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Green Politics as an Institutional Efficient Tool for Developing Albanian Economy

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Abstract

The study focuses on understanding the role of green politics as an institutional efficient tool for developing Albanian Economy. The idea of green politics is founded on four pillars; ecological justice, social justice, grassroots democracy, and non-violence. The initial theory about this idea is that the components should offer guidance on the establishment of a sustainable economy that observes the well-being of the environment. The study combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to achieve outcomes that are wider in scope and deeper in content. Various sources indicate mixed perceptions regarding the efficiency of green politics as a tool for developing the economy of Albania. Using secondary data from the World Bank website, the study finds out that green politics is positively associated with growth rate and exports, and negatively with rate of unemployment. The researcher suggests that further research should be done to establish the variables that can be adjusted to make green politics the best tool for economic development.

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1. Introduction

The understanding of green politics is that it seeks to establish societies across the world that would be conscious about the plight of the environment. The History of the Green politics can be traced back to the 1970s (Simpson, 2014). Majority of the green movements across the world were largely influenced by the preceding movements that advocated the formation of societies that would respect the health of the environment. The green parties in Europe and America mainly adopted the ideology as a response to the effects of the rapidly growing industrialization. Australia experienced the formation of the first modern and formal green party which focused on addressing environmental as well as social justice issues in the society in 1985.

The ideology has its roots on four pillars; ecological justice, social justice, grassroots democracy and non-violence (Simpson, 2014). Ecological wisdom is the component that addresses the environmental concerns and aims at reducing human interferences on the environment. It also focuses on facilitating a healthy relationship between human activities and other living things by encouraging radical changes in politics as well as the economy. The people in this class of ideology encourage respective governments to design or adopt economic models that would sustain the environment. For instance, they tend to support the adoption of environment-friendly sources of energy as opposed to petroleum or oil energy. They also discourage the exploitation of natural resources and activities that would harm the environment in one way or the other (Simpson, 2014).

Social justice pillar focuses on discouraging activities that tend to discriminate others on the basis of their social class (Carter, 2008). For instance, it discourages discrimination on the basis of race, class, ethnicity as well as gender among others. In specific, this pillar tends to protect the interests of the weak from the powerful classes. The central principle of the grassroots democracy pillar exists in the participation of all people in policy making processes. It serves as the core of the green politics ideology. According to this pillar, greater political actions should occur at local and individual levels in the society (Carter, 2008). The nonviolence pillar discourages war by encouraging people or opposing parties to resolute their differences through peaceful means such as amicable dialogs in the society. This pillar of thought upholds the notion that peace can be achieved through democracy and human rights.

2. Problem Statement

Few materials have contributed towards discussing whether green politics is an institutional efficient tool for developing the economy of Albania. The efficiency of the ideology as an instrument for developing the economy is further made uncertain by the fact that it has a young history. Therefore, determining the effectiveness of the idea on the basis of experience is not easy. Furthermore, very few countries such as Australia have tried to adopt the ideology. It can also be argued that the doctrine is still undergoing transformation. For instance, when it emerged it focused predominantly on establishing sustainable environmental friendly societies. Along the course of its

development, other pillars were included to address the social injustices and protect the weak classes from the exploitation of the powerful categories of people.

The economic evolution of a country is an intricate process. Most economists would prefer to use the traditionally proven methods in enhancing the economic process rather than an ideology is not conclusively established. Assessing the role of green politics as a useful tool for developing the Albanian economy would provide logical assertions that can serve as a reliable reference basis. It can also provide the underlying information upon which other scholars can design and implement further studies. Lastly, the investigation can boost the available few pieces of information regarding the subject matter under investigation. This study focuses on providing logical findings that pertain to the efficiency of green politics as an institutional efficient tool for developing the economy of Albania.

3. Research Questions

The primary focus of the study involves assessing the role of green politics as an institutional efficient tool for developing Albanian Economy. In addition, the study seeks to address three questions that are related to the primary question:

- What are the positive impacts of using green politics as a tool for developing the economy of Albania?
- What are the adverse consequences of using green politics as an instrument for developing the economy of Albania?
- What aspects of the economy of Albania are more likely to be affected by the ideology of green politics?

4. Purpose of the Study

In accordance with the principal research question, the purpose of the study includes the following points:

- Determine how green politics ideology was used to develop the economy of Albania.
- Determine whether green politics has developed the economy of Albania.
- Identify the effects of adopting the green politics ideology as a tool for developing the economy of Albania.
- Determine the specific areas that have been impacted the most by the green politics ideology.

