

**ANALYZING THE EFFECTS OF DEVOLVED GOVERNANCE ON
COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD PERFORMANCE IN NAROK COUNTY
GOVERNMENT IN KENYA**

ROTICH KIPLANGAT JOHANA



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THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
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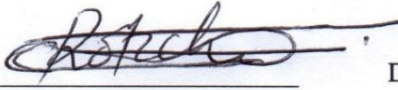
JANUARY 2025

DECLARATION

DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration by the student

This proposal is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or for any other award.

Signature  Date 18/2/2025

Rotich Kiplangat Johana

MPAM/53348/2023

Approval by the Supervisor's

We confirm that the proposal has been submitted by the candidate under our supervision.

Signature _____ Date _____

Dr. Erastus Thoronjo

Senior Lecturer

School of Business and Economics

Mount Kenya University

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to Almighty God for His guidance, strength, and blessings throughout this study. Without His grace, this achievement would not have been possible.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Erastus Thoronjo, for his invaluable guidance, support, and encouragement. His insightful feedback and dedication have been instrumental in shaping this study.

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ABSTRACT

Devolved governance provided greater autonomy and decision-making authority at the local level, enhancing administrative efficiency and democratic participation. The significance of devolved governance was reflected in its ability to enhance local participation by involving communities directly in decision-making processes. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effects of devolved governance on community livelihood performance in Narok County. The specific objectives of the study were to examine the effect of community engagement and participation in devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok County, to establish the effect of capacity and resource allocation in devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok County, to assess the effect of policies and institutions in devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok County. This research utilized a descriptive design and was grounded in a quantitative methodology. From a total population of 200 county officials, a proportionate stratified sampling method was used to ensure representative selection. To determine the appropriate sample size, the study applied Kothari and Garg's formula, which resulted in 132 participants being selected for inclusion. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to provide reliable insights, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis by identifying and examining key themes within the responses. Regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The study demonstrates that devolved governance significantly enhances community livelihood performance in Narok County through active community engagement, equitable resource allocation, effective policy implementation, and strong accountability, with community engagement scoring a mean of 4.2 and accountability receiving the highest impact rating of 4.5 on a Likert scale. Regression analysis revealed accountability ($B = 0.55$) and community engagement ($B = 0.45$) as critical drivers of improved outcomes, fostering trust and ensuring resource efficiency. The findings highlight that active participation and transparency in governance build public trust, reduce corruption, and promote sustainable development by tailoring projects to local needs. The study recommends strengthening transparency mechanisms such as accessible financial reporting and regular public communication to ensure efficient resource use and reinforce trust in governance for long-term economic and social growth.

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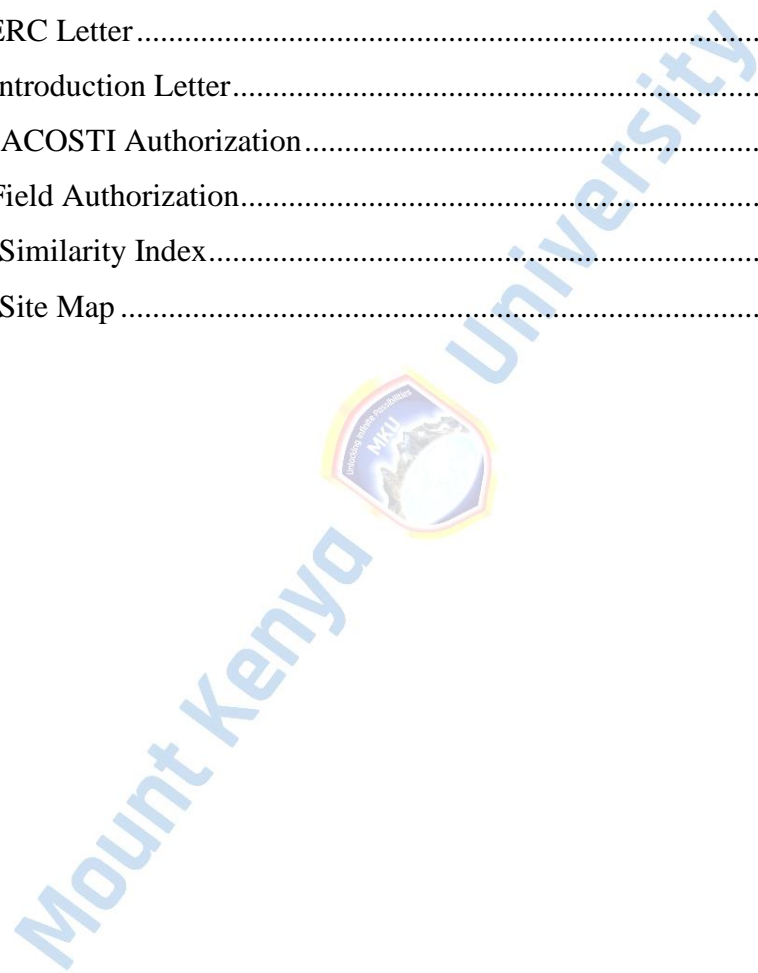
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

COK	Constitution of Kenya
KNPHS	Kenya National Population and Housing Census
CID	County Integrated Development Plan
GOK	Government of Kenya
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

An overview of the study is given in this chapter, which is divided into multiple important areas. The problem statement, study objectives, research questions, study background, and research importance are some of these.

1.1 Background to Study

Devolved governance refers to the delegation of power and responsibilities from central government to local or regional governments. This system allows for greater autonomy and decision-making authority at the local level, aiming to enhance administrative efficiency and democratic participation (Burgess & Pearce, 2021). The importance of devolved governance lies in its ability to enhance local participation by involving communities directly in decision-making processes. This leads to decisions that are more reflective of the specific needs and priorities of the local populace, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability. Additionally, devolved governance improves service delivery as local governments are better positioned to understand and respond to the unique challenges and opportunities within their jurisdictions. This can result in more efficient and effective delivery of public services, such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure development (Ronoh, 2022).

1.1.1 Global Perspective on Devolved Governance on Community Livelihood Performance in the

Decentralized governance is widely regarded as a foundational element of development reforms in numerous counties. Its significance is grounded in the political economy perspective, which posits that transferring authority to local levels—such as county administrations—enhances their operational effectiveness (Rosenbaum, 2013). The

devolution of authority encompasses, among other aspects, democratic engagement and accountability. Through devolution, community members are empowered to take an active role in setting priorities and making decisions. They are enabled to deliberate on matters that directly impact their lives. This inclusive approach to planning and prioritizing development initiatives significantly contributes to both social and economic advancement (Nhede, 2013). In his comparative study, William (2013) highlights Germany as a prime example of a federal democratic nation. The country's governance structure is anchored in federalism, with authority shared between the central government and its 16 constituent states, known as Länder, enabling cooperative administration at both national and regional levels.

Decentralized governance represents one form within the larger framework of decentralization, a key feature evident in many contemporary governments. According to Kauzya (2007), vertical decentralization ensures accountability through electoral mechanisms ("vote"), whereas horizontal decentralization promotes inclusive participation through citizen engagement ("voice"). The critical question for governments is not whether to decentralize, but rather the method and rationale behind it—factors that influence the selection of specific decentralization models. A key aim of devolved governance is to improve operational efficiency by transferring responsibilities to the lowest appropriate level, thereby streamlining communication and reducing bureaucratic costs. Often, the impetus to devolve arises from the shortcomings of central authorities in areas like tax collection and public service provision. Additionally, devolution is viewed as a mechanism for deepening democracy within counties by establishing legal and constitutional safeguards that minimize conflict with central authorities.

According to Arkorful et al. (2022), Ghana's decentralization policy has opened up

channels for grassroots involvement in governance, allowing citizens to shape decisions that influence their daily lives. However, their study also identifies obstacles such as systemic inefficiencies and limited resources, underscoring the need for enhanced local capacity. Similarly, Pakudu (2023) investigates the implementation of village funds in Indonesia's Gorontalo Regency. The study finds that although these funds are intended to promote sustainable development, issues remain regarding meaningful community involvement and participatory planning. The findings stress the value of local engagement in both the design and execution of development projects to realize genuine empowerment.

In Mali, local governance mechanisms have played a pivotal role in enabling communities to develop adaptive responses to climate change. Finan et al. (2017) observe that the proximity of local governments to the people allows for tailored adaptation strategies, although their success is contingent upon governance quality and resource availability. Pradhan et al. (2021) document how Nepalese community institutions govern water resources, which contributes to sustainable agriculture and environmental preservation. Their study suggests that local-level governance allows for more context-specific water management, which enhances both food security and ecosystem protection. However, they also point out that social inequalities persist, and these must be addressed to ensure equitable outcomes. In Bangladesh, decentralization has been instrumental in tackling poverty and vulnerability at the grassroots level. By empowering local authorities, development interventions can be customized to meet the distinct needs of communities. Nonetheless, challenges such as complex funding procedures and centralized oversight continue to limit the effectiveness of local governance. The study recommends increasing financial autonomy, streamlining access to development funds,

and strengthening local institutional capacities to foster inclusive and effective service delivery.

1.1.2 Africa region perspective on Devolved Governance and Community Livelihood Performance

In Africa, notable examples of countries that have effectively implemented devolved governance include Nigeria and Ethiopia. According to Siddle (2011), South Africa has experienced significant reforms in its local governance structure. Though these changes were extensive, they were achieved through a negotiated process that led to broad consensus on the intended direction and facilitated a smooth and logical rollout of a devolved power framework which emphasized the collaboration between local authorities and community members to develop sustainable strategies for addressing social, economic, and material needs and enhancing the overall quality of life. This process constitutionally embedded a new local governance system, supported by comprehensive legislation to uphold its constitutional principles (Siddle, 2011). As a result, South Africa has emerged as a leader in democratic governance in Africa, focusing on public service delivery and inclusivity.

Across Africa, some nations have successfully adopted devolved systems of governance. South Africa, for instance, has made significant progress in decentralizing power, promoting accountability, and enhancing collaboration between national and local government institutions, resulting in noticeable socio-economic development (Siddle, 2011). The White Paper served as a clear guideline for all levels of government, outlining roles and responsibilities aimed at improving service delivery. In Kenya, devolution was introduced with the primary goal of uplifting citizens' living standards and making government services more accessible. This was to be achieved through the application of

legal frameworks and guiding principles aimed at promoting equitable development (Ghai, 2008). It affirms the right of communities to manage their affairs and drive their own development, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment among citizens.

In August 2010, Kenya enacted a new constitution that created a devolved system with 47 county governments. At the time of its enactment, many Kenyan observers, opposition leaders, and development partners welcomed devolution, anticipating its benefits (Ndichu, 2011). The intention behind devolution was to enhance democratic engagement and promote grassroots development by decentralizing government functions. According to Aketch (2010), devolution also served as a strategy to discourse Kenya's longstanding racial skirmishes. To support this goal, the Constitution outlines national values that emphasize inclusion and aim to minimize feelings of exclusion and marginalization.

Kenya's Constitution promotes good governance, with Article 1(1) vesting sovereign power in the people. Article 1(2) allows this power to be exercised either directly or through elected representatives (COK, 2010). The Constitution requires this authority to be exercised in line the ethics of devolution, as outlined in Article 175. These principles include strengthening democratic and accountable leadership, promoting checks and balances, ensuring fair distribution of resources, and guaranteeing gender equity in county leadership by stipulating that no more than two-thirds of any representative body can be of the same gender.

Several constitutional provisions reinforce governance ideals. Article 27(3) ensures that men and women have equal rights and opportunities across political, economic, cultural, and social dimensions. Article 202 mandates the equitable distribution of national revenue between the national and county governments. Counties may also receive additional allocations, either conditional or unconditional. Article 207 establishes a County Revenue Fund to manage all monies received by each county government;

barring exceptions outlined by legislation (COK, 2010).

Devolution in Kenya not only targets more efficient service delivery but also aims to remedy the issues linked to centralized misgovernance and reduce separatist tendencies, resulting in more inclusive decision-making (Mwenda, 2010). As a core aspect of the Constitution, devolution is intended to localize governance by empowering counties politically and economically. Al-Rodhan (2009) emphasized that effective national governance is vital for sustainable development. Ghai (2008) pointed out that centralized systems in many African countries have led to governance failures, often marked by blurred lines between public and private resources, with leaders exploiting public funds for personal advantage.

Kenya, like many former colonies, inherited governance systems primarily designed for economic exploitation rather than institution-building. Colonial "divide and rule" tactics bred ethnic rivalry and competition over resources (Kimenyi, 2005). Devolved governance principles offer a framework for sustainable county-level governance, especially in light of the central government's past failure to build strong institutions, which were often used to bolster ruling parties instead (Cotrell & Ghai, 2007). In Kenya, devolution was introduced partly to address the longstanding exclusion of certain regions and communities from development initiatives and decision-making roles. According to Mackinnon (2015), devolved systems of governance have the capacity to craft policies that align more closely with local needs, fostering innovation in tackling region-specific issues.

