

**ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLUTION ON KENYA'S CROSS-  
BORDER RELATIONS WITH SOMALIA: A CASE OF WAJIR COUNTY 2018-**

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## DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

### Declaration by the Student

This research study is my original work and has not been presented to any other Institution. No part of this research should be reproduced without the authors' consent or that of Mount Kenya University.

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### Approval by the Supervisor

This research project has been submitted with my approval as The Mount Kenya University Supervisor.

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## DEDICATION

Special dedication goes to my parents, especially my father, for their support and encouragement throughout my studies.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Adan Jarso for his guidance, encouragement, and helpful advice during the whole process of this research project. My sincere appreciation also goes to all colleagues and friends who have provided assistance at various occasions. Lastly but not least, to my family for their continued support.



## ABSTRACT

Devolution was implemented immediately following the promulgation of Kenya's constitution 2010, however little is known about its impacts to cross-border relations. Therefore, this study sought to examine the influence of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia with special focus on Wajir County. In particular, the study sought to evaluate the influence of devolution on security dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia border, to assess the changes in socio-economic interactions between communities living along this border and finally to establish the challenges and opportunities faced in governance and administrative structures at the bordering counties. Rational choice theory is employed by the study in explaining how devolution affects cross-border relation especially communities living along Somalia-Kenya border. The used mixed type of research which combines both quantitative and qualitative. The study used a descriptive research design, and the targeted population was 522,812 residents of Wajir, community leaders, government officials (both national and county levels), and local civil society organizations. The study used Yamane's (1967) sampling formula to calculate a sample of 204 and employed a stratified random sampling technique to identify individuals who participated in providing information relating to the topic study. Questionnaires used as data collection instruments. An analysis of quantitative data was done using the SPSS version 22.0 while qualitative information generated from open-ended questions were categorized in form of themes. Study findings were presented in the form of frequency and percentages. The result of this study is expected to demonstrate influence of devolution beyond counties and try to explain how it can build cross-border relationships. The study found that respondents note that well-managed elective seats in the region have reduced political competition resulting to tension and violence; hence some communities had relied on their relatives across the borders for support and devolution has reduced such activities. It also showed that majority 65% of the respondents said that community members from Wajir county regularly have discussions with their counterparts in Somalia side. The study recommends that there is need for national government to support local administration to ensure all parts of the county contribute to cross border relations. Also, county government can formulate policies that seeks to enhance communication between Kenya authorities and those in Somalia. Further studies can be conducted to examine role of devolution in other counties along the border of other countries such as Ethiopia and South Sudan or Uganda.

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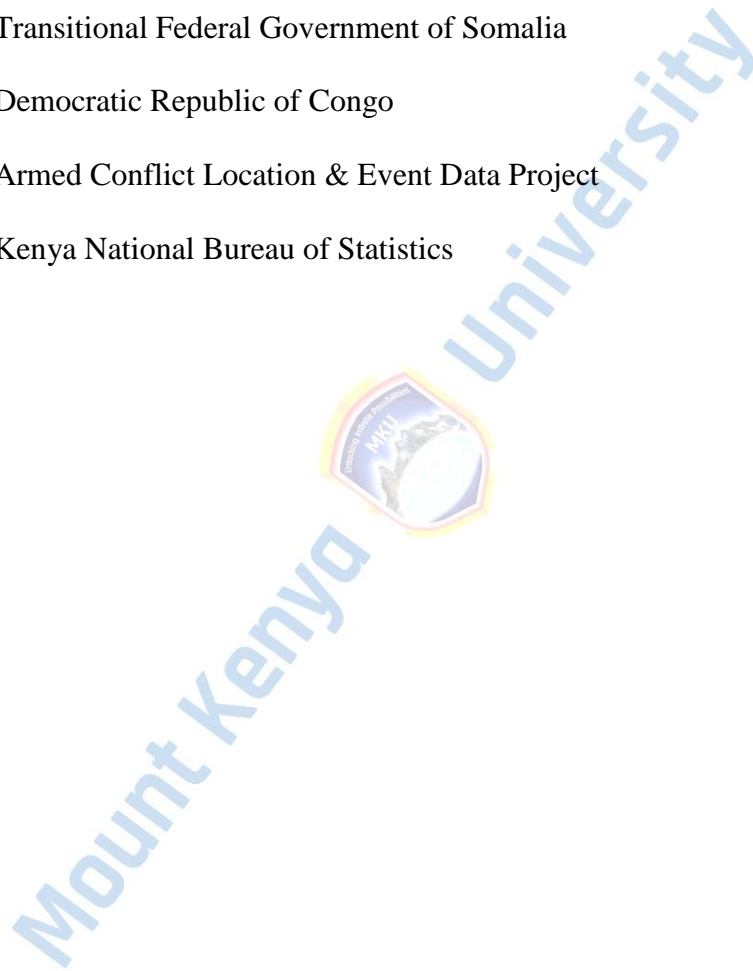


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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>UK:</b>	United Kingdom
<b>US:</b>	United States
<b>FCDC:</b>	Frontier Counties Development Council
<b>NFD:</b>	Northern Frontier District
<b>IGAD:</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>TFGS:</b>	Transitional Federal Government of Somalia
<b>DRC:</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>ACLED:</b>	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
<b>KNBS:</b>	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

In many nations, the concepts of devolution and development have grown increasingly intertwined. This was first seen in the emergence of nationalism and, more recently, in the emergence of divided regions that saw themselves as lagging behind increasingly affluent areas (Chaudhary, 2019). Originally, these territorial complaints were subdued by a centrally administered regional strategy, which was a tool used by succeeding administrations to try to reduce economic disparities between regions by shifting jobs from richer to poorer areas (May, Nolke & Brink, 2021). Regarding the levels of government, these reforms have resulted in a devolution that has fundamentally reshaped local administrative frameworks and authorities. As a result, examining how devolution affects international relations becomes an intriguing academic endeavor, particularly in light of the fact that so few works have addressed this topic explicitly to date (Minas, 2009).

According to Greer (2019), one of the most common types of restructuring is devolution or decentralization, which contributes to the idea of the state as "a (political) process in motion." According to Blunkett et al. (2016), devolution is a potent type of decentralization because it establishes locally elected governments that have the authority to decide how best to provide services. Subnational legitimacy underpins the global trend towards devolution, which suggests increased transfers of power and resources from the federal government to the states or regions. Like in earlier decentralization waves, regional legitimacy typically includes historical, linguistic, religious, and/or cultural foundations. Decentralization has been made possible by states and regions that have their own unique ethnic, historical, cultural, or linguistic

identities (Fombad, 2018). One of the main and explicit goals of devolution in the UK was to solve long-standing issues with quango legitimacy and accountability.

Local governments can facilitate dialogue and reconciliation processes among different communities, fostering social cohesion and addressing historical grievances. In an attempt to guarantee functional and efficient local administration that would address local demands, Nigeria's local government system has undergone multiple stages of evolution (Odigbo, 2013). He argued that these stages, especially during colonialism, recorded several political bruises. Ghana, where people frequently reject leaders chosen by the national government, is one country where the 1992 constitutional acknowledgment of political decentralization has reignited interest in the concept (Tunio, &Nabi, 2021). This suggests that there are still a lot of divisions regarding political and administrative autonomy for local government, as well as resource management, among the various levels of government. Local governments can establish and manage conflict resolution mechanisms tailored to their specific contexts, which can be more effective than top-down approaches.

In East Africa, Kenya's attempts to increase its economic and political power has been undermined by its relations with neighboring countries (Lesutis, 2021). For instance, after former President Uhuru Kenyatta welcomed the political leadership from Somaliland, a breakaway state that is not recognized by Somalia's central government, Somalia severed diplomatic ties with Kenya in December 2020 and accused Kenya of interfering in its internal affairs (Kagwima, 2022). History shows that Somalia has previously claimed the land of the northeastern Kenya region, which was primarily inhabited by Somali speakers, therefore such measures are not new (Chau, 2010).

Following the adoption of the 2010 Constitution, Kenya adopted a decentralized form of governance, with the Executive and Legislature—the two of the three branches of government—being devolved to the 47 Political and Administrative Counties in accordance with Article 6 (Ngigi, & Busolo, 2019). Decentralization's main goal was to transfer authority, funds, and representation to the local level (Steeves, 2015). Devolution was considered the key to distributing duties and unleashing Kenya's economic potential (Barasa et al., 2017). According to Ngigi and Busolo (2019), decentralization enabled counties to recognize issues, formulate policies, arrange and gather funds, carry out budgetary procedures, handle accounting and audits, and involve citizens in the decision-making process. The Constitution's Article 174 outlined a number of improvements to devolution, such as granting the people more autonomy over their own government and increasing their involvement in the process of exercising that authority to make decisions that impact them. Additionally, the Article acknowledged communities' rights to self-govern and advance their own development (Barasa, et al., 2017). Although the national government is still solely responsible for negotiating Kenyan issues, a large portion of the policy content in this field now directly affects transferred and devolved subjects. Because county governments and Somalian citizens share many characteristics, it is believed that they can assist the national government in fostering cross-border cooperation.

Wajir County forms part of the former Northeastern Province. The county is characterized by large uncharted terrains predominantly underdeveloped years prior to devolution. As such the devolution system was introduced in the constitution 2010, it sought to redress some historical marginalization of pastoral regions in the Northeastern (Lind, 2018). Wajir county covers an area of 55,841km<sup>2</sup> (County Government of Wajir, 2018). In addition, the county is considered primarily

marginalized with minimal contribution to national political processes and were occasioned by ethnic classes and terrorism linked to Al-shabaab in Somalia. According to Scharrer (2018) benefits of devolution is evident in the region as produced individual holding various roles including high-ranking politicians, businesspeople.

People's well-being has been impacted by the region's inadequate infrastructure and high levels of human insecurity. There is severe physical and food insecurity, as well as low levels of gender development and education. The availability of clean water, health care, and school enrolment rates are all lower than at the federal level. Both the poverty rate and the rate of child mortality are extremely high. Furthermore, there are either insufficient or nonexistent facilities for education and proper sanitation. Although Wajir states have varied reasons for devolution, it can be considered a response to these restructuring processes. Rationing of public services and administrative modernization are necessary. Promoted by scholars and the constitution, new models of regional development highlight the benefits of decentralized delivery.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Devolution in Kenya has existed for over two decades and it has shaped the lives of communities. It brought services closer and created platform where marginalized communities could participate more effectively in decisions. Moreover, devolution creates inter-territorial comparison and competition leading to policy learning and transfer as the different administrations monitor developments (Gryshchenko, Bondar, Serohina, Bodrova, &Stohova, 2022). Devolution of power suggests that local governments have some latitude in making decisions, running their business locally, and providing services to their constituents. Therefore, as more attention has shifted to ways in which the devolution contributes to the development of local communities, little is known on how it can rebuild Kenya-Somalia relations considering its strategic

position in the region. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia with special focus on Wajir County.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia with special focus on Wajir County.

### **1.4 Objectives of Study**

#### **1.4.1 General Objective**

This study seeks to investigate the influence of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia with special focus on Wajir County.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To evaluate the influence of devolution on security dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia border.
- ii. To establish the extent of local resident's participation on cross-border relations engagement with Somalia.
- iii. To assess the influence of county government decision making on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

- i. How does devolution influence security dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia border?
- ii. To what extent does local resident's participation participate in cross-border relations engagement with Somalia?
- iii. What is the influence of county government decision making on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study seeks to examine the role of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia in Wajir County. With the increasing terrorist attacks along the Kenya-Somalia border, devolution is considered a potential approach that can build relationship between Kenya and its neighbor. Devolution is crucial because it guarantees that choices are made in close proximity to the local public, businesses, and communities that they impact. Local councils will have more independence and flexibility as a result of devolution, which will enable them to operate more productively to enhance local public services. Consequently, after this study is over, it will have an effect on a number of parties, including the researcher, government organizations, and citizens of the counties being studied.

By extending the period of analysis or using a different study methodology, the researchers will have a foundation for future investigation. The results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the subject matter, thereby improving it. As a result, scholars and researchers who want to investigate and conduct more research will find it interesting.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

In seeking to understand the possible limitations of this study, it is crucial to appreciate that being a new area of research, the researcher could face the hurdles under investigation of finding vast subject matter experts, owing also to the sensitive and technical nature of the topic under investigation. The researcher will adhere to the appropriate research procedures and all sources of information will be fully acknowledged of the study.

The study of devolution employed to address cross-border relations (Kenya-Somalia) context seems to be recent, hence lack of data or reliable data compelled the researcher

to limit the scope of the analysis, the size of the sample, or it can be a significant obstacle in finding a trend and a meaningful relationship. In order to overcome this, the researcher will review sector reports, purposively visit selected county offices, stakeholders within the county to discuss this area of study.

Besides, this study largely will depend on having access to people, organizations, data as well as documents and, which for whatever reason might be limited in some way. In order to overcome this, the researcher will organize familiarization visits to the target group and also visit the counties libraries to check for available reports.

