

The Impact of Youth Employment on Somalia's National Transition Plan, Mogadishu-Somalia

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Article

Keywords: youth employment, youth employment rate, youth employment quality, youth participation across economic sectors and National Transition Plan

Posted Date: October 7th, 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-10870628/v1>

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Additional Declarations: No competing interests reported.

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between youth employment and Somalia's National Transition Plan (NTP), focusing on three dimensions of youth employment: employment rate, employment quality, and participation across economic sectors. Adopting a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 1,780 youth beneficiaries of Somali youth employment and empowerment initiatives, selected through stratified random sampling from a target population of 6,181 using Slovin's formula. A structured questionnaire employing a five-point Likert scale was administered, demonstrating strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.866$). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression. Results indicate statistically significant positive relationships between all three youth employment dimensions and NTP outcomes ($r = 0.610$ – 0.652 , $p < 0.01$). The regression model was significant, $F(3, 1776) = 709.622$, $p < 0.001$, explaining 54.5 percent of the variance in NTP outcomes ($R^2 = 0.545$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.544$). Employment quality emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.316$, $p < 0.001$), followed by employment rate ($\beta = 0.280$, $p < 0.001$) and sectoral participation ($\beta = 0.258$, $p < 0.001$), with collinearity diagnostics confirming the absence of problematic multicollinearity among predictors. These findings suggest that Somalia's transition strategy should move beyond employment expansion alone toward an integrated approach combining decent working conditions, skills development, and sectoral diversification. The study contributes empirical evidence on the multidimensional role of youth employment in fragile-state transition processes and offers policy-relevant guidance for embedding youth employment indicators within NTP implementation and monitoring frameworks.

1.0 Introduction

Somalia currently faces a critical youth unemployment crisis, which undermines the long-term sustainability of the federal government's security and development agendas. This challenge is directly addressed by the National Transition Plan, a strategic framework designed to facilitate the shift from African Union-led security operations to full Somali ownership. However, the success of this transition remains inextricably linked to the socio-economic integration of young people, who otherwise risk being radicalized by insurgent groups seeking to exploit systemic disenfranchisement. By fostering robust employment pathways, the state can effectively neutralize the primary recruitment narratives utilized by militant factions to destabilize nascent governance structures. Integrating this demographic into the formal economy acts as a crucial stabilizer, directly reinforcing the operational objectives of the National Transition Plan by diminishing the human capital reserves available to non-state actors. Consequently, scholarly analysis of this nexus is essential to determine how targeted vocational training and private sector engagement can bolster the legitimacy of state institutions. Such efforts are imperative for shifting the current security paradigm from military-centric stabilization to a resilient, governance-led model of peacebuilding. Furthermore, labor market interventions serve as a viable policy instrument to mitigate the risk of insurgency by curbing the appeal of illegal activities for marginalized demographics. Empirical evidence from fragile states suggests that such economic programs are instrumental in decoupling productivity shocks from conflict, thereby fortifying the internal security landscape (Rohner,

2024). Furthermore, systematically addressing these socio-economic vulnerabilities aligns the National Transition Plan with broader peacebuilding outcomes by fostering grassroots support for federal authority. By prioritizing these inclusive growth strategies, the government can better adhere to international frameworks like SDG 16, which emphasizes the necessity of accountable and inclusive institutions for sustaining peace (Osland & Peter, 2021). This necessitates a move beyond mere stabilization tactics toward integrated economic policies that acknowledge how limited employment opportunities in post-conflict environments often exacerbate societal instability (Bove et al., 2021). Consequently, stabilizing the security environment requires addressing the governance gaps that enable armed groups to capitalize on economic disillusionment, ensuring that youth integration remains a central pillar of state-led peacebuilding initiatives (Blair et al., 2022; Mroß et al., 2021).

