

# Effect of Resource Allocation and Availability on Devolution of Public Sector Services in Local Authorities in Kenya: Case of County Government of Kericho

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**Abstract:** It is evident that in most government departments in Kenya, there has been a public outcry at least more than once about poor service delivery. The sector is complaints of unavailability of resources and adoption of ineffective resource allocation strategies. In the advent of devolution, the situation is reportedly worse in most counties and such include Kericho County. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of resource allocation and availability on devolution of public sector services in Kericho County. The theories include economic and market based theory and devolution theories. The study was carried out among 391 county staff and 15 elected members of the County Assembly. Stratified random sampling was employed to select 84 respondents from the categories of sub-counties. Data was collected by use of questionnaires. The study found that resource allocation and availability is a significant predictor of performance of the County Government of Kericho in the devolution of public sector services. The study concludes that resource availability and resource allocation are significant predictors of performance of the County Government of Kericho in the devolution of public sector services. However, the County government has not taken these important aspects seriously are required. resource allocation strategies employed are not appropriate. The most disturbing finding is that that resources were not always available when required. Following this the study recommended that: The County Government of Kericho should consider conducting research to inform the process of development or adoption of resource allocation strategies; and ensure all relevant stakeholders are consulted or involved at the resource planning stage. This will help boost the efficiency of resources in enhancing performance in the public sector. There is also need to mobilise resources to ensure resource availability on timely basis and ensure that quality resources are available.

**Keywords:** Resource Allocation; Resource Availability; and Devolution of Public Sector Services, Kericho County.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Public sector performance is a concern in many countries, especially in the developing countries. The sector is characterized with performance inefficiencies and poor quality service, majorly attributed to resource availability issues and improper allocation of resources. Public sector performance is critical if Kenya is to achieve its vision 2030. Performance in public service delivery means that public sector outputs should efficiently contribute to policy objectives (World Bank, 2014). The public sector has almost universally designated as ineffective. One of the issues of concern that appear to working against public sector performance is resource availability if not existing resource allocation strategies.

In a quest to ensure quality service to its citizens in devolution was introduced in Kenya in the year 2013. Promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 was a pathway for quality service delivery by the Government and as Lubale (2012) shows this great constitution brought with it enhanced checks and balances within the government, an enhanced role of Parliament and citizens, an independent judiciary, and a most progressive Bill of Rights.

Devolved governance refers to restructuring or re-organization of authority that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels according to the principle of subsidiary. The underlying argument in English *et al.* (2011) that local governments are more transparent than national governments owing to their proximity to their communities informed devolution in Kenya. Basically, in the Kenyan sense, the aim of devolution was to create more intense community involvement in order to adjust service delivery models to the communities' specific needs.

Muchomba and Karanja (2015) while studying influence of devolved governance and performance of the health sector in Kenya, observed that performance of the public sector, specifically, the health sector was negatively, affected by the devolved procurement process, organizational leadership, resources allocation and availability as well as policy and regulatory framework.

The influence of resources on the efficacy of devolution is manifest from their acquisition or disposition and their use (MOH, 2014). Scholars like Briscoombe, Suneeta, and Margaret (2010) in Kenya, argue that resource allocation help countries to redress inequities in access to quality service in allocation decisions. These can be achieved through the introduction of needs-based criteria into their budgetary processes.

According to a survey by KPMG (2013), the problem of underfunding and poor control of resources, embezzlement and pilferage in the public sector negatively affected the performance of the sector. However, this was when devolution was being introduced in Kenya. Harmonization of available resources to ensure that the limited resources available are utilized optimally (Patrick, 2013). However, in the dispensation of the County Government system, the influence of resources varies from county to county. This is because different counties have distinct priorities. But whatever the priority performance is critical.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review:

The study was informed by the theory of social choice developed by Dr. William Glasser, a completely independent of the choice of topology on spaces of preferences. This theory has been fruitful in linking diverse forms of resource allocation. According to the theory, contractibility is necessary and sufficient for solving the social choice paradox. Glasser argues that we can only satisfy our needs by satisfying the pictures in our Quality World. The Public sector needs to be careful when crafting resource allocation strategies, by ensuring that the tenets of this theory are observed.

