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Factors Influencing the Implementation of Road Construction Projects in Hargeisa: Evidence from Local Government Projects

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Abstract

Road infrastructure development in Hargeisa, the capital city of Somaliland, faces persistent implementation challenges despite ongoing resource mobilization efforts by the Hargeisa Local Municipality. This study analyzed the effects of local politics, project leadership, and resource mobilization on the implementation of road construction projects, drawing on Resource Dependency Theory as its theoretical anchor. A quantitative, descriptive research design was employed, with data collected from 80 purposively sampled technical and administrative personnel using a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The instrument demonstrated strong validity (CVI = 0.86) and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.88). Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that the three independent variables collectively explained 84.7 percent of the variance in project implementation ($R^2 = 0.847$, $p < 0.001$). Local politics emerged as the strongest predictor ($B = 0.714$, $p < 0.001$), followed by project leadership, which demonstrated a significant positive contribution ($B = 0.264$, $p = 0.037$). Resource mobilization, however, exhibited a significant negative relationship with project implementation ($B = -0.239$, $p = 0.008$), revealing a structural Resource Mobilization Paradox whereby increased financial inputs directed through weak institutional frameworks generate greater bureaucratic complexity and implementation delays rather than improved outcomes. The study recommends institutional reform of fund allocation processes, adoption of digital resource tracking tools, and development of governance policy frameworks that protect technical project procedures from political interference while harnessing the benefits of positive political engagement.

Keywords: *Implementation, Road Construction, Projects, Hargeisa, Local Government, Projects*

1.0 Background of the Study

The capital city of Somaliland has experienced rapid urbanization, generating an urgent demand for dependable and resilient road infrastructure. However, infrastructure development efforts face persistent challenges during execution phases, with research consistently identifying the political environment, leadership capability, and resource availability as critical determinants of project implementation outcomes (Adan & Mohamed, 2012). Globally, infrastructure development in developing countries frequently experiences chronic delays and budget overruns driven by inadequate planning and external interference (Ahmed Osman & Kimutai, 2019). In Hargeisa, despite strong strategic intent to urbanize, development is routinely hindered by a widening gap between resource mobilization and actual project execution. Municipal project failures yield severe economic losses characterized by extensive delays and financial overruns (Chinzara et al., 2023), and structural bottlenecks demonstrate that increased resource mobilization fails to yield positive outcomes when project leaders and institutions are constrained by conflicting political factors (Dachasa, 2022). If this imbalance among political, leadership, and resource factors continues unabated, the future of sustainable urban development in Hargeisa will be severely compromised.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Functional road infrastructure is crucial for delivering public services and sustaining the economic viability of cities. Resource Dependency Theory posits that proper resource mobilization, transformational leadership, and a favorable political context should result in successful municipal project implementation. However, the Hargeisa Local Municipality demonstrates a systematic pattern of project implementation failure, reflected in numerous delays and low-quality road construction outcomes. The persistence of this pattern despite ongoing resource mobilization efforts indicates that the core problem is not resource deficiency but rather an inability to govern and deploy mobilized resources productively. Conflicting local political forces further aggravate this challenge by interfering with technically sound implementation processes. Empirical evidence from this study identifies a critical Resource Mobilization Paradox, whereby resource mobilization is negatively associated with implementation outcomes and confirms that local political dynamics represent the dominant driver of project performance. Without addressing these contradictions through professional governance and institutional reform, the sustainable urban development of Hargeisa faces significant risks.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To evaluate the effect of resource mobilization on the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa.
- ii. To examine the influence of project leadership on the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa.
- iii. To assess the impact of local political dynamics on the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

H0₁: Resource mobilization has no significant effect on the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa.

H0₂: Project leadership has no significant influence on the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa.

H0₃: Local political dynamics have no significant impact on the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study draws upon Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) formulated by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), which posits that organizational success depends heavily on the ability to secure essential resources from external sources. In the context of Hargeisa Local Municipality, project efficiency hinges on securing necessary financial and material resources from external entities. However, dependence on external resource providers introduces the risk of project politicization, a dynamic that is central to understanding the implementation challenges documented in this study.