Kenya's previous constitution lacked clear mechanisms for equitable development, which contributed to deep regional disparities (Ghai, 2006). Adherence to devolution principles is key to its success. Transferring authority from central to local governments is intended to promote democracy and reduce regional inequalities frequently debated in

national forums. Globally, Germany serves as an example of successful devolution, demonstrating how local governments can drive both economic and social progress—a model that other nations can adopt (William, 2013).

1.1.3 Devolved governance in Narok County

Narok County spans approximately 17,933.1 square kilometers and shares its southern border with the Republic of Tanzania. To the west, it is bordered by Kisii, Migori, Nyamira, and Bomet counties; Nakuru lies to the north, while Kajiado County flanks it to the east. Based on data from the 2009 Kenya National Population and Housing Census (KNPHS), the county is administratively segmented into four sub-counties: Narok North, Narok South, Transmara West, and Transmara East. These sub-counties are further broken down into 16 divisions, 92 locations, and 182 sub-locations, comprising a total of 169,220 households. By 2017, the county's population was projected to reach approximately 1.2 million people (KNBS, 2019).

Similar to many other counties within Kenya's devolved system, Narok faces a range of multidimensional challenges that cut across sectors such as environment, health, education, governance, economy, and socio-cultural development. Addressing these issues necessitates strategic interventions from the county government aimed at improving the quality of life for its citizens. Successful execution of these initiatives requires that all stakeholders observe core principles such as transparency, good governance, and accountability. However, several projects often stall at inception due to issues like political meddling, weak stakeholder commitment, inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems, poor record-keeping, and ineffective communication channels (Omolo, 2010).

To guide local development, the Narok County Government crafted the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2013–2017, a strategic framework aimed at promoting both growth and socio-economic empowerment (County Government of Narok, 2013). The CIDP outlined various initiatives across multiple sectors, including capacity development, water and sanitation, environmental sustainability, waste management, transportation, and agroforestry. Nevertheless, the realization of these goals largely depends on the application of sound management practices. Without a firm commitment to principles such as transparency and accountability, implementation remains a significant challenge. Upholding accountability not only ensures the success of projects but also strengthens the relationship between citizens and government, thereby accelerating overall development (Omolo, 2010).

In Kenya, county governments are obligated to implement devolution in a way that improves service delivery and overall performance in their regions. However, many counties have struggled to achieve their revenue collection goals, which has hampered their capacity to support development projects. This shortfall has led to a continued dependence on the National Treasury for additional development financing (Kate, 2023).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Motivation behind this thesis stemmed from growing concerns voiced by a segment of Kenyan citizens regarding the effectiveness of governance at the county level following the establishment of county governments after the 2013 general elections. A national survey on devolution and governance carried out by Twaweza East Africa between July 19 and 27, 2023, revealed that 51% of respondents were dissatisfied with county-level governance. Meanwhile, 16% remained neutral, and only 33% expressed satisfaction (Ronoh, 2022). The central inquiry, therefore, was whether the principles of devolution

had any tangible impact on governance performance within Kenyan counties.

The findings indicate that many county governments in Kenya have not yet fully embraced or implemented the fundamental principles of devolved governance as envisioned in the 2010 Constitution. These principles were specifically designed to improve service delivery and support grassroots development. Counties have often maintained that the funds allocated to them are insufficient to adequately fulfill their responsibilities. However, despite these ongoing complaints, the Controller of Budget's 2023/2024 report highlights that numerous counties did not make effective use of the limited resources they received. The report points to frequent cases of financial mismanagement and a tendency to prioritize recurrent expenditures over developmental projects (GOK, 2023). In addition, an independent investigation by the National Ethics and Corruption Commission uncovered widespread misuse of county funds, with many counties unable to provide proper accountability for their budget allocations (GOK, 2023).

Addressing these challenges calls for a concerted effort to reinforce the system of devolved governance to serve all Kenyans more effectively, both at the county and national levels. A properly functioning devolved structure should be firmly anchored in key values such as human dignity, respect for human rights, transparency, accountability, communal fairness, gender equality, adherence to the law, fairness, and merit-based hiring practices (Ghai, 2011). Citizens must be empowered to play an active role in scrutinizing public spending, questioning resource allocation, monitoring social welfare programs, protecting human rights, and ensuring the provision of quality health services. Employment within county governments should be strictly guided by competence and relevant qualifications. Meaningful public participation not only strengthens the

credibility and accountability of democratic systems but also fosters social unity, raises political awareness, and builds self-confidence among the populace (Brodie, Cowling & Nissen, 2009). According to the Controller of Budget (March 2018), county administrations must pay attention to the dissatisfaction among citizens. Alarming, over 30 counties reported zero development between July and September 2017. For devolution to succeed, it must be tailored effectively to the specific needs and contexts of different regions, including a proper assessment of the capacity and resources required to implement it. Enhancing governance performance in Kenyan counties requires steadfast adherence to the constitutional principles of devolution (Kenyan Constitution, 2010), a goal which this study seeks to contribute to. The research is therefore necessitated by various significant practical and conceptual issues concerning the execution and effects of devolved governance in Kenya, with a particular focus on Narok County. The objective is to fill knowledge gaps around the influence of devolution on community livelihoods and to generate empirical data to inform both policy formulation and implementation.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The aim of the study was to examine how devolved governance influences the well-being and livelihood outcomes of communities in Narok Region.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

The main goals of the research consist of:

- i. To study the effect of level of community engagement and participation devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok county
- ii. To establish the effect of capacity and resources allocation devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok county
- iii. To assess the effect of policies and institution devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok county.
- iv. To determine the effect accountability and transparency in on community livelihood performance in Narok county.

1.4 Research Questions

The research was steered by the following key questions;

- i. What is the effect of community engagement and participation devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok County?
- ii. How does capacity and resources allocation devolution affect community livelihood performance in Narok County?
- iii. What is the effect of policies and institution devolution on community livelihood performance in Narok County?
- iv. To what extent does accountability and transparency affect the community livelihood performance in Narok County?

1.5 Significance of the study

The research aims to investigate and analyze key matters related to how devolved governance affects and adapts to community livelihood outcomes in Narok County. The research will be valuable to various stakeholders, including the Narok County Government, global democratic systems, other county administrations, the general

public, academic scholars, researchers, and emerging economies seeking to implement devolved governance as a means of enhancing community well-being.

1.5.1 County Government of Narok

This study aims to inform county-level policy decisions concerning devolved governance and its practical application. It will highlight the impact of devolution principles on governance outcomes within counties, thereby offering important perspectives to decision-makers. These findings will assist in formulating strategies to boost the effectiveness of Narok County's administration, with a particular focus on enhancing the well-being of local communities—a fundamental goal of devolution. Additionally, the study will serve as a foundation for developing more efficient methods to reinforce the implementation and overall effectiveness of devolved governance across all counties.

1.5.2 Council of Governors

This body which is responsible for upholding constitutional principles, will find this study highly valuable as it examines the impact of devolved governance principles on community livelihood outcomes in Narok County. The county government holds a crucial responsibility in fostering effective governance at the local level. This research aims to inform both the county leadership and relevant stakeholders that devolved governance significantly affects community livelihoods in Narok. As a result, the findings will guide the formulation of appropriate strategies to enhance the governance system and improve the well-being of the local population. Furthermore, the study will provide recommendations to help the county government develop policies that strengthen devolution.

1.5.3 Society and Non-government organizations

Community members and non-governmental organization leaders who engage with the outcomes of this study will benefit by gaining the ability to formulate localized policies

that align with constitutional provisions and support the goals of devolution in both Narok County and Kenya at large. The research tries to enhance the understanding in-between principles of devolved governance and the improvement of community livelihoods, contributing to better living standards for citizens. Furthermore, it will help society recognize its critical role in ensuring the effective implementation of devolution to foster improved community welfare.

1.5.4 World Democracies

The research will provide insights to global democracies that have implemented or are considering adopting this model of devolution for development, encouraging them to uphold devolution principles and establish suitable structures and implementation frameworks to ensure effective governance in decentralized county administrations.

1.5.5 Scholars and Researchers

This research will enrich academic knowledge by offering a well-developed model of devolved governance specific to Narok County and Kenya at large, while also providing insights for countries considering the implementation of devolved systems. It will serve as a valuable resource for scholars interested in conducting further studies aimed at enhancing community livelihood outcomes at the county level. Given the limited information available in Kenya on the impact of devolved governance on community development, these findings will be especially useful. Additionally, the study will benefit academics who wish to replicate similar research in other countries.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study encompassed an analysis of the impact of devolved governance on the performance of community livelihoods in Narok County. Specifically, the study focused on the following areas: community engagement and participation, capacity and resource allocation, policies and institutions, as well as accountability and transparency. The study

targeted the CECs and chief officers in the devolved functions of the Narok County government.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Focusing solely on Narok County limited the generalizability of the results to other regions in Kenya with different socio-economic and governance dynamics. In addition, participants in the study may have provided biased or socially desirable responses, particularly when discussing sensitive topics such as accountability and transparency in governance.

Ethnic Marginalization and Resource Allocation Conflicts

Narok County's diverse ethnic composition, including Maasai, Kipsigis, Kikuyu, and other communities, has led to tensions over resource allocation. The dominance of certain groups in county leadership has resulted in perceptions of unequal distribution of resources and opportunities, leading to protests and unrest. For instance, the Maasai community has expressed grievances over employment opportunities in the Maasai Mara game reserve, feeling sidelined in favor of other groups

Corruption and Mismanagement of Funds

Corruption remains a significant challenge in the implementation of devolved governance. Instances of misappropriation of funds and lack of accountability have been reported in various counties, including Narok. Such practices undermine development efforts and erode public trust in local governments

Inadequate Public Participation

Effective public participation is crucial for responsive governance. However, in Narok County, there have been reports of limited citizen involvement in decision-making processes. Factors such as lack of awareness, insufficient training, and poor communication channels hinder meaningful engagement between the county government

and its constituents

Inter-Governmental Relations and Policy Conflicts

The devolution framework in Kenya has led to overlapping functions and responsibilities between national and county governments. In Narok County, this has resulted in conflicts and delays in policy implementation, particularly in sectors like health and agriculture. The lack of clear delineation of roles hampers effective service delivery and development planning. These limitations highlight the complexities and challenges faced in the implementation of devolved governance in Narok County.

In analyzing the effects of devolved governance on community livelihood performance in Narok County, several key limitations emerge that influence the efficacy and outcomes of devolution.

Ethnic Marginalization and Resource Allocation Conflicts

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1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study was specifically limited to Narok County, allowing for an in-depth analysis of devolved governance and its impact on community livelihood performance within this particular region. The study focused on county government officials within Narok County, ensuring that the data collected was directly relevant to the local context. It concentrated on the recent and ongoing effects of devolved governance, providing a

contemporary understanding of its impact on community livelihoods. The study was confined to examining the effects of community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, and accountability and transparency on livelihood performance, excluding other potential factors that could influence community well-being. A descriptive research design was employed, and data were gathered using a questionnaire.

1.9 Operational definition of key terms

Accountability and Transparency: The degree to which local government officials and institutions are answerable to the public for their actions, and the openness with which they conduct their operations, ensuring that resources are used efficiently and ethically.

Capacity and Resource Allocation: The distribution of financial, human, and technical resources to local governments and communities, as well as the ability of these entities to effectively utilize these resources for development purposes.

Community Engagement and Participation: The involvement of community members in decision-making processes and activities related to governance, ensuring that their voices and interests are considered in the development and implementation of policies and programs.

Community Livelihood Performance: The overall well-being and economic stability of community members, measured by factors such as income levels, employment rates, access to basic services, and quality of life within the community.

Devolved Governance: The transfer of power, authority, and resources from the central government to local or regional governments, allowing them to manage their own affairs and make decisions that directly affect their

communities.

Policies and Institutions: The set of rules, regulations, and organizations established at the local level to guide governance and development activities, including how these policies and institutions impact community development.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provided an organized exploration and assessment of prior research connected to the subject under study. It involved examining findings and viewpoints relevant to the intended research. The review of literature allowed the researcher to recognize key themes previously investigated, evaluate the strengths and limitations of earlier studies, and identify existing gaps that this research seeks to address. Furthermore, the chapter discussed the theoretical frameworks, models, and variables that shape the impact of decentralization of governance in Kenya's counties. It also included a review of empirical studies, a critical analysis of the literature, identification of the research gap, and a summary of key points.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Separation of Power Theory

Wanjoyi (2003) suggests that resident governments in Kenya were established based on the idea that governance at the grassroots level encourages active citizen engagement in both development and political processes. This system promoted a division of authority, which in turn enhanced the effectiveness and functionality of local administrations. Similarly, Montesquieu, a renowned French political thinker, emphasized the importance of separating powers in government in his 1748 work *The Spirit of Laws*. He praised the English system for its clear distinction among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, arguing that such a structure prevents the concentration of power and safeguards individual freedoms. Montesquieu asserted that when government functions are distributed among distinct branches, each can serve as a check on the others to avoid abuse of authority. In agreement with Montesquieu, William (2013), in his study *Is*

Devolution Universal? he highlighted that Germany operates as a federal democratic republic characterized by a robust federalist system. In Germany, governance is divided among the national government and 16 federal states (Länder), allowing for a balanced spreading of political, lawmaking, and administrative errands between the central and regional levels. Rooted in the work of Montesquieu in *The Spirit of Laws* (1748), the theory has evolved to address contemporary governance challenges, adapting to the dynamics of democratic societies, globalization, and technological advancements. Recent literature reflects the enduring relevance of this theory while exploring its application in modern political and legal contexts.