The study was also guided by the Resource allocation strategies by Donald A. Norman, of Northwestern University, and Daniel G. Bobrow, of the Xerox Palo Alto Research Centre. The basic propositions of this paper are as follows: That cognitive functioning involves a whole group of independent processes, constantly exchanging information. These may be referred to as "programs". When programs are "executed" [that is to say, put into operation in some way], they require input data and have to compete for "resources". Norman and Bobrow define resources as "such things as processing effort [presumably brain tissue of some sort], the various forms of memory capacity [presumably brain tissue of some sort], and communication channels [presumably brain tissue of some sort]".

### Empirical Review:

Mihaiu, Opreana, Cristescu (2010) studied efficiency, effectiveness and performance of the Public Sector in UE countries. The study found that efficiency in the public sector versus private sector efficiency can be achieved under the conditions of maximizing the results of an action in relation to the resources used. The study emphasized on the importance resource planning for the performance and relevance of the public sector.

Mandl, Dierx and Ilzkovitz (2008) studied the effectiveness and efficiency of public spending. The researchers noted that resources were an important factor of influence of the efficiency in the public sector. They further argue that in the public sector the resources are much harder to quantify than in the private sector, because most of the times the public services overlap and resources from several sources are used. But, in general, the inputs are given by the expenses incurred for the project/service in matter.

Cheema and Rondinelli (2007) argue that devolution of resources to local levels of governance lead to enhanced decision-making power, authority and control over resources play a pivotal role towards economic and social development. According to the scholars, devolution results in increased citizen participation in local political processes where “local governments are perceived to have the capacity to make political and financial decisions affecting their economic and social welfare.” The improved allocation of resources is the most common theoretical argument for decentralization (Azfar, Kahkonen, Lanyi, Meagher & Rutherford, 2004).

According to Brinkerhoff *et al.* (2007), by bringing government closer to local people, it is asserted that the government will be better informed to local needs and preferences, resulting in increased accountability and enhanced responsiveness of officials and government at the empowered local or regional level.

According to Mbondo (2017) in a report for Makueni County on devolution of water services, the County success of devolution will depend on availability of resources (both financial and human) for counties to carry out their assigned functions, and their empowerment to use resources effectively. It is only with a proper plan and efforts that ensure available resources can the county be able to provide quality and adequate water to the resources.

Vermeerenon (2015) studied the impact of human resources practices on various performance outcomes in the public sector. The study found human resource practices positively influenced the effectiveness, efficiency and fairness of public organizations. The human resources components studied were found to heterogeneously impact upon the three performance outcomes (the effectiveness, efficiency and fairness). The results further, revealed that ability-enhancing and opportunity-enhancing human resources practices are more strongly related to performance outcomes than motivation-enhancing human resources practices.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design:

The study adopted the descriptive research design, a design considered appropriate for the quantitative and qualitative data collected. Both primary and secondary sources of data have been used. Primary sources of data include questionnaires and interviews. Secondary sources include journal articles, Government reports, theses and dissertation, and books.

#### Target Population:

The population under this study constituted the entire political, technical and civic leadership of Kericho County government who were residing within the bounds of the said county at the time the study was carried out. In total the county hosts a total of 391 staff in the categories of public servants, elected members and those attached from the Transitional Authority. These are distributed as: Ainamoi sub-county (150), Belgut Sub County (117), Bureti sub-county (54), Londiani sub-county (26) and Kipkelion sub-county (24). The target population also included 30 elected members of the County Assembly.

#### Sample Selection and Determination:

Guided by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) and Kombo and Tromp (2005) for the target population of 391 a sample size of 20% was used. This was as follows: Ainamoi sub-county (30), Belgut Sub County (24), Bureti sub-county (11), Londiani sub-county (5) and Kipkelion sub-county (5); and 6 elected members of the County Assembly. The sample was selected using simple random sampling.

#### Data Collection procedures/instruments:

The study mainly employed primary sources of data collection as well as secondary sources. The primary source is the research itself, which entail the use of interviews and questionnaires. secondary sources of data included existing literature mainly from government institutions.

