



## Effect of social equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia

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### Abstract

Eradicating poverty calls for young people being identified as agent of transformation in society. With the prolonged conflict in Somalia since the late 1980s that led to the collapse of the central government in 1991 and the weakening of the political institutions the country has witnessed a complete state of poverty. The study sought to analyze the extent to which social equity influence poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia. The gist of this study was to analyze the effect of social equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland, in Somalia. The study adopted the Marxist theory of poverty. The study used a descriptive research design. The target population was 28079 households from Puntland, Somalia. A sample size of 394 respondents was selected using both stratified and simple random sampling methods to ensure representation of all the age groups in the study sample. The data was collected using a questionnaire and an interview schedule which was self-administered by the researcher. The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data. For descriptive statistics, the mean, standard deviations and skewness were used while for inferential statistics, Pearson's correlation, analysis of variance and regression coefficient were used. The results shows that there is a significant positive correlation between social equity and poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. The results shows that Social Equity has a moderate but statistically significant correlation with poverty alleviation ( $r = .566^{**}$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Further analysis revealed that a 1% change in social equity would lead to a 31.8% change in poverty alleviation. The study concludes that NGOs should put emphasis on encouraging the youth to engage in social equity activities in order to enhance poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. The study recommends that NGOs through the support of the government should embark on social equity programs to empower the youth to actively participate in the development programs especially those focusing on poverty alleviation. The study recommends that those NGOs involved in youth empowerment activities should focus more on the capacity building programs which equips the youth with the relevant skills and knowledge to participate actively in poverty alleviation programs. The study is expected to be beneficial to the youth, the government, the development institutions and the other partners involved with the issues of youth and development.

**Keywords:** social equity, poverty alleviation, Puntland

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### Introduction

According to Solomon (2012) <sup>[28]</sup>, the concept of poverty can be described in two aspects - low income, which is insufficient to maintain a dignified life; and low level of human capabilities, which restricts people's options to lead a life of his or her choosing. Poverty is a form of deprivation with strong interactive linkages to other forms such as physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability, and powerlessness especially on the ever-increasing youthful population globally. It is a state of economic, social and psychological deprivation occurring among people or countries lacking sufficient ownership, control or access to resources to maintain minimal acceptable standards of living (World Bank, 2017) <sup>[42]</sup>.

Solomon (2012) <sup>[28]</sup>, further establishes that young people are the pillar on which every prosperous nation has been built. Unfortunately, African youth have been marginalized mainly regarding skills needed for physical and social mobility and they are left out from the decision-making course that influences their welfare and their communities regarding development activities. Moronge and Khaoya (2016), affirm that it is necessary to comprehend how young individuals in sub-Saharan Africa can be sanctioned to participate in national development efforts in order to improve on their livelihoods and standards of living.

There are many youth organizations in the world with many youth empowerment activities/programs which are creatively and courageously coming up with solutions aimed at improving the living standards of their communities. These youth empowerment activities are formed with expectation of alleviating the social, cultural, economic status of their communities (Olawale & Lynety, 2011) <sup>[21]</sup>. Such youth group is the Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER). Y- PEER is a network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and young people that are focusing on sexual and reproductive health with the main

aim of promoting healthy lifestyles through peer-to-peer approach and to empower young people to make responsible decisions (UNFPA, 2016) <sup>[34]</sup>.

Ola Fou Pasifika Youth Development is another group that offers training and support for youth and community workers within the Pacific and works to empower young people within the region to identify needs in their own community and become active in responding to these (Praxis Pacific, 2012) <sup>[23]</sup>. Ola Fou, which means new life in Samoan, officially began in 2006 and offers capacity building training with 18 months diploma certificates to youth and community workers (Curtain & Vakaoti, 2011) <sup>[6]</sup>. The main aim of the group is to improve the well-being of Pacific youth and to strengthen Pacific communities (Praxis Pacific 2012) <sup>[23]</sup>. This is achieved through promoting participatory, developmental and indigenous approaches to working with youth, raising the credibility and worth of youth work, and engaging young people in bringing about positive change (Praxis Pacific, 2012) <sup>[23]</sup>.

Through engaging young people in identifying and responding to needs within their own communities, Ola Fou contributes to the process of creating practical skills that make them more employable as well as integrating them into their community as citizens; a person who takes responsibility for the wider good of their family, community or nation. When young people are excluded from citizenship, they are more likely to be involved in negative outcomes such as unemployment, substance abuse and crime, as a result our communities are less safe and our society less stable (Woo & Corea, 2015).

The importance of youth involvement in development activities/programs is particularly relevant in Florida, as communities throughout the state face extensive growth pressures, significant socio-demographic changes, and a growing youth population. Such conditions suggest an important effect for youth to play in local planning and decision-making. The involvement of youth, and their active collaboration with adults, contributes to local community development, while presenting opportunities for personal self-growth, skill enhancement, and leadership development. Previous research advocates for a successful youth/adult partnership to encourage youth to develop the capacity to serve in organizations and be active community leaders (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2014) <sup>[4]</sup>.

According to Salam (2011) <sup>[26]</sup>, Government of Kenya recognizes that there is a substantial impact that the registered youth empowerment activities have on the country's economy and contribution towards reducing the major problems such as unemployment among the youth. This is seen through the efforts to implement youth empowerment initiatives through the National Youth Council (NYC) Act (2009), the Sector Plan for Labor, Youth and Human Resource Development (2008 – 2012), the National Youth Policy (2007), and the National Action Plan on Youth Employment (2007 – 2012). The Kenyan government has established youth interventions such as Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF). This is a pool of funds through which young individuals, and organized groups, can borrow funds to start a business (Onugu, 2016) <sup>[22]</sup>. Various research has been carried out in the past on youth issues (Amenya, Onsongo & Guyo, 2011) <sup>[1]</sup> that focused on youth unemployment and factors affecting their initiatives.

