

The Influence Factors Of Local Leaders' Roles Toward The Community Development Decision-Making In Bamyar, Afghanistan

Norsida Man, Mohammad Salem Faizi, Nollila Mohd Nawi and Khal Mohammad Ahmadzai

Abstract: The study identified the influencing factors on the roles of the local leaders in decision-making for community development in Bamyar Province, Afghanistan. In an effort to rebuild the nation recovering from decades long of war, the efficiency of governance in development is crucial to deliver the success. Yet, the main problem that poses a challenge to achieve the goal is the indefinite information about the community development and the roles of the local leaders. A self-administered questionnaire was designed and subsequently distributed to 384 community members. Factor and regression analysis were performed to identify the influencing factors. The result shows that three factors have the most impact on community development decision-making. The result obtained from the study shows that Bridging Standardized Beta value is 31.5, Guiding Standardized Beta value is 22.8 and Accountability Standardized Beta value is 11.5 these three factors are significant (P-value 0.000<0.05). Therefore, relationship, cooperation, sponsor and trust are the important issues in a community development decision making for the consideration of local leaders as his role.

Keywords : Influencing Factors, Local Leader's Roles, Community Development, Decision Making.

1 INTRODUCTION

Decision making is a part of leadership, and people put leaders under pressure to decide swiftly, because today's pace of change is faster than ever and people expect leaders to decide for changing swiftly (Kaipa, 2014). The importance of leadership is reflected in the society as an influence for a prosperous urban development. Studies have indeed shown that the association between leadership and the social sense contributes to the whole success of rural societies (Avant, & Copeland, 2013). All societies have individuals who manage the society and a leader who leads towards causes and changes. These leaders have emotion, heart and a strong eagerness to improve their societies for the betterment of the next generation. Such leaders also have a considerable impact on the political, economic, social, and cultural systems of a community (Williams & Lindsey, 2011).

The concept of control and influences is common in most of the studies directed on local leadership. Power is considered as one of the vital basics of the community system, functioning through control and decision-making. A leadership in that background permeates the community system (Mehta, 1972). Therefore, the research on decision-making in a community is crucial to elucidate how other projects became a success. Because each community has a different structure, the focus of a leadership in a large community tend to be poor (Kuponiyi, 2008).

Recent investigation shows that models of leadership are different from one rural society to others, and the strive of rural leaders can solve the problems of their societies (O'Brien & Hassinger, 1992). The Afghanistan's instability combined with the lack of governance and poverty have resulted in a substantial damage to human, physical, and institutional infrastructure (Syed & Mujtaba et al., 2013; Wardak, 2011). In fact, history of Afghanistan shows that top-down reform planning has failed. In its essence, sustainable and socially responsive improvement requires the participation of stakeholders, both men and women of community, for capacity building and performing their responsibilities for development purposes of the community (Nijat, 2014). The changing of decision-making approach from top-down to bottom-up requires a finest performance of local leader and active participation of stakeholders in decision-making for development purposes. This means that local leaders should and must know about the process of decision making, especially the roles in decision making, what goes in the preparation and management of the agenda in community development between community members, NGOs and government agents (Kock and Tumbull et al, 2010; Zakhilwal and Thomas 2005). Nevertheless, Kuponiyi (2008), Ali (2019) and Wardak (2011) noted the poor engagement in decision-making, controlling, and implementing development activities by the rural leaders (warlords and Maliks), and the community members. Currently, there is limited research on the consideration during decision-making in local communities (Capler, 2020). Therefore, this study was undertaken to elucidate the factors affecting the roles of local leaders in the decision-making process for community development in Bamyar Province, Afghanistan. This study will not only enrich the literature on leadership of community development, but also bridge the gap between the significant and non-significant factors that influence the roles of local leaders in community development decision making.