#### Data Analysis;

Data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The means and standard deviations were used to quantitatively describe the characteristics of the population and variables. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to

assess the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The general model of this regression analysis took the form:

$$\hat{Y}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \epsilon_i$$

Where:  $\hat{Y}_i$  = Dependent variable: Devolution of public sector services

$\alpha$  = Constant

$\beta_1$ =coefficient of the independent variables       $X_1 - X_2$  = The independent variables

$\epsilon_i$ = Error term

Data was captured on Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. It was then cleaned, coded and analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The findings were then presented in tables, charts and graphs in relation to the topic of study.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### General Information:

From the data obtained 59.5% of the respondents are male while 40.5% are female. There are few youths in employment posts in the county. Despite the fact that devolution has been there for over 10 years, residents are yet to reap and feel the benefit of devolution as enshrined in the new constitution. Interestingly some of the residents are not sure of the kind of activities to be devolved.

##### Resources from Donors:

It was established in Figure 1 and figure 4.9 above that 9.5% of the respondents feel that there are no injections at all, 53.6% feel that there is slight donations, 23.8% gave a verdict of moderate injections by donors and a small number of 3.6% feel that the injections are very high. This means that there is very little donor support to the county government.

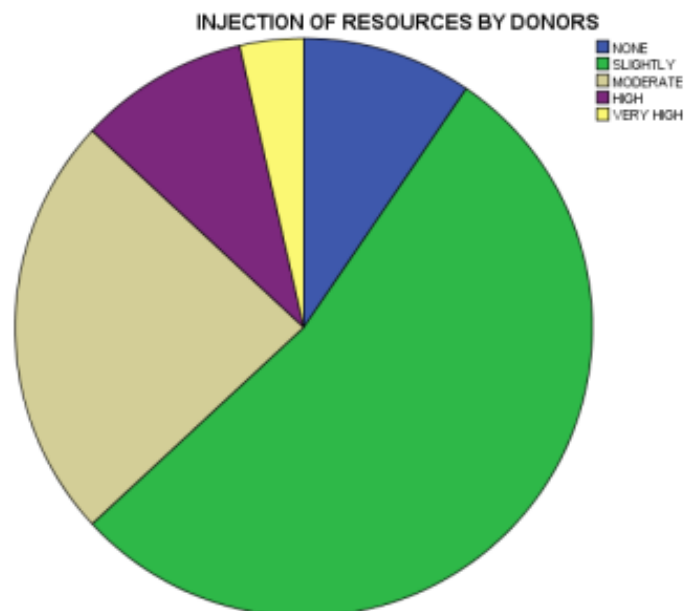


Figure 1: Resources from Donors

##### Availability of Resources:

Select statements in Table 1 show that the statement implying resources were always available when required recorded a mean score of 2.6, a value less than the neutral value of 3.0. thus implying that resources were not always available when required. The statement implying that resources available were enough to support implementation of devolution recorded a mean score of 2.2533. However, the correct quality is always procured budget as shown by the mean score of 3.2267, and budget documents availability in Kericho County has deteriorated as shown by a mean score of 3.1200.

Table 1: Availability of Resources

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resources are always available when required	75	1.00	4.00	2.6000	.94440
The correct quality is always procured	75	1.00	4.00	3.2267	.90901
Budget documents availability in Kericho County has deteriorated	75	2.00	4.00	3.1200	.99946
Resources are enough to support implementation of devolution	75	2.00	4.00	2.2533	.57171
Valid N (listwise)	75				

**Resource Allocation:**

The findings show that all resource allocation was not taken seriously by the County Government of Kericho. These were demonstrated by the fact that all the statements in Table 2 recorded mean scores below 3.0. These were as follows. Resources are always allocated professionally (1.9467), Facilities are being increased in capacity (2.3867), Human resource is properly allocated to departments (2.4400) and appropriateness of resource allocation strategies employed (2.8533). The interpretation is that the resources were not properly allocated to support devolution as planned.

