusive, concurrent, and shared categories (Watts, 1999). Fiscal federalism, including revenue sharing and fiscal transfers, addresses economic imbalances across regions and contributes to a cohesive national identity (Bird & Tarasov, 2004). Intergovernmental relations involve collaboration and conflict resolution between federal, state, and local governments, ensuring coherent policy implementation (Agranoff, 2011). Bicameral legislatures, with one house representing the people and the other the regional units, integrate regional views into the federal legislative process (Tsebelis & Money, 1997).

Moreover, the judiciary, particularly constitutional courts, act as a balance by interpreting the constitution and adjudicating disputes between federal and regional authorities, safeguarding regional interests (Duchacek, 1970). Political parties and electoral systems further integrate diverse regional interests into the national political discourse, fostering negotiation and compromise that contribute to national unity (Chhibber & Kollman, 2004). In federal systems, citizens' political identities are shaped by a multilayered governance structure, which allows for identification with both local regions and the nation. This approach facilitates a connection with local governments due to their immediate impact on daily life, while shared citizenship and collective national goals foster a national connection (Elazar, 1987). Regional governments, endowed with the power to enact region-specific policies, cultivate strong local identities and regional pride (Burgess, 2006).

Additionally, the involvement of diverse groups within a common political and legal framework promotes a shared national identity, despite varied regional affiliations (Keating, 2001). The act of participating in both federal and regional elections reinforces citizens' dual identities, emphasizing their roles in their immediate communities and the broader nation-state (Kincaid, 2017). The allocation of resources and representation through federal structures also influence political identities, as citizens' perceptions of equity and their allegiance to different levels of government may shift based on how benefits and burdens are distributed (Bird & Vaillancourt, 2008). Federal systems adeptly address minority rights and recognition challenges through their constitutional design and political practices, by mirroring a country's social diversity in government structure and ensuring representation and autonomy for minority groups (Kymlicka, 1995).

Federal constitutions typically preserve specific rights that protect minority cultures, languages, and religions, providing a safeguard against majority tyranny and granting minorities a political voice (Choudhry, 2008). Fiscal federalism is critical here, as resource allocation allows minority regions to flourish (Bird & Tarasov, 2004). Intergovernmental relations mechanisms offer a platform for minority regions to engage in dialogue with the central government, ensuring their interests are reflected in national policy (Agranoff, 2004). Consociational elements, such as proportional representation, are often adopted in federal systems to include minorities in national decision-making processes, preventing alienation and reinforcing the federal system's legitimacy (Lijphart, 1977). Judicial interpretation of constitutional provisions in federal systems also protects minority interests and resolves disputes, ensuring adherence to minority protection measures (Tushnet, 2015). Federal systems foster minority identity expression through public policies that promote cultural preservation, such as education in minority languages (Kymlicka, 1995).

Moreover, this emphasis on cultural preservation paves the way for the emergence of a dual identity concept within federal systems, where individuals navigate their affiliation with both their regional community and the broader nation-state. Functioning federal systems allow for political engagement at both regional and national levels, where regional identity is reinforced by local governments' decision-making authority on significant regional matters, fostering a distinct regional character (Keating, 2012). Concurrently, national identity is promoted through shared symbols and institutions relatable to all citizens. Federal systems provide unifying structures such as national constitutions and courts, balancing regional identities' promotion with national cohesion (Burgess, 2006). This balance is often achieved through diversity-embracing yet unity-emphasizing policies like bilingualism at the national level (Kymlicka, 1995). Additionally, dual identity plays a vital role in integrating immigrants and minority groups, valuing both new and established identities within the national narrative (Stepan, Linz, & Yadav, 2011).

Federal systems empower regions with a degree of self-governance, notably in areas such as language, education, and culture. This autonomy enables ethnocultural groups to preserve and promote their unique heritage, fostering a sense of pride that transcends local identities and contributes to a composite national identity (Kymlicka, 1997). Representation of diverse ethnocultural groups within governance structures at both regional and national levels ensures that a plurality of voices influences policymaking, enriching the national identity with the country's cultural diversity (Stepan, Linz, & Yadav, 2011).

Institutional recognition of cultural diversity, through official recognition of languages, holidays, and practices, validates the importance of different cultures within the national narrative (Taylor, 1994). Federalism supports a unified national identity while recognizing diversity by promoting shared values and principles—such as adherence to a national constitution and respect for human rights—that all citizens can relate to, irrespective of their ethnocultural background (Burgess, 2006). The intercultural dialogue encouraged by federalism can mitigate stereotypes and prejudices, fostering a more inclusive national identity (Elazar, 1987). Moreover, mechanisms for conflict resolution, including constitutional courts and intergovernmental councils, are essential for maintaining a stable national identity amidst ethnocultural diversity (Tushnet, 2015).

However, the success of these measures in federal systems is subject to the Böckenförde Paradox, which posits that the stability and cohesiveness of a nation's identity may ultimately hinge on the underlying, often unspoken, pre-political factors such as shared culture or societal norms that exist outside the jurisdiction of formal state mechanisms. This paradox highlights the tension between the need for autonomy to preserve distinct identities and the need for integration to foster a shared national identity (Böckenförde, 1976). It also reflects the tension between secularism and pluralism, where the state’s secular nature may conflict with the recognition and support of minority identities. The health of a federal system thus relies on active citizenship and a genuine sense of shared identity among the population, highlighting the essential role of civil society in cultivating the preconditions for a successful federal state (Böckenförde, 1976). Böckenförde (1976) further highlighted that federal constitutions must balance flexibility for regional identities with a unifying framework that binds the federation, ensuring constitutional design adapts to changing political identities and circumstances.

Recognizing the Böckenförde Paradox's implications on federal systems, it becomes apparent that the vitality of such systems depends not only on legal structures but also on the active engagement of citizens and the cultivation of a collective identity. This segues into the idea of covenantal federalism, which is predicated on a consensus-driven union that weaves together diverse groups through shared values, cooperative commitments, and mutual respect, underscoring the significance of an evolving social contract and intergenerational responsibility within the federal framework. The covenantal nature of federalism implies a consensus among diverse groups to form a polity, grounded in shared values and a commitment to cooperation and mutual respect (Elazar, 1987).

Covenantal federalism encompasses a moral and social contract, emphasizing ethical principles and responsibilities, and a participatory approach to decision-making (Kincaid, 2016). It carries an intergenerational pledge, emphasizing the concept of shared sovereignty and the integration of diverse cultural identities into a unified narrative (Burgess, 2006; Kymlicka, 1995). It embodies adaptability, reflecting the evolving covenant between constituents (Tushnet, 2015). The principle of subsidiarity operationalizes this commitment through its emphasis on local governance. It emphasizes decision-making at the most immediate level, supporting regional identities and fostering a national identity that is both coherent and diverse (Kincaid, 2016). It delineates governance scope, encourages local participation, and manages potential conflicts by defining governance at each level (Stepan, Linz, & Yadav, 2011). Subsidiarity ensures policies are responsive to different identity groups, strengthening the bond between citizens and the state (O'Leary & McGarry, 2006), while promoting interdependency within the federal framework (Elazar, 1987).

Plurinational federalism extends the subsidiarity concept by recognizing and institutionalizing the multiplicity of national identities within a single federal polity. This approach not only accommodates but actively supports the political autonomy and self-governance of various constituent national groups, fostering a cooperative dialogue and shared sovereignty that is vital for the representation and harmonious coexistence of diverse cultures. (Keating, 2001; Kymlicka, 1995). It provides platforms for conflict resolution and economic collaboration, allowing cultural policies to reflect the diversity of national identities (O'Leary, 2005; Bird & Tarasov, 2004). Historically, federal systems emerged to unite entities with distinct identities, responding to the governance challenges of diverse territories (Burgess, 2006; Elazar, 1987). The trend towards decentralization has emphasized regional identities, with federal constitutions enshrining the rights and identities of constituent units, reflecting mutual recognition and respect (Watts, 1999; Tushnet, 2015).

Federalism, with its focus on regional autonomy, contrasts the universalistic ideals of citizenship, which emphasizes equality and uniform access to benefits. This contrast lays bare the central challenge of balancing regional diversity with national equity. Citizenship, as outlined by Marshall (1950), characterizes the pursuit of equality, advocating for consistent access to public services across the national spectrum. Contrastingly, federalism comprises the intricacies of regional uniqueness, making policies that reflect the diverse tapestries of local cultures and preferences. Herein lies the delicate dance of balance that Watts (2006) points to harmonizing regional diversity with national uniformity.

The implications of this balance extend to the core functions of federal states, notably in their approach to citizen welfare and regional distinctions. The discourse on federal structures and the welfare state reveals a complex narrative; while the former can sometimes undermine the latter (Obinger et al., 2005; Bonoli and Champion, 2015), the reverse influence remains underexplored. Esping-Andersen (1990) noted the significant evolution of social citizenship to bolster the welfare state, while historical institutionalist perspectives, as Sturm (2006) suggests, provide a framework for understanding how political institutions, particularly those under a central government, might solidify this evolution into a uniform model of social citizenship. Yet, federalism presents a paradox by offering a range of social programs that, while rich in diversity, may challenge the uniformity of citizen-state relations and community cohesion. This dichotomy between federalism and citizenship becomes particularly poignant in the domain of healthcare, a public service that, in an ideal scenario, should transcend regional boundaries in its accessibility. This tension captures the philosophical clash underscored by Banting (2006), who probes the reasons behind the predominance of citizenship principles over federalist diversity within different federations.

As federal systems engage with global influences, national identities face challenges. Globalization subjects national policies to international standards, migrants form transnational communities, and global markets influence federal economic policies, potentially undermining regional autonomy (Held et al., 1999; Kelemen, 2004; Sassen, 2006; Vertovec, 2009). Environmental challenges and global cultural exchanges demand international cooperation, altering national self-perceptions (Tomlinson, 1999; Osofsky, 2003; Selin & VanDeveer, 2009). In response, federal systems may evolve towards greater decentralization, fostering hybrid identities that embrace both national and global citizenship. This evolution could include adapting to global norms, forming transnational federal structures, and facing shared global challenges, all of which redefine the essence of national identity (Keohane & Nye, 2000; Slaughter, 1997; Held & McGrew, 2002).

Federalism's future will likely be influenced by the intersection of national and global dynamics, from digital governance and demographic shifts to climate change and cultural exchanges. These factors will compel federal systems to balance the preservation of cultural heritage with the embrace of global innovations, shaping national identities that are rooted yet dynamic and open to the flow of global cultural trends (O'Hara & Hall, 2018; Sassen, 2007; Parekh, 2000).

2.3.4. Federalism, Social Cohesion and Political Participation

Federalism has historically played a dual role, acting as both a unifying and divisive force. The foundational framework of the U.S. Constitution, which was established to rectify the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, is a prime example of this duality. It revealed a delicate balance between state sovereignty and federal authority, achieving unity among the thirteen diverse colonies while retaining their individual autonomy. However, the tension between state and federal powers has been a consistent theme in American history, intensifying issues like slavery and states' rights, which culminated in the Civil War (Madison et al., 1788). The Swiss federal arrangement, in contrast to the American experience, has maintained unity by providing cantons with substantial autonomy, allowing for the preservation of distinct languages and customs. This approach has reinforced social cohesion within a unified national framework (Linder, 1994).

Germany's post World War II federal structure also illustrates the role of federalism in preventing centralization of power, thus fostering political stability and unity across its federal states (Hueglin and Fenna, 2015). In the case of India, federalism has been a strategic tool in accommodating the country's diversity, leveraging regional autonomy to uphold unity amidst a rich tapestry of languages, religions, and ethnic groups (Tillin, 2013). Nonetheless, the record of federalism is marred by challenges, as seen in Belgium and Canada. These nations, despite managing internal tensions and cultivating a national identity through federal structures, have encountered issues like the divide between Wallonia and Flanders, and Quebec's intermittent separatist inclinations (Watts, 1999). More dramatically, the federal arrangements in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union were unable to contain nationalist and ethnic divisions, leading to disintegration and conflict (Burg & Shoup, 1999). Despite these, Trudeau (2005) stresses federal systems' capacity to mediate between competing nationalistic aspirations, seeking a shared platform for unity among diverse groups.

In the modern context, federalism continues to demonstrate its capacity to both support and undermine social cohesion. It is celebrated for its ability to honour local identities through the autonomy of regional governments, which bolsters representation among minority groups and strengthens national cohesion—as observed in Switzerland and India. The enduring relevance of the Federalist Papers suggests that a large federal republic can prevent any one faction from gaining undue power, thus preserving social order (Madison et al., 1788).

Federalism fosters a layered identity, connecting individuals to their local state, region, and the nation, which reinforces the social fabric. It can make governance more responsive to local needs, potentially increasing trust in the political system (Erk & Swenden, 2010). However, challenges such as regional disparities in wealth and development, can strain national unity. The complexity of federal systems may also cause confusion about governmental responsibilities, undermining social trust and cohesion (Hooghe et al., 2010). Federalism intricately shapes individual and collective identities by introducing a degree of autonomy for regions or states, which can foster a strong local identity that complements a broader national identity. This dual sense of belonging facilitates the integration of multiple cultures and languages, enhancing citizens' attachment to both their local communities and the nation as a whole (Linder, 1994; Rocher, 2002).

A well-calibrated federal model can deepen citizens' connection to the central government when it respects and celebrates regional diversity. Active civic engagement, promoted by federalism, enables individuals to participate in local governance, heightening their investment in the national political landscape and, consequently, their national attachment. The federalism framework is also instrumental in addressing regional disputes, which plays a critical role in preventing local grievances from escalating into national crises. The capacity for conflict resolution within this structure promotes trust in the nation-state and bolsters national bonds (Burgess, 2006). However, economic, cultural, or political disparities across regions can exacerbate divisions, threatening national unity if certain areas feel marginalized by the federal arrangement (Filippov et al., 2004; Treisman, 2007; Beramendi, 2012).

Loyalty to one's state or region may sometimes override the sense of belonging to the nation. Historical, linguistic, or cultural differences can fuel separatist movements or disinterest in national affairs, challenging national unity, especially in regions with distinct autonomous identities (Keil and Anderson, 2018). Moreover, the complexity inherent in federal systems can lead to confusion and political apathy or disappointment at both regional and national levels (Hooghe et al., 2010). Despite potential challenges, federalism remains a governance approach that unites by valuing diversity. It prevents any single group from dominating the political arena, thus protecting against tyranny of the majority, and fostering a stable, cohesive society (Elazar, 1987; Gerken, 2013). This structure often encourages political participation across various governance levels, contributing to a shared destiny and collective responsibility, fundamental to national unity (Erk and Swenden, 2010).

Federalism allows regions self-governance to address local issues, maintaining common ground and preventing the deepening of divisions (Watts, 1999). Federal systems employ varied approaches to manage social divisions and promote national integration. The United States has continually evolved its federal system to address historical divisions with legislative and judicial measures, enforcing civil rights (Issacharoff, 2015). Switzerland and Germany showcase how federal structures can respect regional identities while integrating diverse populations into a cohesive national framework, striking a balance between autonomy and unity (Linder, 1994; Hueglin and Fenna, 2015). India aligns its federal system with its linguistic and cultural plurality, mitigating secessionist tendencies and fostering national integration (Tillin, 2013). In Belgium and Canada, federalism is also tailored to address linguistic and cultural divisions, promoting coexistence, and building an inclusive national identity (Swenden, 2004; Andre, 2011; Banting & Kymlicka, 2017).

Decentralization within federal systems encourages civic engagement by making governance more accessible and responsive to citizens, leading to strengthened community ties and a sense of belonging. This is particularly beneficial in nations with ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity, as it allows groups to govern according to their customs, promoting inclusivity and reducing inter-group tensions, thereby fortifying the national fabric. Excessive decentralization may lead to fragmentation, with strong local allegiances potentially overshadowing national identity, especially if regional policies conflict with national interests (Lecours, 2010; Rodden, 2005). Moreover, deep-rooted ethnic or regional divisions may be intensified, increasing tensions and challenging national cohesion if local governments become battlegrounds for power struggles or divisive agendas (Bakke & Wibbels, 2006).

The complexity introduced by decentralization can make governance challenging for citizens to navigate, potentially eroding trust in both regional and national institutions (Hooghe & Marks, 2003). Cooperative intergovernmental relations is crucial as it governs the interactions across government levels and influences how well diversity is managed and citizen needs are met. It leads to effective governance and coordination on policies, enhancing public perception of government legitimacy and reinforcing social cohesion (Agranoff, 2011). The balance of power between federal and regional governments is pivotal in shaping societal unity. A balanced distribution of power enhances local representation and meets local preferences, contributing to social cohesion and a stronger national attachment (Elazar, 1987).

Federalism is embedded within a complex systemic context, where it intersects with political, social, and economic dimensions to affect social cohesion and national attachment. Democratic institutions within a federal system are pivotal; when characterized by transparency, participation, and accountability, they can enhance trust and foster a sense of belonging. Weak institutions, conversely, may foster disappointment and weaken national attachment (Horowitz, 2001). The dynamics of party politics within federal systems are also critical. Parties that bridge regional divides with inclusive platforms foster national cohesion. In contrast, parties that focus on regional interests worsen divisions and weaken national unity (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004). The policymaking process, whether cooperative or conflictual between federal and regional governments, directly influences social cohesion. Policies that address regional needs inclusively strengthen cohesion, while exclusionary policies deepen divisions (Bednar, 2008).

In culturally diverse societies, the management of ethnic and cultural plurality is a key aspect of federalism. Proper management supports diversity through regional autonomy, contributing to unity while poor management establish divisions and motivate separatism (Bakke and Wibbels, 2006). Federal systems frame multiple identity layers, which can reinforce social cohesion, but dominant regional identities might sometimes undermine national attachment (Erk & Anderson, 2009). The vibrancy of civil society and the quality of social capital within regions affect federalism's impact on national cohesion. Proximity to government that reflects local needs and engaged social networks reinforce cooperation across regions, solidifying national attachment (Putnam, 2000).

Nevertheless, policies within federal systems worldwide aim to promote social cohesion and national attachment. Fiscal equalization, redistribution programs, equitable development and economic integration address disparities among regions typically fostering solidarity and strengthening cohesion, while imbalances provoke feelings of neglect and erode cohesion (Boadway and Shah, 2009; Rodden, 2005). However, representation of regional interests in national decision-making encourages cooperation and mutual understanding (Swenden, 2006). Federalism profoundly influences individual and collective identities, linking people to their local community, region, and nation. However, the multiplicity of identities can create tension, especially when they are perceived as competing (Erk & Anderson, 2009). Federalism's approach to managing societal diversity often mitigates conflict by granting autonomy to different groups. However, it also risks institutionalizing divisions and creating new tensions (Burgess, 2006).

The alignment of government boundaries with nationalities is a contentious issue; states encompassing multiple nationalities create tensions between maintaining unity and respecting diversity (Mill, 2001; Richards, 2013). Rousseau (1973) underscored the importance of social cohesion and national identity, advocating for a government that fosters patriotism to prevent societal indifference (Rousseau, 1973). Diverse ideological perspectives, from socialist democrats emphasizing social justice to conservatives intent on preserving national culture, underscore the centrality of social cohesion for a functioning democracy (Miller, 1995; Luban, 1980; Scruton, 2006). The 'hunkering down' thesis suggests that ethnic diversity may negatively impact social cohesion, highlighting the complexities of identity diversity in potentially eroding social trust and collective participation (Putnam, 2007).

The impact of identity diversity on social cohesion is debated, with varied findings across studies (Laurence, 2011; Agirdag et al., 2011; Anderson and Paskeviciute, 2006). Some research has not found significant links between diversity and cohesion (Sturgis et al., 2011; Savelkoul et al., 2011; Gesthuizen et al., 2009), while critiques have been raised about the conceptualization and methodologies of social cohesion research (Hooghe, 2007; Portes and Vickstrom, 2011). Trust is highlighted as a cornerstone for fostering inclusivity and collective action (Uslaner, 2004). Identity diversity, associated with decreased social capital, hinder inter-group interactions and solidarity, transforming collective identity (Putnam, 2007). Ethnically diverse communities experience reduced civic participation and increased distrust (Hero, 2007; Dincer, 2011).

Nonetheless, global cases differ, with varied impacts of ethnic diversity on social cohesion observed in countries like the Netherlands and Canada (Tolsma, 2009; Kazemipur, 2006; Wu et al., 2011). The absence of a universal measure for social cohesion adds complexity to understanding the identity-social cohesion nexus (Botterman et al., 2012; Jenson, 2010). In Europe, social cohesion is often linked with social inclusion, whereas in Canada, the emphasis is on community belonging (Vergolini, 2011). Jenson (2010) proposes five dimensions for measuring social cohesion, including civic and political participation, legitimacy of public institutions, sense of community belonging, economic inclusion, and tolerance of diversity. Other studies suggest components like bonding and shared norms (Chan et al., 2006).

On the other hand, federalism impacts political engagement across various levels of government by granting local and regional authorities autonomy in certain policy areas. This decentralization promotes political engagement by making government more accessible and responsive to citizens (Filippov et. all. 2004). The layered structure of federal systems allows for policy experimentation and advocacy across different governmental levels, fostering political mobilization and innovative policy solutions (Weaver, 1986; Tarrow, 1998). However, this layered structure can sometimes be a double-edged sword. While it empowers regions to promote political engagement, it may also lead to confusion among citizens about how to effectively engage, potentially discouraging participation (Thorlakson, 2003). The complexity of intergovernmental relations present challenges for advocacy groups attempting to navigate and influence policy (Anderson & Carter, 1997).

Despite these challenges, the diversity inherent in federal systems necessitates that political parties address a wide range of issues to appeal to regional interests, potentially encouraging greater political engagement (Chhibber & Kollman, 2004). Moreover, federalism creates multiple avenues for accountability, enabling citizens to hold their governments responsible at different levels (Trench, 2008). The upside of this decentralization is evident in voter turnout. Blais (2006) highlights that federal systems boost voter turnout by creating more opportunities for engagement and strengthening citizens' connection to their local or regional governments. Additionally, grassroot campaigns by political parties act a powerful driver of voter turnout (Rosenstone & Hansen, 2002). Federalism also shapes the landscape of civic education and political efficacy. The autonomy of subnational governments leads to diverse approaches in civic education, which enhance citizens' sense of political efficacy.

However, the context within which federalism operates is shifting dramatically. Federalism's adaptability to changing political ideologies, societal norms, and generational views on national identity is paramount for its role in promoting social cohesion and a sense of national unity in a dynamic global landscape (Hooghe and Marks, 2003). Technological advancements are revolutionizing governance and citizen engagement, necessitating that federal systems evolve to address issues like privacy and misinformation to preserve social cohesion (Milner, 2021). Additionally, as migration alters the demographics of federal states, the balancing act of promoting multicultural integration and managing regional identity becomes even more complex (Castles et al., 2014).

2.4. Excerpts from Somali History

2.4.1. Precolonial Political Structure

Somalia's pre-colonial political landscape was characterized by a mixture of indigenous systems that was deeply rooted in its socio-cultural traditions accommodating its nomadic lifestyle and structured around clan affiliations and customary legal practices (Lewis, 1955). The Somali people was primarily divided into various clans and sub-clans that traced their lineage to a common ancestor, each with its own political structures, often rooted in their pastoralist traditions (Lewis, 1965). These clans acted as the fundamental socio-political fabric. They established norms, managed disputes, and guided communal decisions (Lewis, 1961). The indigenous political structure of the Somali people has traditionally revolved around 'Xeer,' a system of unwritten customary laws consisting of orally transmitted agreements preserved across generations (Menkhaus, 2004). This system has directed practices ranging from the management of resources and commerce to the settlement of disputes and the imposition of sanctions for misconduct.

Leadership within these clan structures did not rest on the shoulders of single ruler. Most commonly, it was a collective of elders, referred to as the 'guurti', who exercised significant power. These respected elders were instrumental in mediating and making decisions, thus preserving cultural customs, and ensuring the lineage of practices (Abdullahi, 2001). Each clan had a well-defined internal hierarchy and leadership structure that governed daily affairs (Cassanelli, 1982; Bradbury, 2008). Traditional leaders held positions of authority and respect and they were chosen based on factors such as age, wisdom, and lineage, and their role extended beyond mere governance (Cassanelli, 1982; Lewis, 1955). One of the most notable qualities of Somalia's clan-based society was its proficiency in conflict resolution. Clans played an essential role in mediating disputes and preventing escalation. Traditional leaders used their knowledge of ‘Xeer’ to guide negotiations and reach resolutions that were fair and just (Hoehne, 2013; Menkhaus, 2004).

Despite the clan-centric structure, Somali society was not isolated. It engaged in trade and cultural exchanges with adjacent regions, thereby improving its political systems (Laitin & Samatar, 1987). Somalia's precolonial political structure was also featured complex inter-clan dynamics. Clans frequently allied with each other for mutual defence, commerce, and resource-sharing (Luling, 1997; Cassanelli, 1982).

The precolonial political system was also characterized by a number of sultanates, each with its own distinctive dynastic governance and complex political structure (Abir, 1980; Gibb, 1923). The sultanates were influential in shaping the social and political fabric of the region (Gibb, 1923; Trimingham, 1952). Dynastic rule, marked by succession within a ruling family, was a common basis of governance in many precolonial Somali sultanates. The ruler's legitimacy was deeply connected to their ancestry, with the belief that a ruler's lineage endowed them with power and ensured leadership stability. This tradition also served as a means to uphold societal unity. While dynastic rule was a common feature, the degree of central control in these sultanates differed, with some having more consolidated power structures, where sultans held major authority and enforced policies decisively (Abir, 1980).

The sultan acted as a unifying figure, organising activities in commerce, defense, and foreign relations, while also serving as a patron of cultural and religious affairs (Samatar, 1988). They simultaneously functioned as leaders and guardians of their community's identity and heritage. Rulers frequently endorsed scholars, poets, and artists, thereby nurturing of intellectual and artistic endeavours. Such patronage cultivated a vibrant cultural mosaic that continues to be a defining feature of Somali society (Samatar, 1988). Dynastic rulers were also integral to administration and governance, overseeing councils. These councils were crucial for shaping policies, and resolving conflicts (Sheik,1992).

2.4.2. Postcolonial Governance

During the late 19th century, European powers began to establish colonial footholds in the Horn of Africa, initiating a period of direct foreign rule that would significantly alter the course of Somali history (Lewis, 1961). The British established a colony in the north (British Somaliland), while the Italians gained control of the southern part of the region (Italian Somaliland), and the French took over the territory that is now Djibouti (Drysdale, 1964). These European powers implemented administrative and legal systems vastly different from the indigenous structures, introducing new forms of governance and social structure (Lewis, 1955). After the long period of colonial domination, the journey towards Somali independence was marked by a surge of nationalist sentiment that united different clans and regions against a common colonial adversary. The SYL, a pivotal movement in the struggle for Somali independence, founded in 1943, awakened national consciousness and cultivated a shared vision for an independent Somalia (Lewis, 1963; Samatar, 1988).

Political mobilization intensified in the 1950s, with the SYL and other nationalist parties advocating for self-governance and preparing the people for a post-colonial future (Lewis, 1963). Notable leaders emerged as influential voices, guiding Somalia through the transitional phase of self-administration granted by the British and Italians, leading to full independence (Lewis, 1963; Samatar, 1988). The culmination of these efforts was the unification of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland, which declared independence in 1960 to form the Somali Republic. This historic unification was celebrated as a victory for the Somali nationalist movement, heralding a new era of self-determination and governance (Laitin & Samatar, 1987; Drysdale, 1964). The merger of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland into the Somali Republic in 1960 was the fruition of a long-cherished goal of unification among Somalis. British Somaliland gained its independence on June 26, 1960, followed by Italian Somaliland on July 1, 1960.

The union of the two territories was driven by the widespread public sentiment among Somalis for a unified state that would bring together all Somali-inhabited territories in the Horn of Africa (Lewis, 1965). Political negotiations leading up to the merger were complex, as they involved reconciling different administrative systems, laws, and colonial legacies. Leaders from both territories met several times to discuss the terms of the union, with the aim of ensuring a smooth transition to independence and merger. The process was marked by a spirit of optimism and national fervor, which played a crucial role in propelling the negotiations forward (Lewis, 1965; Laitin & Samatar, 1987). The public sentiment towards the merger was overwhelmingly positive, as many Somalis viewed it as the rectification of the artificial division imposed by colonial rule. Nationalist sentiments were high, and the public largely supported the political leaders who were steering the negotiations. Civic organizations, trade unions, and political parties from both territories mobilized support and facilitated discussions on the practical aspects of the merger (Laitin & Samatar, 1987).

Upon the declaration of independence, enthusiastic celebrations erupted across the country. However, the euphoria of independence was soon met with the reality of integrating two distinct colonial administrations. Despite these challenges, the merger represented a significant achievement for the Somali people and set the stage for the post-colonial nation-building process (Lewis, 1965; Samatar, 1988). The first National Assembly of Somalia elected an interim president, and a referendum in 1961 approved a new constitution, setting the foundation for the country's nascent democratic institutions (Samatar, 2016).

The first election under this constitution saw Aden Abdulle Osman elected to a full term, representing a significant step toward institutionalizing the political process in the fledgling republic (Samatar, 2016). The Somali people embraced the democratic process with enthusiasm, as evidenced by the competitive elections that led to the peaceful transfer of power between presidents—a rarity in the African context of the time (Lewis, 1963; Samatar, 1988). The constitution laid out a parliamentary system and guaranteed civil liberties, signaling the new government's commitment to democratic governance (Laitin & Samatar, 1987). In 1967, Somalia witnessed another democratic transition with the election of Abdirashid Ali Shermarke as president, succeeding Aden Abdulle Osman in a historic and unprecedented peaceful transition of power on the African continent (Samatar, 2016). The elections held in the Somali Republic were a testament to these democratic efforts. The first national elections in 1964, and subsequent local and national elections in 1968, were highly competitive. Various political parties like the Somali Youth League (SYL), the Somali National Congress (SNC), and the Somali Democratic Union (SDU) vied for influence, offering diverse platforms that ranged from pan-Somalism to more localized clan-based issues (Lewis, 1963). These parties often had strong regional bases, reflecting the underlying clan alignments, and acted as proxies for clan interests within the political arena (Lewis, 1961; Samatar, 1988).

Clan politics played a significant role in the political process. The structured clan system provided social organization and conflict resolution, but also introduced factionalism to national politics. Political parties had to navigate the delicate balance of appealing to clan loyalties while promoting a unified national identity (Laitin & Samatar, 1987). This dual allegiance presented challenges, particularly in the distribution of political power and resources, often resulting in accusations of favoritism and the marginalization of certain groups (Drysdale, 1964; Samatar, 2001). The electoral process itself saw high enthusiasm and participation, with voter turnout being relatively high. The interim government, responsible for organizing elections in a society transitioning from colonial rule, managed the process. The United Nations provided oversight to ensure fairness and transparency in the electoral process (Lewis, 1965; Laitin & Samatar, 1987). Despite these democratic strides, the influence of clan politics was evident in both voting patterns and political discourse. The fragmentation along clan lines made it challenging to form broad-based political coalitions, resulting in a government often viewed as a coalition of clan interests rather than a representation of the national will (Lewis, 1965; Touval, 1963).

In spite of that, the nascent republic also faced considerable challenges in maintaining its democratic ideals. The clan-based social structure of Somali society, which had previously organized political life, presented both opportunities and obstacles for democratic development. While the clan system allowed for a certain level of social order and representation, it also fostered division and competition that could potentially undermine national unity (Lewis, 1965). Moreover, the regional and international political climate exerted additional pressure on the fledgling democracy. The Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union found its way into Somali politics, influencing domestic affairs and contributing to the complexity of governance (Laitin & Samatar, 1987). The government's effort to navigate these external influences while addressing internal clan dynamics was a testament to the challenges that lay ahead. Economic hardships, brought about by recurring droughts and the lingering effects of colonial economic policies, further complicated the political landscape. These economic challenges, coupled with high expectations for rapid development, placed immense pressure on the government to deliver tangible progress (Samatar, 1988).

President Shermarke's administration, however, was short-lived, as he was assassinated in 1969. This event that triggered a significant shift in Somali politics, with the military, led by General Mohamed Siad Barre, seizing power in a coup d'état, dissolving the parliament, and suspending the constitution (Ingiriis, 2016). This coup marked the end of the initial post-independence democratic experiment and the beginning of a prolonged period of authoritarian rule (Abdullahi, 2018). The military coup also signalled a shift towards authoritarian rule and a socialist-oriented ideology, as General Barre sought to align Somalia more closely with the Soviet Union (Ingiriis, 2016). The political ideology of Siad Barre's was initially founded on the principles of scientific socialism, drawing inspiration from the Soviet model. His government embarked on an extensive campaign to inculcate socialist values, emphasizing the need for social reform and the eradication of traditional clan structures that were deemed counterproductive to national unity and progress (Mukhtar, 2003). The government nationalized major industries and resources. Land reform was a significant agenda, with the government redistributing agricultural land to create cooperatives intended to boost production and ensure food security (Metz, 1992). Education and literacy campaigns were vigorously pursued, with the aim of empowering the population and fostering a unified national identity through the widespread teaching of the Somali language, which was for the first time written using a Latin-based script (Lewis, 1994).

However, Barre's regime was also marked by increasing authoritarianism and the suppression of political dissent. The government's human rights record deteriorated over time, with reports of widespread abuses and the use of repressive tactics to silence opposition (Ingiriis, 2016). Barre's pursuit of a Greater Somalia led to a war with Ethiopia in 1977-78, a conflict that ended in defeat for Somalia and a shift in the country's Cold War allegiances from the Soviet bloc to the West (Laitin & Samatar, 1987). The latter years of Barre's rule were characterized by growing resistance from various clan-based groups, which eventually blended into armed opposition. The government's inability to manage the competing clan interests and the economic downturn contributed to the regime's weakening (Adam, 1997). By the late 1980s, the regime was facing an armed insurrection, which coupled with a severe drought, led to widespread famine, and suffering across the country (Compagnon, 1992).

As Siad Barre's regime aged, the initial hope that accompanied his rise gave way to disappointment and unrest. Barre's efforts to suppress clan identities in favor of a singular Somali identity began to backfire, as marginalized clans felt increasingly disenfranchised, a dynamic that Samatar (1988) argues laid the groundwork for resistance. The narrative of unity through scientific socialism was contradicted by policies that favored certain clans over others, breeding resentment and discord (Compagnon, 2004). Human rights abuses under Barre's regime, including acts of violence against opposition groups and widespread repression, led to national and international condemnation. Lewis (1989) highlights that the abuses, particularly those against the clans inhabited in the north of Somalia, further diminished Barre's standing both domestically and abroad. The regime's use of force to silence critics was met with growing calls for change (Menkhaus, 2004).

The economic downturns and policy failures under Barre's socialist agenda exacerbated the public's suffering (Adam, 1997). With dwindling support from Cold War patrons, Barre's regime struggled to maintain the military and economic aid necessary to control the country (Patman, 1990). Resistance to Barre's rule coalesced into armed opposition, with several clan-based factions emerged, each with distinct political objectives but united in their desire to overthrow the regime. The most prominent among these were the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), the Somali National Movement (SNM), and the United Somali Congress (USC), which were instrumental in mobilizing against Barre's forces and eventually led to his ouster in 1991 (Lewis, 2002; Menkhaus, 2007). These groups gained momentum in the late 1980s, capitalizing on the regime's waning power and popular discontent, leading to a protracted civil war (Lyons & Samatar, 1995).

The initial solidarity displayed by opposition groups in the face of Barre's regime represented a united front with a common goal of overthrowing an oppressive rule. However, this coalition was fragile and short-lived, as these groups vied for control, transforming the power struggle into a complex web of clan-based conflicts (Menkhaus, 2007). The eventual collapse of the Barre regime in 1991 marked the end of an era and the beginning of a period of civil conflict and state disintegration in Somalia (Abdullahi, 2018). The military regime's fall led to a power vacuum that was quickly exploited by clan militias, precipitating a civil war that would devastate the nation for years to come (Lyons & Samatar, 1995). The ensuing warfare resulted in the fragmentation of the country into fiefdoms ruled by competing warlords, which significantly hindered efforts to establish a central authority (Lewis, 2002). The early 1990s also witnessed a severe humanitarian crisis, particularly the famine of 1992, which drew international attention and led to a United Nations intervention. However, the UN's mission was fraught with challenges, culminating in the tragic events of the Battle of Mogadishu in 1993, and eventually, the withdrawal of UN and US forces (Menkhaus, 2007).