### **1.8 Scope of the Study**

The northeastern region is composed of three counties including Garissa, Wajir and Mandera but this study will be conducted in Wajir County. It will cover the last five years (2018-2023) although devolution was implemented immediately after promulgation of the constitution 2010. The period is selected because region's block, Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) in which Wajir County is a member was established in 2016 and falls within this period.

### **1.9 Assumption of the Study**

This study will investigate the role of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia with special focus on Wajir County. In this case, the underlying assumptions are that: The selected county could provide data, which would provide inferences on issues of devolution across other counties in Kenya. The target population will include diverse individuals living and working in various organizations in Wajir County. In addition, the respondents and participants could agree to participate in the study, by answering our questions accurately.

Studies on devolution and cross-border issues have used several methods and the researcher's belief in this study is that the methodology adopted could help to generate data that can demonstrate the effectiveness of devolution in the aforesaid area/region.

### **1.10 Delimitation of the Study**

The study will cover devolution system and cross-border relationship between Kenya and Somalia. Data from this study will purely come from residents of Wajir County and will not cover Somalia because of the nature of security. While there might be other variables to measure same topic, this study will be limited to security dynamics, local residence's participation and county government's decision making.

### 1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

**County:** A territorial division of some countries, forming the chief unit of local administration.

**Cross-border relations:** refer to the interactions, collaborations, and connections between neighboring countries, regions, or communities across national borders. These relationships encompass a wide range of activities, including trade, security cooperation, cultural exchanges, environmental management, and social interactions, and are shaped by the geographical proximity of the entities involved.

**Cross-border:** Activities involving undertaken across a border between two countries

**Decentralization:** Transferring power and accountability for public tasks from the federal government to quasi-independent or subordinate government agencies, as well as the private sector, is a complicated and multidimensional idea.

**Devolution:** The process through which national government regionalizes and decentralizes its administration by granting specific territories jurisdiction over certain responsibilities previously associated with the central entity.

**Ethnic:** pertaining to or being a member of a community that is recognizable due to commonalities in language, customs, culture, history, etc.

**Influence:** refers to the ability of devolution to affect the thoughts, behaviors, decisions, or actions of local community members, either directly or indirectly. It can shape, guide or alter perceptions, attitudes and outcomes and does not use coercion.

**Marginalized:** The relegation of people to a marginal position within a society or group

**National government:** The government, or political authority, that controls a nation.

**Security dynamics:** are the complexes, shifting interactions and processes that influences the security conditions within a particular environment (in this case either Kenya or Somalia). It describes how actions by one state affect the behavior and security strategies of other states, potentially leading to security dilemmas, arms races, or shifts in alliances.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of the literature concerning devolution and cross-border relations. It also covers the empirical analysis aligned with the study objectives, a critical examination of existing research, identification of research gaps, the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, and a concluding summary.

#### **2.2 Empirical Review**

This study examines role of devolution in Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia and this section presents an empirical review.

##### **2.2.1 Devolution and Security Dynamics in Kenya-Somalia**

For a long time, attempts have been made to resolve insecurity along Kenya-Somalia border. This follows decades of continued anarchy and failed conflict management attempts by international and regional organizations where they opted to use multilateral diplomacy in addressing Somali conflict (Kabura, 2018; Mwanika, 2015). According to Kaburu (2018), Kenya participated in 2002-2004 Somalia peace process under Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) which led to establishment of Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFGS) that was formally recognized but could not enjoy total legitimacy from all the warring factions. Pastoralism in the area is changing quite quickly. Territoriality-related problems become the primary contestation grounds in these processes. Sedentarization, fast population growth, the division and commercialization of formerly shared pastures, the expansion of wildlife conservation areas, and the growing significance of agriculture, according to Gatdet (2023), are all contributing factors to the increasing pressure on land, both within and between communities. Political leaders and other power brokers

are increasingly stepping in to fill the power vacuum created by the breakdown of traditional governance frameworks. These individuals seize the chance to renegotiate borders and land access. It has been observed that ethnic mobilization has been a significant factor in political battles at the national level. These dynamics are observed even in the most remote pastoralist communities, where the land dispute is becoming increasingly ethnicized (Arbuckle & Hammer, 2019).

Yudha, Juanda, Kolopaking, and Kinseng (2020) investigated how rural policies in Indonesia foster value in the nation's development. In order to support rural development in the regency, the researchers investigate the policies and tactics put into place within the framework of rural autonomy. An overview of Indonesia's rural autonomy era is given in the report, which gives local governments additional authority and funding to decide how best to meet the unique requirements and difficulties of their rural communities. It looks at the tactics and policy framework that Pandeglang Regency has used to promote rural development in the modern period. The study examines the main focuses of Pandeglang Regency's rural development policies, which include infrastructure development, agricultural production, education, health care, and tourism. They evaluate how these plans and policies have been put into practice, stressing the successes and difficulties the local government has had to deal with. The importance of local institutions and community involvement in the process of rural development is also covered in the study. It investigates how much local government cooperation with different partners and community involvement affect the effectiveness of rural development projects. Yudha et al. (2020) offer insights on the efficacy of rural development policies and initiatives in Pandeglang Regency based on their analysis. They point out areas that require improvement, like improving community

participation, tightening agency cooperation, and resolving resource constraints. But this report only provides a thorough analysis of Indonesian problems.

In Northern Ireland, the peace process, which aims to shift society from paramilitary violence to a fully democratic system, has become tightly linked with the concept of devolution. Despite notable improvements in public order, the implementation of policies is still hindered by ongoing sectarian conflicts between Protestant and Catholic communities. These conflicts continue to underscore territorial divisions, a longstanding factor influencing housing policy (Sharifi, Khavarian-Garmsir, Allam, & Asadzadeh, 2023). The 1998 Northern Ireland Act created the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive, which first convened in 1999. However, the mandated coalition, which allocated ministerial roles proportionally, struggled with collaboration and was suspended from October 2002 to May 2007, when political control temporarily reverted to Westminster. As a result, it wasn't until the 2007–2011 electoral term that Northern Ireland's devolution operated fully and without interruption, allowing local politicians to lead decision-making and actively shape new policy dynamics in the region.

The emergence of international terrorism forced Government of Kenya to change how it handed national and regional policy. As Adeleke (2022) points out this was necessitated by changes informed not only by Western powers who had seen weak and failed states such as Somalia as possible havens for international terrorism but also series of terrorist attacks that had been executed by terrorism organization such as Al Qaeda. Consequently, the continued attacks in Kenya led to shift on how the country handled threats from Somalia and in October 2011 it deployed military in Somalia in pursuit of Al shabaab. However, this raised more debate on its efficiency in building Kenya-Somalia relationship perceived as threatened by Kenya's counterterrorism

strategies or response to cross border insecurity (Lind, 2018). Kenya's invasion was viewed by some as an attempt to dislodge the terrorism group and captured Al shabaab's financial base, Port of Kismayu (Hughes, 2012).

Furthermore, conflicts and livestock rustling amongst pastoralists in the semi-arid and desert regions bordering Kenya and Somalia go all the way back to pre-colonial times. The primary cause of these activities before to colonialism was the territorial expansion of specialist pastoralist communities like the Maasai, Nuer, Pokot, and Turkana. The colonial rulers prevented ethnic groups from extending their territory by enforcing boundaries between them (Nori, 2019). But raids by cattle persisted. It returned to prominence after independence and became more intense starting in the middle of the 1970s with the proliferation of modern guns. Since then, numerous justifications have been put forward for the continued existence as well as the evolving character of raids in the area (Sobania, 2019). More recently, the discussion on raiding and warfare in Africa's semi-arid and dry regions has expanded to include questions of climate change and environmental security. While some believe that resource scarcity, climate change, and population pressure are the primary causes of interethnic violence, numerous empirically based studies have refuted these Malthusian ideas, asserting that political calculations and institutions play a critical role in determining how people react to these factors either cooperatively or conflictive.

Furthermore, Kenya's effort to address insecurity is linked to cross border tension emanating from perceived counterterrorism activities. Cannon (2016) maintained that construction of border walls between Kenya and Somalia ignited tension relating to Somalia's ideology which is traced to decade's attempt to reunited communities in across borders. This argument is colonially motivated which tended to determine African borders leading to artificial separation of Somalia communities spreading in

several African countries: Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Somaliland, and Djibouti (Thompson, 2015). While these efforts have not addressed the cross-border tension entirely, it continues to attract scholarly debate with advocates of decentralization suggesting that there is need to examine how it helps address tension that heightens risks of conflicts and try to build cross border relationships (Lind, 2018).

Devolution of authority has been viewed as a way to maintain peace because it gives local communities the ability to establish their own goals and determine how best to meet their own demands for human security, according to Heenan and Birrell (2022). According to this perspective, there is potential for "positive" peace, which is defined as "peace with development and human security," rather than only the absence of conflict, provided various groups believe they have a legitimate stake in the political system and the administration. According to research done in Asia and South-East Asia by Southgate (2021), border disputes—many of which entail armed conflicts—remain a significant obstacle to economic success and peace in this enormous region of the world. Regrettably, conflicts pertaining to territory, position, and functions, such as those involving natural resources, persist in inciting violence in border regions. Increased trade and economic development are also significantly hampered by the relocation of minorities. It's interesting to note that there are, in fact, well-known worldwide cross-border economic locations that do not conform to these observations: Hong Kong and Singapore are prime examples.

With disagreements on almost every one of India's five territorial neighbors (Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh), there is an especially volatile situation in East Asia (Avis, 2020). Devolution was intended to reduce political unrest and rivalry over centralized authority, but since the country's new constitution was ratified, violence has erupted in numerous northern counties (Heenan&Birrell, 2022). This begs the question

of whether county administrations that border Somalia can take advantage of internal chances to forge strong bonds with Somalian communities, given that these communities share many major characteristics.

The influence of devolution is portrayed empirically with varying and often contradictory outcomes. According to a research conducted in the federal state of India, for instance, decentralization encourages government responsiveness in providing services, particularly when local media is highly involved (Alok, 2014; Vonk, & Schoukens, 2019). Devolution may make regional differences in public spending and economic performance worse, according to a different study conducted in Italy (Del Monte, De Iudicibus, Moccia, & Pennacchio, 2022). According to Ayres, Flinders, and Sandford's (2018) study on devolution in the UK, there is a lack of information at the local level. Devolution thus fails to produce the intended results of locative efficiency. Researchers have found a number of variables that could affect how effective decentralization frameworks are. First, the constitution and legislative framework were established, outlining the responsibilities of every level of government as well as the regulations controlling public service delivery, budgetary arrangements, and dispute resolution procedures. Second, the political structure controlling subnational elections makes it easier for service customers to directly participate in the selection of political leaders (Heenan & Birrell, 2022).

States have militarized border infrastructure in response to security threats, changing the purpose of many borders worldwide from bridges to barriers. This is done to prevent citizens of one nation from interacting with citizens of the other as part of a counterterrorism strategy (Adelman & Dasgupta, 2019). In Kenya, since the introduction of devolution, counties have over time been given increased powers to handle local issues. For example, the role of devolution in cross-border issues was

evident in a consultative meeting held on July 2023 organized jointly by Wajir, Mandera, Garissa and Lamu counties together with security agencies (Kenya News Agency, 2023). Under the theme, “rethinking security approaches”, the counties demonstrated commitment by the borderland counties to align themselves with national security efforts. Accordingly, the counties seek to promote community engagement, ensure representation of gender, foster inclusivity and build trust between communities. Although studies attempt to relationship between devolution or decentralization and security, it has not adequately this area especially on cross-border with complex issues. Although the arguments presented in each of these studies are perceptive and offer a thorough understanding of the decentralization process in different nations, they are devoid of quantitative information and a more accurate picture of the actual situation. Although the qualitative and normative foundations of the process's praises and criticisms will aid in our study, quantitative and concrete evidence is also required to inform policy. Notably, Beha (2011) found in a study that the decentralization process in Kosovo offers the municipalities with a Serbian majority the best route to integration. are those that undermine the state of Kosovo's ability to stabilize, as noted by Dalipi (2014). A research by Gilson et al. (2017) found that county governance frequently supervises the local election administration in the African environment, particularly in South Africa. To ensure free and transparent elections, they set up polling places, register voters, and oversee the voting process. Additionally, the writers made the case that zoning laws and land-use planning are under county government control. In an effort to maintain orderly growth and safeguard the environment, they set rules and regulations for the development of residential, commercial, and industrial properties under their control. In addition, the county government administers or

arranges social services for its citizens, such as welfare, housing aid, and programs for the aged and disabled (De Grauwe&Laot, 2012).

