Geographical Positioning of Somalia and its National Security

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ABSTRACT: *Somalia's unique geographical location in the Horn of Africa positions it at a strategic crossroads for international trade, maritime navigation, and geopolitical competition. With over 3,300 kilometers of coastline along the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, and proximity to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait a key global energy chokepoint Somalia holds substantial strategic importance in global commerce and security. While this positioning offers considerable economic and diplomatic opportunities, it also exposes the country to complex national security threats, including piracy, terrorism, illegal fishing, regional conflict spillovers, and external interference by global powers. This study investigates the impact of Somalia's geographical location on its national security dynamics. Drawing on geopolitical and realism theories, the study combines theoretical insights with empirical findings from primary and secondary sources to assess the extent to which geography contributes to Somalia's internal and external vulnerabilities. Key findings reveal that Somalia's coastal exposure, porous land borders with conflict-prone neighbors, and fragmented governance structures heighten its susceptibility to cross-border threats and foreign strategic interests. Moreover, the competition among regional and international actors such as the United States, Turkey, China, and the UAE for influence within Somalia underscores the country's role in broader geopolitical rivalries. The study concludes that geography is not a passive backdrop but a central factor influencing national security outcomes in Somalia. It recommends strengthened maritime governance, enhanced border surveillance, coordinated federal security architecture, and regionally-informed diplomacy to transform Somalia's geographic liabilities into strategic assets for long-term peace and development.*
Keywords - Somalia, national security, geography, Horn of Africa, maritime security, terrorism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Somalia's geographical location in the Horn of Africa places it at the epicenter of key maritime and geopolitical dynamics. With over 3,300 kilometers of coastline along the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, Somalia boasts the longest mainland coastline in Africa (African Union Commission, 2020). Its territorial waters are adjacent to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a critical chokepoint in global maritime trade that connects the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean through the Gulf of Aden. Nearly 10% of the world's seaborne petroleum passes through this route (U.S. Energy Information Administration [EIA], 2021), underlining the strategic importance of Somalia's position in both economic and security terms. The geographical advantage that Somalia possesses has historically made it a site of interest for foreign powers. During the colonial period, foreign actors competed to control Somali territories to secure dominance over the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea shipping lanes. In the post-independence era, the country became a Cold War battleground, particularly in strategic areas such as Berbera, which were targeted for naval and military bases (Jibril, 2021). This legacy of foreign involvement has left a complex imprint on Somalia's national security architecture.

Today, Somalia's geography is a double-edged sword. While its proximity to vital shipping routes and access to marine resources present opportunities for economic development, these same features have contributed to persistent insecurity. Somalia's weak maritime enforcement mechanisms have allowed for rampant piracy, illegal fishing by foreign vessels, and maritime smuggling (Bereketeab,

2020). These threats are not merely criminal in nature; they have also undermined regional stability and attracted foreign military interventions. For example, since 2008, multinational naval operations such as EU NAVFOR's Operation Atalanta and Combined Task Force 151 have patrolled Somali waters to deter piracy (European Union Naval Force Somalia, 2022).

Moreover, Somalia's porous land borders with Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti have facilitated the movement of armed groups, weapons, and contraband, posing challenges to national and regional security (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2020). Militant groups such as Al-Shabaab have exploited border vulnerabilities to carry out cross-border attacks and expand their influence. The conflict in Somalia has often spilled over into neighboring countries, especially Kenya, where the group has claimed responsibility for deadly assaults in Nairobi and other regions (Abdullahi & Ibrahim, 2022). The country's internal fragmentation and the absence of a unified national security infrastructure have further complicated its geopolitical standing. Regional states like Puntland and Somaliland operate semi-autonomously, with their own security apparatus, and their differing approaches to external engagement sometimes conflict with the federal government's policies (Hassan & Mohamed, 2023). This decentralization, while constitutionally recognized, weakens centralized coordination of national defense and foreign policy, making the state susceptible to external manipulation and internal insecurity.

