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ROGERS AMISI

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Amisi R., Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenya

Rotich, G., Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Kenya's devolved governance is based on Article 6(2) laws of Kenya, constitution 2010, which describes governments at two levels as being distinct and inter-dependent and which conduct their mutual relations on the basis of consultation and cooperation. The specific objectives that guided this study encompassed the following; Finding out how county structures, financing, staffing levels and leadership styles are having an effect on county establishment in Kenya. The scope of the study was be limited to the challenges facing implementation of the county governance system in Kenya. The study population used was the 14 counties that entailed 235 members of the county that include members of the county Assembly, Governors, senators, public service board members and three staff members from each of the counties. In this report questionnaires were used to acquire data. The data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics Package version 20. To ensure reliability of the instrument Cronbach's Alpha was used. The study provided two types of data analysis; descriptive and inferential. The descriptive analysis helped the study to describe the relevant aspects of the phenomenon under study. The frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were determined. For the inferential analysis, the study used Pearson correlation and multivariate regression analysis techniques to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study found out that Devolution creates sub-national entities which provide additional accountability mechanisms due to physical proximity making it easier for citizens to hold their local officials accountable for their performance while it also provides channels for expression and ensures that varying interests of stakeholders are balanced and decisions are made in a rational, informed and transparent manner.

Key words: *Devolution, Transformation Leadership, HR organizational structure, Administrative structure*

Introduction

Devolution entails the transfer of political, administrative and legal authority, power and responsibility from the centralized government unit to some unit at local or regional level. Such a transfer is legal if provided for under the constitution. It is a practice in which the authority to make decisions in certain spheres of public policy is delegated by law to sub-national level. In a devolved system, the units of devolution to which power and authority is devolved or transferred are autonomous from each other, though interdependent functionally Bigambo, (2012).

The process of change is not easy and has a logical sequence that may take time depending on the magnitude of change. County governance is just taking root in Kenya and hence has not been clearly understood by all thus causing a lot of anxiety. There is also the local government which has been in operation in the counties and hence a need to integrate both the local governments to form the county governments is of essence. Hence this study is exploratory and aims to establish how the integration of local government councils and the county governments is affecting implementation of county governance. The study also aims to establish if county structures do facilitate county government establishment. There has been a crisis in some county governments over the leadership qualities exhibited by governors, namely Embu where the governor was even impeached (Wanyoro, 2014). Hence the study recognizes the role of transformational leadership in implementing county governments and therefore be evaluated the role of transformational leadership in county government establishment. County financing has also been an issue and in some counties it has been reported that the county residents have gone on strike because of the increased county taxes. County financing is an emerging issue which this study aims to research on to establish its effect on county government establishment. Change management is a process and Kotter (1996) noted that there were eight stages to leading change which if ignored would lead to changes failing or change being implemented slowly. Hence the report addresses the effect of change management on county establishment.

Cooperative devolved government in Kenya is founded upon three relational principles; namely, the principle of distinctness; the principle of inter-dependence; and the principle of consultation and cooperation (Chaney, 2012). Despite these principles, management of county establishment in Kenya is faced with various challenges that has been assessed in this paper. While devolution is universally desirable and institutionalizes citizen participation in development, planning and management, devolution may have negative implications if implemented in the incorrect manner and with wrong motives. It is worth noting that problems faced in the previous regimes were attributed to the majimbo system of government. This created friction between KADU and KADU. If a devolved system of government cannot work, the constitution endorsing this is rendered paralyzed / unenforceable.

When devolution is not done well/poor county governance leads to; More concentration of power to a small elite as well as increased oppression of the poor, increased human rights violation, corruption and other abuses of public office, tendency for leaders in devolved governments to reduce participation of the common man to a token level; unaccomplished tasks at the county level as counties might prove too small or too large; possibility that the weak, fragile and illegitimate state will just re-invent itself at the devolved level ;elites gaining more power to manipulate the masses; using the position as an avenue for personal enrichment;

using the platform as a dumping ground for political rejects at the national level

General Objective

The overall aim of this research was to identify the management challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

i. To find out the effect of county structures on county establishment in Kenya.
ii. To establish how financial management is having an influence on county establishment in Kenya.
iii. To find out the effect of staff competencies on county establishment in Kenya.
iv. To establish how transformational leadership style has an effect on establishment of counties in Kenya.