Modern interpretations of the separation of powers emphasize its role in safeguarding democratic values and fostering accountability. Ginsburg and Huq (2018), in *How to Save a Constitutional Democracy*, argue that maintaining the independence of each branch is critical to preventing democratic backsliding. They highlight those contemporary threats, such as authoritarian tendencies and executive overreach, require robust institutional frameworks to uphold constitutionalism.

Recent studies also examine the flexibility of the separation of powers in hybrid and federal systems. Ackerman (2019), in his analysis of constitutional moments, notes that while the traditional model of separation of powers is based on clear demarcation, modern systems often feature overlapping functions to accommodate the complexity of governance. For instance, in federal states, powers are not only divided between branches but also shared across levels of government, creating additional layers of checks and balances.

Judicial independence is a recurring focus in recent literature. Ackerman and Fishkin (2020) emphasize that the judiciary must remain insulated from political interference to uphold the rule of law and protect minority rights. They argue that judicial review is a

fundamental mechanism within the separation of powers, ensuring that executive and legislative actions comply with constitutional principles. The erosion of judicial independence in some democracies has raised concerns about the fragility of this balance, with scholars calling for institutional reforms to safeguard judicial autonomy.

The separation of powers theory has also been analyzed in the context of global governance and supranational institutions. As globalization fosters interdependence, international bodies such as the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) face unique challenges in maintaining a balance of powers. Petersmann (2017) explores how the EU adapts the separation of powers to manage its complex multi-level governance system, arguing that this balance is essential for ensuring legitimacy and accountability in transnational decision-making.

Technological advancements have introduced new dimensions to the theory, particularly in regulating digital governance and data privacy. Recent research by Balkin (2020) examines how the separation of powers can be applied to regulate technology companies that wield quasi-governmental authority. Balkin argues that the legislative, executive, and judicial functions must extend to the digital realm to address the influence of tech monopolies on public discourse and democratic processes.

Another area of focus is the connection in-between the separation of powers and emergency domination. COVID-19 highlighted the need for governments to respond swiftly to crises while adhering to democratic principles. Scheppele (2021) critiques instances where emergency measures concentrated power in the executive, bypassing legislative and judicial oversight. She emphasizes the need for stronger legal frameworks that ensure emergency powers remain temporary and accountable to other branches.

Critiques of the separation of powers theory have also evolved. Contemporary scholars such as Tushnet (2021) argue that rigid adherence to the traditional separation of powers

model can hinder governmental efficiency in addressing complex, multi-dimensional challenges. Tushnet advocates for a more integrated approach, where collaboration among branches enhances policy effectiveness while maintaining accountability.

In conclusion, the separation of powers theory continues to be a vital framework for understanding and promoting democratic governance. Modern literature highlights its adaptability in addressing contemporary challenges, including globalization, technological governance, and emergency responses. Scholars emphasize the importance of maintaining institutional independence, fostering checks and balances, and adapting the theory to new governance contexts to ensure its continued relevance in safeguarding democracy.

2.1.2 Democratic Participatory Theory

Carole Pateman's Democratic Participatory Theory (1970) suggests that genuine democracy can only thrive within a society where participation is widespread, not just in political arenas but across all areas of social life, including sectors like commerce. Pateman, challenges modern concepts that assume greater citizen involvement might destabilize democratic systems. According to Pattern, local governments serve as essential platforms where community members can actively take part in political processes (Osborne et al., 2000). Supporters of this view argue that local governments function as practical spaces where citizens develop democratic skills and experience. They emphasize that at the grassroots level, local authorities offer opportunities for political engagement, the expression and combination of diverse interests, civic education, and socialization into political life. Furthermore, both those conducting consultations and those participating in them must do more to genuinely uphold the democratic principles and participatory legitimacy that such processes aim to achieve. Democratic participatory theory emphasizes the active involvement of individuals and

groups in decision-making processes that directly affect their lives. This theory asserts that democracy functions most effectively when citizens actively participate beyond voting, engaging in policymaking and public administration. It promotes inclusivity, deliberation, and equity, fostering empowerment, accountability, and legitimacy in governance. Grounded in participatory democracy, the theory is built on the belief that genuine participation strengthens democratic systems, enhances governance outcomes, and fosters trust between citizens and leaders.

The foundational work of Carole Pateman in *Participation and Democratic Theory* (1970) laid the groundwork for understanding the value of participation in democratic governance. Pateman argued that active citizen engagement creates a sense of ownership and accountability, strengthening both the legitimacy and the functionality of democratic systems. Similarly, David Held's *Models of Democracy* (2006) underscores the importance of institutional arrangements that enable widespread citizen participation, emphasizing that democratic systems are most resilient when power is distributed across multiple levels of society.

Central to democratic participatory theory is the concept of empowerment through participation. Sherry Arnstein's (1969) *A Ladder of Citizen Participation* describes a spectrum of engagement levels, ranging from tokenistic involvement to genuine citizen control. True participation occurs when citizens have substantial influence over decisions and are not merely consulted. Jürgen Habermas, in *Between Facts and Norms* (1996), adds that deliberative processes ensure rational discourse and enable diverse voices to shape governance, further enhancing inclusivity and consensus-building.

The theory places significant emphasis on inclusivity and equity. Iris Marion Young, in *Inclusion and Democracy* (2000), highlights that participatory frameworks must address systemic power imbalances to incorporate marginalized groups effectively. Participation

that excludes certain demographics, such as women, minorities, or economically disadvantaged groups, weakens the legitimacy of governance and perpetuates inequality. This aligns with the principle that democracy should empower all citizens equally, particularly those historically excluded from decision-making processes.

Democratic participatory theory finds practical applications in initiatives such as participatory budgeting and local governance. Case studies like Muthee's (2014) work on participatory budgeting in Makueni County, Kenya, demonstrate how citizen involvement in resource allocation fosters transparency, accountability, and alignment with community needs. Similarly, Fung and Wright (2001) highlight the success of participatory approaches at the local level, where community-driven solutions enhance service delivery and trust in governance.

However, the theory is not without critiques. Joseph Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942) questioned the practicality of large-scale participation in modern democracies, arguing that professional politicians are better equipped to manage complex governance issues. Jane Mansbridge, in *Beyond Adversary Democracy* (1983), observed that participatory mechanisms often fail to address existing power disparities, allowing dominant groups to control decision-making processes. Cooke and Kothari's *Participation: The New Tyranny?* (2001) further warns that participatory processes can be co-opted by elites to legitimize predetermined decisions, reducing participation to a symbolic act rather than a transformative process.

Despite these challenges, democratic participatory theory remains highly relevant in contemporary governance. It has been instrumental in addressing global issues such as inequality, climate change, and governance crises. Modern technological advancements, such as e-governance platforms and digital forums, offer new avenues for enhancing participation, inclusivity, and deliberation. Future applications of the theory should focus

on integrating these tools to expand citizen engagement and improve decision-making processes.

Overall, democratic participatory theory underscores the importance of fostering inclusive and meaningful citizen participation to strengthen democracy and enhance governance outcomes. It provides a framework for creating equitable and accountable systems that respond effectively to the needs and aspirations of diverse populations. By addressing systemic barriers and leveraging modern innovations, participatory democracy has the potential to drive sustainable development and deepen democratic practices globally.

2.1.3 Resource Dependency Theory

Stakeholder model showcases the importance of cultivating relationships with different groups to achieve shared benefits. In contrast, resource dependency theory centers on how executives contribute to acquiring critical capitals necessary for an organization's success.

Hillman, Canella, and Paetzold (2000) further explained that this theory highlights how directors help organizations obtain critical resources through their connections with external environments. In the context of devolved government units, these directors are represented by the county executive committee and the chief officers, who are responsible for ensuring that counties have sufficient resources to effectively carry out their mandates. The theory stresses that resources are fundamental to the success of counties and that gaining and managing these resources is a source of power that significantly influences county performance. It is essential for counties to develop strategies that guarantee continued access to these resources.

Daily et al. (2003) supported the argument that a steady flow of reliable resources strengthens organizational operations, boosts performance, and contributes to long-term survival. Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) remains a central framework in organizational and strategic management studies, explaining how organizations interact with their environments to secure essential resources. This dependency creates power dynamics, where the control over resources influences organizational behavior, decision-making, and strategy. Recent literature has expanded the theory's application, addressing contemporary challenges such as globalization, sustainability, and technological disruption.

Modern studies continue to explore how organizations reduce their dependency on external resources by building strategic alliances, forming networks, or vertically integrating their operations. For instance, Hillman, Withers, and Collins (2009) highlight that organizations increasingly engage in interorganizational partnerships, mergers, and acquisitions to secure access to scarce resources, mitigate uncertainty, and enhance their market position. This trend is particularly evident in industries such as technology and healthcare, where rapid innovation requires constant adaptation to external dependencies.

Recent research has also applied RDT to governance and nonprofit sectors, exploring how organizations manage dependencies on donors, governments, or regulatory bodies. Stone and Ostrower (2007) examined nonprofit governance through the RDT lens, revealing how resource constraints drive organizational strategies to maintain donor relationships and diversify funding sources. Similarly, Guo and Acar (2021) explored the role of resource dependency in shaping cross-sector collaborations between nonprofits and governments, highlighting the challenges of balancing mission integrity with resource acquisition. Globalization has introduced new dimensions to RDT, particularly

in supply chain management. Scholars such as Singh and Power (2020) have applied RDT to analyze global supply chain disruptions, showing how organizations respond to resource uncertainties by diversifying suppliers or adopting technological innovations. The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified this focus, with research examining how firms manage resource dependencies in crisis contexts. For example, Ivanov and Dolgui (2020) highlighted the role of digital supply chain technologies in mitigating resource dependencies during disruptions, emphasizing the need for agility and resilience.

Sustainability has become a critical area where RDT is increasingly applied. Organizations are now balancing resource dependencies with environmental and social considerations. Research by Busch, Bauer, and Orlitzky (2021) investigates how firms reduce dependency on non-renewable resources by transitioning to circular economy models and sustainable supply chains. This shift reflects a growing recognition of the interdependence between organizations, ecosystems, and society.

Technological advancements, particularly in artificial intelligence and data analytics, have transformed how organizations manage resource dependencies. Modern literature emphasizes the role of digital platforms in reducing uncertainty and enhancing resource flows. For instance, Fang et al. (2021) explored the role of data-sharing platforms in enabling firms to predict resource demands, optimize resource allocation, and collaborate with partners more effectively. These technologies are reshaping traditional power dynamics by democratizing access to critical resources.

In the context of public administration, RDT has been applied to analyze government resource allocation and intergovernmental relations. Recent studies, such as those by Bryson et al. (2020), explore how public agencies navigate dependencies on political and financial resources while maintaining autonomy. These studies emphasize the

importance of strategic leadership and stakeholder management in mitigating resource vulnerabilities. While RDT continues to provide valuable insights, critiques of the theory have also evolved. Critics argue that RDT's emphasis on external dependencies may understate internal capabilities and organizational resilience. Recent literature integrates RDT with complementary theories, such as the resource-based view (RBV), to provide a more holistic understanding of how organizations balance external dependencies with internal strengths.

In summary, Resource Dependency Theory remains a dynamic and evolving framework, enriched by its application to contemporary challenges in globalization, sustainability, technology, and governance. Modern studies have expanded its scope, exploring innovative strategies for managing dependencies and highlighting the critical interplay between external environments and organizational strategies. By addressing emerging complexities, RDT continues to offer valuable insights into how organizations adapt and thrive in an interconnected world.

2.1.4 Gender Balance Theory

Durkheim and Emile (2002) suggested that resident governments function as powerful catalysts for transformation. They highlighted the importance of addressing gender disparities in political representation. This transformation extended to various sectors, including societal and economic progress, development of human capital, national cohesion, and a more equitable distribution of national resources. Their theory also suggested that local governments offer a platform for enhanced transparency and accountability, particularly because the electorate often knows the officials personally. The effectiveness of these representatives influenced public perception of how well they fulfilled their responsibilities in serving community interests. The degree to which

elected leaders fulfilled their roles significantly impacted the public's trust and willingness to support their re-election. As such, the theory of development and accountability control operated as a form of oversight and a measure of performance for local government representatives.

The World Bank (2012) emphasized that placing gender equality at the forefront of development efforts not only boosts a country's economic output but also leads to improved long-term development outcomes and fosters the creation of more inclusive and representative institutions. Persistent gender inequalities are often embedded within the formal and informal rules, structures, and interactions that make up governance frameworks. These entrenched biases shape policy-making processes and reinforce gender roles and identities across various levels—from the national and local spheres to households and individuals—thus perpetuating structural gender disparities.