Foreign actors continue to leverage Somalia's geographic location for strategic gain. Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, China, and the United States have all invested in military training, port construction, and diplomatic influence across Somalia and its neighbors (Farah, 2021). While such involvement can contribute to capacity-building, it also raises questions about sovereignty, dependency, and competing interests on Somali soil. In light of the above, this study seeks to investigate how Somalia's geographical location impacts its national security. It will explore both the positive and negative consequences of its position within the regional and global geopolitical context. Specifically, the study aims to analyze how maritime access, border proximity to conflict-prone areas, and foreign strategic interests have shaped Somalia's internal and external security dynamics. Thus, by examining these interactions, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between geography and national security in fragile states.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Geopolitical Theory

Geopolitical theory is a classical framework that examines the intersection of geography and political strategy. It is based on the fundamental premise that the physical space a country occupies including its location, borders, natural resources, and proximity to global trade routes significantly influences its political behavior, strategic priorities, and interactions with other states. This theory emphasizes that geography is not merely a backdrop to political action but a driving force that shapes national interests, power dynamics, and global influence (Flint, 2011; Eklund, 2020; Cohen, 2021). The roots of geopolitical theory can be traced to thinkers such as Halford Mackinder, who proposed the "Heartland Theory," arguing that control over the central Eurasian landmass could translate into global dominance. Similarly, Alfred Mahan emphasized the strategic importance of sea power and maritime routes in determining a state's international strength. These classical perspectives remain relevant today, particularly for countries like Somalia, whose geostrategic location makes them central to regional and international security concerns (Petersen & Zartman, 2021).

Somalia's geographic location at the Horn of Africa, adjacent to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, places it near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, one of the world's most critical maritime chokepoints. This strait serves as a transit route for an estimated 6.2 million barrels of oil per day, making it a vital artery for global energy security (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2021). From a geopolitical standpoint, any country with influence over Somalia or its coastline could potentially affect global shipping and trade flows, giving Somalia significant geostrategic relevance (Ahmed, 2020; Bereketeab, 2021).

However, this same geographic advantage exposes Somalia to heightened security risks, especially in the absence of strong national institutions. The long, unmonitored coastline has historically facilitated piracy, illegal fishing, and arms smuggling, while its location near conflict zones in Yemen and the Sahel increases vulnerability to cross-border terrorism and regional instability. Furthermore, its location has made it a site of foreign competition. Several global and regional actors including the United States, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and China have expressed strategic interest in Somalia through military training missions, port development projects, and diplomatic influence (Yusuf, 2019; Abdi & Kassim, 2022; Abdullahi, 2020). From a geopolitical perspective, these dynamics are not coincidental but directly related to the country's location. The competition among foreign powers for access to Somali ports, influence over maritime trade routes, or control over regional counterterrorism operations reflects broader geopolitical calculations. Each actor is not merely assisting Somalia out of humanitarian concern or bilateral interest; rather, they are seeking to secure their own strategic positions in a part of the world that is pivotal to global commerce and military strategy (Hassan & Mohamed, 2023).

Geopolitical theory therefore underpins this study by offering a systematic lens to analyze why Somalia's location makes it both strategically valuable and perpetually vulnerable. It helps explain why Somalia is a target for foreign intervention, how its geography exacerbates security risks such as piracy, foreign militarization, and cross-border terrorism, and how its location could be leveraged as a strategic asset under conditions of peace and effective governance. By adopting a geopolitical framework, the study moves beyond viewing Somalia's insecurity solely as a result of internal weaknesses or state failure. Instead, it situates Somalia's challenges within a broader global and regional power struggle shaped by its territorial and maritime positioning (Abdullahi & Abshir, 2021). This perspective allows for a more nuanced and policy-relevant analysis of Somalia's national security, encouraging strategic solutions that incorporate regional diplomacy, border control, and the protection of maritime interests.

2.1.2 Realism Theory

Realism, one of the oldest and most influential theories in international relations, offers a pragmatic framework for understanding the behavior of states in an international system characterized by anarchy a condition in which no central authority governs the actions of sovereign states (Mearsheimer, 2001). In such a system, states are seen as primary actors driven by self-interest, seeking to maximize their security and ensure their survival in an environment where power dynamics are constantly shifting. The central assumptions of realism include the pursuit of power, the inevitability of conflict, and the belief that moral concerns are subordinate to national interest and strategic necessity (Waltz, 1979; Flockhart, 2020).