Literature review

Devolution in Kenya is expected to enhance efficiency in provision of services to citizens but county governments can hardly cope with the massive requirements of service provision due to both inadequate resources, including shortage of staff. Some of this pool of human resource will be useful in starting off Counties once issues relating to terms and conditions of work are clarified (Kenneth, 2012).

A study of decentralization in 30 African countries concluded that: It is significant to note that in no country was the claim to centralization as a preferred organizational model made or implied, nor was decentralization considered undesirable, only difficult to effect and sustain (Ndegwa, 2002). The theoretical premise of devolution posits that building on the multi-dimensional approach the organization and management of state power, a devolved system involves the creation of two or more levels of government that are co-ordinate, but not subordinate to each other (Tordoff and Young, 1994).

In Rwanda decentralization was to "provide a structural arrangement for government and the people of Rwanda to fight poverty at close range, and to enhance their reconciliation via the empowerment of local populations" following the trauma of the genocide of 1994. As Mwabu Germano in his book "Decentralization and Devolution in Kenya" (2001) indicates, efficient delivery of public services in Africa and other developing regions has for a long time been hindered by highly centralized government bureaucracies.

North Dakota better represents a period of local government reorganization that can be assessed and present viable lessons to county management in Kenya. For over a decade, a combination of citizen and interest groups, representing both the rural and urban approach, had been agitating for local government change (Treib, Bähr & Falkner, 2007). A more recent study has indicated that it was not that sentiment for the local government form as developed in Middle Western states was less strong than elsewhere, but the very pressure of economic circumstances, coupled with the expansion of local government services, made change inevitable (Melkers & Willoughby, 2005). Social security problems created by a shifting and dependent population, changes in educational requirements, and land-use control practices presented challenges which the existing local institutions could only inadequately meet.

Studies on the pattern of development of devolved and regional government within the United Kingdom for example since 1999 can only be described as uneven and faltering. (Morelli and Seaman, 2007). The unevenness of devolution stretches from a parliament in Scotland with tax-varying powers to an assembly in Wales without such powers of taxation and an

Assembly for Greater London which is still more limited in its functions. The faltering of this development can be seen in the decision of the Westminster Parliament in 2002 to suspend the Northern Ireland Assembly (a suspension that only came to an end in 2007) and the rejection in a referendum in the North East of England for the establishment of a devolved institution for that region. As a result of such diverse experiences the extension of devolution beyond those assemblies and parliaments currently in operation appears to have stalled (Morelli and Seaman, 2007).

The British Household Panel Study, undertaken annually from 1991 through to the present, provides exactly the type of information required to assess changes in inequality, both in terms of household income and social inclusion. A notable lack of consensus exists within the academic literature examining links between devolution and the distribution of wealth. Devolution reinforces regional and local inequalities in circumstances whereby local communities and services face closure or privatization (Morelli and Seaman, 2007). Only in the realms of social inclusion can devolution claim any success, with a temporary rise in social inclusion, and more specifically civic engagement in UK. Devolved governments' appeal to the electorate for support based upon rhetoric of equality and inclusion is at odds with the reality of the institutions' roles themselves; thus challenging significance of county establishment in the U.K.(Morelli and Seaman, 2007)

The rationale for the comparison of Kenya and S. Africa is because their new constitutions have much in common. One such feature is a devolved system of government. Power is shared in Kenya between the central government and 47 counties, while in South Africa it is between the national government and nine provinces and 278 municipalities. Economically, South Africa is further developed and its demographics are different with a much larger urbanized population. Yet, South Africa's nearly 20 years of experience with devolution may provide some useful lessons – good and bad – on how many common problems have been tackled (White, 2011).

In South Africa, twenty years ago, the question of devolution arose for very different reasons. Representing the majority of the people, the ANC wanted a strong centralized government to undo the ravages of apartheid, while the National Party (NP), representing the white minority government, advocated federalism because it feared a strong centre dominated by the ANC. On the contrary, in Kenya one of the objects of devolution is then to limit the powers of the executive by devolving some powers to counties. Other objects are to ensure a more inclusive form of governance, closer to the people, which would lead to equitable development. As Kenya proceeds down the devolution path it may well worthwhile to reflect on other countries' experience with this form of government (Tordoff and Young, 1994). Given South Africa's experience over the past 20 years, Kenyans may want to consider some of the hard lessons that South Africa has learnt.

