

**ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF GOVERNANCE ON DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA'S  
DEVOLVED UNITS – THE CASE OF NANDI COUNTY**

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## ABSTRACT

Governance refers to the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a nation's affairs. It comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. Since Kenya adopted the devolved system of Government in 2010 (implemented after the General elections of March 2013), there's been debate on how much money would be enough for the County governments to run their affairs and how much resources are adequate in carrying out the devolved mandate. While the Constitution gave the minimum amount that must be sent to the Counties, there has been an intense and somewhat acrimonious interlocution between stakeholders whether or not the amounts disbursed are enough to run devolved programmes. However, money may not just be the problem. The main objective of the study was to assess the impact of governance on development in Kenya's Counties with a special focus on Nandi County. A descriptive cross-sectional design method was preferred for the study. The target population of the study included senior, middle and lower level managers at the County Government of Nandi representing a total of 18 respondents. The main instrument for data collection was questionnaires with both structured and open ended questions. The data was then coded to enable the responses to be grouped into various categories. Data collected was purely quantitative and would be analyzed by descriptive analysis techniques. The descriptive statistical tools such as SPSS helped the researcher to describe the data and determine the extent to be used. The study concluded that the County did not observe transparency in carrying out its development projects. However, transparency played a primary role in ensuring success of local development in that the County ensured free flow of information to ensure shareholder have adequate information on the aim of the development programme, stakeholders are briefed on the progress of the local development programmes to ensure disclosure of information and that the County Government commitment on transparency has enhanced success of development projects within the County. On the other hand the study concluded that stakeholder's participation in the County governance affected development to a very great extent. The poor are particularly in need of the protection of their rights as humans which only the rule of law can provide. The rule of law on the other hand can only operate through the principle of equality before the law in which all people are brought to subjection of the law of the land. The law is developed through a transparent legislative process (in the County assembly) and is enforced by the Executive (the County Governor). The study recommended that though the extent of reliance of internal controls is not sensitive to the strength of internal audit departments, County management should not do away with it. This is because as a management tool, it should assist the County executive in its day to day operations and not necessarily because it's of relevance to the external auditor. On the other hand, the study recommends that transparency should be useful to strengthen the citizens' right to information with a degree of legal enforceability. Restrictive laws that permit public officials to deny information to citizens should provide for independent review of claims that such denial is justified in the greater public interest. The study was conducted between August and October 2014.