2.4.3. The Path to Federalism

After the fall of military regime in 1991 and the subsequent collapse of the central government, Somalia plunged into a state of anarchy with various clan-based factions and warlords filling the power vacuum (Lewis, 2002). The civil war's impact on civilians was catastrophic. Large-scale displacement, famine, and the breakdown of social order became widespread, with the international community struggling to respond effectively. The humanitarian crisis reached its peak in 1992, prompting a United Nations intervention that aimed to alleviate the suffering but faced numerous challenges, including hostility from armed factions and logistical difficulties (Menkhaus, 2007; Lyons & Samatar, 1995).

The United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I), established in April 1992 under Resolution 751, was the first UN mission aimed at facilitating humanitarian relief in the midst of the civil war. Despite its noble intentions, UNOSOM I faced considerable challenges, including limited resources, unclear mandates, and restrictions on the use of force, which significantly hindered its ability to operate effectively (Menkhaus, 2007). The mission struggled to secure the delivery of humanitarian aid amidst widespread looting and violence perpetrated by armed factions, underscoring the complexities of conducting humanitarian operations in a lawless state (Menkhaus, 2007).

The escalating humanitarian crisis, characterized by famine and mass displacements, prompted the United States to launch Operation Restore Hope in December 1992. This operation, authorized by UN Resolution 794, was aimed at securing the environment for the delivery of humanitarian aid. The US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) marked a significant escalation in international involvement, employing a more robust military presence to create safe zones for humanitarian operations (Clarke & Herbst, 1996). While UNITAF succeeded in alleviating the immediate humanitarian crisis, its mandate did not extend to political reconciliation or state-building, leaving unresolved the underlying causes of the conflict (Clarke & Herbst, 1996).

Building on the efforts of UNITAF, the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) was established in March 1993, with a broader mandate that included not only humanitarian assistance but also peacekeeping and nation-building objectives. The endeavor represented by UNOSOM II was part of a broader shift in UN peacekeeping, from traditional peacekeeping missions to multidimensional operations that aimed to address the root causes of conflict through comprehensive approaches to peace and state-building. Lewis (1994) provides a critical analysis of the mission, documenting the complexities and setbacks faced by the international community in its efforts to restore peace and facilitate a political transition in Somalia. Despite the mission's strong mandate and international backing, the formidable opposition from local power brokers underscored the limitations of international interventions in complex, deeply divided societies.

The international interventions in Somalia encountered several significant obstacles. The lack of a cohesive Somali political entity with which to partner, the complex clan dynamics, and the widespread availability of arms made the security environment exceedingly difficult to manage. The situation escalated following the Battle of Mogadishu in October 1993, in which 18 US soldiers and hundreds of Somalis were killed. The incident, and the graphic images broadcast worldwide, led to a shift in United States and United Nations policy, with a subsequent drawdown and eventual withdrawal of international forces by March 1995 (Allard, 1995). The interventions in Somalia in the 1990s highlight the limitations of international peacekeeping in the absence of a local consensus on governance and security. Despite significant investment and the deployment of thousands of troops, the international community struggled to address the root causes of the Somali conflict, leading to a reevaluation of UN peacekeeping strategies in the post-Cold War era (Allard, 1995; Menkhaus, 2007).

Additionally, the international community initiated a series of peace and reconciliation conferences to restore governance and mediate between warring factions (Menkhaus, 2007). Efforts to stabilize Somalia began with two international reconciliation meetings held in Djibouti in the middle of 1991. Although these meetings concluded with an endorsement of Ali Mahdi as president, General Aidid immediately contested the decision, leading to intense civil war in Mogadishu and the southern regions (AMISOM, n.d.). In the wake of this discord, a reconciliation conference was convened in Addis Ababa in 1993 with the aim of establishing a national reconciliation framework and a transitional government. Despite these efforts, the agreement was undermined by the Somali warlords' lack of commitment and persistent violence (Lewis, 2002). Subsequently, the Cairo Conference, in 1997 sought to build on these efforts and resulted in the formation of a National Salvation Council. However, the absence of key faction leaders and ongoing distrust among the participants limited its success (Menkhaus, 2007).

Building on these experiences, the Djibouti-sponsored Arta Conference took a different approach. It marked a significant shift by emphasizing grassroots representation over warlords (Samatar, 2001). This inclusive conference, which brought together various Somali clans and civil society groups, aimed to restore national governance after nearly a decade of state collapse (Bradbury, 2008). The result of this conference was the formation of the Transitional National Government (TNG). Despite its inclusive approach, the TNG struggled to extend its authority beyond Mogadishu, as it faced opposition from powerful warlords and lacked resources (Samatar, 2001). In response, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) initiated a new national reconciliation process in 2002, before the TNG mandate had expired (AMISOM, n.d.). This process eventually developed into a sixth major Somali reconciliation meeting. The conference yielded a ceasefire agreement signed by 24 faction leaders, which called for the establishment of a federal structure, thereby reversing the unitary system established at Arta (AMISOM, n.d.).

The move towards federalism, particularly after decades of centralized authoritarian rule and subsequent state collapse, was motivated by various factors. Firstly, the centralization of power under Siad Barre's regime had led to significant grievances among various clans and regions, contributing to the eventual collapse of the state. A federal system was seen as a means to decentralize power, allowing regions and clans greater autonomy and control over their affairs, thus reducing the potential for conflict over control of the central government (Samatar, 2001).

Secondly, Somalia's social fabric is complexly organized around clan identities and loyalties, which play a critical role in politics, social organization, and conflict. Federalism was perceived as a framework that could accommodate this clan-based structure by providing a political and administrative model that aligns with existing social realities, potentially stabilizing the nation (Lewis, 2002). Thirdly, federalism was also seen as a pathway towards national reconciliation and unity. It was hoped that granting autonomy to the regions and clans within a federal system could bridge divisions and foster a sense of collective Somali identity within a diverse national context (Menkhaus, 2007).

Consequently, the peace process in Kenya (2002-2004), culminating in the Mbagathi Conference, marked a significant milestone with the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia. The TFG, backed by the international community, marked a more concerted effort toward establishing a federal system. It was a complex process involving negotiations between various Somali factions and the distribution of parliamentary seats based on the 4.5 formula, which aimed to balance clan representation (Menkhaus, 2007). The TFG operated under the Provisional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic. The Charter was a temporary constitution that defined the structures and principles of governance, including the division of powers between the proposed federal entities and the central government. It set out the roadmap for the eventual adoption of a full constitution and the formation of federal member states (Samatar et al., 2010). The TFG's tenure was an era of gradual progress and setbacks. However, it eventually led to significant milestones in the federalism journey, including the drafting and adoption of a new provisional constitution in 2012 and the end of the transitional period with the establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia. This period marked a shift from transitional governance to a more permanent, though still evolving, federal structure (Hansen, 2013).

The notions of decentralization and regional autonomy existed among different Somali communities prior to the official establishment of federalism (Bradbury & Healy, 2010). Somalia's federalism follows a bottom-up approach, with regional states like Puntland and Somaliland exerting significant autonomy. Puntland, founded in 1998, has been at the forefront of the federalism process, functioning as a semi-autonomous state within Somalia and often serving as a model for the formation of federal states (Bradbury, 2008). Its creation aimed to restore peace and stability in the northeastern regions of Somalia, which were less impacted by the civil war compared to the south (Hoehne, 2013).

In contrast to Puntland, Somaliland declared unilateral independence from Somalia in May 1991, following the collapse of the Barre regime (Bradbury, 2008). Its claim to sovereignty is based on the territory's status as a separate British protectorate prior to its voluntary union with Italian Somaliland in 1960 to form the Somali Republic. The declaration of independence was the culmination of a struggle against Barre's regime (Walls, 2009). Somaliland has established a functioning political system that includes a bicameral parliament, comprising the House of Elders (Guurti) and the House of Representatives, alongside an elected president. This system blends modern democratic principles with traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms, enabling Somaliland to achieve a significant degree of stability and governance. The Guurti, composed of traditional clan elders, plays a crucial role in mediating conflicts and integrating customary laws with state legislation, contributing to Somaliland's relative peace and democratic governance (Walls, 2009).

Efforts to implement federalism have been marred by disputes over boundaries, resource sharing, and political representation, reflecting the complex interplay between clan loyalties and regional interests. One of the primary challenges in adopting a federal system has been the lack of a clear consensus among Somali political actors, clans, and regions regarding the structure and powers of federal and state governments. The establishment of new federal member states has been contentious, with allegations of federal government interference and intra-clan conflicts affecting the process (Menkhaus, 2014). Furthermore, disagreements over the distribution of resources, the boundaries of federal states, and the extent of autonomy have led to conflicts and impeded the implementation of federalism (Hohne, 2013). The equitable distribution of resources, including revenue from natural resources and foreign aid, remains a contentious issue. Clans and regions vying for a larger share of these resources have sometimes escalated tensions, challenging the federal system's ability to manage and distribute resources fairly.

Despite these challenges, federalism in Somalia remains a work in progress, with significant efforts directed towards constitutional review, state formation, and the establishment of a viable federal governance framework. One of the critical challenges in this process is the delineation of powers between the federal government and the states, including resource sharing, security arrangements, and the integration of regional militias into national security forces. Furthermore, the lack of a finalized constitution has left ambiguity around the federal structure, complicating governance and administration at all levels (Williams, 2018).

The federal government, supported by international partners, continues to engage in dialogue with regional states to refine the federal model and address outstanding issues related to security, governance, and development (Williams, 2018). The dialogue between the federal government and regional states seeks to refine the distribution of power and resources to ensure a balance that respects the autonomy of regions while maintaining national unity. This includes debates over political representation, resource sharing, and the harmonization of regional and national laws to create a cohesive legal framework. The involvement of international partners is crucial in providing support for these dialogues. These partners bring aid, expertise, and experience in nation-building and federal governance that can inform Somalia's efforts. They can offer guidance on international best practices, help in mediating disputes, and provide resources necessary for implementing the agreed-upon reforms.

The reconciliation process among clans and communities within the newly formed states and between the states and the federal government remains a crucial task. Ensuring that federalism does not exacerbate existing divisions but rather contributes to national unity and stability is a priority (Menkhaus, 2016). The prospects for federalism in Somalia hinge on several factors, including the political will of Somali leaders, continued international support, and the ability to adapt the federal model to Somalia's unique context (Walls & Kibble, 2010). The future of federalism in Somalia also depends on addressing underlying issues such as clan rivalries, economic development, and the threat of Al-Shabaab. Strengthening federal and state institutions, ensuring equitable development, and fostering a sense of Somali national identity are essential for the federal model to take root and flourish (Ingiriis, 2016).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methods and procedures employed in this study, which aims to critically examine the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. The study navigates through a complex socio-political landscape to empirically examine the correlation between the degree of autonomy within federal constituent units and the multifaceted aspects of national identity, including citizens' sense of belonging, national attachment, social cohesion, and political participation. In constructing this methodology, consideration has been given to the epistemological and ontological stances that underlie the study. The approach is informed by the theoretical perspectives outlined earlier, drawing from a rich collection of scholarly works on federalism, national identity, and governance. As such, the research encapsulates a deductive reasoning process, testing theoretical propositions against empirical data collected from the Somali context.

The study employs a quantitative research method. This methodology is carefully chosen to provide statistical rigor to the exploration of federalism's impact in a society that is, apparently, one of the most homogenous societies in the world yet divided in its pursuit of a cohesive national narrative and effective governance. The Somali experience presents a unique case where despite shared ethnic heritage, language, religion, and history, the adoption of a federal system has been met with both fervent support and strong opposition. The methodological approach is designed to be comprehensive and systematic, aligning with the study's aims and objectives while ensuring the robustness required for academic rigor. It is constructed to capture the empirical reality of Somalia context, allowing for an analysis that is both deep in understanding and broad in its implications.

The subsequent sections proceed to discuss the research design, detailing the rationale behind the selection of research strategies and their alignment with the objectives of the study. This will be followed by an explanation of the data collection methods, which have been carefully shaped to capture the complexities of the research context. Subsequent sections elaborate on data analysis procedures, research instrumentation, data management practices, and ethical considerations. The limitations inherent in the chosen methodology will be acknowledged, setting the stage for a transparent and reflective research process.

3.2. Research Questions

The research questions are fundamental to any scholarly inquiry as they define the scope, focus, and direction of the study, acting as a crucial navigational tool in the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The following research questions are pivotal in critically examining the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. They serve to examine the dynamic relationship between the increased autonomy of federal constituent units and the various dimensions of national identity, including citizens' identification with the national government, national attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and the extent of their political participation. The focus on these specific aspects allows for a comprehensive investigation into the socio-political fabric of Somalia and its response to federal autonomy. The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How does increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia relate to citizens' identification with the national government? This question seeks to understand if and how the autonomy granted to regions influences the citizens' alignment and allegiance with the central authority.

2. In what ways does higher autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia associate with national attachment among citizens? The intent here is to explore the emotional and psychological ties to the nation that may be affected by the degree of self-governance at the federal level.

3. What is the relationship between greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia and the sense of national belonging among citizens? This question addresses whether the division of power contributes to a stronger or weaker sense of inclusivity and unity among the population.

4. How does greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia associate with social cohesion among its citizens? This question shed light on the influence of federalism on the interconnections and collective fabric of Somali communities.

5. How likely is increased autonomy within federal constituent units in Somalia to correlate with the level of political participation among citizens? This question probes the possible correlation between the autonomy experienced by federal units and the active engagement of citizens in the governance and political processes.

3.3. Hypothesis

The hypotheses set forth in this study are predicated on the premise that the autonomy of federal constituent units within Somalia has a profound impact on various facets of national identity and civic engagement. They are methodically constructed to reflect anticipated trends derived from an extensive review of theoretical and empirical literature. They serve as the fundamental propositions that are rigorously tested to understand the complex relationship between federal autonomy and its broader social and political repercussions in Somalia. They embody the expected directional relationships between the autonomous nature of federal constituent units and various dimensions of national identity in Somalia. Here are the hypotheses that are critically examined:

Hypothesis 1: Increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with citizens' identification with the national government. It suggests that greater regional self-governance may lead to a decrease in allegiance and identification with central authorities.

Hypothesis 2: Higher autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively correlated with national attachment among citizens. This hypothesis informs the consideration that strong regional self-governance could potentially weaken the emotional and psychological ties that citizens feel towards the nation as a whole.

Hypothesis 3: Greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with a diminished sense of national belonging among citizens. This hypothesis aligns with the view that increased regional autonomy could potentially erode the sense of collective national identity and inclusiveness.

Hypothesis 4: Greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with social cohesion among its citizens. The rationale for this hypothesis is that strong regional autonomy may encourage regional disparities and divisions, potentially impacting the unity and cooperative dynamics in the broader society.

Hypothesis 5: Increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be positively correlated with political participation among citizens. This stems from the theoretical perspective that a higher degree of regional autonomy empowers individuals and local communities, thereby fostering greater engagement in political processes.

3.4. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research strategy with the use of surveys and correlation analysis to examine the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. The choice of this design is driven by the objective to quantify the degree of association between the autonomy of federal constituent units and various aspects of national identity—namely, citizens' sense of belonging, national attachment, social cohesion, and political participation. A quantitative approach offers several advantages for this investigation. It provides a systematic and empirical framework to rigorously test the proposed hypotheses and accurately measure the key variables (Bryman, 2016). The accuracy afforded by this method is critical in isolating and examining the patterns, trends, and relationships among the variables (Creswell, 2014). Moreover, it enables the presentation of findings in a quantifiable format, enhancing the capacity for comparison and generalization across the Somali population (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Crucially, the reliability and validity inherent in quantitative methods are paramount in ensuring the integrity of conclusions drawn, especially in a research domain as complex and dynamic as that of socio-political dynamics (Kothari, 2004).

Transitioning from this broad overview of the research approach, the implementation of surveys through a structured questionnaire enables the standardized collection of data, capturing the perceptions and opinions of a large cross-section of Somali citizens about the federal system and its implications for their national identity. The questionnaire, which adopts validated scales from prior studies, ensures the consistent and reliable measurement of the variables, while also facilitating a straightforward analysis through established statistical techniques. Building on this foundation, correlation analysis is the chosen method for data analysis, providing insights into the strength and direction of the relationships between the autonomy of federal units and the identified aspects of national identity.

Given the heterogeneity of the Somali population and the geographical dispersion of its federal units, a multistage sampling method is implemented (Babbie, 2015). This approach enables a stratified selection process, ensuring that the sample is representative of the broader population, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings (Thompson, 2012). The primary data is collected through surveys, with questionnaires distributed to participants in different regions. The questionnaire utilizes scales from previous studies to ensure consistency and reliability in measuring the main variables (DeVellis, 2017).

The variables under examination are operationalized using established scales. 'National identity' refers to the degree to which individuals identify with the Somali nation as a whole, while 'autonomy' pertains to the perceived level of self-governance afforded to federal units. 'Sense of belonging' captures individuals' emotional attachment to the nation, 'social cohesion' gauges the unity within the community, and 'political participation' measures the engagement of citizens in political processes. The below figure presents the research model for the study, mapping out the relationships between federalism and national identity in Somalia. Central to this model is the concept of federalism, which is hypothesized to influence various dimensions of national identity, such as identity, national attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, political participation. These dimensions are operationalized through validated scales, with the relationships among them to be examined through correlation analysis based on data collected via structured surveys. The model visually encapsulates the hypothesized interactions that the study aims to quantify and analyse, representing the empirical framework.

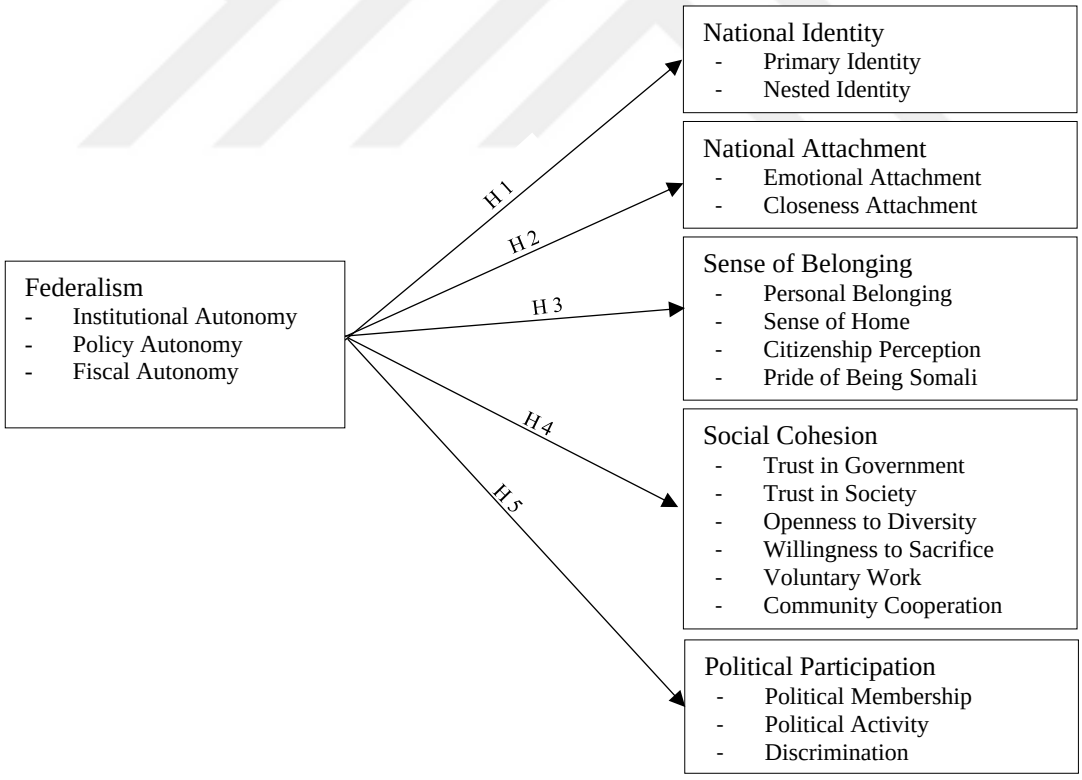


Figure 1. Research Model

3.5. Research Approach

The approach guiding the research methodology of this study is fundamentally deductive. This study is grounded in existing theoretical frameworks and literature on federalism, national identity, and the socio-political context of Somalia (Neuman, 2009). By adopting a deductive stance, the research tests specific hypotheses derived from these established theories, seeking to quantify and validate the relationships among the variables of autonomy, national identity, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation within the Somali context. The rationale for selecting a deductive approach is twofold. First, it aligns with the quantitative nature of the research, which is structured to collect empirical data that can be analysed statistically to either support or refute the proposed hypotheses. This approach is appropriate when the aim is to measure the degree to which theoretical constructs can be observed in practice. Second, the deductive method is chosen because it facilitates the exploration of correlation (Bryman, 2016). By starting with an established theory and moving towards the specific observations, it allows the study to make predictions about the expected relationships. These predictions are then tested through the structured and systematic collection of survey data (Punch, 2013; p. 305, Neuman, 2014, p. 69; Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.116).

Furthermore, the deductive approach enhances the research's capacity to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence. It examines the applicability and robustness of established theories in the context of Somalia's federal system, potentially reaffirming or challenging prevailing academic perspectives (Creswell, 2014). This not only provides insights specific to Somalia but may also have broader implications for understanding federalism and national identity in similar post-conflict settings. Therefore, the research does not aim to develop new theoretical insights from the ground up; rather, it seeks to apply and examine the existing theoretical frameworks in a novel context. This approach ensures that the findings are anchored in the broader theoretical discourse, providing a clear pathway from the conceptual to the empirical, from the known to the new (Kuhn, 2012, p. 35; Popper, 2002, p. 63). The study's structured methodology lends itself to a rigorous testing of the prevailing academic theories within the particularities of the Somali federal model. In doing so, it aspires to yield data-driven conclusions that may either reinforce the universality of these theories or reveal unique deviations that call for a re-examination or refinement of the existing scholarly narratives.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

3.6.1. Questionnaire Design

Surveys are the primary tool for data collection in this study, and they are assembled to ensure the acquisition of precise and meaningful data. The questionnaire is structured into two main sections to methodically gather information on individual characteristics and their perceptions of federalism and national identity. The first section of the questionnaire is dedicated to collecting demographic information. It includes questions about personal characteristics such as sex, age, level of education, constituent unit, and the duration of residence within the constituent unit. This demographic data provides a contextual backdrop for each response and allows for subsequent segmentation and stratification in the analysis, ensuring that the study can assess whether and how views on federalism and national identity vary across different demographic groups. The second section comprises 29 question items divided into specific domains that correspond to the study's main constructs:

- Federalism/Autonomy (3 items): These items are designed to gauge respondents' perceptions of the autonomy of their federal unit. Questions may focus on the extent of self-governance and the degree of independence from the central government.

- National Identity (2 items): This segment measures the respondents' primary identification with Somalia as a nation.

- National Attachment (2 items): These questions aim to assess the emotional and psychological attachment individuals have to the Somali nation.

- Sense of Belonging (8 items): A more extensive set of items evaluates the respondents' feelings of acceptance, integration, and community within their constituent unit and the nation at large.

- Social Cohesion (7 items): This section assesses the strength of relationships and unity among community members, touching on trust, cooperation, and shared values.

- Political Participation (7 items): These items measure the extent and nature of respondents' involvement in political processes, from voting and advocacy to more active forms of engagement.

Each item is carefully selected to quantify the intensity of respondents' opinions. The scales employed are based on validated instruments from previous studies, adapted for contextual relevance. The questionnaire is subjected to a piloting phase with a sample drawn from the target population to ensure the validity and reliability. This preliminary testing is critical for identifying any ambiguities or cultural nuances that may affect responses. The feedback obtained from the pilot phase led to adjustments that refined the questionnaire's effectiveness in capturing the intended data accurately. With the insights gained from the pilot test informing its design, the survey's administration is tailored to maximize participation across Somalia's diverse population. It involves a combination of digital and paper-based formats to accommodate varying levels of access to technology. The multichannel approach to distribution ensures that a broad demographic is represented in the study, enhancing the richness and applicability of the data collected.

3.6.2. Sampling

To ensure a representative sample of the Somali population, this study employs a multistage sampling method, a technique especially useful in complex survey designs that aim to cover a wide geographical area and a diverse population (Kish, 1965). This method involves several stages of selection, providing a structured approach to creating a sample that accurately reflects the demographics and characteristics of the population (Sarndal, Swensson, & Wretman, 1992). In the first stage, the geographical expanse of Somalia is clustered into its seven constituent units as recognized by the federal government. To manage the scope of the study while maintaining representativeness, four regional units—Puntland, Galmudug, Southwest, and Banadir—are selected through a simple random sampling technique. This initial selection process is crucial for ensuring that each region has an equal chance of being included in the study. The second stage involves further narrowing the focus by selecting a sample of districts from the preselected regional units. From seventy districts across these four units, ten districts are randomly chosen: two each from Puntland, Galmudug, and Southwest states, and four from the Banadir Region. The selection of an additional two districts from the Banadir region is a strategic choice, reflecting its status as the most densely populated region in Somalia and ensuring that the sample proportionately represents the Somali population. The ten selected districts are: Bosaso, Galkaio, Abudwaq, Dusamareb, Baidoa, Marka, Yakshid, Hodan, Hamarweyne, and Wadajir.

In the third stage, a total of 384 participants within the chosen districts are selected through a stratified sampling method. Participants are categorized into distinct strata based on their roles in society (Lohr, 2009), such as politicians, intellectuals, civil society members, elders, women, and youth groups. This stratification ensures that the sample captures the diverse voices and experiences within Somali society and that the findings are reflective of the community's multifaceted nature. The sample size for this study is calculated using Cochran's formula, which is a statistical tool used to estimate the optimal sample size for a survey based on predetermined margins of error and confidence levels (Cochran, 1977). Applying the formula with a 95% confidence level, a standard deviation of 0.5, and a margin of error of +/- 5%, the calculation yields a sample size of approximately 384.16, which is rounded to 384 participants (Cochran, 1977). The formula used is as follows:

$$S = \frac{(\text{Z}-\text{score})^2 \times \text{StdDev} \times (1-\text{StdDev})}{(\text{margin of error})^2}.$$

$$S = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$S = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$S = 384.16$$

By adhering to this calculated sample size, the study ensures that the data collected will have the statistical power to draw meaningful conclusions about the population's attitudes and behaviors regarding federalism and national identity (Cohen, 1988). The sampling strategy demonstrates a careful balance between statistical rigor and practical considerations in a challenging research environment (Yates et al., 2002). The study calculated the sample size using Cochran's formula, a well-established statistical tool for determining sample size for survey research (Israel, 1992). The formula considers the desired confidence level (95% in this case), the expected variability in the population (standard deviation of 0.5, assuming maximum variability since there is no prior estimate), and the margin of error (±5%). These parameters are standard in social science research and provide a balance between accuracy and efficiency (Schuman, 1992). While Cochran's formula is robust in determining sample size, it has limitations including, assumption of homogeneity, fixed margin of error and confidence level (Lohr, 2009; Thompson, 2012).

The formula's underlying assumption of population homogeneity, which might not hold in highly heterogeneous contexts, can lead to the underrepresentation of minority groups or unique demographic segments, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings (Lohr, 2009). Additionally, the requirement for pre-set margins of error and confidence levels within Cochran's framework does not always accommodate the particular subpopulations or the varied confidence intervals that might better serve the research objectives (Israel, 1992). The formula also assumes maximum variability (standard deviation of 0.5), which may not align with the actual distribution of responses within the population. Such an assumption risks overestimating the necessary sample size, potentially leading to increased costs and time requirements for the research (Cochran, 1977). Furthermore, Cochran's formula may have limited advantages when dealing with smaller populations or specific subgroups (Thompson, 2012). In these instances, additional sampling methods sensitive to population size details and conducting pilot studies to obtain more accurate estimates of population variability may yield more accurate and meaningful insights.

The study has undertaken comprehensive measures to address and mitigate the limitations associated with Cochran's formula, thereby reinforcing the integrity of its methodological approach. Stratified sampling has been utilized to effectively navigate the homogeneity assumption of Cochran's formula, ensuring that the diverse socio-political fabric and demographics of the Somali population are aptly represented in the sample. This methodological choice enhances the generalizability of the findings by acknowledging and capturing the heterogeneity inherent in the study's context. Adjustments to the fixed margins of error and confidence levels were carefully considered; however, the preliminary research and expert feedback have substantiated the initial parameters selected. The study has thus retained these standards, recognizing their suitability for the overarching research aims and the specificity of the questions being addressed. A pilot study was conducted as part of the research design to ascertain the appropriateness of the assumed level of variability. The findings from this pilot study have corroborated the use of a 0.5 standard deviation in Cochran's formula, reinforcing the sample size calculations without necessitating adjustments for variability. In terms of Cochran's formula's application to large populations, the study's multistage sampling technique complements the formula by sensitively accommodating the sizes and compositions of various subgroups within Somalia. This tailored approach ensures the contextual relevance of Cochran's formula to the Somali setting, providing a methodologically sound foundation for the study.

Subsequently, the sample size of 384 falls within the range recommended by Cochran's formula for a population that is large when considering the margin of error and confidence level chosen (Sudman, 1976). This size is large enough to minimize the margin of error, thereby making the sample representative of the larger population's attitudes and behaviours The multistage sampling method enhances the representativeness of the sample by ensuring that it captures the diversity within the population across different regions and demographic groups (Thompson, 2012). By randomly selecting regions and districts, the study mitigates selection bias and ensures each subset of the population has a chance of being represented (Kalton, 1983). This approach ensures that specific segments of the population are not underrepresented in the sample (Groves, 1989). By categorizing participants into distinct strata based on their societal roles, the study ensures that the diverse voices within the community are included, which is particularly important in a heterogeneous society. (Ritchie et al., 2013). Furthermore, the selection of four regional units and ten districts considers both the geographical expanse and the population density of Somalia (Henry, 1990). By including additional districts from the Banadir region, the study accounted for its higher population density, which is a practical consideration in sample distribution (Hartley, 1974). By including politicians, intellectuals, civil society members, elders, women, and youth groups, the study ensure that the sample captures a wide range of perspectives, thus enhancing the external validity of the study findings (Babbie, 2015).

On the other hand, the use of an English questionnaire was a deliberate methodological choice, aimed at ensuring clarity of communication and the integrity of data interpretation, while also aligning with the practical realities of Somalia's socio-political landscape (Bryman, 2016). The selected sample, therefore, encompasses English-speaking Somalis who provide a critical perspective on issues of federalism and national identity—a perspective that is both influential and relevant to the nation's discourse (Phillips, 1971). The decision to administer an English-language questionnaire was predicated on several key considerations. Somalia is a multilingual nation where Somali is the primary language of communication. However, a substantial portion of the population, particularly among the educated and those involved in governance, academia, and civil society, are proficient in English due to the historical influence of English-speaking educational institutions. English is widely used in Somali education and among professionals.

The use of English allowed for a direct analysis of responses without the potential loss of meaning through translation (Warwick & Lininger, 1975). In research, the fidelity of data is paramount, and by using English, the study mitigated the risk of misinterpretation that can occur when translating complex political and social concepts. The stratified sampling method consciously included segments of society proficient in English (Kerlinger & Lee, 1999). This strategy was not intended to marginalize non-English speakers but to ensure that the sampled voices could confidently articulate their thoughts on the sophisticated concepts explored in our study. The study recognizes that the use of an English questionnaire does introduce limitations regarding the representation of non-English-speaking strata. This limitation was carefully considered and is transparently discussed in the study. Furthermore, the study suggests for future research to encompass broader linguistic inclusivity, potentially through the use of translated questionnaires and bilingual researchers.

3.7. Measurement

Building on the quantitative research method adopted in this study, this section details the operationalization of constructs and the measurement techniques to be used to examine the relationship between the autonomy of federal constituent units and national identity in Somalia.

3.7.1. Federalism

The measurement of federalism within this study is operationalized through a scale developed by Paolo Dardanelli (2018), which offers a multidimensional perspective on autonomy levels, complemented with the constitution of the Somali Federal Republic detailing the powers granted to federal units. This scale was chosen for its robust methodological approach, incorporating qualitative literature and expert judgment to enhance content validity. Dardanelli's (2018) approach to understanding state structures is devoted in a deep conceptual analysis. He examines the essence of federalism by dissecting the term 'autonomy', which is often explained over in less rigorous studies. His analysis acknowledges that autonomy is not monolithic; it reflects a variety of powers and capacities that subnational entities possess or lack. This nuanced understanding of autonomy is pivotal because it acknowledges the complex interplay between different government levels in a federal system.

In considering the qualitative aspects of autonomy, Dardanelli (2018) dives into historical and theoretical foundations of federalism. He revisits the contributions of scholars who have laid down the foundational definitions of federal states based on autonomy. Dardanelli (2018) builds upon these by incorporating modern state governance, emphasizing that true autonomy extends beyond mere decentralization to encompass substantive, self-governing capacities. Moving from qualitative underpinnings to quantitative assessment, he presents a tripartite framework to measure autonomy. The first dimension is institutional autonomy, which measures the institutional capacity for self-governance. It looks at how governments are structured, how leaders are elected, and the degree of control they have over their internal affairs. The second is policy autonomy which captures the extent of a government's policy-making powers. It assesses the scope of subnational governments' legislative powers, differentiating between executive, secondary, and primary law-making authorities. The third dimension of the framework is fiscal autonomy, which evaluates financial independence, examining how subnational governments generate revenue and how much control they have over their financial resources.

Dardanelli (2018) carefully weighted each component measurement of autonomy to reflect its significance within the federal structure. This approach recognizes that different forms of autonomy contribute to the overall federal nature of a state to varying degrees. Operationalizing these components into an index, Dardanelli (2018) provides a scoring system that offers granular insight into the autonomy of subcentral governments. This system takes into account not only the presence of certain structures or powers but also their quality and extent. For example, the difference between a government that has an indirectly elected assembly with limited powers versus one with a directly elected assembly with extensive legislative powers is captured within his index. The scoring is sensitive to the complexities of governance. It allows for variances within each category, recognizing that a subcentral government may have a high level of institutional autonomy but limited fiscal autonomy, or vice versa. The scores are designed to be aggregated into an overall measure that reflects the composite nature of autonomy in a given state. Dardanelli (2018) further proposed a threshold that separates federal and unitary states. The threshold represents a critical point along the continuum of decentralization at which qualitative changes in the degree of autonomy transform the nature of a state's structure from unitary to federal. It is not a mere numerical value but a conceptual line that delineates when variations in the extent of autonomy translate into a different kind of state structure altogether.

Dardanelli's threshold is informed by his three key dimensions of autonomy. A threshold is crossed in the institutional autonomy dimension when a subcentral government has its own directly elected assembly and an executive that is either accountable to that assembly or directly elected by the people. It is also crossed in the policy autonomy dimension when subcentral governments have primary law-making powers in at least one significant area of governance, such as economic policy, cultural-educational policy, or welfare policy. The threshold is also crossed in the fiscal autonomy dimension when a subcentral government is not predominantly reliant on conditional fiscal transfers and has substantial control over its revenue streams, whether through revenue-sharing, block grants, or autonomous taxation powers.

Accordingly, a state can be classified as federal when subcentral governments enjoy autonomy in all three key areas—meeting or exceeding the threshold value. Conversely, if they fall short, the state remains within the unitary category. This conceptual threshold is a distinguishing feature because it allows for the categorization of states into more definitive types. It separates Dardanelli's framework from more linear models of federalism, which may simply measure degrees of decentralization without acknowledging the transformative point at which a state structure fundamentally changes. Dardanelli's commitment to validation underscores the rigor of his approach. He did not merely propose a new way of measuring federalism; but he also subjected his scale to rigorous validation processes. The framework undergoes content validation, where scores and typologies are matched against expert judgment and qualitative literature to ensure they accurately reflect the realities of state structures. This two-step validation involves both an ex-ante and an ex-post assessment. Before scores are assigned, a comprehensive analysis of qualitative literature established a baseline for measurement. Following the scoring, an ex-post evaluation where the typologies derived from the scores are compared against the consensus of experts in the field.