Realist thinkers argue that security threats arise not only from within a state, such as weak governance or civil unrest, but also from the external distribution of power among other states. According to realism, even peaceful or cooperative actions by neighboring or competing states may be interpreted as potential threats, particularly when those actions alter the balance of power in a region (Schweller,

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2021). Thus, states must remain vigilant, build their military capabilities, forge strategic alliances, and assert control over critical resources or territories in order to deter aggression and maintain sovereignty. This theory is especially relevant in the case of Somalia, a country that has long been a weak or failed state in the midst of a highly strategic region. Realism explains why Somalia has become a focal point for foreign military engagement, not merely out of concern for its internal conflicts, but because of its strategic location near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and its proximity to both the Middle East and major sea lanes (Abdullahi & Ibrahim, 2022).

Competing interests by the United States, China, Turkey, and Gulf countries in Somalia's port infrastructure, military bases, and diplomatic influence are consistent with realist logic: each state is acting to advance its own national interests by securing influence over a strategically located territory. Furthermore, from a realist perspective, Somalia's inability to maintain a strong central government and effective military capability renders it vulnerable to both internal threats (such as Al-Shabaab) and external manipulation. The proliferation of foreign military actors and interventions in Somali affairs often under the pretext of peacekeeping or anti-terrorism is indicative of how power politics operate in weak states with high geopolitical value (Mohamed & Warsame, 2020).

Realism also helps explain regional dynamics, including Ethiopia and Kenya's involvement in Somalia's internal affairs, as these neighboring states act preemptively to protect their borders and prevent the spillover of insecurity. In sum, realism provides a vital theoretical foundation for understanding Somalia's national security context. It frames Somalia not as an isolated case of internal dysfunction, but as a state whose strategic location makes it a subject of constant interest and intervention in a power-driven international system (Farah, 2021). This theory underpins the study by highlighting the importance of sovereignty, military capability, strategic alliances, and external threats in shaping Somalia's security environment. Through this lens, national security is not only a matter of domestic reform but also of positioning within the broader global and regional balance of power.

2.1.3. How Somalia's coastline contributes to national security challenges

Somalia's coastline, stretching over 3,300 kilometers, is both an economic opportunity and a significant security liability. Recent studies continue to underscore the persistent threats posed by unregulated maritime spaces. According to Charbonneau & Ricard, (2022), although piracy incidents have declined since their peak in the early 2010s, the underlying conditions such as lack of law enforcement, poor infrastructure, and limited economic alternatives for coastal communities remain largely unaddressed. These gaps have enabled the resurgence of illegal fishing by foreign vessels, leading to local grievances that risk re-fueling maritime criminality and community support for piracy-related activities (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021).

Furthermore, a report by Lusaka & Abebe (2022) highlights that despite regional naval patrols and international anti-piracy missions, Somalia's maritime domain remains largely insecure due to weak institutional coordination between the federal government and regional states. Coastal areas, especially in Puntland and Galmudug, continue to witness arms trafficking and smuggling, exacerbated by the absence of coherent maritime law enforcement. The African Union has also stressed that the lack of an integrated maritime strategy hampers Somalia's ability to secure its blue economy (African Union, 2020). These ongoing challenges reveal that the coastline remains a critical source of national security vulnerability.

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2.1.4. The role of Regional Proximity in cross-border threats

Somalia's shared borders with Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti make it susceptible to a range of cross-border threats, including terrorism, arms flow, and refugee movements. According to Mohamed and Abdi (2021), the ongoing operations by the Al-Shabaab insurgent group frequently involve cross-border infiltration into Kenya and Ethiopia, exploiting weak border controls and unmonitored terrain. The porousness of these borders is further complicated by shared clan ties across state boundaries, which provide insurgents with logistical and intelligence support.