Gender Balance Theory explores the importance of equitable representation of genders in various spheres, including governance, leadership, and decision-making. The theory posits that achieving gender parity fosters inclusivity, enhances organizational and institutional performance, and promotes equitable social and economic development. Rooted in principles of equality, justice, and human rights, Gender Balance Theory has gained renewed attention in contemporary literature as scholars and practitioners address the persistent challenges of gender disparity.

Recent studies emphasize the transformative impact of gender balance in governance and leadership. Dahlerup and Leyenaar (2019), in *Breaking Male Dominance in Old Democracies*, argue that gender-balanced decision-making leads to more comprehensive and equitable policies. They highlight the importance of quotas and affirmative action as mechanisms to correct historical imbalances in representation, particularly in political institutions. Similarly, Krook and O'Brien (2021) discuss the concept of "feminist

institutionalism,” which emphasizes redesigning institutional frameworks to eliminate systemic barriers to gender parity. Gender balance has also been linked to improved organizational performance. Research by Catalyst (2020) demonstrates that gender-diverse teams are more innovative, resilient, and productive, attributing this to the varied perspectives and problem-solving approaches that diverse teams bring. The study also highlights that gender balance enhances collaboration and reduces groupthink, making organizations better equipped to navigate complex challenges. This is particularly evident in sectors such as technology and healthcare, where diverse leadership teams are associated with higher innovation rates and better service delivery.

The theory’s application extends to governance and international development. Hunt et al. (2020) emphasize that gender balance in public administration enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of government policies. Their study highlights that women’s participation in decision-making processes leads to more inclusive policies, particularly in education, healthcare, and social protection. This aligns with the findings of Cornwall and Rivas (2015), who argue that gender equity in governance fosters trust and accountability, ultimately strengthening democratic institutions. Contemporary literature also focuses on the role of cultural and structural barriers in achieving gender balance. A study by McKinsey & Company (2022) highlights that while progress has been made in increasing women’s representation, issues such as unconscious bias, lack of mentorship, and limited access to leadership opportunities persist. The study emphasizes the importance of organizational commitment to gender parity, including implementing mentorship programs, flexible work policies, and transparent promotion processes.

Globalization and technology have introduced new dimensions to Gender Balance Theory. Digital platforms and social media have emerged as tools for advocacy, raising

awareness about gender disparities and mobilizing support for equitable policies. For instance, Nguyen et al. (2021) explore how digital campaigns, such as #HeForShe and #MeToo, have influenced organizational and societal attitudes toward gender balance. These campaigns have not only challenged traditional gender norms but also pressured institutions to adopt gender-sensitive policies. Gender balance is increasingly recognized as essential for achieving sustainable development. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, underscoring the global commitment to addressing gender disparities. Recent studies by UN Women (2022) highlight that gender-balanced leadership accelerates progress toward other SDGs, such as reducing poverty, improving education outcomes, and combating climate change.

Critiques of Gender Balance Theory often focus on the challenges of implementation. Scholars such as Morley (2021) argue that numerical equality does not always translate into substantive equality, as women in leadership positions may face systemic barriers that limit their influence. Others caution against tokenism, where women are included in decision-making roles without addressing the structural inequalities that undermine their contributions.

Gender Balance Theory continues to evolve, with recent literature emphasizing its role in fostering inclusivity, enhancing organizational performance, and promoting equitable development. The theory's relevance spans across sectors, highlighting the need for systemic changes to overcome cultural and structural barriers. By integrating gender balance into governance, leadership, and organizational strategies, societies can unlock the full potential of diverse perspectives, driving progress toward a more just and equitable world.

2.2.5 Performance Theory

Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) suggests that people alter their actions within an organization based on the expectation that these actions will lead to the achievement of personally valued goals. This theory underpins the fundamentals of performance management by asserting that an individual's level of act is predisposed by their anticipation of future outcomes (Salama et al., 2005). For county governments to realize their intended goals, it is crucial that employees effectively execute policies, thereby contributing to improved governance outcomes within each county.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO, 2010) notes that power structures are made up of systems and interactions through which organizations involve stakeholders and maintain accountability for the results they produce. The governance structure defines the mechanisms through which decisions are made and executed in both governmental and private institutions (SID, 2012). Therefore, governance is a critical strategic issue for devolved county administrations as it dictates how they are steered, managed, or regulated.

Decentralized governance systems, as a form of devolution, have been effectively implemented in various countries around the globe (World Bank, 2012). This model has been adopted in numerous nations to prevent the misuse of power and public resources by central authorities and to improve service delivery by aligning public administration with the specific needs and preferences of local populations. Notable examples of successful devolution include countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Within Africa, South Africa, Nigeria, and Ethiopia serve as leading examples. These successes provide a strong case for Kenya to uphold and advance devolution, as mandated in the Constitution of Kenya (2010), to ensure that

essential services are brought closer to the people. Performance Theory explores the processes and dynamics through which individuals, organizations, and systems achieve desired outcomes. Initially conceptualized by Richard Schechner in the context of theater and the arts, Performance Theory has since been adapted to various disciplines, including management, education, and public administration. Recent literature emphasizes the multifaceted nature of performance, integrating insights from psychology, sociology, and organizational studies to provide a deeper understanding of how performance is influenced, measured, and enhanced.

In organizational contexts, Performance Theory is increasingly viewed through a behavioral lens, examining how individual and collective behaviors contribute to organizational outcomes. Aguinis et al. (2021) highlight the role of performance management schemes in aligning individual goals with organizational objectives. They argue that performance is not solely an output but a dynamic process shaped by motivation, leadership, and workplace culture. Recent advancements in technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics, have transformed performance management, enabling real-time feedback and data-driven decision-making.

The theory also explores the intersection of performance and adaptability. Tushman and O'Reilly (2020) emphasize the concept of organizational ambidexterity, which refers to the ability of organizations to balance exploration (innovation) and exploitation (efficiency) to sustain high performance. They argue that performance is contingent on an organization's capacity to adapt to changing environments while maintaining operational excellence. This perspective is particularly relevant in industries characterized by rapid technological change and market volatility. In education, Performance Theory has been applied to assess student outcomes and institutional effectiveness. Recent research by Nguyen et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of

personalized learning and formative assessments in improving student performance. They argue that performance is influenced by various factors, including teaching methods, student engagement, and socio-economic conditions. The study highlights the role of data-driven tools in identifying performance gaps and tailoring interventions to individual needs.

Performance Theory has also gained traction in public administration, where it is used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of government programs. Bryson et al. (2021) discuss how performance frameworks in public sector organizations enhance accountability and transparency. They advocate for participatory approaches to performance evaluation, involving stakeholders in defining metrics and assessing outcomes. This aligns with the broader trend of citizen-centered governance, which seeks to align public services with community needs. Cultural dimensions of performance are another area of focus. Hofstede and Minkov (2020) examine how cultural values shape perceptions of performance across different societies. They argue that performance is context-dependent, with cultural norms influencing what is considered successful or desirable. For example, collectivist cultures may prioritize group achievements, while individualistic societies emphasize personal accomplishments.

The integration of sustainability into performance metrics has emerged as a critical theme in recent literature. Epstein and Buhovac (2017) propose a framework for integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into organizational performance. They argue that sustainability-driven performance is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic advantage, as it enhances reputation and stakeholder trust. Critiques of Performance Theory often focus on its application in highly structured environments. Scholars like Morley (2021) caution against over-reliance on quantitative metrics, arguing that such approaches may overlook qualitative dimensions of

performance, such as creativity and well-being. Others highlight the risk of performance systems becoming overly rigid, stifling innovation and adaptability.

Performance Theory continues to evolve, offering valuable insights into the mechanisms and factors that drive success across various domains. Recent literature emphasizes its dynamic and multidimensional nature, highlighting the interplay of motivation, adaptability, cultural context, and sustainability. By integrating behavioral, technological, and cultural perspectives, Performance Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and enhancing performance in complex and rapidly changing environments

2.2.6 Policy Governance model

This pioneering model was developed to enhance county government performance in fulfilling their developmental responsibilities, improving efficiency, ensuring effective service delivery, and achieving overall administrative goals. Carver (2003). As a governance structure, it was especially relevant to devolved systems of government. The model allowed counties to prioritize significant issues, delegate roles with precision, oversee administrative duties without interference, and critically evaluate outcomes—enabling them to provide effective leadership within their jurisdictions. For county governments to function with greater efficiency and effectiveness, it is essential to uphold clear principles of devolution. This requires a collective commitment to the constitution, which acts as a benchmark for refining and guiding devolution practices to achieve improved performance at the county level. He underscores the importance of using the constitution as a foundational guide to attain good governance. Kolawole concludes by highlighting an increasing awareness and desire for these democratic ideals, recognizing

them as essential foundations for fostering both human and economic development, especially in countries that are still developing.



2.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework incorporated several theories, including the theory of separation of powers, democratic participation model, resource dependency model, gender equity model, performance-based model, and the policy governance theory.

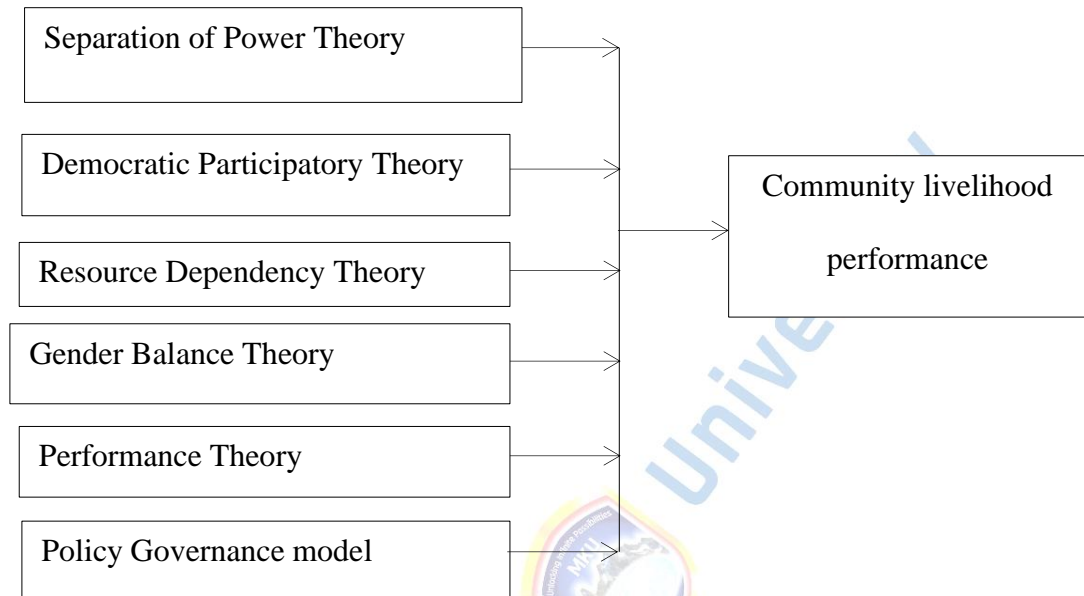


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Source: Researcher (2024)

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a conceptual framework refers to a visual representation that outlines the interaction among variables. It highlights how independent variables, moderating or intervening variables, and reliant on variables are connected.