The integrated approach of Dardanelli (2018) offers a comprehensive tool for analysing the multifaceted nature of federal structures, ultimately enhancing the understanding of how governance is organized across different layers of government. Building upon the conceptual framework for federal autonomy outlined by Dardanelli (2018), the study employs a customized scoring system to quantitatively assess the autonomy of federal constituent units within Somalia. This tailored approach aligns the measurement more closely with the specificities of the Somali federal context and the objectives of the current study.

The decision to diverge from Dardanelli's weighted scale is based on the need for a more straightforward and transparent assessment that can be directly applied within the Somali context. This study seeks to determine the level of autonomy in a clear and interpretable manner, allowing for immediate comprehension by respondents and straightforward analysis by the researcher. The revised scoring system simplifies the aggregation process, reducing potential biases and ensuring consistency across all federal units. It provides a clear hierarchy interpreted in a manner that a higher total score across all three components signifies greater overall autonomy. Each survey item is designed to map directly onto this scoring system. The choices provided are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, covering the full spectrum of possible autonomy configurations.

Adopting this scoring system, the study delineates the autonomy of Somalia's federal units with the following detailed criteria:

Institutional Autonomy

- Directly Elected Assembly and Executive (5 points): This indicates the highest level of institutional autonomy, where people directly elect both legislative and executive.
- Directly Elected Assembly, Assembly-Elected Executive (4 points): This reflects a significant degree of autonomy with the assembly elected by the people and the executive elected by the assembly, reflecting a degree of mediated autonomy.
- Indirectly Elected Assembly, Assembly-Accountable Executive (3 points): Autonomy is moderated in this structure, where the assembly is indirectly elected, and the executive is responsible to the assembly, suggesting moderated autonomy.
- Selected Assembly, Assembly-Elected Executive (2 points): This denotes limited autonomy with the assembly being selected through other processes, and the executive elected by this selected assembly, representing limited autonomy.
- No Assembly, Central Government-Nominated Executive (1 point): This acts the lowest level of autonomy, with no assembly exist and the executive appointed by the central government, representing central oversight without regional self-governance.

Policy Autonomy

- Exclusive Primary Legislation Authority (4 points): The highest policy autonomy within the federal structure is indicated by a unit's exclusive right to enact primary legislation in specific policy areas.
- Concurrent Primary Legislation Power (3 points): A unit that can legislate concurrently with the central government in certain areas shows a considerable degree of policy autonomy.
- Secondary Legislation Capability (2 points): A unit with the capacity to enact secondary legislation in at least two areas reveals a basic level of policy autonomy.
- No Legislative Power (1 point): This denotes an absence of policy autonomy.

Fiscal Autonomy

- Self-Financed (4 points): The highest fiscal autonomy is evidenced when a unit is predominantly self-financed, showcasing its capability to sustain itself financially without federal assistance.
- Unconditional Revenue-Sharing and Self-Generated Financing (3 points): A unit that balances its budget through both unconditional transfers and its own revenues demonstrates a higher degree of fiscal self-sufficiency.
- Mixed Financing (2 points): A unit receiving a mixture of conditional transfers and generating its own revenue is recognized with a moderate level of fiscal autonomy.
- Conditional Federal Financing (1 point): This score is assigned when a unit is primarily financed by conditional transfers from the federal government, showing reliance on the central government.

3.7.2. National Identity

The study operationalizes the concept of national identity by adapting questions from Mathew Mendelsohn's (2002) study on the national identity of Quebecers. Mendelsohn's questions were selected for his meticulous approach to understanding identity as a multifaceted construct, recognizing the existence of nested and overlapping identities within individuals. He acknowledges the plurality of identities within a national community, which is particularly resonant in Somalia, where federalism intersects with clan affiliation. This approach differentiates between identity distinctions critical to understanding Somali identity in its federal structure, marred by complex clan dynamics. The survey, therefore, endeavours to capture the essence of individual identity sentiments, contributing to a collective understanding within a federal framework.

Furthermore, the study reflects on Mendelsohn's observation of resistance to elite-driven identity narratives. This aspect aligns with the Somali context, where despite elite narratives, a core Somali identity persists amidst evolving regional and clan identities in the federal Somalia. The survey's intent is to unearth authentic identity sentiments, transcending the imposed narratives of political or clan authorities. Mendelsohn's operational framework guides the creation of a survey that accommodates the complex nature of Somali identity by translating the abstract concept of national identity into tangible survey elements. This prevents the imposition of binary choices, allowing for a richer exploration of identity facets. Accordingly, the study examines individual responses to reveal the interplay between personal views on federalism and national identity for a deeper synthesis of individual identities into a national collective narrative.

The application of Mendelsohn's scale, originally devised within the context of linguistic diversity in Quebec, to the distinct variables of clan and regional affiliations in Somalia, is grounded in the fundamental principle that national identity is not a uniform construct, but rather a tapestry of various identity markers, including language, ethnicity, region, and clan. While linguistic identity was the primary variable of interest in Mendelsohn's study, the underlying theoretical framework is flexible and robust enough to encompass other identity markers which play a similarly pivotal role in shaping national identity. The scale's analytical strength lies in its capacity to examine the layers of identity that contribute to an individual's sense of national belonging.

In Somalia, linguistic homogeneity contrasts with the prominent clan and regional differences that are the main drivers of social and political organization, much like language in Quebec. Thus, adapting the scale requires a shift in the identity markers being measured, not a change in the fundamental understanding of identity as multi-dimensional and nested within various social affiliations. Just as Mendelsohn recognized the complex interplay between French-Canadian identity and the broader Canadian nationalism within Quebec, the adapted scale seeks to untangle the complex relationship between clan allegiance, regional identity, and the overarching Somali national identity. In both contexts, the individual's self-concept is influenced by their position within these intersecting layers of identity, whether they be linguistic or tribal. Therefore, the scale's methodological core—designed to measure the relative salience of identity components—remains not only applicable but also necessary for a sophisticated analysis of identity in Somalia. The adaptation acknowledges that the salient markers of identity may differ across cultures and contexts but that the essence of how identity is constructed and experienced by individuals shares a common ground. This allows for the exploration of Somali identity in all its complexity, mirroring the careful approach Mendelsohn applied to understand Quebecers, thus providing a rigorous and culturally sensitive framework for the study of national identity in different settings. Building on these foundations, the study introduces a pair of question items designed to assess three identity dimensions prevalent among Somali citizens: national (Somali identity), regional (citizens of federal constituent units), and clan-based identities.

Primary Identity

The first question (item 4) asks respondents about their primary identity as a Somali, a citizen of a federal constituent unit, or a clan member. This question aims to establish the respondent's primary identity affiliation. It is essential to measure the primary identity to understand the base layer of identity from which individuals may develop nested identities.

Nested Identity

The second question (item 5) aims to assess the presence and combination of nested identities. Nested identities reflect the reality that individuals may simultaneously affiliate with multiple social groups. This question is mainly considered for the measurement of the national identity construct for its depth and inclusivity, as it captures the multifaceted nature of identity that is critical for this study.

It enables respondents to articulate their identification with different identity aspects exclusively or in mixture, thereby accommodating the complexity of personal affiliations. While the second question (item 5) is utilized for a detailed analysis due to its diverse response options, the first question (item 4) serves to broaden the understanding of identity by providing initial, singular identification data points. This question acts as a starting point that frames the respondent's primary identity focus, which, when viewed alongside the more complex identity configurations of the second question, enriches the interpretation of how individuals prioritize their identity layers in a broader context. It facilitates a comparative analysis, allowing the research to understand the extent to which singular identity dimensions are endorsed before the complexities of multiple identities are introduced. Moreover, it offers a straightforward metric that can be useful for cross-referencing and corroborating the findings obtained from the multifaceted second question.

The second question (item 5) is followed by conditional follow-up questions for respondents indicating a dual identity to measure the relative strength or equality of nested identities. Understanding the hierarchy and relative strength of identities is crucial to comprehending how individuals navigate their multiple affiliations, particularly in the context of federalism and national integration. The questions are formulated to capture the complex interplay of these identities and to provide insights into the predominant patterns of self-identification within the Somali context. For the purpose of data analysis, particularly when assessing the direction and strength of the relationships between variables, it is crucial to transform the categorical national identity data into ordinal data. This transformation involves assigning weights to the responses to the national identity question, which allows the use of statistical methods that can provide insights into the nature of these relationships. The weights are assigned based on the hypothesized prioritization of identity in the Somali context. A singular identity (Somali, regional, or clan) suggests a more focused allegiance and is therefore given a higher weight, while a distributed identity across multiple dimensions indicates a more complex, potentially diluted, allegiance and is thus weighted lower. Therefore, the weighting of the responses to the national identity item is as follows:

- A Somali only (7 points): This response indicates a singular national identity and is given the highest weight, reflecting the strongest identification with the nation.

- A citizen of a federal constituent unit only (6 points): A strong regional identity is weighted highly, but less so than a singular national identity.

- A clan member only (5 points): Clan identification alone is weighted to indicate a strong sub-national identity.

- Both a Somali and a citizen of a federal constituent unit (4 points): - Dual identities involving the nation and federal unit suggest a balanced but divided identification, hence a mid-range weight.

- Both a Somali and a clan member (3 points): Similar to the prior category, this dual identity suggests a balance between national and subnational identity. However, it is weighted slightly lower as clan identity tends to be more exclusive and less integrative on a national scale.

- Both a clan member and a citizen of a federal constituent unit (2 points): This response indicates a stronger identification with more subnational forms of identity.

- Equally a Somali, a clan member, and a citizen of a federal constituent unit (1 point): This response is given the lowest weight, reflecting an equal but distributed identification across all identity dimensions.

3.7.3. National Attachment

The study measures national attachment incorporating two distinct questions adapted from two different established sources—Mendelsohn's (2002) study on Quebecers' national identity and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2013 module on National Identity. This decision is stimulated by a deliberate methodological rationale, aiming to capture the multifaceted nature of national attachment in a comprehensive manner.

Emotional Attachment

The first question (item 6), adapted from Mendelsohn's study, effectively measures the depth of emotional attachment individuals feel towards Somalia and their federal constituent unit. It gives response options ranging from 'very attached' to 'not at all attached.' The choices ranging from 'Very Attached' to 'Not at All Attached' and 'Can’t Choose' reflect a gradient of emotional intensity, allowing for a detailed spectrum of national attachment to be measured.

Closeness Attachment

Mendelsohn's framework primarily captures the intensity of attachment, which, while crucial, may not encompass all dimensions of how individuals relate to their nation and regions. This is where the second question (item 7), derived from the ISSP 2013 module, complements the first by measuring the sense of closeness individuals feel. It assesses closeness—a sentiment that might be considered more intimate and personal than attachment. This question is crucial as it taps into the proximity of identification that individuals feel with their town or city, their federal member state, and their country, Somalia. The distinction between feeling 'Very Close' and 'Not close at all' provides a scale for measuring these intricate relationships. The ISSP is well-regarded for its cross-national collaboration program, which conducts annual surveys on social science topics. Its approach is rooted in creating replicable and culturally sensitive survey instruments that offer both cross-national and cross-time comparisons. By integrating questions from the ISSP, the study benefits from the program's rich background in constructing survey instruments that are sensitive to cultural variations and are designed for cross-national comparability. This is particularly relevant for Somalia, where regional and global interactions may influence feelings of national attachment.

Furthermore, the ISSP's emphasis on creating surveys that are replicable over time ensures that the measures of national attachment can be compared across different temporal contexts. This temporal dimension, along with the possibility of cross-national comparison provided by ISSP's diverse membership, enriches the data, and contributes to a more comprehensive analysis of national attachment within Somalia. The rationale for selecting these two distinct sources lies in the depth and breadth they provide when combined. Mendelsohn's question allows for an analysis of attachment as a dimension of national identity, while the ISSP question brings in the emotional proximity one feels to various geopolitical entities, from the local to the national level. This dual approach ensures that the study can capture both the cognitive and affective components of national attachment, offering a more rounded picture of how Somali citizens relate to their country and its federal subdivisions. This approach is critical in a country like Somalia, where national identity and federalism are dynamic and evolving constructs.

The data obtained through these questions are anticipated to provide comprehensive insights into the layered nature of national attachment, attachment and the factors that may influence these affiliations in a federal system. Responses are measured on a Likert scale, from 'very attached' to 'not at all attached' and from 'very close' to 'not close at all'. No additional weighting is applied, as the standard values are presumed to capture the gradations in attachment and closeness adequately. The Likert scale allows for the ordinal measurement of the gradient of attachment and facilitates a nuanced analysis of how these feelings of closeness relate to the federal autonomy.

3.7.4. Sense of Belonging

The measurement of the sense of belonging within the context of Somali society in this study is strategically designed through a composite of seven carefully selected question items, each chosen for their proven effectiveness in previous study. This multimodal approach is intended to capture the multifaceted nature of belonging, which is influenced by various dimensions of individual and collective identity. The first (item 8) and third (item 10) questions, probing the depth of personal belonging to Somalia and the preference between national versus federal constituent unit citizenship, are sourced from Mendelsohn's (2002) comprehensive study on Quebecers' national identity. These questions are instrumental in discerning the emotional and civic dimensions of belonging.

Personal Belonging

The first question (item 8) assesses the strength of personal sense of belonging to Somalia and to its federal constituent units, giving response options ranging from ‘very strong’ to ‘not at all strong’.

Sense of Home

The second question (item 9), which touches on the emotional resonance of national pride and the sense of home, is adapted from the pivotal work of Chan et al. (2006). This particular question allows the study to capture the sentiment of national pride and individual perceptions of Somalia as home, even amidst its imperfections. It measures pride in being a member of Somalia and sense of home, using 5-point Likert scale that measure agreement.

Self-Perception of Citizenship

The third question (item 10) measures self-perception of citizenship, asking respondents to reflect on whether they feel a stronger connection to the nation of Somalia as a whole, or to their specific federal constituent unit. This query is designed to reveal the primary locus of civic identity and allegiance within the federal structure of Somalia. The fourth question (item 11) transitions to a different aspect of belonging, allowing respondents to distribute their sense of affiliation across multiple social dimensions, as conceived by Peter Thaler (1997). This innovative method acknowledges the diversity of social ties that contribute to a sense of belonging in Somali society. It measures the respondents' sense of social belonging by quantifying their perceived affiliations with various social groups. By asking participants to allocate percentages to a range of categories, this measure captures the respondent's subjective distribution of social belonging among key societal dimensions. The inclusion of diverse categories such as the Somali people, clan members, citizens of their federal member state, townspeople, professional colleagues, and those with shared hobbies or memberships in clubs, associations, and political parties, ensures a comprehensive analysis of social belonging within the context of Somali society. The percentage-based approach provides a detailed picture of the multifaceted nature of social belonging, allowing individuals to express the degree to which they feel a part of each social group.

Pride of Being Somali

Further deepening analysis questions five through seven (items 12, 13 and 14) which explore the attributes important to being considered truly Somali, as well as the pride associated with various national achievements and values, are derived from the ISSP's 2013 module on National Identity. These questions examine the importance of cultural, legal, and ancestral ties, as well as the pride in national institutions and achievements. Question item 12 measures the respondents view of what constitutes belonging to the Somali nation, asking respondents to consider various factors — from birthplace and citizenship to language ability and ancestry. It gives respondents response options to rate the importance ranging from 'very important' to 'not important at all.' Question items 13 and 14 measure the sense of pride of being Somali, using Likert scale ranging from 'very proud' to 'not at all proud'. Item 14 further examines the constituent elements that form the overall sense of national pride, such as democracy, political system, economic accomplishments, social security systems, military forces, historical legacy, and equitable treatment of all societal groups.

It is noteworthy to highlight that question items 11, 12, and 14 in our survey are not directly measuring the degree and direction of the sense of belonging, their inclusion is pivotal for providing a comprehensive picture of belonging within the Somali society. Item 11 allows for an exploration of the multifaceted nature of social affiliations, acknowledging that a sense of belonging can extend beyond national identity to include a variety of social dimensions. Item 12 offers insight into the perceived criteria for national belonging, which is essential for understanding the cultural and legal boundaries of Somali identity. Lastly, item 14 enriches our understanding by evaluating the sources of national pride, which, while not directly measuring belonging, significantly influences the sentiment of connection to the nation. These items collectively contribute to a more rounded understanding of the societal and emotional constructs that underpin the sense of belonging in a complex federal context. By integrating these items, the study is well-positioned to shed light on the dynamics of belonging in a federal state, highlighting the factors that strengthen or weaken the bonds between individuals and their nation, regions, clans, and other social groups.

3.7.5. Social Cohesion

The study assesses social cohesion by measuring trust in various personalities and institutions, as well as examining community engagement and diversity. It utilizes seven survey items, with items 15, 16, 20, and 21 adopted from the Social Research Centre (2019), and items 17, 18, and 19 from Chan et al. (2006). The adoption of survey items from the Social Research Centre's National Social Cohesion Survey, complemented by the theoretical insights from Chan et al., creates a rich, multi-dimensional composite that reflects a deep and considered approach to measuring social cohesion. The selected items from the Social Research Centre are centred around trust in various institutions and figures, the prevalence of voluntary work, and perceptions of neighbourly cooperation and community harmony. These aspects are crucial as they tap into the relational and institutional trust which are foundational to social cohesion. Trust is the bedrock upon which societies build cooperation and collective action, which in turn reinforces social cohesion. The importance of voluntary work in the survey items highlights community engagement, a practical manifestation of social cohesion where individuals contribute to the social fabric beyond their immediate personal and familial circles. Volunteering is often a reflection of altruism and solidarity, indicating a willingness to work towards the common good – a key indicator of a cohesive society.

The focus on local areas within walking distance introduces a spatial dimension to social cohesion, emphasizing the importance of local-level interactions and integration. It acknowledges that social cohesion is not just a broad national concept but is experienced and nurtured in the everyday interactions within small communities. Complementing this, Chan et al.'s critical analysis offers a much-needed theoretical rigor to the study. Their work pushes beyond the empirical collection of data to scrutinize the very definition of social cohesion, challenging and refining the concept to ensure that it is not just measurable but also meaningful. Chan et al.'s items also complement by probing attitudes towards trustworthiness within the country and willingness to cooperate across different social strata and political views. This addresses the psychological and behavioural aspects of social cohesion, as it reflects on individuals' readiness to bridge social divides and work collaboratively with diverse others. The questions about taxation for social welfare and leisure time for volunteer work provide insights into the civic responsibility and community investment aspects of social cohesion.

By combining these two sets of items, the study is enriched with both attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of social cohesion as it also gains a clarity of purpose and a robustness of concept, which helps in interpreting the empirical data with greater precision and depth. The attitudinal aspects delve into perceptions and beliefs that can drive behaviour, while the behavioural aspects capture actual practices and actions that reflect the strength of social bonds and community engagement. This holistic approach ensures that the study's measurement of social cohesion is not only comprehensive but also sensitive to the distinctions of how trust, cooperation, and community engagement manifest in a society.

It allows for the exploration of how these elements interact with each other, providing a more effective understanding of the forces that bind communities together or drive them apart. Such an approach is invaluable for formulating targeted interventions and policies aimed at strengthening social cohesion. Moreover, the study's ethical integrity is supported by drawing from methodologies that have been approved by ethics boards and are sensitive to the distinctions of cultural and linguistic diversity, as evidenced by the Social Research Centre's inclusion of interviews in languages other than English. This sensitivity ensures that the study's findings are not just statistically relevant but also socially and ethically considerate.

Finally, by combining these approaches, the study stands as a testament to the belief that social cohesion is not a static or one-dimensional construct but a dynamic interplay of attitudes, behaviours, and theoretical constructs. It embraces the complexity of social cohesion, recognizing that to measure such a concept adequately, one must look at both the interactions among individuals and groups within society (the horizontal dimension) as well as the relationship between citizens and the state (the vertical dimension). The dual focus on both the objective behaviours and the subjective experiences of trust, belonging, and willingness to participate ensures a comprehensive approach that can accurately reflect the state of social cohesion within a community.

Following the integration of these items, the subsequent exploration transitions to the weighting approach employed for each item. Item 15 measures trust in various government and social institutions and personalities, asking respondents indicate their level of trust or confidence on a 0-100 scale. The 0-100 scale provides a precise metric, allowing for detailed and refined analysis of respondents' levels of confidence in institutions and personalities. This item serves a distinct purpose beyond directly measuring the degree of trust and social cohesion. Instead, it is included to provide insights into the perceived legitimacy and credibility of key figures and institutions within the socio-political landscape. For instance, higher trust in the president of the federal republic or the federal constituent unit’s president can signal public confidence in the executive branch at both levels. Similarly, assessing confidence in legislators at different levels offers an understanding of the public's view on the law-making bodies and their representation, which reflects on political stability and institutional trust. Furthermore, the inclusion of a clan elder in this set of items recognizes the cultural and traditional structures that influence societal dynamics.

In societies where clan systems play a significant role, the clan elder's position may be a pivotal element of social order and community relations. Trust in this figure can indicate respect for traditional governance and social harmony within the clan structure, which may not directly translate to overall social cohesion but is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of societal dynamics. Therefore, while item 15 may not measure social cohesion in a narrow sense, it enriches the study by shedding light on the multifaceted nature of trust across different tiers of society and governance. It acknowledges that social cohesion is underpinned by various factors, including the public's relationship with and perception of authority, which are essential for a nuanced understanding of the societal fabric.

Trust in Government

Building on the above, item 16 assesses the federal government trustworthiness. It asks respondents to assess how often they believe the federal government can be trusted to do the right thing, giving response options ranging from ‘almost always’ weighted 4 points to ‘almost never’ weighted 1 point. The strength of perceived government trustworthiness is a direct indicator of the faith people have in their political system.

Trust in Society

Continuing in this vein, item 17 similarly measures the general trustworthiness perceived in fellow citizens, reflecting the integrity of social fabric. It asks respondents to agree or disagree with statements about the ease of trusting others in the country, employing five-point Likert scale that ranges from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’.

Openness to Diversity

Expanding the scope, the subsequent four items assess community engagement, and acceptance of diversity which are critical to understanding the social cohesiveness within various community levels. Accordingly, item 18 assesses the respondents’ openness to diversity based on various social dimensions such as social stratum, clan, political views, and geographic origin. Survey item 18 uses Likert-scale, by giving response options ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’, where 'strongly agree' is assigned a weight of 5 points and 'strongly disagree' is assigned 1 point, thereby transforming the categorical responses into ordinal data that align with the objectives of the study.

Willingness to Sacrifice

Item 19 similarly evaluates willingness to sacrifice personal resources, such as time and money, to the welfare of others in society. It employs a five-point Likert-scale, giving response options ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’, where 'strongly agree' is assigned a weight of 5 points and 'strongly disagree' is assigned 1 point, thus enabling to transform the categorical responses into ordinal data that align with the objectives of the study.

Voluntary Work

Item 20 further measures respondents' engagement in voluntary work, and active participation in community service. It gives 'yes/no' response options, where 'yes' is assigned a weight of 2 points and 'no' is assigned 1 point, thereby transforming the categorical responses into ordinal data that align with the objectives of the study.

Community Cooperation

Finally, item 21 measures community cohesion, willingness of community members to help each other and socialization of diverse groups. Survey items 18, 19, and 21 employ Likert-scale measures, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

3.7.6. Political Participation

Political participation is measured through a series of seven carefully selected survey questions. These questions are designed to evaluate the extent of an respondents' engagement in political activities. They cover a broad range of political behaviours, including voting, attending political meetings, and engaging in political discussions. Each response is recorded as ordinal data, with a specific numerical value assigned to indicate the level of engagement for each activity. This structured approach quantifying political participation utilizes survey items that have been adapted from various sources: items 23, 24, 27, and 28 from the Social Research Centre (2019), item 25 from Mendelsohn (2002), item 26 from the International Social Survey Programme (2003), and survey item 22 from Chan et al. (2006). The selection of survey items from a variety of respected sources is a deliberate strategy, designed to form an array that captures the full spectrum of political participation within the unique context of Somalia. This approach is not just methodological precision; it's a narrative of political life, each source contributing a chapter to the story.

Membership Political Organizations

Survey item 22 evaluates membership and activity in political organizations, by inquiring about respondents' membership in political parties and similar organizations as well as the depth of their participation. Respondents indicate their participation with binary 'yes' or 'no' choices. Given that active membership in political entities reflects a degree of

civic engagement and political participation, affirmative answers are assigned a higher value of 2 points, while negative responses are assigned 1 point to transform these binary choices into ordinal data indicative of the level of political participation.

Engagement in Political Activities

Shifting focus to direct political engagement, question item 23 expands the inquiry to assess engagement in political activities. Respondents are asked to identify which of the listed political actions they have undertaken. The actions include voting in elections, engaging in petitions, and various forms of direct communication with legislative representatives, as well as participation in public demonstrations. Each selected action is assigned one point. The aggregation of these points provides an overall score for each respondent, reflecting the extent of their political participation. A response of 'none of the above' is recorded as zero points, indicating no reported engagement in the activities listed. By summing the points, it creates an ordinal scale, with higher scores indicating greater participation. This method aligns with the study's aim to measure not just whether individuals participate in politics, but the extent of their participation.

Experiences of Discrimination

Turning to the personal impact of societal structures, item 24 inquiries about the respondent's experiences with discrimination due to clan origin which is a critical factor in a society where politics and power-sharing are clan-based. The absence of discrimination is assumed to foster greater participation in political processes. Given the significance of clan affiliation in Somali politics, a 'No' response, indicating no experience of discrimination, is assigned a higher value of 2 points. This weighting reflects the positive correlation between the absence of discrimination and the likelihood of political participation. Conversely, a 'Yes' response, suggesting the respondent has faced discrimination, is assigned 1 point, acknowledging the potential barrier such experiences can pose to active political engagement. Expanding the lens to the emotional dimension of politics, item 25 is designed to capture respondents' emotional tendencies towards Somalia and their respective federal constituent unit as political units, using a 0-100 scale. This item is constructed to measure a wide spectrum of feelings, with 0 attaching the extreme negative end, indicating very negative feelings, and 100 at the extreme positive end, indicating very positive feelings.

The survey item 25 particularly tells the context where political life is deeply intertwined with regional and national politics. This approach aligns with the study's objectives to measure political opinions, offering a sophisticated tool for mapping the emotional landscape of the population regarding their political entities. Navigating the details of power and preference, question item 26 evaluates perceptions on the distribution of power within the federal system of governance. It queries respondents on their preferred degree of power allocation between the federal government and the federal constituent units. The response options range from 'Much more' power for the federal government to 'Much less' power, with 'As much' serving as the midpoint indicating an equal balance of power. In relation to these dimensions of governance, survey item 27 further evaluates respondents' views on the current state of Somalia's system of government and its relation to their tendency for political participation. The responses provided are indicative of the respondent's need for political participation, satisfaction with the status quo may imply less urgency for political engagement, whereas a perceived need for change could drive more active participation. It gives response options from 'works fine as it is' to 'should be replaced'.

Finally, item 28 measures optimism about Somalia's future. Optimism can influence citizens' willingness to engage in political processes and support for government policies. It gives response options from ‘very optimistic' signalling a strong positive perception to 'Very pessimistic' denoting a sense of strong negative perception about the political landscape of Somalia. The survey items 25-28 encompassing emotional perceptions towards Somalia and the federal constituent units, preferences on the balance of power within the federal structure, and optimism or pessimism about the country's future are included to deepen our understanding of the factors influencing political participation. While these items provide valuable context and are related to the construct of political participation, they are not used to directly measure the extent of such participation. Including these items allows for a rich exploration of the motivations and attitudes that underlie political behaviours. For example, emotional connections to political entities and the balance of power preferences offer insights into the potential for civic engagement, but they do not necessarily translate into measurable actions. Similarly, feelings about the nation's future might inform one's willingness to participate in the political process but do not associate to actual participation. By analysing these responses separately from the core activities that constitute political participation, such as voting or attending a political rally, the study avoids conflating emotional and cognitive predispositions with overt political actions.

These items serve to provide a more detailed picture of the political landscape and the psychological factors at play, which are essential for a comprehensive understanding of political participation within the unique context of Somalia's clan-based politics. The selection of questions also paints a portrait of the emotional and psychological landscape of the Somali people. The emotions towards Somalia and the constituent units, the perceptions of power distribution, and the optimism or pessimism about the future — these are not direct measures of political action but are essential for a nuanced understanding of what drives political behaviour. By intertwining these various strands, the survey becomes more than a tool; it becomes a storyteller. It narrates the complexity of political life in Somalia, capturing not just the actions, but the motivations, barriers, and sentiments that underlie them. It's this narrative — rich, layered, and contextual — that allows for a deeper understanding of political participation in Somalia's distinctive environment.

3.8. Data Analysis

The data analysis procedures for this study are designed to synthesize quantitative data obtained from the surveys to identify patterns, trends, and correlations between federal autonomy and aspects of national identity in Somalia. Upon collection, data from the surveys is entered into the SPSS statistical software package which is suitable for handling complex datasets. The initial data processing involved meticulous data cleaning which included checking for and addressing any missing data, or inconsistencies.

3.8.1. Treatment of Missing Values

Upon initial data screening, the study identified 13 cases with missing values. Missing data arose due to various reasons, including non-response to certain survey questions and dropout of participants during the survey process. The study employed listwise deletion method to address the missing values. Listwise deletion, also known as complete case analysis, involves removing any cases with missing data from the analysis. This method was used since the number of missing cases (13) represented a small fraction of the overall dataset. Given the relatively low proportion, listwise deletion was unlikely to significantly affect the representativeness of the remaining data. The preliminary analysis indicated that the missingness was random, meaning that the likelihood of missing data was not related to the value of the data itself or other variables in the study. This randomness supports the use of listwise deletion as it reduces the potential for bias.

By employing listwise deletion, the study maintained the integrity of subsequent analyses by using only complete data. This is particularly important when employing correlation analyses, as partial data could distort the relationships between variables. Additionally, the listwise deletion is a straightforward method that does not involve complex imputation techniques or assumptions about the data. This transparency is beneficial for the clarity of the research methodology and the interpretability of results. After treating the dataset with listwise deletion, the study aimed to maintain a robust sample size to ensure sufficient statistical power. To compensate for the loss of data due to missing values, an additional 13 responses were collected. Collecting additional responses ensured that the sample size remained statistically significant for the analyses planned, maintaining the power of the study at the predetermined level.

The new data collection followed the same rigorous methodological standards as the initial data collection phase, ensuring that the additional responses were consistent with the quality and format of the existing dataset (Dillman et al., 2014). Additional data collection aimed to preserve the representativeness of the sample, considering the demographics and characteristics of the target population, to ensure that the study's findings could be generalized to the broader population of interest.

3.8.2. Descriptive Statistics

The study employed comprehensive descriptive statistics to provide a foundational understanding of the data's characteristics (Norusis, 2012; (Blaikie, 2003). Cross-tabulations offered a granular view of the relationship between different variables, helping to identify any initial patterns or anomalies. To complement the numerical crosstab results, bar charts were employed to visually summarize and illustrate the data distributions (Everitt & Skrondal, 2006). The use of bar charts allowed for the quick recognition of patterns, such as which categories had the highest frequencies or whether certain groups tended to respond similarly to survey items. This visual representation was instrumental in making the data accessible and understandable to a broader audience, including those who may not be familiar with statistical notation or terminology. The descriptive analysis served as the groundwork for subsequent inferential analysis. It provided a snapshot of the data's structure and the relationships that might warrant further investigation through more complex statistical methods.

3.8.3. Computation of Construct Scores

Constructs were computed by summing the items that measured the underlying latent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012), including autonomy, national identity, national attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation. Each construct score underwent a rigorous normality test, and transformations were applied where necessary to normalize the distribution of scores, ensuring the suitability of subsequent correlational analyses (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). The study cross-checked the results using non-parametric correlations to confirm that the findings were consistent across statistical methods (Hollander et al., 2013). This comprehensive data preparation process was essential for the accurate testing of the study's hypotheses, ensuring that the interpretations drawn from the data truly reflect the underlying constructs of interest, thereby emphasizing the study's commitment to methodological rigor and the generation of robust empirical findings.

3.8.4. Inferential Statistics

The study employed Spearman's rho as the correlation analysis tool of choice due to its robustness in handling the ordinal nature of the survey data and non-parametric distributions (Field, 2017). Spearman's rho was selected over Pearson's correlation for several key reasons (Corder & Foreman, 2014). It is less sensitive to outliers and does not require the assumption of data being normally distributed, which is particularly beneficial when dealing with ordinal data or when the shape of the distribution is unknown or skewed (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). Moreover, Spearman's rho determines the monotonic relationship between variables, which means it can capture both linear and non-linear associations (Myers et al., 2010). This adaptability is essential when examining the complex socio-political constructs present in this study and their multifaceted interactions.

The study hypotheses proposed directional relationships, suggesting negative or positive associations. For each hypothesis, Spearman's rho was calculated to discern the strength and direction of the association. A two-tailed test of significance was applied with an established alpha level of .05, enabling the detection of both positive and negative relationships. This approach is comprehensive, as it accounts for the possibility that higher or lower levels of autonomy could influence aspects of national identity in different ways (Sherry & Henson, 2005).

The interpretation of the Spearman's rho coefficients was conducted with a dual focus on statistical significance, as indicated by the p-value, and practical significance, as reflected by the size of the coefficient. A significant rho value, while indicating a relationship, does not imply causation, and its magnitude was carefully considered to understand its real-world relevance (Coolidge, 2012). The study's commitment to methodological rigor extended to performing sensitivity analyses (Ioannidis, 2008). This involved re-assessing the hypotheses under varied levels of significance and reviewing the influence of outliers on the results. Such analyses were critical for ensuring the conclusions drawn were not contingent on specific assumptions or unduly influenced by data anomalies. Transparency in reporting the findings was paramount. The study ventured beyond the presentation of statistical findings to engage in a comprehensive discussion of their implications. The results were deliberated within the broader theoretical framework of federalism and national identity.

3.9. Data Management

The study implemented strict data storage and handling procedures to maintain data integrity and confidentiality. Upon collection, all data were digitized if not already in electronic form. Electronic data were stored in a secure, password-protected file. Only the researcher had access to this folder, and individual access was followed and monitored to ensure data security. Physical data, such as paper questionnaires, were scanned and stored electronically. The original physical copies were kept in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location with access restricted to authorized personnel. Participant consent forms and any documents containing personal information were also stored securely and separately from research data. Access to these documents was limited to the principal researcher. After the conclusion of the study, the data were archived to ensure long-term preservation and to facilitate future research. Guidelines were established for future access to the archived data. These guidelines include that researchers interested in accessing the data are required to submit a formal request, outlining their research objectives and how they intended to use the data. Access to the data is contingent upon the approval of the relevant ethical review board, and researchers are required to provide evidence of such approval. Researchers granted access are required to sign a data use agreement, committing to using the data solely for research purposes. The policy set the terms of data sharing, including any restrictions on the use of the data and the requirement to cite the original study.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in the study were of paramount importance to ensure respect for participant autonomy, protection of participant rights, and adherence to the principles of ethical research conduct (APA, 2017). The research was attentive to ethical concerns such as obtaining informed consent, upholding participant confidentiality, and the responsible use of data. Recognizing the sensitive nature of identity politics in Somalia, the study was designed to minimize any potential risks to the participants or the researcher. The study utilized the standard form of the Research Ethics Committee of the university, which was used to explain the purpose, procedures, content, and duration of the research to the participants. The consent form explicitly stated:

- The voluntary nature of participation, emphasizing the right to withdraw at any point.
- The scope and objectives of the study, ensuring participants were well-informed about the reasons for the research and its societal and scientific relevance.
- The anticipated number of participants and the specific locations where the research would be conducted.