A 2023 report by the East Africa Security Outlook emphasizes that the federal government's limited control over border territories especially in Jubaland and Gedo regions creates safe havens for non-state armed actors (East Africa Security Outlook, 2023). The instability along the Kenya-Somalia border has also triggered diplomatic tensions over territorial waters and border demarcation, with direct implications for counterterrorism cooperation and security coordination (African Union Border Programme, 2021). Moreover, the humanitarian crisis caused by recurrent droughts and conflict in Somalia continues to drive large refugee flows into neighboring countries, straining regional security and refugee management systems (Garnier, A. 2023). These findings show that Somalia's geographic proximity to volatile regions significantly contributes to transnational insecurity.

2.1.5. The influence of Global Interest in Somalia's Geographic Position

Somalia's location near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Arabian Peninsula places it at the center of global maritime and geopolitical competition. Recent years have seen increased interest from global and regional powers, including the United States, China, Turkey, the UAE, and Qatar, each pursuing military, economic, and diplomatic influence in Somalia. According to Ismail and Hussein (2021), Turkey's investment in infrastructure and military training through the Turkish-Somali partnership reflects both economic interests and strategic positioning. Similarly, China's expanding presence in Djibouti and interest in Somalia's ports is often interpreted through the lens of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which seeks to secure key maritime trade routes (Li, 2020).

A study by Bhattarai K., & Yousef, M. (2025), warns that Somalia risks becoming a proxy arena for competing foreign interests, where infrastructure projects and military bases double as mechanisms for influence projection. The UAE, for example, has supported regional states like Puntland and Somaliland in port development, raising questions about national sovereignty and federal cohesion. Meanwhile, the U.S. military maintains an active counterterrorism presence, justified by the fight against Al-Shabaab but also influenced by Somalia's strategic positioning near the Gulf and Red Sea corridors (Congressional Research Service, 2023). These dynamics illustrate that foreign engagement is not merely aid-driven or supportive, but deeply strategic, with long-term implications for Somalia's internal political balance, sovereignty, and national security planning.

2.1.6. Research Gap

While extensive literature has explored Somalia's internal instability, civil conflict, and terrorism particularly in relation to non-state actors such as Al-Shabaab (Hansen, 2020; ICG, 2021) limited scholarly attention has been given to the strategic implications of Somalia's geographic positioning as a primary factor influencing national security. Most existing studies focus on internal governance challenges, clan dynamics, or international peace building interventions without sufficiently interrogating how Somalia's coastline, proximity to regional hotspots, and location along key maritime corridors contribute to or exacerbate these security threats (Mohamed & Abdi, 2021; Yusuf & Mahmoud, 2022).

Furthermore, while the role of foreign actors in Somalia has been examined, particularly regarding aid, military operations, and counterterrorism (Charbonneau & Ricard, 2022), few studies have critically assessed how competition among global powers such as the U.S., China, Turkey, and Gulf states is shaped by Somalia's geographical significance. This includes the establishment of foreign military bases, investment in port infrastructure, and maritime security interventions, which have often occurred without coherent national oversight and with ambiguous implications for Somali sovereignty (Li, 2020; Ismail & Hussein, 2021). This research addresses this scholarly void by systematically analyzing Somalia's geography as both a strategic opportunity and a national security liability. By linking spatial features such as its coastline, border regions, and proximity to vital shipping routes to patterns of security threats and foreign geopolitical interest, the study offers a fresh, integrated perspective. In doing so, it contributes to the evolving discourse on security in fragile states by emphasizing the underexplored dimension of geostrategic vulnerability and positioning in regional and global contexts.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Philosophical Assumptions

This study is grounded in critical realism, which asserts that reality exists independently of our perceptions but can only be understood through human interpretation (Bhaskar, 2010). In the context of this research, critical realism acknowledges that Somalia's geographic features such as its long coastline, border regions, and proximity to global maritime chokepoints are objective spatial realities, but the impact of these features on national security is mediated by human actions, decisions, and institutional responses. This ontological stance enables the study to explore the underlying structures (geographic and strategic) while also accounting for agent-based dynamics, such as political decision-making, foreign military engagement, and regional cooperation efforts. Thus, geography is seen not as deterministic, but as a contextual factor that interacts with governance, foreign policy, and institutional capacity to shape security outcomes.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The study follows a qualitative interpretivist paradigm, which emphasizes the importance of understanding the subjective meanings and perspectives of actors involved in Somalia's security landscape. Interpretivism is particularly suitable for examining complex geopolitical phenomena because it prioritizes contextual depth and stakeholder narratives over generalized assumptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, the interpretivist approach allows for nuanced interpretation of how various stakeholders such as policymakers, analysts, and maritime officers perceive the influence of geography on Somalia's national security. Through interpretive inquiry, the study uncovers how meaning is constructed around spatial threats, regional alliances, and foreign military presence, offering insights into both individual and institutional worldviews.

