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Public Participation, Resource Allocation, Political Parties and Government Policy on Economic Development in Kenya: A Case Study of Kajiado County, Kenya

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Abstract:

The study aims at analyzing the link between public participation, resource allocation and political parties on economic development of Kajiado County. The objectives of the study are: to evaluate the influence of public participation on economic development in Kajiado county; to analyse the influence of resource allocation on economic development within Kajiado county; to understand the role of political parties in economic development in Kajiado county. Furthermore, the study has drawn lessons from three theories. That is the neoclassical theory, the Elite and class theory, and the Resource-Based Theory. The target population of the study encompasses 10,789 county government employees. Consequently, Fishers formula is used to arrive at (384) respondents who were randomly sampled as respondents. The data collected from the successful questionnaires, was coded, organized and evaluated using SPSS which includes regression and correlation. The study concludes that public participation, resource allocation and political parties do have positive and significant correlation on economic development in Kajiado County. The study recommends that the government should build context-based methods for allowing public participation; the governments should also consider mapping out resources and conducting cost benefit analysis of the projects being implemented by the government.

Keywords: Public Participation, resource allocation, political parties and economic development

1. Introduction

Economic development has been and remains the force behind the clamour for globalization and the subsequent massive adoption of decentralized systems which guarantee public Participation in governance. Hill and Hupe (2014) have pointed out that economic development has remained elusive to most Africa people. This agrees with Geoffrey (2011) who points that if variables which determine investment growth are not balanced and well controlled, they can pose significant risk to economic development. Economic development as Omari, Kaburi and Sewe (2012) have argued has a close correlation between governance and power sharing. Africa remains one of the poorest continents in the world. This is beside the fact that almost 13% of the world's population is found in Africa (Akeno&Wafula, 2017). Accordingly, the GDP performance Africa has remained unchanged. Similarly, Africa's population has continued to rise sharply from 364 million, in 1970 to nearly 800 million in 1999, this is expected to increase to approximately 1.3 billion people by 2020 (Blanco, 2019). Most of the African leaders have taken advantage of group identities to achieve political mileage, at the expense of economic development.

The discriminatory nature of the politics, according to Akeno and Wafula (2017) has left many small groups in perpetual economic backwardness and conflict. Furthermore, Kamunge, Njeru and Tirimba (2014), have argued economic vibrancy lies in trade activities which need ease of doing business from both an economic, social and political understanding. It suffices to interrogate how public participation resource allocation government policy propounds the economic performance across SSA (Rush, 2014). Economic development is at the core of the modern concept of the nation state. When government policy fails the public is left out of governance giving way to poor resource management. Inference from Kajiado CIDP 2018-2022 shows that unemployment rates stand at 9.7% against the national rate which stands at 11%. Further still Kajiado county HDI is estimated at 0.55 lower than the national HDI which stood at 0.59. According to the Government of Kenya (GOK, 2014) 79% of households in Kajiado County were food insecure with at least four months without enough food for their families due to economic related conditions. With the Human Development Index and unemployment rate in Kajiado being nearly the same with national statistics, how have public participation, resource allocation, political parties and government policy been drivers of economic development of Kajiado County? The major focus in Kajiado and generally across Kenya has been growth as opposed to development; this means less has been done to ensure economic development at grass root. In perpetuation of certain factors like nepotism, tribalism many party politics has resulted in undesirable economic imbalances.

Furthermore, poor resource allocation to people centered programmes has resulted in inadequacy in vital facilities like healthcare and housing. All this is being fueled by rampant corruption and overall resource mismanagement. On the same breath, the lack of proper government policy, which are sometimes contradictory and over ambitious has

created a chaotic social order which stifles entrepreneurial growth and trade. County governments have not focused on issues affecting resident like access to potable water, proper sanitation facilities, garbage collection, continued development of educational opportunities and healthcare services. It's on the aforesaid conditions that study will seek to understand how these bottlenecks can be rectified by proper public participation, resource allocation, political parties and government policy to drive economic transformation.

