

**INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES ON SERVICE
DELIVERY IN WAJIR COUNTY GOVERNMENT KENYA**

ABDIRASHID YUSSUF ABDINUR



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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration by Student

I hereby declare that this research project is my original work and that it has not been presented in any other learning institution for academic purposes or any other reason

Signature: 

Date: 26th June 2025

Abdirashid Yussuf Abdirinur

MPAM/37357/2015

Approval by Supervisor

This research project has been presented with my/our approval as university supervisor

Signature:  Date 27th June 2025

Dr Ibrahim Nyaboga, (PhD)

Mount Kenya University

DEDICATION

To my beloved family, you have been my unwavering source of love, support, and encouragement throughout this journey.



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ABSTRACT

The devolution of power in Kenya, particularly in Wajir County, significantly transformed governance structures. Understanding how devolved leadership impacted service delivery was crucial for effective policy-making and resource allocation. Despite the implementation of devolved governance structures in Wajir County, persistent challenges continued to hinder effective service delivery, undermining the expected benefits of decentralization. Key issues such as inequitable resource allocation, favoritism, and corruption plagued the county, creating disparities in public services. This study aimed to determine the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery within Wajir County, Kenya. Specifically, the study investigated the impact of administrative capacity, accountability mechanisms, and resource allocation on service delivery. The research was guided by Decentralization Theory, Public Administration Theory, Principal-Agent Theory, and Resource Dependency Theory. A mixed-methods research design was utilized, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The study focused on county government executives, including the governor, deputy governor, county secretary, economic advisor, and other significant officials. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 71 participants. Data collection involved structured questionnaires for the quantitative component, alongside semi-structured interview guides for qualitative interviews and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS to produce descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed to uncover patterns and trends. The findings were presented in tables, charts, and narrative descriptions to enhance interpretation. Ethical considerations were paramount, with authorization obtained from Kenyatta University and NACOSTI, ensuring participant confidentiality and informed consent. The study found that devolved leadership structures, administrative capacity, accountability mechanisms, and resource allocation significantly influence service delivery in Wajir County government. The regression model explained 66.2% ($R^2=.662$) of service delivery variance. Devolved leadership had the strongest influence ($\beta=0.223$, $p=0.001$), followed by accountability mechanisms ($\beta=0.204$, $p=0.006$), administrative capacity ($\beta=0.138$, $p=0.004$), and resource allocation ($\beta=0.101$, $p=0.001$). All variables showed statistically significant positive relationships with service delivery performance, confirming their importance in improving governance outcomes. Devolution has positively transformed service delivery in Wajir County. The significant influence of leadership structures, accountability mechanisms, administrative capacity, and resource allocation demonstrates the multifaceted nature of effective governance. While the current framework shows promise, challenges in coordination, resource constraints, and capacity gaps persist. The study concludes that strengthening these four pillars is essential for sustainable improvement in public service delivery across all communities. The county government should prioritize strengthening devolved leadership through capacity development programs and enhanced coordination mechanisms. Accountability frameworks should be reinforced through stricter oversight and increased public participation. Administrative efficiency should be improved through targeted training and technological integration. Resource allocation processes should be reformed to ensure equity and transparency, with innovative financing models adopted to overcome funding constraints and reduce regional service delivery disparities.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBEFs County Budget and Economic Forums

CEC County Executive Committee

KIPPRA Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis

KNBS Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

LGAs Local Government Areas

UNICEF United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund



Mount Kenya University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background f of the study

Devolved governance has increasingly been embraced as a key reform strategy aimed at improving self-governance and the quality of public service delivery. By transferring authority from central to local governments, devolution allows communities to exercise greater control over their development agendas, ensuring that governance is more responsive, inclusive, and efficient. Under Kenya's devolved system, county governments have acquired leadership structures that empower them to tailor services to the unique needs of their populations (Rigii et al., 2019). This shift has been driven by various factors, notably the demand for enhanced public accountability, increased responsiveness to local needs, and the pursuit of operational efficiency in service delivery (Muwonge et al., 2022).

Decentralized governance promotes localized decision-making and greater transparency, as local leaders become directly accountable to their constituents. According to Zinyama (2021), the proximity of devolved leaders to the public fosters a governance system that is both participatory and adaptive. County governments in Kenya are now primarily responsible for delivering essential public services such as healthcare, education, infrastructure maintenance, and social welfare programs (Resnick, 2022). The effectiveness of these services significantly influences community well-being and socio-economic development (Chelagat et al., 2020).

Devolved leadership structures offer counties the flexibility to innovate and adapt service delivery mechanisms to suit local contexts. This autonomy enhances performance and

equity in public service provision, as counties can test alternative approaches to achieve better outcomes (McGarvey, 2021). However, the success of devolution is not guaranteed by structural changes alone. It depends heavily on the capacity of local institutions to plan, budget, and implement services efficiently. Capacity building among county personnel, coordination between national and county governments, and equitable resource allocation across regions are all critical enablers of effective devolution (Chepkonga & Nyaga, 2019). Furthermore, the promise of improved service delivery under devolution hinges on robust accountability mechanisms and anti-corruption measures. Strong oversight systems are essential to prevent the misuse of devolved funds and to eliminate inefficiencies and abuse of power at the local level (Wanzala & Oloo, 2019). Without such safeguards, the objectives of devolution namely, improved governance and enhanced service delivery may be undermined.

The leadership structures in India have created substantial effects on how county governments known as districts deliver services throughout the nation. The Panchayati Raj System established by the Constitution serves as an instrument which decentralizes governance while giving power to local communities. Zinyama (2021) states that the system boosts citizen engagement in decision-making while enhancing the responsibility of service providers. Indian local governments at village and district levels maintain essential responsibility for delivering education and healthcare services along with sanitation services and infrastructure development (Gandhi et al., 2020). The responsibility to supervise local governance and resource management rests with elected local leaders who include both Sarpanch (village head) and Zila Parishad Chairman (district head). The devolved leadership system in India allows local governments to serve their communities

effectively through addressing their special requirements and priorities (Gandhi et al., 2020). As stated in Samue (2023) decentralization of decision-making has developed innovative service delivery systems which resulted in enhanced local outcomes.

The devolved leadership system in Japan helps prefectural governments which correspond to counties to boost their service delivery effectiveness. The residents who elect their prefectural governors endow them with major powers to supervise education and healthcare together with social welfare and regional growth (Yokota, 2020). The prefectural governments maintain tight collaboration with local assemblies and municipal governments to execute service delivery programs and serve the particular needs of their residents (Takao, 2020). The partnership between different governing bodies has produced modern approaches to solve local problems and it makes public service resources stretch further. Through its devolution approach Japan has enhanced citizen involvement in governance procedures which leads to better transparency and accountability within service delivery (Takao, 2020). Through the power granted to local authorities by Osborne (2020) Japanese counties have benefited from enhanced leadership structures that create policies and programs specific to their regional needs thus improving resident quality of life.

The devolved leadership system of Nigeria affects service delivery operations within its local government areas (LGAs). As state executives governors lead the coordination of service delivery activities between state and local government levels (Abasili, & Akinboye, 2019). Local government chairpersons receive their positions through resident elections to direct LGA administration and provide essential services that include education and healthcare as well as infrastructure maintenance and social welfare programs (Abegunde

2019). Service delivery in Nigerian counties remains restricted by three main obstacles: corruption, political meddling and insufficient funding resources. The service delivery effectiveness in Nigerian counties depends on strengthening devolved leadership structures and developing better accountability mechanisms according to Nkwede et al. (2022). Nkwede et al. (2022) advocate for enhanced local government power and grassroots inclusion which enables Nigeria to boost service delivery and grassroots development.

Devolved leadership structures in South Africa have proven essential for municipal service delivery across its county governments known as municipalities. Provincial premiers receive their position through provincial legislative selection to manage provincial operations and direct service delivery activities throughout their territories (Mabunda, 2022). Mayors together with executive mayors lead local municipalities which perform tasks that include delivering services regarding water and sanitation housing transportation and social services (Rigii et al. 2019). Devolved leadership structures enable local authorities to deliver better service to their communities through specific development projects that suit local priorities (Mbandlwa et al., 2020). South Africa has achieved notable advancements in decentralization and service delivery after apartheid through the overcoming of inequality and unemployment together with institutional capacity limitations (Khambule, 2021). South African counties need to develop strong accountability systems and improve inter-governmental teamwork while actively engaging citizens to maintain recent service delivery improvements and deliver effective public services.

The Kenyan government implemented leadership structures through devolution to transform service delivery within its county governments after the introduction of its new

Constitution in 2010. Through their respective governors counties now possess authority to administer healthcare alongside education and infrastructure maintenance and agricultural development as well as social welfare programs (Ogendo & Mwagiru, 2016). The Kenyan devolution system has expanded funding to counties so they can develop programs that fulfill community requirements (Kim, 2020). Despite funding limitations and capacity hurdles Kenya has demonstrated major progress in delivering better services through its grassroots development programs (Owino et al., 2019). To enhance service delivery in Kenyan counties it is crucial to build institutional capacity along with improved transparency and accountability while developing intergovernmental cooperation (Makori & Kinyanjui, 2017). Through local government empowerment and citizen participation Lelegwe (2022) maintains that Kenya will advance its development goals while improving citizen welfare.

1.1. Devolved Leadership Structures in Kenya

In Kenya, devolution marked a significant departure from the centralized governance system by transferring power and resources to the county level. Wajir County, like others, embraced this change, establishing its unique devolved leadership structures tailored to address local needs. At the core of this system is the County Governor, elected by the residents, who serves as the county's chief executive. Working alongside the Governor, the County Executive Committee (CEC) members oversee various departments, ensuring the implementation of policies aligned with county priorities (KIPPRA, 2023). This decentralized approach enables more responsive governance, where decisions can be tailored to the specific challenges and opportunities within Wajir County.

The County Assembly stands as a crucial pillar of devolved governance in Wajir. Comprising elected representatives from the county's constituencies, the Assembly wields significant legislative and oversight powers. Through deliberations and debates, Assembly members influence policies, budgets, and regulations, thereby shaping the trajectory of service delivery and resource allocation within the county (KIPPRA, 2023). This participatory approach ensures that the voices of Wajir's diverse communities are heard in decision-making processes, fostering inclusivity and accountability in governance.

Despite notable progress, challenges persist in Wajir County's devolved leadership structures. Resource disparities remain a key concern, with certain areas experiencing underinvestment compared to others. Such disparities hinder equitable service delivery across the county, undermining the principles of devolution (Kenya Law Reform Commission, 2023). Moreover, while mechanisms like the County Budget and Economic Forums (CBEFs) aim to enhance public participation in decision-making, low participation rates indicate a need for greater efforts to engage citizens effectively (Kenya Law Reform Commission, 2023). Addressing these challenges can help in realizing the full potential of devolution in Wajir County, ensuring that governance structures are not only responsive but also inclusive and equitable in serving the needs of all residents.

1.1.2 Service Delivery in Wajir County

The county government is responsible for providing key services such as healthcare, education, water and sanitation, infrastructure development, and agriculture support (Council of Governors, 2022). In healthcare, the county operates health facilities ranging from hospitals to dispensaries, aiming to ensure access to quality medical services for all residents. Education services include the establishment and management of schools,

as well as initiatives to improve access and quality of education across the county(Council of Governors, 2022). Water and sanitation projects are crucial for addressing water scarcity and promoting hygiene standards within communities. Infrastructure development efforts focus on road construction and maintenance, facilitating connectivity and economic development (Council of Governors, 2022). Additionally, agriculture support programs aim to enhance food security and livelihoods through initiatives such as irrigation schemes and market access strategies.

According to data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), there has been a notable increase in the number of healthcare facilities since the implementation of devolution. For instance, between 2013 and 2020, the number of health facilities in Wajir County rose by 20%, indicating efforts to enhance healthcare accessibility (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). However, despite this increase, there remains a considerable gap between urban and rural areas, with urban centers generally having better-equipped facilities and higher staffing levels compared to remote villages (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

According to data from the Wajir County Health Department, there has been an increase in the number of health facilities since devolution, with a current total of 45 facilities, including hospitals, health centers, and dispensaries (wajir.go.ke, 2024). However, despite this increase, there is still a significant shortage of healthcare workers, with an average nurse-to-patient ratio of 1:1,500, well below the recommended ratio by the World Health Organization (wajir.go.ke, 2024).

The statistics regarding water and sanitation in Wajir County highlight significant challenges that impact the health and well-being of its residents. According to a survey

conducted by UNICEF (2019), access to clean water remains a pressing issue, with only 40% of households having access to improved water sources. Improved water sources typically include piped water, boreholes, protected wells, or spring water, ensuring safer and more reliable access to clean drinking water (UNICEF, 2019). Furthermore, the sanitation situation in Wajir County is equally concerning, with only 30% of households having access to improved sanitation facilities. Improved sanitation facilities typically refer to toilets that hygienically separate human excreta from human contact, thereby reducing the spread of diseases (UNICEF, 2019). The lack of adequate sanitation facilities contributes to health risks such as waterborne diseases, including cholera, typhoid, and diarrhea, which can have severe consequences, especially for vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly (UNICEF, 2019).