Research Methodology

An exploratory research design was used in this report. Exploratory research involves provision of a better understanding of a situation (in this case management challenges affecting county establishment in Kenya).

The study population that was used is the 14 counties entailed 235 members of the county assemblies, Governors, senators, public service board members and three staff members from each of the counties.

The sample size encompassed 14 counties. The respondents' entailed 98 citizens from the sampled counties who were selected using judgmental sampling methods from the counties including, members of the county assemblies (MCAs), county executives, governors, senators, and county public service board members.

The rationale for the choice of the questionnaire was based on the fact that it would ensure high response rates as they were distributed to informants to complete and were collected personally by the researcher.

Purposive and probabilistic sampling techniques were applied in the sample size selection and a sample of 98 respondents were considered. This allowed an equal chance for every item in the counties to be selected.

Research Findings

Effect of financial management on county establishment in Kenya

a majority of respondents highly disagree that County easily adapt to a tighter resource constraint (47.4%) with a mean of 2.04 and a standard deviation of 1.231; and that the reduced resources led to better efficiency of work in the County (41.1%) disagreed with a mean of 1.92 and a standard deviation of 1.162. A majority also disagreed on the statement that county further narrowed the scope of its work and services to the people (45.3%) with a mean of 2.02 and a standard deviation of 1.196. A majority further disagrees that the county substantially reduce the number of its staff (42.5%) strongly disagreed; and that budgetary restraints for travel and meetings, has made county developed its skills in using Internet-based methods for meeting (Skype, etc. (38.9%) Strongly disagreed.

The finding agrees with Schatteman (2008) asserts that both financial reporting and budgeting systems have a common starting point: accurate, reliable, and comparable performance data, and use efficiency and effectiveness measures to support decisions such as staffing levels, process design, and technology investments.

Staff levels and competencies

The study further examined the effect of the staff levels and competencies on county establishment in Kenya. In this regard, respondents were asked to state whether or not they agreed a set of statements posed to capture how staff levels and competencies are having an effect on county establishment in Kenya. Table 4.8 presents the findings.

A majority of respondents were found to disagree with the views that the pay scale and benefits of the county treat each employee equitably (42.5%); They have the information that they need to do a good job (39.0%) strongly disagree; and that the manner in which work tasks are divided in the county is a logical (42.5%) disagree and that opportunity for promotion exists in their county (38.0%) disagreed.

Respondents were further asked to indicate whether division of labor in this county actually helps it to reach its goals where again majority 44.65% disagreed. Also on whether no evidence of unresolved staff conflict in this county majority in this case were neutral 23.3%.

The finding conforms to the literature that as county government continues its participation in service networks, some public administration problems may be resolved (e.g. bureaucratic inefficiency, fiscal burdens). However, these resolutions may give rise to concerns about the hollow state including inadequate management and poor accountability. As counties have expanded beyond their historical service provision, it has become important to analyze these new service arenas of which human resource management is becoming significant. Economic conditions significantly constrain county governments. However, the success of a community is considered to be a form of capital that supports economic development through proper HRM practices (Mirvis & Bloom, 2011).

Effect of transformational leadership style on establishment of counties in Kenya.

Finally, the study sought to determine the effect of leadership style on establishment of counties in Kenya. To this end, respondents were further asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with a range of statements asked with a view to determine whether leadership style has an effect on establishment of counties in Kenya.

Transformational Leadership Style

As indicated in table 4.10 below , a majority of respondents disagreed with the view that the counties responds calmly to events and people in the County (45.3%); and that leaders Consider facts and feelings when making decisions (46.3%) disagree. A majority of respondents however agreed that the leaders are willing to change his/her view point in the face of new information (43.2%); and that leaders Regards challenges as opportunities (39.2%) agreed with the statement.

The finding is in line with the literature that "Transformational leaders are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization." capacity (Bass and Riggio, 2006. It is also clear that transformational leader understands the impact of change on staff.The transformational leadership trait that was observed during the research is the Idealized Influence form where the Governors have the capability to become the role models as they are respected & admired by their staff. The majority of the Governors have trust on their followers and also the staffs have the same for the county heads. Some of the Governors have the willingness to take risks and be consistent. In any situation, they showed high standards of conduct.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4.11 below presents the Pearson correlations for the relationships between the various constituents and the challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya.