Table 2: Resource Allocation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resources are always allocated professionally	75	1.00	4.00	1.9467	.67570
Facilities are being increased in capacity	75	1.00	5.00	2.3867	1.53247
Human resource is properly allocated to departments	75	1.00	4.00	2.4400	.95860
Resource allocation strategies employed are appropriate	75	2.00	4.00	2.8533	.69152
Valid N (listwise)	75				

**Effect of Resource Allocation and Availability on Organizational Effectiveness:**

The study shows that resource allocation and availability recorded highest effect on improved output with a mean score of 3.97, followed by improved inter personal relations with a mean score of 3.35, which was followed by the effect on discharging of duties at 3.31. Little effect was noted in respect to reduction in time (2.67) and reduced wastages at 1.95. the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Effect of Resource Allocation and Availability on Organizational Effectiveness

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reduction in Time	75	1	4	2.67	1.082
Improved Inter Personal Relations	75	1	4	3.35	.966
Discharging of Duties	75	1	4	3.31	.885
Reduced Wastages	75	1	4	1.95	.676
Improved Output	75	2	4	3.79	.622
Valid N (listwise)	75				

**Inferential Statistics:****Correlations between various Resource Allocation and Resource Availability; and Performance:**

The findings in Table 3 shows that there was a negative correlation between Resource Allocation and Performance (Devolution of Public Sector Services) at  $-0.078^*$ ,  $p > 0.05$  (0.506). The p value was higher than the test significance at 0.05, thus implying that the existing negative association was not statistically significant. The results also show that there was a positive correlation between Resource Availability and Performance (Devolution of Public Sector Services) at  $0.589^*$ ,  $p < 0.05$  (0.044). Given that the golden rule that for cases where p values greater than 0.05 sig. value the association was significant.

**Table 4: Correlations between various Resource Allocation and Resource Availability; and Performance**

		Performance (Devolution of the Public Sector)	Resource Allocation	Resource Availability
Performance (Devolution of the Public Sector)	Pearson Correlation	1	-.078	.589**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.506	.000
	N	75	75	75
Resource Allocation	Pearson Correlation	-.078	1	-.131
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.506		.262
	N	75	75	75
Resource Availability	Pearson Correlation	.589**	-.131	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.262	
	N	75	75	75

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

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

#### Regression Analysis:

##### Model Summary:

The *R* Square value in the Model Summary Table 5 shows the amount of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. In this case, the independent variables of Resource Allocation and Resource Availability account for 34.7 per cent of the variability in performance (devolution of public sector services) in Kericho County.

**Table 5: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.589a	.347	.329	.36326

a. Predictors: (Constant), Resource Availability, Resource Allocation

##### Analysis of Variances (ANOVA):

The findings in respect to the analysis of variances are as provided in Table 4. The *p* value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 (Coefficient level). This indicates that the effect of Resource Availability and Resource Allocation on the Performance of the County Government of Kericho (Devolution of Public Sector Services) is statistically significant. This is also confirmed by the *F*-test whereby the calculated  $F = 19.136$  is less than the tabulated  $F (2, 72)$ .

**Table 6: Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.050	2	2.525	19.136	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	9.501	72	.132		
	Total	14.551	74			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance (Devolution of the Public Sector)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Resource Availability, Resource Allocation

##### Coefficients:

The following regression model was used

$$\hat{Y} = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \epsilon_i, \text{ hence}$$

$$\text{Performance} = 1.579 - 0.001 + 0.512 + 0.138$$

The regression analysis in Table 7 shows that resource availability and resource allocation recorded a Beta value of 0.589 and 0.001 respectively. Looking at the p value we conclude both variables were strong predictors of the performance of the County Government of Kericho (Devolution of Public Sector Services).

**Table 7: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.579	.334		4.729	.000
1 Resource Allocation	-.001	.086	-.001	-.009	.993
Resource Availability	.512	.084	.589	6.132	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance (Devolution of the Public Sector)

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that resource availability and resource allocation are significant predictors of performance of the County Government of Kericho in the devolution of public sector services. However, the County government has not taken these important aspects seriously are required. resource allocation strategies employed are not appropriate. The most disturbing finding is that that resources were not always available when required.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

- i. The County Government of Kericho should consider conducting research to inform the process of development or adoption of resource allocation strategies.
- ii. There is need to mobilise resources to ensure resource availability on timely basis and ensure that quality resources are available
- iii. The County Government of Kericho needs to ensure all relevant stakeholders are consulted or involved at the resource planning stage. This will help boost the efficiency of resources in enhancing performance in the public sector.

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