1.1.3 Devolved Leadership Structures on Service Delivery

One strength of this governance model is its potential to promote local ownership and responsiveness to community needs. Devolved leadership structures allow for tailored approaches to service delivery, as decision-makers are closer to the ground and have a better understanding of local challenges and priorities (KIPPRA, 2022). For instance, the County Assembly can allocate resources based on community input, ensuring that service delivery initiatives address specific needs (KIPPRA, 2022).

According to data compiled by the Wajir County Government, areas with stronger leadership engagement and effective decision-making processes tend to exhibit better service delivery performance. For instance, communities where the County Governor and County Executive Committee members prioritize healthcare initiatives have seen an increase in the number of health facilities and medical personnel (Council of Governors,

2022). Statistical trends indicate a 15% rise in healthcare access within these areas over the past three years, showcasing the impact of leadership structures on service provision (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

However, statistical analyses also reveal weaknesses within the current governance system that hinder service delivery. For example, areas experiencing political instability or administrative inefficiencies tend to lag behind in essential service provision. Data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) shows that regions with higher incidences of political interference or corruption have lower rates of access to clean water and sanitation facilities, causing health risks. Statistical correlations between governance indicators and service delivery outcomes highlight the importance of effective leadership structures in promoting development and welfare.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the implementation of local government structures in Wajir County following Kenya's 2010 constitutional changes, significant challenges continue to prevent effective public service delivery and undermine the intended benefits of bringing government closer to the people (Muwonge et al. 2022). The county faces persistent problems with unequal distribution of public resources, with evidence suggesting that some areas receive more attention and funding than others, leading to uneven development across the county (Oxfam Kenya, 2023). Research on similar counties shows that local governments face corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, and inadequate funds, which adversely affects quality service delivery to citizens (Mwangi, 2017). Local leadership faces capacity challenges in managing newly transferred responsibilities from the national government.

Wajir is among the frontier counties targeted for improving county government capacity through international development programs (UNDP, 2023), indicating recognized gaps in local administrative abilities. Additionally, despite large investments in water development and the decentralization of water service delivery, Wajir County residents continue to face problems of water scarcity (IIED, 2021).

Community participation in local governance remains limited due to cultural and social barriers that prevent citizens from actively engaging in decision-making processes. The county also struggles with inadequate physical infrastructure, including poor roads, limited electricity, and insufficient communication networks, which hampers economic growth and service delivery.

Political divisions and tensions between different ethnic groups further complicate governance, often shifting focus away from development priorities toward managing conflicts and political disputes. Studies show that perceived inadequacy of funds directly affects the county's ability to enact critical development programs (Ibrahim, & Minja, 2024).

These interconnected challenges collectively prevent the achievement of improved living conditions for Wajir County residents, raising fundamental questions about whether current local government structures can effectively address historical inequalities and deliver quality public services (Kim, 2020). Without targeted interventions focusing on fair resource distribution, improved leadership skills, inclusive community involvement, infrastructure development, and political stability, the county's local governance system may continue to fall short of its potential to transform lives.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

1.4. Specific Objectives

This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To determine the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.
- ii. To investigate the influence of administrative capacity on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.
- iii. To assess the influence of accountability mechanisms on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.
- iv. To find out the influence of resource allocation on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

1.5. Research Hypothesis

- i. **H0₁:** Devolved leadership structures do not significantly impact service delivery in Wajir County government, Kenya.
- ii. **H0₂:** Administrative capacity does not significantly influence service delivery in Wajir County government, Kenya.
- iii. **H0₃:** Accountability mechanisms have no significant influence on service delivery in Wajir County government, Kenya.
- iv. **H0₄:** Resource allocation does not significantly impact service delivery in Wajir County government, Kenya.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study hold substantial value for a wide range of stakeholders. For policymakers at both national and county levels, the research offers evidence-based insights into how devolved leadership structures influence service delivery, thereby informing the design of reforms to enhance governance and public service outcomes. Local government officials in Wajir County can utilize the study's findings to assess current leadership practices and develop more effective strategies for service delivery improvement.

Civil society organizations and advocacy groups will benefit from the study by gaining data to support transparency, accountability, and participatory governance initiatives. Academic scholars and researchers will also find value in the research, as it contributes to the growing body of literature on decentralization, governance, and public administration in marginalized and arid regions. Most importantly, the residents of Wajir County stand to benefit from improved governance and service delivery, which can enhance access to essential services, promote socio-economic development, and improve overall well-being.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on examining the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery performance within the Wajir County Government in Kenya. It specifically evaluates the roles, responsibilities, and decision-making powers of county authorities concerning the delivery of public services. The study is confined to Wajir County due to its unique socio-political and economic context that presents a relevant case for understanding the dynamics of decentralization.

The study was conducted over a two-month period between May and November 2024. During this period, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using a mixed-methods approach. This enabled a comprehensive analysis of the governance and service delivery mechanisms in the county, while ensuring the study remained practical and manageable in terms of scope and duration.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations were encountered during the course of the study. First, restricted access to some sensitive or confidential government data posed a challenge. This was mitigated by engaging key stakeholders and relying on publicly available information and secondary sources. Second, the possibility of sampling bias was acknowledged, as certain population segments could have been overrepresented. To address this, random sampling techniques were employed to ensure diversity and the limitation was clearly stated in the analysis.

Resource constraints in terms of time, funding, and personnel also impacted the study. These challenges were addressed by prioritizing essential activities, developing a strategic resource utilization plan, and seeking partnerships or alternative support where possible. Additionally, external factors such as political instability, leadership changes, and unforeseen events posed risks to data collection and overall implementation. Flexibility and contingency planning were applied to maintain the study's validity and reliability despite these challenges.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The study was limited to examining devolved leadership structures and their influence on service delivery within the context of Wajir County Government. It excluded the role of national government structures, other county governments, and external economic factors

not directly related to devolution. National policies not specific to decentralization were also not considered.

Furthermore, the study did not include analysis of private sector or non-governmental organization contributions to service delivery. Data collection and analysis were confined to the two-month period between May and November 2024 and relied solely on available information during that timeframe. The research focused exclusively on interactions with Wajir County officials and stakeholders directly engaged with the county administration.

1.10. Operational definition of Key Terms

Accountability mechanisms: The term describes organizational structures which enforce accountability of individual and group conduct in addition to their actions and performance outcomes.

Administrative capacity: The term describes organizational structures which enforce accountability of individual and group conduct in addition to their actions and performance outcomes.

Devolve leadership structures: When organizations shift power and decision authority from central control to local regional levels it is known as decentralization.

Devolved leadership structures: The established systems enable leadership distribution and decision-making powers to local and regional levels for improved local governance and autonomy.

Resource allocation: The process of distributing available resources between different projects and departments under various sectors represents this term.

Service delivery: The delivery of public services together with goods to customers and community members by organizations and governments serves to satisfy their needs as well as their expectations.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The research assesses scholarly publications about leadership organizational frameworks in County and how they affect service delivery outcomes. The research analyzes theoretical foundations together with academic evidence to study this relationship. The chapter achieves three essential goals by reviewing existing knowledge and detecting emerging trends and understanding gaps. The paper explores leadership structures through theoretical analysis and real-life Wajir County service delivery examples to create a complete leadership understanding. This literature review creates a research base for upcoming chapters which directs subsequent analytical procedures and interpretation of study outcomes.

2.2 Empirical Review

The empirical literature on devolved leadership structures and service delivery presents diverse findings across different contexts, revealing both opportunities and challenges inherent in decentralization processes. This review examines international and regional studies to understand the theoretical foundations and practical implications of devolution for service delivery effectiveness.

2.2.1 Concept of Devolved Leadership Structures on Service Delivery

Ahmed and Khan (2021) conducted a comprehensive study in Pakistan examining the impact of devolved governance on public service delivery in Punjab Province. Using a descriptive survey design with 300 participants selected through stratified random

sampling, the study targeted administrative officers and local government workers. Data analysis through regression techniques revealed that devolution significantly improved health and education services due to proximity to local needs, aligning with Public Choice Theory's premise that citizens are better served when decisions are made closer to them. However, the study identified fiscal autonomy constraints as a major limitation to performance, a finding particularly relevant to Wajir County's context where financial resources remain a persistent challenge. The study's failure to analyze political dynamics influencing devolution reveals a critical research gap that this current study addresses by examining the role of political will in successful decentralization.

Nguyen (2020) explored decentralized governance effects on service delivery in Ho Chi Minh City's local communes using a mixed-methods approach involving 200 government officials and residents. The study employed purposive sampling and analyzed data through thematic content analysis and ANOVA. Findings demonstrated that devolved structures enhanced responsiveness and citizen participation, particularly in sanitation and waste management, supporting Agency Theory's principles. However, limited capacity at local levels emerged as a significant hindrance to effective service delivery, a challenge that resonates strongly with Wajir County's experience where technical capacity gaps persist. The study's omission of inter-governmental relations analysis creates opportunities for future research, particularly relevant given Kenya's complex multi-level governance structure.

Rai and Sharma (2022) investigated devolved leadership and rural health service provision in India's Uttar Pradesh state through a case study design focusing on three local panchayats. Using snowball sampling and qualitative data collection methods, the study

found that decentralized leadership facilitated better outreach and increased immunization rates. However, elite capture by powerful local families reduced equity in service distribution, supporting Institutional Theory's emphasis on how local institutional arrangements shape governance outcomes. This finding is particularly significant for Wajir County, where traditional clan-based leadership structures may influence resource allocation and service delivery equity.

Lee and Park (2019) assessed local governance roles in urban planning and public services in South Korea through a comparative longitudinal design analyzing government performance data from 2008 to 2018 across 10 local districts. Using panel regression models, the study found that sustained devolved leadership contributed to improved waste management and public safety outcomes, reflecting Stewardship Theory principles. However, frequent leadership turnover and politicization of local governance disrupted service continuity, a challenge that Wajir County faces given Kenya's five-year electoral cycles and potential for political instability.

Okello and Wamala (2023) researched decentralization effects on education service delivery in Uganda's Lira District using correlational design with 150 participants selected through multi-stage sampling. Analysis through Pearson correlation and multiple regression techniques revealed that transferred decision-making authority positively affected education infrastructure improvement, supporting Decentralization Theory. However, fund distribution delays and corruption issues persisted, challenges that mirror Wajir County's experience with resource allocation inefficiencies. The study's failure to investigate how established power systems create obstacles during formal decentralization procedures represents a crucial gap that this research addresses.

Achieng and Otieno (2020) explored devolved leadership effectiveness in improving health services in Kenya's Kisumu County through cross-sectional survey design using systematic sampling and SPSS analysis. Results demonstrated that decentralized decision-making improved service prioritization but was hindered by insufficient technical capacity, highlighting Principal-Agent Theory's relevance where service failures stem from disconnects between governors and the governed. The study's exclusion of citizen voices represents a significant gap that this research fills by incorporating beneficiary perspectives on service delivery quality in Wajir County.

Mensah and Boateng (2018) investigated devolved governance and public service delivery in Ghana's Ashanti Region through qualitative exploratory design using purposive sampling and narrative analysis. Findings revealed that devolution led to improved local infrastructure but was marred by political patronage, contributing to Network Governance Theory's emphasis on state and non-state actor interplay in public service delivery. The study's subjective approach and lack of empirical generalizability highlight the need for mixed-methods research, which this current study addresses.

Müller and Braun (2021) analyzed decentralization in social welfare service provision across Germany's federal states using quantitative comparative design with hierarchical linear modeling. The study found that states with stronger local autonomy provided more tailored and efficient services, supporting Federalism Theory. However, policy fragmentation across states created access disparities, a concern relevant to Kenya's county system where service delivery standards vary significantly across counties.

Devolved leadership structures in Wajir County introduce accountability layers closer to citizens through elected representatives including governors, senators, and Members of

County Assembly (MCAs). Ndoka (2020) emphasizes that MCAs play crucial oversight and grassroots representation roles. However, accountability mechanism effectiveness depends on elected leaders' integrity and responsiveness. Corruption instances or ineffectiveness among county officials can undermine the accountability framework, eroding public trust and hindering service delivery a particular concern in marginalized counties like Wajir where governance capacity may be limited.

Local governance through devolution enables citizen participation in decision-making and administrative processes. Omar and Edna (2020) document how Wajir County residents actively participated in determining regional concerns and generating County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs). Citizens have utilized public forums to advocate for healthcare facility improvements and infrastructure projects meeting their specific requirements. This community-driven strategy enhances service delivery program effectiveness by ensuring alignment with local community goals, particularly important in pastoralist communities where traditional governance structures intersect with formal county systems.

Wajir County has demonstrated flexibility through innovative approaches addressing geographical and climatic challenges. Hussein et al. (2023) document the implementation of mobile health clinics and community-based water projects helping residents access essential services despite geographical constraints. This local intervention customization enables counties to achieve superior service delivery results compared to standardized top-down programs, particularly relevant given Wajir's arid and semi-arid landscape requiring specialized approaches.