Promoting rural development requires active citizen engagement and efficient local government. When it comes to encouraging participatory processes, including local communities, and considering their viewpoints during the decision-making process, county governments are essential. De Grauwe and Laot (2012) emphasize the significance of citizen involvement in municipal development strategies and initiatives. In rural areas, county governments are in charge of building infrastructure and delivering basic services. This covers roads, electricity, water supply, sanitation, healthcare, and education. In order to promote rural economic growth and enhance living conditions, Olowu and Wunsch (2020) highlight the necessity for county governments to provide efficient services and construct infrastructure. Local governments are essential to the effectiveness of democracy at the local level and are key players in the resolution of disputes. Much is dependent on legitimate, authoritative local government at the local level. This includes the ability of ward administrators, governors, MCAs, security personnel, and others to handle conflicts, stop violence before it starts, respond to crises when they arise, and lead the reconstruction effort in areas that have been devastated by conflict.

Now the big question is whether devolution or decentralization can handle complex cross-border issues such as Kenya-Somalia. According to Gashi (2019) that decentralization is the most successful tool for preserving and developing the multi-ethnic character of the country. While this argument does not mention cross-border, religious and ethnic rationales shared between communities in Kenya and Somalia can explain why Gashi's (2019) study may offer perfect debate on role of devolution on cross-border issues. Kenya's complex security challenges and their policies responses

must therefore be understood within this devolved governance context. Wasike, Okoth, and Were, (2016). The land border between Kenya and Somalia stretches 681 kilometers (423 miles) from the Ethiopian tripoint to the Indian Ocean. When Italy and the United Kingdom divided up their African areas of influence, it was first drawn in 1891. Jubaland, a portion of what had been British Kenyan territory, was given to Italian Somaliland in 1924, and a new straight-line border was established. The division of the ethnic Somali population between the two nations following independence and the history of colonial control are the main causes of the contemporary boundary disputes between Kenya and Somalia. Problematic ties between the two nations have resulted from Kenya's construction of border barriers, violence in Kenya's North-Eastern Province that is sanctioned by the Somali government, an ongoing maritime dispute, and the alienation of ethnic Somalis living in Kenya.

According to SID (2011), decentralization allowed counties to carry out budgetary planning, accounting, auditing, monitoring, and evaluation as well as problem identification, policy creation, revenue collection, planning, and citizen engagement in decision-making. Article 174 of the Constitution outlined the various goals of devolution, including granting the people self-governance and increasing their involvement in the use of authority to make decisions that impact them. The Article acknowledged communities' rights to self-govern and to advance their own development.

### **2.2.2 Local residence's participation on cross-border relations engagement with Somalia**

Analyzing how national borders affect regional economic outcomes has long been of interest. Kolosov (2023) noted that border cities could only develop restricted hinterlands after the First World War, which upset the well-organized structure of the

urban hierarchy based on his well-known central place theory. This occurred as a result of new borders being drawn across Europe. For the first time, another well-known regional scientist, Widdis (2019) used location theory to investigate borders mathematically. Since he saw borders as artificial factors that impede trade, he essentially gave boundaries an extra distance. Even though Widdis (2019) main focus was not borders, their work can be seen as an early indication of the value of border studies to regional science from the outset.

County-level decisions prioritize the requirements of the local community. The capacity of county residents to have thoughtful conversations on the administration and operation of the county's business improves this. Priority should be given to identifying the particular issues that the community is experiencing. The constitution's provisions for public engagement in county management should offer chances for the resolution of specific, high-priority community issues. The report on public involvement by the Embassy of Sweden and Diakonia (2016) states that by identifying and conveying the needs and interests of the community, participation promotes sustainable decision-making. It also makes it easier for others who could be impacted by or interested in a decision to get involved. It is crucial to remember that community involvement affects how the authorities make decisions.

As the third level of government, local government is established by law to serve as a bridge between the public and to promote development in rural areas. According to Manoharan, &Ingrams, (2018) local government is a legal entity that is part of the state or constituents of a nation state and is tasked with controlling public affairs and delivering public services within its borders. According to Fajobi (2010), local government is in charge of enforcing law and order based on the variety of social amenities, encouraging cooperation and participation from the populace, and making

sure that living conditions are improved and that people have a happy life. According to the United Nations Development Program (2009), the local government system is a unit of government that deals with a variety of local governance issues, such as the decentralization of processes and policies, the function and interactions of various actors and institutions, local democracy, and local performance. The duties of local government are fairly obvious: they involve local governance, which includes protecting the populace through the use of state resources and the development of human capital to prevent social discontent, unemployment, and violent crimes brought on by systemic neglect. Development cannot flourish in rural areas when there are security concerns, and migration tends to have a spillover effect on metropolitan areas. In Kenya, devolution as deigned was largely driven by a political push to address real and perceived long term political challenges of marginalization and inequitable resource allocation in most parts of the country (Government of Kenya, 2010). Within the socio-economic field, the constitution outlined that county governments are responsible for segment agriculture and healthcare systems that transform community lives (D'Arcy, & Cornell, 2016). According to a review of the research, vulnerability, war, and disasters are intimately related in most of northern Kenya and Somalia, and the most vulnerable individuals face uncertainty about the sustainability of their households and communities (Langworthy et al. 2016). For instance, long-term trends like population expansion and environmental degradation reduce household resilience and raise doubts about the sustainability of livelihood pursuits like pastoralism in the future. For the case of Somalia, Zeinab, Samantha and Zach (2017) argue that its governance structure is characterized by weak traditional and formal polities with limited ability to provide basic services and security.

All sovereign authority in Kenya is vested in the people, according to the 2010 Constitution (Article 1). Citizens may exercise this power directly or through democratically elected national and county representatives. There are legislative and executive branches at every level of government. Elders from the traditional tradition were crucial in managing the affairs of their villages. For the most part, they helped to settle disputes within and between tribes. Their actions had legal force behind them and guaranteed the social cohesion and long-term viability of their communities. The lives of traditionally pastoral communities have seen a variety of changes, much like in other parts of Kenya and Somalia. The most noticeable shift is the elders' declining power, who formerly oversaw all facets of community life. Hope (2014) posits that devolution serves multiple purposes, including democracy and better government. Nevertheless, it prioritizes accountability by moving decision-making and involvement closer to the general public. According to Hope (2014), a decline in corrupt practices has been observed as a consequence of devolved governments being closer to the people. This has strengthened downward accountability mechanisms and increased openness in the use of local resources.

MacArthur (2019) divides the Somali community in Kenya into four divisions in an effort to understand their varied makeup. The first and largest group of people are those who live in Kenya's northeast, which borders Ethiopia and Somalia. Second, some Somalis have become urbanized; their forebears were colonial town dwellers. The third category comprises Somalian refugees, while the smallest group consists of highly rich Somalian "returnees" who left Somalia in the 1990s to migrate to Europe or North America, then "returned" to urban areas in East Africa. There are numerous people who do not fit into these arbitrarily created categories, and there is a limited interlink age range between these groups. Geschiere (2010) contends that from the early 1990s,

concepts of "autochthony," with their implicit rejection of outsiders, have replaced views of national citizenship in many African nations.

The historical discontent with their socio-economic status since the British administration's establishment in Kenya in 1895 was one of the primary causes of the former Northern Frontier District (NFD) Somalis' struggle to join "Greater Somalia" on the eve of Kenya's independence (Behr, 2018). Following World War II, the administration was forced to reevaluate the views of Somalis when creating a development plan for the colony, as they stated that "unless adequate attention is given to the NFD Somalis it will become a menace - or at least a serious nuisance to the southern half of Kenya" (Shivji, 2020). Numerous attempts to address the issues with water supply, grazing and marketing, and the provision of medical facilities have been shown in the literature to be unsuccessful (Shivji, 2020). The post-World War II development plan's outcome greatly disappointed the Somalis. Furthermore, it turned out that Sir Philip Mitchel, the colony's governor, had promised that significant construction would follow the NFD tribesmen's war efforts. This included spending \$5,000,000 on trade facilities, water supplies, and medical and educational services. However, this promise had never materialized.

Hope (2014) asserts that decentralization can support political stability and national cohesion. This is a significant benefit that encouraged many Kenyans to vote for the 2010 constitution. Fostering community cohesiveness, togetherness, and coexistence is one of the roles of decentralized administration. Ambose (2017) highlighted how crucial it is to comprehend what national unity means in relation to peace, accord, and the coexistence or mutual agreement of many organizations. According to Amboso (2017), decentralization has the potential to strengthen the unity among the diverse population of Kenya provided it is properly nurtured and implemented. Kenyans must,

however, accept the diversity that may be found in many forms, including race, ethnicity, religion, gender, culture, and language, if they are to coexist peacefully. The 2010 Constitution's Article 130(2), which acknowledges the notion of spatial variety, makes provisions for this. Cornell and D'Arcy (2016) state that the explicit objectives of the devolution reforms in the constitution include fostering a sense of Kenyan identity and bolstering national cohesion through the recognition of diversity, equitable resource distribution, and the provision of justice for underserved communities and areas.

MacArthur (2019) analyzes states of exception along the Kenya-Somali frontier. What is emerging is that one of the concerns of the post-independence period has been the rectification of imbalance in the standard of living between the northern Kenya and the rest of the country. Empirical evidence demonstrates that efforts have been made to ensure that the major programme of development, both social and economic, is devolved. The Ministry of Agriculture established a division for range management and livestock development, according to Nyanjom (2014). The establishment of state routes and the enhancement of water supplies were deemed crucial for enhancing the welfare of the populace. The issue has been that Wajir's 256 mm average annual rainfall offers little chance of expanding agriculture. The province's population is steadily declining because migration to developed areas appears to be the only way to improve living circumstances in this harsh environment. Furthermore, the Somalis themselves would rather not engage in any kind of cultivation, depending solely on the products of their livestock for sustenance.

Kenya's devolution is over ten years yet little scholarly attention has focused on Kenya-Somalia relations from devolution or decentralization perspective. What is available are studies trying to explain the relationship from cultural or socioeconomic

content as demonstrated by Chau (2010) who followed historical perspective to examined how the two countries who share borders relates. By tracking historical relationship, Chau (2010) attempted to lay foundation for today's researchers, and he found abnormal journey painted with both positive and negative relationship. Moreover, earlier studies had predicted how devolution would be game changer for northeastern region.

However, these regions also represent areas marked by exception, instability, and violence. As Richard Reid (2019) highlights, the prolonged processes of state formation in the politically dynamic "fertile frontier" of northeastern Africa were driven by a "vitality of violence." While many studies on the Kenya-Somalia borderland have often overlooked the decolonization period, focusing instead on state-centric narratives of colonial rule transitioning into exclusionary postcolonial nationalism, this research adopts a different viewpoint. To explore the conceptual, rhetorical, textual, and practical elements of cross-border dynamics, this shift in analysis requires new methodological approaches. Providing fundamental, accountable, and transparent community policing is the primary responsibility for guaranteeing human rights and local human security. Building the required trust for effective policing may require local community supervision, creative court systems, and collaboration with police and other internal security agencies. Local collaborations with educational institutions, houses of worship, human rights watchdogs, and representatives of marginalized and indigenous communities have shown to be effective means of fostering more positive interactions between law enforcement and the courts in difficult areas.

### **2.2.3 County government decision making on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia**

There is a large literature on devolution or decentralization which provides a broader perspective on the country situation (MacKinnon, 2015; Rodri'guez-Pose and Sandall 2008; Lobao, Martin, and Rodri'guez-Pose 2009; Mossberger, Clarke, and John 2012). Over the past two or three decades, governments all over the world have been giving local (city) governments more authority and regulatory obligations for basically three reasons. In order to promote stronger horizontal ties and better policy coordination across the various sectoral functions of government, power is first transferred away from a central authority and its hierarchical (top-down) manner of operation. Decentralized decision-making can enhance policy alignment with the endeavors of external civil society organizations for the same reason. Second, decentralization increases citizen control over the process and brings policy-making closer to local communities. The relevance and responsiveness of governmental services to actual situations may be enhanced by distributing power lower. Finally, by granting local authorities more leeway to handle their unique requirements and opportunities through the provision of specialized infrastructure, skills, and collaborations with private investors, decentralization may aid in the strengthening of city economies (Russell, Milburn, & Heron, 2023).

While cross-border areas are characterized by numerous sources of vulnerabilities, literature remains scarce in relation to how they address issues that affect both sides of the frontier. Adrot et al (2018) analyzes challenges that establish cross-border resilience. They conclude that cross border resilience is still missing. Elsewhere, as Kanai (2019) reiterates, despite institutions dealing with cross border acknowledging importance of joint efforts to address issues extending from one side of frontier, some

embody suspicions. By using the term frontier. Kraudzun (2012), it brings a military term stating cross-border could be a source of threat which can quickly reemerge during hard times.

Most recent immigrants are skilled individuals from Kenya and Somalia's interior who have moved to cities due to urbanization. According to Kumssa, Williams, Jones, and Des Marais (2014), a sizable portion of student migrants from Somalia to Kenya travel across borders in pursuit of education. Migration from rural to urban areas was regarded in traditional development literature as a normal aspect of the urbanization and modernization process. Within the perspective of sustainable livelihood, migration is frequently regarded as a crucial component of livelihood strategies implemented by rural households for the sake of survival and accumulation. People frequently move in order to better their families' economic and personal circumstances. While there are many different and compelling reasons to migrate, improving one's standard of living is a major motivator for many. Seasonal migration is one of the prominent migration patterns that rural households in developing nations undertake, according to Lagakos, (2020).