The main objective of the study is to establish the influence of public participation, resource allocation on economic development in Kajiado County: the influence of public participation in the economic development of Kajiado County, and to analyze how resource allocation influences economic development in Kajiado County. The study sampled employees of county government that included; members of county assembly, departmental staff Kajiado County. They provided necessary data for the study, by filling in a questionnaire with close-ended questions and a Likert scale that reflects the influence of public participation and resource allocation on economic development. A target population of 208 was used in the study from selected flower farms. The sample of 384 respondents was taken out of the total population of 10,789 using random sampling technique.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Literature Review

Theory of Neoclassical Theory, The Elite and class theory, and Resource-Based Theory have been reviewed to help the study gain deeper understanding how public participation, and resource allocation interlinked with economic development.

Neoclassical theory can be traced to Adam Smith (1723 – 1790) and David Ricardo (1772-1823). The theory argues that human nature characteristically drives economic performance and outcomes. This concept places human beings as being possessors of the abilities to produce maximum wealth within the society they live in. It stresses on the ideas of achieving maximum possible and feasible wealth and consumption while at the same time positing social harmony. Therefore, different times present different pressures and demands upon the government to formulate new policies which provide solutions to new economic problems. According to Wolff and Resnick (2012), Adam Smith's "Invisible Hand" proved that an efficient allocation of both consumption outputs and resource inputs can arise when a fully competitive society acts rationally in his or her own self-interest by having consumers maximizing utility and producers maximizing profits. The insight of Adam Smith has persisted in neoclassical economics as follows each person having the power (liberty) to act in his or her own self-interest will be led as if by an "invisible hand" (the totally competitive market) to actions that produce maximum wealth (productivity) for a society of individuals.

The elite and class theory basically explain and describes the functioning of the nation state by shading light on the power relationships in modern society. The theory propounds that society consists a small minority, who hold the economic and policy influence, and that this power is resultant from election which are democratic. The theory was postulated by Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), Gaetan Mosca (1858–1941), and Robert Michels (1876–1936), who all argued that Power lies in holding positions of power in key economic and political institutions within the nation state (Amsden, 2012). Furthermore, they posit that the elite are powerful by virtue of their psychological superiority which sets them apart from others; that is by virtue of their personal resources, that is for example their intelligence and skills, vested interest governance. The theory concludes that the elite are more organized than the masses and this gives them an edge they undertake within the nation state. The theory posits that government is often dominated by a few top leaders, a huge percentage of them being outside government, but with elitism and networks to power. Here the power is not in the hands of government officials elected after every couple of years. Society is divided upon class lines, with the upper-class elite possessing the power by virtue of their wealth. Wealth here is the basis of power.

The Resource-based theory posits that the possession of strategic resources offers organizations with key opportunities to develop competitive advantages over their rivals. The theory was posited by Barney, Jay in 1991 in his work dubbed "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage (Barney, 1991). The theory proposes that that organizations are heterogeneous since they are found to have heterogeneous resources, this Barney argues makes organizations to choose varied strategies due to the diverse resources present at their disposal. The theory concludes that for any organization to be superior and outperform the other competitors it has to be cognizant of its inherent resources as a way of identifying its key assets, capabilities and competencies which can aid it to have a superior competitive advantage over its competitors (Kenton, 2019). Evidence from Chile and Colombia revealed that decentralization contributes to, or at least does result in maintaining, more equitable allocation of health resources as means to economic development among municipalities of different incomes (Bossert, 2000). The resource-based theory, proposes that value is driven from strategic alliances, and states that possess valuable resources ought to be close allies (Mkutu, Marani & Ruteere, 2014).

2.2. Review of Inter-Variable Relationships

2.2.1. Public Participation and Economic Development

Public participation implies to an expansion of meaningful participation rights to new social groups who are not economic elites, as well as to CSOs (Sabatier & Weible, 2014). Good governance is as Ng'ethe and Michuki, (2013) posit necessary but not sufficient for countries to sustain progress over the longer term. The 'Big man' syndrome or the cult of Personality Orjuela, (2014) points has lingered in African politics, rendering politics as a channel with which public

servants' loots and enrich themselves. Contrary to what Alexis De' Tocqueville wrote in his pamphlet on 'Democracy in America', democracy works, when it is driven by the people. This fact is emphasized by Burchard, (2014), who notes that the fact that for there to be overall economic change, public participation must remain entwined and realized in how the state cascades down its functions in order to organize people's aspirations for development.