Such initiatives are particularly vital given that productivity-boosting interventions, including vocational training and employment programs, have been empirically shown to correlate with a significant decline in combatant recruitment (Rohner, 2024). By mitigating the influence of these security threats, the National Transition Plan can effectively leverage youth inclusion to transform volatile regions into hubs of productive economic activity (Krampe et al., 2021). Adopting such a holistic approach necessitates data-driven national skill strategies to align labor supply with evolving regional market demands (Commission & OECD, 2024). Moreover, sustainable peacebuilding initiatives must prioritize fostering inclusive national ownership by directly engaging domestic stakeholders in the design of these economic frameworks.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Concepts from Youth Employment

Existing studies on youth unemployment in conflict-affected states consistently highlight how the absence of viable economic opportunities creates a fertile ground for recruitment by non-state armed actors (Jeke & Lazarus, 2021). Research into these fragile contexts emphasizes that vocational training programs, while theoretically beneficial, often require rigorous evaluation to ensure that the skills acquired effectively translate into sustainable livelihoods for impoverished youth (Hassan et al., 2021). Furthermore, such strategies must prioritize the regional integration of skills development policies, as standardized vocational frameworks better equip youth to navigate the increasingly digital labor demands of East Africa (Commission & OECD, 2024a, 2024b). Empirical analyses of developing economies demonstrate that persistent unemployment not only hampers gross domestic product growth but also destabilizes social capital by limiting individual contributions to the formal economy (Mohamed & Abdi, 2024).

These analyses further suggest that promoting structural flexibility and targeted entrepreneurship support is essential for mitigating the long-term economic risks associated with youth labor market exclusion (Bal-Domańska, 2021; Hjazeen et al., 2021). In particular, evidence from the Horn of Africa indicates that significant correlations exist between high youth unemployment rates and heightened

levels of political volatility (Demeke, 2022). These findings mirror broader patterns observed in low-income regions, where information frictions often impede young work seekers from effectively signaling their productivity to prospective employers, thereby exacerbating structural unemployment (Carranza et al., 2022; Wheeler et al., 2022).

2.1.1 youth employment rate on the progress of the National Transition Plan in Somalia

Although frequently framed as a cornerstone of the peace-stability-development nexus, the widely held assumption that gainful youth employment acts as a primary mechanism to deter recruitment into insurgent factions in fragile states is increasingly challenged in the literature for oversimplifying complex socio-political dynamics (Fortune et al., 2015; Izzi, 2013). In post-conflict contexts like Somalia, scholars argue that structural barriers and political exclusionary practices often supersede economic scarcity as drivers of instability. Furthermore, the successful implementation of the National Transition Plan remains hindered by a mismatch between current labor market demands and the existing educational landscape, where limited digital literacy continues to constrain broader productivity gains (Commission & OECD, Digital skills in East Africa, 2024). Empirical evidence from the IGAD region suggests that such persistent youth unemployment is a significant driver of political instability, underscoring the urgency for reform within the transition framework (Demeke, Youth unemployment and political instability: evidence from IGAD member countries, 2022).

Beyond these systemic obstacles, Somali youth face acute information frictions, as a lack of professional networks and verifiable work experience impedes their integration into the nascent formal economy (Carranza, Garlick, Orkin, & Rankin, Job Search and Hiring with Limited Information about Workseekers' Skills, 2022, p. 3555).

2.1.2 Quality of youth employment contributes to the effectiveness of the National Transition in Somalia

In the Somali context, quality youth employment transcends mere income generation, encompassing the psychosocial benefits of meaningful labor that reinforce social stability (Hussam et al., 2022). Such employment is defined by secure working conditions, clear career advancement prospects, and organizational support, which collectively enhance individual well-being and reduce the likelihood of economic disillusionment (Xueyun et al., 2023). This framework aligns with the National Transition Plan, which prioritizes state-building and stability by fostering sustainable livelihoods to mitigate the influence of extremist recruitment. By grounding the transition process in robust career self-management, the state can transform labor market entry from a source of instability into a vehicle for professional agency and resilience (Stremersch et al., 2021). Furthermore, this research underscores that aligning individual career readiness with national stabilization objectives is critical for addressing the persistent gap between available skill sets and the demands of Somalia's evolving economy (Raut et al., 2024). By integrating employability frameworks that prioritize both technical competence and adaptive career

responses, policymakers can bridge these labor gaps to ensure that youth transition successfully into roles that sustain long-term economic development (Horst et al., 2021; Maina et al., 2022).

2.1.3 Youth participation across economic sectors on the outcomes of the National Transition Plan in Somalia

Somalia's National Transition Plan seeks to stabilize governance and foster long-term socio-economic development amidst a demographic landscape where youth constitute the vast majority of the population. Despite this demographic prominence, the efficacy of these structural reforms remains inextricably linked to the degree of youth integration into critical economic sectors. This research evaluates how the active inclusion of younger cohorts in labor markets serves as a catalyst for sustainable peacebuilding and regional stability. By examining the nexus between sectoral employment and policy outcomes, this study highlights the necessity of human capital development to mitigate the risks of precarious labor participation (Commission & OECD, Digital transformation for youth employment and Agenda 2063 in North Africa, 2021).