3.3 Research Design

This research employs a case study design, focusing exclusively on Somalia as a single, in-depth case. The case study approach is ideal for exploring contemporary issues within real-life contexts, especially when boundaries between the phenomenon (geography) and context (national security) are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018). Somalia's complex geopolitical position, combined with its ongoing security challenges and multi-layered foreign involvement, provides a rich case for analysis. The study relies on both secondary data (academic literature, policy briefs, UN reports, and media sources) and primary data, collected through expert interviews. This design allows triangulation of data sources, enhancing the validity and depth of the findings.

3.4 Sample Size

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select ten key informants with expert knowledge relevant to the study. These included:

- Senior government officials involved in national security and foreign affairs;
- Maritime security officers with operational experience along Somalia's coastline;
- International relations scholars and regional analysts from think tanks;
- Representatives from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), who provided insight into security coordination, foreign troop deployment, and regional collaboration.

Each interview lasted between 30–45 minutes and was conducted either face-to-face or virtually, depending on availability. The goal was to obtain deep, contextual insights into how geography is interpreted and managed within Somalia's security framework.

3.5 Data Management

All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent, transcribed verbatim, and subsequently analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involved coding transcripts line-by-line, identifying recurring patterns, and categorizing the data into major themes aligned with the study's objectives. These included; Maritime threats and ungoverned spaces, Cross-border insurgency and regional instability and Geopolitical competition and foreign influence. To complement this, secondary literature (journal articles, UN reports, African Union documents, and regional strategy papers) was also sorted under similar thematic categories. NVivo software was used to organize and analyze the qualitative data, ensuring systematic handling and traceability of interpretations.

IV: RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive Statistics on the Geographical Positioning of Somalia and Its National Security

This section presents the descriptive analysis of how Somalia's geographical positioning influences its national security. The data were analyzed using item mean tabulation, and the results are summarized in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics on the Geographical Positioning and National Security of Somalia.

Geographical Positioning Factors	Mean	SD
Presence of violent extremist organizations linked to global jihadist groups in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait	3.80	1.23
Somalia's proximity to the Mandeb Strait and adjacent waters raises security concerns	4.25	0.83
Geographical proximity to the Arabian Peninsula, where Al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates operate	4.23	0.67
Increased deployment of military naval units (US, China, Russia, UK, France)	4.23	0.89
Strategic location near Bab el-Mandeb, a chokepoint linking the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean	4.10	0.79
Globalization drawing global powers into the region (Russia, USA, China, France)	3.94	0.95
US efforts to foster Trans-Pacific Partnership to counter Chinese influence	3.80	0.93
Somalia's location exposes it to threats from great powers	4.09	0.79
Historical narratives shaping security policy behavior	4.08	0.86
Somalia as a focal point in global power shifts and politics	4.10	0.76
Average Mean	**3.93**	**1.041**

Source: *Primary Data (2022)*

The average mean of 3.93 indicates a strong agreement among respondents that Somalia's geographical positioning significantly impacts its national security. Respondents notably agreed that Somalia's strategic position in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait a critical global maritime chokepoint exposes the nation to heightened security threats. For example, the presence of violent extremist groups aligned with global jihadist movements, as reflected in a mean score of 3.80 (SD = 1.23), and the increased presence of foreign naval forces in nearby waters (Mean = 4.23; SD = 0.89), were considered significant security concerns.

The data also revealed high levels of agreement on Somalia's vulnerability due to its geographical closeness to conflict-prone regions such as the Arabian Peninsula, where Al-Qaeda and ISIS-affiliated groups operate (Mean = 4.23; SD = 0.67). Similarly, the strategic importance of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait for international oil trade (Mean = 4.10; SD = 0.79) and the influx of global powers like the USA, China, and Russia into the region (Mean = 3.94; SD = 0.95) were acknowledged as critical to understanding Somalia's security dynamics.