Public participation as a product of democracy; is measured on economic matrices pegged on human development. The economic development hypothesis provides means to conclude that the adopted strategy in this case public participation is aimed purely at achieving economic development which in turn directly affects the process of democratization. That said, the neoclassic theory has emerged as the most favorable for the study, beyond the elite and the Resource-Based Theory (Owino, 2013). The decentralization of any country as Omari, Kaburi and Sewe (2012) write, demands for a shift from a non-democratic tendency, which usually result in reduced GDP performance. The Economic development as a prominent, feature of participative decentralization of governance, demands the county government expenditure of public money and resources, be done within participative mechanisms which allow for monitoring and evaluation of economic enhancing programmes. Under the new global development goals, decentralization can be termed as being synonymous with 'leaving no one behind' a precursor for bottom-up development demanding for active engagement and participation of the general public (Stuart & Samman, 2016).

Multiple, diverse mechanisms for public input can correct mistakes in policy design and promoting social inclusion and drive policies, with economic transformational ability (Rush, 2014). Constitutionally anchored participation also provides channels for settling (or at least narrowing) conflicts over interests and values and for making broadly legitimate policy preference (Muiruri, 2014). Policies will be more likely to be stable and sustainable when they enjoy popular understanding and support. A minimalist definition of decentralization requires only that principal government structures be brought to the people (Niels & Schiele, 2013) but also evaluated on the basis of transformational work done.

2.2.2. Resource Allocation and Economic Development

Equitable resource sharing requires transferring resources from the center to the local level: but there is no single answer to the question of how much, how fast and in what form (Akeno & Wafula, 2017). Unlike in many other decentralized countries, Kenya's counties do not have substantial sources of their own revenues. While Kenya's Constitution provides high-level guidance on the respective responsibilities of the national and the county governments, much more granular work is needed in order to provide a basis for sharing assets and revenue (Sabatier & Weible, 2014). Accordingly, Coen and Maritan, (2010) the continuance of poverty takes on the form of economic poverty, with resource abuse resulting in numerous white elephant projects. As such economic development remains elusive within communities' yet equitable resource allocation of the present resources is perpetually exploited and stolen through corruption and impunity (Dang & Sui Pheng, 2015). Economists nowadays keep allocation and distribution quite separate and argue for letting prices serve to their purpose in ensuring efficiency, while providing a means with which resources can be best shared within separate policy instruments which constitute devolution. The principle of equality of access and equality of utilization, according to KNHRC (2012) is at the core of economic empowerment. With equal access to means with which the individuals can earn money and government services easily, over exploitation can be reduced. On the contrary Mukabi, Wawire and Chepng'eno, (2015) defends the opinion that equity is the benchmark because it is more respectful of individual preferences than the principle of equality of utilization or treatment.

2.2.3. Political Parties and Economic Development

Weak political culture and inefficiency within how political parties are organized has an effect on how stable a country becomes in the long run. On the other hand, when a country has strong and well-functioning political parties the democratic space forms a formidable link with which citizens can effectively engage with their governments. As such political parties play a vital role in ensuring that natural resources are well managed, for the long-term interests of the people, as they are strongly interrelated with the real needs of the people.

According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, (2018) there is a strong positive link between the strength of political parties and their representation mechanism with the quality of its resource governance systems. In most SSA countries, the political systems there, work to guarantee that political parties which win a significant share of the vote, become the ruling majority assuming to decide how economic development will be carried out (Keefer & Philip, 2013).

The winner takes it all syndrome has perpetuated imbalanced economic development as those who come second in vote counts; are not well included to drive economic development. In the context of counties, the same is true where political parties with higher fraction of the total vote, assume more independent control. However, opposition parties can still influence policy, their influence depends on the fraction of votes they win during elections this according to Henderson, Storeygard and Weil (2012). The literature review focused on revealing the challenges that have perpetually retarded economic development, in sub-Saharan Africa as being part and parcel of the structures of how public participation, resource allocation, political parties and government policy.