In Nigeria, Youth Based organization have been involved in diverse development and poverty reduction programs in many states. Nnachi, Nwigwe and Nkoma, (2013) <sup>[18]</sup>; Idaka (2013) <sup>[9]</sup>, Odoh and Innocent (2014) <sup>[20]</sup> had stated that about 60% of the Nigerian population consisted of youths and children, and that it has been recognized globally that the involvement of youths is the key to achieving sustainable growth and development. The youth empowerment schemes popularly tagged Project YES is a registered non-governmental organization initiated with the aim of human development intervention which offers opportunities for a wide range of vocational skills training for the youth because of their socio-economic situation (Kuti, 2017) <sup>[11]</sup>.

In Ethiopia, the SHGs approach has been promoted to ensure the empowerment of the poor and contribute to poverty reduction in a manner that is consistent with the strategies, and goals of the state and its development programs. Over 400,000 people in Ethiopia are members of a specific variant of self-help group (SHG) targeted at poverty alleviation (Meehan & Mengistu, 2016) <sup>[12]</sup>. More than 20,000 of those groups are established and facilitated since 2002 with support from a variety of affiliated Christian relief and development NGOs and their local partners. Youth empowerment activities such as Talent Youth Association (TAYA) were established with the mission to promote, initiate and advocate for the improvement of adolescent reproductive health conditions and combating the spread of HIV/AIDS through participation, partnership and networking in Ethiopia. According to report by AU commission on Youth and Security (2020) <sup>[29]</sup>, The Centre for Youth Empowerment (CYE) is one of the youth empowerment activities in Somalia that engages its members and the wider public of young people in the capital, Mogadishu, on programs to prevent violent extremism and promote peace through mobilizing several creative, visual and performing artists to revisit and re-tell the stories of the country. This is with a view of changing the narrative that everything is about terrorism and tribal violence. CYE also mobilizes medical practitioners to conduct free medical outreach programs, with particular emphasis on eye testing and treatment as well as teaching basic hygiene.

Mercy Corps' (2009) <sup>[13]</sup> also note that Somali Youth Learners Initiative (SYLI) was based upon the theory that improving Somali youth's access to education and civic engagement opportunities has the potential to reduce their likelihood of supporting or participating in armed groups in general and political violence. The program presented an opportunity to test this theory. The Norwegian Refugee Council (2015) <sup>[30]</sup> found out that vocational training for young people in Somalia are particularly few, a situation that led NRC in 2014 to launch a Youth Education Pack (YEP) center in Kismayu. The YEP has curriculum that promotes skills and literacy programs such as carpentry, tailoring, beautification, fishing, plumbing, electricity, and cooking. At the end of

the training, the students are guaranteed skills and knowledge which empowers them to transition smoothly into the market. These skills and services provided by the training center are adapted to the local economy. According to UNDP (2019) <sup>[33]</sup>, studies on youth empowerment activities have been necessitated by the fact that most international, regional and local organizations are heavily involved in funding many youth empowerment activities in Somalia. At the global level, United Nations, World Bank, European Union, IMF and other development partners are deeply involved in funding youth empowerment activities in Somalia. Most of the activities funded in Somalia are usually aligned towards building capacities. Regionally, the African Development Bank and partly the African Union have been key in funding youth empowerment activities like microfinance, entrepreneurship and peace keeping in order to keep the youth involved in various activities like farming, trainings on life skills, business development amongst other aspects (Sanusi, 2019).

At the local level, Youthprise manages the Somali Youth Development Fund to support positive youth empowerment activities, community engagement and capacity building for Somali-led community-based organizations (UNDP, 2016) <sup>[32]</sup>. The Somali Youth Development Fund at Youthprise supports positive youth development with Somali youth and capacity building for organizations serving Somali youth. Locally, the European Union funds organizations like the *Urur Kaab* which deals with youths who mainly deal with civil society activities like advocacy. These empowerment activities have resulted in young people to have opportunities to exercise leadership and participate in sustainable development, humanitarian action and sustaining peace. It is the above aspects which necessitated this study to be done.

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to Sanusi (2019), in many countries, the degree to which youth can contribute to the possibilities of their countries and the African continent in general is constrained by circumscribed life chances, with the lack of job opportunities being one of the major circumscriptions. Yet the development of the continent rests squarely on them. And it is through them that Africa can make progress towards the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the goal of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030 (UNDP 2016) <sup>[32]</sup>. With the collapse of the central government, these income employment and opportunities diminished. Currently, there are structural constraints to generating productive employment for the Puntland youth including: the youth's low level of skills, and the low percentage among them who have had formal schooling due to civil war and forced displacement (UNDP, 2019) <sup>[33]</sup>. Other factors affecting youth participation in economic and poverty reduction activities in Puntland include but not limited to economic slump as a result of ban on livestock export from Somalia to Arabian nations, drug and substance abuse, lack of coordinated vocational training and entrepreneurial skills training, non-conventional credit facilities, prolonged drought and poor infrastructures. More so the effect of the youth empowerment activities in poverty alleviation is an area that remains under researched by development researchers. The gist of this study was to analyze the effect of social equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland, in Somalia.

### **Main Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to analyze the effect of Social Equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

The study seeks to address the following hypothesis;

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between social equity and poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia.