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2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership plays an important role in molding the community, economic, and political life of rural societies. Aref and Redzuan (2009) and O'Brien and Hassinger (1992) asserted the significance of rural leaders in assuming essential role in the rural development. As quoted by Shinn et al. (2012) quoted in

their research, “indigenous knowledge is a fundamental resource and a foundation for local-level decision making and sustainability. Opinion leaders serve as channels to move the society from poverty and conflict toward security and peacebuilding”. Aref & Redzuan (2010) noted the importance and the need for local leaders to build a strong community in the development. Vora & Kainzbauer (2020) highlight five themes, notably “guiding, bridging, emotionally supporting, socializing and indirectly communicating” as the roles assumed by the local leaders’ Thailand. Therefore, the concept of influence and control are popular in most studies that emphasize on local leadership. Particularly, engaging stakeholders with local leaders are crucial to develop future programs and achieve the community goals. Capler (2020) illustrates the factors that have important roles in decision-making is composed of six themes, namely a) remembering the past, b) communication and respect, c) spurring economic growth and development, d) fairness, e) recognizing and removing emotion and bias, and f) accountability. Relationships in rural societies are essential to access the resources, the subsequent sharing of accessible resources and services, and meeting the basic requirements. Also, the relationship allows bonding between families, groups, societies, and organizations both inside and outside of the local communities (Avant et al., 2013).

Concept of The Model

The roles of rural leaders in community development decision-making cannot be denied anymore. It is important for rural leaders to assess the problem and select the right action or set of actions. The Hill’s model is a good guide for inexperienced rural leaders. It will be proven more useful as leaders gain experience that allows them to internalize the model to the point where it becomes almost tacit—that is, leaders respond to situations without even thinking about the model. The actions listed in the model are not all-inclusive, and astute rural leaders will add others and maybe delete some as they gain leadership experience in a community environment. What is most important is developing the ability to discern when an intervention is needed and the appropriate action to take during the intervention. These leadership actions are used to improve a community’s ability to get the job done. They include being focused on appropriate goals, having a process that makes decision making easier, setting and maintaining appropriate standards for individual and community performance, and encouraging collaboration among community members. Aside from that, a leadership is also required in managing the conflicts, namely intellectual conflict rather than personal conflict; satisfying the trust and support the needs of community members, networking to form alliances and gain access to information, negotiating with senior management for recognition, support, and resources; protecting community members from environmental diversions, examining the indicants of effectiveness (e.g., customer satisfaction surveys), and finally, providing community members with appropriate information (Northouse, 2018). Figure 1 depicts the framework of the study that define the gap of local leader’s roles regarding the expectation of community members contributing to the decision-making for community development. The different attributes of ideas may have influence on the community development.

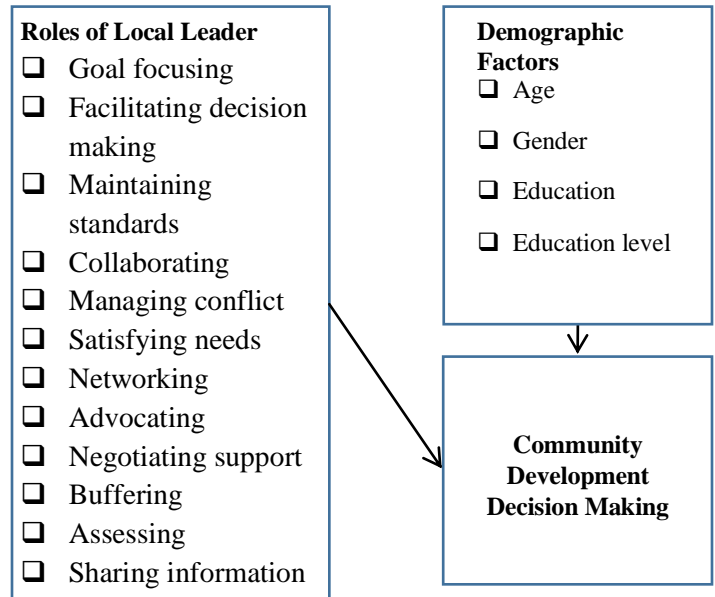


Figure 1: Roles of Local Leaders in Community Development

Based on the figure, the dependent variable of this study is “Community Development Decision Making”. That is, the effectiveness of a leader in assuming the duty in the community development. The framework of this study essentially comprised of two parts. Demographic factors are the first part, which includes age, gender and education level. The roles of local leaders are the second part which includes goal focusing, facilitating decision making, maintaining standards, collaborating, managing conflict, and satisfying needs, negotiating support, buffering, assessing and sharing information. The roles of local leaders are indicated by the performance of local leader in the community development, specifically in the process of decision-making in various situation and the development programs initiated by the community.