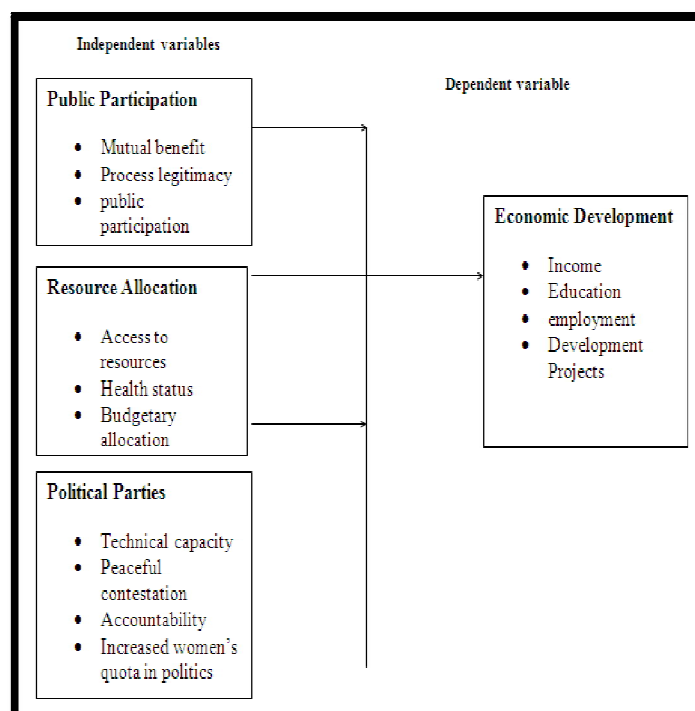


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2. Methodology

Descriptive research design helped the study to gather and analyze influence of public participation, and resource allocation on economic development in Kajiado County. It gives a holistic view of the present situation about influence of public participation, and resource allocation on economic development in Kajiado County, Kenya. The target population comprised of 10,789 which included members of county assembly, employees of various county departments and citizen participation.

The study adopted both random sampling and stratified sampling technique for selecting flower farms and managers to be used in the study. A sample of 384 respondents that comprised of members of county assembly, employees of various county department and citizen participated in completing the data instrument throughout the entire county. Questionnaire was the principal instrument employed to collect responses for the study purpose. Prior to actual data collection, pilot study involving 15 random respondents was carried out to determine the clarity and appropriateness of the language used.

Validity or credibility is based on the adequacy with which instruments of data collection can determine the qualities of the study Newman, (2006). Therefore, in guaranteeing credibility of the research instruments, skilled viewpoint from supervisors, other researchers and peers were valued and included in the instrument. The study used field survey, which ascertained the reliability of the study by subjecting the instrument to a scale test. Reliability was indicated to what extent there was internal consistency or dependency of the used tools over time. It showed the exactness and meticulousness of the measurement procedure (Kothari, 2014). Ethical consideration was observed that involved a high degree of confidentiality in all the data collected. The researcher did not diverge or share information about the interviewee with other interviewee or with any other third party. The researcher maintained the highest level of objectivity in discussions and upheld this principle throughout the research. There was no use of offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable languages in the formulation of interviews and questions.

3. Findings

3.1. Public Participation and Economic Development

Statements on Public Participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mutual benefits of public participation determine to what extent the people in Kajiado county benefit economically	1.69	0.00
Public participation meetings influence the type of economic programs done in the community.	2.33	10.20
Public trust influences economic development in Kajiado county	1.94	2.00
Public participation function as a driver of economic development	1.69	2.00

Table 1: Public Participation and Economic Development

The findings of the study showed that public participation function is a driver of economic development (mean score = 1.69) and that public trust influences economic development in Kajiado county (mean score = 1.94). Moreover, the study findings showed respondents agreed that mutual benefits of public participation determine the extent to which the people in the county benefit economically (mean score = 1.69) and that public participation meeting influences the type of programs done within the community (mean score = 2.33). Overall, the findings revealed that public participation influenced economic development in the county.

The results are in agreement with Nzomo (2014), who notes that economic development is a function of how the general public is involved in governance. Nzomo (2014) also showed that public trust boosted strong belief among the respondents that the government had their best interests at heart, thus creating confidence requisite for economic development.

3.2. Resource Allocation and Economic Development

Statements on Resource Allocation	Mean	Std Deviation
Access to resources and transparency determines the economic development in Kajiado county	3.29	3.66%
Has there been improved access to Health status in the Kajiado county	1.68	0.00%
Resources allocation is based on the need to optimize some budgetary allocation for economic performance of Kajiado county?	1.59	6.71%
The education has improved and as such growth is well visible	1.49	0.00%
Resource allocation influences economic development in Kajiado county by availing jobs	2.01	0.00

Table 2: Resource Allocation and Economic Development

The study results show that the respondents agreed that access to resources and transparency determines the economic development in Kajiado County (mean score =3.29) and that there has been improved access to health care status in the Kajiado County (mean score =1.68) .However, the findings showed that respondents disagreed that resources allocation is based on the need to optimize some budgetary allocation for economic performance of Kajiado County (mean score = 1.59). Besides, the results of the respondents showed that education had improved and as such growth is well visible (mean score =1.49)and that there is a clear link between Resource allocation and economic development in terms of the number of jobs created by Kajiado County (mean score =2.01).