### **Justification of the Study**

The study results can be used by the International organizations such as the United Nations, Red Cross, and others to involve the youth empowerment activities as implementing partners in their projects. The study results can be used by the government to encourage them not to leave behind youth groups and development activities during policy making process on matters affecting the society. The study results can be used to demonstrate the importance of youth development activities in poverty alleviation which will encourage them to be the agent of change. It can also enable the government of Puntland to seek to improve on its policies to support youth programs more.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Social Equity and Poverty Alleviation in Puntland Somalia**

Revenge killings were used as a means of retaliation, especially for rape cases against majority clan women and girls. As clan elders' authority eroded and with no ability to keep peace, prevent crimes or seek redress for wrongdoings, Somali communities simply began normalizing and accepting horrific acts of violence (UNFPA, 2020) <sup>[35]</sup>. Traditional authorities shifted from peace building to war, encouraging the formation of clan militias. Some male members from minority *sheegad* clans, who had previously enjoyed protection from the government, were forced to participate in the continuing civil war, while at the same time use of social exclusion against their communities became ever popular and rose to an alarming level. In addition, religious leaders could not agree on how to find a peaceful way forward and rebuild their state (UNICEF, 2018) <sup>[36]</sup>. Instead, the formation of Islamic militias gained popularity, further contributing to the proliferation and normalization of violence in Somalia.

In a study by Somali Health and Demographic Survey (2020) [24, 29], on women and forced marriage, the study established Somali children are married through parental coercion and/or in order for the child to avoid being accused of disobedience (caasinimo), which may result in physical violence being used against them. Islamic law permits boys and girls to marry at the age of baaluq ('maturity'), which is determined based on a child's physical development. For boys, this usually coincides with when they are around 15 years or older. For girls, some Somalis' understanding of 'maturity' is when they begin menstruating, which can start between the ages of 9 and 15 (IOM, 2020). Other people in Somalia understand that maturity of girls can be more than the menstruation, for example, the development of the hips/pelvic bones or the psychological development to an adult state. However, this point of view remains the one of a minority of more educated people. Many Somali communities do not view forced and child marriage as a type of SGBV.

In a study by International Organization on Migration (2020) [10], a severe form of gender-based violence that continues to be almost universal among women and girls in Somalia is Female Genital Mutilation. FGM is a normalized violence in Somalia as most girls and women and indeed the larger Somalia community does not perceive it as mutilation or a grave violation of the rights of women and girls. It has remained pervasive and a strong social norm because of its requirement for marriage for girls (UNICEF, 2018) [36]. Especially within the context of humanitarian emergencies, it has become more compelling for families seeking to escape poverty and build affinity with host communities to cut their girls to gain social acceptance and assure marriageability. With increasing reports of deaths from FGM and calls for action to end FGM, there has been a shift from the extreme Pharonic FGM type 3 to type 1 – Sunna. At present, there is no consensus, national legislative or policy action to end FGM in Somalia (Human Rights Watch, 2018) [8].

Survey by Nicolai and Tripplehorn (2003) [17], on children that have been recruited into fighting forces has shown that most of them have been living and or working in the streets, girls that have suffered abuses, children out of school and separated. Further they point out that significant unemployment and lack of educational opportunities can fuel political dissatisfaction among youth who resort to violence. Williamson (2005) [40], in his review of the DDR program in Liberia pointed that war affected children placed high value on education because it enhances future employment prospects because being a student changes the way one is perceived in the community, consequently, enhances community acceptances.

Report by UNICEF (2007) [37] on Evaluation of program for Children Associated with Fighting Forces (CAFF) found out that empowerment of war affected children and youth especially those that were active in the civil crisis is a complete nightmare because some of them may have taken up adult responsibilities expected of them within their communities without the necessary support to sustain them. As a result, they get involved in anti-social activities to meet the demand, hence, perpetual the stigma of their association with the fighting forces.

The lack of well-designed and acceptable standards to carrying out sustainable program for youth empowerment of war affected children and youth really brought confusion amongst key actors in disarmament, demobilization, and youth empowerment program and this is still the case. Many youth empowerment programs are not based on scientific findings, but rather based on the whims and believes of the leaders of the program hence, the impacts are not felt. The confusion was built around what are the key factors to be considered in the design and implementation of a sustainable youth empowerment program and who to benefit from special programs.

### Marxist Theory of Poverty

The theory was proposed by Karl Marx according to Milford (2014) [14]. Karl Marx argues that poverty comes about as a result a poor person finds himself or herself in. The poor person is seen as a victim of circumstances resulting from a number of factors that are critical to the production system. A series of failed structure give rise to the number of the poor people. Gordon *et.al* (2014), identify these structural failures as racial and gender discrimination, war and instability, corruption and nepotism resulting in deprivation of certain groups of peoples' opportunities for jobs, education and social assistance. In this study these factors included civil war, draught and famine, clannism, poor governance and frequent attack by terrorist groups.

Milford *et.al* (2014) [14], further contributes to this theory by pointing out that massive restructuring of economic systems leads to increased economic and social marginalization of an entire group of people. Such groups end up poorer due to the lack of access to opportunities.

The Marxist theory recommends that in order to alleviate poverty there is necessity for improved education, training and structures of production to those that have been left behind by technological enhancement to adjust to the change of environment and profession. The theory also advocates for a kind of government and non-governmental welfare program to aid those who are unable to re-engineer themselves through education so that they can access basic requirement for upkeep such as food rations, health programs and subsidies.

This theory addresses various aspects of development and poverty alleviation and it helps one understand that development concept is a combination of various aspects which must be combined together to bring results.

### Research Methodology

The study adopted a correlational design is a type of research design where a researcher seeks to understand what kind of relationships naturally occurring variables have with one another. The target population for this study was households in Puntland Somalia of 28079 according to Puntland Health and Demographic survey (2020) [24, 29]. The sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula of 1960 as follows;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

n = desired sample size N = the total population

e = the error term estimated at 5% level of significance

$$= \frac{28079}{1+ [28079 * (0.05)^2]}$$

= 394 Households

The study employed systematic sampling which is applicable where the sampling frame is available in form of a list and in cases with large target populations. Questionnaires were be designed to gather information on effect of youth empowerment activities on poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. For the actual study, a total of 394 copies of the questionnaires were prepared and administered to the respondents and after four days they were collected back for data analysis. The descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and frequency were computed and presented in form of bar charts, tables, pie charts, graphs and percentages for ease of understanding. Inferential statistics were computed to assess the correlation and level of significance between the variables under study. Pearson's correlation ( $r$ ) was computed and tested at a significant value of 5%.