Participants were encouraged to ask questions and were provided with adequate time to consider their participation. They provided written consent, affirming their comprehension of the study and their voluntary agreement to participate. Participants were assured of confidentiality, with the understanding that all responses would be anonymized, and personal identifiers removed from the research data. Participants were also informed that they could discontinue their participation at any time for any reason without any repercussions. The study received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the university, underscoring its adherence to ethical standards. The committee reviewed the research proposal, consent forms, and all participant materials to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines. To reinforce the ethical foundation of the research, continuous monitoring throughout the study was employed to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders. The researcher maintained a commitment to addressing any unforeseen ethical issues promptly and transparently, ensuring a high standard of ethical rigor was upheld at all times. In conclusion, the careful consideration of ethical protocols not only protected the participants but also enhanced the integrity and credibility of the study's findings.

3.11. Assumptions and Limitations

The research design and methodology of this study are predicated on a set of assumptions that are inherent in the collection and analysis of data within the context of Somalia. These assumptions and limitations were carefully considered throughout the research process. They were addressed as much as possible through careful design and methodological choices, and they are acknowledged here to provide transparency and context for interpreting the study's findings.

3.11.1. Assumptions

- Homogeneity in Responses: It is assumed that the survey instruments are interpreted uniformly across participants, notwithstanding the diverse socio-political backgrounds within the federal units.
- Stability of Constructs Over Time: The study assumes that the constructs of national identity, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation remain stable throughout the duration of the research.
- Accuracy of Self-Reported Data: The study is based on the assumption that participants provide accurate and truthful responses, with an understanding that self-reported data can be subject to biases and inaccuracies.
- Non-Response Bias: It is assumed that the participants who chose to respond to the survey are representative of the broader population, acknowledging that non-responders may have different views or characteristics.

3.11.2. Limitations

- Generalizability: Given that the study is conducted within specific districts of Somalia, the generalizability of the findings may be affected by regional variations in political governance and administrative practices (Shadish et al., 2001).
- Cross-sectional Design: As the study employs a cross-sectional design, it captures data at a single point in time. This design does not account for changes over time and therefore cannot establish causality between variables (Babbie, 2015).

- Self-Selection Bias: The voluntary nature of participation may lead to self-selection bias, where individuals with strong opinions or interests in the subject may be more likely to participate, potentially skewing the results (Heckman, 1979).

- Measurement Error: While measures have been taken to ensure reliability and validity, there is always the possibility of measurement error (Alwin, 2007).

- Language and Comprehension: The research assumes that all participants have a sufficient understanding of the language used in the survey. Misinterpretation due to language could affect the accuracy of the data collected (Harkness et al., 2003).

- Data Collection Constraints: The security situation in Somalia and access to certain regions may have limited the study to collect data evenly across all federal units, which may affect the representativeness of the sample (Maxfield & Babbie, 2015).

- Potential for Response Bias: There is a possibility of response bias, such as social desirability bias, where participants may respond in a manner, they perceive to be more favourable or acceptable to the researcher (Nederhof, 1985).

3.12. Reliability and Validity

The study paid particular attention to the principles of reliability and validity, which are crucial for ensuring the integrity and credibility of the research findings.

3.12.1. Reliability

The study focused on two primary types of reliability to ensure consistent results:

- Internal Consistency: The study utilized Cronbach's alpha to measure the internal consistency of the survey instruments (Cronbach, 1951). This statistical test assesses the extent to which all parts of the survey contribute equally to the construct being measured. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or above was deemed acceptable.

- Test-Retest Reliability: The study implemented a test-retest procedure to measure the stability of the measures over time (Kline, 2015). This involved administering the same survey to a subset of the sample population at two different points in time, separated by a period of four weeks.

3.12.2. Validity

The study addressed validity through the following methods (Messick, 1995):

- Construct Validity: This was established through a combination of confirmatory factor analysis and theoretical triangulation (Thompson, 2004). Confirmatory factor analysis was utilized to investigate the underlying structure of the survey items, ensuring that they grouped appropriately according to the theoretical constructs (Brown, 2006). Theoretical triangulation involved a rigorous comparison of our constructs with existing literature and theory, ensuring that our measures accurately reflected the constructs of interest.

- Content Validity: Expert reviews were conducted to ascertain that the survey comprehensively captured the domain of the study (Haynes et al., 1995). Subject matter experts assessed the relevance and representativeness of the items.

- External Validity: The study used a representative sample of the Somali population to enhance external validity (Campbell & Stanley, 1966). The multistage sampling method, combined with the diversity of the districts selected, aimed to produce generalizable study findings.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the study, examining the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. It starts with a detailed demographic profile based on a survey of 384 participants, offering insights on the varied backgrounds that comprise the sample population. The participants' demographic characteristics such as gender, age, educational level, their distribution across federal constituent units, and their duration of residency within these units, are precisely reported, providing the platform for the subsequent analysis. The chapter proceeds to correlate these demographics with the participants' sense of national identity, attachment, belonging, and their political participation, offering a nuanced understanding of how autonomy impacts these aspects of civic life.

The chapter explores the autonomy of federal constituent units, employing a composite scoring system that compresses institutional, policy, and fiscal autonomy dimensions. This granular breakdown affords a comparative perspective on how each federal unit stands in terms of self-governance within the Somali federal structure. The chapter then navigates the multifaceted correlation between autonomy levels across federal constituent units and national identity, as quantified through Spearman's rank correlation coefficient. The data presents a fascinating, albeit complex, picture of how increased autonomy correlates with a decrease of national identity, suggesting a shift towards more localized identities.

In a similar vein, the chapter probes into the relationship between autonomy and national attachment as well as between autonomy and sense of belonging, uncovering weak and moderate negative correlations respectively. The chapter further analyses the relationship between autonomy on social cohesion, highlighting a moderate to strong negative correlation. This association suggests that higher autonomy may correspond with weaker social ties, a critical consideration for national unity. Finally, the chapter addresses the correlation between autonomy and political participation. In contrast to the other factors, a moderate positive correlation is observed here, indicating that greater autonomy might fuel political engagement among citizens.

4.2. Demographic Profile

The study surveyed a total of 384 participants to understand the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. The subsequent table and the accompanying charts detail the distributions across various demographic indicators, including gender, age, educational attainment, federal constituent units represented, and the duration of residency within these units. These demographics provide a foundational understanding of the sample, which underpins the analysis of the study's central themes.

Table 1. Demographic profile

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	255	66.4%
	Female	129	33.6%
	Total	384	100.0%
Age	18-29	128	33.3%
	30-39	147	38.3%
	40-49	36	9.4%
	50-59	38	9.9%
	60+	35	9.1%
	Total	384	100.0%
Education Level	No Formal Education	33	8.6%
	Secondary	35	9.1%
	Bachelor	142	37.0%
	Masters	164	42.7%
	PhD	10	2.6%
	Total	384	100.0%
Federal Constituent Units	Banadir Region	156	40.6%
	Galmudug State	75	19.5%
	Southwest State	76	19.8%
	Puntland State	77	20.1%
	Total	384	100.0%
Duration Lived in the Federal Constituent Unit (Years)	<1	25	6.5%
	1-5	30	7.8%
	6-10	32	8.3%
	11-15	60	15.6%
	16-20	74	19.3%
	21+	163	42.4%
	Total	384	100.0%

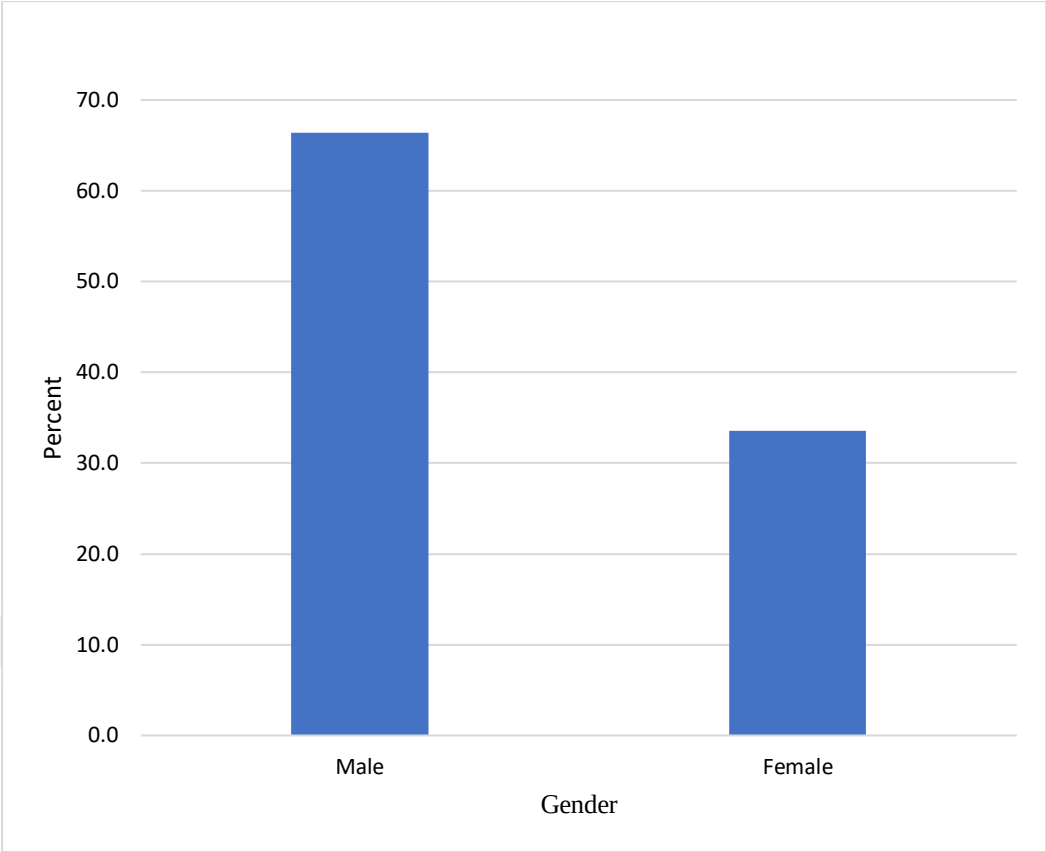


Figure 2: Gender

The distribution of participants by gender was skewed towards males, who constituted 66.4% (n=255) of the sample, while females accounted for 33.6% (n=129). This male predominance in the sample may reflect broader societal trends or specific aspects of the study's context and recruitment strategy. The data reveals a clear pattern of gender disparities across several key dimensions, most notably in education and age distribution. There is a significantly higher proportion of young males (18-29 and 30-39 years) age groups in the sample. This could suggest that younger males are more engaged in the context from which the sample is drawn. Conversely, females are more represented in older age groups (50-59 and 60+ years), which may indicate either a greater longer lifespan for females or likelihood availability for the survey. On the education side, the disparity is marked by a significant overrepresentation of males who have attained higher levels of education, with the most pronounced difference observed at the master's degree level. The data also shows a notable number of the female population in the sample have no formal education, which is largely higher than that of males. This disparity points to a potential access gap in education for females and underscores the need for targeted educational initiatives to bridge this divide.

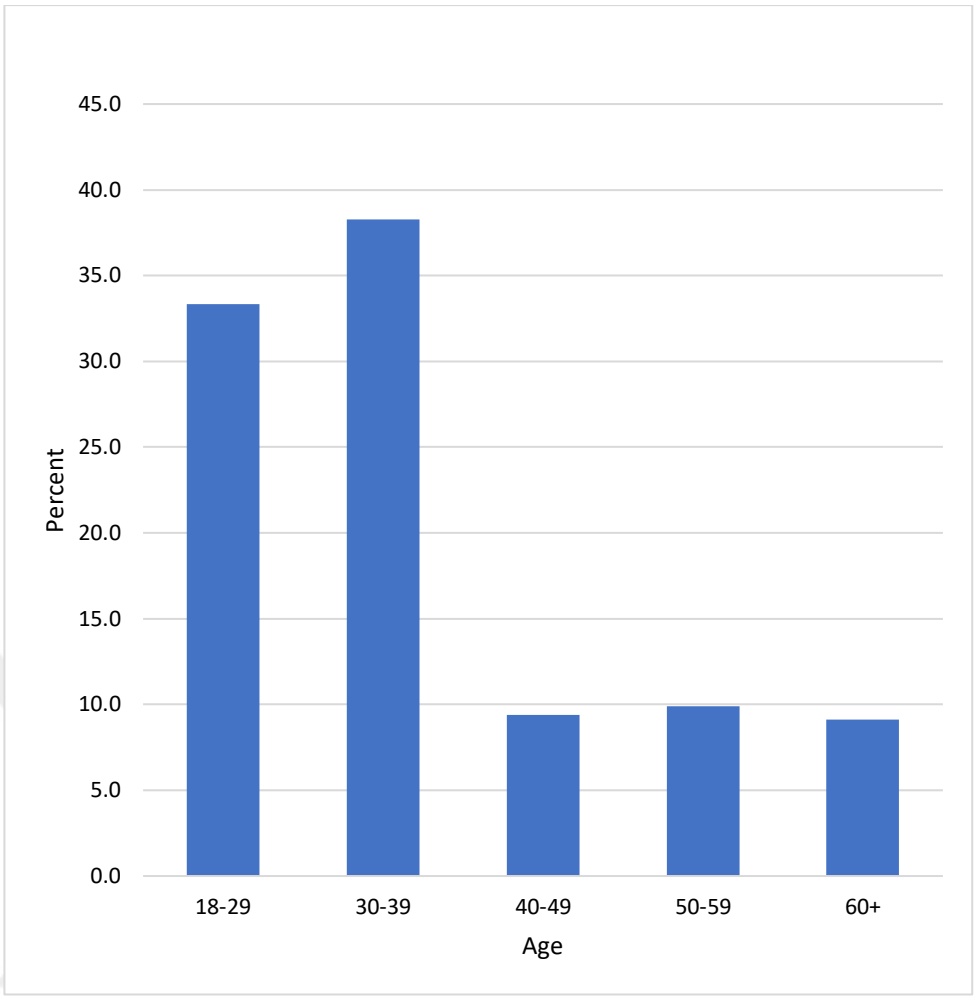


Figure 3: Age

Participants were diverse in age, with the majority falling within the 30-39 years age group, representing 38.3% (n=147) of the sample. Those aged 18-29 years also formed a substantial group, accounting for 33.3% (n=128). The 40-49, 50-59, and 60+ years age groups were less represented, comprising 9.4% (n=36), 9.9% (n=38), and 9.1% (n=35) of the sample, respectively. This age distribution indicates a relatively young demographic with a significant representation of individuals likely to be in the active workforce. The 40-49 age group shows a balanced gender representation, but the number of individuals is markedly lower than in the younger cohorts. Gender disparities are prominent in the younger and older age groups. Educational levels vary, with some having no formal education and others holding advanced degrees. Their presence across federal units is less than younger adults. Most of the individuals in this group have been long-term residents of their federal units, with durations extending beyond 21 years, reflecting a settled demographic.

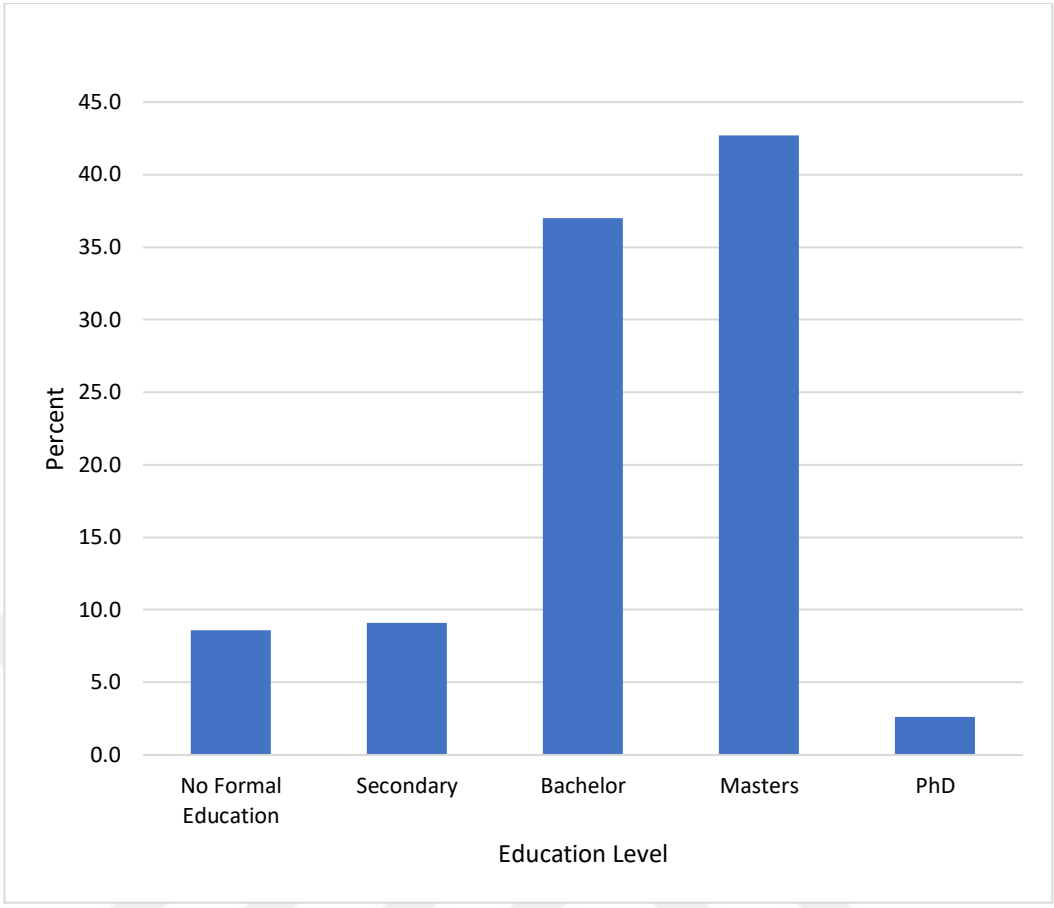


Figure 4: Education level

The educational attainment of participants varied widely. A significant proportion of respondents held a master's degree, 42.7% (n=164), followed by those with a bachelor's degree, constituting 37.0% (n=142). Individuals with secondary education and no formal education were less prevalent, making up 9.1% (n=35) and 8.6% (n=33) respectively. Notably, 2.6% (n=10) of participants had attained a Ph.D., indicating the inclusion of highly educated individuals in the study. The data illustrates a gender imbalance across different education levels. The predominance of well-educated participants in the study appears to be due, in part, to the accessibility and reach of your recruitment methods. In conducting the study, the aim was to reach a cross-section of the population. However, the avenues available and most effective for recruitment inherently skewed towards individuals with higher education. Primarily, the recruitment was channelled through online platforms and professional networks, which are more readily accessed and utilized by those with at least a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, the nature of the study perhaps resonated more with those who have engaged with academic research before, either as students or professionals, leading them to participate in greater numbers.

In recognizing this, it is acknowledged that the resulting participant profile does not reflect the full spectrum of educational backgrounds. The insights gained, therefore, may not fully encapsulate the perspectives of all educational demographics. This limitation has been taken into account in the analysis and interpretation of the study's findings. It's an important aspect for consideration in the design of future research, where a more inclusive strategy will be essential to capture a broader educational representation.

A significant gender gap is evident at the higher education levels, with males greatly outnumbering females, particularly at the master's degree level. This suggests that males may have better access to higher education or that there are societal factors encouraging or enabling them to pursue advanced degrees more than females. Conversely, there is a higher percentage of females with no formal education, pointing to systemic barriers that may prevent women from accessing basic educational opportunities.

When cross-referenced with age, it becomes clear that higher education levels are concentrated among the younger adults (18-29 and 30-39 years), with a noticeable decline in formal education as the age increases. This may reflect generational shifts in access to education. Notably, the oldest cohort (60+) has a significant percentage without formal education, which may highlight historical educational deficits or the impact of early life conditions on lifelong educational opportunities. The geographical analysis reveals that higher education levels, particularly master's degrees, are most prevalent in the Banadir Region suggesting that it may be educational or economic hubs attracting or retaining highly educated individuals.

The near absence of PhD holders in certain regions could indicate a lack of opportunities for the most highly educated or a concentration of specialized roles in specific areas. The data shows that individuals with higher education levels, such as master's and PhD degrees, tend to have longer durations of residence within federal units, which might imply that higher education correlates with stability or a lack of migration. Conversely, individuals with no formal education have a more evenly spread duration of residence, with a substantial percentage having lived in their federal unit for more than 21 years. This could suggest that those without formal education are less mobile, possibly due to economic factors or familial ties. The gender disparity in education levels points to a need for gender-focused educational initiatives, especially at higher education levels.

The age-related educational trends may inform policies aimed at adult education and lifelong learning programs, while geographical disparities suggest regionalized educational development strategies may be necessary. Lastly, the link between education and residency duration might influence community planning, as more educated populations tend to be more stable, potentially contributing to regional socio-economic development. Policymakers and educational planners can leverage these insights to tailor educational programs and policies that address the specific needs of different demographic groups, thereby promoting educational equity and fostering socio-economic growth.

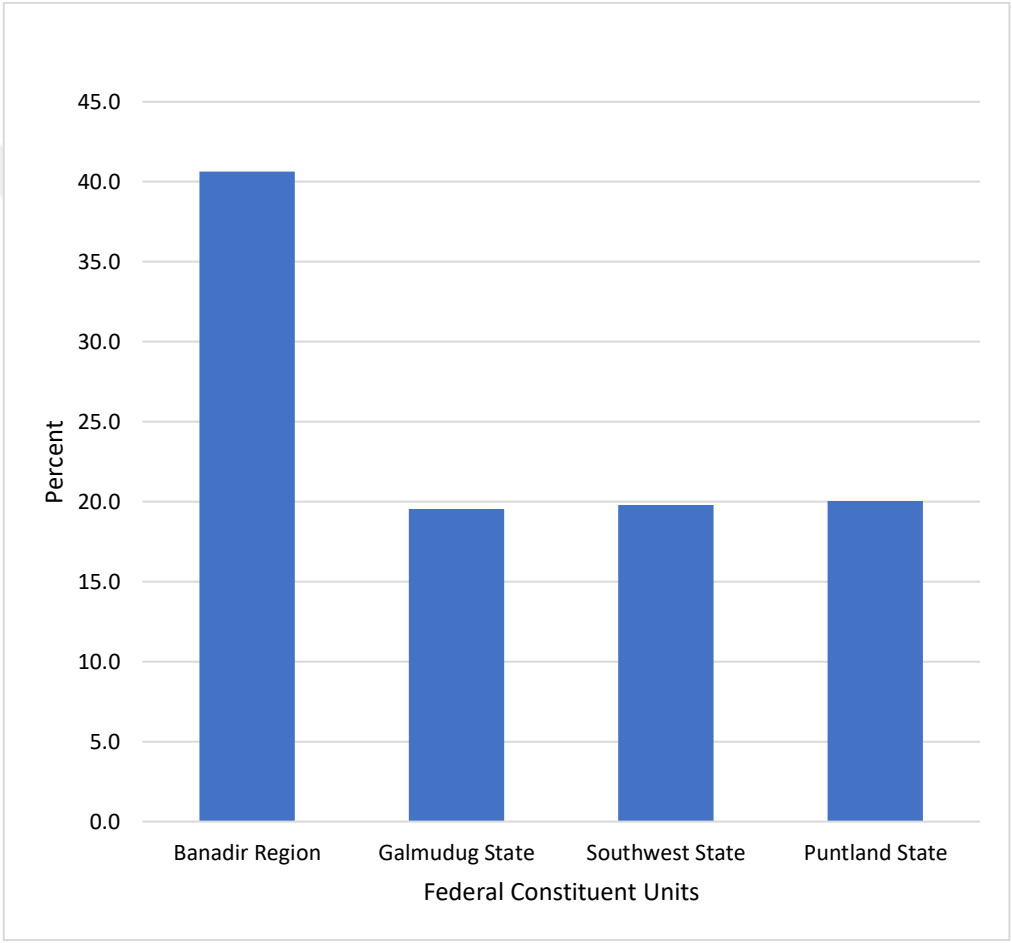


Figure 5: Federal Constituent Units

Participants were drawn from various federal constituent units of Somalia, with the Banadir Region being the most represented at 40.6% (n=156). This was followed closely by participants from Puntland State, Southwest State, and Galmudug State, which accounted for 20.1% (n=77), 19.8% (n=76), and 19.5% (n=75) of the sample, respectively.

This distribution suggests a broad geographical representation within the federal units of Somalia. The demographic data indicates a pronounced gender gap in Galmudug State, where the male population outnumbers the female population. This plain disparity contrasts sharply with the gender distribution in Puntland State, where the numbers are more evenly matched, suggesting a more gender-balanced population. In the Banadir Region, a significant concentration of young adults (18-29) and early midlife adults (30-39) suggests that it is particularly attractive to younger demographics. Puntland State and Southwest State, however, exhibit a relatively uniform distribution of age groups, indicating demographic stability within these populations.

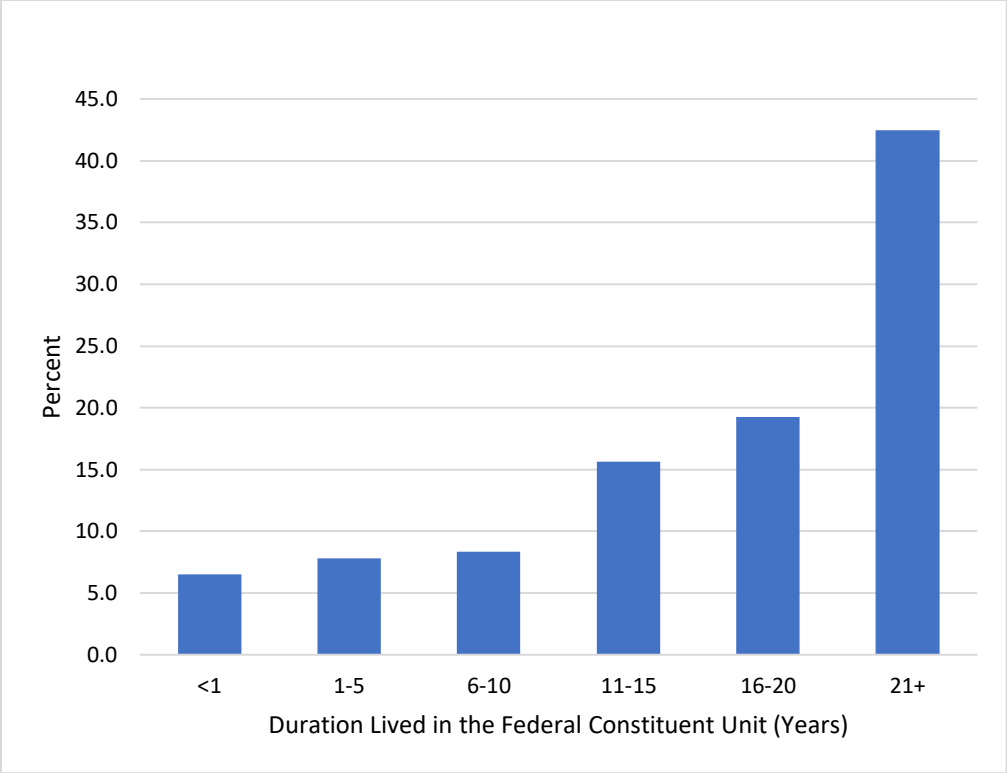


Figure 6: Duration lived in the federal constituent units

The length of residence within the federal constituent units varied among participants. A significant majority, 42.4% (n=163), had lived in their respective units for more than 21 years, indicating a deeply rooted experience in their communities. Those who had resided in their units for 16-20 years and 11-15 years comprised 19.3% (n=74) and 15.6% (n=60) of the sample, respectively. Fewer participants had lived in their units for less than 10 years, with those residing for 6-10 years, 1-5 years, and less than 1 year making up 8.3% (n=32), 7.8% (n=30), and 6.5% (n=25) of the sample, respectively.

This highlights the inclusion of both long-standing and relatively newer residents in the study. The data shows that young adults (18-29) and early midlife adults (30-39) are more likely to have lived in their federal constituent units for shorter periods (less than 15 years), suggesting that this demographic is more mobile. In contrast, the older age groups, particularly those aged 60 and above, have the highest percentages of individuals who have lived in their federal constituent units for over 21 years. This indicates a stable older population that has longstanding roots in their communities. The data also reveals that Banadir Region has a substantial number of long-term residents (21+ years), which implies a stable or indigenous population. Galmudug State, on the other hand, shows a more even spread across residency durations. Southwest State and Puntland State have a mix of long-term and medium-term residents, pointing to a combination of established communities and newer settlements.

4.3. Autonomy of Federal Constituent Units

In assessing the autonomy of Federal Constituent Units within Somalia, the study employed a composite scoring system encompassing three distinct dimensions: institutional autonomy, policy autonomy, and fiscal autonomy. The total autonomy score is a sum of these components, offering an overall measure of autonomy. The table and figure presented below provide a clear comparative perspective on how each federal unit stands in terms of its autonomy within the federal system, offering valuable insights into the distribution of power and self-governance across the regions.

Table 2. Autonomy of federal constituent units

Federal Constituent Units	Institutional Autonomy	Policy Autonomy	Fiscal Autonomy	Total Autonomy Scores
Puntland State	2.00	3.00	4.00	9.00
Southwest State	2.00	3.00	2.00	7.00
Galmudug State	2.00	3.00	2.00	7.00
Banadir Region	1.00	1.00	3.00	5.00

Puntland State exhibits the highest level of autonomy with a composite score of 9. This is attributed to a moderate level of institutional autonomy (scored at 2), higher policy autonomy (scored at 3), and the highest level of fiscal autonomy among the units (scored at 4), suggesting a substantial degree of self-governance and financial independence. Southwest State and Galmudug State both present with an identical pattern in their autonomy structure, each with a total autonomy score of 7. These states demonstrate the same level of institutional and policy autonomy as Puntland State but fall behind with a lower fiscal autonomy score of 2. This indicates a lesser degree of financial self-sufficiency compared to Puntland State. On the other hand, Banadir Region is shown to have the lowest overall autonomy, with a total autonomy score of 5. It reflects minimal institutional and policy autonomy, both scored at 1, and a moderate level of fiscal autonomy, scored at 3. The low scores in institutional and policy autonomy may point to a significant control by the central government. The following comparative analysis delve into the distinctions of each dimension of autonomy and explore their implications for the federal structure in Somalia.

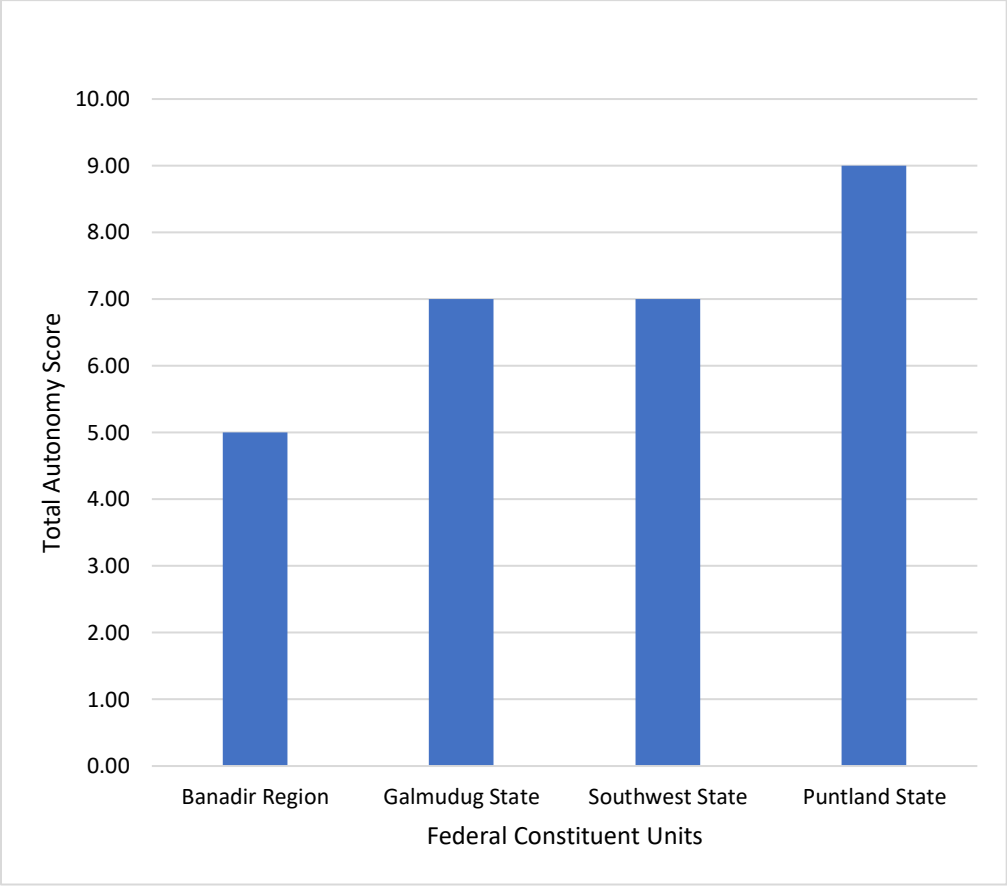


Figure 7: Federal constituent units' autonomy levels

4.3.1. Institutional Autonomy

In Somalia's federal system, the institutional structures of the federal constituent units—Puntland State, Galmudug State, and Southwest State—are designed to accommodate both the traditional clan-based governance model and the nascent development of modern state institutions. These structures are a testament to the complex social fabric of Somalia and the challenges of establishing governance in a context marked by security issues and the gradual evolution of political frameworks. The institutional architecture within these states is shaped by the need to bridge traditional authority with the objectives of a federal system, aiming to create governance mechanisms that are both effective and representative. The interim arrangements in place for the selection of assembly members and the election of executive officials reflect a blend of customary practices and statutory mandates. Puntland, Galmudug, and Southwest states have assemblies that are not directly elected through popular vote. Instead, they are constituted through a selection process guided by traditional clan elders. In this system, the societal influence of clans is paramount, and each clan is allocated assembly seats. The process is managed by elders, who nominate individuals to represent their respective clans in the state assemblies.

This interim method, which serves as a placeholder for direct elections, is rooted in the current realities faced by these regions, where security conditions and institutional infrastructure are not yet conducive to holding widespread democratic elections. Despite these constraints, there is a shared vision across the federal constituent units to evolve towards a more participatory electoral process, where citizens can directly elect their representatives. The relationship between the legislature and the executive organs in these federal units is characterized by a process in which the executive is elected by the legislature. The president and vice-president (except in Southwest State, which does not have a vice-president) are elected by the legislature assemblies. This design underscores the principle of accountability and reflects a system where the executive is expected to be responsive to the assembly's will. Following the election, the president nominates cabinet members, who must then be approved by the assembly. This approval process serves as a critical mechanism for legislative oversight, fostering a balance of power between the executive and the legislative branches of government. It is through this interplay that the assembly exerts influence over the executive, reinforcing the autonomy of the federal unit within the boundaries set by the central federal government.

The uniform institutional autonomy score of 2 points across Puntland, Galmudug, and Southwest suggests that the assemblies within these federal units are selected through methods other than direct elections, and the executive is then elected by these selected assemblies. This level of scoring represents limited autonomy, indicating that while there is some self-governance present, it is not the result of direct democratic processes. The limited autonomy score suggests that there is a structure in place for regional governance, but it operates under greater influence or control from the central government than would be the case with higher autonomy scores.

The Banadir Region, which also serves as the capital city – Mogadishu, holds a unique position within the Somali federal system and has been scored with the lowest level of institutional autonomy, specifically receiving 1 point. This score denotes that there is no assembly in place, and the executive, who also holds the position of mayor and governor, is nominated directly by the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. It indicates a governance structure without an independent regional legislative body or a directly elected executive. It also suggests that the region lacks the mechanisms typical of self-governing federal units that allow for a degree of local legislative and executive autonomy. Instead, the governance of Mogadishu is more directly managed by the federal authorities.