Devolved leadership structures enable collaboration between different governmental levels and non-governmental stakeholders. Ibrahim and Minja (2024) highlight combined efforts between Wajir County government, national government ministries, and international organizations tackling complex development obstacles. The County Department of Education collaborates with non-profit organizations to build schools and supply educational materials in underserved areas, while the County Department of Agriculture partners with extension services to promote sustainable farming and enhance food security. These cooperative ventures combine specialized knowledge bases, resulting in higher-quality and more accessible service delivery.

Devolution provides opportunities to address historical marginalization patterns through inclusive administration and program delivery approaches. Ali (2021) documents how devolved structures in Wajir County give marginalized groups, particularly pastoralists and women, space to voice their needs. Affirmative action policies in county government have increased women's representation in leadership and decision-making positions, leading to programs addressing women's health, education, and economic empowerment needs through maternal healthcare programs and entrepreneurship training. Pastoralist communities have received recognition for their distinct requirements and indigenous knowledge, leading to specific livestock management and drought adaptation solutions.

Devolved leadership structures enable local communities to develop innovative solutions fitting their unique service requirements. Onyango (2021) describes how community health volunteers receive basic healthcare training to serve populations in areas without formal health facilities, bridging gaps between healthcare facilities and encouraging community members to seek medical support. National policies are adapted to local realities through

devolution processes, as demonstrated by Wajir County's modification of the national Youth Empowerment Program to address local youth employment challenges through entrepreneurship schemes, vocational programs, and skills development training.

2.2.2 Influence of administrative capacity on service delivery

Ahmed and Mahmood (2020) performed research in Bangladesh which investigated how administrative capacity affects service delivery performance in Dhaka's municipal authorities. The researchers used descriptive survey methods to study 320 employees of various departments in local governments. The research employed stratified random sampling to achieve coverage of different managerial levels in the organization. Structured questionnaires served as the data collection method and researchers applied regression analysis together with descriptive statistics for data analysis. Departments achieving better training outcomes for employees and providing increased access to information and communication technology tools achieved superior service quality. The organization faced difficulties due to both substantial employee change and weak systems for holding workers accountable which reduced performance outcomes. The research revealed a significant gap because it lacked any assessment of citizen satisfaction levels as performance outputs. The delivery outcomes of public institutions depend largely on their technical capabilities and institutional infrastructure as well as human resources according to the Capacity Theory of Governance.

Ramesh and Pillai (2021) conducted research about administrative capacity and rural service delivery within Tamil Nadu state in India. The research design utilized case studies to analyze water along with sanitation services within three different districts. The research selected village administrative officers engineers along with local residents as its target

population. The researchers applied purposive sampling to pick 60 key informants. The authors conducted thematic content analysis on their data. Service reliability depended directly on administrative capacity through staff training and budget planning according to the research. The trained personnel faced reduced effectiveness because of bureaucratic restrictions and insufficient performance rewards. The research failed to investigate the relationship between administrative and political capacities which creates an opportunity for future investigations. According to Institutional Theory formal and informal norms determine how well organizations fulfill their established targets.

Lee and Kim (2022) conducted a longitudinal study in South Korea on the evolution of administrative capacity in digital public service delivery. Using a mixed-methods approach, they analyzed secondary data from local government reports and conducted interviews with 40 local administrators. The study applied content analysis for qualitative data and trend analysis for quantitative service delivery indicators. Findings showed that digital training and decentralization of authority enhanced responsiveness and reduced corruption. However, capacity improvements were not uniform, with rural areas lagging. The research failed to account for the role of citizen digital literacy, presenting a research gap. The study supports the Resource-Based View (RBV) of public institutions, suggesting that investment in internal capabilities enhances external performance.

Nguyen and Tran (2019) analyzed the impact of administrative competence on healthcare delivery in Vietnam. Using a quasi-experimental design, they assessed 12 districts before and after a decentralization reform. The target population included district health officers and service users. Cluster sampling was used, and data were analyzed using difference-in-differences (DiD) models. Results revealed that where administrative personnel received

leadership and planning training, health service delivery indicators improved significantly. However, where such training lacked, service quality stagnated. A limitation was the narrow sectoral focus on health only. The findings reinforce the Capacity Theory, where administrative leadership and competence are critical to transforming policy into service outcomes.

Müller and Schneider (2020) explored administrative efficiency and service delivery in Germany, focusing on local governments in Bavaria. The study used a quantitative cross-sectional design, targeting 400 municipal officials. Systematic sampling was employed. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results revealed that decision-making autonomy, staff competence, and ICT skills positively correlated with citizen satisfaction and service delivery efficiency. However, administrative overload and decentralization without capacity enhancement were major barriers. The research lacked a comparative rural-urban analysis, creating a potential gap for deeper contextual studies. This study illustrates the Public Administration Theory, where administrative tools and human resources directly influence governance outcomes.

Andersen and Nielsen (2021) in Denmark assessed the relationship between administrative capacity and education service delivery across 28 municipalities. Utilizing a panel data design, the study drew from public employment databases and citizen surveys. The entire population of municipal education officers was used. Time-series analysis showed that municipalities with structured training programs, performance-based evaluations, and decentralized budgeting saw improvements in literacy and school attendance rates. However, over-bureaucratization delayed decision-making. A research gap was the exclusion of non-state actors in service delivery. The study is consistent with New Public

Management (NPM) principles, which advocate for efficiency and performance-based systems.

Petrova and Ivanov (2022) investigated administrative capacity in relation to social welfare services in Bulgaria. Adopting a qualitative approach, they conducted interviews with 50 public administrators and NGO staff in Sofia. Snowball sampling was used, and data were analyzed using grounded theory methods. The study found that high-capacity administrators were more effective in forming partnerships with NGOs and mobilizing resources. However, outdated institutional structures often restricted innovation. A research gap existed in the study's narrow geographic focus, limiting generalizability. It aligns with Collaborative Governance Theory, where administrative ability to partner with other sectors enhances service outcomes.

Achieng and Mwaura (2023) conducted a study in Kenya focusing on how administrative capacity affects public health service delivery in Kisii County. Using a descriptive research design, the study targeted healthcare facility managers and county health administrators. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to select 120 respondents. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Findings indicated that higher staff qualifications, digital systems, and financial planning significantly improved health service outcomes. Yet, lack of performance tracking tools and bureaucratic procedures diluted results. A research gap was the absence of service user feedback. The study supports Capacity Theory by highlighting that human and institutional capacity directly translate into delivery efficiency.

Moyo and Ncube (2020) investigated administrative capacity in Zimbabwe, focusing on the water sector in Bulawayo. Employing a comparative case study design, the study

examined two water authorities. The target population included engineers, finance officers, and local residents. Quota sampling was used, and data were analyzed using comparative performance metrics and interviews. The study found that entities with stronger administrative autonomy and skilled workforce were more resilient to external shocks like droughts. However, corruption and political interference weakened their impact. The study did not fully explore legal frameworks, creating a gap for legal-institutional analysis. The findings reinforce Institutional Capacity Theory.

Abebe and Alemu (2019) in Ethiopia analyzed the influence of administrative skills on agricultural service delivery in Oromia region. A survey design was used targeting agricultural extension officers. Random sampling selected 250 respondents. ANOVA and regression analysis showed that administrative competence, especially in budget planning and community mobilization, was strongly associated with improved productivity and access to services. However, inadequate ICT usage was noted as a barrier. A key gap was the lack of gender-sensitive analysis in service delivery, relevant for inclusive planning. The study is grounded in Human Capital Theory, which links investment in staff capacity to public sector performance.

Open financial systems with accountability functions enable effective use of funds. The procurement process becomes more transparent in order to minimize corruption risks which allows funds to reach their intended priority service areas. The system allows money designated for healthcare together with education and infrastructure projects to directly benefit the community (Hamisi, 2022). Through efficient financial management institutions can develop strategic resource distribution plans which guarantee sustainable service delivery and effective population need response (Hamisi, 2022). Financial

management practices that are insufficient result in fund misallocation which causes service delivery to become inefficient and obstructed. Financial processes in Wajir County need transparent management and accountability practices to achieve effective resource utilization and service delivery program success.

Proper infrastructure consisting of roads with water supply systems and communication networks provides essential access to serve distant locations in Wajir County. The delivery of essential services including healthcare and education together with public utilities becomes difficult when infrastructure remains unreliable for reaching remote communities positioned outside urban centers (Abdi & Minja, 2023). Well-built roads enable the timely delivery of medical supplies to isolated health facilities thereby guaranteeing local residents can receive medical attention (Abdi & Minja, 2023). A dependable water distribution network provides residents with fundamental water access to maintain their health and stop water-related illnesses.

Wajir County can enhance its administrative performance and service delivery efficiency by adopting e-governance platforms together with modern technological systems. The implementation of e-governance platforms facilitates digital transformation of government services which allows citizens to use these services in a more accessible and open manner. Through online systems citizens can complete permit applications and tax payments and obtain government information which decreases bureaucratic barriers and makes authorities more accountable (Abdullahi & Allan, 2022). Modern technology enhances communication between government departments which produces enhanced decision-making abilities and better resource management (Abdullahi & Allan, 2022). The delivery of services to remote areas along with the improvement of resident quality of life in Wajir

County depends on physical infrastructure development and technological innovations (Abdullahi & Allan, 2022).

The Wajir County Government's successful execution of policies enables the delivery of planned services to their designated beneficiaries. These plans determine the extent to which services successfully deliver to their targeted beneficiaries in Wajir County. For the successful implementation of policies the government needs complete coordination between its separate departments. A healthcare policy to enhance maternal care services requires coordination between the health department and both transportation department ambulance services and community outreach programs (Esamai et al., 2020). The coordinated management of resources enables efficient distribution of funds which produces superior outcomes for intervention programs (Esamai et al., 2020). Such collaboration promotes transparency and maintains accountability because departments unite to reach shared objectives. The Wajir County Government can deliver better services to its residents through successful policy execution along with strong inter-office working relationships.

The Wajir County Government works with government officials and community members in addition to civil society organizations as well as relevant actors who participate in the process. Stakeholder engagement produces service delivery programs which match community requirements and needs thus producing sustainable impactful outcomes (Wanjau et al., 2021). The planning and implementation stages for infrastructure projects become more effective when local communities participate in decision-making through Wanjau et al. (2021). Residents should contribute their ideas about project design and

placement which allows developers to create infrastructure systems that suit local requirements and preserve cultural traditions.

2.2.3 Influence of Accountability Mechanisms on Service Delivery

The research conducted by Khan and Asad (2019) investigated public health service delivery in Punjab Province through examination of accountability frameworks in Pakistan. The research employed a descriptive method to gather data from senior officers and health practitioners in 40 public hospitals. A total of 120 participants were selected through purposive sampling while multiple regression analysis served to interpret the quantitative data. The research demonstrated that implementing internal audits alongside public complaints systems and independent oversight bodies leads to enhanced transparency while improving service efficiency. The lack of digital tools together with political interference created obstacles for accountability implementation. The research has a major shortcoming due to its lack of frontline staff and service users which reduces the understanding of accountability mechanisms at the grassroots level. The study supports the Principal-Agent Theory because it demonstrates how information asymmetry combined with inadequate monitoring systems leads to reduced accountability.

Huang and Li (2021) investigated of accountability systems operating in Guangzhou municipal government. The research employed case studies to focus on local government departments that managed waste operations. The researchers conducted their study through snowball sampling which resulted in 60 selections from administrative and field workforce members. The researchers obtained data through both interviews and official records which underwent thematic analysis. The research discovered that performance-based contracts together with citizen scorecards proved successful for enhancing the reliability of services.

A strict organizational hierarchy within the bureaucracy proved detrimental to adaptive governance operations. The research did not investigate public understandings of accountability which resulted in a knowledge gap. The research design employs Accountability Theory because it focuses on answerability and enforceability as fundamental elements for successful governance systems.

Kato and Tanaka (2020) conducted research on citizen engagement alongside public accountability in Japanese local governments within Osaka. The research followed a three-year duration through which researchers conducted mixed-methods analysis combining surveys and documentary analysis. The research included local administrators together with active community members as its target population. The researchers employed stratified sampling techniques while using time-series analysis together with qualitative coding for their data analysis. The research established that service satisfaction together with trust increased through the combination of transparency portals, participatory budgeting and citizen audits. The population showed reluctance to challenge public officials because of cultural reasons which limited feedback. No research conducted during the study examined variations between rural and urban municipal services which created a contextual problem. The study confirms the Public Value Theory by showing that governance practices which offer inclusivity and transparency foster public trust and service legitimacy.

Ahmed and Alsharif (2022) conducted research in Saudi Arabia about digital accountability systems for public transportation. The researchers designed their study through a quasi-experimental approach while focusing on mobile-based service feedback systems as the main research element. Riyadh commuters together with its transit workers

comprised the population under study. The research utilized random sampling to involve 200 participants to perform statistical analysis through ANOVA and regression methods. Mobile applications improved the process of reporting alongside complaint tracking while enabling better service responsiveness. Limited Wi-Fi access combined with digital illiteracy prevented users from adopting the services. The current research has an empty space because it does not examine how officials utilize the data collected from these platforms. The research work adds value to Technological Accountability Models by integrating citizen engagement with digital governance platforms.