Analysis of variance was computed with the aim of computing the F statistics which is used to measure the adequacy of the model in predicting the outcomes of the variables. The model was said to be a good predictor if the  $f$  calculated was greater than the F-critical and the significant value is less than 5%. Multivariate regression analysis was done to establish the combined effect resulted in an equation that described the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. According to Bertha and Melody (2013), a multiple linear regression model has a continuous outcome and multiple predictors and adopts longitudinal data and this was adopted for this research. They proposed that a regression model would adopt the format;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \dots + \beta_k x_k + \epsilon$$

It is on this basis that this study adopted regression model to reflect measures of youth empowerment activities poverty alleviation in Somalia.

The model is as follows

In this research regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the dependent variable (poverty alleviation) and the independent variables (social equity, capacity building and agricultural diversification).

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$$

Where;

Y represents Dependent variable  $\beta_0$  represents Intercept coefficient

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_4$  represents Regression coefficient of the four independent variables

$X_1$  represents Social Equity

$X_2$  represents Capacity Building

$X_3$  represents Agricultural diversification

$\epsilon =$  is the error term to capture unexplained variations in the model and which is assumed to be normally distributed with mean zero and constant variance.

### Results and Discussions Instrument Return Rate

Instruments return rate was the proportion of the research instruments that were returned after they had been administered to the respondents. Response rate remains a critical concern for scholars who seek dependable, valid and reliable results (Rowley, 2014) <sup>[25]</sup>. In this case, 394 questionnaires were administered to the respondents from the three study areas. The return rate is given in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Instrument Return Rate

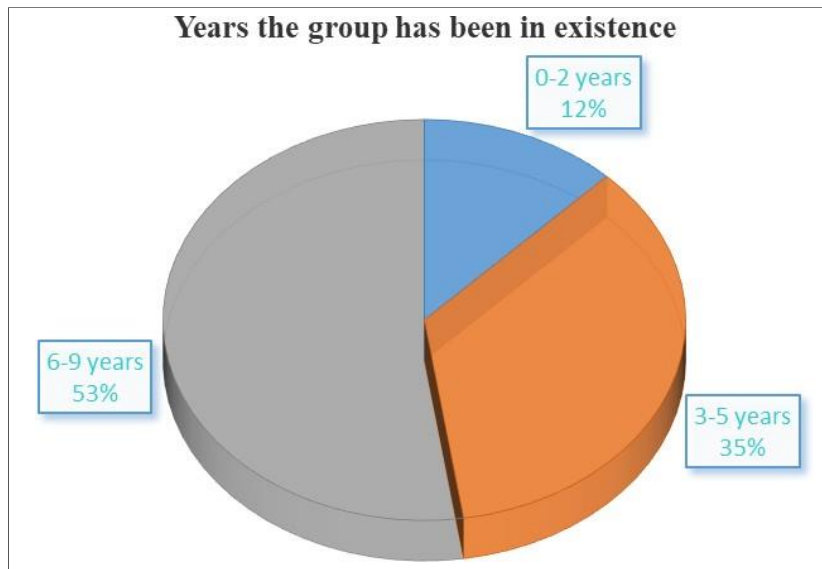
Location	Administered questionnaires	Number returned	% Return rate
Bosaso	183	148	80.9
Garowe	104	97	93.3
Galkayo	107	92	86.0
Total	394	337	85.5

The findings of the study in table 1 show that the questionnaire return rate of study was 85.5%. Therefore, higher response rates tend toward findings that have greater credibility among the stakeholders (Batty *et al*, 2020) <sup>[2]</sup>. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) <sup>[16]</sup>, if the researcher achieves a response rate of 60% and above then it is appropriate for data analysis. However, a response of 70% and above is much preferred.

### Findings of the Study

The results of the study were presented based on the demographic variables and the objectives of the study. The demographic results were computed for the purpose of establishing the distribution of the respondents regarding the duration for which the group has existed, the number of members in the group, the sources of funding,

gender composition of the group, the age bracket of the members and the area of location of the group. The results are presented as shown.



**Fig 1:** Years of existence of the group

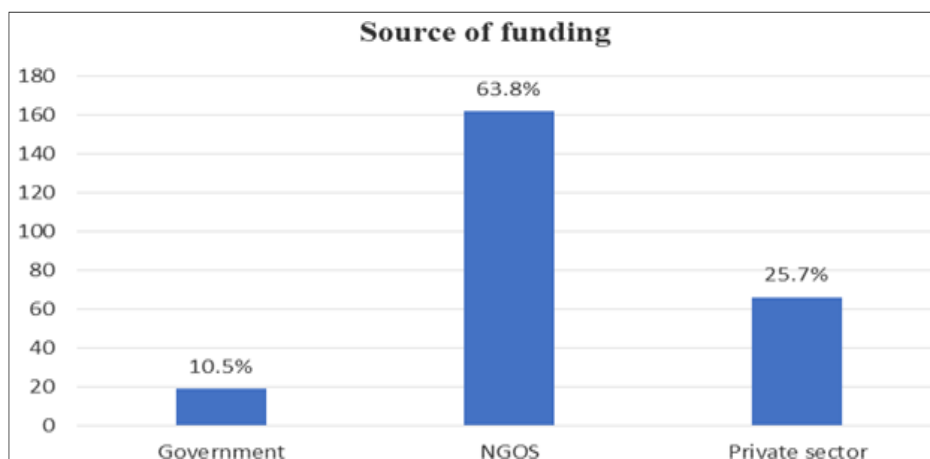
The results show that most of the respondents (53%) indicated that the group has been in existence for more than 6 years followed by 35% of those that have existed for between 3- 5 years and lastly 12% who indicated that they had existed for less than 3 years. This shows that most of the youth groups have been in existence for a long time and hence they have a good experience with the youth and poverty alleviation programs in the study area. The study sought to establish the number of members on average in the groups. This was important in assessing the number of youths who are actually involved in the groups and hence in the fight against poverty in their localities. The results are presented in Table 2 as shown below.