The absence of an assembly and the presence of a centrally appointed executive in Mogadishu can be understood through Article 9 of the Somali Provisional Constitution. This article indicates that the status of Mogadishu as the nation's capital will be determined through the constitutional review process. The constitution acknowledges that Mogadishu's unique role as the capital city necessitates a distinct governance arrangement, which is yet to be codified into law by the Federal Parliament. The ongoing constitutional review process is expected to address the status of Mogadishu and outline a governance framework that could potentially increase the city's institutional autonomy. The review aims to determine how the capital city will integrate within the federal system while serving as the seat of the national government. This process is crucial because it will establish whether Mogadishu will develop an independent governance structure, potentially including an elected assembly and more localized executive powers or continue to be governed by federal appointees. The current governance structure, where the mayor/governor is appointed by the Somali President, is an interim measure that remains in effect until the constitutional review process is complete. This provisional arrangement suggests that Mogadishu's governance and administrative structure are still evolving.

4.3.2. Policy Autonomy

Policy autonomy is a cornerstone of federal governance, allowing federal member states the freedom to create and implement policies tailored to their unique socio-economic contexts. The policy autonomy scores of the federal constituent units in Somalia provide insight into the distribution of legislative powers within the country's federal system. The data shows that policy autonomy across the federal constituent units; Puntland, Southwest, and Galmudug are on equal footing, each with a score of 3.00.

This level of autonomy (3 points) indicates significant self-governance of having concurrent legislative power with the central government. This allows them to enact laws that are tailored to their regional needs while still aligning with the broader federal legislative framework. This score reflects a substantial degree of policy-making authority, signifying that these states can introduce primary legislation in tandem with the federal government's policies. This uniformity suggests that despite differences in their fiscal autonomy and total autonomy scores, they share an equal level of legislative power as per the federal structure. However, Banadir Region's score of 1.00 in policy autonomy highlights a stark contrast, with much less authority to enact regional legislation.

The 1.00 score indicates no legislative power, which is the lowest level of policy autonomy among the units. The mayor and governor, being appointed directly by the federal president, implies a governance structure that is more centrally controlled and with limited regional legislative input. While Puntland, Southwest, and Galmudug enjoy a degree of legislative collaboration with the central government, Banadir Region awaits further constitutional clarification to potentially enhance its policy autonomy. These scores not only reflect the current state of legislative authority within each unit but also the potential for future political evolution as Somalia continues to refine its federal structure.

The distribution of policy-making authority in the federal system of Somalia is deeply rooted in the constitutional framework, which has been designed to balance the need for national coherence with the desire for regional self-governance. The policy autonomy scores for the federal constituent units of Somalia, including Puntland State, Galmudug State, Southwest State, and the Banadir Region, are directly informed by the Somali Provisional Constitution (2012), which distinctly delineates the exclusive policy areas of the federal government.

The constitution carves out certain domains as the exclusive preserve of the federal government, which plays a pivotal role in determining the degree of policy autonomy that regional states can exercise. For the federal states of Puntland, Galmudug, and Southwest, each with a policy autonomy score of 3.00, this indicates that they have the authority to legislate concurrently with the federal government on a number of issues. These regional states can create and implement policies in areas that are not explicitly reserved for the federal government by the constitution. The score reflects an arrangement that upholds the principle of federalism by allowing states to self-govern in certain domains while also aligning with the federal legislative framework on national matters.

The policy areas exclusively managed by the federal government typically include those that affect the nation as a whole, such as international relations, national defence, citizenship and immigration, and monetary policy. By reserving these areas, the constitution ensures that the federal government retains control over matters that are essential to national sovereignty, unity, and economic stability. This reservation is a common feature in federal systems worldwide, where the central government maintains exclusive legislative powers in areas that are critical to the country's integrity and international standing. While the federal member states have some legislative leeway, their autonomy is naturally circumscribed by the constitution's reservation of key policy domains for the federal government. This explains the uniform policy autonomy score for Puntland, Galmudug, and Southwest states, and the lower score for the Banadir Region, as the scope of their policymaking is limited by the constitutionally defined powers of the federal government.

The Banadir Region, which is also recognized as Mogadishu, the capital city, has a notably lower policy autonomy score of 1.00. This reduced level of autonomy is largely due to the unique constitutional circumstances surrounding the capital. As outlined in Article 9 of the Provisional Constitution, the definitive governance structure and status of Mogadishu will be established through the constitutional review process. Until this process is finalized and a specialized statute is legislated, the administration of the region remains under the direct jurisdiction of the federal government. The interim status of Mogadishu's governance translates into limited self-rule, particularly in policymaking. The city's strategic importance as the administrative and political hub of the nation necessitates a greater degree of central oversight. Hence, while the other federal states are granted concurrent legislative powers, the Banadir Region’s policymaking is tightly coupled with the federal government's directives, pending the outcomes of the constitutional review process.

This arrangement ensures that the policies pertinent to the capital city are coherent with national strategies and international obligations, which are critical for the functioning of the central government. As Somalia continues to evolve its federal system, the constitutional review process is pivotal in potentially redefining the policy autonomy of its regions, especially the capital city, which is poised for future legislative development. The constitutional review holds the potential to not only reshape the policy-making landscape of the Banadir Region but also to fortify the legislative fabric of the entire nation.

4.3.3. Fiscal Autonomy

The fiscal autonomy of Somalia's federal constituent units, as measured by their ability to generate and manage their own financial resources, is a crucial aspect of their overall autonomy. This ability is assessed on a scale that ranges from complete self-financing to heavy reliance on federal transfers. Each score provides insight into the financial independence and economic capacity of these units. The scores attributed to fiscal autonomy—ranging from Puntland State's high of 4.00 to the lower scores of 2.00 for both Galmudug State and Southwest State, with the Banadir Region situated in between at 3.00—highlight the divergent revenue-generating capabilities of these federal constituent units.

Fiscal autonomy scores are indicative of the extent to which federal constituent units can self-finance their operations through the generation of local revenues. A higher score denotes a greater degree of financial independence from the central government. Such autonomy can derive from control over strategic economic assets, robust local economies, or the ability to collect taxes and fees within the region. Conversely, lower scores typically reflect a reliance on the central government for fiscal transfers to support regional budgets, which may be due to less developed local economies or limited access to revenue-generating infrastructure. Puntland State, with the highest fiscal autonomy score of 4.00, exemplifies fiscal self-reliance within the Somali federation. This high score reflects Puntland's robust revenue-generating capacity, largely due to the strategic economic asset of the Port of Bosaso. The port of Bosaso serves as a critical commercial hub for the northeast and central regions of Somalia. Revenue generated from this active port constitutes the major share of Puntland's income, underpinning its fiscal autonomy score of 4.00. By leveraging this port, Puntland not only sustains its financial needs without substantial federal aid but also invests in local infrastructure and services, reinforcing its financial independence.

The Banadir Region, which comprises the capital city of Mogadishu, stands out with its fiscal autonomy score of 3.00, the second highest among the units. The rationale behind this score is twofold: Mogadishu's status as the most populous city in Somalia and its possession of the country's busiest port and airport. The significant population density translates into a broad tax base, while the port and airport are crucial economic assets, generating substantial revenue through trade and travel. Despite sharing revenue with the federal government, the region's capacity to generate substantial funds through these assets ensures a higher degree of fiscal self-sufficiency.

On the other hand, the fiscal autonomy of Galmudug and Southwest states is characterized by their reliance on a mix of conditional transfers and internally generated revenues, each having a fiscal autonomy score of 2.00. They rely on a combination of conditional transfers and their own modest revenue streams. Despite having coastal access, the absence of significant ports in Galmudug and Southwest states limits their ability to capitalize on the maritime trade that bolsters the economies of Puntland and Banadir. Their coastal cities, while holding potential for development, currently do not serve as major revenue sources. Consequently, Galmudug and Southwest states are more dependent on conditional federal transfers to fund regional expenditures, as their internal revenue streams are insufficient to fully support their budgets. The fiscal autonomy of Somalia's federal constituent units reflects the complex interplay between geographical assets, population density, infrastructure, and economic activity. Puntland's robust control over the port of Bosaso grants it the highest degree of fiscal independence, while the Banadir Region benefits economically from Mogadishu's status as the country's commercial nerve center. In contrast, Galmudug and Southwest, without significant port facilities, find themselves in a position of greater fiscal reliance on the federal government. As regions potentially expand their infrastructure and economic bases, the landscape of fiscal autonomy may evolve, leading to a reconfiguration of the economic bases of these federal constituent units.

4.4. Autonomy and National Identity

The analysis of autonomy and national identity within the context of Somalia’s federal system offers interesting insights. Initially, the analysis focuses on respondents’ primary identity through cross-tabulation, setting the stage for discerning their core identity affiliations.

Subsequently, the relationship between autonomy and national identity is examined using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rho), for its capacity to assess the monotonic relationship between two variables, capturing trends without assuming a linear relationship. This correlation analysis is further enriched by a descriptive cross-tabulation of national identity scores against autonomy scores, further revealing the complex ways individuals align with the nation, regional federal units, or clan identities.

Table 3. Crosstabulation of primary identity and autonomy

		Autonomy			
		5.00	7.00	9.00	Total
Would you define yourself as:	Somali	145	112	38	295
	Federal constituent unit citizen	5	18	22	45
	Clan member	6	21	17	44
Total		156	151	77	384

The crosstabulation presented in table 3 outlines the relationship between respondents' primary identity and the autonomy levels of their federal constituent units. The majority of respondents, 295 out of 384 making up 76.8%, identify primarily as Somali. Within this group, 145 (49.15%) associates with the lowest autonomy score of 5.00, while 112 (37.97%) and 38 (12.88%) are aligned with the mid-level and highest autonomy scores of 7.00 and 9.00, respectively. In contrast, those who consider themselves federal constituent unit citizens, totalling 45, show a tendency towards higher autonomy scores. A mere 5 individuals (11.11%) align with the lowest autonomy level, while larger proportions of 18 (40.00%) and 22 (48.89%) respondents feel associated with mid-level and high autonomy levels, respectively. Respondents identifying as clan members, numbering 44, also display a tendency towards higher autonomy levels. Six respondents (13.64%) correspond to the lowest autonomy level of 5.00, but a greater number, 21 (47.73%) and 17 (38.64%), associate themselves with the mid and high autonomy levels. The data indicates a significant trend where individuals identifying as Somali are more likely to associate with lower levels of autonomy, while those identifying with federal constituent units or clans are more frequently aligned with higher autonomy levels.

Table 4. Correlation matrix of autonomy and national identity

			Autonomy	National Identity
Spearman's rho	Autonomy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.330
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	384	384
	National Identity	Correlation Coefficient	-.330	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	384	384

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The statistical result presented in table 4 indicates the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between the autonomy of the federal constituent units and national identity that is found -0.330. This figure falls between 0 and -0.5, which suggests a weak to moderate negative correlation between the two variables. In the context of this study, it indicates that there is a tendency for national identity to decrease as the autonomy of federal constituent units increases. However, the relationship is not strong, implying that while there is a negative association, other factors may also play a significant role in influencing national identity. The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) for this correlation is less than 0.001, which is well below the commonly accepted threshold of 0.05.

This means that the likelihood of observing such a correlation by chance is less than 0.1%, thereby providing strong evidence against the null hypothesis (which would suggest no correlation between autonomy and national identity). Therefore, it can be concluded with high confidence that there is indeed a statistically significant negative correlation between these variables in the population from which the sample was drawn. The sample size (N) for both variables is 384, which is a substantial number of observations. A larger sample size increases the reliability of the correlation coefficient, as it reduces the margin of error and the effect of outliers. This robust sample size lends credence to the results and their generalizability to the population. In the context of Somalia, this analysis suggests that as individual federal units gain more autonomy, there may be a slight shift away from a singular national identity towards more localized identities. It is important to remember that while there is a significant negative relationship between autonomy and national identity, it cannot conclusively say that increased autonomy causes a decrease in national identity without further research that can isolate the effects of autonomy from other variables.

The crosstabulation table below offers a breakdown of the relationship between national identity scores and total autonomy scores.

Table 5. Crosstabulation of national identity and autonomy scores

		Autonomy Scores			
		5.00	7.00	9.00	Total
National Identity Scores	7.00	99	68	16	183
	6.00	1	1	4	6
	5.00	3	0	1	4
	4.00	17	13	5	35
	3.00	12	33	18	63
	2.00	5	2	2	9
	1.00	19	34	31	84
Total		156	151	77	384

Table 5 outlines the distribution of respondents' national identity scores across different levels of autonomy scores. National identity scores range from 1 to 7, with 7 indicating a singular Somali national identity and 1 indicating an equally distributed identification across national, regional, and clan identities. Autonomy scores are presented in three categories: 5.00, 7.00, and 9.00, represent varying degrees of autonomy. The majority of respondents, 183 out of 384 (47.66%) identify strongly with the national identity, scoring 7. Within this group, the highest number of respondents, 99 (54.10%), with a national identity score of 7, is associated with the lowest autonomy score of 5.00. As the autonomy score increases to 7.00 and 9.00, their numbers decrease to 68 (37.16%) and 16 (8.74%), respectively.

Few respondents identify with a strong regional identity, scoring a 6, or a clan identity, scoring a 5, with these categories comprising 6 (1.56%) and 4 (1.04%) respondents, respectively. A larger group, 35 (9.11%) of the total, exclusively identifies with clan identity, showing no clear trend across different levels of autonomy. A significant portion of respondents, 84 out of 384 (21.88%) of the total, has an equally distributed identification across all identity dimensions, scoring a 1. Here, a progressive increase is observed with the number of respondents as autonomy increases: 19 (22.62% of those with a distributed identity score of 1) at autonomy score 5.00, 34 (40.48%) at autonomy score 7.00, and 31 (36.90%) at autonomy score 9.00.

The prevalence of high national identity scores at lower autonomy levels suggests that individuals tend to identify more strongly with the national identity when autonomy is perceived to be lower. This could indicate that a centralized authority may be associated with a stronger sense of national identity. Conversely, the increase in distributed identity scores as autonomy levels increase supports the observation of a negative correlation between autonomy and a singular national identity. As the federal units gain more autonomy, people might be identifying less with a singular national identity and more equally with regional and clan identities. Notably, the category with the strongest regional or clan identity does not show a significant pattern across autonomy scores, which may suggest that other factors influence the adoption of these identities.

Additionally, the follow-up sub-question items for respondents who identify with dual allegiances offer a deeper understanding of how these layered identities interact with perceptions of autonomy. For those who navigate the dual identity of being both a Somali and a federal constituent citizen (35 respondent), the data reveals a clear inclination towards the national identity when autonomy is perceived to be lower. Specifically, 12 (34.29%) of these respondents consider themselves Somali first, with the majority, 9 of these (75%), corresponding to the lowest autonomy score of 5.00, and the remaining 3 (25%) at the autonomy score of 7.00. No respondents in this category are at the highest autonomy score of 9.00. Interestingly, an equal proportion of 13 (37.14%) respondents view their Somali and federal constituent identities as balanced, with the majority 7 (53.85%) placed at the mid-level autonomy score of 7.00, 5 (38.46%) at the lowest autonomy score, and just 1 (7.69%) at the highest autonomy score. This suggests that a sense of equal allegiance does not necessarily equate to a perception of higher autonomy.

In contrast, those who see themselves as federal constituent citizens first, 10 respondents (28.57%), exhibit a spread across all levels of autonomy, with a notable presence 4 (40%) at the highest autonomy level and an even distribution of 3 (30%) at the autonomy scores of 5.00 and 7.00, hinting at a correlation between a regional identity preference and a sense of greater autonomy. Looking at those who hold both a Somali and a clan identity (63 respondent), a different pattern emerges. The largest number of respondents, 24 respondents (38.10%), who prioritize their Somali identity over their clan membership is found at the mid-level autonomy score, with a distribution of 7 (29.17%) at the autonomy score of 5.00, 11 (45.83%) at 7.00, and 6 (25%) at 9.00.

Respondents, 21 (33.33%), who identify with their clan first show an even stronger association with higher autonomy levels, reinforcing the notion that clan allegiance may be linked to a stronger sense of self-governance. They are most represented at the mid-level autonomy score of 7.00 with 12 (57.14%), followed by 7 (33.33%) at the highest score of 9.00, and only 2 (9.52%) at the lowest score of 5.00. Those who see themselves equally as Somali and clan members, 18 in total (28.57%), are mostly found at the mid-level autonomy score of 7.00 with 10 (55.56%), while 5 (27.78%) are at the highest score of 9.00, and 3 (16.67%) at the lowest score of 5.00.

The smallest group, consisting of 9 respondents who identify as both a clan member and a federal constituent citizen, presents an interesting dynamic. The majority, 5 (55.56%), who consider themselves clan members first are distributed relatively evenly across autonomy levels, with 2 (40%) at the lowest score of 5.00, 2 (40%) at the mid-level score of 7.00, and 1 (20%) at the highest score of 9.00. One respondent (11.11%) feels primarily aligned with the federal constituent unit but also identifies as a clan member, positioned at the lowest autonomy score of 5.00. The remaining 3 respondents (33.33%) who view their identities equally between federal constituent unit and clan are observed, with 2 (66.67%) at the lowest autonomy score 5 and 1 (33.33%) at the highest score 9, none at the mid-level score 7. This pattern is less pronounced due to the small size of the group, but it still indicates that those with clan affiliations might perceive varying degrees of autonomy, perhaps reflecting the complex social structures within Somali clans and the nuanced interplay between clan and regional governance.

Overall, the findings illustrate a complex relationship between levels of autonomy in federal constituent units and the sense of national identity among citizens. The data indicates that a strong national identity is prevalent at lower autonomy levels, with 47.66% of respondents scoring a high national identity, and of those, over half, 54.10%, are at the lowest autonomy level. Meanwhile, there is a clear fraction of the population, 21.88%, that feels a distributed sense of identity as autonomy increases, culminating in over a third, 36.90%, at the highest autonomy score. This gradual shift in identification patterns can be a critical insight for policymakers and social planners who aim to balance the need for local governance autonomy with the need to maintain a strong national identity for unity and national cohesion.

4.5. Autonomy and National Attachment

In examining the interplay between the autonomy of federal constituents and the sense of national attachment among Somali citizens, our analysis considers both correlational and distributional perspectives. The correlation coefficient table reveals a statistically significant, albeit weak, negative relationship between increased autonomy and national attachment, as evidenced by a Spearman's rho value of -0.142. Complementing this, the cross-tabulation of responses offers a granular view, displaying the varied levels of national attachment across different strata of autonomy, highlighting the complexity and multifactorial nature of national attachment within the context of Somalia's federal system.

Table 6. Correlation matrix of autonomy and national attachment

			Autonomy	National Attachment
Spearman's rho	Autonomy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.142
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.005
		N	384	384
	National Attachment	Correlation Coefficient	-.142	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.
		N	384	384

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient for the relationship between autonomy and national attachment is -0.142. This value indicates a weak negative correlation between the two variables. This means that when the autonomy of federal units is higher, the feeling of attachment to the nation as a whole experience a slight decrease among the citizens. It is important to highlight that the correlation is weak, suggesting that many other unmeasured factors are likely contributing to the sense of national attachment, and autonomy is just one of them. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.005, which is well below the commonly used significance level of 0.05. This means that the probability of obtaining such a correlation by random chance is very low (0.5%), providing strong evidence that the observed relationship is real in the population from which the sample was drawn. However, the 'realness' of the relationship does not imply a strong or practically significant relationship.

It simply means that there is enough evidence to assert that the relationship exists, not necessarily that it is of a magnitude that would be considered substantial or impactful in a practical sense. The sample size for the analysis is 384, which is robust for statistical testing. A larger sample size increases the statistical power of the test, meaning it is more likely to detect a correlation if one truly exists in the population. The adequacy of this sample size lends confidence to the reliability of the correlation coefficient as an estimate of the true correlation in the broader population. The weak negative correlation suggests that autonomy has a noticeable but limited influence on national attachment. The findings imply that other factors, which may include economic conditions, social policies, historical context, cultural ties, and personal experiences, could be more influential in shaping the feelings of national attachment. The data suggests that while federal autonomy may be associated with a decrease in national attachment, it is not causing a dramatic shift in attachment levels on its own. The crosstabulation table provided shows the distribution of national attachment scores across different levels of total autonomy scores.

Table 7. Crosstabulation of national attachment and autonomy scores

			Autonomy Scores			
			5.00	7.00	9.00	Total
National Attachment Scores	22.00	Count	1	2	2	5
	21.00	Count	2	3	0	5
	20.00	Count	4	3	1	8
	19.00	Count	9	6	4	19
	18.00	Count	4	6	4	14
	17.00	Count	9	11	0	20
	16.00	Count	21	17	3	41
	15.00	Count	20	15	9	44
	14.00	Count	32	24	11	67
	13.00	Count	17	23	5	45
	12.00	Count	28	32	28	88
	11.00	Count	3	5	5	13
	10.00	Count	2	1	3	6
	9.00	Count	4	2	1	7
	8.00	Count	0	1	1	2
Total		Count	156	151	77	384

The national attachment scores appear to range from 8 to 22, suggesting that these scores are the aggregate scores based on responses to several items and sum of scores from different dimensions of attachment. The total autonomy scores are categorized into three distinct groups: 5.00, 7.00, and 9.00, which represent increasing levels of autonomy. There are very few respondents with the highest levels of national attachment (scores 20 to 22), totaling 19 individuals. The distribution among the autonomy categories is relatively even, indicating no clear trend relating high attachment scores to any particular level of autonomy.

The majority of respondents are clustered in the mid-range of national attachment scores (14 to 19). Within this range, there is a substantial number of respondents across all autonomy levels, with no obvious pattern that suggests a relationship between the level of autonomy and the degree of national attachment. At the lower end of the national attachment scores, the largest number of respondents (88) has a score of 12. The distribution across autonomy levels for this score is notable, with an equal number (28) in the low and high autonomy categories, and a slightly larger number (32) in the medium autonomy category. This could suggest that feelings of lower national attachment are not significantly impacted by the level of autonomy.

The distribution of scores indicates that there is no strong relationship between the autonomy scores and the levels of national attachment. This is consistent with the weak negative correlation previously identified. The even distribution of the highest and lowest national attachment scores across autonomy levels suggests that other factors might be at play in determining the sense of attachment that individuals feel toward the nation. The bulk of respondents falling in the mid-range scores for national attachment, regardless of the level of autonomy, points to a general trend where most individuals might feel a moderate level of attachment to the nation that is not strongly influenced by how autonomous their federal unit is. The absence of a clear pattern in the distribution suggests that while autonomy may have some impact on national attachment, it is not the predominant factor. Social, economic, cultural, and historical factors are likely also very important and could be the subject of further study.

4.6. Autonomy and Sense of Belonging

The study presents findings on the relationship between autonomy and sense of belonging through a detailed correlation matrix table, illustrating the intricate relationships between these two variables. To further enhance our understanding, it complements the correlation analysis with cross-tabulations tables, showcasing the distribution of sense of belonging and autonomy scores. These tools collectively provide a comprehensive view of how autonomy and sense of belonging interact and impact one another.

Table 8. Correlation matrix of autonomy and sense of belonging

			Autonomy	Sense of Belonging
Spearman's rho	Autonomy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.492
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	384	384
	Sense of Belonging	Correlation Coefficient	-.492	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	384	384

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman’s rho value of -0.492 indicates a moderate negative correlation between the degree of autonomy of federal constituent units and the sense of belonging that citizens feel towards the Somali nation. This figure suggests that as the autonomy score increases (implying a higher level of federal autonomy), the sense of belonging to the nation decreases among the citizens. In practical terms, a Spearman's rho closer to -0.5 implies that this is not just a slight trend but a reasonably strong pattern within the data. The correlation is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001, which exceeds the standard threshold for statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). This very low p-value indicates that the probability of observing such a correlation by chance is extremely slim, lending strong support to the hypothesis that there is a real inverse relationship between autonomy and sense of belonging in the population from which this sample was drawn.The sample size for this analysis is 384, which is sufficiently large to give confidence in the reliability and stability of the Spearman’s rho calculation.

With a sample of this size, we can be more certain that the correlation coefficient is a good estimate of the true correlation in the wider population. Given the moderate strength of the negative correlation, there is an implication that federal autonomy is a significant factor in shaping national belonging in Somalia. This association suggests that individuals may feel less connected to the national identity as the federal units they reside in become more autonomous. This can be interpreted as a potential trade-off between granting autonomy to federal units and fostering a unified national identity. This result highlights the importance of considering how federal structures and the degree of autonomy granted to constituent units might influence national cohesion. The findings could inform strategies that aim to balance the provision of autonomy with measures that strengthen national unity, such as nation-wide cultural, educational, and political initiatives that celebrate shared values and collective identity. The crosstabulation table below provides the distribution of sense of belonging scores across three categories of total autonomy scores (5.00, 7.00, and 9.00) among respondents of the study.

Table 9. Crosstabulation of sense of belonging and autonomy scores

		Autonomy Scores			
		5.00	7.00	9.00	Total
Sense of Belonging Scores	18.00	24	0	1	25
	17.00	28	4	4	36
	16.00	28	22	1	51
	15.00	25	22	6	53
	14.00	12	21	10	43
	13.00	21	39	9	69
	12.00	9	17	10	36
	11.00	5	16	13	34
	10.00	3	5	12	20
	9.00	1	4	6	11
	8.00	0	1	5	6
Total		156	151	77	384

The highest sense of belonging scores (16.00-18.00) are most frequently associated with the lowest autonomy score (5.00). For example, all 24 respondents with a belonging score of 18.00 fall within the lowest autonomy category.

This could indicate that a stronger sense of belonging is more prevalent among those in less autonomous regions. The mid-range scores of belonging show more distribution across autonomy scores, but there is a noticeable trend where the counts generally decrease as the autonomy score decreases. For instance, there are 25 counts of a 15.00 belonging score at autonomy score 5.00, compared to 6 counts at autonomy score 9.00. This suggests that moderate feelings of belonging are present across all levels of autonomy but may decrease with higher autonomy. At the lower end of the belonging scores, there's an interesting increase in counts with higher autonomy scores. For example, no respondents scored an 8.00 in belonging at the lowest autonomy, but there are 5 counts at the highest autonomy score. This could imply that lower feelings of belonging are associated with higher autonomy.

The data suggests that individuals in areas with lower autonomy scores tend to report a higher sense of belonging. This may reflect a closer connection to the national identity or more significant reliance on national structures rather than regional or local ones. As autonomy scores increase, there seems to be a shift in the distribution of belonging scores, with the higher autonomy regions showing a more varied sense of belonging. This could point to a more complex social identity landscape where increased autonomy allows for or coincides with a broader range of social belonging experiences. It's noteworthy that the highest autonomy score (9.00) has the lowest overall counts for the highest sense of belonging scores. However, it does not necessarily have the highest counts for the lowest sense of belonging scores, indicating that the relationship is not linear and suggesting that other factors may influence the sense of belonging.

Given Somalia's history and social structure, the sense of belonging might be significantly influenced by factors like clan affiliations, regional politics, and historical relationships with the central government. These factors could modulate or even override the effects of federal autonomy in some cases. The sense of belonging is a deeply personal and socially constructed feeling that can be influenced by numerous local factors, including economic, cultural, and security-related issues that might not be directly related to political autonomy. Transitioning from the broader observations of sense belonging and autonomy, findings from survey items 11, 12 and 14 further provide deeper insights social belonging, affiliation, and national pride. The survey findings from item 11 indicate that the majority of respondents feel a strong affiliation with 'the Somali people', with 253 out of 384 participants (65.89%) expressing this sentiment.

Notably, as the autonomy score increases from 5.00 to 9.00, there is a trend of decreasing association from 95 (36.73%) of those affiliated with 'the Somali people' at the lowest autonomy score to 51 (20.16%) at the highest. Affiliation with 'Fellow clan members' is less prevalent, totalling 38 (9.90% of all respondents), increasing with higher autonomy scores. Respondents feeling most closely affiliated with 'fellow citizens of the federal constituent unit' totaled 17, with an equal distribution of 4 respondents (23.53%) at autonomy levels 5.00 and 7.00, and an obvious increase to 9 respondents (52.94%) at level 9.00. 'Fellow townspeople' saw a total of 18 respondents, with the majority, 11 individuals (61.11%), identifying with the lowest autonomy level of 5.00, and fewer, 3 (16.67%) and 4 (22.22%), at autonomy levels 7.00 and 9.00, respectively. There were 24 respondents for affiliation with 'people who have the same profession', evenly split with 11 (45.83%) at both autonomy levels 5.00 and 7.00, and a smaller number, 2 (8.33%), at level 9.00. Those who are most closely affiliated with 'people who share your hobby' are fewer, totalling 15, with 3 (20%) affiliating at autonomy levels 5.00 and 9.00, and a slightly higher number, 9 (60%), at level 7.00. Finally, 'fellow members of clubs and associations' account for 16 respondents, with the majority, 8 (50%), associating with the lowest autonomy level of 5.00, fewer, 2 (12.5%), at level 7.00, and 6 (37.5%) at the highest autonomy level of 9.00.

Findings from item 12 data on respondents' perception of what constitutes belonging to the Somali nation further illuminates that being born in Somalia is considered 'very important' by a significant number of respondents, 214 out of 384 (55.73%), suggesting a strong connection between birthplace and sense of belonging. However, the importance attributed to birthplace decreases across the rising autonomy levels, from 92 (42.99%) of those rating birthplace as 'very important' at the lowest autonomy score to 36 (16.82%) at the highest. Regarding citizenship, 232 respondents (60.42%) believe that having Somali citizenship is 'very important'. This perception remains relatively stable across different levels of autonomy, from 82 (35.34%) of those valuing citizenship as 'very important' at autonomy score 5.00 to 47 (20.26%) at 9.00, suggesting that legal citizenship is a significant factor in their national identity regardless of the degree of autonomy. The data also reflects on the importance of having lived in Somalia for most of one's life. 153 out of 384 (39.84%) respondents, deem this 'very important', with a noticeable decline from 68 (44.44%) within this category at autonomy score 5.00 to 29 (18.95%) at 9.00, indicating that the length of residence in Somalia is an essential element of belonging, particularly at lower levels of autonomy.

Furthermore, the ability to speak Somali is seen as 'very important' by 232 (60.42%) participants with the numbers decreasing from 92 (39.66%) of those who value language proficiency as 'very important' at the lowest autonomy score to 48 (20.69%) at the highest, illustrating the role language plays in national identity and belonging. When considering religious affiliation, 280 respondents (72.92%) find being a Muslim 'very important', with the proportion relatively high across all autonomy levels, suggesting that religion remains a cornerstone of identity for many Somalis irrespective of autonomy. Respecting political institutions and laws is 'very important' for 202 participants (52.60%), with a slight drop from 77 (38.12%) at the lowest autonomy level to 44 (21.78%) at the highest, indicating that civic engagement and respect for state institutions are integral to the sense of belonging, although perhaps less so as autonomy increases. Lastly, the feeling of being Somali is overwhelmingly significant, with 267 respondents (69.53%) rating it as 'very important'. The emphasis on this aspect of identity remains robust across autonomy levels, though it decreases from 110 (41.20%) at autonomy score 5.00 to 49 (18.35%) at 9.00. This suggests that the intrinsic feeling of national identity persists strongly regardless of the degree of autonomy experienced.

The item 14 survey data, revealing sense of national pride across various autonomy levels, offers a detailed landscape of national sentiment. For the sentiment towards democracy, 85 respondents (22.14%) feel 'very proud' of the way democracy works in Somalia, with a proportionate decrease from 34 (40%) at the lowest autonomy level to 18 (21.18%) at the highest. Another 85 (22.14%) are 'somewhat proud', with the number reducing from 40 at autonomy level 5.00 to 13 at 9.00. A significant 123 (32.03%) are 'not very proud', incrementally increasing with higher autonomy levels, while 84 (21.88%) are 'not proud at all', with the sentiment persisting relatively consistently across autonomy levels. For Somalia's political system, 61 respondents (15.89%) express 'very proud' feelings, with the highest number, 27 (44.26%), at the mid-autonomy level of 7.00. The 'somewhat proud' count stands at 75 (19.53%), with a slight decline noted as autonomy increases. Discontent is evident with 143 (37.24%) 'not very proud' and 96 (25%) 'not proud at all', with a noticeable uptick in the latter sentiment at higher levels of autonomy. The data on pride of economic achievements also shows that a total of 62 respondents (16.15%) are 'very proud' of Somalia's economic achievements, displaying a modest decline from 27 at autonomy level 5.00 to 9 at autonomy level 9.00.

The 'somewhat proud' category includes 100 (26.04%) respondents, and those indicating less pride—'not very proud' or 'not proud at all'—account for 214 (55.73%), with these negative perceptions growing with increased autonomy. Pride in the social security system is articulated by 60 participants (15.63%) as 'very proud', with 71 (18.49%) 'somewhat proud'. The critical views 'not very proud' and 'not proud at all' total 236 (61.46%), with the volume of these perspectives intensifying alongside higher autonomy levels. With regard to the armed forces, 69 respondents (17.97%) feel 'very proud', yet this number diminishes from 31 at the lowest level of autonomy to 9 at the highest. There are 117 (30.47%) who are 'somewhat proud', and a combined 185 (48.18%) express less favourable opinions 'not very proud' or 'not proud at all', with a slight rise in these sentiments at elevated autonomy levels. Historical pride is prominent, with 185 (48.18%) declaring they are 'very proud', although the proportion decreases from 74 (40%) at autonomy level 5.00 to 35 (18.92%) at 9.00. Those feeling 'somewhat proud' maintain relatively stable numbers across autonomy levels, whereas the count of those who are 'not very proud' or 'not proud at all' is less, indicating that pride in history remains a strong aspect of national identity. On the fair and equal treatment of all groups in society, 64 (16.67%) are 'very proud' and 78 (20.31%) are 'somewhat proud', while a considerable number voice criticism, with 95 (24.74%) 'not very proud' and 121 (31.51%) 'not proud at all'. This discontent tends to amplify with greater levels of autonomy, signalling possible concerns about social equity that parallel increases in autonomy. These findings suggest that there is a notable sense of pride in historical achievements and less so in the armed forces, sentiments towards Somalia's democracy, political system, economy, and social equity exhibit diverse levels of satisfaction and tend to decrease with higher levels of perceived autonomy.

4.7. Autonomy and Social Cohesion

In the exploration of the relationship between autonomy and social cohesion, the study presents findings through a correlation matrix table, which reveals the nuanced interplay between autonomy and social cohesion. To deepen our insight, it supplements this with cross-tabulations tables that display the varied levels of autonomy and their corresponding impacts on social cohesion. This dual approach offers a multifaceted understanding of how personal independence intersects with collective unity.

Table 10. Correlation coefficient of autonomy and social cohesion

			Autonomy	Social Cohesion
Spearman's rho	Autonomy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.587
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	384	384
	Social Cohesion	Correlation Coefficient	-.587	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	384	384

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of -0.587 between Total Autonomy Scores and Social Cohesion indicates a moderate to strong negative association. This statistically significant result suggests that as the autonomy of federal units increases, the level of social cohesion among citizens tends to decrease. The value of -0.587 is relatively close to -0.6, which points towards a moderate to strong negative correlation. This level of correlation implies that there is a noticeable inverse relationship between the autonomy of federal units and the cohesion within the social fabric of Somalia. In practical terms, this correlation might manifest as less trust between individuals and institutions, decreased community engagement, and less willingness to cooperate across diverse groups in regions with higher autonomy. The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) being less than 0.001 is highly indicative that the correlation is not due to random chance.

In the context of statistical analysis, this p-value reflects a high level of confidence in the robustness of the relationship between autonomy and social cohesion. It provides strong empirical backing for the hypothesis that greater autonomy is associated with reduced social cohesion. With a sample size of 384, the study has enough participants to suggest that the results are reliable, and that the correlation coefficient is a good estimation of the true relationship within the broader population. A sample size of this magnitude generally allows for more accurate estimates of population parameters. The findings have significant implications for understanding the social dynamics in Somalia's federal system. The negative correlation may suggest that as federal units become more self-governing, there might be a dilution of the shared social experiences and commonalities that bind people together at the national level.

This can have far-reaching consequences for national unity and may present challenges in fostering a cohesive society where trust and collaborative spirit are essential for collective well-being and progress. The correlation is an important metric that should inform the design of federal autonomy policies. It highlights the need to ensure that increasing autonomy of federal constituents does not undermine the social ties that are vital for a cohesive society. Balancing the benefits of autonomy with initiatives that promote trust, cooperation, and collective identity could be key to maintaining social cohesion.

