

**Research Article**

# Revamping Local and Regional Development Through Local Regional Management Practices

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**Abstract.**

The purpose of the study was to investigate revamping local and regional development through local regional management practices. Local and regional development is facilitated often upon the implementation of local and regional management practices by the government and civil authorities in a specific geographic area. Another unique and exciting way to reevaluate international development programs is via local and regional management techniques. They are inspiring locals to think strategically rather than waiting for solutions. Thus, they may have a big impact, but their effectiveness might be limited by local capacity issues, coordination issues, and a lack of robust local institutions. Capacity development programs must be suitably matched to local realities to promote beneficiary participation. Building capacity may be done on various scales, with various short- and long-term goals, and using various techniques. Beneficiaries need more intensive focused assistance, at least in the near future, to complete the particular research needed to put a request for review and funding into action. The proliferation of jobs, a rise in the standard of living, better income, and better opportunities are all important dimensions of regional and local development.

**Keywords:** local development, region development, management practices

**JEL CLASSIFICATION codes:**

O10, Q50, R10

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Local and regional administrations are seen as either making or breaking the economic dynamism and wellbeing of territories in a world where subnational levels of government have been gaining more authority [15, 10]. As globalisation has emphasised and energised the importance of localities in economic activity, this rise of subnational levels of government for development has been increasingly significant in recent decades. The importance of regional processes and the role of local actors in determining development trajectories is growing due to globalisation, which is caused by the emergence of an increasingly competitive, knowledge-intensive global economy and the territorial scale at which processes of growth, development, and change operate[21] .

Gavriilidis & Metaxas [6] indicate that the capacity and resources available to local and regional governments vary widely worldwide. Still, the so-called "global trend towards devolution" has given subnational governments a range of powers, from the simplest of planning decisions to the creation and implementation of fully fledged development strategies. These tactics address various welfare-related concerns and national economic policies, luring foreign direct investment, managing health and education systems, and building infrastructure. This suggests that subnational governments are now more directly than ever responsible for fostering economic development and dynamism and enhancing residents' welfare. Compared to how politicians approached socioeconomic growth only a few decades ago, this constitutes a fundamental paradigm shift.

In the civic sense of the term, regional and local development is seen to find manifestation in the creation of effective roads and transportation systems that allow people to navigate across different areas or places quite effectively [29, 4]. Access to sanitized drinking water and basic healthcare services, along with access to urban facilities like stores and other essentials needed for the regular sustenance of people, are also features of regional and local development, apart from the creation of efficient roads and transportation networks [29, 11]. In other words, it can be stated that regional and local development has quite a wide canvas and this paper looks at, the extent to which managerial practices at the local and regional level can have a role to play in boosting such development. The study is carried out specifically in the context of Greece.

## 1.1. Problem Statement

Building the community and strengthening and empowering the members of the community are a vital goal of every regional and local administrator, and the country of Greece is no exception in this respect [9, 12]. While it is acknowledged that local and regional administrative authorities make a crucial contribution towards the development of the community, while contributing to both urban and rural development at the same time, there is little that is spoken about the types of managerial practices that are implemented at the local and regional levels, in Greek cities and towns, in order, to boost community development and do good for the people [9]. The purpose of this study is therefore to investigate with the help of secondary research, the revamping local and regional development through local regional management practices with Greece as the case study.

## 1.2. Research Aims and Objectives

The major purpose of the study was to investigate the revamping local and regional development through local regional management practices. The study is also based on the following specific objectives;

1. To explore the different dimensions of community building at both local and regional levels
2. To explore the importance of regional and local management practices in capacity building as well as to boost the technical abilities of people belonging to local communities.
3. To understand the impact that local and regional managerial practices can have on multinational governance.
4. To explore the rationale of horizontal and vertical coordination, across local and regional levels of governance.