**Table 2:** Number of Members

Number of members	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10 members	25	7.5
10-20 members	223	66.8
21-30 members	86	25.7
Total	334	100.0

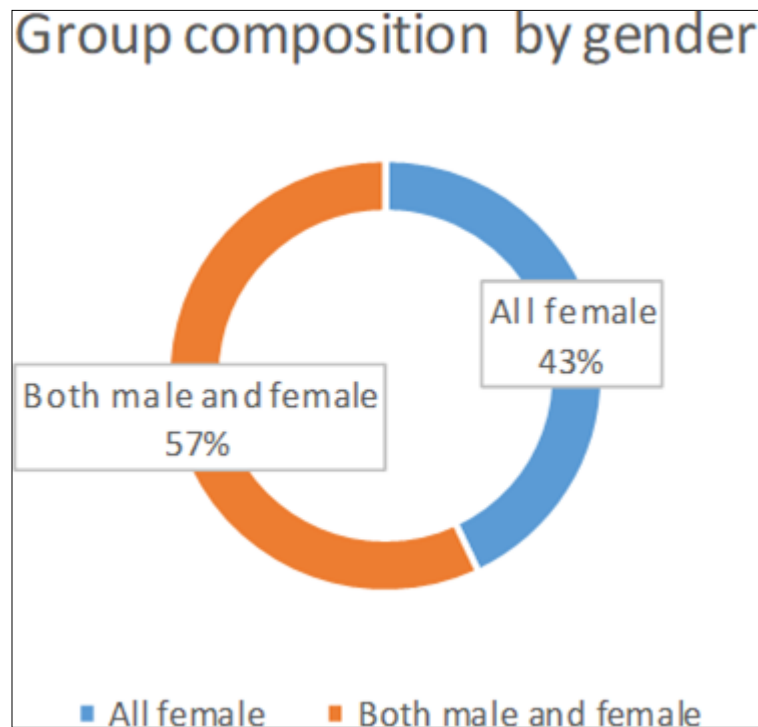
The result shows that majority of the respondents 223 (66.8%) the number of members were between 10-20 in their groups. This was followed by 86 (25.7%) of the groups that had between 21-30 members while only 25(7.5%) indicated that their groups had less than 10 members. This implies that most of the groups have the expected threshold of members.

In regard to funding of the youth groups the study sought to find out the main sources of funding of the youth groups. The results are presented in figure 2 below.



**Fig 2:** Funding of the youth groups

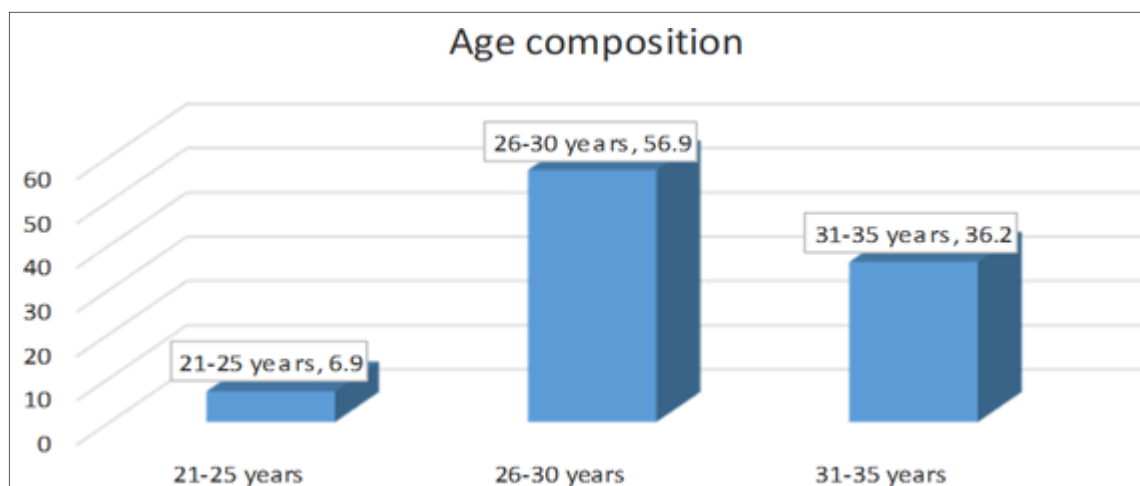
The results show that the main source of funding for the youth groups was the NGOs with a response rate of 63.8% followed by private sector organizations 25.7% and the government 10.5%. This implies that the NGOs offer the highest source of funding for the youth groups involved in youth empowerment and poverty alleviation. The study also sought to find out the gender composition for the groups. This was important as it helps one to assess the involvement of both males and females in the empowerment and poverty alleviation programs. The results were presented in figure 4.3 as shown below.



**Fig 3:** Gender Composition of the Respondents

The results show that most of the groups had both male and female members, 43% of the groups had only female membership while the rest 57% had both male and female membership. This implies that majority of the groups composed of both male and female meaning that the empowerment programs for poverty alleviation were not only focusing on one gender.

The study also sought to find out the age composition of the youth in the programs, this also helped to find out the age group that was most prevalent in the youth groups. The results are presented in figure 4.4.



**Fig 4:** Age composition of the Respondents

The results show that most of the respondents 56.9% were aged between 26-30 years followed by 36.2% who were aged between 31-35 years while only 6.7% were aged between 21-25 years. This shows that most of the youth who participate in the poverty alleviation programs are aged above 26 years. The study sought to establish the distribution of the respondents based on their area of residents. Three residential areas were considered for the study and the responses were as shown in table 3.