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A number of studies have always stressed the importance of developing and maintaining high-quality, cross-border relationships between counties (Basboga, 2020; Xue, Xiao, & Ren, 2024). Despite using economic terms, it is right to argue that investments in international relationships often are necessary, yet such relationships also are marked by substantial environmental uncertainty (Jean, Sinkovics, & Cavusgil 2010; Andersen & Buvik 2001). Moreover, information asymmetries are liable to lead to opportunism and strong cultural contingencies (Barnes et al. 2010). Furthermore, because of conflicting aims and cultural differences, cross-border exchange partnerships are more likely to end in conflict than domestic interactions. Women and/or minorities' public participation in the creation of policy has remained low. County governments have concentrated on discrete and fragmentary programs rather than tackling decision-making and the gendered effects of devolution in a methodical manner. In addition, these programs take up very little of the county budgets and are often abandoned. There is still a huge discrepancy between stated policy goals and real investments.

Kenya and Somalia have been working together more closely on security and counterterrorism since Kenya started its counter-insurgency war against al-Shabaab in 2011. Furthermore, they consented to reopen border crossings that had been shuttered since 2011. In 2022. The implementation of these plans is complicated by the increase in al-Shabaab activities and the gradual withdrawal of troops from the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) since June 1, 2022. Despite being forced

closer to the border, al-Shabaab has maintained a substantial operational capacity and exploited the terrain in the border regions as strategic hideouts, according to data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). With the assistance of US soldiers and ATMIS, the governments of Kenya and Somalia have begun measures to reduce the heightened activity of al-Shabaab in areas close to the border. Security personnel in Somalia, such as the Special Forces "Danab/Bancroft" (Anderson & McKnight, 2015).

Furthermore, in many African countries, citizenship is still inextricably linked to ethnic and group identification, with bureaucratic procedures predicated on these classifications (Botha & Abdile, 2014). According to Manby (2021), millions of people on the continent have been denied access to secure citizenship and the privileges and protections that come with it because of these procedures. While some exclusions stem from attempts to weaken the influence of certain politicians, many exclusions result in the displacement or statelessness of entire groups of people. According to Campbell's (2013) study, tens of thousands of people were forcibly removed from their homes by Eritrea and Ethiopia during the 1998–2000 war. This is just one instance of how states have made people stateless based solely on their ethnicity by preventing them from obtaining documentation or by destroying any documentation that may have previously identified them as belonging.

According to some research, decentralization is a program and policy intended to reform governance as well as government, resulting in the creation of new institutions of government and changes in the vertical power sharing between its supporters and detractors (Gencer, et al., 2018). The decentralization process is directly impacted by a number of factors, including the underdevelopment of newly established municipalities' economies, high unemployment and low investment rates, a tight budget, a lack of

infrastructure, a shortage of qualified human capital, intense political pressure on public administrative capacities, unrelenting demands from the Serbian community, the subtle evolution of political culture, and the institutionalization of the current ethnic divide. The municipalities are guaranteed broad local competencies by the Law on Local Self-Government. According to European standards, this law satisfies every requirement for a municipality to be self-sufficient and to have access to the administrative and financial resources needed to increase the likelihood of good governance, local economic growth, and increased security for the populace, particularly the marginalized.

In fact, Kenyan immigration laws still replicate the screening process. After turning eighteen, people are required by law to make themselves accessible for registration within ninety days. But identity cards are only issued sometimes in northern Kenya. Young individuals are given a temporary document between the time they turn eighteen and when they get their card. Many police interrogations during which the validity of the document was questioned are reported. Kenyan Somalis must appear before a screening committee made up of elders, the local chief, and frequently security agency personnel when it comes time to get identity cards. Devolution can lessen national conflicts, but it can also cause regional conflicts to arise, particularly if resources are divided unevenly or local elites seize control.

Regional factors have only served to increase the mistrust that Somalis are felt by police and government bureaucracy, making it harder for Kenyan Somalis to enjoy their citizenship rights and safeguards and increasing the likelihood that they would be the victim of extortion. On the one hand, concerns about an economic "Somali invasion" in the media and popular discourse have grown as a result of Somalis' growing economic influence in Kenya. In December 2009, the Kenyan Minister of

Internal Security issued orders to the provincial administration to profile all property in the country, beginning in Nairobi, "to document who owns what in this country and from which country," in response to widespread media speculation that the majority of the capital invested in the Somali-dominated Eastleigh (Nairobi County) business hub originated in Indian Ocean piracy. He expressed worries that "foreigners" were involved in money laundering and property fraud. The opposition of notable Somali figures in Kenya caused the move to stall.

Although there is an increasing body of case-study evidence, a systematic analysis of how and where decentralization has affected such conflict risk is lacking. According to Heenan and Birrell (2022), successful decentralization can lead to a deeper and more flexible democracy, which, in most cases, will lower the likelihood of internal conflict. Decentralization eliminates the "winner takes all" problem, which lessens the pressure on political candidates to "win at all costs." This played a major role in the civil conflicts that broke out in Rwanda, Uganda, and Sierra Leone, and more recently, in the ethnic violence that erupted in the run-up to the 2011 Kenyan elections. It appears that this is an appropriate moment to track and assess the decentralization process because experience and knowledge indicate that reconciliation is a process that requires time to complete. It need to be evident whether or not this intricate change is moving in the right way toward the state's strategic goals.

Adeyemi, Okpala, and Dabor (2012) state that improving local government level efficacy and efficiency under representative authorities is the aim of local government management. It is a well-known fact that no central government, even with civil servants stationed at the headquarters, can efficiently run its operations from the capital. Consequently, it makes sense that decentralization of some kind is necessary for local government engagement with the public. The following traits of devolution were noted

by Ezeani (2004:6): local government needs to be acknowledged as a level of government with little to no direct influence from the federal government, as well as autonomy and independence. Local government entities need to have distinct, legally recognized borders. Local governments must be corporations with the authority to raise the necessary funds to carry out their mandated duties. "Developing local governments as institutions" is a requirement of devolution. It also requires central and local government interactions to be mutually beneficial, reciprocal, and coordinated.

Since colonization, the central theme of governance in the region has been the control and restriction of movement. This approach contrasts sharply with the needs of Somali society and the environmental realities of northern Kenya, where mobility is essential for managing and negotiating group and individual movements (Shattock & Horvath, 2020). During the colonial period, the Northern Frontier District (NFD) comprised six districts: Moyale, Marsabit, and Isiolo, mainly inhabited by various pastoralist communities, and Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa, predominantly occupied by Somali clans (Shivji, 2020). The "Somali line," erected to prevent Somalis from moving west, divided the former from the latter. Pastoralists were also restricted to rangelands that were marked by ethnic and tribal boundaries by the administration. Agents of the provincial government might seize property, arrest all or any members of a community, reserve resources for select groups, and force communities to relocate or stay in a particular region. In conclusion, devolution can be a potent instrument for fostering inclusive governance, lessening centralization, improving accountability, enabling growth, fostering social cohesion, and averting the recurrence of conflict. However, careful execution, the development of ability, and cooperation amongst various governmental levels are necessary for its success.

## **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

In the examination of the influence of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia, this study employs rational choice theory and stakeholder theory.

### **2.3.1 Rational Choice Theory**

This theory, which was created by Adam Smith in 1776, is a popular theoretical viewpoint that explains why people engage in the informal economy. It makes the case that people are logical economic players who want to make money (Hudik, 2019). According to the rational choice theory, people make decisions that are in line with their own goals by using logical calculations (Hands, 2013; Vlaev, 2018). According to rational choice theory, people, or rational actors, constantly seek to minimize their losses in order to actively maximize their advantage in any given circumstance (Weyl, 2019). According to this argument, people don't always have access to all the knowledge they would need to decide wisely. Herfeld (2020) argues that rules and structures that prescribe a particular path of action are only special instances of rational choice theory. To put it another way, there may be only one option available in a strong structural situation, although the range of options in other situations is different.

According to Neissl et al. (2019), the rational choice theory is centered on understanding social and economic behavior; in other words, the person conducts a cost-effective analysis to determine whether or not their choices are suitable. It presents the hypothesis that individual player choices can influence group social behavior. The people are free to express their choices and preferences in this way. A variation of rational choice theory known as instrumental rationality employs more economical strategies without weighing the importance of the objective (Blau, 2021). This aids in choosing the best course of action and forecasting the outcome because every decision

has an effect. The potential area and activities are chosen with consideration for the constraints that the active player has in the areas of economics, law, society, and nature. This study has used this theory because it provides an explanation for group behaviors that are characterized as being carried out in the public interest. In fact, rational choice explanations can be quite persuasive when actors are either unable to articulate the reasoning behind their actions or are not dependable enough to give a truthful explanation, as noted by Hampsher-Monk and Hindmoor (2010).

Making a rational decision is a wide endeavor with movable bounds. At most, it is a broad hypothesis rather than a substantial one. As a result, it is typically seen as a methodological approach that uses human goal-seeking under limitations to explain both individual and collective (social) outcomes. Rational choice assumptions have been utilized, either expressly or implicitly, by realist views of international relations studies to explain and forecast the conduct of states: states rationally pursue power. Both neorealists and classical realists believe that states compete with one another for security in the anarchic system of international relations. In all matters pertaining to cross-border development, one of the primary strengths of the *acquis communitaire* has been and continues to be cross-border cooperation. In order to improve the quality of life for their populations, governments, national actors, and local actors from both border sides should work together to coordinate and carry out development initiatives aimed at addressing the issues in intra-East African border areas.

### **2.3.2 Stakeholder Theory**

This theory was developed by R. Edward Freeman in 1984 and posits that shareholders are merely one of many stakeholders in the society (Dunham, Freeman, & Liedtka, 2006). According to Freeman, Harrison, and Wicks, (2007) this theory promotes a practical, efficient, effective, and ethical way to manage organizations in a highly

complex and turbulent environment. Achieving success in cross border relations requires a comprehensive strategy that prioritizes stakeholder and community engagement. For example, according to this theory, engaging government officials, civil society organizations and communities, serves as a conduit to understand local needs, concerns, and aspirations in ensuring there is a sustainable relation among those living along Kenya and Somalia border (Borges, et al., 2022).

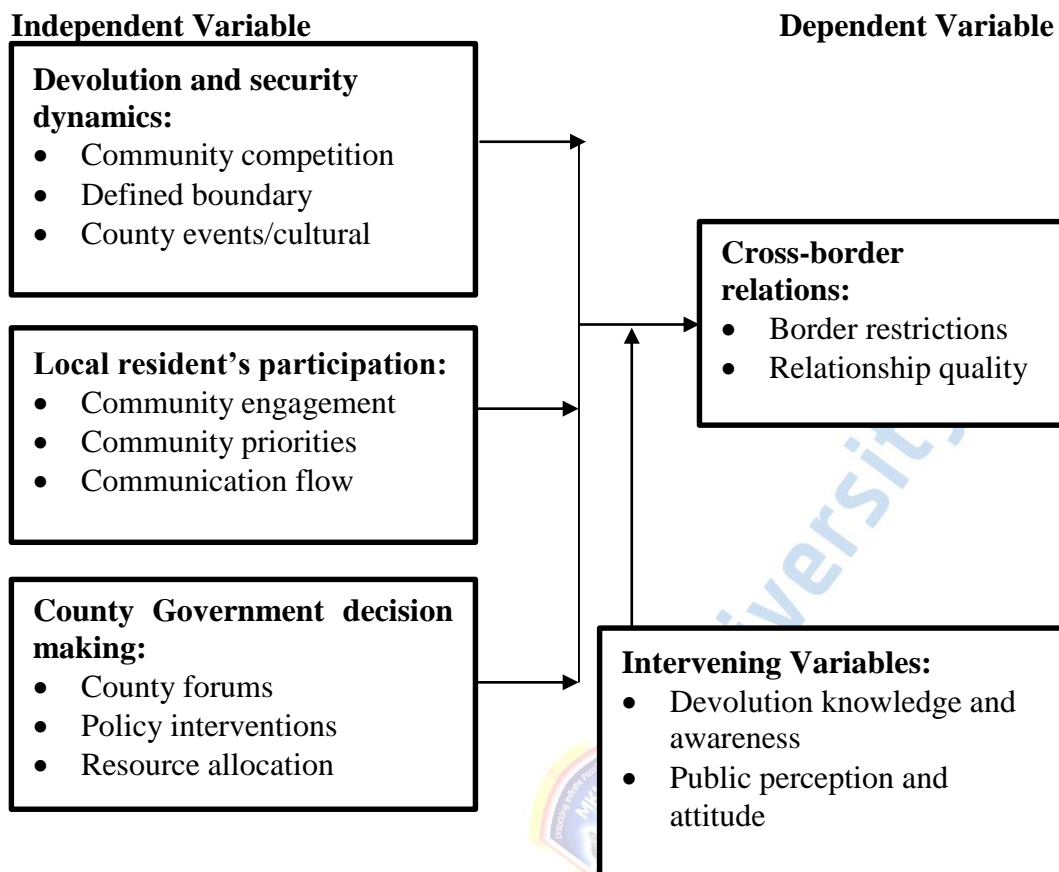
According to Borges et al. (2022), stakeholders have the power to actively shape cross-border cooperation, thus it's critical to gain a thorough grasp of their perspectives on the factors that encourage it. Stakeholders should become more conscious of both their own and other people's opinions as a result. For example, by recognizing the existence of divergent opinions, stakeholders could be able to pinpoint issues that need to be resolved as well as areas of agreement and disagreement (Tuokuu et al., 2019). Insights from this kind of research may be utilized by decision-makers to encourage stakeholder participation in participatory approaches in cross-border regions and as a prelude to the development of more precisely tailored policies.