2.2 Local Politics and Project Implementation

Infrastructure construction is shaped by local politics in two distinct ways. Political goodwill can facilitate project approval and strengthen community support (Fakunle, 2020), while political interference in technical decision-making frequently leads to suboptimal implementation outcomes (Hills, 2016). In Somaliland, where personal relationships and governance structures are closely intertwined, public funding often serves as a primary motivation for initiating urban planning projects, making political alignment a critical determinant of project success (Hussein, 2013). The literature therefore identifies local politics as simultaneously an enabler and a barrier to infrastructure delivery, a duality confirmed by the findings of this study.

2.3 Project Leadership and Implementation

In the public sector, project leadership extends beyond technical management. Leadership effectiveness in the construction industry is determined by the capacity to foster stakeholder coordination and mitigate implementation risks (Lee & Kim, 2021). Leaders in local government environments frequently encounter the dual-pressure challenge of simultaneously meeting engineering standards while fulfilling political objectives (Maqbool & Sridhar, 2018). Effective project leadership therefore encompasses not only technical supervision but also the management of stakeholder expectations and the navigation of complex human dimensions of project delivery (Mohammad & Yahia, 2018). In Hargeisa, leaders must strike a balance between technical requirements and the competing pressures exerted by local political actors, making interpersonal and institutional competencies as important as technical expertise.

2.4 Resource Mobilization and Project Implementation

Resource mobilization is widely recognized as a critical determinant of project success. Timely procurement of materials and financial liquidity are essential to maintaining project momentum (Ramlay et al., 2023), yet poor revenue collection and excessive reliance on external support frequently impede this process in developing nations (Lee & Kim, 2021). Resource management capacity is argued to be equally as important as resource availability, a distinction particularly relevant to Hargeisa, where institutional processes governing fund allocation may represent a greater obstacle than outright resource scarcity. Recent scholarship on infrastructure development in low-income contexts suggests that increased resource mobilization without corresponding institutional capacity can paradoxically hinder project implementation, as greater financial inputs

directed through inefficient administrative structures generate additional bureaucracy and costly delays (Otieno & Opiyo, 2016).

2.5 Identified Research Gaps

Two significant gaps in the existing literature motivated this study. First, a contextual gap exists as the majority of infrastructure studies are conducted within stable economic and governance environments, and empirical research specifically focused on Hargeisa's unique governance context, where informal social dynamics intersect with formal administrative processes, remains absent. Second, a conceptual gap exists in that conventional project management models assume a linear negative relationship between resource mobilization and implementation outcomes. This study addresses both gaps by providing empirical evidence of a negative correlation within a municipal context, demonstrating that without sufficient institutional absorptive capacity, increased resource inputs generate greater bureaucratic complexity and implementation delays rather than improved performance (Rivera et al., 2020).

2.6 Conceptual framework

The relationship between the variables under study is illustrated in the conceptual framework below. The independent variables Resource Mobilization, Project Leadership, and Local Politics are hypothesized to have a direct influence on the dependent variable, Implementation of Road Construction Projects.