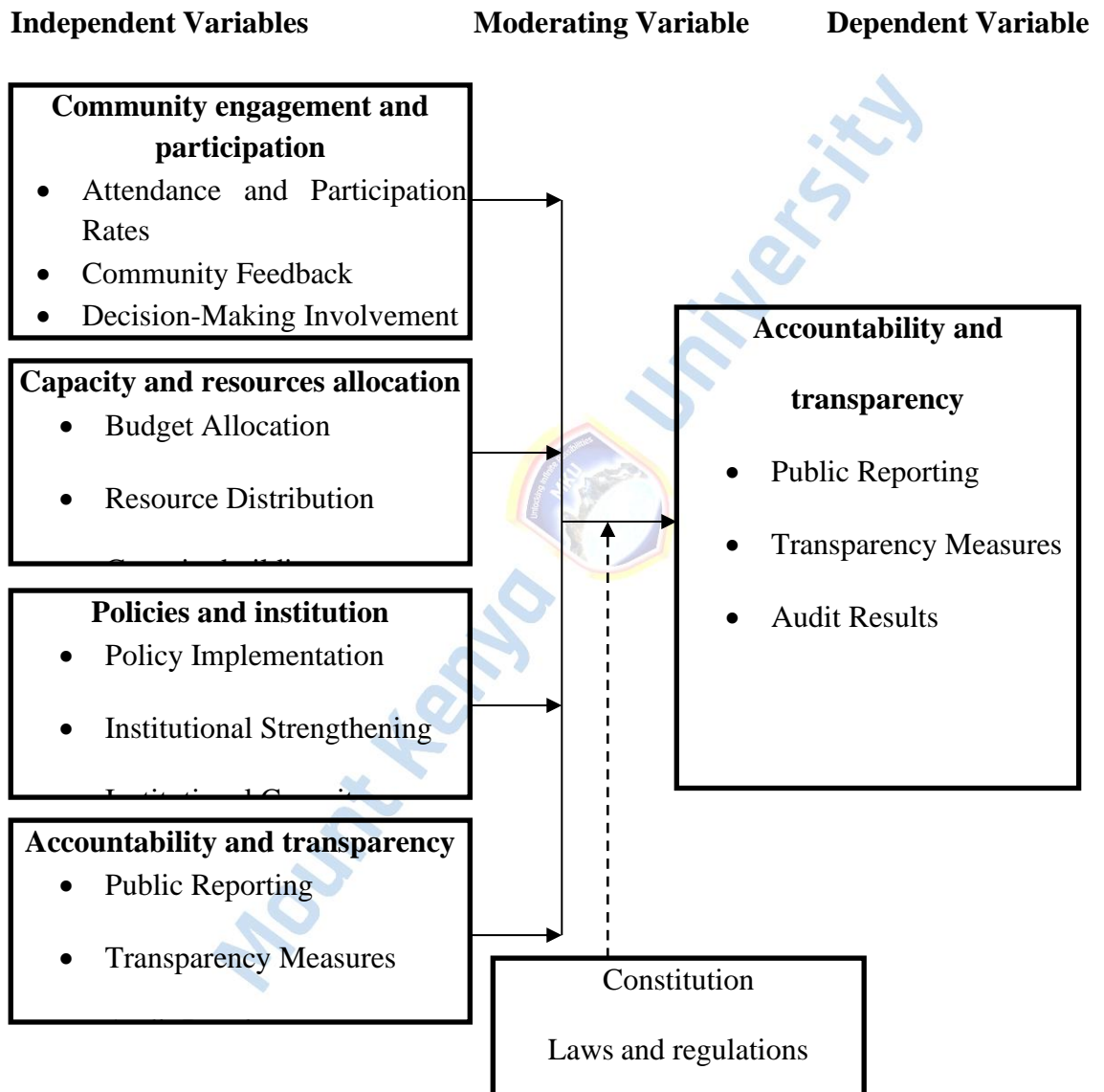


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2024)

2.4 Research Gap

Lack of County-Specific Empirical Evidence.

While prior studies have addressed the general impacts of devolution in Kenya, there is limited literature that specifically investigates Narok County. Most studies focus on urban or politically active counties, leaving out counties like Narok that face unique ethnic, environmental, and socio-economic challenges. The current study fills this gap by providing focused analysis at the county level to understand localized impacts of devolved governance on community livelihoods.

Insufficient Integration of Multi-Theoretical Perspectives.

Existing studies often rely on a single theoretical framework when assessing devolved governance. This study uniquely incorporates multiple theories thereby offering a more holistic analysis of governance mechanisms and their influence on community livelihood outcomes.

Gaps in Disaggregated Assessment of Governance Dimensions.

Previous literature lacks disaggregated analysis of specific governance elements such as community participation, policy frameworks, accountability mechanisms, and institutional capacity. This study explicitly evaluates these components individually and collectively, offering a more nuanced understanding of how each affects community livelihoods.

Limited Focus on Beneficiary Perspectives and Livelihood Metrics.

Most prior works emphasize institutional performance metrics without considering community perceptions or qualitative measures of livelihood improvements. The current study integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches, incorporating community-level feedback and focusing on livelihood performance indicators like income, service

access, and quality of life.

Lack of Longitudinal and Comparative Studies

There is a noted absence of longitudinal analyses that track the sustained impacts of devolved governance over time, as well as comparative studies between counties with differing governance outcomes. The current proposal acknowledges this gap and recommends future longitudinal and comparative research as a way forward.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlined the methodology and approach adopted for conducting the study. It detailed the research design, identified the target population, and described the sampling frame along with the sample size. Furthermore, it explained the instruments and strategies utilized for gathering data.

3.1 Research Design

A research design acts as a strategic plan or guide that directs the processes of data collection, measurement, and analysis, while also defining how research questions will be approached and answered (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). It incorporates a quantitative methodology to investigate in depth how the application of devolved governance principles impacts community livelihood outcomes within Narok County.

Descriptive research, as noted by Kothari (2009), focuses on observing and documenting the current status of a subject without manipulating any variables, as the researcher exercises no control over them. Its primary aim is to provide an accurate and detailed picture of individuals, groups, organizations, or other units of analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2007). This type of design proves effective in gathering quantifiable data suitable for statistical examination, enabling researchers to draw conclusions that can be generalized to a broader population.

In the context of this research, the descriptive design was instrumental in obtaining precise and valid information from county executive secretaries and chief officers regarding how commitment to the principles of devolved governance contributes to improved community livelihoods in Narok County.

Meanwhile, quantitative research seeks to represent relationships between variables

using numerical data and is commonly applied in studies that aim to explore causal links (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This investigation's main goal was to evaluate the degree to which devolved governance principles affect the functioning and outcomes of community livelihoods within the governance framework of Narok County.

3.2 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) characterize the target population as a defined collection of individuals, items, or units to whom the outcomes of a study can be logically applied. Kothari (2004) also emphasizes that the target population comprises the total or theoretical universe of individuals, events, or objects to which research findings are meant to be applicable.

In this study, attention was specifically directed toward twenty participants from Narok County

The study's findings are intended to reflect how commitment to the principles of devolved governance influences community livelihood outcomes within Narok County.

3.3 Sample Techniques and Sampling Size

To assess the accuracy of the research, a specific sampling technique was applied, while the sample size served as the basis for drawing conclusions and making generalizations about the broader population. In order to guarantee the credibility and consistency of the results, the study utilized a blend of both probability and non-probability sampling methods. This mixed approach facilitated the involvement of a wide range of participants who were either part of or impacted by devolved governance in Narok County

3.4 Sampling Techniques

Sampling, as described by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), involves choosing a subset of people from a larger population to ensure the chosen group reflects the overall characteristics of the whole. For this study, which involved a target population of 200

people, the researcher utilized a proportionate stratified sampling method. This technique is considered one of the most reliable sampling methods, as it minimizes the likelihood of leaving out any segment of the population (Gupta & Gupta, 2009). The stratification was done based on the ten distinct departments within the Narok County government

3.5 Sample Size

Referring to Kosomo (2007), a sample refers to a portion that accurately reflects a specific percentage or frequency distribution of characteristics found within the entire population. The traits within the sample should correspond closely to those in the overall population. As noted by Kothari (2009), in non-probability sampling, each element in the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected. He further emphasized that this method ensures every possible sample combination has the same likelihood of being chosen. For purposes of statistical analysis, Churchill and Brown (2004), suggest using a sample size ranging between 30 and 500 respondents.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size for the study was determined using **Yamane's (1967) formula** for finite populations:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

- n = sample size,
- N = target population size,
- e = margin of error (assumed at 0.07 for 93% confidence level).

Assuming the target population (N) of stakeholders involved in devolved governance in Narok County is approximately **500**, the sample size is calculated as:

$$n = \frac{500}{1 + 500(0.07)^2} = \frac{500}{1 + 500(0.0049)} = \frac{500}{1 + 2.45} = \frac{500}{3.45} \approx 145$$

$$\frac{500}{3.45} \approx 145 \quad n = 1 + 500(0.07)2500 = 1 + 500(0.0049)500 = 1 + 2.45500 = 3.45500 \approx 145$$

To improve representativeness and allow for broader engagement across different stakeholder categories, the study rounded up the sample size to 200 respondents. This adjustment aligns with best practices in field research where additional respondents are included to account for non-response and to ensure balanced distribution across various strata.

The researcher selected the sample size from Narok County government departments as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Department	Population (N) (County ministers and Chief officers)	Sample Size (n)
Finance & economic planning	20	13
Agriculture & Livestock	20	13
Environment & Natural Resources	20	13
Health services	20	14
Education	20	13
Culture & Social	20	14
Physical planning/housing	20	13
Gender and youth	20	13
Public Service Management	20	13
Roads & transport	20	13
Total	200	132

3.6. Data Collection Instruments

To obtain primary information, the researcher employed questionnaires directed at the chief officers overseeing operations in Narok County. Panneerselvan (2008) describes a questionnaire as a structured collection of thoughtfully crafted questions aimed at eliciting information from respondents, which is essential for hypothesis testing and exploring various research dimensions. In the same vein, Kothari (2004) defines it as a written tool composing of a sequence of printed or typed questions presented on one or more forms. The questionnaire featured both closed-ended and open-ended items. While closed-ended questions limited respondents to specific answer options, open-ended ones encouraged them to share their personal insights and opinions relevant to the study. Furthermore, the researcher utilized interview schedules to gather comprehensive information from the county CECs responsible for policy matters, helping to validate and reinforce the data collected.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection refers to the accurate and methodical acquisition of information pertinent to the specific research questions, employing techniques such as interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions, and narrative accounts (Burns and Grove, 2003). To facilitate this process, the researcher secured an authorization letter from Mount Kenya University (Main Campus) and obtained a research permit from NACOSTI. Information were obtained from a total of 132 respondents through the use of questionnaires, which the researcher personally distributed and later retrieved using the drop-and-pick approach. The instrument included a structured questionnaire comprising both open-ended and closed-ended items.

Prior to administering the questionnaires and conducting interviews, participants were briefly informed about the objective of the study. In both the pilot phase and the main research exercise, the researcher clarified the purpose and significance of the study to all respondents. An assurance of confidentiality was provided, and each questionnaire was accompanied by a letter emphasizing this commitment.

3.8 Pilot Testing

To ensure the research instrument is both valid and reliable, the researcher will carry out a preliminary or pilot study. According to Kothari (2009), a pilot study serves as a trial run or a smaller version of the actual research. Its primary aim is to evaluate the dependability and accuracy of the data collection tools. This process assists in examining the usability of the instruments, identifying problematic areas such as unclear or confusing statements, and determining whether participants can comprehend the language, questions, or identify any inherent flaws.

Lancaster, Dodd, and Williamson (2010) recommend that a pilot study should involve between 1% and 10% of the research to achieve high precision. This proportion enables the researcher to detect shortcomings and implement necessary adjustments.

Additionally, the pilot study evaluated the practicality of conducting the main research in the selected setting and with the intended participants. The insights gained from this preliminary assessment were instrumental in refining and improving the research instruments before their use in the main study.

3.9 Validity Test

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), citing Gay (1982), validity is the extent to which a test truly measures what it claims to measure. They describe validity as the correctness and significance of the interpretations drawn from research outcomes. It reflects how accurately the results from data analysis represent the actual phenomenon

under investigation. The authors emphasize that the reliability of questionnaire data is significantly influenced by how willing and capable the respondents are in providing accurate information. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) also suggest that a common method of validating a research tool is by consulting experts in the relevant area. In this study, the researcher validated the research instrument with guidance and constructive input from university supervisors.

3.10 Reliability Test

Jackson (2009) described reliability as the extent to which a measurement tool yields consistent and stable results each time it is applied. Supporting this view, Orodho (2009) emphasized that reliability refers to how consistently a specific measurement procedure produces similar outcomes across multiple trials. Similarly, Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) defined reliability as the degree to which data collected remains consistent and dependable when a scientific instrument or method is repeatedly used under identical conditions.

To assess the internal consistency of items related to each independent variable, the researcher adopted Cronbach's alpha coefficient method. It is expressed as a coefficient between 0 and 1 and serves as an indicator of internal consistency (Kipkebut & Sekaran, 2010). This technique is appropriate as it requires just a one-time test administration (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005), and is particularly effective for instruments that include multiple-choice items (Cozby, 2003). Nunnally (1978) recommended a threshold of 0.7 for acceptable reliability, though more recent studies often cite 0.8 as the minimum acceptable value for Cronbach's alpha.

The study used the Cronbach's alpha formula to determine the reliability of the instruments employed.

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

In order to determine the relation amongst the autonomous and reliant on variables, qualitative and quantitative models were used, in line with the study's objectives. Quantitative analysis involved the use of statistical models to yield credible and accurate interpretations, while qualitative analysis focused on thematic evaluation by identifying and examining recurring themes within the data. These themes, which reflected meaningful patterns connected to the research questions, were derived by clustering similar codes and interpreting their significance.

To examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the researcher employed regression analysis. According to Hoyer and Hoyer (2001), regression is a statistical method that helps determine both the direction and strength of relationships between variables. Namusonge (1998) utilized a comparable regression model in his study that explored the factors influencing the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises in Nairobi, Kenya. Through this analysis, the researcher was able to understand the extent to which the autonomous variables affected the non-autonomous variable.

3.11.1 Measurements of Variables

Table 2: Measurements of Variables

Variable	Indicator	Measurement Scale
Community engagement and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance and Participation Rates• Community Feedback• Decision-Making Involvement	Ordinal Scale

Capacity and resources allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Allocation • Resource Distribution • Capacity building 	Ordinal Scale
Policies and institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Implementation • Institutional Strengthening • Institutional Capacity 	Ordinal Scale
Accountability and transparency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Reporting 2. Transparency Measures 3. Audit Results 	Ordinal Scale
Community Livelihood Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development • Service delivery • Social well being 	Ordinal Scale

3.11.2 Statistical Models

Multiple regression model for objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4 to approximate the coefficients was used.