## 1.3. Significance of the study

The findings of this study will generate sufficient insights on the nature of local and regional management practices undertaken in Greece, to boost local and regional development, in this part of the world.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1. Dimensions of Community Building at the Local and Regional Level

Cooperation and influence are two important dimensions of community building as seen to take place at the local and at the regional level [7]. Managerial practices as implemented in a regional and local setup are usually aimed at finding out whether the members of the community are cooperating and getting along well with one another and the right type of influence is used in order, to get the members of the community to support one another, especially at critical junctures, all of which can contribute to the creation of a strong community [7, 16]. In order, to make sure that cooperation and collaboration both prevail at the local and regional setup the administration here usually keeps the people of the community under surveillance, and there is a general encouragement of cooperation and collaboration that is fostered by undertaking schemes and projects of a collective nature, which are aimed at benefitting all sections of the community in equal measure and where one segment of the community is not favored over another [9, 17]. Collective action or participation is one of the main ways by which community building is engaged in on the part of local and regional administrative actors [6]. The main aim of such collaboration is to make sure that the people of the community are united, that they are capable of, addressing each other's wellbeing over and above their own and that they are eager to develop and boost the strength of the community [6, 13].

The prevalence of racial and communal harmony is known to be an important dimension of the community building process as well. This is something that is fostered by getting the people of the community to take part in activities and projects that are not segregated in nature, where they are not discriminated on the basis of their ethnicity, culture, and religion and which requires their equal and collective participation in order, to be pulled off with success [2]. Collective working in an organized way as well as the element of equality are two vital components of the community building process [29, 18]. Local and regional administrators usually take care to ensure that all the members of the community are informed about and included in activities and projects that are undertaken for their wellbeing and that they are able to express their views on all matters pertaining to the community in a free and equal way [2]. It is by promoting a culture of tolerance, acceptance, and resilience that the power of the community is strengthened to a considerable extent and the members of the community are provided with the tools and the capability that they are in need of, in order, to be able to conduct their lives

in a largely self-sufficient way. Equality is thus an important requisite that needs to be met in terms of how it is that the members of the community are treated, in order, for such a community to be regarded as strong and empowered.

OECD [24] revealed that Greece's multi-level governance (MLG) system has to be adjusted in order to move toward a more place-based approach to regional policy. Since the beginning of the 2010s, Greece has adopted this strategy, undergoing significant changes to its institutional structure and fiscal MLG system. Greece has built a new MLG system architecture to implement local and regional development plans from 2010. Through decentralisation initiatives like regionalization, a more strategic approach to managing European Union (EU) funds, and a more regional approach in the 2014–20 programming period, a number of improvements have been made and a shift towards a more place-based approach to local and regional development policy is occurring.

## 2.2. Capacity Building at the Local and Regional Level

Apart from the various dimensions of community building, the elements of capacity building have to be taken into consideration as well, in order, to understand how it is that local and regional actors make, a contribution to the same [3]. Peer learning and leadership development for instance is something that is engaged in by local and regional actors, to ensure that the members of the community are fairly resilient and that they have the tools and the capacity that is needed not just to support themselves but to support other dependent members of the community as well [3, 5]. There are usually camps and small-scale projects that are organized by regional and local actors to build capacity among the members of the community, to find out whether they are in good health and to understand how well educated they are to take part in activities that are meant to empower all the people of the community. Through collaborative learning as undertaken by virtue of community activities, the members of the community are learnt to come face to face with their weaknesses and their strengths and they are given a platform to speak about the possible issues that they are faced with, in community life and for which they require an immediate resolution [1, 22]. Community members are thus able to express their views and concerns about the current affairs of the community, and the way forward with regard to community development is also made known by them through their engagements with collaborative learning experiences as organized by the administration at the local and the regional level [22].

Local and regional managerial practices are usually those that are aimed at fostering leadership development as well. It is usually recognized that community development

and capacity building at that is not something that is capable of being undertaken, unless leaders are cultivated and developed in the truest sense of the term [7]. It is therefore common practice for those who serve in the administration at local and regional levels to conduct workshops and camps on the subject of leadership and whereby potential people who have the skill and the zeal to serve the members of the community and the community as a whole, are easily identified. Leadership is a crucial aspect of community development because it is believed that only when the people of the community are able to lead and take charge on a variety of matters, that capacity building truly takes place and all the members of the community become empowered [7].