3 METHODOLOGY

The research was done by using a quantitative method for collecting primary data from 384 community members based on the sampling method by Krejcie & Morgan (1970). A close-ended questionnaire was presented to the respondents which centered on the Likert scale approach. The questionnaire was translated from English to the Persian language in order to ease understanding among the community members on the purpose of the research. Data collection was done through self-administered approach and the data were subjected to quantitative analysis by SPSS (version 22.0, IBM, Armonk, NY, USA). Descriptive analysis was used to transform the data into the simplest form. It is commonly used to facilitate the interpretation and description of the population (Mann, 2007). In this study, the percentage and frequency the data were derived to describe the demographic profile of the community members. Scoring and analysis were also applied on the statements measured using the Likert Scale. Further, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine the factors affecting the community development decision-making, to examine the number of factors affecting the variables and to determine which variables match and go together (Decoster & Hall, 1998). For this purpose, Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted. Generally, the perception of factor analysis is to

operate the quantifiable and observable variables where the factors are reduced to several and fewer latent variables that share a common variance (Yong & Pearce, 2013). Factor analysis is a multivariate technique used to achieve and conclude the information from a huge number of statements or items into a smaller number of statements or items for a better understanding of the data. It is an appropriate approach of data analysis, especially in a study that employs a questionnaire based on 5-point Likert scale from almost never true (1) to almost always true (5). Accordingly, the factor analysis was utilized to determine the most influencing factors of the local leaders' roles in community development decision-making based on the mean of each factor. In this research, the variables were rotated by using the Varimax rotation technique. Varimax rotation technique has been used to redistribute the variance so that the variables were clearly separated (Kaiser, 1974). Prior to the factor analysis, the adequacy of the sample data was first measured using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO). To qualify for the analysis, the KMO values must exceed 0.6 (Hair et al, 2009). It was observed that the correlation between the factors was satisfactory and therefore, the scores for every single factor were computed for further analysis. To examine the most influential factors that affect community development decision-making among the factors, multiple regression analysis was also applied, mainly to extract the factors to be used to measure the influencing factors towards the community development in Bamyan, Afghanistan. The following hypothesis was considered in this study to reveal the strength of the extracted factors from the factor analysis.

H0: There is no significant relationship between the extracted factors and community development decision-making.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between the extracted factors and community development decision-making.

4 DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Socio-demographic profile

The study included data from 384 community members from the Bamyan Province, Afghanistan. Table 1 that presents the socio-demographic features of the respondents are composed of 65.4% males and 34.6% females with an average age of 28 years old. The oldest respondents were 63 years and the youngest was 18 years old. Out of all the respondents, 15.4% or 59 of respondents did not attain any form of education whereas the majority of respondents, i.e., 84.6% or 321 were educated (at least possessed the ability of reading and writing skills).

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=384)

Characteristics	Frequency (n=384)	Percentage
Age (years)		
18 - 25	188	49.0
26 - 35	124	32.3
36 - 45	38	9.9
46 - 55	26	6.8
56 <	8	2.1
Mean = 27.0911	Min = 18.0	
S.D = 10.4622	Max = 63.0	
Gender		
Male	251	65.4
Female	133	34.6
Education Level		
No Education	59	15.4
Educated	321	84.6

Factor analysis was used to identify and define the hidden

variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions. The variables used in these analyses are variables adopted from the earlier literature review. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was carried out in order to identify the factors that may have an effect on community development decision making. The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was further conducted to explore the validity of the items in the instrument.