Schneider and Weber (2021) conducted a research investigation into how parliamentary oversight influences service delivery in German local authorities. The research conducted a quantitative cross-sectional analysis by utilizing data from 50 municipalities. The studied population consisted of municipal executives together with councillors. The research used systematic random sampling to collect data which were evaluated through structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. Municipalities having robust legislative oversight systems demonstrated both improved budget efficiencies and increased service delivery promptness. The oversight benefits diminished due to partisan interference from time to time. A weakness of the study was its inability to include performance indicators from citizen perspectives. The research follows the public sector accountability framework based on the Checks and Balances Model.

Leclerc and Fournier (2020) investigated how public feedback systems influence service delivery for local water systems through their French research study. The research utilized qualitative comparative case design to study three municipalities' feedback systems. Service managers together with resident associations formed the target group for this

research. The research used purposive sampling to collect data which underwent content analysis as a method of analysis. Highly integrated complaint redress systems together with performance benchmarking led to both better service responses and lower user dissatisfaction levels. The feedback integration along with bureaucratic inertia combined to prevent transformative impact from occurring. The research had a significant gap because it did not track performance data throughout the study period. The research supports Feedback Theory of Governance by demonstrating that accountability systems successfully bridge service planning with user requirements.

Petrova and Dimitrov (2023) examined how audit institutions affect education service delivery in Bulgaria. The research applied a mix of research methods to study policy officers together with school inspectors and teachers. Thirty schools were randomly selected through stratified random sampling for the analysis that used regression analysis combined with interview coding. Performance audits conducted regularly alongside staff appraisal processes delivered substantial impacts on both curriculum execution and educational facility leadership. The concern about negative consequences from staff members prevented them from making their activities public. The research failed to analyze its data by gender which created an opportunity for more inclusive accountability studies. The research findings validate Institutional Accountability Theory by recommending mechanisms which enhance institutional openness and operational performance.

Otieno and Musyoka (2021) conducted a research project that evaluated health service delivery accountability mechanisms in the neighboring Garissa County to Wajir. The authors used a descriptive survey design to investigate 150 healthcare workers and administrators who made up the target population. Stratified sampling was chosen as the

method to include workers from all service levels in the study. The researchers conducted data analysis through descriptive statistics combined with inferential correlation analysis. Service quality along with responsiveness improved when public audits and citizen health boards and performance reviews were implemented according to the study. Community members showed limited participation because they were unaware of their roles in monitoring healthcare services. Existing research showed that no digital accountability tools existed in the healthcare sector. The research follows the principal-agent model to demonstrate how clear roles and monitoring systems enhance the relationship between service administrators and their users.

A research study conducted by Tshabalala and Dlamini (2020) examined how accountability affects waste service delivery through a case-study approach in Gauteng Province of South Africa. The research team conducted interviews with both 45 local officials and 45 service users. The study applied purposive sampling to accumulate data that were analyzed through thematic analysis. Research results showed that both performance scorecards and citizen forums enhanced the delivery of services along with their compliance and responsiveness. The trust was constrained because of insufficient financial transparency and abnormal auditing practices. The study lacked important findings because political office bearers were not included as part of the research. The study validates Social Accountability Theory because citizen monitoring activities enhance institutional accountability mechanisms.

Girmaye and Abebe (2019) conducted research on agricultural extension service accountability within the Amhara region of Ethiopia. The research design incorporated surveys which reached out to 300 extension officers and farmers. The research adopted

cluster sampling across five districts and used regression and factor analysis to analyze collected data. According to the research findings upward accountability towards the ministry together with downward accountability towards farmers enhanced both information exchange and service coordination. The strict reporting systems constrained the ability of officials to innovate their processes. The study failed to consider informal community leadership structures as well as formal accountability mechanisms. The research findings validate Multiple Accountability Frameworks by demonstrating the requirement to unite vertical and horizontal accountability systems during service delivery.

Accountability mechanisms create opportunities for citizen participation that lets residents actively participate in governance activities by expressing concerns and offering feedback and forming part of decision-making processes (Kosec & Wantchekon, 2020). Service delivery programs in Wajir County find shape through resident needs and priorities thanks to community meetings combined with public hearings and citizen feedback systems (Hamisi, 2022). Service delivery initiatives develop better local relevance through citizen involvement in decision-making processes. The Wajir County population participates in healthcare service planning through participatory budgeting exercises which makes sure healthcare initiatives tackle unique health issues within different communities (Hamisi, 2022).

Independent bodies composed of audit institutions together with ombudsman offices and civil society organizations use accountability mechanisms to monitor and oversee government activities (Breuer & Leininger, 2021). The assessment bodies evaluate government operations while conducting investigations of misconduct to develop recommendations which improve public service delivery. The audit institutions in Wajir

County examine public funds to validate budgeted disbursements (Lutta et al., 2022) according to the findings in Breuer & Leininger (2021). The ombudsman offices in Wajir County investigate reports of governmental power abuse and administrative misconduct (Breuer & Leininger, 2021). The monitoring of government actions combined with transparency advocacy comes from civil society organizations including watchdog groups. The oversight activities of these entities lead to identification and resolution of corruption and inefficiency and mismanagement therefore enabling resources to be used efficiently and delivering intended services.

Brisbois (2020) shows that legal and regulatory frameworks establish accountability systems through precise rules which define public sector accountability responsibilities and procedures. The frameworks consist of laws along with rules and ethical conduct guidelines which define official responsibilities and establish accountability systems and enforce penalties against misconduct and negligence (Brisbois, 2020). The public procurement laws in Wajir County promote transparent and equitable contract allocation and financial management laws provide budgeting and expenditure control procedures (Dubow, 2022). Public servants must follow ethical codes that define their required behavior in office according to Dubow (2022). Lawful regulations serve to prevent bad behavior and offer citizens pathways to challenge inadequate performance while maintaining service delivery system integrity. Wajir County residents who serve as whistleblowers can use legal protections to disclose corruption and mismanagement cases without facing retaliation (Dubow, 2022). The governance processes of Wajir County require robust legal and regulatory frameworks to maintain public trust and ensure proper accountability functions.

Through its accountability mechanisms the government develops stronger institutional capabilities by creating a system that promotes public official accountability as well as integrity and professional behavior. The goal of accountability mechanisms is to strengthen government personnel through training and building capacities and implementing performance-based rewards (Amde et al., 2019). Training sessions concentrate on deepening employee knowledge regarding laws and regulations and established best practices which affect governance and service provision. Capacity-building initiatives deliver workshops and seminars that teach public administration relevant skills such as project management and financial management according to Amde et al. (2019). Public officials maintain high performance levels and practice ethical conduct because performance incentives including promotions and bonuses reward them for their success.

The development of Wajir County's personnel through investments leads to better service delivery performance with improved efficiency. Well-trained and knowledgeable public officials are better equipped to design and implement policies and programs that address the needs of the community (Choi & Chandler, 2020). A culture of accountability and integrity helps prevent corruption and malfeasance, thereby ensuring that resources are used responsibly and services are delivered equitably. Overall, institutional capacity building facilitated by accountability mechanisms is essential for enhancing the government's ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently, ultimately contributing to the overall development and well-being of Wajir County's residents.

Service delivery gets influenced by accountability mechanisms through their ability to increase public understanding and create support networks that push for better governance and service delivery standards (Waddington et al., 2019). Accountability mechanisms

connect citizens to their rights and duties of holding government officials accountable by using education programs and media platforms as well as civil society initiatives (Waddington et al., 2019). The mechanisms empower citizens to become policy changers through access to information resources that allow them to demand superior service delivery while holding authorities responsible for community needs. The local organizations and advocacy groups of Wajir County organize communities to press for enhanced healthcare facilities while seeking better educational service access (Onyari et al., 2024). Through their work to elevate citizen voices and defend their rights accountability systems create governance systems that function better for all citizens thus improving service delivery in Wajir County.

2.2.4 Influence of Resource Allocation on Service Delivery

Ahmad and Sadiq (2020) performed a research investigation of budgetary impacts on health service delivery in Punjab Province Pakistan. Financial officers together with health administrators in 25 public hospitals were studied through a descriptive research design. Purposive sampling method led to selecting 150 participants. A regression model was used to calculate the link between financial resources and service output efficiency. The research documented how financial resources misalignment combined with secretive distribution systems and slow bureaucratic processes negatively influenced health service results. The research failed to investigate the impact of recurrent and capital expenditure on service delivery thus creating an essential gap in the analysis. The study supports Resource-Based Theory because efficient performance depends upon appropriate management of tangible resources.

The research by Nguyen and Tran (2021) studied fiscal decentralization and resource distribution within local governments of Vietnam by focusing on Da Nang Province. The research employed mixed-methods methodology to investigate municipal officers as well as local leaders. A stratified sampling technique picked out 100 participants for the study. The researchers performed descriptive statistical analysis combined with qualitative content evaluation of the collected data. The implementation of decentralized resource allocation methods delivered better services to the public particularly through infrastructure and education systems. Service delivery experiences variations because districts exhibit different levels of administrative capacity. One main shortcoming of this study involved its restricted examination of monitoring systems for resources that were allocated. The research findings validate the Public Choice Theory because it demonstrates efficiency improvements from decentralized resource management systems..

Hashimoto and Saito (2019) in Japan examined resource budgeting in elderly care services across Tokyo districts. A longitudinal research design was used, collecting data over five years. The target population included budget officers and social service workers. Quota sampling selected 200 respondents, and analysis involved time-series regression models. The study found that consistent funding and human resource investment were directly linked to improvements in service delivery metrics like client satisfaction and wait times. However, the lack of integration between departments led to duplication of resource use. The research gap was the absence of cost-effectiveness analyses. The study aligns with the Equity Theory, stressing that fair and needs-based allocation of resources enhances service outcomes.

Sharma and Rathi (2022) conducted a study in India, focusing on the role of resource allocation in rural water service provision in Uttar Pradesh. A case study design was adopted, targeting district engineers, project managers, and local administrators. Snowball sampling was used to identify 75 participants, and data were analyzed using thematic analysis and cross-tabulation. The study highlighted that political favoritism, limited technical planning, and underfunding hindered equitable service provision. A major research gap was the lack of community participation in budget formulation. The study supports the Participatory Planning Model, which underscores community inclusion in resource planning for equitable development.

Müller and König (2021) investigated resource allocation for public housing services in Germany, targeting municipalities in Saxony. A quantitative correlational design was used, involving 60 local government officers. Systematic random sampling was applied, and data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and regression models. The study revealed that well-structured budgeting and fund allocation improved service responsiveness and housing quality. However, rigid regulations slowed implementation speed. A critical gap was the study's narrow focus on financial resources, ignoring human and infrastructural assets. The study's findings align with Resource-Based Theory, which asserts that effective management of diverse resources leads to superior performance.

Dubois and Lefevre (2020) examined how resource allocation impact municipal transport services in France, particularly in Lyon and Marseille. Employing a comparative case study design, they collected data from urban transport officials and policy advisors. Purposive sampling of 40 respondents was conducted, and analysis utilized qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). The findings revealed that effective resource allocation to sustainable

transit options improved service accessibility and citizen satisfaction. However, conflicting policy priorities led to uneven funding. The research gap was a lack of longitudinal tracking of service impacts. This study connects with Public Value Theory, indicating that strategic investment in public services contributes to social welfare.

Dimitrov and Ivanova (2021) conducted a study in Bulgaria, focusing on resource planning in public schools in Sofia Municipality. Using a survey research design, the study involved school principals, education officers, and budget clerks. Stratified random sampling selected 120 participants, and multivariate regression analysis was conducted. The study found that transparent budgeting, needs-based funding, and regular audits improved educational outcomes. However, rural schools remained under-resourced due to urban-focused policies. A major gap was the failure to assess community-level budget feedback mechanisms. The findings reflect Equity and Efficiency Theories, emphasizing fairness in resource distribution and optimal utility of funds.

Mugisha and Atieno (2022) studied resource allocation in county health services in Uganda, focusing on Gulu District. A descriptive cross-sectional design was adopted, targeting health administrators, procurement officers, and clinical staff. Using purposive sampling, 80 participants were selected. SPSS-based correlation and regression analysis revealed that budget delays, misallocation of medical supplies, and weak procurement processes negatively influenced service quality. The research gap was the absence of disaggregated data on rural vs. urban health centers. The study aligns with Resource-Based and Agency Theories, stressing that resource mismanagement stems from weak oversight and poor capacity.

Mburu and Njoroge (2021) in Kenya investigated how financial and human resource allocation affects water service delivery in Machakos County. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, involving 100 officials from county water departments and community water user associations. Cluster sampling was used, and data were analyzed using thematic content analysis and descriptive statistics. Results indicated that areas with higher investment in trained personnel and infrastructure had better service outcomes. However, donor-driven projects created dependency and uneven development. A critical research gap was the lack of sustainability frameworks in resource planning. The findings resonate with Public Administration Theory, calling for coordinated and long-term allocation strategies.

Ahmed and Abdi (2020) carried out a study in Somalia, focusing on the allocation of donor and government funds in public education services in Mogadishu. A qualitative case study design was used, targeting education officials, school managers, and NGO representatives. Purposive sampling of 30 informants was conducted. Data were analyzed using narrative and thematic techniques. The study found that inconsistent funding, weak accountability, and political interference led to interrupted services and low enrollment. A major gap was the lack of gender-sensitive allocation models. The study relates to Equity Theory, advocating for just and inclusive allocation frameworks.