**Table 3:** Distribution of the Residents

Area of residence	Response	Percentage
Garowe	148	80.9
Bosaso	97	93.3
Galkayo	92	86.0
Total	337	100

The results show that the response rate was very good for all the residential areas with an over 80% response from each area. This shows that there was a good representation of the residents from the three areas of study.

#### **The effect of Social Equity on Poverty Alleviation in Puntland, Somalia.**

The first objective of the study was to assess the effect of social equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland. The respondents were asked to give their opinion on a five Likert scale where; 5- Strongly agree, 4- Agree, 3-Neutral, 2-Disagree, 1- Strongly Disagree. The results were presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Effect of Social Equity on Poverty Alleviation

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
There has been seminars and workshops against early and forced marriages, female genital mutilation and domestic violence in Puntland Somalia.	0	63 18.9%	34 10.2%	107 32.0%	130 38.9%
Child-soldiers have been disarmed, rehabilitated and reintegrated into the community in Puntland Somalia	0	63 18.9%	69 20.7%	118 35.3%	84 25.1%
Youth from different clans have been involved in peace initiative activities in Puntland Somalia.	0	63 18.9%	34 10.2%	170 50.9%	67 20.1%
There have been advocacy initiatives through dialogue among rival clans in Puntland, Somalia to promote peace.	0	63 18.9%	55 16.5%	144 43.1%	72 21.6%
Gender sensitization workshops are essential among the youth in Puntland Somalia	29 8.7%	74 22.2%	29 8.7%	134 40.1%	68 20.4%
Social equity is a prerequisite for poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia.	31 9.3%	22 6.6%	36 10.8%	214 64.1%	31 9.3%
Youth empowerment activities have promoted youth empowerment in Puntland Somalia, and this has mitigated poverty	31 9.3%	58 17.4%	40 12.0%	169 50.6%	36 10.8%

The results show that most of the respondents (38.9%) strongly agreed that there has been seminars and workshops against early and forced marriages, female genital mutilation and domestic violence in Puntland Somalia. This was followed by 32.0% who agreed while 18.9% disagreed with the statement. This shows that most respondents have attended meeting that have aimed at empowering the girl child by talking about the ways of empowering them. The study also sought to determine whether Child-soldiers have been disarmed, rehabilitated and reintegrated into the community in Puntland Somalia. The results show that most of the respondents 35.3% agreed and 25.1% strongly agreed with the statement while 18.9% disagreed with the statement. This shows that through the various programs among the youth the child soldiers have now been disarmed rehabilitate and reintegrated into the community. These activities have also contributed to poverty alleviation in most of the areas. The results also show that most of the respondents (50.9%) agreed and 20.1% strongly agreed with the statement that Youth from different clans have been involved in peace initiative activities in Puntland Somalia. Only 18.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This show that by involving the youth in various social programs and ensuring that they are empowered has contributed to social equity hence improved on the poverty alleviation in the country. The study also established that most of the respondents (43.1%) agreed with the statement that there have been advocacy initiatives through dialogue among rival clans in Puntland, Somalia to promote peace. While only 18.9% disagreed with the statement. This implies that through the various social equity programs the advocacy initiatives have encouraged dialogue among rival clans and this has helped to reduce conflicts hence improved on poverty alleviation. The study also noted that most of the respondents 40.1% agreed with the statement that gender sensitization workshops are essential among the youth in Puntland Somalia. The study also shows that 20.4% strongly agreed with the statement while 22.2% disagreed and 8.7% strongly disagreed. This shows that gender sensitization has played a very critical role in enhancing youth empowerment and hence ensuring social equity in the communities in the study area. The results also show that majority of the respondents (64.1%) believe that social equity is a prerequisite for poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. The study also shows that 9.3% strongly agreed with the statement while 9.3% strongly disagreed with the statement. This implies that social equity plays a very critical role in enhancing poverty alleviation in the study area. On whether Youth empowerment activities have promoted youth empowerment in Puntland Somalia and this has mitigated poverty. The results show that most of the respondents (50.6%) agreed while 10.8% strongly agreed with the statement. The results also shows that 17.4% disagreed with the statement. This show that the youth empowerment activities have promoted youth empowerment in Puntland Somalia. The results agree with the findings of UNFPA (2020) <sup>[35]</sup> and UNICEF (2018) <sup>[36]</sup> who noted that social equity concept is very important in enhancing the youth empowerment activities that aim at



empowering the youth. The findings of UNICEF also support these results in by noting that empowerment of the youth to engage in development activities hence provide room poverty alleviation. The findings of IMO (2016), noted that most of the youth in Somalia both girls and boys were involved in anti-social activities where the boys played a very active role in the civil war while the girls were abducted and used for sexuality by war men. This affected their stigma and hence their social life. This culminated into the lack of well-designed and acceptable standards to carrying out sustainable programmer for youth empowerment of war affected children and youth really brought confusion amongst key

### Poverty Alleviation in Puntland, Somalia

The study also sought to find out what the respondents felt about the level of poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. The respondents were also required to give their opinion on the various statements on a scale of 1-5, with 5= strongly agree; 4= Agree; 3= Not sure; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree. The results are presented in table 5.