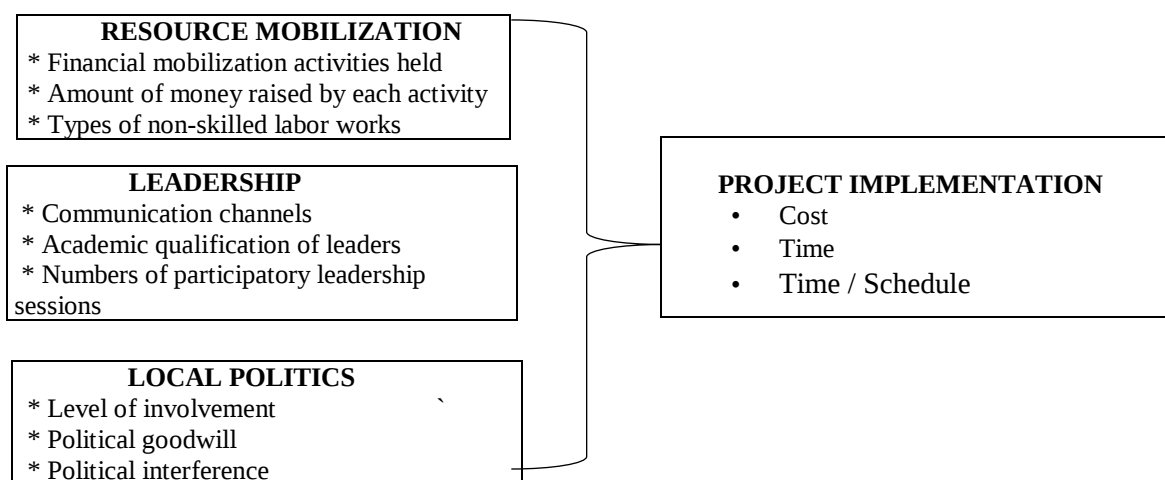


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive research design to systematically examine the relationships between the independent variables, namely resource mobilization, project leadership, and local politics, and the dependent variable of road construction project implementation in Hargeisa. The target population comprised technical and administrative personnel within the Hargeisa Local Municipality, including engineers, project managers, and local government representatives. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select 80 respondents directly involved in the design and execution of road construction projects, ensuring that evidence was grounded in specialist knowledge and direct institutional experience. Primary data were collected using a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire, with reliability confirmed through a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.88 and validity established through a Content Validity Index of

0.86. Quantitative data were analyzed using STATA, with multiple linear regression applied to determine the predictive strength of the independent variables on project implementation, using the model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$, where Y represents project implementation, X_1 resource mobilization, X_2 project leadership, and X_3 local politics. Prior to regression analysis, diagnostic tests including the Shapiro-Wilk normality test and multicollinearity verification through Variance Inflation Factor analysis were conducted to validate the assumptions of the ordinary least square's regression model.

4.0 Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the findings of the study across three independent variables and the dependent variable of project implementation. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses are reported, supported by regression diagnostics to confirm model validity. The measurement framework for all study variables is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Qualitative Measurement of Variables

Category	Variable Name	Indicators	Measurement Tool	Scale
Independent Variable	Resource Mobilization	Financial mobilization activities held; Amount of money raised; Types of non-skilled labor	Structured Questionnaire (RM1–RM7)	5-point Likert
	Project Leadership	Communication channels; Academic qualifications; Participatory leadership sessions	Structured Questionnaire (LM1–LM6)	5-point Likert
	Local Politics	Level of involvement; Political goodwill; Political interference; Impact on decision-making	Structured Questionnaire (LP1–LP6)	5-point Likert
Dependent Variable	Project Implementation	Level of completion; Scope; Cost; Quality; Time/Schedule adherence	Structured Questionnaire (PI1–PI7)	5-point Likert

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis covered all four study variables measured on a five-point Likert scale. Results are reported as percentage frequencies, means, and standard deviations, and are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Descriptive Statistics for All Study Variables (n = 80)