Furthermore, the expansion of digital skill acquisition is essential to addressing existing gaps in occupational structures, as these competencies directly correlate with enhanced productivity and long-term economic integration (Commission & OECD, Digital skills in East Africa, 2024). Consequently, addressing the current limitations in infrastructure and vocational training is imperative to align the labor supply with the evolving demands of the national economy (Commission & OECD, Policies for productive and inclusive skills development in Africa, 2024; Commission & OECD, Digital transformation for youth employment and Agenda 2063 in North Africa, 2021). Investigating these dynamics is crucial, as the marginalization of youth from decision-making and formal economic life often exacerbates social exclusion, ultimately threatening the long-term success of the transition process (Erdoğan et al., 2021). By bridging the divide between formal policy frameworks and grassroots economic agency, this analysis illuminates how inclusive growth strategies can fortify the state's institutional legitimacy.

2.2 Theoretical Framework for Youth Employment and Somalia's National Transition Plan.

2.2.1 Labor Market Theory

In this context, social capabilities and a robust institutional framework are essential to realize long-term productivity gains and absorb labor into high-value service sectors (Bal-Domańska, The impact of macroeconomic and structural factors on the unemployment of young women and men, 2021, p. 1145). Furthermore, investments in human capital act as a primary catalyst for this shift, as new labor market entrants accelerate the transition by gravitating toward non-agricultural sectors that offer higher marginal returns (Porzio et al., 2022).

However, the effectiveness of these investments in Somalia remains constrained by labor market segmentation, where informational asymmetries and lack of professional networks disproportionately

disadvantage youth compared to established workers (Wheeler, Garlick, Johnson, Shaw, & Gargano, LinkedIn(to) Job Opportunities: Experimental Evidence from Job Readiness Training, 2022, p. 110).

2.2.2 Institutional Theory

State capacity serves as the foundational architecture for this implementation, as the efficacy of transition plans depends on the government's ability to enforce regulatory standards and coordinate inter-sectoral labor policies (Tommaso, Prodi, Pollio, & Barbieri, Conceptualizing and measuring "industry resilience": Composite indicators for postshock industrial policy decision-making, 2022, p. 101450). In this environment, strong governance mechanisms must harmonize the integration of labor demand with state-led initiatives, as the failure to establish coherent regulatory oversight frequently exacerbates market fragmentation and limits the long-term viability of development strategies (Shen & Zhang, The impact of artificial intelligence on employment: the role of virtual agglomeration, 2024, p. 11). Consequently, institutionalizing mechanisms such as cross-ministerial labor boards can facilitate the synchronization of vocational training outcomes with the specific requirements of public-private investment schemes (Xiao et al., 2024).

Furthermore, by leveraging data-driven national skill strategies, the government can better align educational output with shifting industrial demands to bolster productive employment across the formal and informal sectors (Commission & OECD, Policies for productive and inclusive skills development in Africa, 2024). This coordination ensures that governance constraints—rather than mere economic limitations—are addressed to prevent the divergence of industrial policy from its intended developmental impact (Juhász & Lane, 2024).

2.3 National transition plan in Somalia

The literature on national transition planning in Somalia spans the country's evolving development frameworks, from the post-independence National Development Plans to the newly launched National Transformation Plan 2025–2029, which marks a significant shift in approach: for the first time, Somalia adopts a participatory, systems-based methodology through the "Lab Approach," integrating federal and member-state institutions, civil society, and international partners to design solutions tailored to Somali conditions, with goals of inclusive economic growth, resilient governance, and environmental sustainability aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063 (Hussein et al., 2025). The same literature is candid that previous plans have struggled due to institutional fragility, political instability, and heavy reliance on external aid, and that the NTP's success remains contingent on overcoming security threats, technical capacity gaps, and political fragmentation (Hussein et al., 2025).

Within these frameworks, employment has been a persistent priority: one of the ten goals of the national development plan (2017–2019) was "increased employment opportunities and decent work, particularly for the youth," and the ninth national development plan (2020–2024) aimed to create more jobs for the most vulnerable groups, including youth, women, and internally displaced persons — though these plans

"do not seem to be effective" in the absence of appropriate policies to tackle unemployment (Warsame et al., 2022).