From the findings, a positive correlation is seen between each aspect constituent. The strongest correlation was obtained between Leadership style and establishment of county governance system in Kenya ($r = 0.7723$), and the weaker relationship found between Financial management and establishment of county governance system in Kenya ($r = 0.7318$).

County Structure and Staff levels and competencies are also strongly and positively correlated with establishment of county governance system in Kenya at correlation coefficient of 0.7134 and 0.6933 respectively. All the independent variables were found to have a statistically significant association with the dependent variable at 0.05 level of confidence. Stigler (2002) offers that the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient measure linear correlation (dependence) between two variables X and Y, giving a value between $+1$ and -1 inclusive, where 1 is total positive correlation, 0 is no correlation, and -1 is total negative correlation. He further demonstrates that P values less than 0.05 level of confidence can be considered statistically significant.

Pearson correlation

	Challenges facing	County Structure	Financial management	Staff competences	Leadership style
challenges facing	1				
County Structure	0.7134	1			
	(0.013)				
Financial management	0.7318	0.547	1		
	(0.027)	(.000)			
Staff levels and competencies	0.6933	0.684	0.539	1	
	(0.002)	(.076)	(.032)		
Leadership style	0.7723	0.682	0.629	0.572	1
	(0.011)	(0.003)	(0.061)	(0.214)	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Model Goodness of Fit

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.771	0.594	0.587	0.046

a. Predictors: (Constant), County structure, Financial Management, Staff competences, transformational Leadership Style.

b. Dependent Variable: County establishment

With an adjusted R-squared of 0.594, the model shows that County structure, Financial Management, Staff competences and transformational Leadership Style explain 59.4 percent of the variations in the Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya, while 40.6 percent is explained by other factors not included in the model. According to Howell (2002), measures of goodness of fit typically summarize the discrepancy between observed values and the values expected under the model in question.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

As presented in table 4.14, ANOVA statistics was conducted to determine the differences in the means of the dependent and independent variables to show whether a relationship exists between the two.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.181	4	1.394	3.135	.038a
Residual	15.562	69	.445		
Total	19.743	73			

The P-value of 0.038 implies that Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya has a significant joint relationship with County structure, Financial Management, Staff competences, Leadership Style which is significant at 5 percent level of significance. This also depicted the significance of the regression analysis done at 95% confidence level. This is implies that the regression model is significant and can thus be used to assess the association between the dependent and independent variables. Gelman (2006) provides that ANOVA statistics analyzes the differences between group means and their associated procedures (such as "variation" among and between groups).

Regression Coefficient Results

	Unstandardized Coefficients		**Standardized Coefficients**	**T**	**Sig.**
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.724	5.006		1.543	.043
County Structure	1.740	0.589	.296	2.954	.017
Financial management	1.722	.697	.338	2.471	.033
Staff competences	1.644	.689	.287	2.386	.032
TransformationalLeadership style	1.779	.720	.362	2.471	.023

a. Dependent Variable: County establishment

The data in table 4.15 reveals a positive relationship between Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya and all the independent variables.

Taking the regression model: $Y = \alpha + \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3$ X3 + ϵ; where, Y= establishment of county; α = Constant; $\beta_{1-}\beta_4$ = Beta coefficients; X1 = County Structure; X_2 = Financial Management; X_3 = Staff competences; X_4 =

Leadership Style and Є = Error term, the established regression equation was:

Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya = 7.724 + 1.740 County structure + 1.722 Financial management + 1.644 Staff level and competences + 1.779 Leadership style. A unit change in County Structure would thus lead to a 1.740 change in Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya ceteris paribus; a unit change in financial management would lead to a 1.722 Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya ceteris paribus and a unit change in the staff level and competences would lead to a 1.644 change in Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya ceteris paribus while a unit change in leadership style would lead to a 1.779 change in Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya. This is in conformity with Katz (2006) who provides that regression analysis helps one understand how the typical value of the dependent variable (or 'criterion variable') changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed. This implies that among other factors, County structure, Financial Management, Staff competences, Leadership Style are key determinants of Challenges facing the establishment of county governance system in Kenya.