There has been a widespread tendency for nations to transfer power and resources from national to subnational government levels, along with the trend toward regional disparities. This trend can be understood as the result of two concurrent developments that began in the middle of the 1970s: the introduction of devolution in nations that had previously used extremely centralist political systems, and a decentralization akin to that in those whose regions had previously experienced some degree of autonomy. Cross-border collaboration is influenced by various factors. For example, cross-border regions with similar cultures, access to universities and research facilities, well-developed infrastructure, and congruent institutional, economic, and policy frameworks enhance stakeholder cooperation (Lundquist &Tippl, 2013). Despite the fact that each

of these factors is crucial for cross-border collaboration, it is reasonable to suppose that different stakeholders have different goals, which are reflected in differing opinions about how these factors should be implemented. This theory is relevant to our research because it clarifies the interests of various stakeholders in cross-border problems involving Wajir and Somalian citizens.



## 2.4 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## 2.5 Summary

Although devolution was introduced over a decade ago, its contribution to cross-border issues is an interesting area of study in international relations. A review of literature of Kenya-Somalia relations points to strained relationship and little on how County Governments play a critical role in shaping this relationship. Indeed, devolution in many ways, however, has sparked an emerging system of governance without government, management, or control. There are still no shared principles that influenced earlier government initiatives. The government's ability to comprehend and influence the arising issues and the underlying disputes has decreased along with the nation's sovereignty.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in conducting the study. It covers the research design, target population, sampling procedures, and data collection methods and instruments. Additionally, it addresses the validity and reliability tests, pilot study, data analysis process, and ethical considerations involved in the research.

#### **3.2 Research Methodology**

Research methodology refers to the systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data for a research project. It can be seen as the science that investigates various research techniques and procedures. It involves examining the different methods that a researcher may use to address the study problem and the rationale behind choosing them. A researcher must have a strong understanding of both the methodology and the specific research methods and procedures. This includes knowing which methods and techniques are suitable for the study, what they signify, and why they are appropriate. Additionally, researchers should be proficient in applying these techniques and in performing statistical calculations such as mean, mode, median, standard deviation, and chi-square analysis.

This study adopts mixed research where it combined quantitative and qualitative research approach. According to Migiro, and Magangi, (2011) mixed method is the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time. This research approach has been used because it helps in understanding the research problem by combining numerical data with rich, descriptive insights and hence quantitative data provides statistical rigor, while qualitative data provides context and depth, leading to more well-rounded conclusions. The study has utilized both quantitative and qualitative

because the strengths of both data types can create a comprehensive analysis. In this method, the study used both interviews and questionnaires as data collection methods.

### **3.3 Research Design**

A research design is the overall strategy and analytical method you have chosen to logically and cohesively combine the many study components, ensuring a thorough examination of the research problem (Orodho, 2003). It acts as a manual for compiling, computing, and analyzing data and information. A well-designed study increases the likelihood of success. Research projects that are successful yield objective and precise information. A survey must be created by a researcher that satisfies every essential component of a design.

The study employed a descriptive research approach to gather data from the many community segments the researcher was aiming to reach. Siedlecki (2020) asserts that this study design is most suited for characterizing events or phenomena that are poorly understood or for spotting novel and developing phenomena. Furthermore, the outcomes of descriptive studies typically serve as the foundation for additional study. Descriptive studies must therefore be carefully planned and carried out. Descriptive research, according to Siedlecki (2020), can focus on opinions or attitudes regarding a variety of topics, including prohibition, college autonomy, the right to strike, the presidential system of government, attitudes, and the death penalty. Additionally, the results of descriptive studies are usually the basis for further research.

### **3.4 Target Population**

The target population refers to the group of individuals that the study aims to examine and draw conclusions about. As Hale (2006) states, the target population consists of the people to whom the research findings are relevant or applicable. It is the specific group that the intervention is intended to study and from which inferences are made.

In this study, the targeted population were community leaders, government officials (both national and county levels), and local civil society organizations operating in the six sub counties, Wajir County. The total population is 522,812 (KNBS, 2019).

**Table 1: Adult Population Per Subcounty**

No	Subcounty	Population
1	Wajir North	102,137
2	Wajir East	90,170
3	Tarbaj	77,100
4	Wajir West	100,135
5	Eldas	67,130
6	Wajir South	86,140
Total		522,812

**Source: KNBS (2019)**

### 3.4.1 Sample Size

The sample size refers to the number of observations chosen to estimate the characteristics of a given population. It is determined based on the target population size. Sampling involves selecting a representative subset from the entire population to assess its attributes. According to Mugenda (1999), a sample is a smaller group drawn from the broader population for the purpose of analysis.

Each member of the sample is referred to as a subject, responder, or interviewee, and the smaller group is meticulously chosen to ensure that it is representative of the entire population with the pertinent qualities. A representative sample was calculated using Yamane's (1967) sampling formula. Therefore, this study selected a sample of 204 respondents from community leaders, government officials (both national and county levels), and local civil society organizations operating in the six sub counties.

As indicated in Yamane's (1967) formula, a sample size of +/- 7% precision level here confidence level is 95% and P = 0.05 is adopted.

The formula is  $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$ .

where:  
n= sample size

$$\begin{aligned}
N &= \text{Population} \\
e &= \text{Level of precision} \\
n &= N / (1 + N(e)^2) \\
n &= 522,812 / (1 + 522,812(0.07)^2) \\
n &= 522,812 / (1 + 522,812(0.0049)) \\
n &= 522,812 / 2,563 \\
n &= 203.984 \quad (n=204)
\end{aligned}$$

The study selected a sample (n) of 204 respondents across the identified groups and Table 2 shows distribution of the sample in all the six sub counties in Wajir County. The researcher deems this sample size representative of entire population since data from (almost) the entire population was collected and also the issue of resource constraints was considered in adopting this sample size.

**Table 2: Sample Size**

No	Sub county	Sample Size	Percentage
1	Wajir North	51	25%
2	Wajir East	34	17%
3	Tarbaj	26	13%
4	Wajir West	42	21%
5	Eldas	20	10%
6	Wajir South	30	15%
<b>Total</b>		<b>204</b>	

### 3.4.2 Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a small group from a larger population to participate in a research study (Ogula, 2005). This research utilized the stratified random sampling technique, which involves dividing the population into smaller subgroups called strata, and then selecting samples from each stratum based on a specific design (Doucet et al., 1994). Stratified random sampling was chosen because it minimizes selection bias and ensures that the sample accurately reflects the characteristics of the target population based on the stratification criteria. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), this method allows for a representative selection of study subjects, ensuring that each subgroup within the population is proportionately included in the sample. As a result, this approach provided a well-balanced sample that reflected

the diversity of the target population, including subgroups such as residents, community leaders, government officials, and civil society organizations.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

In this section, the study highlights data collection instrument, data collection procedures as well as reliability and validity of data collection instruments.

#### **3.5.1 Data collection instruments**

The study used questionnaires and interviews as data collection instruments for the study. The researcher has chosen a questionnaire of its efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the collection of vast amounts of information (Mazikana, 2023). The flexibility to drop and pick the questionnaire for respondents to fill them out makes the researcher cover a vast geographical area. The researcher can obtain a significant amount of data at a relatively low cost by using questionnaires. Very few questionnaires required a pretest in order to be understood. This was completed prior to the fieldwork itself. The questionnaires were split into two portions and included both closed- and open-ended questions. While section two covered the primary subject of the study, section one concentrated on the general and demographic data of the targeted respondents. In order to increase responsiveness of the data collection process, the researcher will monitor the respondents during the actual data collection process and administer questionnaires that were developed while others were dropped off at the locations of respondents who might have busy schedules.

Furthermore, the study included interviews, which are mostly used in qualitative research and involve asking generic, open-ended questions of one or more individuals and recording their responses (Creswell, 2012). Interviews are helpful for following up with specific respondents after questionnaires, such as to look into their answers more thoroughly, according to McNamara (1999). The purpose of the interview method was

to aid in the interpretation of the respondents' comments regarding devolution and cross-border relations.

Five research assistants were enlisted to help in the process of gathering data. A pilot study will be conducted in this study after the researcher has a clear idea of the study topic, research questions, methodologies and methods to be used, and the format of the research schedule. Ten participants who will not be involved in the actual data collection were chosen by the researcher to participate in the pilot project. After entering their responses into the computer, analysis were done.

### **3.5.2 Data collection procedures**

The researcher submitted the complete research proposal to the University for Approval. Upon receiving a letter from the University introducing the researcher to the respondents, the researcher pre-visited the selected study area to familiarize himself and seek permission to conduct research within the county. The study also identifies target respondents because this study requires respondents who meet specific criteria. For example, the study targets mainly individuals who actively engage in community issues including community leaders and government officials (both national and county levels).

In addition, the study hired and train research assistants who assist in collection of data from across the target areas of Wajir County. This is to ensure that research assistants understand more than simply how to conduct the interview itself. They should learn about the background for the study, previous work that has been done, and why the study is important.

Considering the study collection data targeting Kenya and Somalia, the research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)

who assessed the research questions, the design of the study, the potential impacts and publication plans. This helps the researcher adhere to research ethics.

### **3.5.3 Reliability and Validity of data collection instruments**

This section presents details of reliability and validity of data collection instruments.

#### **Reliability:**

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003), a test's reliability is determined by how free it is from measurement errors. The more frequently these errors occur, the less trustworthy the test is. Furthermore, a tool's consistency or repeatability when measuring the same occurrence over time is referred to as its reliability. It measures the degree to which the same people perform comparably on an assessment administered at two separate times. Furthermore, a test is considered dependable if it continues to produce constant, non-varying results when employed by numerous researchers in stable settings.

#### **Validity:**

The capacity of an instrument to measure what it claims to measure is known as validity. It addresses how well a measure captures the different facets of the relevant notion. Validity is often regarded as a single concept. An instance of internal binding would be if multiple researchers were required to review a single research study and reach a consensus regarding the study's conclusions. Conversely, results and conclusions having external validity can be extrapolated to different contexts or subjects. To determine the validity of the instrument and permit any revisions, the researcher will consult with academics, specialists, and the supervisor.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

After being inspected, cleaned, and coded, the questionnaire data were loaded into the statistical package for social science (SPSS) computer program for analysis. SPSS

version 22.0 will be used to analyze the quantitative data. Additionally, a seven-step analytical approach described by Marshall and Rossman (2006) will be used to analyze the qualitative data. These include categorizing the data, coding it, delving further into it, coming up with themes and categories, providing interpretations via analytical memoranda, and presenting the research. We'll utilize a descriptive summary of statistics to explain how managerial remuneration plans affect company performance.

Frequency tables, charts, and graphs were used to portray the data once they had been entered and analyzed. The research objectives drove the categorization of the qualitative data derived from open-ended questions into themes, which were then presented narratively in addition to quantitatively.

### **3.7 Ethical consideration**

According to Hall (2008) ethical consideration is an integral part of the planning stage of all social research projects. The study adhered to several ethical considerations to ensure it meets scientific standards. First, since the study is dealing with human subjects, it ensured respondents are not physically or psychologically harmed and hence their safety will be priority for the researcher. Secondly, the study observed confidentiality during the research process. This helped in winning respondent's trust and their support as their privacy is guaranteed because all responses received from respondents would be treated with confidentiality and would not be shared with any third party.

Thirdly, the study ensured informed consent of the respondents is adhered to and this means they understand the purpose of the study and any other information they need to get from the researcher. This will allow them to provide full details as required by the researcher since they will have knowledge of the study area. In addition, transparency, whereby respondents are aware of the use of the research findings, and they were

adequately informed on the research objectives. Respondents will be assured that the data that was collected is purely for research purposes and will not be used for any other reasons rather than meeting study objectives.