Statement	SD%	D%	N%	A%	SA%	Mean	SD
Resource Mobilization							
Strong strategy for resource mobilization	41.25	13.75	28.75	6.25	10.00	2.30	0.15
Resource mobilization needs significant improvement	8.75	6.25	8.75	55.00	21.25	3.73	0.13
Approaches provide adequate finances for all projects	1.25	8.75	13.75	55.00	21.25	3.86	0.10
Types of non-skilled labor involved in projects	12.50	11.50	21.25	36.25	18.75	3.37	0.14
Financial activities aligned with mobilization strategy	2.50	16.25	11.25	47.50	22.50	3.71	0.20
Organization seeks partnerships for resource mobilization	5.00	10.00	22.50	42.50	20.00	3.65	0.12
Money raised was sufficient for project requirements	3.75	23.75	10.00	47.50	15.00	3.46	0.13
Project Leadership							
Leadership fosters positive and productive work environment	5.00	8.75	11.25	46.25	28.75	3.85	0.12
Communication channels support effective information flow	2.50	16.25	8.75	50.00	22.50	3.73	0.12
Academic qualifications of leaders pivotal to success	6.25	8.75	18.75	33.75	32.50	3.77	0.13
Improvements needed in leadership strategies	2.50	11.25	8.75	51.25	26.25	3.88	0.11
Participatory leadership sessions enhance performance	6.25	7.50	17.50	52.50	16.25	3.65	0.12
Leadership improves employee morale and job satisfaction	8.75	7.50	17.50	36.25	30.00	3.71	0.14
Local Politics							
Local politics impacts operations and decision-making	5.00	8.75	12.50	56.25	17.50	3.72	0.14
Level of involvement negatively affects organization	6.25	17.50	22.50	36.25	17.50	3.41	1.29
Political goodwill supports organizational initiatives	8.75	8.75	6.25	58.75	17.50	3.67	1.27
Positive political relationships contributed to project success	6.25	8.75	12.50	51.25	21.25	3.72	1.22

Regarding resource mobilization, respondents held mixed perceptions of their organization's approaches. While 76.25 percent agreed that approaches provide adequate finances for projects ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.10$) and 76.25 percent acknowledged the need for significant improvement ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.13$), the item recording the lowest mean was the overall organizational strategy for resource mobilization ($M = 2.30$, $SD = 0.15$), with only 16.25 percent expressing agreement, indicating that strategic resource planning remains a critical institutional weakness. On project leadership, findings were generally positive, with 75.00 percent agreeing that leadership fosters a productive work environment ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.12$) and 77.50 percent acknowledging the need for improvements in leadership strategies ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.11$), reflecting both adequate baseline capacity and awareness of areas for development. On local politics, 73.75 percent agreed that local politics positively impacts organizational decision making ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.14$) and 76.25 percent recognized political goodwill as a supportive factor ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.27$). However, 53.75 percent also acknowledged that the level of political involvement negatively affects organizational functioning ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 1.29$), confirming the dual enabling and obstructive nature of local politics in project delivery. Regarding project implementation, cost management was the most positively rated dimension at 72.50 percent agreement ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 1.24$), while timeline adherence recorded the lowest mean ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.44$) with 38.75 percent expressing disagreement, confirming that delays represent the most persistent challenge in road construction project delivery in Hargeisa.

4.2 Regression Diagnostics

Prior to interpreting regression results, the key assumptions of multiple linear regression were tested. Table 3 presents the model summary.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.92	0.847	0.841	0.214

The R-square value of 0.847 indicates that 84.7 percent of the variance in road construction project implementation is explained by the three independent variables. Table 4 presents the ANOVA results confirming overall model significance.

Table 4: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	22.45	3	7.48	140.23	.000
Residual	4.05	76	0.053		
Total	26.50	79			

The F-statistic of 140.23 ($p < 0.001$) confirms that the regression model is a statistically significant predictor of project implementation. Multicollinearity diagnostics presented in Table 5 confirm that all VIF values ranged between 1.232 and 1.342, well below the threshold of 5.0, and all Tolerance values exceeded 0.10, confirming the absence of multicollinearity and the stability of the regression results.

Table 5: Multicollinearity Diagnostics

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Resource Mobilization	0.784	1.276
Project Leadership	0.812	1.232
Local Politics	0.745	1.342

The Shapiro-Wilk test presented in Table 6 confirmed that regression residuals were normally distributed ($W = 0.985$, $p = 0.502$), satisfying the normality assumption required for valid parametric inference.