5. Research Methods

This section discusses the design and methods that will be used to collect and analyze relevant data in relation to the research questions. Specifically, it discusses the strategies and the approach to collecting relevant information. This section further explains the selection process of respondents.

Finally, it discusses the ethical considerations associated with the process of selecting respondents. The discussion of such methods is important because they can have various impacts on the results or results obtained at the end of the study.

5.1 Research Design

5.1.1 Research Philosophies

The research design of a study includes all the desirable methods that the researcher would use certain conclusions regarding research questions and objectives (Parahoo, 2006). In other words, every research design should be relevant to the needs and goals entailed in the study. The research methods are guided by two major philosophies; interpretivism and positivism. Under interpretivism, researchers participate in the process of interpreting various elements that define the study. Most likely, the interest of the researcher may integrate in the overall study (Myers, 2008). Positivism takes a rational approach, an approach that is different from interpretivism. It entails assertions or arguments that can be proved through scientific methods. In this case, the research process is independent from the influence of the researcher.

The nature of the study requires a combination of most aspects of both paradigms; interpretivism and positivism. The combination of the elements of both models would achieve well-balanced results. The aspects of positivism discourage a researcher from exerting his or her influence in the study process while analyzing the information gathered from the field. In this context, the results will provide an objective reality by which the potential beneficiaries or other researchers can ascertain a high degree of truth. The results can also find application beyond the scope of the study. Therefore, the study process will mainly base on the qualitative approach. The dominion of the method is preferable because the study question is explorative in nature. It provides a basis for analyzing the related issues intensively and extensively. Qualitative approach also includes interpretative techniques that a researcher can use to describe, decode and interpret research issues so as to establish logical conclusions. However, the basis of the study will also be guided by the quantitative approach for quantification purposes. Specifically, the method entails techniques that a researcher can use to quantify relationships between variables. In quantitative design, research questions are determined in advance as well as the data collection and analysis methods (Parahoo, 2006).

5.1.2 Research Approach

The approach of the study includes using the aspects of both the qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve well-balanced outcomes. The relevance of the qualitative approach in this study is that it provides a platform for analyzing the research questions in deeper and wider dimensions. The researcher can also use the platform to interpret and decode the pieces of information gathered from the field of study. Quantitative approach can provide the appropriate platform for quantifying numerical data with the aim of establishing and understanding relationships between the study variables.

5.1.3 Research Strategy

The combination of qualitative and quantitative approach can facilitate the collection of accurate data and their proper analysis to prove or disapprove the central research question. The

combined approach also reduces the limitations present in each strategy when used separately. Even though quantitative approach may be objective and reliable, it is limited when it comes to validity aspect of information. The method is also over systematic and follows long processes before arriving at conclusions. However, it may be useful in a case that involves using questionnaires to survey a large group of respondents. Most studies entail fixed and predetermined questions that require a substantial amount of precision when administering. A quantitative approach also has decided data collection and analysis techniques (Robson, 27). In general, the quantitative methodology is appropriate for gathering and analyzing primary data.

Qualitative design provides the proper platform for analyzing preceding studies that are relevant to the subject matter. It also helps in gathering pieces of information have deeper content. Under the same design, information can be analyzed from different perspectives to provide a wider insight on the subject under investigation. Specifically, the research design will help in determining and discussing the areas of technology that are likely to be impacted by green politics ideology. The data collection methods under qualitative approach may include individual in-depth interviews and structured. Another method involves non-structured interviews, focus group, content analysis and archival research (Landy & Conte, 2010).

5.1.4 Selecting Respondents

The selection of respondents will be based on the research questions. The central research question of the study involves investigating the role of green politics as an institutional efficient tool in developing the economy of Albania. Therefore, the selected respondents would mainly entail economists and government representatives. The respondents would be randomly picked from many government sectors to provide a balanced and fair representation in the study. Selecting respondents from many areas will provide responses that vary in depth. The accuracy of the conclusions can be ascertained on the basis of similarity or closeness of the answers offered by various respondents.

5.1.5 Research Ethics

Confidentiality is the first ethical issue in this study process because it establishes trust between respondents and the researcher. It also makes respondents provide feedbacks without worrying about their anonymity. The study may target high profile Albania government workers who may not prefer to be identified with certain information. The study will address the issue of confidentiality using non-identifying information during collection and analysis of data. The second specific ethical concern involves attaining informed consent before engaging potential respondents in the study process. The overall study will be conducted upon successful commissioning of the proposal by the ethical review committee. Prior to the research analysis, the pieces of data would be cleaned of any information that would lead consumers of the results to identify the participants. The actual name of particular locations and circumstances will be manipulated during the process so as to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. The validity of the research is ensured through the development of realistic and accurate questions. The validity of the outcomes is also provided through a careful selection of data collection method. The choice of the data collection method is influenced by the research questions and the underlying objectives. Johnson & Christensen (2012) maintain that the occurrence of an error is reduced when the number of data collectors is few.