The establishment of various networks that include participants from the public, private, and third-sector is constantly linked to capacity building. The general efficiency of sustainable development initiatives or policies, however, continues to be significantly hampered by institutional impediments, local capacity constraints, and a lack of efficient policy coordination [28]. Most development plans have recently started to be linked to various social, economic, and environmental advantages. One benefit of implementing sustainable development plans is that they may increase a country's capacity to successfully compete on the international market [31]. Utilizing the most efficient sustainable development solutions will probably contribute to improving rather than harming the local productive setting. The participation of various decision-makers in the overall design, execution, and monitoring of various development methods aids in achieving speedy development returns [32, 33].

### **2.3. Local and regional managerial practices in multinational governance**

The capacity to maximise local empowerment may be compromised if there is inadequate coordination and cooperation between regions and localities and national-level decision-makers. A lack of coordination between centralised decision-makers and decision-makers on the ground may lead to a mismatch between the resources and powers transferred down and the obligations that lower-order territorial organisations accept. Due to their responsibilities in connection to the authority and resources delegated to them, local governments may become overburdened. Therefore, improving vertical coordination issues seems to be essential for ensuring that communities benefit from enhanced local decision-making capacity. Promoting multilevel governance, which is described as a "decision-making system to define and implement public policies produced by a collaborative relationship that can be vertical (between various levels

of government, including national, federal, regional, or local) or horizontal (within the same level, e.g. among ministries or between local governments), or both, is one way to address vertical coordination failures. Territorial networks in particular, which include multilevel governance structures, are instruments for encouraging the dialogue and exchanges between parties needed to achieve cross-territorial coordination and, ultimately, more successful devolutionary processes [6].

Greater cities and regions may participate more actively in politics at all levels of government and may be better equipped to connect with and influence central governments on their behalf. Because of this, while these worries about influence may be more acute in smaller places and groups, they are not exclusive to them [28]. While horizontal coordination failures, such as those between subnational agencies, can occur and need to be addressed, vertical coordination failures pose the biggest risk and barrier to economic progress. Inter-territorial rivalry, which in the worst-case scenario might result in beggar-thy-neighbor policies, is the most obvious impact of these horizontal coordination failures on territories' capacity to create and execute effective sustainable development plans. Promoting connectivity, dialogue, and territorial networks, but this time among subnational stakeholders, may aid in reducing these issues with horizontal coordination [21].

The cross-territorial alignment of subnational authorities' objectives and the territorially focused policies they implement to achieve those objectives may be facilitated by horizontal collaboration between subnational authorities. This might, among other things, reduce the predominance of unnecessary inter-territorial economic activity and investment. The realisation of synergies between smaller subnational authorities, resource sharing, and increased coherence between planning processes and subnational territorial collectives' aims may all be facilitated by horizontal coordination. The entire result would be to increase their influence on choices made at the highest levels of government, which would all help lessen the capacity and other constraints that these territories often experience.

## 2.4. Gaps in the Review of Literature

While the literature, which has been reviewed above, has talked about the various dimensions of community development and while the elements of capacity building in the local and regional context is also a matter that has been discussed in the literature review, the extent to which the local and regional management in Greece are engaging in practices pertaining to community development and capacity building is not discussed

in the literature review. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the same through secondary research, in the results section.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Research Philosophy**

The research design and the research philosophy of a project usually have to be given due consideration at the time of project implementation. This is because the philosophical outlook of the researcher, as well as the strategies that are undertaken to collect and analyze data for the project, are known to influence the outcomes of the study. The positivist research philosophy and the descriptive research design have been utilized in order, to carry out the research work in the present context, with a systematic, organized, structured and detailed collection and analysis of data having been undertaken to arrive at the findings of the study.

### **3.2. Research design**

A secondary research methodology was adopted for this study since it involved review of different past reports and publication to establish the different trends that are prevalent in local and regional development. Secondary research is concerned with the use of already existing data that can be accessed from several online data bases in the different journals, articles or books. The advantage of using secondary data is that it is easy to access and can be obtained at a free cost as compared to other forms of data.