TABLE 2: VARIANCE EXPLAINED

Factors of local leaders Roles	Variance % Explained
Socializing	23.519
Bridging	12.870
Indirect Communication	8.270
Development Standards	7.200
Communication and Respect	4.108
Emotionally Supporting	2.971
Guiding	1.814
Accountability	1.673
Total	61.424

Table 2 that describes the factor analysis and its elements. Generally, the amount of variance explained represents the percentage of components that explain the variability in the overall factors. The result revealed the percentage of total variance explained as 61.424%, which is considered good. The remaining percentage, which is 38.576%, indicates the percentage of information lost during the data reduction effort. The principal component analysis for data extraction was performed on the eight factors, namely Socializing, Bridging, Indirect Communication, Development Standards, Communication and Respect, Emotionally Supporting, Guiding, and Accountability. The rotation maintains the cumulative percentage of nearly 60%.The variation was distributed uniformly across the component. Eight components were extracted from the factor analysis, and the components that have the highest proportion are accounted as the first factors of local leader's roles. Therefore, the extracted factors with a particular amount of variance explained are observed as satisfactory. The Cronbach's alphas the individual factors as shown in Table 3 indicate the validity and reliability of the variables, considering that the values exceeded 0.70, which is a sufficient indication.

TABLE 3: RELIABILITY ANALYSIS ON PRINCIPLE COMPONENT ANALYSIS

Factors	No. of Items	Alpha	Factors	No. of Items	Alpha
Socializing	8	.897	Communication and Respect	11	.931
Bridging	6	.855	Emotionally Supporting	7	.875
Indirect Communication	6	.859	Guiding	6	.873
Development Standards	5	.831	Accountability	6	.866

Multiple Regression Analysis

Following the factor analysis, the effectiveness of the dependent variable (community development decision making) was examined using multiple regression analysis based on the extracted independent variables. There are three influential factors identified in this study, notably Bridging, Guiding and Accountability. An increase in the factor of Bridging was found increase (as in enhancing) the community development decision-making 31.5%. Similarly, a unit increase in Guiding enhances the community development decision-making by

22.8%, whereas an increase in the Accountability factor will result in an increase of community development decision-making by 11.5%.

Model Summary Table

The R-square indicates the variation of independent variables that explain the percentage of variance in the dependent variable. Based on the result of the regression, R2 was found to be 0.550 which shows a combination of independent variables (Socializing, Bridging, Indirect Communication, development standards, Communication and Respect, Emotionally Supporting, Guiding, and Accountability). These variables explained 55% of the variation in the community development decision-making by the sampled community members. The remaining 45% is attributed to uncontrollable variables in the regression model.

TABLE 4: MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742	.550	.540		.63309

Dependent Variable: Community Development Decision Making
 Predictors: (Constant) Socializing, Bridging, Indirect Communication, Development Standards, Communication and Respect, Emotionally Supporting, Guiding, and Accountability.

Relationship Between Extracted Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

The outcome from analysis of variance (ANOVA) that is presented in Table 5 indicated that the model is significant, that is the relationship between the extracted factors (Socializing, Bridging, Indirect Communication, development standards, Communication and Respect, Emotionally Supporting, Guiding, and Accountability) and the dependent variable (community development decision making).

TABLE 5: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	183.649	8	22.956	57.275	.000
Residual	150.303	375	.401		
Total	333.953	383			

Dependent Variable: Community Development Decision Making
 Predictors: (Constant) Socializing, Bridging, Indirect Communication, Development Standards, Communication and Respect, Emotionally Supporting, Guiding, and Accountability.

The Multiple Regression Analysis Table (Coefficients)

The coefficient described in Table 6 indicates that based on the regression analysis, three variables were found to be significantly associated with the dependent variable. Specifically, the variables of Bridging, Guiding, and Accountability were statistically significant at the level of 1%, 1%, and 5%, respectively, thereby confirming their importance as the determining factors that influence the community development decision-making. Table 6 also shows the relationship between the dependent variable (community development decision-making) and extracted factors (Bridging, Guiding, and Accountability).