Summary of Findings

Effect of County Structure on the establishment of county governance system in Kenya.

The study sought to establish the effect of County Structure on the establishment of county governance system in Kenya. A majority of respondents did agree with the view that to make any decisions one has to go through a long process in the county structure (40.8%); and that Very few employees understand the county structure well (44.2%). Also majority agree that there is along bureaucratic process to be which is not necessary (41.5%); and that the County Structure should be simple and short to enhance effectiveness (58.9%).

Further, majority of respondents highly agree that County structure should encourage all inclusive and team work (41.5%).

Effect of financial management on county establishment in Kenya.

The study also sought to assess the effect of financial management on county establishment in Kenya. In this regard, a majority of respondents, disagreed to the statement that County easily adapts to a tighter resource (47.4%) strongly disagreed. A majority also disagrees with the view that reduced resources led to better efficiency of work in your County (41.1%) disagreed. A majority further disagrees that the county further narrowed the scope of its work and services to the people 45.3% strongly disagreed.

Effect of Staff Competences on county establishment in Kenya.

The study further examined the effect of staff level and competences on county establishment in Kenya**.** A majority of respondents were found to disagree with the views that the pay scale and benefits of the county treat each employee equitably (42.5%); They have the information that they need to do a good job (39.0%) strongly disagree; and that the manner in which work tasks are divided in the county is a logical (42.5%) disagree and that opportunity for promotion exists in their county (38.0%) disagreed. Respondents were further asked to indicate whether division of labor in this county actually helps it to reach its goals where again majority 44.65% disagreed. Also on whether no evidence of unresolved staff conflict in this county majority in this case were neutral 23.3%.

Effect of Effect of leadership style on county establishment in Kenya.

Finally, the study sought to determine effect of Leadership style on county establishment in Kenya. A majority of respondents disagree with the view that responds calmly to events and people in the County (45.3%); and that leaders Consider facts and feelings when making decisions (46.3%) disagree. A majority of respondents however agrees that the leaders are willing to change his/her view point in the face of new information (43.2%); and that leaders Regards challenges as opportunities (39.2%) agreed with the statement.

Conclusions

Kenya's devolution is not based on the principle of absolute autonomy but rather, it combines a certain measure of autonomy and inter-dependence. As such it may be referred to as a cooperative system of devolved government. Devolution multiplies the opportunities for political participation by creating a number of governments below the national level. This enables the communities to not only engage in the political processes but also demand effective provision of services accountability and transparency

Devolution creates sub-national entities which provide additional accountability mechanisms due to physical proximity making it easier for citizens to hold their local officials accountable for their performance while it also provides channels for expression and ensures that varying interests of stakeholders are balanced and decisions are made in a rational, informed and transparent manner. This leads to provision of goods and services based on the needs of the people hence increasing their economic welfare.

Devolved system of government will provide a more effective governance framework for dealing with extreme poverty, hunger, diseases, illiteracy and unemployment by advancing pro-poor policies. Devolution promotes inter jurisdictional competition hence reducing opportunities for bribery and rent seeking. Such opportunities are often created by lack of competition that a central governments' monopoly supply of public goods and services. It also presents training ground for leaders - devolved systems of governments serve as training grounds for national leadership.

Recommendations

Following consultations with the stakeholders in the counties it is of utmost importance to consider the following;

Empower the sub-counties to operate semi-autonomous as they are capable of brining development much closer to the people as the way the system is at the moment most critical decisions made at the county level do not have much input from the sub county level.

Amend the CDF Act to be administered at the sub county level and not at the county headquarters in order to funds to specific needs of the people. The Act should also ensure that funds are utilized in infrastructural/social projects only that include feeder/access roads, water and health services

Explore the possibility of having the County employ a Chief Executive Officer freeing the Governor to handle policy issues. Alternatively the Deputy Governor can be empowered by law to be the CEO of the County that will manage both county financial and Human resources

Counties should form regional clusters to in order to manager investment projects that cut across the geographical divide.

Suggestions for further studies

The following areas are suggested for further study. A study of factors affecting strategy implementation of governance structures at the national and county level to help pin point areas of weakness for better strategic planning and implementation Secondly, an exploratory study of the level of preparedness of the county governments in institutionalization of the devolved governance structures should be undertaken to prevent further wastage of resources on instances where institutionalization is not viable.

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