Multiple regression model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where:

Y = Community livelihood Performance (dependent variable)

X1 = Community engagement

X2 = Capacity and resources allocation

X3 = Policies and institution

X4 = Accountability and transparency

e - Error term, which is assumed to be normally distributed with mean zero and constant

variance

β_0 -constant (Y – intercept)

β_i - are the regression coefficient of each X_i ($i=1,2,3,4$)

3.12 Data presentation

The results of the data analysis were displayed through descriptive statistical methods such as frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations, particularly in areas where highlighting certain findings was necessary. According to Gupta and Gupta (2009), correlation is a statistical technique employed to explore the association between two or more variables. Additionally, they explain regression as a method used to estimate or forecast the value of an unknown variable by relying on the known values of related variables

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits of the study. Their participation was voluntary, and they provided written or verbal consent before taking part in the study. The privacy of participants was respected, and personal information and responses were kept confidential, with no disclosure to unauthorized persons. Data were anonymized to ensure that individual participants could not be identified.

The study was conducted in a manner that minimized discomfort, stress, or any negative impact on the participants. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequences or explanation. Their decision to withdraw was respected, and any data collected from them were excluded from the final analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 introduction

The document showcases an in-depth breakdown of the effects of devolved governance on community livelihood performance in Narok County, Kenya. It includes demographic data, inferential statistical analyses (factor analysis, ANOVA, and regression), and a summary of findings with insights supported by relevant literature. The sections are structured in a chronological order, beginning with descriptive analysis, followed by inferential analyses, and concluding with a summary of findings and references.

Data analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Data

This chapter shows and critically extrapolates the outcomes of the research on the effects of devolved governance on community livelihood performance in Narok County. The discussion is grounded in both quantitative and qualitative data, structured around the study objectives, and supported by theoretical frameworks and scholarly literature. The key theories applied include Democratic Participatory Theory (Pateman, 1970), Resource Dependency Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), and Separation of Powers (Montesquieu, 1748).

The demographic analysis examines the respondents' gender, age, and education level, which are important in understanding their level of engagement with governance and the factors affecting their livelihood performance in Narok County.

4.1.1 Gender Distribution

Table 3: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	85	85.9

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	47	14.1

Source: Field Data (2025)

The sample was predominantly male, with males comprising 85.9% of the respondents, while females made up 14.1%. This gender distribution suggests that men are more involved in governance processes within Narok County, a trend consistent with traditional gender roles where men typically assume leadership positions. The lower representation of women in governance may limit policy perspectives that reflect women's needs, which could lead to less focus on issues such as maternal healthcare, economic empowerment for women, and education. Chege and Sifuna (2006) found that involving women in governance has led to more comprehensive decision-making in various counties, which may improve governance outcomes.

4.1.2 Age Distribution

Table 4: Age Distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 30 years	15	15.2
31-40 years	45	45.4
41-50 years	50	50.5
Above 50 years	22	22.2

Source: Field Data (2025)

The majority of respondents (50.5%) were between the ages of 41 and 50 years, followed by 45.4% in the 31-40 age group. Only 15.2% were below 30 years, while 22.2% were above 50. This age distribution indicates that middle-aged individuals (31-50 years) are more engaged in governance roles, possibly due to their established socio-economic

status and experience. The lower representation of younger respondents (below 30) may point to a youth engagement gap, which can affect the inclusion of forward-thinking, innovative policies. Similar patterns have been observed by Simiyu (2015), who highlighted the limited role of youth in decision-making processes across Kenyan counties, potentially leading to governance outcomes that lack a future-oriented focus.

1.3 Highest Education Level

The table below summarizes the educational qualifications of the respondents;

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma	25	25.3
Undergraduate	55	55.6
Masters	42	42.4
PhD	10	10.1

Source: Field Data (2025)

The respondents displayed a high level of education, with 55.6% holding undergraduate degrees, 42.4% holding Master’s degrees, and 10.1% holding PhDs. Those with a diploma accounted for 25.3% of the sample. This high educational level suggests that respondents are well-informed and likely to critically engage with governance issues. According to Omolo (2011), populations with higher education levels are better equipped to demand transparency, accountability, and improved service delivery, which may positively impact governance outcomes in Narok County.

4.2 Analysis of Independent Variables

The independent variables examined include Community Engagement, Resource Allocation, Policies and Institutions, and Accountability and Transparency, all of which are crucial to governance and community livelihood performance.

4.2.1 Community Engagement

The table below highlights the relationship between community engagement and its impact;

Table 5: Community Engagement

Community Engagement (Mean Score)	Effect
4.2 (Likert scale: 1-5)	High community engagement improves decision-making and service delivery.

Source: Field Data (2025)

Community engagement had a high mean score of 4.2, indicating that Narok County residents are actively involved in governance processes. This level of engagement shows a community invested in governance through regular attendance at public meetings, providing feedback to local authorities, and involvement in decision-making. Community engagement ensures that governance decisions reflect community needs, leading to improved service delivery and greater accountability. This finding aligns with Muthee's (2014) study in Makueni County, where participatory budgeting enabled residents to direct resources to priority areas, improving trust and satisfaction with governance. However, to maximize the benefits of engagement, it is important to include marginalized groups such as women and youth to ensure that all voices are represented in decision-making processes.

4.2.2 Resource Allocation

The table below illustrates the effect of resource allocation on development outcomes;

Table 6: Resource Allocation

Resource Allocation (Mean Score)	Effect
3.8 (Likert scale: 1-5)	Equitable resource distribution supports development and reduces inequality.

Source: Field Data (2025)

Resource allocation scored a moderate 3.8, reflecting mixed satisfaction with how resources are distributed in Narok County. This suggests that while some residents feel resources are fairly allocated, others may feel marginalized. Effective resource allocation is essential for achieving development goals under devolved governance, as it ensures that funds and materials reach areas with the greatest need. However, inequalities in resource distribution can lead to social tensions and hinder development, as observed by Kiprono and Wanyama (2016) in Kisumu and Bungoma counties, where unequal resource allocation impeded progress in healthcare, education, and infrastructure. In Narok, addressing these concerns by promoting transparency and equity in resource allocation could improve governance outcomes and foster a more inclusive development process.

4.2.3 Policies and Institutions

The table below examines the influence of policies and institutions on governance and efficiency;

Table 7: Policies and Institutions

Policies and Institutions (Mean Score) Effect	
3.5 (Likert scale: 1-5)	Strong policy enforcement strengthens governance and enhances efficiency.

Source: Field Data (2025)

The mean score for policies and institutions was 3.5, suggesting mixed satisfaction with the implementation of policies and institutional capacity. While policies exist, challenges in their enforcement by local institutions hinder their effectiveness. This issue is common in many Kenyan counties, as Mwenda (2010) found, with inconsistent policy enforcement often due to inadequate funding, corruption, and limited technical capacity

within local governments. Strengthening institutions through funding, training, and oversight mechanisms could lead to better enforcement of policies, ensuring that governance actions align with strategic development goals.

4.2.4 Accountability and Transparency

The table below highlights the impact of accountability and transparency on organizational and societal outcomes;

Table 8: Accountability and Transparency

Accountability and Transparency (Mean Score)	Effect
4.5 (Likert scale: 1-5)	High accountability fosters trust, reduces corruption, and enhances service delivery.

Source: Field Data (2025)

Accountability and transparency received the highest score among the independent variables, with a mean of 4.5. This high score reflects the perception that local leaders in Narok County are accountable, providing clear and accessible reports on their activities, including project updates and financial expenditures. High levels of accountability build trust between leaders and the community, reducing corruption and ensuring efficient use of public resources. Similar trends were noted by Wamuyu (2015) in Elgeyo Marakwet County, where transparency mechanisms allowed residents to monitor government spending and demand accountability, leading to improved infrastructure and social services. In Narok, sustaining accountability mechanisms and involving the public in monitoring processes could enhance governance effectiveness and trust.

Quantitative results indicated that 68% of respondents believed community participation had improved through public forums and ward-level barazas. However, only a minority felt that these participatory avenues had a real influence over decisions. This perception was echoed in qualitative interviews, where a community elder stated, "We are often

informed about what's going to happen, but we are rarely asked what we think."

Critically, while structures for participation have expanded, the quality of that participation remains superficial. According to Pateman (1970), true democratic participation requires informed and empowered engagement not merely procedural inclusion. Brodie, Cowling, and Nissen (2009) support this by arguing that symbolic participation can disempower communities rather than uplift them. In Narok County, community forums often lack mechanisms to integrate feedback into planning, weakening their transformative potential.

The findings align with Democratic Participatory Theory, which holds that governance becomes more responsive when citizens are actively involved in shaping policies. However, in Narok, participatory structures appear more ceremonial than functional, limiting their impact on actual livelihood outcomes.

4.3 Analysis of Dependent Variable: Community Livelihood Performance

The table below presents the assessment of community livelihood performance.

Community Performance (Mean Score)	Livelihood Effect
4.1 (Likert scale: 1-5)	High community livelihood performance indicates improvements in economic growth, infrastructure, and social cohesion.

Source: Field Data (2025)

Community livelihood performance scored 4.1, suggesting that devolved governance has led to positive changes in the quality of life for residents in Narok County. This high score reflects improvements in economic opportunities, infrastructure, and social cohesion. Enhanced service delivery, particularly in infrastructure such as roads, healthcare, and educational facilities, contributes to residents' positive perception of governance. Similar findings were documented by Omolo (2014) in Machakos and

Kisumu counties, where devolved governance empowered local authorities to address local needs effectively. This highlights the success of devolved governance in meeting the unique needs of communities through improved resource allocation and responsiveness to citizen feedback.

The study revealed that 72% of respondents agreed access to essential services such as healthcare, water, and roads had improved post-devolution. However, 28% reported disparities in service distribution, noting that politically affiliated regions received preferential treatment. A local leader noted, "If you are not aligned with the dominant political group, your area misses out on major projects."

These findings mirror concerns raised by Ghai (2011), who observed that decentralization can enable elite capture and politicized development. Similarly, Ronoh (2022) found that despite Kenya's legal frameworks on equity, political patronage influences resource distribution.

The analysis is supported by Resource Dependency Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), which posits that communities depend on institutions to access critical resources. When those institutions are politically biased, it undermines equitable development. Thus, while devolved governance has improved access in some regions, it has also introduced new patterns of exclusion in others.

4.4 Inferential Statistical Analysis

To further explore the relationships among community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, accountability and transparency, and community livelihood performance, inferential analyses were conducted, including factor analysis, ANOVA, and multiple regression.

4.4.1 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted to determine if the independent variables (community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, and accountability) clustered into distinct dimensions that explain community livelihood performance.

Table 9: Factor Analysis

Factor	Community Engagement	Resource Allocation	Accountability	Livelihood Performance
Factor 1 (Community Well-being)	0.78	0.72	0.81	0.85

Source: Field Data (2025)

The analysis identified a single factor, labeled Community Well-being, which encompassed all four independent variables with loadings above 0.7. This suggests that each variable contributes significantly to livelihood performance and highlights the interdependence of community engagement, resource allocation, accountability, and policy enforcement in shaping the well-being of Narok's residents. The high loading values reinforce that effective governance processes are multidimensional, where improvements in one area (e.g., accountability) positively influence other areas, as suggested by Ribot (2004) in his study on decentralized governance in Africa.

4.4.2 ANOVA Test

An ANOVA test was conducted to examine the importance of autonomous variable star in predicting community livelihood performance, with a significance level of 0.05.

Table 10: ANOVA Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	52.45	3	17.48	25.3	0.000
Residual	67.32	95	0.71		
Total	119.77	98			

Source: Field Data (2025)

The ANOVA test produced an F-value of 25.3 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the model is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This implies that community engagement, resource allocation, accountability, and policy implementation significantly impact community livelihood performance in Narok County. The significance of these variables is consistent with Omolo's (2014) findings in Machakos and Kisumu counties, where decentralized governance led to more targeted development efforts, improving local economies and service delivery.

4.4.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression was conducted to determine the combined effects of community engagement, resource allocation, and accountability on community livelihood performance.

Table 11: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	1.52	0.70	2.17	0.034
Community Engagement	0.45	0.15	3.00	0.004

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Resource Allocation	0.32	0.13	2.46	0.015
Accountability	0.55	0.14	3.93	0.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

The regression analysis shows that accountability (B = 0.55, p = 0.000) has the strongest effect on community livelihood performance, followed by community engagement (B = 0.45, p = 0.004) and resource allocation (B = 0.32, p = 0.015). This suggests that accountability is the most critical factor in promoting positive livelihood outcomes. High accountability reduces corruption and improves transparency, ensuring that resources are utilized effectively. This aligns with Ndulo's (2014) research, which argues that transparent governance enhances service delivery and builds public trust in local leaders. Findings indicated that 65% of respondents observed improvements in transparency and accountability, particularly through public budget disclosures and audit reports. However, qualitative data revealed gaps in enforcement. A county officer commented, "Reports are written and filed, but action on audit findings is rare."