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between youth employment and the National Transition Plan (NTP) in Somalia. The study focused on three dimensions of youth employment: youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and youth participation across economic sectors. The design was appropriate because it enabled the study to quantify the relationships among the study variables and assess the predictive contribution of the three youth employment dimensions to NTP outcomes using data collected at a single point in time.

The target population comprised 6,181 eligible youth participating in the selected Somali youth employment and empowerment initiatives. The sampling frame consisted of the official programme records and beneficiary registers containing eligible youth from the participating initiatives. These records provided the basis for identifying eligible participants and selecting respondents. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure adequate representation of relevant groups within the sampling frame. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, $(n = N/[1 + N(e)^2])$, where (N) represents the target population and (e) represents the margin of error. With a population of 6,181 and a 2% margin of error, the calculation yielded a sample of approximately 1,780 respondents: $(n = 6,181/[1 + 6,181(0.02)^2] \approx 1,780)$. The sample was proportionally allocated across the relevant strata, after which respondents were selected randomly within each stratum. The final dataset comprised 1,780 valid responses.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from established literature on youth employment and national development. The instrument measured the three independent variables—youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and youth participation across economic sectors—and the dependent variable, National Transition Plan outcomes. The questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The instrument was designed to ensure that each construct was measured through conceptually distinct items reflecting its respective theoretical dimension.

Content validity was established through expert review by specialists with relevant expertise in youth employment, development planning, and social or economic policy. The experts assessed the relevance, clarity, adequacy, and appropriateness of the questionnaire items, and their recommendations were incorporated before the main data collection. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of respondents who were not included in the final sample to assess the clarity of the instrument and its internal consistency. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable. The overall instrument demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.866 across 16 items, supporting the reliability of the measurement instrument.

The completed questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Composite scores for youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, youth participation across economic sectors, and National Transition Plan outcomes were calculated from their respective measurement items. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the respondents' characteristics and the distribution of the study variables. Pearson's correlation analysis was then conducted to determine the direction and strength of the bivariate relationships between the three youth employment dimensions and the National Transition Plan. Finally, multiple linear regression analysis using the Enter method was performed to determine the combined and unique predictive effects of youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and youth participation across economic sectors on National Transition Plan outcomes. The regression model was evaluated using R, R², adjusted R², the F-statistic, unstandardized coefficients (B), standardized beta coefficients (β), t-values, and significance levels. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 1% level ($p < .01$). Collinearity diagnostics, including condition indices and variance proportions, were also examined to assess potential multicollinearity among the predictors.

This study involving human participants was reviewed and approved by the SIMAD University Research Ethics Committee (SIMAD-REC) under Approval No: EC000132), dated **30 August 2026**. The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical requirements established by SIMAD University and the principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Participant confidentiality and anonymity were maintained through the use of coded identifiers, and participation was entirely voluntary. Appropriate measures were implemented to ensure the secure handling, storage, and protection of research data throughout the study.

4.0 Results

This section outlines the empirical findings obtained from a survey of 1780 respondents, emphasizing the impact of youth employment on national transition plan. The findings are organized by demographic characteristics, perceptions of youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and youth participation across economic sectors, along with statistical analyses that examine the relationships and predictive capabilities of these constructs in relation to national transition plan.

4.1 background information

This section the demographic characteristics of the respondents were carefully analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the background of the study participants. Key demographic variables included gender, age, marital status, level of education, and years of entrepreneurial experience. The demographic characteristics of the 1780 respondents, including gender, educational attainment, age, and entrepreneurial experience, are presented in Table 1

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	928	52.1
	Female	852	47.9
	Total	1780	100.0
Age	18–28	1210	68.0
	29–39	464	26.1
	40–50	74	4.2
	51 and above years	32	1.8
	Total	1780	100.0
Level of education	Diploma	298	16.7
	Bachelor's degree	590	33.1
	Master's degree	599	33.7
	PhD	293	16.5
	Total	1780	100.0
Level of experience	No experience	306	17.2
	1–3 years	587	33.0
	4–7 years	592	33.3
	8 and above years	295	16.6
	Total	1780	100.0

The demographic profile of the study participants (N = 1,780) reveals a relatively balanced gender distribution, with males comprising 52.1% (n = 928) and females 47.9% (n = 852) of the sample. This near-parity in representation strengthens the generalizability of findings across gender perspectives, which is particularly relevant given the gendered dimensions of labor market participation in Somalia. The age distribution demonstrates a strong concentration of respondents in the 18–28 age bracket (68.0%), followed by those aged 29–39 years (26.1%), indicating that younger respondents constitute the predominant participants in the study. This distribution is particularly relevant to the study of youth employment, as a substantial proportion of respondents falls within the primary age group examined. Notably, 4.2% of respondents were aged 40–50 years, while 1.8% were aged 51 years and above, providing representation across different age groups and enabling consideration of perspectives beyond the primary youth cohort.