## CHAPTER FOUR

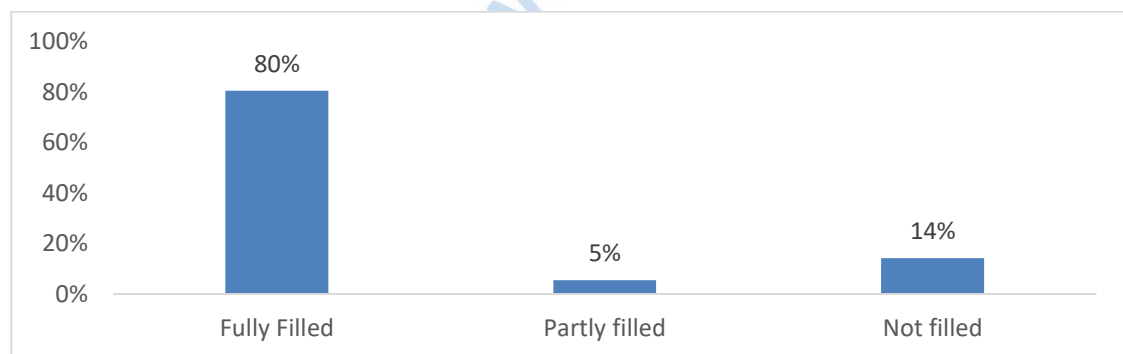
### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This study examined effects of devolution on cross border relation with special focus on Kenya- Somalia border. The findings presented three specific objectives as presented and discussed in the following sections.

#### 4.1 Response Rate

A total of 204 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. At the closure of data collection, 164 (81%) had fully filled and retrieved, 40 (19%) questionnaires could not be included in the final analysis because they were retrieved unfilled, some partly filled, and their responses were inconsistent with others. According to Baruch and Holtom (2008) an average response rate of 50% should be considered. Moreover, Hendra and Hill (2019) argue a response rate of 70% is achievable and is reasonable while Gordon et al (2002) adds 80% is good and 90% is excellent.



**Figure 2: Response Rate**

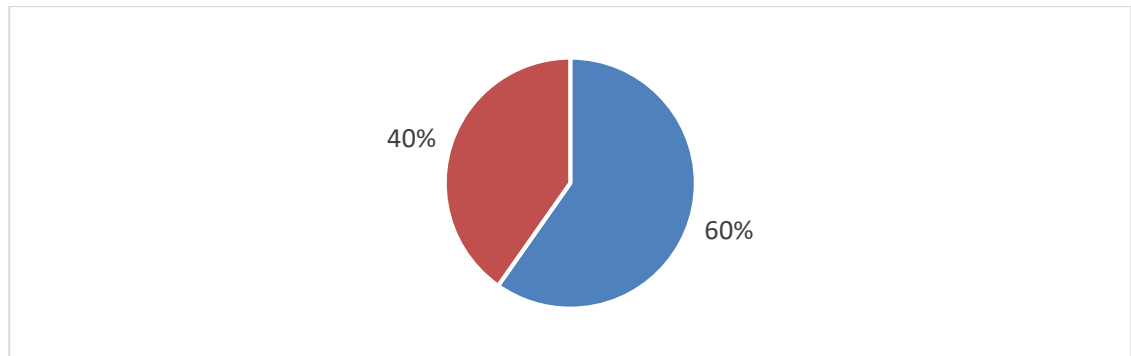
Source: Research Data, 2024

#### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study analyzed the distribution of respondents based on demographic information. The findings have been presented in the following sections.

#### 4.2.1 Gender Distribution

The distribution of respondents by gender is shown in figure 3. 60% were male compared to 40% women. This shows although men were more, views of women captured and forms part of the findings that examined how devolution can contribute to cross border relationship building.



**Figure 3: Your gender**

Source: Research Data, 2024

#### 4.2.2 Age

Respondents were asked to indicate their ages and the findings are presented in Table 3. 34% of the respondents were aged 38-44 years, followed by 24% in the bracket of 45-51 years. The findings show that while those aged 32-37 years accounted for 18% of the respondents 11% were aged 52 years and above 25-31 years and 18-24 years accounting for 7% and 6% respectively.

**Table 3: Age bracket**

Description	Frequency	Percentage
18-24 yrs	10	6%
25-31 yrs	12	7%
32-37 yrs	30	18%
38-44 yrs	55	35%
45-51 yrs	40	24%
52 and above	17	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Research Data, 2024

#### 4.2.3 Marital status

59% of the respondents were married and single at 21% of the respondents (Table 4). In addition, the findings show that 12% indicated the marital status as widowed and 9% as

divorced. This shows the level of interactions in the communities, especially marriage which might explain cross border. The study did not delve into cross border marriages but argues that in most cases these communities along the border have some tendency of engaging in marriages and could be beneficial to this study in terms of response.

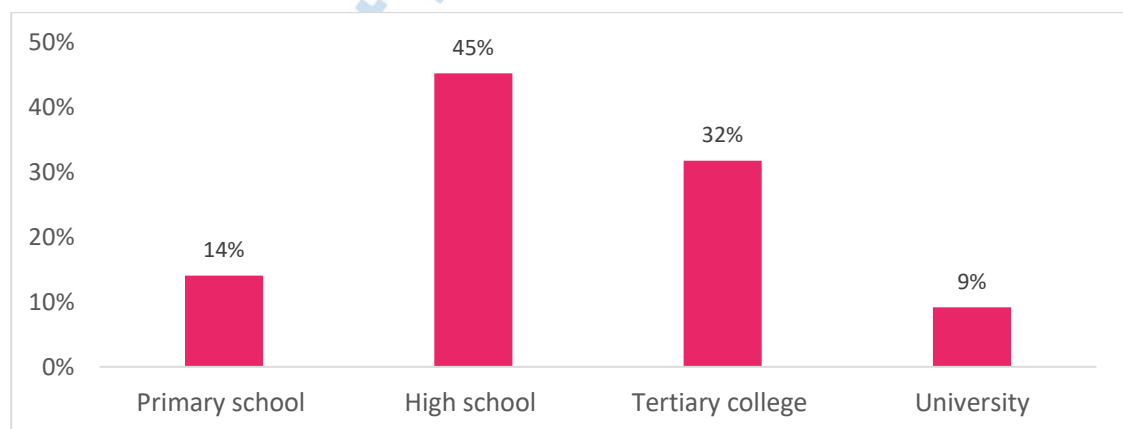
**Table 4: Marital status**

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Single	35	21%
Married	96	59%
Divorced	14	9%
Widowed	19	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Research Data, 2024

#### 4.2.4 Highest level of education

Respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of education. The findings have been presented in Figure 4. It shows that 45% had high school education followed 32% who had completed tertiary college. Only 9% had university education with those with primary certificates accounting for 14% of the respondents. This demonstrates their level of literacy / knowledge in reading and writing. Therefore, this helped researchers who used little time in explaining some of questions to the respondents but majority of them were able to understand the questions.

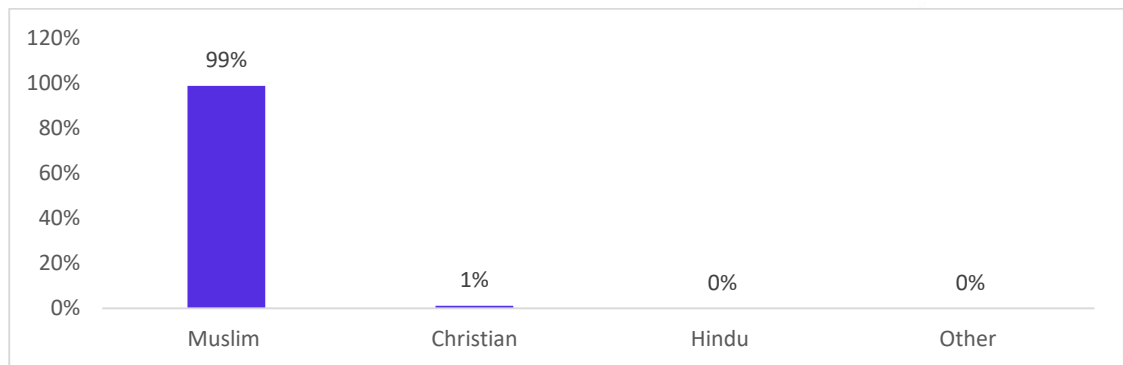


**Figure 4: Highest level of education**

Source: Research Data, 2024

#### 4.2.5 Religion

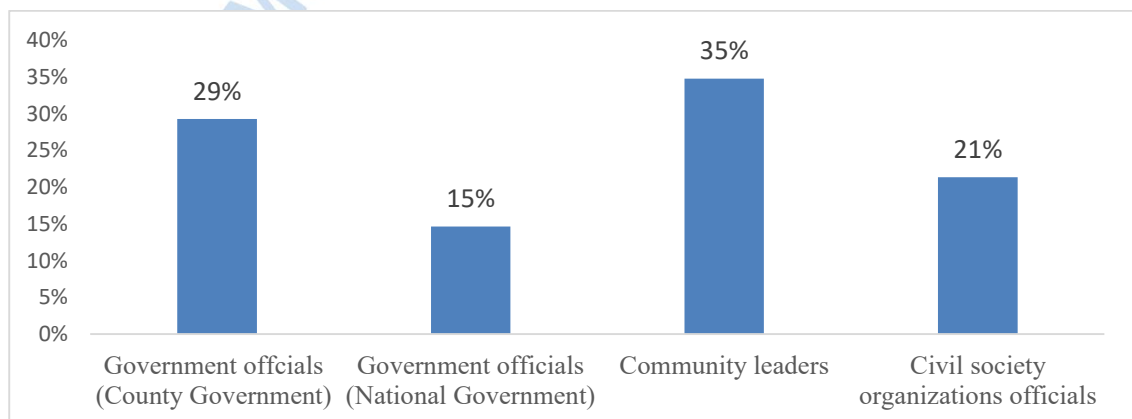
The study sought to understand religious affiliations, but this plays an important role in society. The findings have been presented in Figure 5 while diverse religious institutions exist in the area, majority 162(99%) of the respondents are affiliated to Muslim while those who indicated Christian accounted for 1% of the total respondents and none indicated Hindu or any other religious organizations.



**Figure 5: Religion**  
Source: Research Data, 2024

#### 4.2.6 Occupation

Figure 6 presents distribution of respondents by their occupation. The Community leaders 57(35%) and government officials from county government constituted the majority of respondents. The members of civil society organizations from the local and national government being 24(15%) of the respondents with 48(29%) being Government officials (County Government).



**Figure 6: Occupation**  
Source: Research Data, 2024

### 4.3 Presentations of Findings

The study findings are presented based on the Linkert scale ranging from 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. In the study, the five scale include Strongly disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A) and Strongly agree (SA).

#### 4.3.1 Effect of Devolution on Security Dynamics

**Table 5: Effect of devolution on security dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia border**

Description	SD	D	N	A	SA
Devolution has promoted strong relationship between communities in Kenya and Somalia considering they share major characteristics	17%	13%	8%	22%	40%
Militarization of border infrastructure has facilitated people of Wajir county to undertake their cross-border business peacefully	21%	11%	5%	38%	25%
Devolution has given people of Wajir county a sense of identity with their counterparts along Somalia border	11%	19%	11%	40%	19%
A well-defined boundary has enhanced a shared security information among communities living along Kenya	16%	14%	3%	19%	48%
There has been reduced political violence and competition for communities along the Kenya-Somalia border since establishment of counties	33%	11%	5%	35%	16%

Source: Research Data, 2024

Most of the respondents believe that since county governments were established, communities along Kenya-Somalia border have continued to interact closely. This can be attributed to the improvement of service delivery and common characteristics that have allowed them to freely share the marketplace. However, 30% of the respondents do not believe devolution has contributed to local community members from Wajir county resolving cross border issues. This means devolution has contributed positively to this aspect. The study findings show that majority 63% of the respondents think that increased military activities especially infrastructure has strengthened activities of Wajir county opening up region for increased supplies of Somalia communities along the border. Nonetheless, 32% of the respondents don't believe that militarization of border infrastructure leads to growth of border business (markets). With the creation of new markets and improved road network, local communities in Kenya and Somalia have much power to solve their own issues.

Furthermore, the findings show that majority 67% of the respondents agree that devolution has given residents of Wajir County a sense of identity with their counterparts living along the Kenya-Somalia border. Most of the respondents think that defining boundaries enhances shared security information especially among communities with common interest and share most characteristics (Table 3). Besides, 30% don't see any benefits of having well defined boundaries especially on cross border security. This means residents who border Somalia have utilized territorial locations to resolve their local problems as they know people can easily relate. The findings further show 44% of the respondents believe since the established of county government or devolution, political violence in the region had reduced and there has been low competition among Kenya-Somalia border. This suggests some individuals from Somalia with links in Kenya have been participating border creating tension or unnecessary conflicts.