5.1.6 *Validity and Reliability*

The study will avoid direct human judgment which may affect the process of research to ensure that the survey is reliable and valid. Instead, the analysis of the results will adopt scientifically proven approaches to arrive at appropriate conclusions. Appropriate controls and randomization of the samples will ensure that the final results are authentic. The study will use a consistent and proven research design in order to avoid errors and improve the general validity and reliability of the information. Additionally, analyzing both primary and secondary data ensures that the information utilized in the study is accurate.

5.1.7 *Rigors*

The study will utilize the right tools and methods necessary to attain the specified research objectives. Methodological questions will be discussed to determine whether the methods adopted are consistent with the goals of the study. The study will also focus on explicitly and transparency. A high-level rigor will be maintained by using appropriate and precise data collection and analysis. In addition, the study will present a coherent discussion of the objects and phenomenon in research.

5.2 *Data Collection Instruments*

Information embedded in secondary sources will be extracted through the analysis of their contents. Specifically, the process includes analyzing reports on studies that investigated the similar of related subject. In most cases, such reports are entailed in journals and books among other sources. Content analysis is always used in qualitative research and involves the interpretation of the insinuation of the secondary sources (Hsieh, H., & Shannon, 2005). The qualitative information provides a background for carting out the quantitative process of the study. As discussed in the preceding chapters, the study process will combine the qualitative and quantitative methods. One of the principal advantages associated with this study design is that it is less costly. Books, journals, official reports and websites among others are the sources that would form the basis of analysis. Another advantage is that it expands the scope of the results obtained. Quantitative strategy is objective and systematic in approach. This approach provides a mean of testing various theories effectively with the aim of improving the understanding of the research.

The study process will also involve the collection of primary information. Primary information consists of the original feedbacks provided by the selected study participants. The design of the questions will be in accordance with the principles of quantitative research design. In other words, they will be predetermined by carefully developed processes. Specifically, the questions will seek to answer the research issues and objectives that were discussed in the preceding paragraphs. Such questions will be contained in questionnaires. The questionnaires can be administered directly to participants to answer and submit their replies. They can also be read out loud in structured interviews. Questionnaires are beneficial because they prevent data collectors or researchers from influencing the study process through assertion of their views on the subject under investigation.

5.3 *Sampling*

The study participants would be selected using purposeful sampling. This sampling method involves selecting research participants according to the objectives of the study, aims as well as requirements. Members who meet the inclusion criteria would be informed by the researcher about their participation. They would be allowed to make informed decisions regarding their willingness to be interviewed. In this context, a written consent would be essential for ascertaining and proving that the selected respondents would agree to engage in the study process.

Holloway and Wheeler (2010) maintain the opinion that the number of participants in a quantitative investigation depends on a number of factors. These factors include the type and nature of research questions, the number of researchers in the study as well as availability of the necessary resources. The quality is also an important factor worth considering when determining the number of participants that should be involved in a study. The general opinion is that the appropriate number of participants in a study should be between 8 and 15 people. However, there are no standard rules established concerning the most efficient number of participants in any given qualitative study. This study aims at utilizing 50 members who are well conversant with the economic trends of Albania and the principles of green politics ideology.

5.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of data can be perceived as a procedure that aims at testing hypothesis, identifying and describing patterns and establishing relationships amongst variables of the study. It also aims at describing facts that are represented by the collected data. The process is an essential step towards highlighting important pieces of information and making generalized conclusions about the study. The analysis of the collected data will take place through methods such as content analysis, theoretical sampling, thematic analysis and grounded theory. Thematic analysis deals with data that focuses on the creation and application of 'codes' to data. A relationship exists between this data analysis method and grounded theory. Grounded theory involves a step-by-step analysis of data, particularly those that focus on creating an understanding of the subject matter. Such data also lead to the formulation of ideas regarding various social phenomena. Data was analyzed using the axial coding which helps to identify relationships between the different categories of data through a combination of inductive and deductive thinking.

6. Findings

The null and alternative hypotheses for assessing the association between green politics and economic variables is stated as follows;

Ho: There is no association between green politics and economic variables of Albania.