Similarly, allocating funds to infrastructure projects such as road construction or water supply systems enhances access to essential services, especially for residents in remote communities. Improved infrastructure facilitates the transportation of goods and services, reduces travel times, and enhances connectivity, thereby promoting economic development and improving the overall quality of life for residents (Jumanne et al., 2023). Investing in

road construction projects can facilitate access to healthcare facilities, schools, markets, and other essential services for residents living in rural or underserved areas.

Allocating resources towards recruiting and retaining skilled personnel ensures that service providers have the capacity to meet the demands of the population. Adequate staffing levels not only enhance the efficiency of service delivery but also contribute to the quality of services provided. Allocating funds for training programs and competitive salaries can attract and retain qualified professionals in key sectors such as education and healthcare. Investing in continuous professional development and offering competitive compensation packages, the county government can incentivize skilled individuals to remain in their roles, thereby reducing staff turnover and maintaining institutional knowledge and expertise (Jumanne et al., 2023). In the education sector, investing in training programs for teachers and educational staff can enhance teaching methodologies, curriculum delivery, and student outcomes. Similarly, in healthcare, allocating funds for training healthcare workers and providing opportunities for professional development can improve clinical skills, patient care, and health outcomes (Garane & Ondieki, 2023).

Investing in infrastructure development enhance service delivery within Wajir County, particularly in remote areas. Allocating resources to infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, water supply systems, and communication networks is essential for improving accessibility and connectivity, thus facilitating the delivery of essential services to residents (Bulle & Muchelule, 2024). Investing in road construction projects enables better transportation of goods, services, and people, thereby reducing travel times and improving access to healthcare facilities, schools, markets, and other vital services (Bulle

& Muchelule, 2024). Improved road networks also facilitate emergency response and evacuation in times of crisis, enhancing community resilience.

Similarly, investments in water supply systems ensure access to clean and reliable water, which is crucial for public health, sanitation, and agricultural productivity (Omar & Edna, 2020). Furthermore, investments in communication networks, including mobile phone coverage and internet connectivity, enhance access to information, education, and economic opportunities. Improved communication infrastructure enables residents to access telemedicine services, online education resources, and e-commerce platforms, thus bridging the digital divide and promoting socio-economic development (Omar & Edna, 2020).

Ahmad and Sadiq (2020) performed a research investigation of budgetary impacts on health service delivery in Punjab Province Pakistan. Financial officers together with health administrators in 25 public hospitals were studied through a descriptive research design. Purposive sampling method led to selecting 150 participants. A regression model was used to calculate the link between financial resources and service output efficiency. The research documented how financial resources misalignment combined with secretive distribution systems and slow bureaucratic processes negatively influenced health service results. The research failed to investigate the impact of recurrent and capital expenditure on service delivery thus creating an essential gap in the analysis. The study supports Resource-Based Theory because efficient performance depends upon appropriate management of tangible resources.

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2.3 Theoretical Review

2.3.1 Decentralization Theory

During the mid-20th century political scientists and economists along with scholars such as Jean-Paul Faguet (2004) and Dennis Rondinelli (1981) introduced Decentralization Theory. Local control of authority from central governments enables better decision-making at the local level thus producing improved outcomes in governance and service delivery according to these scholars. Rondinelli explained decentralization as a system where governments at lower levels receive authority to handle planning and resource distribution and management responsibilities leading to improved local community service delivery.

The research about devolved leadership structures that impact Wajir County service delivery in Kenya depends strongly on Decentralization Theory. The theory demonstrates that delegating power to local authorities provides them with the capability to create

decisions that match their community requirements. The theory proves valid for Wajir County because local leaders situated near the population achieve better results when directing funds toward basic services including healthcare, education and infrastructure development. The ability of local leaders to serve the specific needs of their communities represents a key reason for decentralization because it produces more efficient public service delivery.

According to the theory decentralization improves both public official accountability and citizen involvement in government governance. The integration of citizens and local leaders in decision-making allows public officials to maintain greater accountability towards their service population. The research aims to examine how accountability systems affect service delivery in Wajir County according to one specific objective of the study. By distributing leadership power across communities decentralized governance promotes both transparency and less corruption because residents maintain direct observation of resource distribution and service delivery.

Decentralization of power enables local authorities to try new approaches in governance through experimental initiatives. Local authorities receive authority to create specialized strategies that resolve their distinct regional problems. The leadership in Wajir County could create innovative strategies for healthcare delivery and infrastructure development which align better with their geographical and socio-economic characteristics. The freedom to make decisions independently along with the flexibility yields better outcomes in service delivery.

2.3.2 Public Administration Theory

As Woodrow Wilson founded the Public Administration Theory in 1887 it continues to serve as the cornerstone for studying formal government operations. In his article "The Study of Administration" Wilson outlined the foundational concepts which guide research on how public organizations execute tasks for their citizens. Public administration requires autonomous academic recognition because efficient governance should be its primary focus according to Wilson's perspective. In his framework bureaucracy achieves maximum effectiveness through the combination of professional administrators alongside capable leadership for creating efficient service delivery.

Wajir County service delivery serves as the main goal of this study which receives fundamental theoretical backing from Public Administration Theory. Public service delivery reaches its effectiveness through the combination of proper government structures and efficient administrative capabilities according to the theory. The performance capabilities of government institutions including policy implementation and resource management arise from their administrative capacity which determines their speed in distributing services to the public. To assess administrative capacity in Wajir County it is necessary to analyze government institution resource management and organizational performance and leader competence in service delivery management. The operationalization of government policies through public administration allows Wajir County to perform its duties toward citizens.

The theory establishes that competent leadership represents the fundamental element needed for effective government institution operations. Organizations under leaders with specialized competencies obtain direction toward well-defined objectives that results in

optimal resource allocation decisions and service execution. Government agencies in Wajir County need leaders who must deliver essential public affairs management to deliver healthcare services alongside education and infrastructure construction which extends to the people. The examination of leadership decision-making mechanisms for service delivery outcomes requires evaluation of administrative capabilities.

As per Public Administration Theory the delivery of quality public services depends on ensuring government employees have the required skills. Government institutions need skilled personnel to deliver effective execution of policies and programs. Research will evaluate both the efficiency and service quality of Wajir County by examining its workforce recruitment and development capacity and employee retention practices. According to this theory well-trained motivated employees enable government institutions to perform more efficiently in delivering their services.

2.3.3 Principal-Agent Theory

Stephen Ross introduced Principal-Agent Theory in 1973 to understand how principals delegate work tasks to agents who perform them. The theory investigates methods by which principals (citizens) can protect agent interests (government officials). Governments need this theory to understand ways that accountability systems reduce conflicts between citizens and government representatives. According to this theory agents might hold superior information than principals which could result in agents acting in their own self-interest.

The research goal to evaluate how accountability mechanisms affect Wajir County service delivery makes Principal-Agent Theory particularly applicable for this study. The theory

demonstrates why agents must be accountable to their principals through specific mechanisms which link public officials to citizens. Service delivery quality suffers when agents remain unchecked because they fail to prioritize public welfare. The service delivery results in Wajir County will improve when strong accountability systems including transparency and oversight alongside citizen participation are properly established.

According to the theory transparency functions as a vital factor in eliminating the information gap that exists between agents and principals. Transparent operations of government budgets along with expenditures allow citizens to monitor resource utilization. Openness in government operations allows citizens to observe resource allocation accurately so public officials minimize corruption and mismanagement in the system. The release of healthcare budgets in Wajir County enables residents to verify how resources are used to improve healthcare services which increases accountability.

The Principal-Agent Theory includes oversight mechanisms as one of its fundamental aspects. External oversight organizations such as audit institutions and ombudsman offices work to examine public official activities in order to stop corruption and inefficiency. The institutions work as critical checkpoints to maintain public officials in Wajir County follow budgetary rules and service delivery goals while ensuring funds produce effective improvements in healthcare and education services.

The theory teaches that governance needs citizen involvement as an accountability method. The citizens of Wajir County can impact decision-making through public forums combined with community meetings and feedback platforms that allow residents to voice their concerns.

2.3.4 Resource Dependency Theory

Resource Dependency Theory was introduced by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik in 1978. The theory focuses on how organizations, including governments, depend on external resources to achieve their goals. It suggests that organizations are not fully self-sufficient; they rely on external entities for crucial resources like finances, personnel, and infrastructure. This dependency on external resources creates vulnerabilities, influencing organizational behavior and decision-making as they seek to secure and control these resources to maintain autonomy and effectiveness.

In the context of Wajir County government, Resource Dependency Theory is highly relevant to the study objective, which investigates how resource allocation affects service delivery. According to this theory, Wajir County's ability to deliver services, such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure, depends on its ability to secure necessary resources. The more effectively the county manages these resources, the better it can meet the needs of its constituents.

The theory argues that resource allocation decisions are critical in determining how well government agencies can function and deliver services. For example, if Wajir County allocates adequate funding to healthcare services, it can ensure the availability of medical personnel, medicines, and equipment. This enhances the quality of healthcare services and improves access for residents. Similarly, by investing in education, the county can improve human capital development, leading to long-term socio-economic growth.

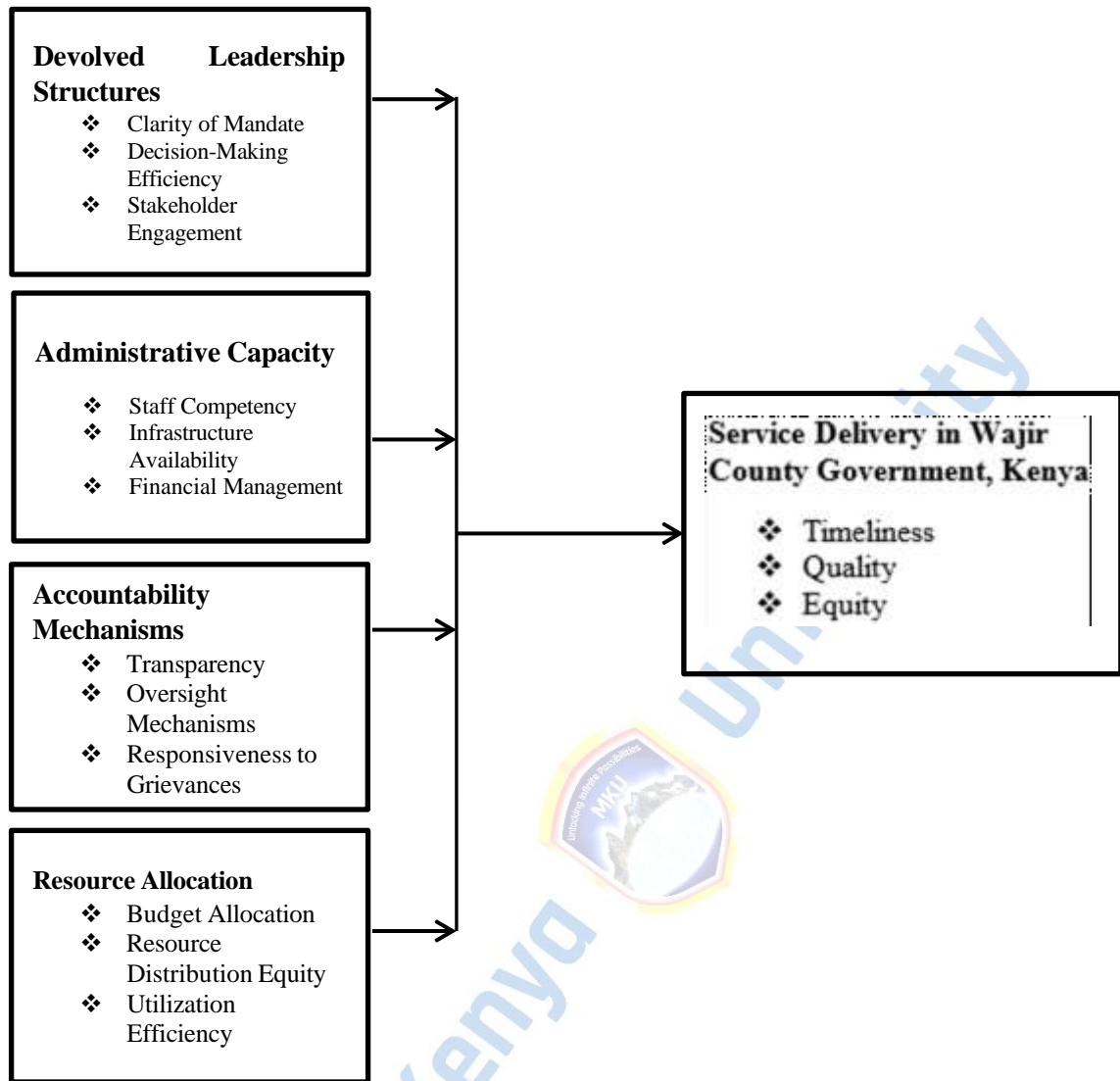
The theory also emphasizes that securing resources strengthens organizational autonomy. When government agencies in Wajir County secure sufficient resources, they become less

reliant on external entities and can operate more effectively. For instance, proper allocation of funds to operational expenses like hiring skilled personnel and maintaining facilities ensures that government agencies have the capacity to function without excessive reliance on outside actors, thus reducing external pressures and enhancing service delivery.