Educational attainment was relatively high, with 33.7% holding master's degrees and 33.1% possessing bachelor's degrees. This elevated educational profile may reflect the sampling frame of youth initiative, where managerial and supervisory positions demand formal qualifications. The presence of doctoral degree holders (16.5%) and diploma holders (16.7%) provides variation across educational strata. Professional experience followed a similar distribution pattern, with 33.3% having 4–7 years of experience, 33.0% with 1–3 years, while 17.2% reported no prior experience, and 16.6% possessed eight or more years of experience. This diversity enables robust examination of how experiential factors High perceptions of youth employment and national development.

4.2 Descriptive statistics on youth employment dimensions

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' perceptions of the three dimensions of youth employment youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and youth participation across economic sectorsand the National Transition Plan (NTP). Means and standard deviations were examined to identify the general level of agreement and variation in respondents' assessments. This analysis provides an initial overview of the study variables before examining their relationships through correlation and regression analysis.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of youth employment

A higher youth employment rate significantly accelerates national development goals.	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
	1780	3.44	1.247	High
Increasing the number of employed youths reduces unemployment challenges in the country.	1780	3.72	1.280	High
Youth employment rates positively influence economic self-reliance at the national level.	1780	3.45	1.263	High
Youth employment rates positively influence economic self-reliance at the national level.	1780	3.48	1.257	High
Stable jobs with fair wages for youth contribute to sustainable national growth.	1780	3.44	1.262	High
The quality of youth employment improves their economic empowerment and social wellbeing.	1780	3.47	1.273	High
Good working conditions for young employees are crucial for the success of the National Transition Plan.	1780	3.41	1.278	High
Improving job security for youth leads to better outcomes in national transformation efforts.	1780	3.42	1.273	High
Youth participation in key economic sectors boosts sectoral growth and innovation.	1780	3.45	1.268	High
Employment of youth in diverse sectors supports balanced national development.	1780	3.45	1.267	High
Targeting youth employment in priority industries enhances the effectiveness of the National Transition Plan.	1780	3.52	1.250	High
The involvement of youth across different sectors strengthens economic diversification.	1780	3.42	1.273	High
Valid N (listwise)	1780			

The descriptive analysis in Table 2 reveals that all measured items pertaining to youth employment dimensions received mean scores ranging from 3.41 to 3.72 (SD = 1.247–1.280), indicating high levels of agreement among respondents regarding the relationship between youth employment and national development outcomes. The highest mean score (M = 3.72, SD = 1.280) was observed for the assertion that "increasing the number of employed youths reduces unemployment challenges in the country," suggesting strong consensus on the instrumental value of employment expansion. Conversely, the item "stable jobs with fair wages for youth contribute to sustainable national growth" and "the quality of youth employment improves their economic empowerment and social wellbeing" exhibited slightly lower yet

consistent scores (M = 3.44 and 3.47, respectively), indicating more nuanced perceptions regarding the qualitative dimensions of employment.

The three distinct dimensions—youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and youth participation across economic sectors—demonstrate relatively uniform response patterns, with mean values ranging from 3.41 to 3.52 across all measurement items. This consistency suggests that respondents perceive these dimensions as interconnected rather than discrete factors influencing the National Transition Plan. The standard deviations, all exceeding 1.24, indicate substantial variation in individual responses, highlighting the complexity of perspectives on youth employment dynamics in Somalia's post-conflict context. This variation may be attributable to differential experiences across sectors, regions, or firm types, underscoring the necessity for disaggregated policy approaches.