HA: There is a positive association between green politics and economic variables of Albania

To test these hypotheses, a correlation matrix was generated from data on economic variables from 1980 to 2014. The economic variables were; rate of unemployment, GDP percentage growth, Export of goods and services. The correlation matrix returned the following results;

Table 1. Correlations

		Green Politics	Democracy	Rate of unemployment	GDP %ge growth	Exports (% of GDP)
Green Politics	Pearson Correlation	1	.803**	.850**	.804**	.638**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	35	35	35	35	35
Democracy	Pearson Correlation	.803**	1	-.743**	-.904**	.673**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	35	35	35	35	35
Rate of unemployment	Pearson Correlation	.850**	-.743**	1	-.727**	.761**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	35	35	35	35	35
GDP %ge growth	Pearson Correlation	.804**	.904**	-.727**	1	-.769**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	35	35	35	35	35
Exports (% of GDP)	Pearson Correlation	.638**	.673**	-.761**	.769**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	35	35	35	35	35

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above correlation matrix table shows the relationship between economic variables and green politics. According to the table, there is a strong positive correlation between green politics and democracy with a Pearson correlation coefficient of .803. This means that with green politics, democracy is expected to be practiced which is a factor to enjoy for a country. This coefficient is significant at 1% significance level (p-value = 000). Another variable that is affected by green politics is the rate of unemployment in the economy. It has a correlation coefficient of .850 with a p-value of .000, meaning that this coefficient is significant at 1% level of significance. This implies that a country that increases its green politics practices will suffer the increasing rates on unemployment. Green politics also has a positive association with GDP growth rate which had a coefficient of .804 with a p-value of .000 meaning that the coefficient is significant. Being 0.804 means that this association is very strong which implies that GDP growth rate is highly associated with green politics. As the green politics intensifies in a country, exports of goods and services increases. This is shown by the Pearson's coefficient of correlation (.638, p-value = .000). Although this association is not very strong, it is still a positive one and the coefficient is greater than 0.5, thus the association can be termed as strong. The other coefficients are the correlations between the other variables other than green politics. Democracy brought about by green politics is found to have a negative correlation with the rate of unemployment and positive association with industry value added and exports. All this shows how the green politics means a positive economic development.

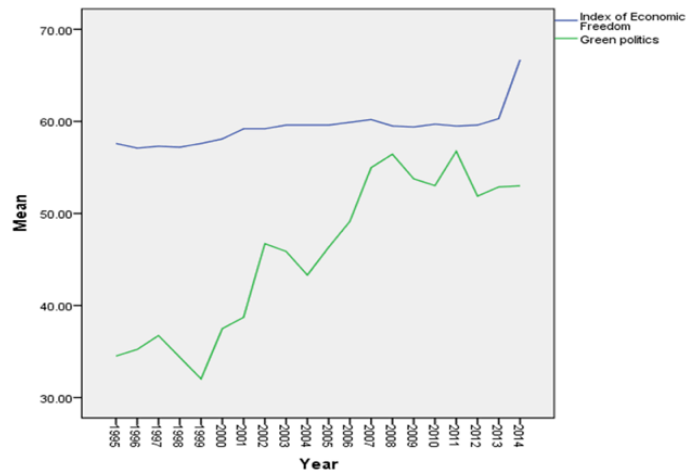


Fig 1. Green Politics and the Index of Economic Freedom

As depicted by the graph above, as green politics intensify in the economy the index of economic freedom increases. This shows that economic freedom is also associated with green politics where the freedom becomes better. The economic sectors including farming will enjoy the freedom in the markets with green politics (Alison, 2012).

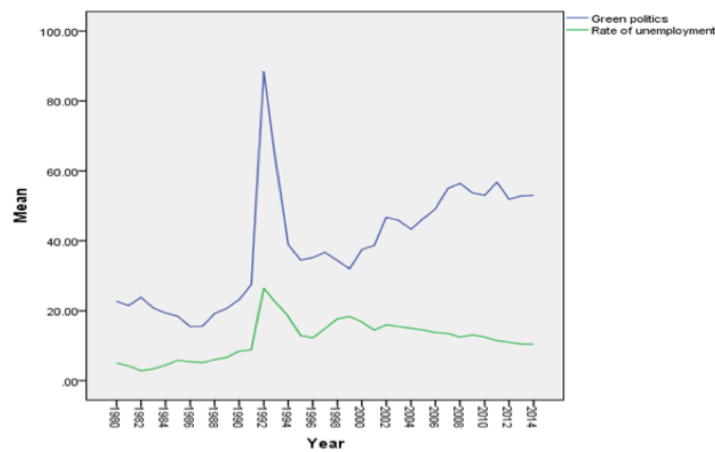


Fig 2. Green Politics and the rate of unemployment

In the year 1992 above, it is clear that when the green politics intensified rapidly, the rate of unemployment also increased rapidly.