Table 6: Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality of Residuals

Variable	N	W-statistic	z-value	p-value	Result
Regression Residuals	80	0.985	-0.004	0.502	Normally Distributed

4.3 Regression Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Table 7 presents the regression coefficients for all independent variables.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig. (p)
Constant	1.12	0.45		2.48	.015
Local Politics	0.714	0.12	0.68	5.95	.000
Project Leadership	0.264	0.10	0.22	2.64	.037
Resource Mobilization	-0.239	0.08	-0.19	-2.98	.008

Local politics emerged as the strongest predictor of project implementation ($B = 0.714, p < 0.001$), confirming that infrastructure delivery in Hargeisa is fundamentally shaped by socio-political processes. Road construction in the municipality requires community backing and resolution of land-related matters, both of which are facilitated by political goodwill, confirming that political alignment with local leadership objectives accelerates project delivery (Mohammad & Yahia, 2018). Project leadership demonstrated a significant positive influence on implementation ($B = 0.264, p = 0.037$), indicating that leaders possessing both technical competence and interpersonal skills are better equipped to manage the complexity of urban construction and coordinate multidisciplinary teams effectively [20]. Resource mobilization exhibited a significant negative relationship with project implementation ($B = -0.239, p = 0.008$), revealing the Resource Mobilization Paradox whereby greater financial and material inputs directed through weak administrative structures generate increased bureaucratic complexity rather than improved outcomes (Willar et al., 2023). This may be attributed to outdated procurement procedures, unclear fund distribution mechanisms, or insufficient absorptive capacity, a condition in which the volume of resources exceeds the institutional framework's ability to deploy them effectively (Odeh & Battaineh, 2002).

Based on these results, all three null hypotheses are rejected. $H1_0$ is rejected as resource mobilization has a statistically significant, though negative, influence on project implementation ($p = 0.008$). $H2_0$ is rejected as project leadership has a significant positive influence on implementation ($p = 0.037$). $H3_0$ is rejected as local political dynamics have a highly significant positive influence on implementation ($p < 0.001$). The overall model explains 84.7 percent of variance in project implementation, confirming the strong explanatory power of Resource Dependency Theory in the Hargeisa context and extending the theory by demonstrating that resource abundance can become a liability when organizational structures lack the capacity to manage resource dependency efficiently.

5.0 Conclusion

This study provides robust empirical evidence that the implementation of road construction projects in Hargeisa Local Municipality is a socio-political phenomenon driven by the interplay of local politics, project leadership, and resource management. The three factors collectively explain 84.7 percent of the variance in project implementation outcomes. Local political dynamics emerged as the single most important determinant of project success ($B = 0.714, p < 0.001$), confirming that political cooperation and community engagement are prerequisites for infrastructure delivery in this context. Project leadership demonstrated a significant positive contribution ($B = 0.264, p = 0.037$), underscoring the importance of combining technical and

political competencies in municipal project management. The most significant finding, however, is the negative relationship between resource mobilization and project implementation ($B = -0.239$, $p = 0.008$), which reveals that the core challenge in Hargeisa is not a shortage of resources but rather weak governance practices that prevent their effective deployment. This finding extends Resource Dependency Theory by demonstrating that resource abundance without institutional reform does not lead to improved project outcomes, and calls for a shift in focus from quantity-based resource mobilization toward quality-based institutional governance.

6.0 Recommendations

Three key recommendations emerge from the study findings. First, the Hargeisa Local Municipality should pursue institutional reform by simplifying and regulating fund allocation processes, streamlining procurement cycles to eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic stages, and strengthening absorptive capacity to ensure that mobilized resources are deployed efficiently and effectively. Second, digital resource tracking tools should be adopted to enhance transparency and accountability in the allocation and utilization of project funds and materials, reducing opportunities for mismanagement and improving implementation oversight. Third, a governance policy framework should be developed to protect technical project procedures from political interference while harnessing the benefits of positive political engagement through structured community participation mechanisms, ensuring that political goodwill supports rather than distorts project delivery. Fourth, institutional capacity-building programs should be institutionalized for project leaders to enhance both their technical competencies and soft skills in stakeholder management, enabling them to better navigate the socio-political dynamics of municipal projects. Fifth, an independent project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework should be established within the municipality to strictly track project timelines, thereby mitigating the persistent challenges of project delays and schedule overruns.

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