### **3.3. Data collection**

The study used a secondary research approach, in which a literature search was undertaken to find different studies or data that may aid in answering the study's many research questions. This research primarily used archival data, which included journal articles, documented news in the media, expert reports, government and relevant policy documents, and policy feedback literature, all of which are relevant to local and regional development through local regional management practices. Articles that have been published in peer reviewed journals, books, as well as reports on the topic of local and regional development and its role in boosting capacity building and the empowerment of locals, have been sourced from Google Scholar and other databases, and studied, for



this project. After discovering articles and pertinent papers, the contents were assessed to determine which ones should be included and which should be excluded based on their relevance to the topic under research.

### **3.4. Data analysis**

Data analysis for this study was undertaken using a technique which is known as content analysis or textual analysis, with rigorous analysis of the secondary data being carried out.

### **3.5. Ethical Considerations**

The different secondary sources on which the study is based are cited in an appropriate way, using the Harvard style of referencing. The researcher has taken care to ensure that plagiarism, or the issue of content duplication does not arise in the course of writing this paper and that the study undertaken is one that is free from problems such as plagiarism.

### **3.6. Limitations of the Study**

There are of course a number of limitations or weaknesses that this paper is characterized by. Firstly, there was a limited period of time within which the study had to be performed and the resources available at the disposal of the researcher to conduct the study, were also of a limited nature as well.

## **4. RESULTS**

### **4.1. Community Development in Greece at the Local and Regional Level -- An Analysis of Regional and Local Managerial Practices**

At the start of 2020, Greece's 180 billion euro economy grew 1.9%, fueled primarily by net exports, with private consumption also contributing. During the peak of Covid-19, Greece emerged from a decade of bailouts and is now reliant on financial markets to meet its borrowing needs. Earlier this month, the government lifted all remaining capital controls.

Community development in Greece is largely undertaken at the behest of local and regional leaders who are entrusted with the upkeep of rural and urban areas and who are seen to commission a wide range of infrastructural projects, to ensure the development of localities and to ensure in particular that navigation from one place to another is not a problem for the average Greek citizen [3]. Urban development is taking place in a rapid way, showcases the fact that local and regional actors are quite proactive when it comes to taking up projects, plans and programs that are meant for the wellbeing of the community and which shows that they can count on society to become developed and progressive in much the same way as it is in other parts of the world as well [3]. There are usually specific civic authorities who are deployed in Greece for the local and regional development and there are a number of managerial practices which are put in place to achieve community development here [19]. To begin with, the locals are engaged with on a regular basis on the part of the civic authorities to understand the needs and requirements of the same while surveys are taken from time to time of specific geographic areas in order, to understand the urban development needs of such places. The surveys give development officials an overview of the plans and policies that need to be undertaken to boost development at the rural and in the urban spaces [19, 18,13] . Roads, bridges, and related infrastructure are often built only after assessing the needs of the local population, ensuring that they are properly settled in habitational areas and that there is no possibility of them becoming displaced in the event that large scale infrastructural development work is seen to take place in such places [27]. Hence when it comes to community development in the country of Greece it can be stated that the local actors here are very heavily involved in the development of the society and the community and that there is an active engagement that is seen to take place with locals to understand their growing demands and needs and cater to the same. Making sure that all people in the community have access to basic facilities like housing and water, and that there is basic access to public education as well, are matters that are also looked into by the regional and local administration in the country of Greece [26].

OECD [25] revealed that public investment can be a potent weapon for accelerating growth, provide a reliable foundation for social and economic advancement or Community Development. Bad investment decisions or poor management of investments, however, are a waste of money. It undermines public confidence and can limit prospects for progress. In March 2014, the OECD adopted the Recommendation of Effective Public Investment across Levels of Government, recognising the need of greater governance for public investment. The suggestion divides different principles into three pillars that

stand for the coordination issues, subnational capacity challenges, and framework conditions as shown in Figure 1.