These findings corroborate with those of Akeno and Wafula (2017) who revealed that equitable resource sharing is essential and requires transferring resources from the center to the local level; this principle of equality of access and equality of utilization is at the core of economic empowerment (KNHRC, 2012). The County should therefore create an enabling atmosphere for equitable resource sharing so that economic growth rates are realized collectively in all areas. The results further concur with Job (2014), who posits that resource allocation based on needs of the community meant that the community led projects were being implemented thus increasing education standards, and health care services. Though resources were deemed scarce they were being utilized on key sectors and therefore economic development was steadily being realized.

3.3. Political Parties and Economic Development

Statements on Political Parties	Mean	Std Deviation
Political parties possess technical capacity, to support overall economic development in Kajiado county	2.39	26.83
There have been improved peaceful contestation within party politics in the Kajiado county	1.63	5.49
There is accountability within political parties in Kajiado county	2.49	7.32
There have been increased Women's quota in political party in Kajiado county	2.47	0.00

Table 3: Political Parties and Economic Development

From the results above; the study finding revealed the respondents disagreed that political parties possess technical capacity, to support overall economic development in Kajiado county (mean score =2.39) and there is accountability within political parties in Kajiado County (mean score = 2.49). This impliedly depicts the inability of political parties to a drive clear strategy to support economic development. The respondents further agreed that there has been improved peaceful contestation within party politics in the Kajiado county (mean score =1.63) and that there been increased women's quota in political party in Kajiado County (mean score = 2.47). However, the respondents also disagreed that there is accountability within political parties in Kajiado County.

3.4. ANOVA Results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	0.835 ^a	0.697	0.694	0.42930

Table 4: ANOVA Results

a. Predictors: (Constant), Public participation, Resource allocation, Political Parties

A multivariate regression model was used to explain the influence of public participation, resource allocation and political parties on economic development in Kajiado County. The regression results posted R value of 0.835 which implied the existence of high relationship between the variables. The R-Squared explains how well the model predicts the observation; this is a statistical measure of how close the data is to the fitted regression line. The value of adjusted R square (coefficient of determination) is 0.694. This implied that the three variables (Public participation, Resource allocation, Political Parties) explained 69.4% of economic development of Kajiado County. The remaining 30.6% is explained by other variables/predictors not included in the study.

3.5. Regression Coefficients

Model		Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.088	0.155		0.569	0.570
	Public participation	0.506	0.080	0.448	6.321	0.000
	Resource allocation	0.409	0.090	0.390	4.528	0.000
	Political Parties	0.208	0.074	0.230	2.805	0.007

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

a. Dependent Variable: Economic development

The following regression model was established:

$$Y = 0.088 + 0.506X_1 + 0.409X_2 + 0.208X_3$$

The regression co-efficient results confirmed that a positive and statistically significant relationship for all the variables under the study. The results showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between public participation and economic development of Kajiado County as shown by $\beta = 0.506$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$. The results further show a positive and significant relationship between economic development of Kajiado County and resource allocation ($\beta = 0.409$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$); and political parties ($\beta = 0.208$, $p = 0.007 < 0.05$).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the correlation results, the study concludes that there is a positive and significant association between public participation and economic development. Furthermore, from the regression results the study concluded that resource allocation has a positive and significant influence on economic development in Kajiado County. Additionally, the study concludes that there is a positive correlation between political parties and economic development. Furthermore; the regression results of the study concluded that government policy has positive and significant influence on economic development in Kajiado County.

The study recommends that government should improve and build context based mean and tools for public participation and should also work on motivating the communities through constant awareness programmes on how to participate in governance for more people oriented economic development; County policies need to be developed where county Government supports local need based allocation of resources. Government needs to begin engaging with resources as custodians. Finally, institutions of higher learning should introduce courses in role of political parties as an action pathway with which to enable political parties have influence in driving economic development.

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