**Table 5:** Opinion on Poverty Alleviation in Puntland Somalia

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Youth empowerment activities play a key effect in poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia.	25 7.5%	103 30.8%	30 9.0%	95 28.4%	81 24.3%
Employment levels among the youth have gradually risen in Puntland State in the past five years and they have helped in poverty alleviation.	17 5.1%	54 16.2%	30 9.0%	131 39.2%	102 30.5%
There has been significant reduction in the number of young people involved in crime in Puntland due to improved well-being amongst the youthful population.	28 8.4%	54 16.2%	17 5.1%	133 39.8%	102 30.5%
There is improvement in access to health information by the youth in Puntland Somalia and this has helped in poverty alleviation	0	77 23.1%	43 12.9%	112 33.5%	102 30.5%
Local Government of Puntland Somalia has developed ways to mitigate poverty amongst the youth hence improved welfare	0	60 18.0%	13 3.9%	174 52.1%	87 26.0%
Capacity building has enhanced the well-being of the youth in Puntland Somalia	28 8.4%	83 24.9%	62 18.6%	64 19.2%	97 29.0%
Youth empowerment activities in Puntland Somalia have promoted poverty alleviation to the greatest extent	11 3.3%	41 12.3%	66 19.8%	119 35.6%	97 29.0%

The results show that most of the respondents 28.4% strongly agreed while 24.3% agreed with the statement that youth empowerment activities play a key effect in poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia. The results also show that only 30.8% of the respondents disagreed agreed with the statement that youth empowerment activities play a key effect in poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia. This shows that the activities done by NGOs affect poverty alleviation among the various communities in Somalia.

The study also established that 39.2% of the respondents strongly agreed, 30.5% strongly agreed while 16.2% disagreed and 5.1% strongly disagreed with the statement that employment levels among the youth have gradually risen in Puntland State in the past five years and they have helped in poverty alleviation. This shows that youth empowerment has improved poverty alleviation in Somalia. The study also sought to establish whether there has been significant reduction in the number of young people involved in crime in Puntland Somalia due to improved well-being amongst the youthful population. The results show that 33.5% agreed, 30.5% strongly agreed and 23.1% disagreed with the statement. This again shows that there has been a reduction in the number of young people involved in terrorism activities in the state.

The results further that most of the respondents 52.1% agreed and 26.0% strongly agreed with the statement that there is improvement in access to health information by the youth in Puntland Somalia and this has helped in poverty alleviation.

Only 18.0% disagreed with the statement. This shows that there is improved access to health care information through the various programs conducted by the NGOs in empowering the youth for poverty alleviation. The results have also shown that 51.0% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Local Government of Puntland Somalia has developed ways to mitigate poverty amongst the youth hence improved welfare. This was also agreed upon by 27.1% of the respondents while 16.2% disagreed with the statement. This shows that there are programs in place by the Government to improve welfare in Puntland Somalia. Regarding Capacity building, 29.0% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 19.2% agreed with the statement. This shows that capacity building has enhanced the well-being of the youth in Puntland Somalia. The results also show that most to the respondents 24.9% disagreed with the statement. This shows that NGO programs on capacity building among the youth have helped to improve poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia to the greatest extent.

The results also show that 35.6% agreed while 29.0% strongly agreed with the statement that youth empowerment activities in Puntland Somalia have promoted poverty alleviation to the greatest extent. Only 12.3% disagreed with the statement. This shows that the youth empowerment programs offered

by the NGOs in Somalia play a very important role in alleviating poverty among the youth in communities in Puntland Somalia.

The results are supported by the findings of Olawale and Lynety, 2011)<sup>[21]</sup>, UNFPA (2016)<sup>[34]</sup> and Woo and Corea (2009)<sup>[41]</sup> who noted that the involvement of the youth in the campaign for poverty alleviation is a way of empowering them and this helps in ensuring that the objectives are achieved. The findings have further indicated that when young people are excluded from participating in various development activities, they are more likely to be involved in negative outcomes such as unemployment, substance abuse and crime and as a result, our communities are less safe and our society less stable. Sanusi, (2019) also established that involvement of the youth in farming activities can have a very positive impact on the poverty alleviation in Somalia. This implies that the role of the youth in development activities such as poverty alleviation is very critical for sustainable development in the entire country.

### Inferential Analysis

The study also sought to determine whether there was a relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable of the study. The Pearson correlation analysis was computed and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The study sought to assess how the independent variable correlated with the dependent variable so that the hypothesis could be tested as being statistically significant or not. The regression analysis was computed to establish the magnitude of the relationship. This test was important because, statistically, variables might show a correlation, yet it might not be significant.

### Correlation Analysis

The study computed the Person's correlation (r) to examine the relationship that existed between the variables under study. Correlation coefficient range between +1 and -1. Where a value of 0 shows that there is no correlation, 0 -0.4 shows weak correlation, 0.5-0.7 shows moderate correlation while above 0.7 shows a strong correlation between the variables. If the p-value is less than 0.05 then it indicates that the correlation is statistically significant. The results are analyzed and presented in table 6 below.

**Table 6:** Pearson's Correlation Analysis

		Poverty Alleviation
Social Equity	Pearson Correlation	.566**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	334

The results shows that Social Equity has a moderate but statistically significant correlation with poverty alleviation ( $r = .566^{**}$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), These results agreed with the findings of Cervantes-Godoy and Dewbre (2010)<sup>[5]</sup>, who also noted that there is a direct relationship between the empowerment programs of the youth and poverty alleviation in a country. A similar view was held by Nyalulu (2016)<sup>[19]</sup>, who also noted that there is a direct relationship between youth empowerment programs and poverty alleviation because the youth are appropriate agents of change in any society.

### Regression Analysis

This test was done in order to provide a basis for testing the research hypothesis. The regression analysis was run in three steps, the first step gave the simple linear regression for testing the level of magnitude between each independent variable and dependent variable.

The second step was to compute the multiple regression for testing the magnitude of the effect between the combined variables and the dependent variable and the last step was for testing the effect of the moderating variable on the regression model. The results are presented to show the model summary, analysis of variance and the regression coefficient of variable.

### Simple Linear Regression

This shows the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. By computing the regression model summary, the researcher is able to test how much of the change in the dependent variable is caused by a 1% change in the independent variable. The summary of the three tests were given in table 7.