In addition, Resource Dependency Theory highlights the strategic importance of resource allocation in addressing the needs of citizens. For Wajir County, prioritizing critical sectors like healthcare, education, and infrastructure ensures that services are delivered effectively to meet the population's demands. Efficient resource management allows the county to improve service delivery, contribute to socio-economic development, and enhance the well-being of its residents.

2.4 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework depicts the relationships between independent variables along with dependent variables through diagrammatic presentation. Devolved Leadership serves as an independent variable along with Administrative Capacity and Accountability Mechanisms and Resource Allocation in a relationship with the dependent variable Service Delivery in Wajir County Government Kenya. This framework serves as a roadmap for researchers, aiding in hypothesis development, experiment or study design, and interpretation of findings within a cohesive theoretical framework. It offers a structured approach to investigating research questions and enhances the credibility and rigor of the research process.



Independent Variable
Figure 2. 1 : Conceptual Framework

Dependent Variable

The conceptual framework for this study provides a structured representation of the hypothesized relationships between key variables influencing service delivery within the Wajir County Government. It serves as a theoretical blueprint that guides the research process, from the formulation of objectives and hypotheses to data collection and interpretation of findings.

At the core of this framework is the dependent variable service delivery which reflects the quality, accessibility, efficiency, and responsiveness of public services provided to residents of Wajir County. The study proposes that service delivery is directly influenced by four interrelated independent variables: devolved leadership structures, administrative capacity, accountability mechanisms, and resource allocation.

Devolved leadership structures refer to the formal systems and institutional arrangements established under Kenya's 2010 Constitution, which transferred authority, responsibilities, and resources from the national government to county governments. In Wajir County, this decentralization aims to bring governance closer to the people, allowing local leaders to make context-specific decisions and respond effectively to community needs. However, the effectiveness of these structures depends significantly on the competence, inclusivity, and stability of local leadership.

Administrative capacity represents the ability of county government institutions and officials to plan, implement, and monitor public services effectively. This includes factors such as human resource adequacy, technical skills, institutional coordination, and adherence to regulatory frameworks. Weak administrative capacity can hinder the execution of service delivery mandates, regardless of the presence of devolved authority.

Accountability mechanisms encompass the tools, processes, and institutions designed to ensure that public officials and agencies are held answerable to citizens and higher levels of government. These include public audits, performance evaluations, community oversight forums, and grievance redress systems. Where such mechanisms are robust and transparent, they can significantly enhance service quality by curbing mismanagement and aligning leadership actions with public expectations.

Resource allocation refers to the distribution and utilization of financial, human, and infrastructural resources within the county. Equitable and needs-based allocation of resources is critical to ensuring that all areas and populations within Wajir benefit from government services. However, instances of favoritism, corruption, or politicized budgeting can lead to disparities and undermine the goals of devolution.

Together, these four independent variables interact to shape the nature and effectiveness of service delivery in Wajir County. The conceptual framework thus not only defines the scope of investigation but also highlights the expected causal relationships that the study seeks to explore. By visually and theoretically linking these elements, the framework enhances the clarity, coherence, and academic rigor of the research.

2.5 Summary of the Research Gaps

Table 2. 1: Summary of the Research Gaps

Author(s)	topic	Variables	Findings	Research Gaps	Measures
Ngigi, S., & Busolo, D. N. (2019)	Influence of Devolved Leadership Structures in Kenya	Devolved leadership structures, service delivery	Devolved leadership structures significantly improved service delivery by increasing efficiency and responsiveness to local needs.	Lack of data on long-term sustainability and varying impacts across regions.	Service delivery measured through public satisfaction, response time, and quality of services.
Ohemeng, F. L., & Kamga, O. (2020)	Influence of Administrative Capacity on Service Delivery in Ghana	Administrative capacity, service delivery	Enhanced administrative capacity led to improved service	Need for detailed analysis on the impact of specific administrative	Administrative capacity measured by personnel competency

			delivery, with effective management of resources and personnel being crucial.	ve training programs.	, resource management efficiency, and execution of administrative processes.
Kuwawenaru wa et al. (2020)	Influence of Accountability Mechanisms on Service Delivery in Tanzania	Accountability mechanisms, service delivery	Robust accountability mechanisms led to improved service delivery, with audits, transparent reporting, and public feedback being instrumental.	Need for further studies on the impact of citizen engagement in enhancing accountability.	Accountability mechanisms evaluated through frequency and transparency of audits, public access to information, and presence of feedback systems.
YuSheng, K., & Ibrahim, M. (2019)	Influence of Resource Allocation on Service Delivery in China	Resource allocation, service delivery	Effective resource allocation improved service delivery, with strategic fund distribution enhancing public service outcomes.	Gaps in understanding the role of community involvement in resource allocation decisions.	Resource allocation measured by efficiency of fund distribution, adequacy of resources, and quality and reach of services.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology employed in investigating the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya. The chapter provides a comprehensive description of the research design, target population, sampling approaches, research instruments, data collection methods, and data analysis and presentation techniques that guided this study.

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design that systematically combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of how devolved leadership structures influence service delivery in Wajir County Government. Mixed-methods research is defined as an approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study to provide a more complete understanding of research problems than either approach alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This specific methodological combination was selected as the most appropriate approach for addressing the research questions because it leverages the complementary strengths of both paradigms to generate robust and nuanced findings.

The quantitative component serves as the foundation for identifying measurable patterns, relationships, and statistical associations between devolved leadership variables and service delivery outcomes. Quantitative research enables systematic measurement and statistical analysis to test hypotheses and identify relationships between variables (Bryman, 2016). Through structured questionnaires administered to a representative sample, this

approach enables the systematic collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to determine the extent and significance of relationships between leadership effectiveness, resource allocation practices, governance mechanisms, and service delivery performance indicators. The quantitative method provides empirical evidence of correlation patterns and allows for generalization of findings across similar devolved governance contexts (Field, 2018).

The qualitative component provides essential depth and contextual understanding that quantitative data alone cannot capture. Qualitative research focuses on understanding phenomena from participants' perspectives and exploring the meaning and context of social experiences (Patton, 2015). Through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, this approach elicits rich narratives about lived experiences, implementation challenges, success factors, and the complex dynamics that shape how devolved leadership operates in practice. Qualitative methods reveal the underlying mechanisms, processes, and contextual factors that explain why certain relationships exist and how they manifest in the day-to-day reality of governance and service delivery (Miles et al., 2020).

The integration of these methods creates a comprehensive analytical framework where quantitative findings establish what relationships exist and their statistical significance, while qualitative insights explain how and why these relationships occur, providing the contextual understanding necessary for meaningful interpretation and practical application of research findings (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

3.3 Study Location

This research was conducted in Wajir County, located in the northeastern region of Kenya along the border with Somalia and Ethiopia. Wajir County covers an area of 55,840 square kilometers and is characterized as an arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) with a predominantly pastoralist population of approximately 781,263 people according to the 2019 national census (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). The county comprises six sub-counties: Wajir North, Wajir East, Wajir West, Wajir South, Tarbaj, and Eldas.

The selection of study location is a critical methodological decision that affects the validity and generalizability of research findings (Yin, 2018). Wajir County was strategically selected as the study location based on several factors that make it an ideal context for examining the influence of devolved leadership on service delivery. First, the county represents one of Kenya's most marginalized regions where the impact of devolved governance is particularly critical for improving citizens' access to essential services (Commission on Revenue Allocation, 2021). Second, Wajir County faces significant development challenges including inadequate infrastructure, limited healthcare facilities, poor road networks, water scarcity, and high levels of poverty and unemployment, making effective service delivery under devolved leadership structures crucial for addressing these challenges (County Government of Wajir, 2022).

Third, the county's diverse ethnic composition, primarily consisting of Somali communities with various clan affiliations, presents unique governance dynamics that influence how devolved leadership structures operate and affect service delivery outcomes (Lindberg & Morrison, 2008). Fourth, as one of Kenya's frontier counties with historical marginalization, Wajir provides an excellent case study for understanding how devolution

can address historical inequities and improve service delivery in previously underserved areas (Cheeseman et al., 2016).

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised 236 key stakeholders within Wajir County Government who are directly involved in or significantly affected by devolved leadership structures and service delivery processes. Target population refers to the entire group of individuals or entities that researchers want to understand and about whom they want to make inferences (Kothari, 2004). This population was carefully selected to include individuals who possess comprehensive knowledge and experience regarding governance processes, policy implementation, resource allocation, and service delivery outcomes within the devolved system.

The target population included five distinct categories of stakeholders based on their roles in devolved governance structures (Barasa et al., 2017): county executives comprising the governor, deputy governor, and county executive committee members (10 individuals); county assembly members including the speaker, deputy speaker, majority leader, minority leader, and elected ward representatives (31 individuals); departmental heads encompassing chief officers and directors from various county departments such as health, education, water, agriculture, and infrastructure (47 individuals); public service board members including the chairperson and board members responsible for human resource management in the county (9 individuals); and departmental and sub-county staff including senior officers, coordinators, and field staff involved in direct service delivery (139 individuals). This comprehensive target population ensures representation from all levels of the devolved governance structure, from policy makers and senior executives to

operational staff and service delivery personnel, providing diverse perspectives on how devolved leadership influences service delivery outcomes (Bosire, 2013).

Table 3. 1: Target Population

Category	Population
County Executives	10
County Assembly Members	31
Departmental Heads	47
Public Service Board Members	9
Departmental and Sub-County Staff	139
Total	236

Source: HR Office, Wajir County Government

3.5 Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consisted of the complete list of 236 individuals identified in the target population, obtained from the Human Resources Office of Wajir County Government. A sampling frame is a list of all members of the target population from which a sample is drawn (Saunders et al., 2019). This frame provided a comprehensive directory of all key stakeholders involved in devolved governance and service delivery within the county. The sampling frame was verified for accuracy and completeness through cross-referencing with official county government records and consultation with human resources personnel to ensure all relevant positions and individuals were included. The frame was organized according to the five stakeholder categories to facilitate stratified sampling and ensure systematic representation from each group. Regular updates were made to account for any personnel changes or new appointments during the study period, maintaining the frame's accuracy and relevance throughout the research process (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

3.6 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The study employed stratified random sampling to ensure representative participation from all levels and functions within Wajir County's devolved leadership structure. Stratified

sampling is a probability sampling technique where the population is divided into homogeneous subgroups (strata) and random samples are drawn from each stratum (Babbie, 2016). This sampling approach was selected to address the heterogeneous nature of the target population and ensure adequate representation from each stakeholder category, recognizing that different groups have varying perspectives, experiences, and roles in devolved governance and service delivery.

The stratification process divided the target population into five distinct strata based on functional roles and hierarchical positions within the devolved system. This stratification was necessary for several reasons aligned with sampling theory principles (Neuman, 2014): first, to ensure proportional representation from each level of governance, from executive leadership to operational staff; second, to capture diverse perspectives on devolved leadership and service delivery from different vantage points within the system; third, to enable comparative analysis between stakeholder groups; and fourth, to ensure that smaller but important groups (such as county executives) were not underrepresented in the sample.

Within each stratum, participants were selected using simple random sampling techniques. For strata with smaller populations, a comprehensive list of all members was created and random selection conducted using random number generation following procedures outlined by Cochran (2007). For larger strata, systematic random sampling was employed where every *n*th individual was selected after a random starting point, with the sampling interval calculated based on the stratum size and desired sample (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

Table 3. 2: Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sample Size (30%)
County Executives	10	3
County Assembly Members	31	9
Departmental Heads	47	14

Public Service Board Members	9	3
Departmental and Sub-County Staff	139	42
Total	236	71

The sample size of 71 respondents, representing 30% of the target population, was determined based on practical constraints rather than statistical power analysis. These constraints included the remote geographical location of Wajir County with challenging accessibility to some areas, limited financial resources for extensive travel and accommodation, time limitations for data collection given the academic calendar and research timeline, and the need to balance comprehensive data collection with feasible implementation in a resource-constrained environment (Marshall et al., 2013).

While a larger sample would have been statistically preferable based on power analysis recommendations (Cohen, 1988), the 30% proportion was considered adequate for providing meaningful insights while remaining practically manageable. This sample size aligns with guidelines for qualitative research components (Patton, 2015) and provides sufficient cases for basic statistical analysis in the quantitative component (Field, 2018).

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Two primary data collection instruments were developed and employed to gather comprehensive information addressing the research objectives and questions, following established principles of instrument development in social science research (DeVellis, 2017).

3.7.1 Structured Questionnaire

A comprehensive structured questionnaire was developed to collect quantitative data from county government officials and relevant stakeholders. Questionnaires are systematic data

collection instruments consisting of a series of questions designed to gather information from respondents (Fowler, 2014). The questionnaire was designed to measure five key constructs central to understanding the influence of devolved leadership on service delivery: leadership effectiveness in devolved structures, service delivery performance indicators, resource allocation efficiency and transparency, citizen satisfaction and engagement levels, and governance accountability mechanisms.