Source: Source: OECD [25]

**Figure 1:** Public Investment practices across Levels of Government towards community development.

## 4.2. Capacity Building in Greece -- An Analysis of Regional and Local Managerial Practices

Capacity building in Greece is something that is known to take place at quite a rapid pace as well and in most instances, this is something that is aimed at empowering the local governance in Greece [23]. Efforts are thus made by local and regional administration to make sure that people who are working in the domain of governance, have access to all the right tools and mechanisms to undertake projects and plans in an efficient way, that they have a thorough understanding of the public who they are catering to, and that they do not engage in any discrimination when conducting their administrative activities [23]. The Greeks pride themselves on the creation and maintenance of an inclusive society where people from all ethnic and religious backgrounds are accepted and live in harmony with one another. Local government officials are also expected to take cognizance of this, and ensure, that they have the knowledge and the tolerance that is necessary to cater to people who are ethnically and culturally different, who are not a part of the mainstream and who need to be treated in a specific way. The main aim of the capacity building programs as seen to be undertaken in the country of Greece is to make sure that local governance here is in a position to offer quality services to the citizens in the regions and localities [9].

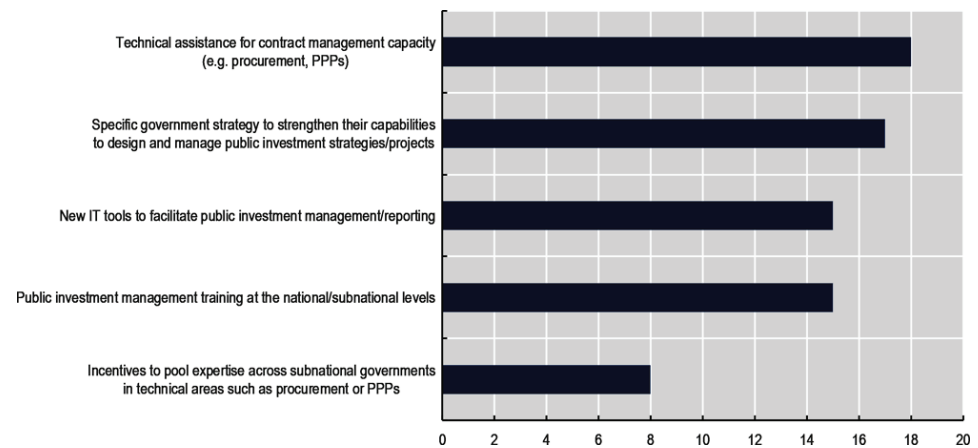
Some of the managerial practices that are put in place by local and regional administrators in Greece in order, to engage in capacity development is to first undertake a

training needs analysis of the public that they will be catering to in order, to assess their needs and wants in the best possible way [2]. Apart from training needs analysis, there are best practices programs and strategic municipal planning, that is also engaged in order, to determine how it is that capacity building is to be engaged in, and how the local governance in Greece can be improved as a result of this [29]. Leadership development is a matter that is taken seriously in Greece and the local and regional administration are of the view that community building and capacity building of people in the community can occur truly, if the people are placed under the guidance of a good leader. Strategic planning and training needs analysis in particular are the main tools and practices which are made use of by the administrators in provinces and localities in Greece to gauge the requirements of the local population in the civic context and undertake projects that will address the civic concerns [29]. Disputes and resolutions are all handled by the local governance in Greece and this ability on the part of the local administration to do so, is considered to be an important measure of the capacity building agenda of the Greek governance as a whole [20].

Most OECD nations have some kind of system in place to improve the technical proficiency of policymakers. Out of a sample of 26 OECD countries, 18 have implemented, for instance, technical assistance for contract management capacity (e.g., procurement, public-private partnerships), and a comparable proportion have developed a specific strategy to strengthen national and subnational capabilities to design and manage public investment projects (Figure ??14). [25] Some OECD nations have also embraced innovative IT tools or collaborative e-government platforms in the context of digitalization to close capacity gaps between regions or localities and promote peer learning. For instance, the Department of National Planning (DNP) in Colombia created the web-based toolkit, which provides particular resources to assist local leaders in the design of their territorial development plans (PDT). The national government of Australia is creating an online mapping tool to help applicants for the Regional Growth Fund identify the value, location, and scope of their projects.