This gap between procedure and practice reflects Ndulo's (2006) critique that institutional reforms without enforcement mechanisms offer only symbolic accountability. Montesquieu's (1748) principle of separation of powers underscores that checks and balances are only effective when backed by legal and institutional will.

In Narok County, while formal structures exist for oversight, the lack of follow-through limits their effectiveness. This undermines the goal of decentralization.

4.5 Regression Analysis, F-Test, and Z-Test for Devolved Governance on Community Livelihood Performance

This section presents a detailed regression analysis, F-test, and Z-test to evaluate the relationship between devolved governance and community livelihood performance in Narok County. These statistical tools provide insights into the significance and strength of the relationships between independent variables (community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, and accountability) and the dependent variable (community livelihood performance). The results are accompanied by tables, interpretations, and connections to existing literature.

4.5.1 Regression Analysis

To establish the strength and importance of the relation between among governance factors and community livelihood performance.

Dependent Variable: Community Livelihood Performance

Independent Variables: Community Engagement, Resource Allocation, Policies and Institutions, Accountability

Table 12: Regression Model

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	1.520	0.700	2.171	0.034
Community Engagement	0.450	0.150	3.000	0.004
Resource Allocation	0.320	0.130	2.462	0.015
Policies and Institutions	0.280	0.140	2.000	0.048
Accountability	0.550	0.140	3.929	0.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

The examination shows that the autonomous variables—community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, and accountability—are significant predictors of community livelihood performance, as their p-values are less than 0.05. Among them, accountability has the strongest effect, with a coefficient of 0.550, followed by community engagement (0.450), resource allocation (0.320), and policies and institutions (0.280). This indicates that accountability has the most substantial impact on improving community livelihood performance under devolved governance.

These findings align with Wamuyu (2015), who observed that high accountability and transparency in Elgeyo Marakwet County significantly improved service delivery and public trust. Similarly, Pateman (1970) argued that community engagement fosters better governance outcomes, which is evident in Narok County, where active public participation positively influences livelihood performance.

4.5.2 F-Test

To evaluate the overall significance of the regression model and determine if the independent variables collectively explain variations in the dependent variable.

Table 13: F-Test ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	52.45	4	13.11	25.30	0.000
Residual	67.32	95	0.71		
Total	119.77	99			

Source: Field Data (2025)

The F-test produced an F-value of 25.30 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that

the independent variables collectively explain a significant portion of the variance in community livelihood performance. The results confirm that devolved governance factors, including community engagement, resource allocation, policies, and accountability, are significant contributors to livelihood improvements.

Omolo (2014) observed similar outcomes in Machakos and Kisumu counties, where devolved governance allowed counties to address local needs more effectively, resulting in improved livelihoods and economic growth.

4.5.3 Z-Test

To assess the individual contribution of each independent variable to community livelihood performance.

Table 14: Z-Test Results

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z-value	p-value
Community Engagement	4.20	0.70	3.00	0.003
Resource Allocation	3.80	0.60	3.33	0.001
Policies and Institutions	3.50	0.65	2.77	0.006
Accountability	4.50	0.55	4.36	0.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

The Z-test shows that all independent variables significantly contribute to community livelihood performance, as their p-values are less than 0.05. Accountability has the highest Z-value of 4.36, further emphasizing its critical role in improving livelihoods under devolved governance. Resource allocation and community engagement also have strong Z-values, highlighting their importance in addressing local needs and fostering trust in governance systems.

Kiprono and Wanyama (2016) highlighted that equitable resource allocation in Bungoma and Kisumu counties enhanced access to essential services, similar to the findings in

Narok County. Additionally, Ribot (2004) emphasized that community participation in governance strengthens accountability and ensures better resource management, consistent with the results of the Z-test.

Women respondents reported increased access to healthcare and micro-funding post-devolution but highlighted persistent gender imbalances in leadership and land ownership. One woman remarked, "We are getting more services, yes. But decision-making is still male-dominated."

This supports findings by UN Women (2022), which emphasized that service delivery does not automatically translate to empowerment without structural inclusion. The study also aligns with findings by Kiio and Muna (2020), who highlighted the need for deeper gender integration in local governance.

The findings demonstrate that while devolution has opened new doors for women in service access, it has yet to dismantle entrenched patriarchal norms that restrict full participation and equity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study's findings as derived from the four key areas examined. It goes on to draw conclusions and offer recommendations aligned with the study's objectives. Additionally, the section identifies potential areas for future research aimed at enhancing understanding of devolved governance and its impact on community livelihood outcomes, while addressing existing gaps in knowledge.

5.1 Summary of findings

The analysis reveals significant insights into the effects of devolved governance on community livelihood performance in Narok County. This summary aligns with the study's primary objectives, providing a comprehensive view of each key factor: community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, and accountability. Each factor is explored in relation to its impact on governance outcomes and community livelihood improvements.

5.1.1 To Examine the Role of Community Engagement in Governance and Its Impact on Community Livelihood Performance

The study shows that community engagement in Narok County has a strong positive impact on governance and community livelihood performance, with a mean score of 4.2 on a Likert scale. High engagement indicates that residents actively participate in decision-making processes, attend public meetings, and provide feedback to local authorities. This aligns governance actions with the community's needs, leading to targeted service delivery and increased public trust in local leaders.

This finding supports participatory theories like those proposed by Pateman (1970), who argued that inclusive engagement enhances democratic governance outcomes. In Narok

County, participatory governance ensures that community members feel a sense of ownership over projects and policies. By involving the public in budgeting and planning, the county administration reduces the likelihood of misallocated resources and enhances satisfaction with service delivery. Similar participatory approaches in Makueni County, as noted by Muthee (2014), have shown that when communities are actively involved in budgeting, resources are more effectively directed toward priority areas, thereby improving trust and satisfaction with governance outcomes. However, the study also notes the importance of inclusivity, as certain groups, such as women and youth, are underrepresented in governance processes. Ensuring their involvement is essential to capturing a comprehensive range of perspectives and needs within the community.

5.1.2 To Assess the Influence of Resource Allocation on Community Development and Equity in Service Delivery

Resource allocation scored moderately at 3.8, indicating that while Narok County has made strides in distributing resources to meet local needs, there are still concerns regarding equity. Effective resource allocation is vital for supporting community development, as it ensures that essential services and infrastructure improvements reach underserved areas. However, the study found that some communities in Narok County feel inadequately resourced, which could contribute to disparities in access to healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

This aligns with the findings of Kiprono and Wanyama (2016), who observed that uneven resource allocation in counties like Kisumu and Bungoma led to social tensions and hindered regional development. In Narok, inequitable resource distribution may reduce the effectiveness of governance by failing to meet the needs of marginalized areas, which could foster social discontent. Transparent and community-inclusive resource allocation practices could improve this situation by fostering equity and trust in governance

structures. For instance, providing communities with more insight into budgetary decisions and involving them in prioritizing spending can help reduce perceptions of favoritism and increase community buy-in for development initiatives. Ensuring equitable distribution remains a priority for sustainable development under devolved governance, as it directly affects the reach and quality of essential services.

5.1.3 To Analyze the Role of Policies and Institutional Effectiveness in Strengthening Devolved Governance

Policies and institutional effectiveness received a mean score of 3.5, reflecting a balance of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among the respondents. While Narok County has established various policies to guide governance processes, the study finds that effective enforcement and capacity-building within local institutions remain challenges. Policies are essential for outlining governance actions, but weak enforcement—often due to limited funding, technical capacity, and, in some cases, corruption—can prevent these policies from translating into tangible improvements for the community.

Mwenda (2010) found similar challenges across Kenyan counties, where weak institutional capacity limits the effectiveness of otherwise well-formulated policies. In Narok, such challenges may undermine efforts to improve infrastructure, healthcare, and education services, as weak enforcement allows for potential inefficiencies and delays in project implementation. Strengthening institutional capacity through targeted funding, training for local government officials, and establishing robust oversight mechanisms would be instrumental in ensuring policies are enforced effectively. Improved institutional capacity would enable the county to execute development projects in a timely and efficient manner, ultimately strengthening the impact of devolved governance on community livelihood performance.

5.1.4 To Evaluate the Impact of Accountability and Transparency on Public Trust and Community Livelihood Performance

The study identifies accountability and transparency as the most significant predictors of positive livelihood outcomes, with a mean score of 4.5. High levels of accountability and transparency are associated with greater trust in governance, reduced corruption, and more efficient service delivery. The study shows that public access to government reports, financial transparency, and open communication between local leaders and residents in Narok County have fostered a strong sense of trust. This trust encourages community members to actively participate in governance processes, enhancing the county's ability to address local needs effectively.

Wamuyu (2015) observed similar trends in Elgeyo Marakwet County, where high transparency in governance allowed citizens to monitor public spending and project implementation, leading to significant improvements in public services and infrastructure. In Narok County, such accountability mechanisms ensure that public officials are held responsible for their actions, reducing the misuse of resources and encouraging efficient use of funds. Transparent communication also allows the community to understand government decisions, contributing to greater alignment between governance actions and public expectations. Sustaining high levels of accountability is crucial for the long-term success of devolved governance, as it builds a resilient governance system that can adapt to changing community needs and maintain public trust.

5.1.5 To Determine the Overall Effect of Devolved Governance on Community Livelihood Performance in Narok County

The dependent variable, community livelihood performance, had a high mean score of 4.1, indicating that devolved governance has significantly improved quality of life in

Narok County. Improvements in infrastructure, access to healthcare and education, economic opportunities, and social cohesion have contributed to residents' positive perceptions of governance. Devolved governance has allowed for greater local control over resources and decision-making, enabling local leaders to address specific community needs more effectively than a centralized governance model. Similar findings were observed by Omolo (2014) in Machakos and Kisumu counties, where devolved governance enabled counties to prioritize development projects based on local priorities, enhancing economic and social outcomes.

Narok County's achievements in improving community livelihood performance demonstrate the effectiveness of devolved governance in Kenya. By decentralizing decision-making, devolved governance empowers local authorities to respond to community needs in a timely and targeted manner. This is especially important for rural areas, where historically, limited representation in centralized decision-making led to underinvestment in essential services. In Narok, devolved governance has bridged this gap, allowing for improvements that align with the unique needs of the county's diverse population. However, challenges remain in ensuring equitable resource distribution and robust policy enforcement. Addressing these challenges through continuous capacity building, improved resource management, and sustained accountability practices will be crucial for realizing the full potential of devolved governance in enhancing community livelihoods.

The study finds that devolved governance in Narok County has led to improved service delivery and expanded participatory spaces. However, elite capture, weak accountability, and gender disparities continue to impede full realization of devolution's promise. These findings affirm the work of Ghai (2011), Ndulo (2006), and UN Women (2022), and extend current literature by providing localized, empirical insights from Narok County.

The application of Democratic Participatory Theory, Resource Dependency Theory, and Separation of Powers has provided a nuanced analytical lens. The study contributes to scholarship by confirming that while devolution creates opportunities for improved livelihoods, its success is contingent upon inclusive participation, fair resource allocation, and strong institutional oversight.

References:

5.2 Conclusions

The findings of this study highlight the significant impact of devolved governance on community livelihood performance in Narok County. Key governance elements, including community engagement, resource allocation, policies and institutions, and accountability, collectively shape the county's development outcomes. Community engagement has been particularly effective in fostering active participation from residents, ensuring that development projects are tailored to address specific local needs. This participation not only enhances transparency but also strengthens the alignment between governance priorities and the expectations of the community.

Resource allocation, while satisfactory in some areas, still requires strategic improvements to address equity and inclusivity gaps. Equitable distribution of resources is critical for ensuring that all segments of the population benefit from devolved governance, especially those in underserved regions. Challenges in achieving fair resource allocation may hinder the overall effectiveness of governance and necessitate deliberate efforts to promote fairness and inclusivity in service delivery.

The study also reveals that robust institutional capacity and the consistent enforcement of policies are essential for delivering services effectively. Strengthening these governance structures would address existing inefficiencies, enabling timely and

equitable implementation of development initiatives. Policies must be supported by capable institutions to ensure that they translate into tangible outcomes that improve livelihoods across the county.

5.3 Recommendations

Accountability and transparency are identified as the most significant drivers of improved livelihood performance. Trust in governance is reinforced when leaders maintain openness about their decisions and use of resources. Transparency mechanisms, such as accessible financial reports and regular public communication, foster public confidence, reduce corruption, and enhance the efficient use of resources. This trust, in turn, supports sustainable development by creating an environment where the community and leadership work collaboratively toward shared goals.

These findings are consistent with research from other Kenyan counties, such as Machakos, Kisumu, and Elgeyo Marakwet, where devolved governance has been associated with substantial improvements in infrastructure, livelihoods, and public services. By leveraging the strengths of community involvement, equitable resource distribution, and transparent governance practices, Narok County can replicate and build on these successes.

To maximize the benefits of devolved governance, Narok County must address challenges related to policy enforcement and ensure that resource allocation processes are both fair and transparent. Sustained efforts to enhance accountability and deepen community participation will be crucial in consolidating progress and achieving inclusive and sustainable development. Through these measures, the county can continue to deliver improved services, foster trust in governance, and create better livelihood opportunities for its residents.