Table 11. Crosstabulation of social cohesion and autonomy scores

		Autonomy Scores			
		5.00	7.00	9.00	Total
Social Cohesion Scores	70.00	25	8	1	34
	69.00	4	0	0	4
	68.00	7	1	0	8
	67.00	1	1	0	2
	66.00	21	11	1	33
	65.00	6	1	1	8
	64.00	10	0	1	11
	63.00	6	2	0	8
	62.00	7	1	2	10
	61.00	27	23	1	51
	60.00	4	0	1	5
	59.00	6	4	0	10
	58.00	10	17	4	31
	57.00	4	7	0	11
	56.00	6	5	1	12
	55.00	2	14	12	28
	54.00	3	3	1	7
	53.00	2	18	12	32
	52.00	0	6	2	8
	51.00	1	3	9	13
	50.00	1	4	7	12
	48.00	3	15	10	28
	47.00	0	2	0	2
	45.00	0	2	4	6
	43.00	0	3	7	10
Total		156	151	77	384

The crosstabulation table shows the distribution of social cohesion scores across different levels of total autonomy scores among respondents in Somalia. A majority of respondents with high social cohesion scores are found in the lowest autonomy category (5.00). For instance, out of the 34 respondents with a score of 70.00, 25 are in the lowest autonomy category, and only 1 is in the highest (9.00). This pattern suggests that regions with lower autonomy are associated with higher social cohesion. Respondents with mid-range social cohesion scores are more evenly distributed across autonomy levels, but there is a tendency for the number of respondents to decrease in the highest autonomy category (9.00). For example, at a social cohesion score of 61.00, there are 27 respondents at the lowest autonomy level and only 1 at the highest.

Interestingly, the counts of respondents with lower social cohesion scores (below 50.00) tend to increase with higher autonomy scores. For example, there are no respondents with a score of 48.00 in the lowest autonomy category, but there are 10 in the highest autonomy category. This suggests that lower levels of social cohesion are more common in regions with greater autonomy. The concentration of higher social cohesion scores in lower autonomy regions could reflect a stronger sense of community and trust in shared institutions and values, potentially due to a more centralized governance model that emphasizes collective over individual or local identities. The spread of mid-range scores across autonomy levels indicates a gradient where social cohesion is present but lessens as autonomy increases. This gradient may be due to the varying degrees to which federal units operate independently and the corresponding differences in communal activities, trust, and shared social norms.

The increase in lower social cohesion scores in areas with higher autonomy could be symptomatic of a transition from a centralized to a more localized form of governance, where the emphasis on regional and local identities might weaken the traditional social ties that bind larger communities together. The data suggests that social cohesion in Somalia is sensitive to the autonomy of federal units. This could be due to long-standing cultural, social, or political factors that are exacerbated by the degree of autonomy exercised by these units. The relationship between autonomy and social cohesion is likely influenced by how autonomy impacts the delivery of services, the representation of diverse groups, and the effectiveness of governance, all of which contribute to the trust and cooperation within communities.

The separate analysis of survey item 15 findings on trust in political figures across autonomy levels in Somalia present a complex picture of confidence in leadership. The survey data indicates varied levels of trust in the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia across different autonomy levels. A notable number of respondents, 49 (12.76%), express the highest level of trust, scoring 100 on the scale. Interestingly, while 21 (42.86%) respondents of those with the highest trust are at the lowest autonomy score, the number declines to 6 (12.24%) at the highest autonomy score. This pattern suggests that trust in the national president may be inversely related to the autonomy of federal units. When it comes to trust in the president/governor of the federal constituent units, the distribution of trust is more uniform across autonomy levels. The lowest trust score, 0, is given by 53 respondents (13.80%), with a notable concentration at the mid-autonomy level.

Conversely, 26 respondents (6.77%) demonstrate complete trust, scoring 100, with this sentiment being somewhat evenly distributed across autonomy levels. The distribution indicates a spread of trust across autonomy levels, with no clear trend, suggesting that trust in the federal member state president may be influenced by factors other than autonomy. In the case of trust towards federal government legislators, a similar pattern emerges with 43 respondents (11.20%) giving a score of 0, indicating no trust, and this response being most pronounced at the mid-autonomy level. On the opposite end, 16 respondents (4.17%) exhibit total trust with a score of 100, yet this highest level of trust does not appear to be significantly influenced by the autonomy score. The presence of trust at varying levels across different autonomy scores could reflect a complex relationship between legislative trust and the perceived autonomy of federal units.

A similar pattern to that of the federal government legislators emerges regarding the legislators of the federal constituent units, as trust appears to be more evenly spread across autonomy levels. A considerable group, 61 respondents (15.89%), has no trust, scoring 0. The complete trust score of 100 is reported by 12 respondents (3.13%), dispersed across autonomy levels without a clear trend, implying varied trust in state legislators irrespective of regional autonomy. Lastly, when examining trust in clan elders, 53 respondents (13.80%) allocate the lowest trust score of 0, while 40 respondents (10.42%) express the highest trust with a score of 100. The distribution suggests that trust in clan elders is multifaceted and that such traditional authority figures maintain significant trust across different levels of political autonomy.

4.8. Autonomy and Political Participation

The study presents findings on the dynamic interplay between autonomy and political participation. Initially, it illustrates the relationship through a correlation matrix table, highlighting how varying degrees of personal autonomy interact with aspects of political involvement. It complements the initial analysis with cross-tabulations tables, detailing the specific nuances between levels of autonomy and patterns of political participation to further examine this complex relationship. This dual-faceted approach provides an in-depth exploration, shedding light on the significant ways in which personal independence and civic engagement influence one another.

Table 12. Correlation matrix of autonomy and political participation

Correlations

			Autonomy	Political Participation
Spearman's rho	Autonomy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.439
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	384	384
	Political Participation	Correlation Coefficient	.439	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	384	384

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficient and significance level indicate a moderate positive relationship between the autonomy of federal constituent units and the level of political participation among citizens in Somalia. The Spearman's rho value of 0.439 represents a moderate positive correlation. This indicates that as federal units gain more autonomy, there is a corresponding increase in political participation among citizens. The positive value here is critical, as it contrasts with the negative correlations seen with other societal factors such as national identity and social cohesion, suggesting that increased autonomy may engage citizens more in the political process. The correlation is statistically significant, with a p-value much less than the standard threshold of 0.05, indicating that the observed correlation is very unlikely to have occurred by chance. This strong statistical significance supports the hypothesis and suggests that the relationship between autonomy and political participation is consistent and can be reliably inferred for the population represented by the sample.

With a substantial sample size of 384, the study has the statistical power needed to detect a correlation of this magnitude, increasing confidence in the generalizability of the findings. The positive correlation between autonomy and political participation suggests that when citizens feel their regional governments hold significant power, they may be more inclined to engage in political processes. This could be due to a variety of reasons, such as the perception that their involvement has a more direct and tangible impact, or because autonomous regions may provide more accessible platforms for citizen engagement. These findings highlight the potential benefits of federal autonomy in promoting political engagement. As regions gain autonomy, it seems to catalyze citizen involvement in politics, which is a desirable outcome for democratic governance. This insight could guide strategies in decentralization policies, encouraging local governance structures that empower citizens and foster active political communities.

Table 13. Crosstabulation of political participation and autonomy scores

		Autonomy Scores			
		5.00	7.00	9.00	Total
Political Participation Scores	8.00	0	0	11	11
	7.00	0	0	8	8
	6.00	2	11	11	24
	5.00	20	47	26	93
	4.00	83	65	19	167
	3.00	51	28	2	81
Total		156	151	77	384

The crosstabulation table presents the relationship between Total Autonomy Scores and Political Participation Scores among respondents in Somalia. All respondents with the highest political participation score (8.00) fall within the highest autonomy score category (9.00). This striking pattern suggests that the most politically active individuals are in regions with the greatest autonomy. Respondents with high political participation scores are predominantly found in regions with medium (7.00) and high (9.00) autonomy scores, with no respondents in the lowest autonomy category (5.00). This further supports the idea that greater political engagement occurs as autonomy increases. For a moderate level of political participation (Score 5.00), the numbers are spread across all levels of autonomy but are most prominent in the medium autonomy category (7.00). This suggests that even with moderate engagement, there is a tendency for greater participation in more autonomous regions.

The largest counts are in the lowest autonomy category (5.00), particularly for the score 4.00, which has the highest count of 83. This may indicate that in areas with less autonomy, citizens' political participation is less intense. The absence of highly politically active respondents in the lowest autonomy category could imply that when federal units are less autonomous, citizens may feel their political actions are less impactful, which could demotivate engagement. The trend where political participation increases with autonomy could reflect a sense of empowerment among citizens in more autonomous regions. They may have more accessible political forums, perceive a greater ability to influence policy, or feel a stronger responsibility to engage due to the proximity of governance.

The spread of moderate political participation across autonomy levels but peaking in the medium autonomy suggests that there is a threshold of autonomy that optimizes citizen engagement. Too little autonomy might not motivate citizens enough, while too much autonomy might not be necessary to maintain a healthy level of participation. For lower political participation scores, the higher numbers in less autonomous regions might suggest a baseline level of engagement that is maintained regardless of the political structure. Alternatively, it could indicate that less autonomy might limit the avenues or perceived effectiveness of political activities, leading to lower participation scores. In a federal system like Somalia's, where historical, cultural, and clan dynamics play significant roles, the level of autonomy could be a critical factor in how citizens engage with the political process. Autonomy might be linked with the capacity for regions to address specific local needs and issues, which can galvanize political participation. The concentration of higher political participation scores in more autonomous regions might also be influenced by increased opportunities for political mobilization efforts, or political decentralization.

Furthermore, the separate analysis of items 25-28 on emotional perceptions towards Somalia and the federal constituent units, preferences on the balance of power within the federal structure, and optimism about the country's future deepen understanding of the observed patterns in political participation in relation to the varying levels of autonomy. The findings from item 25 reveal a range of emotions towards Somalia among the respondents, with the most positive feelings, marked by a score of 100, reported by 92 participants (23.96%). This strong positive feeling is most prevalent at the lowest autonomy level, with 36 respondents (39.13%) within the highest sentiment category, and diminishes at the highest autonomy level, with 11 respondents (11.96%).

The data indicates that as autonomy increases, there is a decline in the most positive emotions towards Somalia, suggesting a possible correlation between increased autonomy and a complex emotional connection to the nation. Concerning feelings about their federal constituent units, the pattern is slightly different. Here, the highest positive sentiment, also scored at 100, is reported by 32 respondents (8.33%), and unlike the national sentiment, this feeling is more evenly distributed across autonomy levels, with the highest number, 18 respondents (56.25%) within the highest sentiment category, at an intermediate autonomy level of 7.00. This could reflect a more consistent affinity towards local governance structures, regardless of the autonomy level.

Item 26 uncovers preferences for federal power distribution: a significant number of respondents, 132 out of 384 (34.38%), believe the federal government should have 'much more' power than the federal constituent units, with the majority, 76 individuals (57.58%) within this opinion group, at the lowest autonomy level of 5.00. This preference decreases as autonomy increases, with 37 respondents (28.03%) at 7.00 and 19 respondents (14.39%) at 9.00, suggesting a trend that as regions experience higher autonomy, there is a decline in the desire for a strongly centralized federal government. Similarly, the opinion that the federal government should have 'more' power is held by 90 respondents (23.44%), distributed relatively evenly across autonomy levels, indicating a consistent preference for a somewhat stronger central government irrespective of the level of autonomy experienced. The view that federal government and member states should have 'as much' power, indicating a preference for equal distribution of power, is represented by 93 respondents (24.22%).

Notably, there is an increase in this preference at the intermediate autonomy level of 7.00, with 54 individuals (58.06%) within this category, compared to 19 (20.43%) at 5.00 and 20 (21.51%) at 9.00, suggesting that those in moderately autonomous regions might favour a more balanced federal structure. For those who believe the federal member states should have 'less' or 'much less' power than the federal government, the counts are lower, with 29 respondents (7.55%) choosing 'less' and 23 respondents (5.99%) opting for 'much less'. Interestingly, the preference for 'much less' power increases with higher autonomy levels, from 6 respondents (26.09%) within this preference group at 5.00 to 12 respondents (52.17%) at 9.00, indicating a possible correlation between higher autonomy and a desire for more localized power.

Finally, a small fragment of 17 respondents (4.43%) could not choose a preference, showing some level of indecision or uncertainty regarding the power distribution between the federal government and member states, which does not exhibit a strong correlation with autonomy levels. On the other hand, the findings of item 27 on participants' opinions on the current system of government in Somalia suggest a prevalent sentiment for change. A total of 187 respondents (48.7%) believes the system 'needs major change'. This perspective is significantly pronounced at the low autonomy level (5.00), where 97 respondents (51.87% within the 'needs major change' group are situated, indicating a possible sense of urgency for governmental reform in areas with moderate levels of autonomy. On the other end, 55 respondents (14.32%) feel the system 'works fine as it is', with the highest number of 31 participants (56.36%) within the 'works fine' group are at the highest autonomy level (9.00), suggesting that residents in these regions are more satisfied with the current state of governance. This could reflect a satisfaction with the localized governance that higher autonomy may afford or a belief that the current federal structures are adequate.

Finally, item 28 findings on the general sentiment about Somalia's future reveals a strong inclination towards optimism. A significant number of respondents, 161 (41.93%), are 'very optimistic' about the nation's future. This positivity is most prevalent at the mid-autonomy level (7.00) with 71 respondents (44.10%) within the 'very optimistic' category, but the optimism diminishes slightly as autonomy decreases, down to 27 respondents (16.77%) at the lowest autonomy level (5.00). This trend may indicate that individuals in more autonomous regions have a more hopeful outlook, possibly due to an anticipation of benefits from federal structures. Conversely, the spread of optimism across all autonomy levels indicates a general national sentiment that, despite varying degrees of political autonomy, there remains an overarching hope for Somalia's future. This optimism, in areas with greater autonomy, might be driven by a belief in the potential for local governance to enact positive change or a trust in the resilience and adaptability of Somali society in the face of political challenges.

Following the presentation of the detailed findings of this study, the following table serves as a concise summary of the outcomes related to the hypotheses concerning the impact of increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia on various aspects of social and political life. This table systematically categorizes each hypothesis based on the empirical evidence gathered through Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis.

Table 14. Hypotheses testing findings (Continue..)

No	Hypotheses	Summary of Findings	Status
1	Increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with citizens' identification with the national government.	The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between autonomy and national identity was found to be -0.330, indicating a weak to moderate negative correlation. This suggests a tendency for national identity to decrease as autonomy increases. This means that the likelihood of observing such a correlation by chance is less than 0.1%, thereby providing strong evidence against the null hypothesis.	Accepted
2	Higher autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively correlated with national attachment among citizens.	The Spearman's rho value for the relationship between autonomy and national attachment is -0.142, indicating a weak negative correlation. This suggests a slight decrease in national attachment as autonomy increases. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.005, which is well below the commonly used significance level of 0.05.	Accepted
3	Greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with a diminished sense of national belonging among citizens.	The Spearman's rho value of -0.492 indicates a moderate negative correlation between autonomy and sense of belonging, suggesting that as autonomy increases, the sense of belonging decreases. The correlation is statistically significant with a p-value of less than 0.001, which exceeds the standard threshold for statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).	Accepted

4	Greater autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be negatively associated with social cohesion among its citizens.	The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of -0.587 between autonomy and social cohesion indicates a moderate to strong negative association, suggesting that increased autonomy is associated with reduced social cohesion. The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) being less than 0.001 is highly indicative that the correlation is not due to random chance.	Accepted
5	Increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia is more likely to be positively correlated with political participation among citizens.	The Spearman's rho value of 0.439 represents a moderate positive correlation between autonomy and political participation, indicating that as autonomy increases, there is a corresponding increase in political participation among citizens. The correlation is statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.001 much less than the standard threshold of 0.05.	Accepted

Table 14 summarizes the status of five hypotheses evaluated in this study, focusing on the relationship between the autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia and several dimensions of citizens' socio-political experiences: national identity, national attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation. Each hypothesis is assessed as either accepted or rejected based on the statistical analysis conducted, offering a clear overview of how increased autonomy correlates with these key variables. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were accepted, revealing a negative correlation between increased autonomy and aspects of national cohesion, such as identification with the national government, national attachment, and a sense of national belonging. This suggests that as federal units become more autonomous, there might be a shift towards more localized identities at the expense of a unified national identity. The implications of these findings are critical for understanding the challenges of fostering national unity in a federal system.

Hypothesis 4 was also accepted, showing a significant negative association between autonomy and social cohesion, indicating that greater autonomy may lead to decreased social cohesion among citizens. This finding underscores the potential social fragmentation risks associated with increased federal autonomy, which could impact the overall stability and unity of the nation. Contrasting with the previous findings, Hypothesis 5 was accepted, demonstrating a positive correlation between autonomy and political participation. This suggests that increased autonomy of federal units is associated with higher levels of political engagement among citizens, potentially due to a closer alignment between governance structures and citizens' needs or a greater sense of agency within more autonomous federal units. These relationships underscore the complex and multifaceted effects of federal autonomy on the socio-political landscape in Somalia, offering valuable insights for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners involved in governance and development efforts within federal systems.

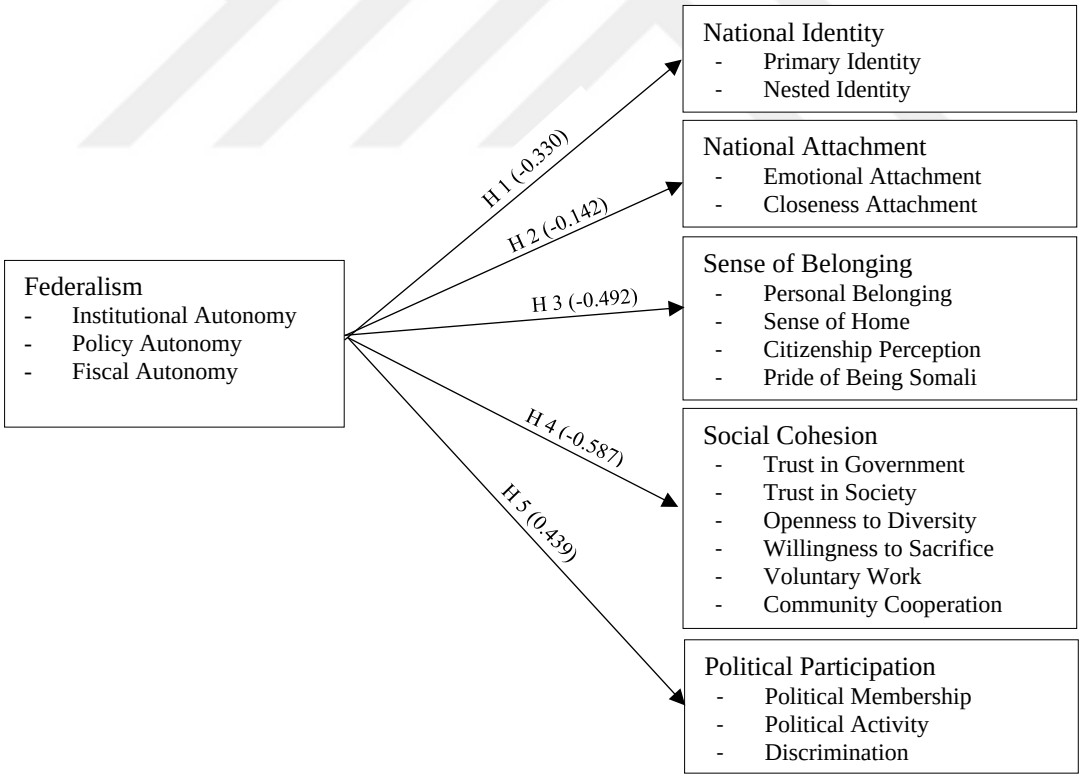


Figure 8. Hypothesis testing findings

4.9. Reliability and Validity

4.9.1. Reliability

The study methodically incorporated two fundamental types of reliability assessments, Internal Consistency and Test-Retest Reliability, in the pursuit of ensuring the reliability and integrity of their survey results. These methodologies were pivotal in validating the consistency and stability of the survey instruments employed in their study. In the measurement of internal consistency, the study harnessed the power of Cronbach's alpha, a statistical tool renowned for its effectiveness in measuring the coherence among multiple survey items. By applying this metric, the study aimed to ascertain how well each part of the survey contributed to the overarching construct under investigation. The benchmark for acceptability was set at a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.7 or higher, a standard threshold in social science research indicating a good level of internal consistency. This rigorous approach ensured that the survey instruments were reliably measuring what they were intended to, with all components uniformly contributing to the collective construct. Table 15 reveals the calculated Cronbach's Alpha values for various constructs related of the study.

Table 15. Reliability Statistics

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
Autonomy	0.80
National Identity	0.72
National Attachment	0.73
Sense of Belonging	0.78
Social Cohesion	0.81
Political Participation	0.76

The reliability statistics table provides a concise overview of the robustness of the scales used to measure six distinct constructs: autonomy, national identity and attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation. Each construct demonstrates good to high internal consistency, as indicated by their Cronbach's Alpha values, suggesting that the instruments employed to measure these constructs are reliable and well-constructed to meet the objectives of the underlying study.

The subsequent discussion delves into the breakdown of each construct and its corresponding Cronbach's Alpha values, shedding light on the implications of these reliability metrics.

- Autonomy: This construct has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.80, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items measuring the concept of autonomy. This robust figure implies that the scale's items are not only cohesive but also effectively tap into the various dimensions of autonomy. The score suggests that the items designed to measure autonomy are closely related, thus providing a reliable scale.

- National Identity: With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.72, the national identity construct also demonstrates good reliability, signifying that the items within this scale are suitably aligned and measure the concept with a good degree of precision. The Alpha value suggests that the scale items work well together reflecting a singular construct rather than a disparate set of ideas.

- National Attachment: This construct has a slightly higher reliability score than national identity, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.73. The close proximity of this score to that of national identity indicates that both constructs, while distinct, are measured with a good degree of reliability, offering consistent metrics for how individuals cognitively and emotionally align with their nation.

- Sense of Belonging: Scoring a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78, the Sense of Belonging construct showcases high internal consistency, suggesting that the scale is particularly effective in capturing this complex social construct. The high reliability of this scale indicates that the items chosen reliably captures the various facets of belonging.

- Social Cohesion: With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.81, the Social Cohesion construct, stands out with one of the highest reliability scores among the constructs presented. This high level of reliability indicates that the scale's items are well-chosen to represent the concept of social cohesion comprehensively. Social cohesion typically examines the strength and quality of relationships and the sense of solidarity among community members. A score of 0.81 suggests that the scale is adept at measuring the interconnectedness and community integration.

- Political Participation: Exhibiting a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.76, the Political Participation construct maintains good reliability. The given Alpha value indicates that the items of the scale are effectively capturing the essence of political engagement and are coherent in their measurement, implying that the scale reliably measures the extent and nature of participants' political activities.

Test-Retest Reliability further augmented the study's reliability framework. This method entailed the repeated administration of the same survey to a designated subset of participants at two distinct time points, with a four-week interval separating the two administrations. This interval was strategically chosen to be long enough to prevent recall bias yet short enough to minimize the likelihood of genuine changes in the constructs being measured. The consistency of the survey responses across these two time points served as a critical indicator of the measures' stability over time. Such consistency bolstered the credibility of the survey items, affirming their reliability. The study's rigorous application of internal consistency and test-retest reliability methodologies, underpinned by solid statistical evidence, provided a robust foundation for the reliability of its survey instruments. These measures ensured that the survey results were both consistent across its parts and stable over time, lending significant credibility and validity to the findings derived from this research endeavour.

4.9.2. Validity

The study addressed various facets of validity to ensure the robustness and applicability of its findings. Three primary types of validity were considered: Construct Validity, Content Validity, and External Validity. Each type served a unique purpose in strengthening the overall validity of the research. Construct Validity was established through a dual approach involving confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and theoretical triangulation. CFA was instrumental in examining the underlying structure of the survey items, verifying that they appropriately clustered according to the theoretical constructs they were designed to measure. This method ensured that the constructs were accurately represented by the survey items. Theoretical triangulation complemented this by comparing the constructs against existing literature and theories, thereby validating that the measures used in the study accurately reflected the intended constructs of interest.

The below table presents the factor loadings from the confirmatory factor analysis, indicating how well each survey item loaded onto their respective constructs. Factor loadings are a crucial aspect of construct validity, with higher values (close to 1) indicating a strong relationship between the item and the construct. The factor loadings in table 15 affirm that most items have a strong relationship with their respective constructs, underscoring the survey's construct validity. The positive and significant loadings across the board indicate a well-structured model that effectively captures the complex interplay between observed variables and their underlying theoretical constructs. Each item's contribution reinforces the construct it is intended to measure, thereby lending credence to the validity of the scale.

Table 16. CFA factor loading

			Estimate
IA	<---	Autonomy	.779
PA	<---	Autonomy	.826
FA	<---	Autonomy	.682
PI	<---	National Identity	.749
NI	<---	National Identity	.791
EA	<---	Attachment	.781
CA	<---	Attachment	.739
PSB	<---	Sense of Belonging	.802
PM	<---	Sense of Belonging	.749
SPC	<---	Sense of Belonging	.680
PBS	<---	Sense of Belonging	.660
FGT	<---	Social Cohesion	.703
GTW	<---	Social Cohesion	.736
OD	<---	Social Cohesion	.712
WSPR	<---	Social Cohesion	.722
EVW	<---	Social Cohesion	.687
CC	<---	Social Cohesion	.693
MAPO	<---	Political Participation	.697
EPA	<---	Political Participation	.715
ED	<---	Political Participation	.767

The factor loadings from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis offer a clear view into how well each observed variable, or indicator, measures its intended latent construct. For the construct of Autonomy, the indicators Institutional Autonomy (IA), Policy Autonomy (PA), and Fiscal Autonomy (FA) show a positive and robust relationship, with PA showing the strongest link to Autonomy, IA follows closely, while FA, though slightly lower, still maintains a strong association with the Autonomy construct. In exploring National Identity, both Primary Identity (PI) and Nested Identity (NI) exhibit strong, positive loadings, with NI being slightly higher. This suggests that both items are effective measures of National Identity, capturing the essence of how individuals identify with their nation.

When it comes to National Attachment, Emotional Attachment (EA) and Closeness Attachment (CA) stand as significant indicators, with EA showing a slightly stronger loading. These items seem to tap into the emotional and affective dimensions of how individuals connect with their nation. The construct of Sense of Belonging is well-represented by Personal Sense of Belonging (PSB), Pride in being Member of the Somali people (PM), Self-perception of Citizenship (SPC), and Pride of being Somali (PBS), all showing positive relationships with the construct. PSB stands out as the most reflective item, while the other items are slightly lower, they still contribute meaningfully to the construct, painting a comprehensive picture of the sense of belonging.

Social Cohesion is consistently measured by items Federal Government Trustworthiness (FGT), General Trustworthiness perceived in fellow citizens (GTW), Openness to Diversity (OD), Willingness to Sacrifice Personal Resources (WSPR), Engagement in Voluntary Work (EVW), and Community Cooperation (CC). The loadings range from moderate to strong, collectively suggesting that these items effectively capture the interconnectedness, solidarity, and collective well-being within a community or society. Lastly, the construct of Political Participation is significantly and positively indicated by Membership in Political Organizations (MEPO), Engagement in Political Activities (EPA), and Experience of Discrimination (ED). ED emerges as the strongest of these indicators, implying that it might be the most critical measure of how individuals engage with and contribute to political processes and civic activities.

Table 17 extends the analysis to include Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Maximum Reliability (MaxR(H)), alongside correlations between the constructs. These statistics provide a multifaceted view of validity:

- CR values above 0.7 indicate good reliability for the constructs.
- AVE values above 0.5 suggest that a majority of the variance in the items is accounted for by the constructs.
- MSV and MaxR(H) further assess the discriminant and convergent validity, indicating how much variance in the constructs is shared and the maximum reliability, respectively.

Table 17. Validity analysis

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Autonomy	National Identity	National Attachment	Sense of Belonging	Social Cohesion	Political Participation
Autonomy	0.808	0.585	0.468	0.812	**0.765**					
National Identity	0.745	0.593	0.441	0.747	0.603*	**0.770**				
National Attachment	0.732	0.578	0.462	0.732	0.628	0.684*	**0.558**			
Sense of Belonging	0.815	0.526	0.421	0.815	0.546*	0.674*	0.517*	**0.565**		
Social Cohesion	0.858	0.503	0.402	0.862	0.617*	0.633*	0.457*	0.532*	**0.709**	
Political Participation	0.770	0.528	0.422	0.772	0.573*	0.473*	0.364	0.425*	0.642*	**0.727**

* $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.001$

The validity analysis of table 16, including CR and AVE values, confirms that the constructs are both reliable and valid, capturing a substantial variance in the survey items. The correlations between constructs, especially those marked with significance, highlight the relationships that exist within the data, providing a rich context for understanding how different constructs interact within the theoretical framework of the study.

By addressing construct, content, and external validity with a comprehensive methodological approach, and by employing rigorous statistical analysis to confirm these aspects of validity, the study ensures that its findings are both robust and generalizable. This meticulous approach to validity not only enhances the credibility of the research but also contributes valuable insights to the field of study. On the other hand, the study conducted Content Validity was ensured through expert reviews. These reviews involved subject matter experts assessing the survey items for their relevance and representativeness of the domain being studied. This process confirmed that the survey comprehensively covered the study's domain, ensuring that all relevant aspects of the constructs were measured. Additionally, External Validity aimed to enhance the generalizability of the study findings. By employing a representative sample of the Somali population and utilizing a multistage sampling method that encompassed diverse districts, the study strived to ensure that its results could be generalized to the broader population.

5. DISCUSSIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter delves into the multifaceted relationship between federalism and various aspects of social and political life in Somalia. Each section explores distinct dimensions of this relationship, examining how increased autonomy within federal constituent units influences national identity, attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation among Somali citizens. The first section examines the statistical relationship between the autonomy of Somalia's federal units and the national identity of its citizens, uncovering a multifaceted interaction. The section reveals how increased autonomy correlates with a decrease in identification with the national government and an increase in localized identities.

The second part further explores this theme, focusing on the psychological bond between citizens and the nation-state. It presents findings that suggest increased regional autonomy may lead to a reorientation of identity toward more localized forms of affiliation. The third part addresses how federal autonomy impacts citizens' sense of belonging. With a moderate negative correlation found, the section highlights the complexities federalism introduces to the social fabric of a post-conflict society like Somalia. The subsequent fourth section presents a moderate to strong negative association between federal autonomy and social cohesion, indicating that greater self-governance capacity within federal units may challenge societal harmony.

Finally, the fifth part examines the impact of federal structures on citizens' engagement in political life. It outlines a positive correlation between autonomy and political participation, suggesting that more independent federal units foster environments conducive to civic involvement. Each section contributes to a comprehensive understanding of federalism's impact on Somalia's societal dynamics, with implications for federal policy and the balance between regional empowerment and national cohesion. The dissertation provides an empirical and theoretical analysis relevant to policymakers, scholars, and practitioners involved in federal governance, particularly in contexts marked by diversity and a history of division.

5.2. Correlation between Federalism and National Identity

The findings from the statistical analysis present a picture of the relationship between the autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia and the national identity of its citizens. The study sought to understand how increased autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia relates to citizens' identification with the national government. The hypothesis suggested a negative association between these two variables and the findings do indeed support this hypothesis. The methodological approach, leveraging Spearman's rank correlation coefficient and detailed cross-tabulation, has allowed for understanding the interaction between the two variables. The primary research question is addressed through the observed negative correlation coefficient of -0.330, which indicates that as the autonomy of federal constituent units increases, identification with the national government tends to decrease. This finding substantiates the hypothesis but also points to a moderate effect size, suggesting that autonomy is just one of several factors influencing national identity.

The study has explored the dynamics of primary identity affiliations among the respondents. The findings reveal that a significant majority of respondents primarily identify as Somali, however, this national identification is most prevalent among those experiencing the lowest levels of autonomy. As autonomy increases, there is a notable shift towards more localized identities—either with federal constituent units or clans. This trend manifests a noticeable gradient in identity alignment: the higher the autonomy score, the more likely individuals are to identify with their federal constituent unit or clan rather than the national identity. Interestingly, this gradient is not linear but suggests a complexity in identity dynamics, particularly at the middle autonomy level, where the mix of identities becomes more prominent.

One of the more interesting findings of the study is the identity distribution at the middle autonomy level, where a mixture of national, regional, and clan identities becomes more pronounced. This suggests that there may be a threshold or tipping point at which the influence of autonomy on national identity becomes more or less pronounced. It could imply that moderate levels of autonomy provide a balance that allows for dual or multiple identity affiliations, while higher levels push towards a clearer delineation between national and localized identities. The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of -0.330, although indicating a negative relationship between autonomy and national identity, is moderate in strength.

It implies that while there is a statistically significant tendency for national identity to decline as autonomy increases, the relationship is not overwhelmingly dominant, leaving room for other influential factors not captured in this study. This pattern emerges clearly in the distribution of national identity scores across autonomy levels, with a significant portion of respondents displaying a distributed identification across national, regional, and clan identities as autonomy increases. These findings provide a base for a detailed discussion on the implications of federal autonomy on national identity in Somalia, challenging the hypothesis that increased autonomy is negatively associated with citizens' identification with the national government.

The hypothesis is further supported by the statistically significant p-value of less than 0.001, indicating a very low probability that the observed correlation is due to random chance. This robust statistical evidence gives credence to the hypothesis, yet the moderate strength of the correlation coefficient cautions against a deterministic interpretation of the relationship. Despite the clear association patterns, the data also underscores the diversity of individual experiences and affiliations, suggesting that identity in Somalia is multifaceted and cannot be reduced to a simple function of autonomy levels. The delicate interplay between these identities and perceptions of autonomy provides fertile ground for a more granular analysis of the socio-political landscape within Somalia's federal structure.

The empirical findings from Somalia, which highlight varying degrees of national identity at different autonomy levels, offer a practical reflection of the federalist theoretical discourse on balancing national unity and regional diversity. In Federalist No. 10, Madison (1787) presented federalism as a means to prevent tyranny by factions, ensuring liberty, and promoting the public good. The empirical data indicating a stronger Somali identity associated with lower autonomy scores resonates with Madison's assertion. Here, the lower autonomy could be seen as a structural mechanism that, by keeping power more centralized, mitigates the factionalism that can emerge from regional diversities. It implies that the balance between unity and diversity is not static but adjustable according to the levels of autonomy granted to federal units. Böckenförde (1976) offers a critical perspective on this balance, positing that a liberal state depends on conditions it cannot solely ensure. In the context of Somalia, where increased autonomy correlates with stronger identification with federal constituent units, this can be interpreted as a manifestation of the Böckenförde Paradox. The Somali federal system appears to create the conditions for a shared identity but cannot mandate it.

The organic development of regional identities, while autonomous, may challenge the cohesive national identity the state seeks to promote. Böckenförde's insight emphasizes that the sense of national unity must evolve naturally and cannot be imposed, aligning with the observed trend in Somalia where higher autonomy seems to lead to more pronounced regional identities. The federal system's capacity to accommodate diversity is evident in the empirical data, which shows that individuals align themselves with identities other than the national one, especially at higher autonomy levels. This supports Böckenförde's argument that a liberal state thrives on preconditions it does not control. In Somalia's case, these preconditions may include historical clan structures and regional loyalties that the federal system, no matter how well-designed, cannot entirely override.