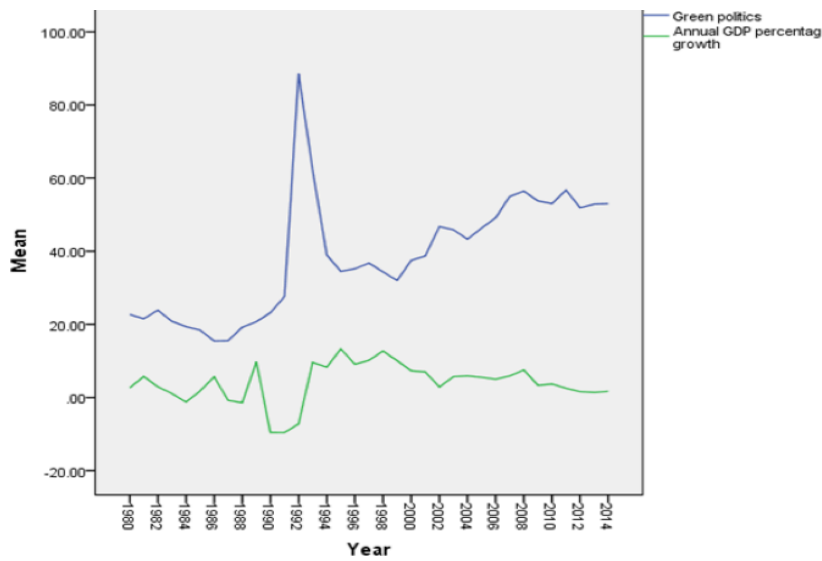


Fig 3. Green politics and GDP percentage growth

The above chart shows that an increase in the green politics practices causes an increase in the percentage growth of Albania’s GDP. This is in line with the correlation coefficient obtained which implies that Albania should embrace green politics for continued economic growth. It is clear from the graph that increased green politics practices in 1992 caused a drastic increase in the rate of growth of Albania’s GDP. According to Michael (2004) green politics makes a country to have a sustainable economic development.

Various studies reveal mixed perception regarding the efficiency of green politics as an institutional tool for developing the economy of Albania. Hido (2012) explains that the energy intensity in Albania is still on the increase despite the low rate of energy consumption and emission of carbon-dioxide emission. The small rate of energy consumption and emission of carbon-dioxide is facilitated by the pillar of the ideology, ecological justice, which seeks to reduce the harmful activities on the environment. This principle expects human beings to adopt energy solutions that are safer for the environment as well as lessen the consumption of toxic energy altogether. Despite achieving this goal, the energy intensity in Albania is still high due to the use of outdated equipment in production processes (Hido, 2012). In this perspective, it is apparent that the ideology has been more efficient in deterring the use of harmful energy solutions compared to generating revenues for various companies.

According to the economic index of 2014 portraying Albania, the economic freedom reached 66.9. This index score means that the economy of Albania is one of the liberated economies in the world. The economic freedom of the country can be accessed on the basis of the liberty in the investments and trade sector. Specifically, the green politics has facilitated trade liberalization, privatization and the enhancement of environmental regulations among others. The report also indicates that the adoption of the ideology has provided a greater monetary stability and maintained a low rate of inflation in the economy of Albania. The core pillar of the green politics is

the grassroots democracy which tends to advocate in equal economic and policy-making procedures. In this regard, the economy of Albania is not controlled by few cartels that would seek to maximize their gains unfairly.

7. Conclusions

The analysis of such materials proves that green politics provides a platform through which governments can uphold democracy, human rights, and environmental conservation. On the negative side, it offers a limitation on the use of energy. This factor may contribute to the increment of energy prices due to high demand for the socially and legislatively approved energy sources which in turn leads to unemployment. Since the energy is a pervasive factor of production, its limitation and high demand may contribute to low aggregate supply in the economy. Such an economy has to be stabilized by other means such as increasing the money supply to offset the imbalance between the aggregate supply and energy prices. Therefore, green politics is an essential factor in economic growth and should be applied in Albania. Further research should be done on the variables that can be adjusted to make green politics an instrument of overall economic development.

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