4.3 Descriptive on dependent variable

this section presents the descriptive assessment of the National Transition Plan, which constitutes the dependent variable of the study. The analysis examines respondents’ perceptions of the extent to which youth employment contributes to NTP progress, national development, social stability, and economic growth. The mean and standard deviation values provide an indication of the overall level of perceived NTP outcomes and the variation in respondents’ views.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of National transition plan

The National Transition Plan has benefited from increased youth employment.	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
	1780	3.46	1.268	High
Youth employment is essential for achieving the goals outlined in the National Transition Plan.	1780	3.45	1.282	High
Improvements in youth employment quality and distribution are reflected in national development progress.	1780	3.42	1.273	High
Overall, youth employment positively influences social stability and economic growth under the National Transition Plan.	1780	3.44	1.270	High
Valid N (listwise)	1780			

The assessment of the National Transition Plan (Table 3) yielded mean scores ranging from 3.42 to 3.46 (SD = 1.268–1.282), reflecting high endorsement among respondents regarding youth employment's contribution to national development objectives. The highest-rated item (M = 3.46, SD = 1.268) pertained to the proposition that the National Transition Plan has benefited from increased youth employment, suggesting tangible perceived impacts of employment growth on policy implementation. The lowest-rated item (M = 3.42, SD = 1.273) concerned the reflection of improvements in youth employment quality

and distribution in national development progress, indicating potential gaps between employment quantity and quality in policy realization.

The mean of 3.44 for the overall construct suggests that while respondents acknowledge the positive influence of youth employment on social stability and economic growth under the National Transition Plan, this recognition is tempered by awareness of persistent challenges. The consistency of responses across items, with minimal variance in mean scores, indicates coherent perceptions of the dependent variable's conceptualization. However, the standard deviations exceeding 1.26 suggest substantial heterogeneity in experiences and expectations, likely reflecting differential exposure to employment opportunities and policy impacts across respondent categories.

4.4 Correlations of the study

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the direction and strength of the relationships between youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, youth participation across economic sectors, and NTP outcomes. This analysis provides preliminary evidence of whether the study variables are significantly associated and establishes the basis for the subsequent multiple regression analysis. Statistical significance was assessed at the 1% level ($p < 0.01$).

Table 4. **Correlations Between youth employment Dimensions and National Transition plan**

Table 4
Correlations

		Youth employment rate	Quality of youth employment	Youth participation across economic sectors	National transition Plan
Youth employment rate	Pearson Correlation	1	.610**	.612**	.631**
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	1780	1780	1780	1780
Quality of youth employment	Pearson Correlation	.610**	1	.641**	.652**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	1780	1780	1780	1780
Youth participation across economic sectors	Pearson Correlation	.612**	.641**	1	.631**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	1780	1780	1780	1780
National transition Plan	Pearson Correlation	.631**	.652**	.631**	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	1780	1780	1780	1780
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The Pearson correlation matrix (Table 4) reveals statistically significant positive relationships among all study variables ($p < 0.01$), with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.610 to 0.652. Notably, the dependent variable (National Transition Plan) exhibits the strongest correlation with youth employment quality (Quality of youth employment: $r = 0.652$, $p < 0.01$), followed by youth employment rate (Youth employment rate: $r = 0.631$, $p < 0.01$) and youth participation across economic sectors (Youth participation across economic sectors: $r = 0.631$, $p < 0.01$). This pattern suggests that the qualitative dimensions of employment—encompassing job security, fair wages, and working conditions—may exert marginally greater influence on national transition outcomes than quantitative employment measures.

The intercorrelations among independent variables range from 0.610 to 0.641, indicating strong associations without reaching problematic multicollinearity thresholds. The highest intercorrelation

exists between youth employment quality and youth participation across economic sectors ($r = 0.641$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that sectoral integration and employment quality are mutually reinforcing phenomena. Similarly, the correlation between youth employment rate and youth participation across economic sectors ($r = 0.612$, $p < 0.01$) indicates that employment quantity and sectoral diversity are closely linked. The magnitude of these correlations provides preliminary evidence for the theoretical framework positing interconnected dimensions of youth employment influencing national transition outcomes.

4.5 Regression analyses

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the unique contribution of each youth employment dimension to NTP outcomes while controlling for the other predictors in the model. The analysis estimates whether youth employment rate, employment quality, and participation across economic sectors significantly predict NTP outcomes and identifies the relative strength of each predictor using standardized beta coefficients. The regression results are also used to evaluate the three study hypotheses.

Table 5
Multiple Regression Analysis of Youth Employment Dimensions Predicting National Transition Plan Outcomes.”