TABLE 6: SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS AND TEST OF

HYPOTHESIS

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Decision
(Constant)	.771	.109	7.100	.000	
Socializing	.063	.056	1.122	.262	Fail to Reject H0
Bridging	.315	.050	6.238	.000*	Reject H0
Indirect Communication	.019	.058	.332	.740	Fail to Reject H0
Development Standards	.037	.051	.720	.472	Fail to Reject H0
Communication and Respect	.053	.057	.925	.355	Fail to Reject H0
Emotionally Supporting	.072	.061	1.177	.240	Fail to Reject H0
Guiding	.228	.056	4.107	.000*	Reject H0
Accountability	.115	.056	2.063	.040*	Reject H0

Dependent Variable: Community Development Decision Making, ***Significant at 1%, **significant at 5%

1) Bridging

This factor includes trust, open and honest communication between the community members in the decision-making process, embracing development as a way of life in the community, emphasizing on the consensus of decision making effectively in the community and train stakeholders to understand their roles clearly in the community. The t-statistical value for Bridging is 6.238, accompanied by a p-value of 0.000; thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding suggests the significant relationship between Bridging and community development decision-making. Additionally, the unstandardized Beta coefficient for Bridging is 0.315. From this result, an increase in the Bridging factor increases the community development decision making in the community by 31.5%. The finding shows that Bridging is an important factor which has more influence and that the increase will result in an increase of the community development decision-making. This result is in line with Kuponiyi (2008), Ozor (2009), Senchi, Hassan, & Yelwa (2014), Quiroz-Niño & Blanco-Encomienda (2017), Martiskainen (2017) and Cavaye, & Ross (2019); Vora & Kainzbauer (2020). The researchers revealed that the need for Bridging such as trust, managing conflict, compatibility, capacity, empowerment, skill, and networking between participation are important in community development.

2) Guiding

The immunity element of the community is another factor extracted from the factor analysis. It includes informing community members of the current situation (environmental issues, political, social, economic issues) in the community, protecting the community from bothering and solving challenges and problems. The t-statistical value for Guiding is 4.107 (Table 6), accompanied by a p-value of 0.000; thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding suggests the significance of the relationship between guiding the community and community development decision-making. Additionally, the unstandardized Beta coefficient for Guiding is 0.228. This finding can be

interpreted as a unit increase in guiding will increase the community development decision-making by 22.8%. This result can be attributed to the fact that the better guiding in the community from development purposes such as environmental, social, political, economic, and so on, will result in an increase in the community development decision-making. This finding is in line with Vora & Kainzbauer (2020) and Kuponiyi (2008) who indicated that community safety is an essential issue in decision-making in the community in Nigeria. Further, Ali (2019) highlights the positive relationship between community guiding and community leadership in Afghanistan.

3) Accountability

The t-statistical value for Accountability is 2.063 (Table 6), accompanied by a p-value of 0.040; thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding proposes the significant relationship between Accountability and community development decision-making. The finding also showed that the unstandardized Beta coefficient is 0.115. It indicates that an increase in the Accountability factor will result in an increase in community development decision-making by 11.5%. This finding accords with the studies conducted by Capler (2020); Ozor and Nwankwo (2009) and Senchi, Hassan & Yelwa (2014) where funding and resources are the most important factors in the community development. That is, attracting donor agencies, government and non-governmental organization are crucial to support and assist the community leaders and community members.

5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to elucidate the influencing factors of the roles assumed by the local leaders in community development decision making in Bamyan, Afghanistan. Eight factors have been identified in this study, notably Socializing, Bridging, Indirect Communication, development standards, Communication and Respect, Emotionally Supporting, Guiding, and Accountability. These are the essential components of the roles played by the local leaders in the decision making for community development in Bamyan Province. Among those factors, Bridging, Guiding and Accountability have emerged as the most influential factors on the decision-making. Based on the finding of the study would contribute scholarly, as in enriching the knowledge is the Bridging, Guiding and Accountability are the most important factors as roles of local leaders' roles in the social science field in village areas and the result shows that local leaders need to focus on mentioned roles in decision making to develop the community in Bamyan, Afghanistan. The findings suggest that local leaders in Bamyan province benefit from the result. Specifically, effective leaders engage in three main roles: bridging, guiding and accountability. Further, local leaders should recognize that all three roles are important and relate to each other local leader cannot simply focus on one and assume that followers will follow them. The limitation of this study was insecurity and fund, researcher was not able to include all provinces and this study not included local leaders just included subordinates of local leaders. The future study could benefit from local leaders and their subordinates to find the roles of community members and as well as local leaders.

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