5.4 Recommendation for Future research

Future studies should explore the sector-specific impacts of devolved governance, particularly in critical areas such as healthcare, education, and agriculture. These sectors are integral to community development, and a detailed analysis of governance reforms in these areas would provide valuable insights into how service delivery is being influenced. Additionally, research should examine barriers to youth and women participation in governance processes. Identifying and addressing these barriers could help enhance inclusivity, ensuring diverse perspectives are represented in decision-making at all levels.

Comparative studies across counties with varying levels of success in implementing devolved governance could offer insights into best practices and recurring challenges. Such studies would highlight factors contributing to success in counties like Makueni and Elgeyo Marakwet, while identifying persistent governance issues in others. Similarly, future research could investigate the role of technology in enhancing accountability, transparency, and citizen participation. Digital tools, such as e-governance platforms and participatory applications, have the potential to revolutionize governance by increasing public access to information and enabling efficient resource management.

Longitudinal studies tracking the evolution of devolved governance over time are also recommended. These studies would evaluate the sustainability of governance improvements and assess how governance structures adapt to emerging challenges. Research into fiscal decentralization would be equally valuable, focusing on how counties allocate, utilize, and manage financial resources. Identifying gaps in financial management could lead to strategies that enhance resource efficiency and promote equitable development.

The impact of political dynamics on the success of devolved governance is another area that warrants further investigation. Studies examining the influence of political relationships, leadership changes, and power dynamics could provide insights into the stability and continuity of development initiatives. Furthermore, research into community perceptions of devolved governance and public trust in local leaders would help uncover social and psychological factors that shape governance outcomes.

By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of devolved governance and its role in fostering sustainable development. Such studies would provide valuable recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders, ensuring that governance reforms are inclusive, transparent, and effective in addressing community needs.



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Let me know if there's anything else you'd like adjusted or clarified!

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Consent form

Title of Study: The Effects of Devolved Governance on Community Livelihood Performance in Narok County

Principal Investigator: Rotich Kiplangat Johana

Institution: Mount Kenya University

Contact Information:

The purpose of this study was to analyze how devolved governance affects community livelihood performance in Narok County. This research aimed to provide insights that could enhance governance practices and improve community well-being.

Participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire, which required approximately 5 minutes of their time. There were minimal risks associated with participation. The study sought to contribute to the improvement of governance practices and community livelihoods in Narok County. The participants' contributions were valuable and appreciated.

Responses were kept confidential, with no personal information shared outside the research team. Data were anonymized and securely stored. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants could choose not to participate or withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. If participants chose to withdraw, any data collected from them were excluded from the final analysis.

By signing the consent form, participants agreed to take part in the study, acknowledging that they had read and understood the provided information and had the opportunity to ask questions.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Part A: Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?

Male ()

Female ()

2. Which is your Age bracket?

Below 30 years ()

31-40 years ()

41-50 years ()

Above 50 years ()

3. What is your highest education level?

Diploma ()

Undergraduate degree ()

Masters ()

PhD ()

4. Indicate your department.....

Part B: Community engagement and participation

5. Indicate your level of agreement on the statements provided. Scale; 1=Strongly

Disagree, 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Community meetings are well-attended by a diverse range of community members					
The frequency of community meetings is sufficient for effective engagement					
Community feedback is regularly sought by local leaders					

Local decisions reflect the input and preferences of the community.					
I am satisfied with the responsiveness to community feedback.					
Decision-making processes are transparent and inclusive.					
Attendance at community meetings has increased since the introduction of devolved governance					

6. In what ways do you feel community engagement and participation in governance have influenced the overall well-being and performance of your community?

.....

.....

.....

Part C: Capacity and resources allocation

7. Indicate your level of agreement on the statements provided. Scale; 1=Strongly Disagree / 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The local budget allocation is adequate to meet community needs.					
Budget allocation processes are transparent and inclusive.					
Devolved governance has improved the budget allocation process					
Resources are distributed equitably across the community					
The distribution of resources is timely and efficient.					
Local authorities actively support capacity-building initiatives					

8. In your opinion, what improvements could be made in the way resources are allocated to better support community livelihood?

.....

.....

.....

Part D: Policies and institution

9. Indicate your level of agreement on the statements provided. Scale; 1=Strongly

Disagree / 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Local institutions have the capacity to manage resources effectively.					
Local institutions are well-equipped to perform their duties					
Local policies are effectively implemented					
Devolved governance has improved policy implementation.					
Devolved governance has built the capacity of local institutions. evolved governance has strengthened local institutions					
Local institutions provide adequate support for community projects					

10. How effective do you find the local policies implemented under the devolved governance?

.....

.....

.....

Part E: Accountability and transparency

11. Indicate your level of agreement on the statements provided. Scale; 1=Strongly

Disagree / 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Local authorities frequently provide public reports on financial expenditures and project outcomes					
Public reports provided by local authorities are easily accessible to community members					
Public reports from local authorities are clear and easy to understand.					

Information about local government decisions and actions is readily available to the public					
Decision-making processes in local governance are transparent					
Communication channels between local authorities and the community are open and effective					

12. In what ways do you think the local government can improve its accountability and transparency to enhance community livelihood?

13.

Part F: Community Livelihood Performance

14. Indicate your level of agreement on the statements provided. Scale; 1=Strongly Disagree / 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
There has been significant economic growth in our community due to devolved governance					
Devolved governance has led to an increase in job opportunities in our community					
The quality of infrastructure in our community has improved under devolved governance					
Access to local markets has improved, benefiting the community economically					
There has been increased investment in local businesses as a result of devolved governance					
The availability and quality of services have improved in our community					
Social cohesion and cooperation within the community have increased					

The overall standard of living in our community has risen under devolved governance.					
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Appendix III: ERC Letter



REF: MKU/ISERC/4608

Date: 27 November 2024

TO: Rotich Kiplangat Johana

REG: MPAM/53348/2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE-ANALYZING THE EFFECTS OF DEVOLVED GOVERNANCE ON COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD PERFORMAMCE IN NAROK COUNTY GOVERBMENT IN KENYA

This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **3330**. The approval period is **27/11/2024 - 26/11/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

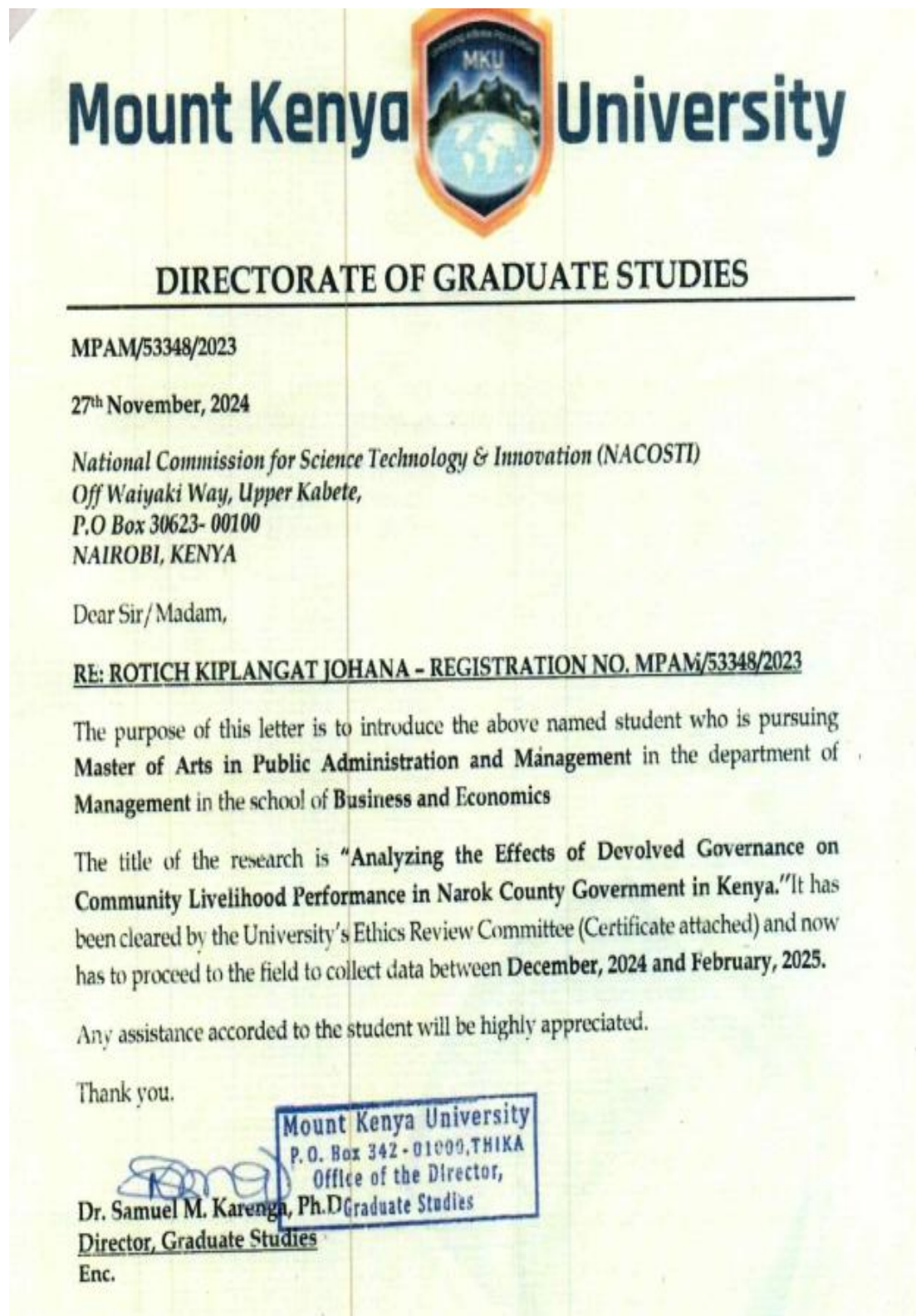
Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research.portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC



Appendix IV: Introduction Letter




Appendix V: NACOSTI Authorization

REPUBLIC OF KENYA
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 723739
Date of Issue: 03/February/2025

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Mr. JOHANA KIPLANGAT ROTICH of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Narok on the topic: **ANALYSING THE EFFECTS OF DEVOLVE GOVERNANCE ON COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD PERFORMANCE IN NAROK COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN KENYA** for the period ending : 03/February/2026.

License No: NACOSTI/P/25/415712

Applicant Identification Number: 723739

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

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See overleaf for conditions

Appendix VI: Field Authorization



NAROK COUNTY GOVERNMENT OFFICE OF THE COUNTY SECRETARY

County Headquarters
Mau-Narok Road, Narok Town
P.O.Box 898-20500
Narok, Kenya.

Tel: 020-268 8929/03
Email: countysecretary@narok.go.ke
info@narok.go.ke
Website: www.narok.go.ke

When Replying Quote:

OUR REF: NCG/CS/CLR-ACD-RSCH/01/25

20th January, 2024

Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD
Chairman
Mount Kenya University ISERC
P.O. Box 342-01000
THIKA

Dear *Dr. Alfred,*

**RE: CLEARANCE TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN NAROK COUNTY –
ROTICH KIPKORIR JOHANA (MPAM/53348/2023)**

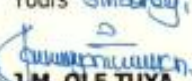
The above-captioned subject matter refers.

We refer to your letter dated 27th November, 2024 under Ref No. MKU/ISERC/4608 in which directed your student Mr. Rotich Kipkorir Johana (MPAM/53348/2023) to seek and obtain relevant clearance before commencing academic research for the award of Master of Public Administration and Management.

We are writing to confirm that Narok County Government does not object to the conduct by Mr. Rotich Kipkorir Johana (MPAM/53348/2023) of his academic research entitled ***"Analyzing the Effects of Devolved Government on Livelihood Performance in Narok County Government"*** in Narok County.

Consequently, clearance is hereby granted to Mr. Rotich Kipkorir Johana (MPAM/53348/2023) to conduct his academic research-related activity in Narok County until the lapse of the approval period on **26th November, 2025**.

This clearance is subject to the strict compliance by the above-mentioned student with the applicable laws and regulations of Narok County Government, as well as the relevant codes of ethical academic research. In addition, the County Government will not accept liability for any loss and/or damage that may arise in the course of the academic research.

Yours sincerely,

J.M. OLE TUYA
COUNTY SECRETARY

Appendix VII: Similarity Index

Proposal

by Alfred Jones

Submission date: 27 Jun 2025 11:33AM UTC+08
 Submission ID: 27867676
 File name: RESEARCH_PROJECT_REPORT_FINAL.docx (1 MB)
 Word count: 2040
 Character count: 12527

Proposal

ORIGINAL REPORT

15%	12%	8%	6%
<small>SIMILARITY INDEX</small>	<small>INTERNET SOURCES</small>	<small>PUBLICATIONS</small>	<small>STUDENT PAPERS</small>

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1	ir.jkuat.ac.ke <small>Internet Source</small>	2%
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Appendix VII: Site Map



Mount Kenya University