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.659	.269		6.158	.000
	Youth employment rate	.291	.023	.280	12.918	.000
	Quality of youth employment	.318	.023	.316	14.136	.000
	Youth participation across economic sectors	.263	.023	.258	11.515	.000
a. Dependent Variable: DV						

The multiple regression analysis in Table 5 demonstrates significant predictive relationships between the three youth employment dimensions’ youth employment rate, youth employment quality, and youth participation across economic sectors and the National Transition Plan (DV). The model collectively explains a substantial proportion of variance in the National Transition Plan, with $R = 0.738$, $R^2 = 0.545$, and adjusted $R^2 = 0.544$. Thus, the three dimensions jointly explain 54.5% of the variance in National Transition Plan outcomes, while the remaining 45.5% is attributable to other factors outside the model.

The standardized beta coefficients indicate that youth employment quality emerges as the strongest predictor of the National Transition Plan ($\beta = 0.316$, $t = 14.136$, $p < 0.001$), followed by youth employment

rate ($\beta = 0.280$, $t = 12.918$, $p < 0.001$) and youth participation across economic sectors ($\beta = 0.258$, $t = 11.515$, $p < 0.001$). The unstandardized coefficients further indicate that, holding the other predictors constant, a one-unit increase in youth employment rate, employment quality, and participation across economic sectors is associated with increases of 0.291, 0.318, and 0.263 units, respectively, in the National Transition Plan score. All three predictors are therefore positive and statistically significant at the 1% significance level.

The overall regression model is statistically significant, $F(3, 1776) = 709.622$, $p < 0.001$, confirming that the three youth employment dimensions jointly provide a significant prediction of National Transition Plan outcomes. The constant term was also statistically significant ($B = 1.659$, $t = 6.158$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a positive baseline level of the dependent variable when the predictor values are zero. The close correspondence between R^2 (0.545) and adjusted R^2 (0.544) further indicates that the model retains its explanatory strength after adjustment for the number of predictors.

The collinearity diagnostics indicate no serious multicollinearity problem. Condition indices ranged from 1.000 to 13.670, remaining below the commonly applied threshold of 30 for serious multicollinearity. Although relatively high variance proportions were observed for Quality of youth employment and Youth participation across economic sectors in Dimension 4 (0.50 and 0.87, respectively), the corresponding condition index of 13.670 does not indicate problematic multicollinearity. The predictors can therefore be retained simultaneously in the regression model, particularly given their theoretical relatedness as dimensions of youth employment.

5.0 Discussion

The findings demonstrate significant positive relationships between all three dimensions of youth employment and National Transition Plan (NTP) outcomes in Somalia. The descriptive results show high respondent agreement regarding the contribution of youth employment to national development, while the correlation analysis confirms strong positive associations between NTP outcomes and youth employment rate ($r = .631$, $p < .01$), employment quality ($r = .652$, $p < .01$), and participation across economic sectors ($r = .631$, $p < .01$). These findings indicate that youth employment is an important socioeconomic dimension of Somalia's national transition.

Youth employment rate significantly predicted NTP outcomes ($\beta = .280$, $p < .001$), supporting H1. This finding is consistent with Demeke (2022), Mohamed and Abdi (2024), and Jeke and Lazarus (2021), who associate youth unemployment and economic exclusion with instability and broader socioeconomic challenges. The present finding therefore reinforces the argument that expanding employment opportunities can strengthen the socioeconomic foundations of national transition. However, the literature also indicates that employment quantity alone is insufficient where young people remain in insecure or low-productivity work. Thus, increasing employment opportunities should be accompanied by improvements in their sustainability and productivity.

Employment quality emerged as the strongest predictor of NTP outcomes ($\beta = .316$, $p < .001$), with the strongest bivariate relationship ($r = .652$, $p < .01$), supporting H2. This finding is consistent with Hussam et al. (2022) and Xueyun et al. (2023), who emphasize secure working conditions, meaningful employment, career development, and organizational support. The stronger effect of employment quality compared with employment rate suggests that the contribution of youth employment to national transition depends not only on whether young people work, but also on the conditions and sustainability of that work. This finding strengthens the literature by demonstrating the importance of employment quality within the Somali NTP context.

Youth participation across economic sectors also significantly predicted NTP outcomes ($\beta = .258$, $p < .001$; $r = .631$, $p < .01$), supporting H3. This finding is consistent with the literature emphasizing vocational skills, digital competencies, entrepreneurship, and stronger links between education and labour-market demand. Broader sectoral participation can improve the utilization of youth human capital and support economic diversification and structural transformation. However, its comparatively smaller regression coefficient indicates that sectoral participation is likely to be most effective when accompanied by adequate skills and quality employment.