The questionnaire consisted of 52 closed-ended questions organized into six sections following established questionnaire design principles (Dillman et al., 2014). Section A captured demographic information including respondent category, years of service, education level, and departmental affiliation (8 questions). Section B assessed perceptions of devolved leadership effectiveness using items measuring decision-making processes, leadership competencies, and coordination mechanisms (12 questions). Section C evaluated service delivery performance across key sectors including healthcare, education, water services, and infrastructure development (11 questions). Section D examined resource allocation practices, budget transparency, and financial management effectiveness (9 questions). Section E measured citizen engagement, participation in governance, and satisfaction with county services (8 questions). Section F assessed accountability mechanisms, oversight functions, and transparency in governance processes (4 questions).

The questionnaire development process involved multiple stages to ensure validity and reliability following established scale development procedures (Churchill, 1979; Hinkin, 1995). Initial item generation was based on extensive literature review of devolved governance and service delivery measurement instruments used in similar contexts. Existing validated scales were adapted where appropriate, including items from the Public

Service Delivery Assessment Tool (World Bank, 2018) and the Governance Effectiveness Index (Kaufmann et al., 2020), modified to fit the specific context of devolved governance in Kenya.

For constructs without existing validated measures, new items were developed following established scale development procedures (MacKenzie et al., 2011). This process involved defining construct domains through literature review and expert consultation, generating an initial pool of items that comprehensively covered each domain, refining items through expert review for clarity and relevance, and conducting cognitive interviews with five public administration experts to identify ambiguous or problematic items (Willis, 2005).

Response formats varied according to question type, with most attitudinal items using 5-point Likert scales (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), performance ratings using 5-point scales (1 = Very Poor to 5 = Excellent), and demographic questions using appropriate categorical response options (Likert, 1932). The questionnaire was pre-tested extensively beyond the formal pilot study through multiple rounds of expert review and cognitive testing to ensure clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness (Presser et al., 2004).

3.7.2 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

A detailed semi-structured interview guide was developed for conducting key informant interviews with senior county officials, departmental heads, and other leadership figures. Semi-structured interviews combine the flexibility of unstructured interviews with the focus of structured interviews, using predetermined questions while allowing for exploration of emerging themes (Bryman, 2016). The interview protocol was designed to elicit rich, detailed information about experiences with devolved leadership

implementation, challenges and successes in service delivery coordination, and recommendations for improvement.

The interview guide covered eight main thematic areas, each with core questions and follow-up probes, following established principles of qualitative interview design (Patton, 2015; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The first theme explored participants' experiences with devolved leadership implementation, including questions about the transition from centralized to devolved governance, adaptation challenges, and leadership capacity development needs. The second theme examined service delivery coordination mechanisms, focusing on inter-departmental collaboration, resource sharing, and coordination with national government agencies.

The third theme investigated resource allocation decision-making processes, including budget preparation, prioritization criteria, community input mechanisms, and transparency measures. The fourth theme addressed inter-governmental relations, exploring relationships between county and national governments, coordination challenges, and areas of conflict or cooperation. The fifth theme focused on citizen engagement mechanisms, including public participation processes, feedback systems, and community involvement in governance.

The sixth theme examined accountability and oversight mechanisms, including internal controls, audit processes, and performance monitoring systems. The seventh theme explored specific challenges faced in service delivery, including infrastructure constraints, human resource limitations, and external factors affecting performance. The final theme solicited recommendations for improving devolved leadership effectiveness and service delivery outcomes.

Each thematic area included 3-5 core questions designed to ensure consistency across interviews while maintaining flexibility to explore emerging themes and follow up on interesting responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Probe questions were developed to encourage elaboration, clarification, and deeper exploration of key issues. The semi-structured format was specifically chosen to balance the need for systematic data collection with the flexibility required to capture the complexity and nuance of participants' experiences and perspectives (Mason, 2018).

Questions were formulated using open-ended formats to encourage narrative responses and avoid leading participants toward particular answers (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). The guide was reviewed by experienced qualitative researchers and pre-tested during the pilot study to ensure questions effectively elicited the desired information and flowed logically throughout the interview.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted over an eight-week period from March to April 2024, organized in two sequential phases to ensure systematic and comprehensive information gathering while minimizing respondent burden and optimizing data quality (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.8.1 Phase One: Questionnaire Administration

The first phase involved administering structured questionnaires to all 71 sampled participants across the five stakeholder categories. Given the geographical challenges and varying literacy levels in Wajir County, questionnaires were administered through face-to-face encounters rather than self-administered surveys or electronic distribution. This approach was essential for ensuring high response rates, providing clarification when

needed, and accommodating participants with varying levels of formal education (Fowler, 2014).

Research assistants were recruited and trained to support questionnaire administration following established protocols for training data collectors (Groves et al., 2009). Three local research assistants with undergraduate degrees and familiarity with the local context were selected and provided with comprehensive training on research ethics, questionnaire administration procedures, data collection protocols, and cultural sensitivity. Training included practice sessions, role-playing exercises, and assessment of competency before field deployment.

Questionnaire administration followed a standardized protocol to ensure consistency and minimize bias (Dillman et al., 2014). Appointments were scheduled with participants at their convenience, typically during regular working hours at their offices or other suitable locations. Each session began with an explanation of the research purpose, procedures, voluntary participation, and confidentiality assurances. Participants were provided with informed consent forms and given time to read and ask questions before signing.

The questionnaire administration process took approximately 30-45 minutes per participant, depending on their reading speed and need for clarification. Research assistants were trained to provide neutral clarification when requested without influencing responses (Fowler & Mangione, 1990). Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness immediately after administration, and any missing responses were politely brought to participants' attention for completion.

3.8.2 Phase Two: Key Informant Interviews

The second phase consisted of conducting 18 key informant interviews with senior county officials, departmental heads, and other leadership figures selected from across the stakeholder categories. Interview participants were purposively selected from the questionnaire respondents to ensure representation from each stakeholder group and include individuals with extensive experience and knowledge of devolved governance and service delivery issues (Patton, 2015).

Interviews were scheduled at participants' convenience and conducted in locations that ensured privacy and comfort, typically in participants' offices or meeting rooms within county government facilities. Each interview was scheduled for 60-75 minutes to allow sufficient time for comprehensive discussion of all thematic areas while respecting participants' time constraints (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

All interviews were conducted by the principal researcher to ensure consistency in approach and quality. Interviews began with rapport building and re-explanation of research purposes and ethical considerations. Participants were reminded of their right to skip questions or withdraw at any time, and explicit permission was obtained for audio recording (Mason, 2018).

The interview process followed the semi-structured guide while maintaining flexibility to explore emerging themes and allow participants to elaborate on issues they considered particularly important. The researcher used active listening techniques, appropriate probing, and neutral follow-up questions to encourage detailed responses without leading participants toward particular answers (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

All interviews were audio-recorded using high-quality digital recording equipment, with backup recordings made to prevent data loss. Detailed field notes were taken during interviews to capture non-verbal observations, contextual information, and preliminary analytical insights (Miles et al., 2020). Immediately following each interview, the researcher completed reflection notes summarizing key themes, interesting observations, and methodological considerations.

3.9 Pilot Testing

A comprehensive pilot study was conducted in Garissa County to test and refine the research instruments and procedures before implementing the main study. Pilot testing is a crucial component of research methodology that involves conducting a preliminary study to test research instruments and procedures on a small sample before the main study (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Garissa County was selected as the pilot location because it shares similar geographical, climatic, and socio-economic characteristics with Wajir County, including arid and semi-arid conditions, pastoralist communities, and comparable development challenges, while having sufficiently different political dynamics and leadership structures to provide an independent testing environment.

The pilot study involved 8 participants (representing approximately 11% of the main study sample) selected across the same stakeholder categories used in the main study: one county executive, one county assembly member, two departmental heads, one public service board member, and three departmental staff members. This distribution ensured testing of instruments across all participant types while maintaining practical feasibility (Connelly, 2008).

3.9.1 Pilot Study Implementation and Feedback

The pilot study implementation followed identical procedures planned for the main study, including questionnaire administration and key informant interviews. Six participants completed questionnaires and provided feedback on clarity, length, and appropriateness of questions. Four participants participated in key informant interviews to test the interview guide and procedures.

Specific feedback received during the pilot study led to several important modifications following established practices for instrument refinement based on pilot study results (Malmqvist et al., 2019). Regarding the questionnaire, participants identified three items in the resource allocation section that were ambiguous about whether they referred to county government or national government responsibilities. These items were revised to explicitly specify "county government resource allocation" and "county-level budget processes" to eliminate confusion.

Two questions about citizen engagement were found to be culturally inappropriate for the local context, using terminology unfamiliar to participants. These were revised to use locally appropriate language and concepts following recommendations for cultural adaptation of research instruments (Beaton et al., 2000). The questionnaire length was initially considered too long by participants, but after review, it was determined that the comprehensive coverage was necessary, so participants were advised that completion time varies and they should not feel rushed.

Interview guide feedback revealed that the original structure did not adequately address inter-governmental coordination challenges, which participants identified as a critical theme. Two additional probe questions were added to explore relationships between county

and national governments and coordination mechanisms. Participants also suggested that questions about traditional governance structures and their interaction with devolved governance would provide valuable insights, leading to the addition of relevant probes in the governance mechanisms section.

Technical issues identified during the pilot included challenges with audio recording quality in noisy office environments. This led to the procurement of higher-quality noise-canceling recording equipment and identification of quieter interview locations for the main study. The initial interview duration of 45 minutes proved insufficient for comprehensive discussion, leading to the adjustment to 60-75 minutes for main study interviews.

3.9.2 Instrument Refinement

Based on pilot study feedback, both instruments underwent systematic refinement following established procedures for instrument improvement (Hinkin, 1995). The questionnaire modifications included revision of ambiguous items, replacement of culturally inappropriate terminology, addition of clarifying phrases for complex concepts, and minor reordering of questions to improve logical flow. The interview guide modifications included addition of new thematic areas based on participant suggestions, development of additional probe questions for key themes, refinement of question wording for clarity and cultural appropriateness, and adjustment of the interview structure for better flow and comprehensiveness.

The pilot study also informed procedural refinements including revised time allocations for data collection activities, improved training protocols for research assistants, enhanced

quality control procedures, and better preparation for technical challenges in the field environment (Leon et al., 2011).

3.10 Validity and Reliability

Comprehensive measures were implemented to ensure the validity and reliability of research instruments and procedures throughout the study, following established psychometric principles and best practices in research methodology (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Campbell & Fiske, 1959).

3.10.1 Validity Assessment

Content validity was rigorously established through expert review by seven specialists in public administration, governance studies, and research methodology from Kenyan universities including Kenyatta University, University of Nairobi, and Moi University. Content validity refers to the extent to which a measurement instrument provides adequate coverage of the topic under study (Polit & Beck, 2017). The expert panel included three professors with extensive experience in devolved governance research, two senior lecturers specializing in public service delivery, and two research methodology experts with experience in mixed-methods studies.

Each expert received a comprehensive review package including the research objectives, conceptual framework, complete instruments, and standardized evaluation forms. Experts assessed each questionnaire item using specific criteria adapted from established content validity assessment protocols (Lynn, 1986; Lawshe, 1975): content relevance (whether items accurately measure the intended constructs), clarity and comprehensibility (whether items are clearly worded and easily understood), comprehensiveness (whether the

instrument adequately covers all aspects of the constructs), and cultural appropriateness (whether items are suitable for the Kenyan devolved governance context).

The evaluation process used quantitative ratings on 4-point scales (1 = Not Relevant/Clear to 4 = Highly Relevant/Clear) and qualitative feedback on specific improvements needed. Items receiving average ratings below 3.0 were revised or eliminated, while items with mixed ratings underwent careful review and modification based on expert comments. The content validity index (CVI) was calculated for each instrument section using the formula: $CVI = \text{Number of experts rating item as relevant} / \text{Total number of experts}$ (Polit & Beck, 2017), with all sections achieving CVI scores above 0.78, indicating acceptable content validity.

Face validity was assessed through cognitive interviews with five additional experts in public administration who reviewed instruments for apparent appropriateness and logical structure. Face validity refers to whether an instrument appears to measure what it claims to measure (Holden, 2010). These experts confirmed that instruments appeared to measure what they were intended to measure and were suitable for the target population.

Construct validity was addressed through the theoretical framework guiding instrument development, ensuring that all items were grounded in established theories of devolved governance and service delivery (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). The pilot study data were subjected to preliminary factor analysis to examine whether items loaded appropriately onto their intended constructs, with results indicating satisfactory construct validity based on factor loadings above 0.40 and clear factor structure (Hair et al., 2019).

3.10.2 Reliability Assessment

Test-retest reliability was assessed by re-administering instruments to pilot study participants after a three-week interval, chosen to minimize memory effects while ensuring participant availability. Test-retest reliability measures the stability of an instrument over time (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Seven of the original eight pilot participants completed the retest, providing adequate data for reliability assessment.