In light of this, the Somali experience presents a real-world application of federalist theory, where increased regional autonomy challenges the central government's ability to maintain national unity. It suggests that the relationship between autonomy and identity is complex and that there may be a threshold of autonomy beyond which the centripetal forces of a national identity begin to weaken in favour of centrifugal regional affiliations. Moreover, the federal system in Somalia, while striving to respect regional autonomy must also navigate the task of fostering a unifying national identity that can hold the country together. This requires not only constitutional safeguards but also the cultivation of a shared national narrative that can resonate with all Somalis, regardless of their regional or clan-based identities. The findings imply that federal structures must be flexible and responsive, capable of adapting to the fluid dynamics of identity politics. They must navigate the spectrum between the extremes of a heavily centralized state that risks suppressing regional autonomy and a loose federation that may weaken in sustaining a cohesive national identity. The challenge, therefore, lies in a dynamic equilibrium that respects and integrates regional autonomy while sustaining a coherent national narrative that binds the country together.

The findings of the study also offer a profound insight into the practical application of federalist theories on multiculturalism and minority rights. The findings related to the stronger identification with federal constituent units or clans at higher autonomy levels in Somalia can be critically analysed through the lens of federalism's ability to accommodate ethnocultural diversities and minority rights, as emphasized by theorists like Kymlicka (1997) and Burgess (2006). Kymlicka's theoretical contributions suggest that federalism is not only a governance mechanism but also an instrument for recognizing and accommodating ethnocultural diversity.

The manifestation of this theory is clear in the Somali context, where the federal system allows for autonomy that seems to strengthen the identification with sub-national identities. The increase in autonomy, and the subsequent shift towards a more pronounced regional or clan identity among citizens, aligns with Kymlicka's assertion that minority rights within federal systems are paramount to ensuring justice and cohesion in diverse societies. The findings illustrate that higher autonomy allows federal constituent units to assert their distinct identities more robustly. This reflects Kymlicka's stance on minority rights, showing that when these groups are granted the power to govern themselves in matters that are crucial to their identity—such as language, education, and local governance—they tend to develop a stronger sense of self which is separate from the national identity. Here, federalism acts as a facilitative structure that can help to manage and even celebrate ethnocultural plurality while maintaining a form of unity within the state.

Furtherly, Burgess's insights into federalism as a tool for integrating diverse communities into a cohesive whole provide another aspect of understanding to these findings. Burgess suggests that the very value of federal principles lies in their capacity to integrate diverse communities, thereby ensuring stability in states with multiple nationalities. The Somali experience indicates that federalism does allow for such integration to a certain extent, as it affords the space for multiple identities to coexist under the umbrella of a single state. However, the increase in identification with federal constituent units at higher autonomy levels may pose a challenge to the integration aspect of Burgess's theory.

The empirical evidence from Somalia could suggest that while federalism as a structure can support diversity, the practical outcomes may vary depending on how the federal principles are applied. The perceived increase in regional identity over national identity at higher autonomy levels may indicate a lean towards what Burgess might describe as the disintegrative tendencies of federalism, where the emphasis on regional autonomy could potentially come at the cost of national cohesion. This phenomenon also ties back to Kymlicka's work, which posits that federalism must ensure that the protection of minority rights does not lead to the balkanization of the state. The challenge for the Somali federal system is to maintain a balance where minority rights and regional autonomy do not overshadow the collective national identity. This balance is crucial for the maintenance of a stable and integrated state. Both Kymlicka and Burgess acknowledge that federalism must provide frameworks for minorities to express their identities, but also mechanisms that prevent the fragmentation of the state.

For Somalia, this means that the federal system must continue to evolve to ensure that the increased autonomy of federal constituent units reinforces, rather than undermines, the overall unity and identity of the state. The empirical findings indicating varying degrees of national identity in relation to autonomy levels can be assessed in light of Elazar's theory of covenantal federalism. Covenantal federalism, as conceptualized by Elazar (1987), revolves around the notion of federalism as more than a mere administrative arrangement—it's a profound commitment, a covenant, grounded in shared values, mutual goals, and collective decision-making. This theoretical stance posits that the essence of a successful federal system lies in its capacity to foster a sense of community through shared values and consensual governance, which resonates with the foundational principles of a nation. In the context of Somalia, the role of shared values and consensual decision-making in federal units are essential for the integration and the establishment of a stable national identity.

Shared values can be a binding force that unites different federal units and clans within Somalia. Values such as mutual respect, recognition of diversity, and a collective vision for the country's future are integral to fostering a cohesive national identity. In situations where consensus and shared values are prominent, they can mitigate the fragmentation often associated with high levels of autonomy. This is in line with Elazar's theory, which emphasizes that a covenantal relationship based on consensual decision-making can enhance the unity and stability of the federal system. However, the challenge emerges when autonomy leads to the prioritization of regional or clan values over national ones. If federal constituent units, particularly those with high levels of autonomy, develop distinct sets of values that are not aligned with the national ethos, this can lead to a dilution of the sense of national identity.

Elazar's covenantal federalism posits that the success of a federal system lies in its ability to integrate diverse constituents into a single polity without erasing their unique identities. The Somali federal system, therefore, faces the delicate task of ensuring that the autonomy of its federal units does not translate into isolationist tendencies that could potentially erode the national covenant. Fostering shared values that transcend clan and regional loyalties requires an effort to promote inclusive national narratives and policies that reflect the interests of the federation as a whole. This could involve developing national education curriculum that emphasize Somali history and cultural heritage, promoting national media that underscores common experiences and challenges, and creating national symbols that resonate with all citizens, irrespective of their regional or clan affiliations.

In essence, the Somali experience highlights both the potential and the pitfalls of covenantal federalism. On the one hand, shared values and consensus can be powerful tools for uniting a nation. On the other hand, when autonomy empowers regional identities at the expense of national unity, it can lead to a weakened national covenant. The task for Somali federal constituent units, then, is to strike a balance between honouring the autonomy and distinctiveness of each unit and cultivating a set of shared values and commitments that can bind the nation together, reinforcing the covenantal foundations of their federal system.

Shifting focus to the political implications of identity dynamics in the Somali context, it becomes essential to consider Elazar's (1987) theory on the dual aspects of federalism: self-governance and shared rule. Self-rule pertains to the autonomy of individual federal units to govern their own affairs, while shared rule refers to the participation of these units in the collective governance of the country. The empirical findings from Somalia, indicating varied levels of national identity across different autonomy levels, shed light on how this duality operates in practice and its impact on citizens' affiliation with different levels of government. In regions with higher autonomy, where self-rule is more pronounced, citizens' identification with their local governance structures is stronger. This can be seen as a direct expression of Elazar's self-rule, where the local government's immediacy and relevance to citizens' daily lives stimulate a stronger local identity. This sense of identity is likely reinforced by the ability of federal constituent units to make decisions that closely reflect the preferences and needs of their populations.

Conversely, shared rule implies a collective identity and a broader sense of belonging to the nation. The findings suggest that where self-rule is emphasized to the point of overshadowing shared rule, the national identity may become secondary. This could lead to a scenario where citizens feel more connected to their immediate governance structures than to the national government, potentially challenging the integrity of shared rule. Elazar's theory suggests that a well-functioning federal system should maintain a balance between self-rule and shared rule to foster both local responsiveness and national cohesion. The balance is delicate and dynamic, reflecting the negotiation of power and identity between the centre and the peripheries. When one aspect begins to dominate the other, it can lead to political tensions and a re-evaluation of the federation's structure and identity policies. In Somalia, where clan identities are historically and culturally significant, the emphasis on self-rule may naturally lead to a stronger allegiance to local governance.

However, the national government must ensure that shared rule is not neglected in this process. It must craft policies and create institutions that embody national values and goals, thus fostering a sense of national identity that complements, rather than competes with, local identities. For instance, the inclusion of various regional representatives in national decision-making bodies, the distribution of national resources in a manner that reflects equity and solidarity, and the celebration of national achievements and symbols can all reinforce the notion of shared rule. Additionally, the national government must engage in dialogues and policy-making processes that are inclusive of all federal units to strengthen the sense of shared rule and collective national identity.

The political implications of this identity dynamic are significant. They influence voter behaviour, the legitimacy of governance structures, and the stability of the federal system. The Somali federal system thus faces the complex task of managing the tensions and synergies between self-rule and shared rule to foster a political environment where local and national identities are both valued and aligned with the overarching goals of the federation. Turning to the broader implications of federalism as a framework for peace and stability in divided societies, the insights of O'Leary and McGarry (2006) on power-sharing emerge as a vital element in post-conflict resolution. Their perspective offers a lens through which the Somali experience of balancing local allegiances with national unity can be interpreted. In Somalia, a post-conflict society with a history of clan-based segmentation and conflict, federalism has been adopted as a state-building and peacekeeping mechanism.

The data showing a stronger identification with federal constituent units or clans at higher autonomy levels can be seen as an affirmation of the effectiveness of federalism in providing a platform for power-sharing. This form of governance allows various clans and regions to exercise self-determination in their local affairs while still being part of the larger Somali state. This aligns with O'Leary & McGarry's view that federalism can create an environment where different groups can coexist peacefully by ensuring that they all have a stake in the government and the country's future. The variation in national identity among different levels of autonomy can be interpreted as a reflection of the degree to which federalism has been able to mitigate conflict through power-sharing. In areas where autonomy is higher, and identification with local governance is stronger, it could be indicative of successful power-sharing that allows these communities to feel represented and to govern according to their specific needs and preferences.

However, the challenge lies in ensuring that this autonomy does not lead to fragmentation or new conflicts, which requires a delicate balance between self-rule and shared rule. O'Leary & McGarry argue that federal systems must be designed with conflict resolution in mind, meaning that the distribution of power and resources must be carefully managed to prevent the resurgence of old conflicts or the emergence of new ones. In Somalia, this means that while regions should have significant autonomy, there must also be mechanisms to promote inter-regional cooperation, national integration, and the resolution of disputes that may arise between the federal units or between a unit and the central government. One way to achieve this is through the establishment of inclusive federal institutions that reflect the country's diversity and allow for effective representation of various groups. Additionally, constitutional safeguards can be put in place to protect the rights of all constituent units and provide a framework for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

The integration of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, which are well-respected within Somali culture, into the formal governance structure can also be an effective way of managing disputes and fostering a sense of national identity. The data from Somalia underscores the importance of power-sharing and conflict resolution strategies in maintaining a stable federal system. The findings suggest that while federalism has provided a framework for accommodating regional and clan identities, continuous efforts are needed to reinforce the shared rule and the collective identity that underpins the federation. The work of O'Leary & McGarry on federalism as a tool for conflict resolution provides valuable insights into how these efforts can be structured to ensure that federalism not only resolves past conflicts but also paves the way for a cohesive and peaceful national future.

Bridging the gap between political structure and individual psychology, Tajfel & Turner (1979) offers a relevant explanatory framework. It delves into the cognitive processes behind group affiliation, which can illuminate the patterns of identity formation within the autonomous federal units of Somalia. The theory posits that part of an individual's self-concept is derived from perceived membership in a social group, and this can significantly influence their behaviours and attitudes. In the context of increased autonomy within federal units, as seen in Somalia, the theory can be applied to understand how such autonomy may affect the formation of national identity. The findings that show a stronger identification with federal constituent units or clans at higher autonomy levels suggest that social categorization processes are at play, where people are aligning their identities more with their immediate social groups than with the broader national entity.

The differentiation between in-groups and out-groups can lead to comparisons that are biased in favour of the in-group. In Somalia, this could manifest in competitive dynamics between different autonomous regions or clans, each emphasizing its unique attributes and, in some cases, superiority in certain aspects such as governance, stability, or cultural preservation. When groups feel threatened by each other in terms of resources, status, or identity, this can lead to increased cohesion within the group and hostility towards out-groups. Hence, if decreased autonomy is perceived as a threat to regional interests, this could strengthen local identities as a defensive response. This has also implications for conflict resolution. It is crucial to manage intergroup relations by ensuring that autonomy does not lead to exclusion or marginalization of any group. The central government and local leaders must work together to address any perceived inequalities and to promote a vision of the nation that includes all constituent groups.

The findings also invite an exploration into the significance of Keating's (2001) concept of plurinational federalism offers a complementary perspective to the observed identity shifts within Somalia's federal units as a reflection of the intrinsic balance between distinct cultural memories and the overarching national narrative. Keating's (2001) notion of plurinational federalism resonates deeply with the identity shifts observed in Somalia, particularly when examining the autonomy levels of its federal units. This approach acknowledges the coexistence of multiple nations or significant cultural groups within a single state and calls for a federal system that accommodates this diversity. In Somalia, where each federal unit exhibits a degree of autonomy and harbors distinct, often clan-based, identities, Keating's framework becomes instrumental in analyzing the federal system's efficacy in managing and harmonizing these diverse identities. It acknowledges the Somali federal system's efforts to recognize multiple identities, mirroring Keating's belief that federal structures must adapt to incorporate the unique identities of its constituent parts flexibly. Plurinational federalism requires a balance between the autonomy of constituent nations and the overarching need for national cohesion. The variation in Somali citizens' identification with the national government versus local governance underscores the challenge of maintaining this balance.

Keating's concept suggests that federal systems should enhance shared governance while honoring the autonomy and identity of each constituent unit. This concept extends to federal policies that should not only tolerate but actively endorse the distinct identities within the federation. Such policies may include constitutional measures safeguarding minority languages and cultures and political arrangements that enable diverse groups to participate meaningfully in national decision-making. The identity shifts among Somali citizens, particularly in regions with greater autonomy, reflect the natural outcome of acknowledging and accommodating multiple identities within a single state as envisioned by plurinational federalism. Keating’s perspective suggests that these shifts are manageable and even beneficial, as long as the federal system is adept at handling them constructively, fostering allegiance to both the local unit and the nation.

Furthermore, plurinational federalism illuminates the dynamics of intergroup relations within the Somali federal system, indicating that positive intergroup relations are vital for a plurinational federation's stability. In Somalia, this implies promoting dialogue and cooperation among different clans and regions, ensuring that no group feels marginalized. Keating's plurinational federalism dovetails with the identity dynamics observed within Somalia's federal system, underscoring the need for a federal framework that can effectively manage and integrate multiple identities. This approach is crucial to ensuring that the system remains responsive and inclusive, thereby maintaining stability and cohesion in a context marked by diverse and strong regional identities.

The impact of globalization on national identity, as discussed by theorists such as Craig Calhoun (2007) and Mary Kaldor (2004), offers a profound lens through which to examine the Somali experience of federalism and autonomy. Globalization, characterized by the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa, interacts with national identity in complex and multifaceted ways. In the Somali context, the federal structure and varying degrees of autonomy across regions create a unique environment for globalization to influence national identity. Calhoun (2007) has emphasized the tension between globalization's drive towards a more interconnected world and the desire of individual communities to maintain their cultural specificity. In Somalia, regions with significant autonomy may leverage globalization to enhance their economic and social development, potentially leading to divergent paths in identity formation.

As these regions interact more with global flows of trade, information, and culture, their sense of identity might increasingly reflect a blend of local and global influences, which could either enrich the national tapestry or create challenges for maintaining a cohesive national identity. Kaldor's (2004) work on new wars and complex globalization underscores globalization's dual role in both homogenizing cultures and stimulating the resurgence of localized identities as forms of resistance. For Somalia, this means that while globalization may introduce homogenizing pressures, such as the adoption of global consumer culture, it can also reinforce or even resurrect distinct regional identities within the federal system. These identities might then assert themselves in new forms, whether through political demands for greater autonomy, cultural revival movements, or through the differentiation of regional governance practices. The economic dimensions of globalization can have varying impacts on Somali federal units, depending on their levels of autonomy and integration into global markets. Regions that successfully attract foreign investment or integrate into global supply chains might experience a boost in autonomy, given the additional resources and economic leverage. This economic empowerment could lead to a stronger regional identity, potentially at the expense of national cohesion.

The spread of digital technologies and social media platforms represents another facet of globalization impacting national identity. For Somalia, the digital realm offers opportunities for greater civic engagement, education, and economic participation. It also allows for the diaspora to maintain close ties with their regions of origin, influencing local and national identities from afar. However, the digital divide between more developed and less developed regions could exacerbate disparities in national identity perception, with more connected areas possibly adopting more globalized identities. The Somali diaspora plays a critical role in the country's engagement with globalization. Their remittances support local economies, and their return, whether temporary or permanent, brings new ideas and practices. This transnational engagement enriches the national culture but also introduces elements that might differ from traditional Somali norms, impacting the formation and perception of national identity. Moreover, the interplay between global influences and regional characteristics can catalyze the development of hybrid identities that are uniquely Somali yet cosmopolitan in flavor. Such a phenomenon presents both opportunities for innovation in governance and cultural expression, as well as challenges in aligning these new identities with the overarching national narrative.

Insights from O'Hara and Hall (2018) and Sassen (2006) provide valuable perspectives on how these global phenomena might influence Somali national identity in the years to come. O'Hara & Hall (2018) highlight the potential of digital governance to democratize information access and facilitate greater citizen participation in governance. For Somalia, this could mean increased engagement from regions with varying degrees of autonomy, allowing for a more inclusive and participatory approach to national identity formation. Digital platforms can offer a space for diverse voices within the federation to express their visions of what Somali national identity should encompass, potentially leading to a more cohesive and collectively endorsed national identity.

Sassen's (2006) work on globalization emphasizes the role of transnational networks in redefining the scope and impact of national boundaries. The Somali diaspora, actively engaged with their homeland through remittances and social media, plays a crucial role in this transnational landscape. Their contributions and interactions can introduce global perspectives to local debates on identity, governance, and development, enriching the national discourse. However, they can also complicate traditional notions of national identity by introducing elements that are both global in character and specific to diaspora experiences. While digital governance promises greater inclusivity, the reality of the digital divide could pose challenges to national cohesion. Regions within Somalia that have limited access to digital infrastructure may find themselves marginalized from national conversations, potentially exacerbating regional disparities in identity and governance. Addressing this divide is crucial for ensuring that the evolution of Somali national identity in the digital age is inclusive and representative of the entire population.

The move towards digital governance necessitates a re-evaluation of how national identities are curated and disseminated. Traditional top-down approaches to fostering national identity may give way to more fluid, bottom-up processes driven by online communities and digital media. This shift could empower regional entities within Somalia to craft and promote their unique contributions to the national identity, fostering a sense of pride and ownership that strengthens the overall national fabric. The ease of access to global cultural content, facilitated by digital platforms, introduces a new dynamic into the formation of national identity. Somali citizens, particularly the younger generation, are exposed to a wide array of cultural influences that can shape their perceptions of identity, values, and belonging. While this global cultural flow can enrich the national culture with diverse influences, it also raises questions about the preservation of unique cultural heritage.

For Somali federal and regional policymakers, the implications of digital governance and transnational trends necessitate strategic planning. Policies that leverage digital technologies for inclusive governance, cultural preservation, and education can help navigate the challenges and opportunities these global trends present. Furthermore, engaging the diaspora as a strategic partner in national development and identity formation can harness transnationalism's positive aspects while mitigating potential disruptions to national cohesion.

The relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia, as illuminated through this comprehensive analysis, embodies a compelling narrative of evolution, negotiation, and adaptation within the context of globalization, autonomy, and regional diversity. The statistical findings of the study offer a foundational understanding of how varying degrees of autonomy within Somalia's federal constituent units involvedly communicate into the fabric of national identity among its citizens. This analysis, grounded in both empirical data and theoretical discourse, underscores the complex dynamics at play in balancing national cohesion with regional autonomy. The relationship between increased autonomy and a more pronounced identification with localized identities, reflects a broader dialogue on the essence of federalism as a governance model designed to accommodate diversity while fostering unity. This delicate balance, as evidenced by the Somali experience, reveals the inherent challenges and opportunities in nurturing a cohesive national identity amidst the centrifugal forces of regional autonomy. The findings reveal a landscape where identity, governance, and autonomy intersect in ways that shape the perceptions and allegiances of citizens, highlighting the role of federal structures in facilitating a balance between unity and diversity.

As Somalia navigates the complexities of federalism and national identity, the insights derived from this analysis offer a roadmap for understanding the multifaceted relationship between governance structures, autonomy, and identity. The Somali experience, with its unique challenges and opportunities, contributes to the broader discourse on federalism, national identity, and the quest for unity in diversity. The findings and discussions presented herein not only reflect the current state of affairs but also chart a course for future exploration and policymaking, aiming to harness the strengths of federalism in building a cohesive, inclusive, and resilient national identity.

5.3. Correlation Between Federalism and National Attachment

The core of this study's empirical investigation revealed a statistically significant, albeit weak, negative relationship between the autonomy of federal constituents and national attachment among Somali citizens. This finding, indicated by a Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of -0.142, suggests a subtle interaction between these variables in the context of Somalia's federal system. The negative correlation implies that as the autonomy of federal units increases, the level of national attachment among citizens experiences a slight decline. However, the weak nature of this correlation is critical to note. It indicates that while there is a relationship between increased autonomy and decreased national attachment, this relationship is not strong or determinative. Several implications arise from this finding. First, the weak nature of the correlation suggests that the autonomy granted to federal units has a noticeable but limited influence on how citizens feel about their national identity. This implies that other factors, potentially outside the scope of this study, play a more significant role in shaping national attachment. Second, the existence of a statistically significant relationship, despite its weakness, points to the complex dynamics between governance structures and national identity. It suggests that the way power is distributed within a federal system has implications for national cohesion and individual citizens' sense of belonging to the nation-state. Third, the negative sign of the correlation coefficient indicates a directionality to the relationship between autonomy and national attachment, suggesting that even minor adjustments in the level of autonomy could potentially influence feelings of national attachment, albeit to a small extent. Fourth, the statistical significance of the correlation (p-value = 0.005) underlines that the observed relationship between autonomy and national attachment is unlikely to be due to random chance. This reinforces the need to consider autonomy as a factor in discussions about national identity and cohesion, even if its impact is not overwhelmingly strong.

While interpreting these findings, it is crucial to exercise caution. The weak negative correlation between autonomy and national attachment does not imply a direct causational relationship. Instead, it highlights a subtle interplay where increased autonomy is associated with slightly lower levels of national attachment among citizens. This association, while statistically significant, underscores the complexity of national identity dynamics in a federal system like Somalia's. It suggests that autonomy and national attachment are linked to a subtle balance, influenced by numerous other socio-political, economic, and cultural factors.

The cross-tabulation of responses provides a granular view of how national attachment varies across different levels of autonomy within Somalia's federal units. This detailed analysis reveals the distribution of national attachment scores against the backdrop of autonomy scores, presenting a tricky pattern that underscores the multifaceted relationship between these two variables. The cross-tabulation highlights that national attachment is not uniformly distributed across various autonomy levels. The data shows a wide range of national attachment scores across different autonomy levels, suggesting that individuals' feelings of attachment to the nation vary significantly within each stratum of autonomy. This variability points to the influence of factors beyond autonomy that contribute to the sense of national attachment.

Interestingly, the distribution does not exhibit a clear or linear trend relating higher autonomy levels with either higher or lower national attachment scores. Individuals within high autonomy regions do not consistently show lower national attachment than those in regions with lower autonomy, and vice versa. This absence of a clear pattern suggests that the relationship between autonomy and national attachment is not straightforward or directly proportional. A significant number of respondents across all levels of autonomy demonstrate moderate levels of national attachment, indicating a general trend of inconsistency or moderate identification with the national identity.

This finding suggests that while autonomy plays a role in shaping national attachment, it may not be the sole or dominant factor influencing individuals' sense of belonging to the nation. This interpretation aligns with the broader discourse on federalism and national identity, emphasizing the importance of considering the multifaceted influences on citizens' sense of belonging and loyalty to the nation-state. It invites further exploration into how federal structures and the distribution of autonomy within them can affect national cohesion in contexts characterized by significant diversity and complex historical legacies. The relationship between autonomy and national attachment in Somalia's federal system is embedded within a web of socio-political, historical, and cultural factors that contribute to its complexity and multifaceted nature. Somalia's path to federalism, marked by clan-based politics, ethnic homogeneity despite regional diversity, and a tumultuous history of conflict and reconciliation, sets a unique stage for examining national attachment. This insights provide a platform for comparative analysis, inviting researchers to investigate how similar dynamics manifest in other federal systems around the world, potentially contributing to a global understanding of federalism and national attachment.

Somalia’s adoption of a federal system was largely driven by the need to accommodate the country's deep-rooted clan divisions while striving for national unity. Each federal unit not only represents a geographical territory but also embodies the historical, cultural, and political aspirations of the clans within it. This duality presents a unique challenge to fostering national attachment, as citizens' loyalties and identities are often involvedly tied to clan affiliations rather than to the notion of a singular Somali national identity. The historical context of Somalia, from colonial rule to post-independence unity efforts, followed by the devastating civil war and the emergence of federalism as a governance model, profoundly influences national attachment. These historical experiences have fostered a sense of resilience and local autonomy among the population, impacting how national attachment is perceived and manifested. The struggle for independence and subsequent efforts to create a unified Somali state have imbued the national identity with layers of complexity, where pride in Somali heritage coexists with deep-seated regional and clan-based identities.

The study's findings on the relationship between autonomy and national attachment in Somalia's federal context offer a practical example of theoretical discussions surrounding federalism, national identity, and autonomy. Comparing and contrasting these findings with the theoretical insights provided by classical thinkers and contemporary federalism theories can deepen our understanding of the balance between autonomy and unity within federal systems. Althusius (1603) posited that federalism is about balancing the collective strength of the polity with the autonomy of smaller communities, emphasizing the importance of a symbiotic relationship between the two for societal cohesion. The study's findings reflect this balance, showing that while autonomy impacts national attachment, the relationship is complex and influenced by multiple factors, suggesting that autonomy and national attachment can coexist within a nuanced equilibrium. The weak negative correlation between autonomy and national attachment suggests that increased autonomy does not significantly diminish national attachment, indicating that it is possible to balance regional autonomy with a sense of national unity. This finding aligns with Althusius' view of federalism as a cooperative arrangement that can accommodate diverse identities within a unified political structure. Montesquieu (1748) similarly introduced the concept of a federal system as a means to preserve liberty and prevent tyranny by distributing governance across various levels. The absence of a clear pattern in the distribution of national attachment across different autonomy levels highlights the complex dynamics of federalism theorized by Montesquieu.

It suggests that the structure of federalism itself does not predetermine the strength of national attachment, reflecting Montesquieu's notion that the success of a federal system lies in its ability to navigate the complexities of governance and identity. It underscores the idea that while autonomy is essential for local governance and the protection of liberty, it also presents challenges to fostering a unified national identity. In conclusion, the weak negative correlation between autonomy and national attachment in Somalia presents a complex picture. Reflecting on the insights provided by the thinkers and the study's findings, it becomes evident that fostering national unity in a federal system requires tailored strategies that respect the unique characteristics of each federal unit while promoting shared values and collective aspirations. This approach is critical for maintaining the balance between allowing for local autonomy and fostering a cohesive national identity. As Somalia's federal system evolves, it is important to monitor how changes in autonomy impact the citizens' sense of national attachment.

5.4. Correlation Between Federalism and Sense of Belonging

The findings from the analysis reveal a moderate negative correlation (-0.492) between the level of autonomy of federal constituent units and the sense of belonging among Somali citizens. This correlation is statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.001, indicating a robust and unlikely by chance relationship between these two variables. The moderate strength of this correlation suggests that as federal units in Somalia gain more autonomy, there is a noticeable decline in the sense of belonging to the national identity among the citizens residing within these units. This relationship holds significant implications for the ongoing discourse on federalism in Somalia, particularly in understanding how the structure of federal autonomy impacts national cohesion and individual identity. The statistical significance of this correlation, underscored by the very low p-value, provides strong evidence to support the hypothesis that increased autonomy within Somalia's federal system is associated with a decrease in the sense of belonging to the nation. This finding is critical in the context of Somalia's federalism, where the balance between granting autonomy to constituent units and maintaining a unified national identity is a contentious issue. The moderate magnitude of the correlation suggests that while federal autonomy is a significant factor, it is not the sole determinant of the sense of belonging, hinting at the complexity of national identity dynamics in a federal context.

Furthermore, the cross-tabulation analysis of the relationship between autonomy scores and sense of belonging in Somalia reveals a detailed distribution that warrants careful consideration. The analysis indicates that higher autonomy scores are associated with lower levels of belonging, suggesting a significant trend within the data that has profound implications for Somalia's federal system and its impact on national identity and social cohesion. The data from the cross-tabulation show a clear trend: as autonomy scores increase, the sense of belonging to the nation decreases among respondents. Specifically, respondents in regions with lower autonomy scores reported higher levels of belonging, indicating a stronger connection to the national identity. This pattern is particularly evident in the highest categories of belonging, where the majority of respondents fall within the lowest autonomy category. Conversely, at the higher end of the autonomy spectrum, there is a noticeable increase in respondents reporting lower levels of belonging, suggesting that as regions gain more autonomy, individuals feel less connected to the national identity. This distribution points to a complex interplay between regional autonomy and national belonging, where increased autonomy seems to foster a sense of distinction or separation from the national collective, potentially at the expense of national cohesion.

The moderate negative correlation between increased autonomy and a decreased sense of national belonging, as identified in the study, carries profound theoretical and practical significance. This finding intersects with longstanding debates in political theory and federalism, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities of designing federal systems in divided societies like Somalia. The finding underscores a central concern in federalism theory—the balance between granting autonomy to constituent units and maintaining a cohesive national identity. Theoretical discussions, particularly those by Böckenförde (1976) and Kymlicka (1995), who have discussed the tensions between state structures, identity, and the accommodation of diversity within federal systems. The results suggest that while federalism is aimed at managing diversity by allowing for autonomy, it may also have unintended consequences on the collective sense of national belonging. This dichotomy reflects the inherent challenge in federal systems to balance the benefits of local governance and autonomy with the need for a unified national identity. The correlation can also be interpreted through the lens of social contract theory, as discussed by philosophers like Rousseau (1973) and Locke (1990). These theories posit that the legitimacy of the state is derived from the consent of the governed, with a strong emphasis on the collective identity and unity among its citizens.

The observed correlation suggests that increased autonomy may challenge the traditional social contract by weakening the sense of collective identity, thereby necessitating a re-evaluation of how social contracts are conceptualized in federal contexts. The study's findings also contribute to the discourse on identity politics within federal systems. The decreased sense of belonging with increased autonomy mirrors the tensions between individual or subgroup identities and a broader national identity. This aligns with Kymlicka's (1995) assertions on the rights of minority groups within federal systems, emphasizing the need for a federalism that not only accommodates but also integrates diverse identities within a unified national framework.

On the other hand, the philosophical inquiries of Immanuel Kant (2005) into the nature of peace and civil society, provides a third perspective on the interplay between autonomy and belonging. Kant argued for a federation of free states, a 'league of peace' where sovereign entities come together under a common law to ensure perpetual peace without sacrificing their autonomy. This model, emphasizing voluntary association and mutual respect among sovereign entities, underscores the importance of fostering a shared sense of belonging that transcends individual or regional identities. In the context of Somalia, Kant's ideas suggest that the federal state must work to cultivate a shared identity that binds together its diverse constituents, promoting a sense of belonging that supports both peace and unity.

In practical terms, the findings highlight a critical challenge for Somalia's federal governance model. As federal units become more autonomous, potentially exacerbating existing clan divisions, there is a risk that citizens' sense of belonging to the Somali nation-state may weaken. This scenario underscores the importance of implementing federal policies that not only respect the autonomy of federal units but also promote shared values, cultural integration, and national symbols that can foster a sense of belonging among all citizens. In post-conflict societies like Somalia, the relationship between autonomy and sense of belonging has direct implications for conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. The design of federal systems must consider how autonomy impacts social identities and group affiliations, aiming for a federalism that supports peace and reconciliation through shared belonging and national identity. This pattern observed between regional autonomy and national belonging is a delicate yet crucial aspect that needs to be navigated with strategic insight to ensure the long-term stability and unity of the Somali nation. The study's results emphasize the importance of a carefully designed federal system that balances autonomy with measures that nurture a strong, overarching national identity.

5.5. Correlation Between Federalism and Social Cohesion

The statistical analysis conducted in this study reveals a moderate to strong negative correlation between autonomy and social cohesion within the context of Somalia's federal system. This correlation, characterized by its statistical significance, sheds light on the relationship between the degree of autonomy granted to federal units and the levels of social cohesion experienced within these regions. The correlation coefficient, indicating a moderate to strong negative relationship, suggests that as autonomy increases within federal units, social cohesion tends to decrease. This finding is critical, as it points to a potential challenge in balancing regional autonomy with national unity—key components in the stability and functionality of a federal system.

The statistical significance of this correlation, often represented by a p-value less than 0.05, underscores the reliability of the findings, indicating that the observed relationship is not due to random chance but rather reflects a meaningful pattern within the data. The sample size plays a crucial role in determining the reliability and generalizability of the statistical analysis. A sufficiently large sample size ensures that the findings are representative of the broader population, reducing the margin of error and enhancing the study's validity. In this context, considerations of sample size also extend to ensuring adequate representation from various federal units, capturing the diversity of autonomy levels and social cohesion experiences across Somalia. A well-considered sample size bolsters the confidence in the correlation observed, providing a solid foundation for interpreting the impact of autonomy on social cohesion.

The moderate to strong negative correlation between autonomy and social cohesion has profound implications for understanding the dynamics within federal systems, particularly in context of Somalia. This relationship suggests that while autonomy is critical for addressing local needs and aspirations, it may also pose challenges to fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose among the population. The decrease in social cohesion associated with increased autonomy may result from various factors, including divergent policies and economic disparities that become more pronounced as regions exercise greater independence. This correlation prompts a re-evaluation of strategies aimed at enhancing social cohesion in federal structures. It highlights the need for mechanisms that can bridge the divide between regional autonomy and national unity, ensuring that the benefits of self-governance do not come at the expense of the social fabric that binds the nation together.

The moderate to strong negative correlation found between autonomy (self-rule) and social cohesion within Somalia's federal context presents a compelling case for theoretical reflection, especially when viewed through the lens of Daniel J. Elazar's (1987) concepts of "self-rule" and "shared rule." Elazar's framework, which is central to the understanding of federalism, posits that a successful federal system balances the autonomy of its constituent parts (self-rule) with the integration and cooperation necessary for a unified state (shared rule). The findings of this study, indicating that increased autonomy may lead to decreased social cohesion, invite a detailed examination of how these foundational principles of federalism interact in practice. The concept of self-rule emphasizes the importance of local autonomy, allowing federal units the freedom to govern according to their specific needs, traditions, and preferences. This autonomy is crucial for accommodating the diverse identities within a federal state, potentially enhancing the legitimacy and responsiveness of governance at the local level. However, the observed negative correlation with social cohesion suggests that, in isolation, self-rule may also foster divisions or emphasize differences that challenge the sense of belonging to a larger national community. This raises critical questions about how self-rule can be designed to support rather than undermine social cohesion. Shared rule, on the other hand, focuses on the mechanisms of integration and cooperation among the federal units and between the units and the central government. It is through shared rule that a sense of common identity and purpose is cultivated, promoting social cohesion across the diverse fabric of the federal state.

Reflecting on the findings in light of Elazar's (1987) concepts of self-rule and shared rule, it becomes evident that the balance between these two pillars of federalism is critical for maintaining social cohesion. The findings of this study highlight the importance of shared rule in counteracting the potential divisive effects of autonomy, suggesting that more robust mechanisms of shared governance might be necessary to foster unity and social cohesion within a federal system like Somalia's. This discrepancy between theory and practice invites a deeper exploration of how federal systems can enhance shared rule mechanisms to counterbalance the centrifugal forces of autonomy. The negative correlation between autonomy and social cohesion in Somalia's federal system highlights the complexities involved in operationalizing federalist principles. It underscores the need for innovative governance solutions that reinforce the bonds of shared rule, ensuring that the benefits of autonomy are complemented by a strong and cohesive national identity.

The core implication of the study is the understanding that while autonomy is essential for addressing local governance needs and respecting the diverse identities within Somalia, unrestrained autonomy may impede the development of a cohesive national identity and undermine social cohesion. The challenge, therefore, lies in navigating the autonomy-unity paradox: how to grant sufficient autonomy to federal units to meet their unique needs and aspirations while ensuring these units remain integral parts of a cohesive Somali nation. To address the potential divisive effects of autonomy on national cohesion, there's a need to strengthen federal governance mechanisms that promote shared rule and national integration. This could involve in establishing platforms and initiatives that facilitate cooperation and dialogue between different federal units. Such initiatives could focus on shared challenges like economic development, security, and environmental protection, fostering a sense of common purpose. It can also in involve in developing national policies in a manner that is inclusive of the diverse perspectives across Somalia's federal units. Involving regional representatives in the policy formulation process can ensure that national policies reflect the collective interests of the Somali people, enhancing national unity.