The combined results provide evidence that youth employment should be addressed as a multidimensional policy issue. The three predictors were strongly interrelated, particularly employment quality and sectoral participation ($r = .641$, $p < .01$). The regression model was statistically significant, $F(3, 1776) = 709.622$, $p < .001$, with $R^2 = .545$ and adjusted $R^2 = .544$, indicating that the three dimensions jointly explain 54.5% of the variance in NTP outcomes. Employment quality made the largest unique contribution, followed by employment rate and sectoral participation. These findings extend previous research by demonstrating that employment quantity, quality, and sectoral inclusion are complementary dimensions of youth employment within Somalia's national transition.

5.2 Conclusion

This study concludes that youth employment is significantly and positively associated with National Transition Plan outcomes in Somalia. Youth employment rate, quality of youth employment, and participation across economic sectors all demonstrated significant positive relationships with NTP outcomes, supporting H1, H2, and H3.

Employment quality emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = .316$), followed by youth employment rate ($\beta = .280$) and participation across economic sectors ($\beta = .258$). The findings therefore demonstrate that successful youth employment policy should combine job creation with decent employment conditions, skills development, and economic diversification.

The study contributes to the existing literature by demonstrating empirically that the contribution of youth employment to national transition is multidimensional. Rather than focusing solely on the number of young people employed, Somalia's transition agenda should emphasize the availability, quality, sustainability, and sectoral distribution of employment opportunities. Such an integrated approach can

strengthen the socioeconomic foundations of national transition. However, youth employment represents only one component of the broader transition process, and the findings should be interpreted within the limitations of the cross-sectional design.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings, the study proposes the following recommendations:

Prioritize employment quality by promoting decent wages, job security, safe working conditions, and career development, as it was the strongest predictor of NTP outcomes ($\beta = .316$).

Expand youth employment opportunities through SME development, entrepreneurship, and private-sector investment.

Align education and training programmes with labour-market needs by strengthening vocational training, digital skills, internships, and practical learning.

Promote youth participation across diverse economic sectors, including agriculture, services, manufacturing, and emerging digital activities.

Strengthen partnerships between education institutions and employers to reduce skills gaps and improve employment pathways.

Integrate youth employment indicators into NTP planning and monitoring, including employment rate, job quality, sustainability, and skills development.

6.0 Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, its cross-sectional design limits conclusions about causality and changes over time. Second, the use of self-reported data may introduce perception and common-method biases. Third, the study examined three dimensions of youth employment and therefore did not capture other factors that may influence NTP outcomes, such as governance, security, political inclusion, infrastructure, and access to finance. Fourth, the relatively strong correlations among the predictors require careful interpretation and should be complemented by VIF and tolerance statistics. Finally, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all regions or populations in Somalia because socioeconomic and labor-market conditions vary across contexts.

Future studies should use longitudinal or mixed-method designs, objective employment indicators, and broader institutional and socioeconomic variables to provide stronger evidence on how youth employment contributes to Somalia's national transition.

Declarations

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to SIMAD University for its generous financial support, which has been instrumental in advancing their research objectives. The university's dedication to promoting academic excellence has significantly influenced this study.

Ethical approval statement

This study involving human participants was reviewed and approved by the SIMAD University Research Ethics Committee (SIMAD-REC) under Approval No: EC000132), dated **30 August 2026**. The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical requirements established by SIMAD University and the principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Participant confidentiality and anonymity were maintained through the use of coded identifiers, and participation was entirely voluntary. Appropriate measures were implemented to ensure the secure handling, storage, and protection of research data throughout the study.

Informed consent statement

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before participation in the study. Participants were provided with clear information about the purpose and procedures of the research, their voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity, and the handling of their responses. Participants were informed that they could decline to participate or withdraw from the study without consequence.

Authors' Contributions

The authors have made significant contributions to the preparation of this article. Mohamed Abdi Dhaqane and were responsible for the study's inception, design, and development. They wrote the first draft of the paper, collected and analyzed the data, and evaluated and edited the publication. Abdihakim Abdullahi Jama contributed to the literature review, research methods and editing the manuscript. Ahmed Hassan Mohamud contributed to the discussion and conclusion part

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Funding declarations

This research received no specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

The supporting data of the findings of this investigation are available upon reasonable request.

Competing interests

The authors reported no potential conflict of interest.

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