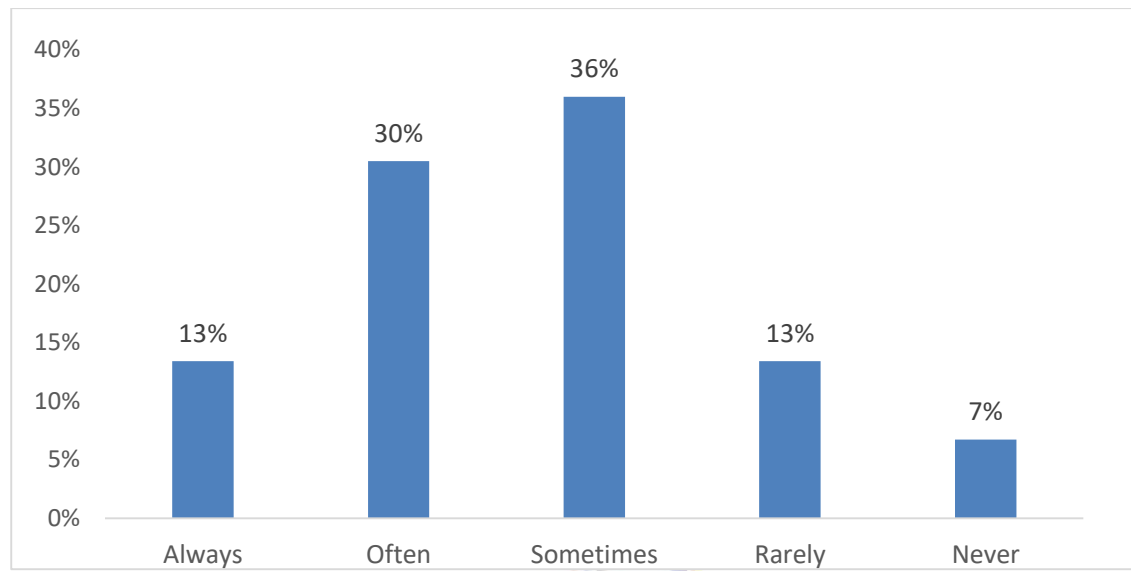
In an interview, some respondents confirmed that devolution has broken information barriers and their participation has helped in resolving issues faster than before.

*We participate in public meetings and our local leaders are given mandate to organize us. This is different from many years where our people had been ignored. I am happy because this has it is no longer about people coming from far to come and plan for us, but they have embraced what we tell them and it has worked (Interview, May 26, 2024)*

*Every ward handles their issues and people like ward administrators have played an important role as they work closely within the villages. Whenever we have issues, they quickly reach to our county leadership lead by Governor. I remember years back, any time we report insecurity issues, it could take many days before being responded to (Interview, May 28, 2024)*

### 4.3.2 Communities Crossing the Border to Somalia to Attend Cultural or Market Since Devolution

Respondents were asked to indicate whether there were cultural, or markets activities facilitated by county governments that seeks to enhance community integration along Kenya Somalia border. The responses were shown in the figure 7.

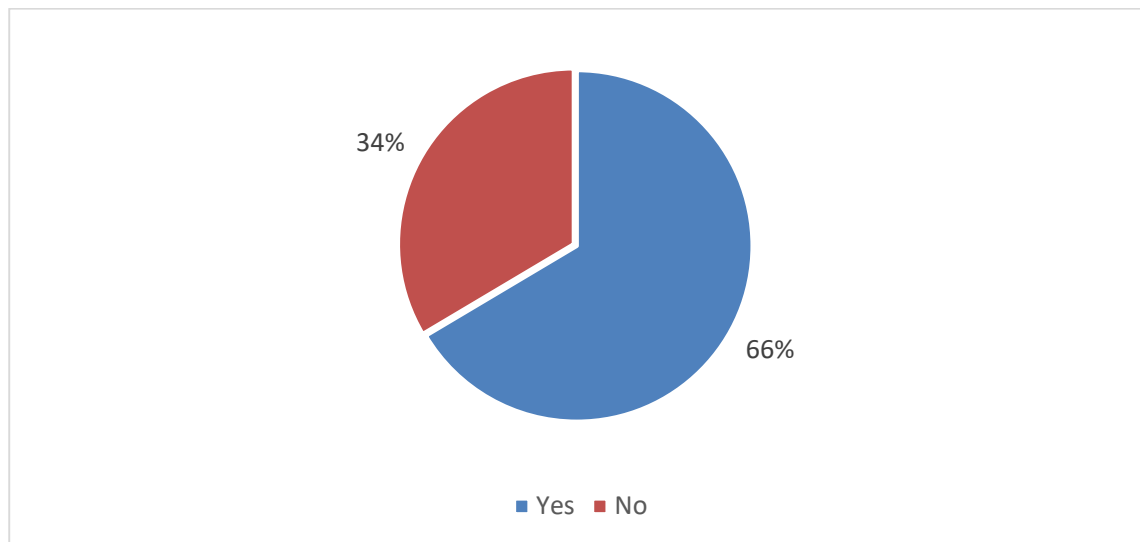


**Figure 7: In general, how often do you cross the border to Somalia to attend cultural or market**

Source: Research Data, 2024

The majority 59(36%) said they sometimes cross the border to Somalia to attend cultural events or markets organized by Kenya and Somalia. While 50(30%) indicated often, 22(13%) seems to cross the border always with 22(13%) and 11(7%) indicating rarely and never respectively. This illustrates how devolution empowers the community through participation of issues affecting them and since they understand the root causes, they are likely to offer desired solutions.

### 4.3.3 Response on Enhancement of the Security along the Border



**Figure 8: generally, would you say the security issues along the border have been enhanced?**

Source: Research Data, 2024

Respondents were also asked to evaluate and offer their views on the general security situation along the border. The findings have been presented in Figure 8. The findings show that most of them respondents believe the security along the brooder of Somalia and Kenya had improved something attributed to sustained activities offered by devolution. Also, the findings indicate that 34% of the respondents don't agree there were changes or improvements which could be true considering the selective insecurity caused by terrorist organizations. They predominantly think that the greater freedom and flexibility at the counties offers them opportunity to seek services at a closer proximity something which has not been there for decades.

### 4.4 Local Residence's Participation on Cross-border Relations Engagement

In this section, the study sought to examine the extent to which local residents are invited to participate in cross border discussions. In assessing this, the study used four items as presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Local residence’s participation on cross-border relations engagement with Somalia**

Description	SD	D	N	A	SA
Community members have severally held discussions with residents of Somalia to enhance their coexistence.	11%	11%	13%	46%	19%
Local community members have been able to set their own priorities and decide how to strengthen their relationship with communities in Somalia.	20%	13%	3%	19%	45%
There has been increased information flow among Wajir county communities and those living in Somalia.	17%	15%	11%	43%	14%
Local communities have effective local mechanisms of resolving cross-border tension.	21%	18%	7%	21%	33%

Source: Research Data, 2024

The study asked respondents whether community members had held discussions with their counterparts in Somalia side. The findings show majority 46% indicated agree with 19% in favour of strongly agree. Moreover, 13% of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree but 22% did not agree that some community members had participated in cross border discussion to improve their coexistence with their counterparts in Somalia.

Although 33% of the respondents could not agree that residents of Wajir county are able to own some action by setting their own priorities and decide they enhance their relationship with their counterparts, most of them believe the local community are able to take tow initiatives in developing measures to enhances cohesion. This means devolution has empowered communities in identifying areas of urgent intervention especially issues affecting those along Kenya and Somalia border. By doing this, the communities are able to help the government in resolving minor issues and find long lasting solutions.

As shown in Table 7, the findings show majority 57% of the respondents were in agreement that since establishment of devolution, information flow between communities along the Kenya and Somalia border had increased. However, 32% of the respondents don’t agree devolution has played an important role in increasing communication among communities living along the Kenya-Somalia border. Also,

when asked to state whether communities have localized systems to address any emerging issues along the border, 21% indicated agree and 33% strongly agree. On the other hand, 21% indicated strongly disagree with 18% in favour of disagree. This means that although communities have mechanisms to resolve their issues, they are not effective in addressing an emerging issue along the border.

#### 4.5 Effects of County Government Decisions on the Cross-border Relations

The study assessed the effects of decision-making by county government on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia. First, the study asked respondents to state whether the county government had organized events aimed at uniting communities along the Kenya-Somalia border. As shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: County government's decision-making on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia**

Description	SD	D	N	A	SA
Wajir county government have always held events to promote community engagement and build trust between communities along Kenya-Somalia	23%	14%	9%	26%	28%
County government has developed policy intervention to allow communities in Somalia attend local markets or conduct businesses within the county.	25%	16%	7%	32%	20%
The county has allocated resource to awareness campaigns to build relationship among the communities.	14%	22%	33%	20%	26%
There has been an increased tourism activity along the border enhancing Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia.	10%	13%	20%	23%	49%

Source: Research Data, 2024

The majority 54% of the respondents were in agreement compared to 37% who didn't believe the county government had organized events that promote community engagements. Only 9% of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree. This means the county government have cultural or trade fairs to enhance community engagement and build trust for the communities living along the border of Kenya and Somalia.

Furthermore, majority 52% of the respondents believe that county government had developed policy interventions to allow communities in Somalia attend local market or conduct business within the county. However, 41% of the respondents don't think there

is such provisions within Wajir County that would facilitate trade or allow Somalia communities conduct their activities peacefully within the county.

As shown in Table 8 the study also found that one third of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree that the county government had allocated resources in awareness creation campaigns to strengthen relationships among communities living in Kenya and Somalia. Moreover, 46% were in agreement while 36% could not agree. When asked to state whether there was increase in tourism activities along the border of Kenya and Somalia, majority 52% were in agreement and 23% could not agree. This means the governments have utilized tourism events/activities in building cross border relations among the communities along the border.

In an interview, respondents agreed that county government had organized intercommunity events that promote cross border cohesion. These events have united warring communities suggesting devolution has not only benefited Kenyans but Somalis too:

*I have attended several cross border cultural competitions which was organized by department of ICT, Trade, Investment and Industry. We met with communities from Somalia to showcase our Kenyan products and they too showed theirs. I liked the event as it united us with some communities we fought (Interview, May 27, 2024)*

#### **4.6 Discussions**

This study assessed role of devolution on Kenya's cross border relations with Somalia. The findings have demonstrated that cross-border relations can be achieved if all stakeholders including the local community are given opportunity. As stated by Gill (2009) devolution allows individuals nationally or regional an opportunity to play a role in promoting cross border cohesion. This is also noted in the findings of this study which showed that majority 62% of the respondents believe that communities in Wajir

County share the resources allocated to them with their counterparts in Somalia and hence strengthen their relations. The findings show that collaboration between county government and national government has realized improvement of roads, and this facilitates the residents to undertake their businesses or farming activities with communities from Somalia. In fact, the established of devolved systems promoted or given the people of Wajir County a sense of identity with those along Kenya-Somalia border.

One of the defining features of devolution that has played an important in promoting among communities along the border is administrative boundaries. This has facilitated the sharing of information among not only the community members of the two countries but even government agencies. Although 44% of the respondents don't believe that devolution has reduced political tension, most of them argue that communities have always shared not only political seats but other available opportunities among the people of Wajir. They note that most communities who live along the border had been relying on their kin in Somalia whenever they face any issue and now, there is no confrontations amongst them. The 2010 Kenyan Constitution established a decentralized form of governance in which the 47 Political and Administrative Counties receive devolved authority over the Legislature and the Executive, two of the three institutions of government, as stipulated in Article 6. Decentralization's main goal was to transfer representation, authority, and resources to the local level. By dividing up the duties, devolution was thought to hold the key to releasing Kenya's economic potential.

The study found that communities along Kenya-Somalia border have always engaged in activities/events such as cultural or businesses. Two thirds of the respondents attribute the community interaction, communal harmony and sustained cross border

activities to efforts by the county government coupled with level of responsibility and the power that exists among the local residents. As part of their responsibility to participate in promoting cross border relations, residents of Wajir have shared platforms with those from Somalia to discuss and resolve any emerging issue without involving external interventions. Furthermore, the study findings show that devolution has empowered local community members by allowing them set their own targets and plans as well as setting their priorities based on their community needs. Most 52% of the respondents believe that communities living along Kenya-Somalia border share information between each other leading to early intervention of any emerging issues across the borders. This means devolution has empowered the local residents to take a lead in putting in place effective mechanisms that can easily address cross border issues without engaging directly government agencies. They participate in decision-making, plan and manage their local projects at their levels, and produce funds at their levels.

The findings show that the participation of marginalized groups in political and public decision-making is generally recognized both in political and in legislative terms. Despite these gains, across the region gender discrimination remains a formidable barrier to women's participation in formal decision-making processes. An exclusive mindset and political culture regarding women are often sustained by political institutions. Because of this, a large number of women have made the decision to work in civil society organizations and political parties that support social and political change instead of entering the formal political system. Given their limited access to and participation in pre-conflict decision-making organizations and institutions, women are frequently left out of formal talks.

The findings show that county government has supported communities living along the border. Wajir County uses cultural events to promote community engagements and

build trust among communities both in Kenya and Somalia. The county government also contributes to cross border relations through trade activities. In particular, the findings show they develop policies that promote local trade cooperation as local communities benefit from cross border businesses. They also allocate resources for capacity building programs aimed at addressing the needs of all the communities. By devolving powers, local governments can enhance their infrastructure and investment to effectively ensure sustainable development (Watts, 2008). It is through devolution of power that the principles of equity, fairness, public participation, and unity in diversity are maintained. This study confirms that communities living along Kenya and Somalia have changed how they relate since county government was established as they have strengthened their unity.