Greek regions may be more involved in processes of capacity development. For the preparation and development of technical initiatives connected to the development and maintenance of vital infrastructure, several tiny island communities turn to the knowledge of the surrounding areas. However, as regional authorities are not required to do so by law, this help mostly rests on their desire to assist towns that fall within their purview [14]. Regions, which often have more technical and administrative competence than municipalities, may often provide technical help to draught investment projects or planning tools as well as management support to administer programmes, initiatives, or

investments more methodically. As they are more in tune with local problems than the national government, technical help in the regions also enables more focused aid [25]. Additionally, regions may be more aggressive in promoting peer learning techniques and supporting important initiatives that call for cross-jurisdictional collaboration. For instance, they might be given the authority to act as a political intermediary and provide technical assistance to encourage municipal cooperation for investment projects funded by the National Investment Programme or EU money [8].



Source: OECD (2019)

Figure 2: Capacity building in OECD countries.

### 4.3. Source: OECD (2019)

Building the necessary skills at the local level is also a process that subnational governments acquire while gaining greater independence. For this reason, several nations have started experimenting with giving subnational governments more authority. For instance, two successful asymmetric decentralisation pilot projects were launched in Sweden at the end of the 1990s to shift control of regional development from county administrative boards to regional political organisations (elected regional councils). Since that time, regional political entities in other counties have also increasingly inherited the role from regional state agencies [25]. Pilot projects allow for experimentation and learning while preventing subnational governments with limited resources from being overburdened with additional duties [25]. The "learning-by-doing" technique must be combined with routine, targeted, diversified capacity development activities and technical help in order to develop the necessary capabilities.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This research examined the effectiveness of revamping local and regional development via local and regional management strategies. The development of local communities' technical skills and ability depends greatly on local regional management methods. According to the report, "municipalities or local governments have been able to achieve a considerable amount of economic growth both at local and regional levels by using effectively conceived sustainable development plans. The research also showed that local community economic and social change is greatly influenced by sustainable development techniques. The local and regional administration in Greece are seen to be highly committed towards the development of the community with much effort being made to make sure that members of a community are treated with equality, that there is no bias or discrimination that is faced with community life, and that all the members of the community are given access to the basic education and training that is needed by them, in order, to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, to be economically empowered and to contribute thus towards the development of a just, strong and harmonious society. The local and regional management in Greece are seen to create a culture of equality and inclusion so that people from all walks of life and from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, feel accepted by their society here and can work towards the positive development of the same. Local and regional management practices also provide an original and fascinating method to reconsider global development programmes. Instead of waiting for answers, they are motivating residents of communities to think strategically. They may thus make a significant contribution, but local capacity limitations, coordination problems, and a lack of strong local institutions may limit their efficacy. Therefore, overcoming institutional and capacity limitations as well as creating sound development plans should be given top priority in order to maximise the development potential of locations all over the globe. A focus on economic sustainability along with educational empowerment and leadership building are some of the main ways in which local and regional development or capacity building can be achieved in Greece.

### 5.1. Recommendations

If community development on the whole, is to be undertaken in a positive and constructive way, through the implementation of local and regional managerial practices, then the following recommendations need to be taken into consideration for this purpose.

The promotion of equality is something that needs to always be there as a part of the community building process. Efforts have to be made to ensure that, the people of the community are being treated with the respect and the inclusion that they are worthy of and that they are not being discriminated against in any given way whatsoever.

The matter of religious diversity needs to be acknowledged and accepted as a part of the community building process at the local and regional level, especially since, Greek society it needs to be remembered is a multi-ethnic society and there are people from various cultural backgrounds not to mention religious faiths living in this part of the world. It is only when the community development process is one that is inclusive and diverse in its nature that it is going to succeed in a country like Greece, a country otherwise where community building has always been a very powerful tradition.

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