5.6. Correlation Between Federalism and Political Participation

The concept of political participation is a cornerstone of democratic societies, embodying the active engagement of citizens in the political process. Within federal systems, the distribution of power and autonomy across different levels of government presents a unique backdrop against which political participation unfolds. It raises compelling questions about how the decentralization of authority influences the participation of people in political life. This study is guided by a critical research question: How does increased autonomy within federal constituent units in Somalia correlate with the level of political participation among citizens? Stemming from this inquiry, the hypothesis posited a positive correlation between the autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia and the political participation of its citizens. It suggests that as regions gain more autonomy from central control, they foster environments that are more conducive to civic involvement. The study employed a comprehensive methodological framework consisting of both a correlation matrix and cross-tabulation analysis. This statistical tool was utilized to quantify the strength and direction of the relationship. By calculating the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient, the study provided a clear metric of how these variables interact within the Somali context.

The empirical investigation into the dynamics between autonomy and political participation within Somalia's federal system has yielded enlightening results, uncovering a moderate positive correlation between these two variables. The study identified a Spearman's rho value of 0.439, indicating a moderate positive correlation between the level of autonomy granted to federal units in Somalia and the degree of political participation observed within these regions. This correlation suggests that as federal units experience greater autonomy, there is a corresponding increase in political participation among the citizens. This relationship implies that autonomy might serve as a catalyst for political engagement, encouraging citizens to take an active role in the governance processes that directly affect their lives. The statistical significance of this correlation is noteworthy, reinforcing the robustness of the observed relationship between autonomy and political participation. A p-value less than 0.05 confirms that the correlation is not a product of random chance but indicates a genuine association between these variables within the context of Somalia's federal system. This statistical robustness provides a strong foundation for interpreting the implications of autonomy on political participation, offering empirical evidence to inform discussions on federal governance and democratic engagement.

Further analysis through cross-tabulation has elucidated how different levels of autonomy correlate with varying degrees of political participation. The results reveal a clear pattern: higher autonomy scores within federal units are consistently associated with increased political participation. This pattern suggests that autonomy acts as a catalyst for citizen involvement in the political process, potentially by empowering local governance structures, enhancing the relevance of political decisions to citizens' daily lives, and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility towards local and national governance. The empirical findings have several critical implications for understanding and enhancing political engagement within Somalia's federal units. The positive correlation suggests that granting autonomy to federal units can empower citizens, making political participation more meaningful and impactful. This empowerment likely stems from citizens' perception that they have a more direct influence on governance outcomes that reflect their preferences and needs. The findings underscore the importance of carefully designing autonomy arrangements to maximize political engagement. Policies that support the development of local governance capacities, ensure equitable resource distribution, and encourage inclusive political processes could further enhance political participation in autonomous regions.

The association between autonomy and increased political participation indicates that Somalia's federal structure has the potential to foster a vibrant democratic culture. Strengthening this structure requires a balanced approach that respects the autonomy of federal units while promoting integrated national policies that encourage political engagement across the country. The empirical findings indicating a moderate positive correlation between autonomy and political participation within Somalia's federal system present an intriguing point of analysis when compared with theoretical frameworks and literature on federalism and political engagement. This reflective analysis delves into how these findings align with or diverge from established expectations and considers the broader implications for Somalia's evolving federal structure. Theories of federalism often posit that a federal structure, by design, encourages political participation. The decentralization inherent in federalism theoretically brings governance closer to the people, making political processes more accessible and responsive to citizens' needs. The observed positive correlation between autonomy and political participation in Somalia supports this theoretical expectation, suggesting that increased autonomy can indeed stimulate higher levels of political engagement among citizens. This finding aligns with the principles articulated by scholars like Elazar (1987), who highlighted the dual benefits of "self-rule" and "shared rule" in fostering a vibrant political community.

The correlation also resonates with theories that view autonomy as a form of empowerment. By granting federal units the ability to govern according to local preferences and conditions, autonomy is presumed to incentivize political participation by making governance more relevant to citizens' lives. This perspective, which sees autonomy as a catalyst for democratic engagement, is reflected in the empirical data from Somalia, supporting the notion that federal structures can enhance political participation by empowering regional entities. While the positive correlation found in the Somali context supports many theoretical expectations, it also presents contrasts, especially when considering the diverse experiences of federal systems globally. For instance, in some federal systems, increased autonomy has been associated with feelings of detachment from the central government, leading to decreased political participation at the national level. The distinction in the Somali context suggests that the relationship between autonomy and political participation can be highly context-dependent, influenced by factors such as the historical development of the federal system, the distribution of resources, and the nature of political institutions.

Federalism, as a governance structure, has evolved through centuries of political thought, from its philosophical roots with Aristotle to its diverse modern implementations across the globe. This evolution reflects a continuous dialogue on the balance between unity and diversity—two fundamental principles that have guided the development of federal systems. The exploration of foundational theories by Althusius (1603), Montesquieu (1748), and Kant (2005) provides a deep well of insight into the complexities of federalism, particularly in relation to the dynamics between autonomy and political participation. Their contributions, while rooted in different historical contexts, collectively offer a theoretical framework for understanding how the balance of autonomy within a federal system can influence the nature and extent of political participation among citizens. Althusius proposed the concept of federalism as a symbiotic covenant, emphasizing the importance of cooperation and mutual benefit among diverse societal groups. He argued for a federative structure where smaller communities retain their autonomy yet are bound together by a collective agreement to form a larger political entity. Althusius' theory underscores the importance of bottom-up governance structures, suggesting that political participation is most effective when it emerges from the autonomy of smaller, cohesive groups. In this light, autonomy is not merely a grant of power but a foundational principle that encourages active engagement and cooperation across different layers of governance.

Similarly, Montesquieu (1748) laid the groundwork for the modern understanding of the separation of powers, a principle that underpins many federal systems today. Montesquieu argued that liberty is best preserved by dividing governmental power among different branches and levels, thus preventing tyranny and promoting a balanced governance structure. Montesquieu's theory is directly relevant to the dynamics of autonomy and political participation, illustrating how the distribution of power within a federal system can enhance democratic engagement by preventing the concentration of power and protecting individual liberties. The separation of powers, including the devolution of powers to regional or local governments, creates multiple avenues for political participation, enabling citizens to engage with and influence different levels of government. Kant (1795), on the other hand, proposed a federation of free states as a means to achieve lasting peace. He envisioned a voluntary association of states that, while maintaining their sovereignty, agree to abide by common laws in the interest of peace and cooperation. His vision of federalism emphasizes the role of mutual respect and cooperation among sovereign entities, a concept that extends to the relationship between autonomy and political participation.

Kant suggests (1975) that a federal system based on the principles of freedom and mutual respect fosters a political environment where participation is both a right and a duty. Autonomy, in this framework, is coupled with the responsibility to engage in the political process, both within and between states, in a manner that respects the autonomy of others. The examination of modern federalist thought, particularly Riker's (1964) bargaining theory of federalism, offers a contemporary lens through which to analyze the dynamics of federal systems, including the interplay between autonomy and political participation. Riker's theory, which emphasizes the role of negotiation and strategic bargaining in the formation and operation of federal systems, provides valuable insights into the complexities of managing diverse interests within a federated structure. This perspective is especially relevant for understanding the implications of federalism in the Somali context, a setting marked by clan-based politics, regional disparities, and the ongoing effort to build a cohesive national identity. Riker (1964) posits that the formation of a federal system is fundamentally a strategic bargaining process between potential member states or regions. According to Riker, federal systems emerge when states choose to unite under a federal structure to achieve collective goals that they cannot accomplish independently, such as defence or economic development. This decision to federate involves a negotiation of terms that balance the autonomy of member states with the powers granted to the federal government.

In Somalia, clan dynamics play a critical role in political negotiations and the distribution of power. Riker's bargaining theory of federalism can shed light on how these dynamics influence the formation and functioning of Somalia's federal system. The process of federating and negotiating autonomy levels for federal states in Somalia can be understood as a form of strategic bargaining, where clans and regions negotiate their terms of participation in the federal system to maximize their autonomy while contributing to national unity. Riker's theory suggests that the sustainability of a federal system depends on the ability to negotiate agreements that respect the autonomy of member states while ensuring their commitment to shared national objectives. This has implications for how autonomy is structured and granted, with the need for continuous negotiation and adaptation to accommodate changing political and social dynamics. As federal units negotiate their levels of autonomy, the outcomes of these negotiations can significantly impact the avenues and extent of political participation available to citizens within those units. Where autonomy agreements balance local governance needs with national integration, political participation may be enhanced as citizens engage with both local and federal governance processes.

Conversely, imbalances or perceived inequities in autonomy arrangements may dampen political participation if citizens feel disconnected from or marginalized by the federal system. The study's findings, indicating a moderate positive correlation between autonomy and political participation within Somalia's federal system, highlight the critical role of autonomy in fostering political engagement. These insights underscore the need for policies and initiatives that not only respect the autonomy of federal units but also actively promote political participation at the local level. By balancing autonomy with efforts to enhance national unity and identity, Somalia can strengthen its democratic processes and governance structures. The study contributes significantly to the discourse on federalism, autonomy, and political engagement, offering an insightful understanding relevant not only to Somalia but also to other divided societies navigating the complex terrain of federal governance and democratic participation. The findings also indicate federal systems worldwide to consider the design and implementation of governance models that promote autonomy as a means of enhancing political participation. However, the degree of autonomy must be carefully calibrated. Too little may fail to motivate citizens, while too much could lead to fragmentation and a weakening of national unity.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to chart a course for actionable strategies, drawing from the insightful understanding of how increased autonomy can catalyse civic engagement. The objective is to provide well-informed, scholarly recommendations designed to strengthen the democratic infrastructure of Somalia, a task that necessitates a thoughtful consideration of the equilibrium between local autonomy and collective national unity. The study aims to propose solutions that are not only grounded in the rich insights derived from empirical data but also resonate with the expressed desires and expectations of Somali citizens. These solutions should be in harmony with the fundamental objectives of Somalia's federal system, reinforcing its ability to accommodate diverse regional aspirations while ensuring a cohesive national strategy.

6.2. Recommendations

The study proposes a set of scholarly recommendations derived from the findings of the study. These recommendations aim to enhance the theoretical understanding and practical application of federalism within the context of Somalia's ongoing efforts to foster national identity and cohesion.

1. The study proposes the development of a national education curriculum aimed at fostering a cohesive national identity. This curriculum would be comprehensive in its inclusion of national history, civic education, and cultural literacy, allowing students to gain a deep understanding of the Somali nation as an interconnected community. The focus would be on instilling values of solidarity, mutual respect, and civic responsibility, with a special emphasis on the importance of social cohesion and the active role individuals play within it. Through this educational strategy, young people would be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to participate in constructive dialogue and contribute meaningfully to community and national life, celebrating regional distinctiveness within the unity of the national framework.

2. The study suggests fostering cooperative federalism and inclusive development planning. The federal system of Somalia should actively promote inter-regional cooperation. By involving regional stakeholders in collaborative planning processes, alignment between regional initiatives and national development objectives can be achieved. This alignment should maintain a degree of flexibility to honor regional specificities while adhering to national standards, thereby reconciling local needs with overarching national goals. Such an approach encourages regions to contribute uniquely to the nation's progress, deepening their involvement in a shared journey towards prosperity and reinforcing a collective sense of identity and purpose within the federal framework. This cooperative and inclusive model of policymaking is posited to bolster national cohesion and advance Somalia's federal agenda.

3. The study recommends that Somalia's federal governance structures undertake comprehensive reforms to strengthen the country's electoral systems and processes. This would involve ensuring transparency, fairness, and widespread accessibility to all citizens, thereby creating an inclusive political landscape conducive to fair competition. Efforts should be made to dismantle barriers impede the participation of all groups, including minorities and marginalized communities, in the political process. This includes facilitating entry for new parties, providing voter education to elucidate electoral rights and the significance of participation, and fostering environments that support free and equitable election practices. Moreover, governance should be inherently participatory, with decision-making processes at every level being open to public input through consultations, community meetings, and other mechanisms that engage citizens directly in governance.

4. The study endorses the creation of a broad-based civil society engagement platform that is representative of Somalia's diverse demographic makeup. This initiative should aim to inclusively address critical national issues, ensuring that the voices and concerns of all citizens are integrated into the national discourse. It should further facilitate ongoing national dialogues through diverse forums, town hall meetings, and digital platforms, providing equitable opportunities for individuals from all federal units and societal groups to actively participate in discussions that shape the national agenda. Such dialogues are essential for fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring that every citizen feels their contributions are valued.

5. The study recommends the establishment of a structured network of peace and reconciliation forums across national and regional levels in Somalia. These forums would serve as dedicated venues for addressing and redressing historical grievances and conflicts, facilitating dialogue, fostering mutual understanding, and promoting healing. Such initiatives are critical for acknowledging the complexities of the past while laying the groundwork for a unified and reconciled future. By providing spaces where diverse communities can collectively engage in the peacebuilding process, these forums would play a pivotal role in the construction of a resilient and cohesive national fabric.

6. The study proposes the establishment of a comprehensive program aimed at strengthening Somalia's national identity through the integration of historical documentation and cultural celebrations. This program would involve a national history project in collaboration with local historians and community leaders to create a shared narrative that celebrates the distinct and collective experiences of Somalia's diverse regions. Furthermore, the program would incorporate a national service component, where participants from different regions contribute to nationally significant projects, promoting unity and shared purpose. Central to this initiative would be the creation of enduring national monuments and cultural institutions that serve as custodians of Somalia’s rich historical legacy and contemporary cultural achievements.

7. The study suggests the development of transportation infrastructure in Somalia as a critical pathway to foster national identity, cohesion, and attachment, addressing simultaneously the pressing security challenges. By investing in accessible, secure, and efficient transportation networks, the initiative seeks to significantly improve the mobility of Somali citizens. Such improvements are pivotal for facilitating greater social interaction and economic integration, which are essential for overcoming the divisions fostered by prolonged conflict. The study underlines an integrated strategy that combines mobility enhancement with broader security and development initiatives, emphasizing that improved mobility can serve as a catalyst for national integration. This approach encourages the government and civil society to leverage new transportation networks for organizing events that promote unity, thereby directly addressing the fractures caused by civil war.

6.3. Areas for Future Research

The following areas could be explored by future research:

1. Longitudinal Studies on Federalism and Identity: Future research could involve longitudinal studies to track changes in national identity and regional autonomy over time, providing insights into the evolving nature of federalism in Somalia.

2. Impact of Economic Development on Federal Dynamics: Investigating how economic development within federal units impacts their governance, autonomy, and relationship with the central government could provide valuable insights into the economic dimensions of federalism.

3. Comparative Studies with Other Federal Systems: Comparative research with other federal states, particularly those with similar socio-political contexts, could yield important lessons and strategies for managing diversity and fostering national unity.

4. Role of External Actors and International Aid: Exploring the influence of external actors, including international aid organizations and foreign governments, on Somalia's federal structure and national cohesion would be a significant area of study.

5. Impact of Federalism on Social Services and Welfare: Research focused on how federalism affects the delivery and quality of social services and welfare programs across different regions could inform policies aimed at equitable service provision.

6. Public Perception and Engagement with Federalism: Studies on how the Somali population perceives and engages with the federal system, including attitudes towards regional autonomy and national identity, would offer wider perspectives.

By addressing these recommendations and exploring these research areas, Somalia can continue to refine its federal model, catering to its unique challenges and opportunities. Such efforts will not only contribute to the academic discourse on federalism but also to the practical realities of nation-building in complex, multi-ethnic societies.

6.4. Conclusion

The study has concluded in several pivotal insights, drawing on the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. Synthesizing the hypotheses and research questions with the empirical findings presents an insightful landscape of federal governance and social dynamics. The study's hypotheses posited a negative association between the autonomy of federal constituent units in Somalia and various dimensions of national identity – namely, citizens' identification with the national government, national attachment, a sense of national belonging, and social cohesion. In contrast, increased autonomy was hypothesized to correlate positively with political participation. The empirical analysis, supported by Spearman's rho calculations, confirmed these hypotheses to a varying degree, revealing a complex picture where increased autonomy is indeed associated with lower levels of national identity but encourages greater political participation. These findings imply that as federal units gain more autonomy, there may be a noticeable distancing from a unified national identity and cohesion. However, this distancing is not necessarily overwhelming, especially in the case of national attachment, which showed only a weak negative correlation. In contrast, the positive correlation between autonomy and political participation highlights a different facet of correlation with autonomy, suggesting that as regions exercise more self-governance, citizens become more politically active. This underscores the potential for autonomy to enhance democratic engagement within federal systems. The broader implications of these findings for federalism theory and practice are profound. They indicate that while autonomy can serve as a catalyst for political participation and local governance, it may simultaneously pose challenges to national identity. Thus, the adoption of federalism requires a balance, maintaining enough national cohesion to preserve a sense of shared identity and purpose, while allowing for regional self-governance that can strengthen political participation. This balance is not static but requires ongoing adjustment and recalibration to align with the nation's evolving socio-political landscape. The insights gathered from Somalia’s federal experience can inform global federal practices, emphasizing the importance of adaptive federal structures that are responsive to the needs and identities of their constituent populations. The study paves the way for future research to further discover the complexities of this balance, contributing to the development of federal systems that harmonize regional empowerment with national unity and democratic vibrancy.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent

I am Mustafa Mohamed Ali, a PhD Candidate researcher at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration of Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University. This research aims to study the relationship between federalism and national identity in Somalia. It tests the relationship between the autonomy of the federal constituent units and citizens' identity, national attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation.

This questionnaire contains 28 question items, and it should only take about 20 minutes to respond. Participation in this study is voluntary. You are not obliged to respond any of the questions, and you can withdraw your participation at any time. Your information is very useful for the study. Please give your sincere and objective opinion as much as you can. All information you provide will be strictly confidential and solely used for academic purpose. Thank you very much for your acceptance and commitment to participate in this study.

Mustafa Mohamed Ali
PhD Candidate
Ankara Yildirim Beyazit
University Email:

Section A: Personal Information	Please choose the applicable category		
Gender	☐ Male	☐ Female	
Age (Years)	☐ 18 – 29	☐ 30 – 39	☐ 40 – 49
	☐ 50 – 59	☐ 60 and above	
Level of Education	☐ No formal education	☐ Secondary	☐ Bachelor
	☐ Master	☐ PhD	
Federal Constituent Unit	☐ Somaliland	☐ Puntland	☐ Southwest
	☐ Jubaland	☐ Galmudug	☐ Hirshabelle
	☐ Banadir Regional Administration		
Duration being Lived in the Federal Constituent Unit (Years)	☐ Less than a year	☐ 1 – 5	☐ 6 – 10
	☐ 11 – 15	☐ 16 – 20	☐ More than 21 years

Section B: Questions	Please answer the below questions choosing one of the given options

Federalism

1. Which one of the following statements best demonstrates the institutional autonomy of the federal constituent unit you live in?

- **a.** ☐ It has no assembly, but has an executive nominated by the central government.
- **b.** ☐ It has a selected assembly and an executive elected by the assembly.
- **c.** ☐ It has an indirectly elected assembly and an executive responsible to the assembly.
- **d.** ☐ It has a directly elected assembly and executive elected by the assembly.
- **e.** ☐ It has both directly elected assembly and executive.

2. Which one of the following statements best demonstrates the policy autonomy of the federal constituent unit you live in?

- **a.** ☐ It has executive responsibilities only.
- **b.** ☐ It has the power to enact secondary legislation in at least two of the following areas: economic policy, cultural-educational policy, welfare state policy.
- **c.** ☐ It has the power to enact primary legislation in one of the following areas— economic policy, cultural-educational policy, welfare state policy—concurrently with central government.
- **d.** ☐ It has the exclusive power to enact primary legislation in one of the following areas—economic policy, cultural-educational policy, welfare state policy.

3. Which one of the following statements best demonstrates the fiscal autonomy of the federal constituent unit you live in?

- **a.** ☐ It is primarily financed from conditional transfers from the federal government.
- **b.** ☐ It is primarily financed from a mix of conditional transfers and own revenues.
- **c.** ☐ It is primarily financed from a mix of unconditional transfers—including revenue-sharing—and own revenues.
- **d.** ☐ It is primarily financed from own revenues

Identity

4. Would you define yourself as a Somali, federal constituent unit citizen, or a clan member?

a. ☐ a Somali **b.** ☐ a federal constituent unit citizen **c.** ☐ a clan member

5. Different people have different ways of defining themselves. Which one of the following do you consider yourself to be:

- **a.** ☐ a Somali only **b.** ☐ a clan member only **c.** ☐ a federal constituent unit citizen only
- **d.** ☐ both a Somali and a clan member **e.** ☐ both a Somali and a federal constituent unit citizen
- **f.** ☐ both a clan member and a federal constituent unit citizen
- **g.** ☐ equally a Somali, a clan member, and a federal constituent unit citizen

5.1. Please answer this question only if you consider yourself to be 'both a Somali and a clan member', which one of the following do you consider yourself to be:

- **a.** ☐ a Somali first but also a clan member
- **b.** ☐ a clan member first but also a Somali
- **c.** ☐ equally a Somali and a clan member

5.2. Please answer this question only if you consider yourself to be 'both a Somali and a federal constituent unit citizen', which one of the following do you consider yourself to be:

a. ☐ a Somali first but also a federal constituent unit citizen
b. ☐ a federal constituent unit citizen first but also a Somali
c. ☐ equally a Somali and a federal constituent unit citizen

5.3. Please answer this question only if you consider yourself to be 'both a clan member and a federal constituent unit citizen', which one of the following do you consider yourself to be:

a. ☐ a federal constituent unit citizen first but also a clan member
b. ☐ a clan member first but also a federal constituent unit citizen
c. ☐ equally a clan member and a federal constituent unit citizen

National Attachment

6. To what extent do you feel that you are profoundly attached to:	**a.** Very Attached	**b.** Somewhat Attached	**c.** Not Very Attached	**d.** Not at All Attached	**e.** Can't Choose
6.1. Somalia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.2. Federal Constituent Unit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. How close do you feel to:	**a.** Very Close	**b.** Close	**c.** Neutral	**d.** Not Very Close	**e.** Not close at all
7.1. Your town or city	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.2. Your federal constituent unit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.3. Your country, Somalia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Sense of Belonging

8. Some people have a stronger sense of belonging to some things than others. Please tell me how strong your own personal sense of belonging is to each of the following:	**a.** Very Strong	**b.** Somewhat Strong	**c.** Not Very Strong	**d.** Not at All Strong
8.1. Somalia	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.2. Your Federal Constituent unit	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	**a.** Strongly Agree	**b.** Agree	**c.** Neither Agree nor Disagree	**d.** Disagree	**e.** Strongly Disagree
9.1. ''I feel proud of being a member of this country''	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.2. ''Despite its many defects this country is still our home''	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. Do you feel that you are more a citizen of Somalia or more a citizen of the Federal Constituent unit?

a. ☐ More citizen of Somalia **b.** ☐ More citizen of the federal constituent unit

11. Who do you feel most closely affiliated with? (answer in percentages)

a. The Somali people _____ **b.** Fellow clan members _____

c. Fellow federal constituent unit citizens _____ **d.** Fellow townspeople _____

e. People who have the same profession _____ **f.** People who share your hobby _____

g. Fellow members of clubs and associations _____ **h.** Fellow party members _____

12. Some people say that the following things are important for being truly Somali. Others say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following is... (Please, check one box on each line)	**a.** Very important	**b.** Fairly important	**c.** Not very important	**d.** Not important at all	**e.** Can't choose
12.1. to have been born in Somalia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.2. to have Somali citizenship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.3. to have lived in Somalia for most of one's life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.4. to be able to speak Somali	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.5. to be a Muslim	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.6. to respect the Somalia political institutions and laws	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.7. to feel Somali	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.8. to have Somali ancestry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. How proud are you of being Somali?	**a.** Very proud	**b.** Somewhat Proud	**c.** Not Very Proud	**d.** Not Proud at All	**e.** Can't choose
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. How proud are you of Somalia in each of the following?	**a.** Very proud	**b.** Somewhat Proud	**c.** Not Very Proud	**d.** Not Proud at All	**e.** Can't choose
14.1. the way democracy works	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.2. its political system	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.3. its economic achievements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.4. its social security system	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.5. its armed forces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.6. its history	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.7. its fair and equal treatment of all groups in society	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Social Cohesion

15. On a 0 – 100 scale, how much trust or confidence do you have with the following personalities and institutions?

15.1. The president of the federal republic _____ **15.2.** The president of the federal constituent unit _____

15.3. The legislators of the federal government _____ **15.4.** The legislators of the federal constituent unit _____

15.5. The clan elder _____

16. How often do you think the federal government in can be trusted to do the right thing for the Somali people?

a. ☐ Almost always **b.** ☐ Most of the time

c. ☐ Only some of the time, or **d.** ☐ Almost never

17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	**a.** Strongly Agree	**b.** Agree	**c.** Neither Agree nor Disagree	**d.** Disagree	**e.** Strongly Disagree
17.1. ''Do not trust people so easily in this country''	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17.2. ''People in this country are always out to take advantage of you''	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17.3. ''People in this country are not to be easily trusted''	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Would you be less willing to cooperate with your colleagues if he/she has the following background?	**a.** Strongly Agree	**b.** Agree	**c.** Neither Agree nor Disagree	**d.** Disagree	**e.** Strongly Disagree
18.1. He/she is from a higher social stratum than yours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.2. He/she is from a lower social stratum than yours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.3. His/her political view is much different than yours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.4. He/she is from another clan other than yours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.5. He/she is from another federal constituent unit other than yours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	**a.** Strongly Agree	**b.** Agree	**c.** Neither Agree nor Disagree	**d.** Disagree	**e.** Strongly Disagree
19.1. I would like to spare part of my leisure time to do voluntary work/help others'	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19.2. I am willing to pay more tax if that could improve social welfare	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. Have you done any unpaid voluntary work in the last 12 months?

a. ☐ Yes **b.** ☐ No

20.1. If yes, how often do you participate in voluntary activity?

a. ☐ At least once a week **b.** ☐ At least once a month **c.** ☐ Three to four times a year

d. ☐ At least once a year **e.** ☐ Less often than once a year

21. Keeping in mind your local area is within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance of where you live, to what extent do you agree with the following statements:	**a.** Strongly Agree	**b.** Agree	**c.** Neither Agree nor Disagree	**d.** Disagree	**e.** Strongly Disagree
21.1. People in my local area are willing to help their neighbors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21.2. My local area is a place where people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21.3. I am able to have a real say on issues that are important to me in my local area.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21.4. I like meeting and getting to know people from clan and cultural groups other than my own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21.5. I often spend time with people from clan or cultural groups other than my own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21.6. I often help my neighbors and friends on matters like household work, financial problems and emotional problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Political Participation

22. Are you a member of a political party or similar political organization? **a.** ☐ Yes **b.** ☐ No

22.1. If "yes", could you describe your depth of participation in the above organization?

a. ☐ Mere member **b.** ☐ Regular event helper **c.** ☐ chief organizer

22.1.1. If you are a chief organizer of the above organization, could you please tell us if there are any other groups in society that your organization:

a. regularly cooperates with? (please specify) _____

b. be unwilling to collaborate with? (please specify) _____

23. Please tell me which, if any, of the following you have done over the last three years or so?

a. ☐ Voted in an election **b.** ☐ Signed a petition **c.** ☐ Written or spoken to a member of the federal parliament
d. ☐ Written or spoken to member of the state parliament **e.** ☐ Attended a protest, march, or demonstration
f. ☐ None of the above

24. Have you experienced discrimination because of your clan origin over the last three years?

a. ☐ Yes **b.** ☐ No

25. Please answer these questions by placing on a scale of 0 – 100, where 0 represents a very negative feeling and 100 represents a very positive feeling.

25.1. How do you feel about Somalia? _____

25.2. How do you feel about your federal constituent unit? _____

26. Generally, do you think that the federal government should have... much more, more, as much, less, or much less power than its federal constituent units?

a. ☐ Much more **b.** ☐ More **c.** ☐ As much **d.** ☐ Less **e.** ☐ Much less **f.** ☐ Can't choose

27. Would you say the system of government in Somalia works fine as it is, needs minor change, needs major change, or should be replaced?

a. ☐ Works fine as it is **b.** ☐ Needs minor change **c.** ☐ Needs major change **d.** ☐ Should be replaced

28. In general, are you optimistic or pessimistic about Somalia's future?

a. ☐ Very optimistic **b.** ☐ Optimistic **c.** ☐ (Neither optimistic nor pessimistic)
d. ☐ Pessimistic **e.** ☐ Very pessimistic

APPENDIX II

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PLEASE TAKE A TIME TO READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY

We invite you to the research titled "**Federalism and National Identity in Somalia**" conducted by **Mustafa Mohamed Ali** Before deciding whether or not to participate in this research, you need to know why and how the research will be conducted. Therefore, it is very important to read and understand this form. If there is something that you do not understand and is not clear to you, or if you want more information, ask us.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate in the study or to withdraw from the study at any time after participating. Your response to the study will be interpreted as your consent to participate in the study. Do not be under pressure or suggestion from anyone while answering the questions on the forms given to you. The information obtained from these forms will be used for research purposes only.

1. **Research Related Information:**
    a. Purpose of the Research: This research aims to study the relationship between federalism and identity in Somalia. It tests the relationship between the autonomy of the federal constituent units and citizens' identity, national attachment, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and political participation.
    b. Content of the Research: Federalism and Identity Politics in Somalia
    c. Reason for Research: □ Scientific research □Thesis study
    d. D. Projected Duration of the Research: 45 days
    e. Number of Participants/Volunteers Expected to Participate in the Research: 384
    f. Place(s) of Research: Ten districts in Somalia, namely; Abudwaq, Baidoa, Bosaso, Dusamareb, Galkaio, Hamarweyne, Hodan, Marka, Wadajir, Yakshid

2. Consent to Participate in the Study:

I have read the information above and should be given to the participant/volunteer before the research and I fully understand the scope and purpose of the study I am asked to participate in, and my responsibilities as a volunteer.

Written and verbal explanations about the study were made by the researcher named below, I had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss, and I received satisfactory answers. I was also verbally explained to me the possible risks and benefits of the study.

I understood that I can leave this work whenever I want and without having to give any reason, and that I will not face any negativity if I quit.

In these conditions, I agree to participate in the research in question voluntarily, without any pressure or coercion.

Participant's (own handwriting)

Name-Surname: .....

Signature:

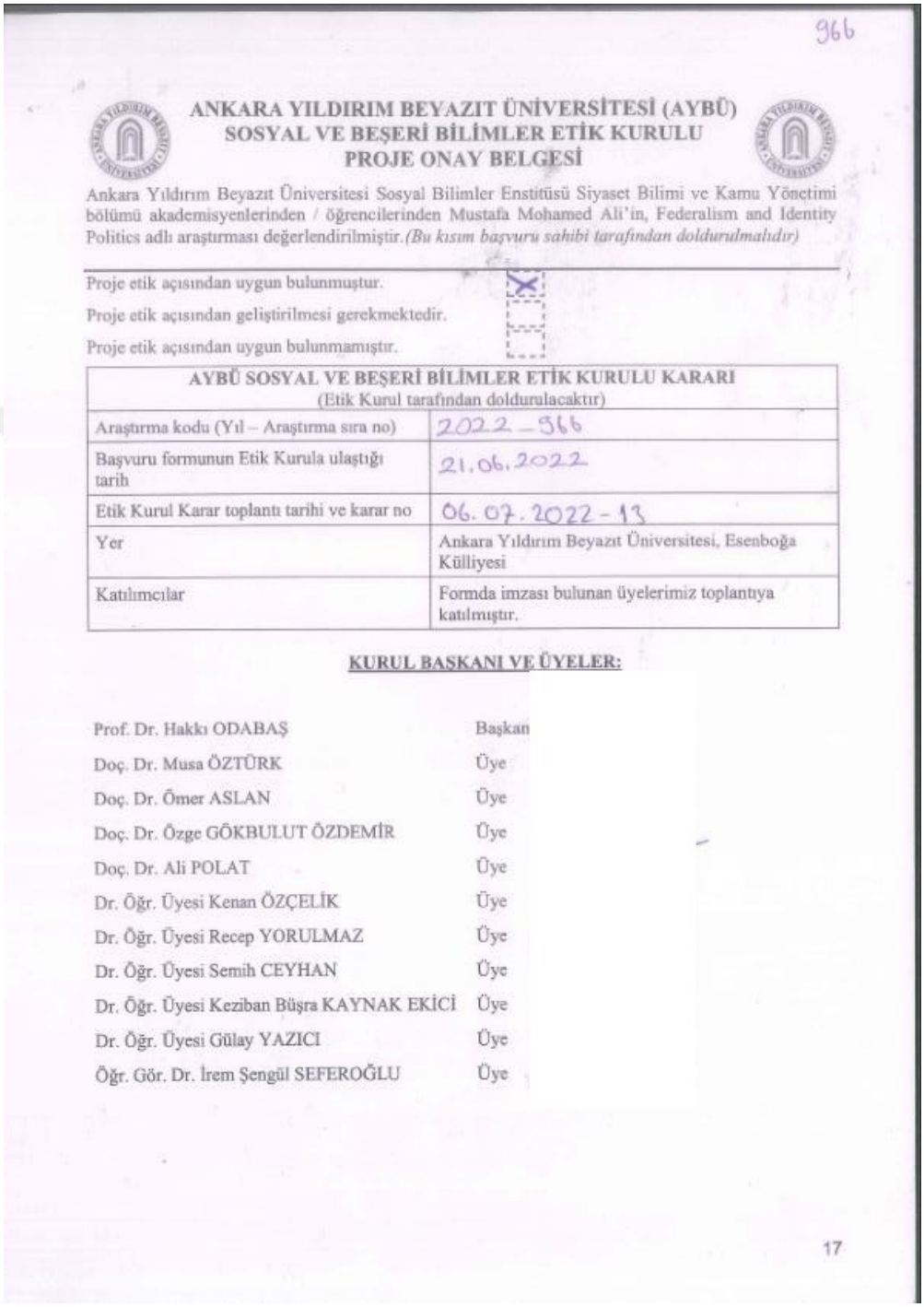
For Those Under Custody or Guardianship (if any);

Parent or Guardian (in own handwriting)

Name-Surname: .....

APPENDIX III

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL DOCUMENT



966

ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT ÜNİVERSİTESİ (AYBÜ)
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ETİK KURULU
PROJE ONAY BELGESİ

Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi bölümü akademisyenlerinden / öğrencilerinden Mustafa Mohamed Ali'in, Federalism and Identity Politics adlı araştırması değerlendirilmiştir. *(Bu kısım başvuru sahibi tarafından doldurulmalıdır)*

Proje etik açısından uygun bulunmuştur.	☒
Proje etik açısından geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir.	☐
Proje etik açısından uygun bulunmamıştır.	☐

AYBÜ SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ETİK KURULU KARARI (Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır)	
Araştırma kodu (Yıl – Araştırma sıra no)	2022 – 966
Başvuru formunun Etik Kurula ulaştığı tarih	21.06.2022
Etik Kurul Karar toplantı tarihi ve karar no	06.07.2022 – 13
Yer	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Esenboğa Külliyesi
Katılımcılar	Formda imzası bulunan üyelerimiz toplantıya katılmıştır.

KURUL BAŞKANI VE ÜYELER:

Prof. Dr. Hakkı ODABAŞ	Başkan
Doç. Dr. Musa ÖZTÜRK	Üye
Doç. Dr. Ömer ASLAN	Üye
Doç. Dr. Özge GÖKBULUT ÖZDEMİR	Üye
Doç. Dr. Ali POLAT	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Kenan ÖZÇELİK	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Recep YORULMAZ	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Semih CEYHAN	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Keziban Büşra KAYNAK EKİCİ	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Gülay YAZICI	Üye
Öğr. Gör. Dr. İrem Şengül SEFEROĞLU	Üye

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