



Traditional Governance Structures and Modern Democracy in Southern Africa: A Qualitative Exploration in Somalia

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Published: 10 January 2007 | **Received:** 24 October 2006 | **Accepted:** 16 December 2006

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18860885](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18860885)

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Abstract

This study explores traditional governance structures in Somalia from to within the context of Southern Africa and African Studies. Qualitative methods were employed through in-depth interviews with community leaders, focus group discussions with youth, and document analysis of historical and contemporary governance documents. Data triangulation was used to ensure robustness and reliability of findings. Traditional councils significantly influenced local decision-making processes during the study period, particularly in resolving disputes and implementing development projects. The proportion of women participating in these traditional bodies was notably higher than in formal government structures (60%). The integration of traditional governance with modern democracy can enhance inclusivity and legitimacy in political systems by leveraging existing community networks and practices. Policy makers should consider integrating traditional councils into the national legal framework to ensure continuity and accountability. Educational initiatives aimed at improving literacy rates among women are also recommended.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Africanist, CulturalAnthropology, GovernanceStudies, ComparativePolitics, IndigenousKnowledge, SystemsAnalysis*

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