**Table 7:** Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig. F
1	.566 <sup>a</sup>	.320	.318	.736	.000 <sup>b</sup>

Dependent Variable: Poverty Alleviation

The results show that the three independent variables have a statistically positive correlation with poverty alleviation given that all the three variables have a positive correlation R. For objective one  $R = 0.566$ ; for objective two  $R = 0.285$ , and for objective three  $R = 0.504$ . Further analysis revealed that the regression coefficient (R square) for each variable revealed that a 1% change in social equity would lead to a 31.8% change in poverty alleviation. However, the model summary shows that the test variable was statistically significant in influencing the poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia.

### Analysis of Variance

The study sought to establish whether the regression model is an appropriate predictor of the of youth empowerment activities on poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. The analysis of variance was computed and used to test the first null hypothesis that; *there is no significant relationship between social equity and poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia*. The hypothesis was tested and the results presented in table 8.

**Table 8:** ANOVA on effect of Social Equity on Poverty Alleviation.

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	84.864	1	84.864	156.483	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	180.049	332	.542		
	Total	264.913	333			

a. Dependent Variable: Poverty Alleviation.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Equity

The results show that the F statistic was statistically significant at a 5% level of significant which imply that the model is a suitable predictor of the relationship between the social equity activities used in empowering the youth and poverty alleviation. ( $F = 156.483$ ; p value 0.000). This shows that the null hypothesis is rejected implying that social equity programs have a statistically significant effect on poverty alleviation. This shows that implementation of social equity programs in Somalia has helped to enhance efforts in poverty alleviation among the youth.

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations Summary of Demographic Variables

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents were members of a youth group in their locality. This indicated that most the respondents understood the role that the youth groups perform in enhancing the empowerment of the youth and its contribution to poverty alleviation in Puntland Somalia. The results also established that that most of the youth groups that participated in the study have been in existence for more than 6 years. The results also established that most of the youth groups have been in existence for a long time and hence they have a good experience with the youth and poverty alleviation programs in Puntland Somalia.

It was further noted that majority of the respondents indicated that most of the youth groups had between 10-20 members which is the recommended number for most of the groups. Regarding the source of funding, the results indicated that most of the groups received their funding from NGOs. The results show that most of the groups had both male and female members. Finally, it was established that majority of the respondents were aged between 26-30 years. This was the active youth group ages involved in development matters in the communities generally and the study area specifically. Most of them have completed college and university and are working, or looking for employment or are engaged in other development activities including youth group.

### Effect of Social Equity on Poverty Alleviation in Puntland, Somalia.

The first objective of the study sought to assess the effect of social equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia. The study established that most respondents have attended meetings that have aimed at empowering the youth spatially the young women to participate in development issues. It was also established that through the various youth programs the child soldiers have now been disarmed, rehabilitated and reintegrated into the community. These activities have played a very important role in enhancing poverty alleviation in most of the areas. It is also noted that the youth empowerment activities have empowered most of the youth who are involved in various social programs and ensuring that they are empowered has contributed to social equity hence improved poverty alleviation in the country.

Advocacy has also been improved where there is improved dialogue among rival clans and this has helped to reduce conflicts hence improved on poverty alleviation. This implies that through the youth groups, gender sensitization has played a very critical role in enhancing youth empowerment and hence ensuring social equity in the communities and in turn promoting poverty alleviation activities in the study area. The results of the study supports that work of UNFPA (2020) <sup>[35]</sup> and UNICEF (2018)

<sup>[36]</sup> who have put a lot of effort in enhancing the empowerment and welfare of the youth in war torn countries such as Somalia.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of social equity on poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia. The study established that the youth groups play a very crucial role in poverty alleviation among communities in Puntland. Based on the summary of the findings the study makes the following conclusions.

The NGOs should put emphasis on encouraging the youth to engage in social equity activities in order to enhance poverty alleviation from their communities. The results have shown that through social equity the youth

are in a position to engage in various positive youth empowerment activities that enhance their social being and help them move out of their poor situation.

The study also concludes that NGOs that work with the youth groups in Somalia must enhance skills development among the youth through capacity building. When people have skills it is of much importance than when they are assisted with handouts. The study has established a very significant effect between capacity building and poverty alleviation in Somalia.

The study also concludes that by helping the local youth achieve agricultural diversification it is important for them to develop programs that support the youth to also get actively involved in the development agenda of the country. The study further concludes that there is need to have a positive government support through political will where the environment is made suitable for achieving development goals. In general, the study concludes that by empowering the youth through various development programs, there are high chances of the youth to effectively participate in poverty alleviation in Puntland, Somalia.

### **Recommendations**

Bases on the conclusions above, this study recommends that.

NGOs through the support of the government should embark on social equity programs to empower the youth to actively participate in the development programs especially those focusing on poverty alleviation.

The study also recommends that those NGOs involved in youth empowerment programs must focus more on the capacity building programs which equips the youth with the relevant skills and knowledge of participating actively in poverty alleviation programs.

The study further recommends that organizations that seek to empower the youth should be actively involved in enhancing the various agricultural diversification programs to enhance poverty alleviation in the country. Through agricultural diversification the youth will have activities that they can engage in to enhance agricultural development hence.

Lastly, the study also recommends that the government should ensure they provide an environment suitable for the youth to utilize their skills and also support those youth who were involved in civil war to positively engage in the development agenda of the country. Hence, this can be enhanced through effective political will.

### **Areas for Further Study**

This study focused on understanding various ways of empowering the youth to actively engage in poverty alleviation programs. The study only focused on three factors social equity, capacity building and agricultural diversification. The focus was limited to youth in three areas of Puntland, Somalia. There is therefore need to have further study conducted that will consider other factors not discussed and also incorporate other areas to have a clear picture of the general effect of these empowerment activities on youth and poverty alleviation in the country.

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