A community's sense of "self" and "group" identities are linked to territory. More importantly, there is a close relationship between ethnic identity and geography. Due to the significance of territory for identification, identity frustration causes us to become extremely worried and prone to react violently when threatened (Cunningham, 2001). The geographic component of interest representation has been reinforced by devolution. Groups have rearranged themselves as interlocutors with the new institutions, which is the most obvious shift. As opposed to the formation of entirely new groups or breakaways from pre-existing northern communities, this has typically taken the shape of an increased territorial presence. Group involvement around recently defined or reinterpreted policy topics is less evident. Sectors stay separate, while government and elected assemblies serve as the means of communication between parties within various sectors.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

A summary of the findings is presented in this section. First the chapter introduces the section and thereafter discusses key findings as guided by the research objectives. In addition, the chapter discusses conclusions and recommendations as well as suggestions for further studies.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study sought to assess the role of devolution in Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia. In particular, the study examined the role of devolution on security dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia border, established the extent of residents' participation on cross border relations engagement with Somalia and lastly assessed the role of county government's decision making on Kenya's cross border relations with Somalia. The findings presented in this study are based on 164 (81%) responses from the 204 questionnaires administered.

##### 5.2.1 Effect of Devolution on Security Dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia Border

Although they share several characteristics, communities living along the Kenya and Somalia border have faced insecurity dilemmas. In resolving issues brought about by regional political, and interethnic clashes over resources, the findings show devolution has promoted equal distribution of the resources among the communities. The majority of the respondents observed that the county government understands the needs of the residents and hence ensures they access some resources which had been attributed to tensions. The nature and dynamics of the cross-border conflicts in Wajir are complex and involve different actors from all the genders. They have knowledge and skills in fighting. The cross-border conflict happens mostly in the drought and rainy seasons.

The findings demonstrate that residents of Wajir County are empowered by devolution to manage local issues. For example, they observed that devolution has given them a sense of identity with their counterparts in Somalia. This can be attributed to well-defined geographical boundaries which are allowing them to share any insecurity information not only within Kenya but across the borders with Somali communities. Respondents also note that well-managed elective seats in the region have reduced political competition resulting to tension and violence; hence some communities had relied on their relatives across the borders for support and devolution has reduced such activities.

Most of the respondents confirmed that security issues along the Kenya-Somalia border had been enhanced and residents from both countries can cross the border without being attacked or harmed. The informal security and governance structures, as well as the Kenyan government's readiness to view them as allies rather than competitors to be sidelined or used as props for "indirect rule," One of the most intriguing examples of the emergence of "mediated state" arrangements in modern Africa is Northern Kenya. This case highlights a number of issues regarding the viability and wisdom of the mediated state model as a short-term safety net or a long-term substitute for restoring the rule of law in failing states. Respondents offered a variety of justifications for getting involved in the community, despite the fact that there is a true dearth of funding and training. Putting in place prevention and citizenship committees that help and aid security personnel could counteract the shortcomings of surveillance and control agents in providing effective services along all border regions.

### **5.2.2 The Residents' Participation on Cross-border Relations Engagement with Somalia**

Despite their differences, communities living along Kenya-Somalia often participate in activities, interactions, and collaborations that take place across national borders aimed at strengthening their coexistence. This was evident when 65% of the respondents said that community members from Wajir County regularly have discussions with their counterparts in Somalia side. Moreover, the study found that local residents set their priorities and make a decision that strengthens their relations with those in Somalia. The examples of citizens' mobilization around democracy show the important role for organized citizens to play an active part. According to the findings, as community members increase their capabilities by strengthening human and social capital, they are better able to choose how best to satisfy their priorities for livelihood opportunities.

The findings show that devolution has increased information flow and all institutions of decision and action in a local space contribute to local governance. In addition to local governments these include traditional/indigenous institutions and authorities, village committees, and community organizations. This suggests that methods and strategies for including the community in the politics of border security management have not yet been established. Better ways to integrate the populace into border security management have been suggested. The effectiveness of the local mechanism in reducing cross-border-related insecurity and tensions was confirmed by a respondent in an interview:

Since the establishment of the county government, we have held several meetings with communities from Somalia. Our local leaders have always taken a lead to ensure successful engagement where we share information that can strengthen our relations as

communities along the borders. For me, I learned talking to each other helps reduce hatred or tension against the other person (Interview, May 28, 2024)

### **5.2.3 The Effects of County Government Decision making on Kenya's Cross-border Relations with Somalia**

The findings show that majority of the respondents believe that devolution has given powers county government has increased community engagements among communities living along the border. This has raised profile of particular issues such as public participation and placing them on the policy agenda. The findings further show that there has been increased tourism activities along the border enhancing Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia. Policies to address inequalities are not only clearly required by the county which has suffered conflict and terrorism but should also become a component of development policies in general. According to the majority of respondents, a border service representative should conduct themselves professionally. Their answers revealed three main traits of northern (Kenya-Somalia) border surveillance officers. They are categorized as "severe" by some, "friendly" by others, and "professional" by over a third of the respondents—the most common classification among those surveyed.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study examined role of devolution on Kenya's cross border relations with Somalia. Based on the findings, the study concludes that devolution has given powers to community members to organize their needs and prioritize them. By localizing their political matters, there has been reduced cross border tension as county government uses its position to organize cross border cultural and trade events to benefit both Kenyan and Somalia communities.

Even if every zone under investigation has unique characteristics, there are common facts that have an impact on communities all along the border. The community's relations with those in charge of border security and control can be categorized as normal. There aren't any significant issues between the two organizations. Although the security forces perform a poor job of incorporating the community into border security plans, the community typically views them as professional in nature. Making sure that every force near the border is arranged according to a coordinated security management plan could help to enhance these interactions. The level of living in the border region is comparatively low. Isolation and a lack of socioeconomic infrastructure are common realities. In summary, an insufficient level of security is implemented by the official border security personnel alone. The border populations' quantitative and qualitative contributions are a valuable resource for putting into practice a robust border management strategy.

Additionally, community involvement produces several elements that help develop cross-border relationships; nevertheless, these have not yet resulted in universal empowerment or advantages. However, local and elite politicians hold significant power in their areas, which restricts the prospects for underprivileged community groups to grow and thrive. Even after giving county governments more authority, the federal government still has the last say over their decisions, which means that the county government is no longer able to effectively engage the community because the federal government controls their authority.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings present, this study offers the following recommendations:

- i. This study found that establishment of county government has facilitated increased cross border activities and hence there is need for national government to support local administration to ensure all parts of the county contribute to cross border relations.
- ii. County government can formulate policies that seek to enhance communication between Kenya authorities and those in Somalia.
- iii. The findings showed that communication is key for cross border relationship, and hence there is need to provide training support community members for the to regularly communicate clearly and frequently to establish trust, rapport, and alignment.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Study**

This study examined role of devolution in cross border relations between Kenya and Somalia. Further studies can be conducted to examine role of devolution in other counties along the border of other countries such as Ethiopia and South Sudan or Uganda. In addition, there is need for future studies to investigate role of trade integration on cross border relations.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Consent Form

Serial No: .....

I am a student from Mount Kenya University; currently undertaking an academic research study as part of an academic requirement by the institution. The research work requires that I collect field data. The study aims to assessing influence of devolution on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia with special reference to Wajir County 2018-2023. It is my humble request that you be part of this research. Please read through the following before you append your signature.

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I am aware that even if I accept to participate right now, there are no repercussions if I decide not to participate at all or withdraw at any moment.
- I am aware that I have two weeks following the interview to revoke my consent to the use of the interview data; in that event, the information will be removed.
- I've received a written explanation of the study's goals and methodology, as well as the chance to ask questions.
- I consent to having my interview recorded on audio.
- I am aware that any information I give to this research will be kept private.

Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix II: Research Questionnaire

### Section A: Demographic Information

1. Your gender

Male  Female

2. Your age bracket?

18-24 yrs  25-31 yrs

32-37 yrs  38-44 yrs

45-51 yrs  52 and above

3. Marital status

Single  Married

Divorced  Widowed

4. Highest level of education

Primary school  High school

Tertiary college  University

5. Religion

Muslim  Christian

Hindu  Other

6. Occupation

Civil servant (County Government)  Civil servant (National  
Government)

Business owner  Other

### Section B: To evaluate the effect of devolution on security dynamics along the Kenya-Somalia border.

7. What implication has the devolution brought on security dynamics along Kenya-Somalia border.? Indicate your level of agreement in a scale of 1- 5 and use the following ratings and tick or cross where appropriate.

1- Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 - Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Devolution has reduced political violence and competition for communities along the Kenya-Somalia border leading to enhanced among communities across the border					
Devolution has promoted strong relationship between communities in Kenya and Somalia considering they share major characteristics					

Militarization of border infrastructure has facilitated people of Wajir county to undertake their cross border business peacefully					
Devolution has given people of Wajir county a sense of identity with their counterparts in Somalia-Somalia border					
A well-defined boundary has enhanced a shared security information among communities living along Kenya					

8. In general, how often do you cross the border to Somalia to attend cultural or market events since devolution came?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

**Section C: To establish the extent of local residence’s participation on cross-border relations engagement with Somalia.**

9. What is the extent to which local residence’s participation on cross-border relations engagement with Somalia? Indicate your level of agreement in a scale of 1- 5 and use the following ratings and tick or cross where appropriate.

1- Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 - Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Community members have severally held discussions with residents of Somalia to enhance their coexistence.					
Local community members have been able to set their own priorities and decide how to strengthen their relationship with communities in Somalia.					
There has been increased information flow among Wajir county communities and those living in Somalia.					
Local community members have developed local mechanisms of resolving cross-border tension.					

**Section D: To assess the effects of county government decision making on Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia.**

10. What is the extent to which local residence’s participation on cross-border relations engagement with Somalia? Indicate your level of agreement in a scale of 1- 5 and use the following ratings and tick or cross where appropriate.

1- Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 - Strongly agree

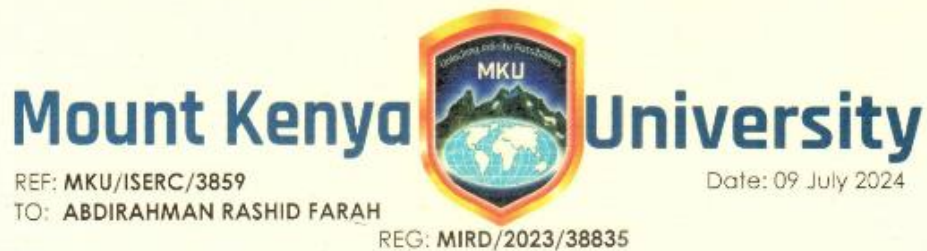
Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Wajir county government have always held events to promote community engagement and build trust between communities along Kenya-Somalia					
County governments have developed policy intervention to allow countries in Somalia attend local markets or conduct businesses within the county.					
The county has allocated resource to awareness campaigns to build relationship among the communities.					
There has been increased tourism activities along the border enhancing Kenya's cross-border relations with Somalia.					

11. To what extent, if at all, do you think that devolution has improved the capacity and capability of local communities to deal effectively with cross border problems?

- To at least small extent
- To a small extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a great extent
- Not at all
- Don't know



## Appendix III: Ethical Clearance



Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: ASSESSING ROLE OF DEVOLUTION ON KENYA'S CROSS-BORDER RELATIONS WITH SOMALIA: A CASE OF WAJIR COUNTY 2018-2023**

This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **2891**. The approval period is **09/07/2024 - 08/07/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD  
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC



## Appendix IV: Letter of Introduction

  
**Mount Kenya University**  
**DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

MIRD/2023/38835

9<sup>th</sup> July, 2024

*National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)  
Off Waiyaki, Upper Kabete  
P.O Box 30623- 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA*

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: ABDIRAHMAN RASHID FARAH-REGISTRATION NO. MIRD/2023/38835**

The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Internal Relations and Diplomacy** in the department of **Institute of Security Studies, Justice and Ethics** in the school of Social Sciences.

The title of the research is "**Assessing Role of Devolution of Kenya's Cross -Border Relations with Somalis: A Case of Wajir County 2018-2023.**" It has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **July, 2024 and September, 2024.**

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.



Dr. Samuel M. Karenga, Ph.D  
Director, Graduate Studies  
Enc.

Mount Kenya University  
P. O. Box 342 - 01009, THIKA  
Office of the Director,  
Graduate Studies






**Appendix VI: Map of Research Area**



# Appendix VII: Originality Report

## ABDIRAHMAN RASHID FARAH

### ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLUTION ON KENYA'S CROSS-BORDER RELATIONS WITH SOMALIA: A CASE OF WAJ...

 PROJECT  
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 Mount Kenya University

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