These quantitative findings were corroborated by qualitative insights gathered through interviews. One senior internal security official emphasized:

> *"By its very nature, national security is geographic. It involves time, space, and the nature of what exists within that space be it resources, infrastructure, or threats. A country's location determines its climate, economy, strategic alliances, and vulnerabilities."*

Such views illustrate the strategic importance of geography in determining national capabilities and threats. Moreover, interviewees, including clan elders, highlighted the influence of geographical factors on economic infrastructure and military readiness, noting:

> *"Climate, access to water, transport, and resources all shape how Somalia must respond to external and internal security threats."*

Further evidence of the geopolitical implications of Somalia's location came from respondents who strongly agreed that international initiatives, such as the U.S.-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (Mean = 3.80; SD = 0.93), and global shifts in power relations have a bearing on Somalia's internal stability. Additionally, government representatives highlighted the relevance of geographical factors in shaping national policy and urban planning. One official stated:

> *"....Our security strategy must consider that geography affects everything from economic activity to urban crime patterns and from foreign threats to domestic vulnerabilities".* This reinforces the idea that Somalia's geography not only attracts international strategic interest but also determines domestic planning priorities and governance responses.

Thus, the findings strongly suggest that Somalia's geographical positioning has a profound and multifaceted influence on its national security. The convergence of high-stakes global interests, proximity to volatile regions, and critical trade routes makes the country both strategically important and highly vulnerable. As such, Somalia's national security policy must be deeply informed by geographic realities to safeguard its sovereignty, stability, and prosperity.

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4.2. Conclusions

This study concludes that Somalia's geographical location plays a major role in shaping its national security. Its proximity to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden exposes the country to serious external threats, including terrorism, piracy, and foreign military interventions. The presence of global jihadist groups and international naval forces highlights the country's vulnerability to both regional and global conflicts.

The findings also show that Somalia's geography has made it a focal point for foreign powers competing for influence. While this gives Somalia strategic importance, it also creates risks of external interference and instability. Respondents and interviewees agree that global rivalries and military interests have significant effects on the country's internal affairs and sovereignty. Moreover, Somalia's physical environment, including its climate and terrain, affects national security through its impact on resources, infrastructure, and migration. Issues like drought, flooding, and land degradation are increasingly influencing security and governance, making geography a key consideration in both conflict prevention and development planning.

4.3. Recommendations

The government of Somalia should develop a national security strategy that considers the country's geographic realities. This strategy should prioritize maritime security, border protection, and climate adaptation to address both traditional and emerging threats. Strengthening naval and surveillance capabilities will help secure key trade routes and protect against foreign infiltration.

There is also a need for Somalia to engage more actively in regional and international diplomacy. Collaborating with neighboring countries and international organizations will help Somalia benefit from shared security efforts while also protecting its national interests. Careful monitoring of foreign military activities in the region is essential to avoid becoming a battleground for global powers. Finally, the government should invest in community-level security programs and awareness campaigns. Public understanding of how geography affects national stability can lead to stronger local cooperation and better preparedness. Integrating local knowledge and geographic data into national planning can improve both security and service delivery across regions.

4.4. Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge by clearly showing that geography is not just a background factor, but a central driver of national security in Somalia. It provides evidence that location near strategic waterways and conflict-prone neighbors significantly influences the country's exposure to threats. This insight adds depth to existing literature on geopolitics and fragile states.

The study also bridges the gap between academic theory and real-world policy by combining statistical analysis with voices from government officials, clan leaders, and security experts. This mixed approach offers a richer understanding of how geography, power, and politics intersect in Somalia, especially in relation to external interference and internal instability. Additionally, the research introduces the idea that climate and environmental challenges are linked to geography-related security risks. In this case, it opens up new discussions on how natural conditions like drought and land degradation can contribute to insecurity. This perspective is especially useful for policymakers and researchers working in other conflict-affected and geographically strategic countries.

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