For quantitative measures, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between test and retest scores for each questionnaire section following established procedures (Kline, 2016). All correlations exceeded 0.80, with most above 0.85, indicating excellent test-retest reliability according to established criteria (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The overall questionnaire test-retest correlation was 0.87, well above the 0.70 threshold considered acceptable for research purposes.

Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha for multi-item scales within the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha measures the extent to which items in a scale measure the same construct (Cronbach, 1951). All five construct scales achieved alpha values above 0.75, with three scales exceeding 0.80, indicating good to excellent internal consistency according to established guidelines (George & Mallery, 2019). The leadership effectiveness scale achieved $\alpha = 0.83$, service delivery performance scale $\alpha = 0.79$, resource allocation efficiency scale $\alpha = 0.81$, citizen engagement scale $\alpha = 0.76$, and governance accountability scale $\alpha = 0.78$.

For qualitative instruments, reliability was enhanced through multiple strategies following established practices in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Inter-rater reliability was established by having two experienced qualitative researchers independently code

25% of pilot study interview transcripts, achieving 88% agreement on code application, indicating excellent inter-rater reliability according to established standards (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Intra-rater reliability was assessed by having the principal researcher re-code three randomly selected interviews after a two-week interval, achieving 92% consistency in coding decisions.

Additional reliability measures included development of detailed coding protocols and definitions, regular calibration meetings between coders during main study analysis, and maintenance of an audit trail documenting all analytical decisions and their rationale (Carcary, 2009).

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

The study employed a comprehensive analytical approach that integrated quantitative and qualitative methods to provide robust and nuanced findings addressing the research objectives, following established principles of mixed-methods analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

3.11.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29.0, following a systematic analytical framework designed to address each research objective comprehensively (Field, 2018).

Descriptive Statistics: Comprehensive descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize participant characteristics and response patterns following standard statistical procedures (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017). Measures included frequencies and percentages for categorical variables (stakeholder categories, education levels, years of service), means and

standard deviations for continuous variables (scale scores, performance ratings), and measures of central tendency and dispersion for all key variables. Cross-tabulations were generated to examine distributions across stakeholder groups and identify preliminary patterns.

Inferential Statistical Analysis: Multiple inferential statistical tests were employed based on research questions, variable types, and data characteristics following established statistical decision-making frameworks (Howell, 2017). Pearson product-moment correlation analysis examined linear relationships between devolved leadership effectiveness measures and service delivery performance indicators, with correlation coefficients interpreted according to established guidelines: < 0.30 weak, $0.30-0.69$ moderate, ≥ 0.70 strong relationships (Cohen, 1988).

Independent samples t-tests compared service delivery perceptions between different stakeholder groups (executives vs. operational staff, assembly members vs. departmental heads) to identify significant differences in perspectives. Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's d to assess practical significance of differences, with interpretations following established conventions: small ($d = 0.20$), medium ($d = 0.50$), and large ($d = 0.80$) effects (Cohen, 1988).

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tested differences in leadership effectiveness ratings across the five participant strata, with post-hoc Tukey HSD tests identifying specific group differences when overall F-tests were significant (Field, 2018). Levene's test assessed homogeneity of variance assumptions, with appropriate adjustments made when assumptions were violated using Welch's ANOVA or Brown-Forsythe test (Brown & Forsythe, 1974).

Multiple regression analysis was conducted with service delivery effectiveness as the dependent variable and various aspects of devolved leadership as independent variables following established regression procedures (Hair et al., 2019). The regression model included leadership competency ratings, resource allocation transparency scores, citizen engagement levels, and accountability mechanism effectiveness as predictors. Model assumptions were tested including linearity, independence, homoscedasticity, and normality of residuals using appropriate diagnostic procedures (Fox, 2016). Multicollinearity was assessed using variance inflation factors (VIF), with values below 5.0 considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2019).

Chi-square tests of independence examined relationships between categorical variables such as stakeholder category and satisfaction levels with specific services (Agresti, 2019). When expected cell frequencies were below 5, Fisher's exact tests were employed as appropriate alternatives following established guidelines (Field, 2018).

3.11.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis employed a rigorous inductive thematic analysis approach following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework, enhanced with systematic procedures to ensure analytical rigor and credibility following established qualitative research standards (Tracy, 2010).

Phase 1: Data Familiarization involved comprehensive immersion in the dataset through multiple readings of interview transcripts. All interviews were professionally transcribed verbatim within 48 hours of completion, with transcripts checked for accuracy against audio recordings following established transcription protocols (Poland, 1995). The

principal researcher read all transcripts multiple times while listening to recordings to ensure familiarity with both content and context, making preliminary notes about interesting features and potential patterns.

Phase 2: Initial Coding employed systematic line-by-line coding using NVivo 14 software to manage and organize the extensive qualitative dataset following established computer-assisted qualitative data analysis procedures (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Initial codes were descriptive, staying close to participant language and meaning. A total of 847 initial codes were generated across all transcripts. Coding was conducted iteratively, with regular reviews and refinements to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness (Saldaña, 2021).

Phase 3: Theme Development involved grouping related codes into broader categories based on conceptual similarities and relationships to research questions. Codes were organized using visual mapping techniques and NVivo's visualization tools to identify patterns and connections following established thematic development procedures (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Initial categories were refined through constant comparison and theoretical consideration, resulting in 23 preliminary categories.

Phase 4: Theme Review consisted of systematic evaluation of preliminary themes for coherence, distinctiveness, and adequacy in representing the dataset following Braun and Clarke's (2006) criteria. Themes were assessed at two levels: internal coherence (whether codes within themes fit together meaningfully) and external distinctiveness (whether themes were clearly differentiated from each other). This process resulted in consolidation into 12 refined themes.

Phase 5: Theme Definition and Naming involved developing clear definitions and names for each theme that captured their essence and scope. Each theme was defined in terms of its central organizing concept, key features, and boundaries following established theme definition procedures (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Themes were named to be both descriptive and theoretically meaningful, facilitating clear communication of findings.

Phase 6: Report Production organized themes into a coherent narrative structure that addressed research questions while preserving the richness and complexity of participant experiences. The analysis integrated themes with relevant literature and theoretical frameworks to enhance interpretation and significance following established qualitative reporting standards (Tong et al., 2007).

Quality Assurance Measures: Multiple strategies were employed to enhance analytical rigor following established quality criteria for qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tracy, 2010). Inter-coder reliability was established by having 20% of transcripts independently coded by a second experienced qualitative researcher, achieving 89% agreement on code application. Regular calibration meetings were held to discuss coding decisions and resolve disagreements following established inter-coder reliability procedures (Campbell et al., 2013). Intra-coder reliability was assessed through re-coding of randomly selected transcript portions after two-week intervals, achieving consistent results.

Member checking was conducted with 6 interview participants who reviewed preliminary findings and provided feedback on accuracy and completeness of interpretations following established member checking procedures (Birt et al., 2016). Peer debriefing sessions with

experienced qualitative researchers provided external perspectives on analytical decisions and interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.11.3 Mixed-Methods Integration

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings occurred during the interpretation phase using a convergent parallel design approach following established mixed-methods integration procedures (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Integration strategies included comparison of quantitative patterns with qualitative themes to identify areas of convergence, divergence, and complementarity (Fetters et al., 2013). Where quantitative analysis identified significant relationships or differences, qualitative themes were examined to provide explanatory context and understanding of underlying mechanisms.

Joint displays were created to visually represent the integration of quantitative results and qualitative themes, facilitating identification of areas where different data types supported, contradicted, or extended each other following established mixed-methods integration techniques (Guetterman et al., 2015). This integration approach enabled comprehensive understanding by using quantitative data to assess the prevalence and significance of phenomena identified qualitatively, while using qualitative insights.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics remained the main priority which protected participant rights and their welfare throughout the study. The institution granted authorization to Kenyatta University which validated the research project. A permit letter from NACOSTI enabled researchers to conduct their activities by following national regulations. The study obtained Wajir County participants' informed consent through which they received information about the research objectives as well as risk information and confidentiality protocols. The research

team followed strict rules to protect participant confidentiality as well as provide full anonymity and participants maintained the right to withdraw at any time. Preventive measures were implemented to avoid harm and exploitation. The research followed ethical guidelines established by Mount Kenya University as well as NACOSTI for maintaining study credibility and accountability.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The study findings originate from the data collected through respondent surveys. The research evaluation incorporates response rates together with response distribution among different stakeholder groups and an exploration of Wajir County's devolved leadership structures' effect on service delivery. The research findings analyze governance effectiveness together with resource allocation and policy implementation and service provision in Wajir County government.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 71 respondents took part in the study but 69 completed the survey successfully achieving a response rate of 95.8%. The summary table in Table 4.1 presents the response rates for different stakeholder groups.

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Distributed Questionnaires	71	100
Questionnaires Returned	69	
Response Rate		95.8

Source: Researcher (2025)

According to Table 4.1 social science research accepts a response rate of 95.8% as highly satisfactory. Research findings achieve better credibility because a response rate surpassing 70% ensures proper representation of the target population according to Saunders et al. (2019). Baruch and Holtom (2008) state that organizational and social studies accept response rates over 50% but rates above 80% reach outstanding levels. The research

findings attain enhanced reliability and validity because of the high response rate which accurately represents the views of Wajir County's devolved governance system stakeholders.

4.3 Demographic Data of Respondents

The data on respondents' demographics consisting of gender and age as well as their educational levels and department affiliations and work experience at Wajir County Government offer essential information about decision-making and implementation roles in devolved governance. The assessment benefits from these factors to determine how leadership experience along with institutional expertise supports improvements in service delivery.

4.3.1 Age-Bracket

Table 4.2 indicates the age distribution of respondents to assess the representation of different age groups in Wajir County's devolved leadership.

Table 4. 2: Age-Bracket

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	26-30 Years	1	1.4
	31-40 Years	39	56.5
	41-50 Years	12	17.4
	50 Years +	17	24.6
	Total	69	100.0

Source: Researcher (2025)

The findings indicate that the majority (56.5%) of respondents are aged between 31-40 years, signifying a youthful yet experienced leadership. This aligns with global trends where middle-aged professionals often hold key decision-making roles in governance. The

41-50 age group constitutes 17.4%, reflecting a blend of seasoned professionals contributing to policy execution. Respondents above 50 years make up 24.6%, indicating significant representation of senior officials with extensive governance experience. The minimal representation (1.4%) of the 26-30 age group suggests limited inclusion of younger professionals, which may impact long-term succession planning in Wajir County Government.

4.3.2 Gender Category

Table 4.3 shows the gender distribution of respondents to analyze gender representation in Wajir County’s leadership.

Table 4. 3: Gender Category

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	43	62.3
	Female	26	37.7
	Total	69	100.0

Source: Researcher (2025)

The findings show that 62.3% of respondents are male, while 37.7% are female. This suggests that male dominance persists in Wajir County’s leadership, consistent with historical gender disparities in governance. However, the 37.7% female representation indicates progress towards gender inclusivity. The presence of women in decision-making roles is critical for promoting inclusive policies and improving service delivery. The findings underscore the need for continuous gender mainstreaming efforts to achieve balanced representation, aligning with Kenya’s constitutional provisions on gender equality in public service.

4.3.3 Length of Work

Table 4.4 indicates the work experience of respondents in Wajir County Government to assess institutional knowledge and leadership stability.

Table 4. 4: Length of Work

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-5 Years	11	15.9
	6-10 Years	54	78.3
	Over 10 Years	4	5.8
	Total	69	100.0

Source: Researcher (2025)

The results indicate that 78.3% of respondents have between 6-10 years of experience in Wajir County Government, suggesting a stable workforce with substantial institutional knowledge. The 15.9% with 1-5 years of experience reflects new employees integrating into governance structures, essential for innovation and policy reform. Only 5.8% have over 10 years of experience, indicating fewer long-term employees, which could present challenges in leadership continuity. These findings highlight the importance of knowledge transfer and mentorship programs to sustain governance effectiveness.

4.3.4 Level of Education

Table 4.5 indicates the educational qualifications of respondents to evaluate the capacity for informed decision-making in service delivery.

Table 4. 5: Level of Education

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Undergraduate Degree	44	63.8
	Higher Diploma	9	13.0
	Post Graduate	16	23.2
	Total	69	100.0

Source: Researcher (2025)

The findings reveal that 63.8% of respondents hold undergraduate degrees, indicating that a majority possess foundational academic training for governance roles. Additionally, 23.2% have postgraduate qualifications, suggesting a significant proportion of advanced expertise, which is critical for strategic planning and policy implementation. The 13.0% with higher diplomas highlights the presence of technical personnel, essential for operational efficiency. These findings suggest that the educational composition of Wajir County Government supports effective decision-making and service delivery. However, promoting continuous professional development could further enhance governance capabilities.



4.4 Descriptive Analysis

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study, focusing on the key research objectives. Data is analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, and displayed in tables for clear interpretation and discussion.

4.4.1 Influence of Devolved Leadership Structures on Service Delivery

The study sought determine the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya. The results are as shown in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4. 6: Devolved Leadership Structures on Service Delivery

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The current devolved leadership structures effectively prioritize service delivery in Wajir County.	69	3.93	.734
Devolved leadership has significantly improved service delivery compared to the centralized system.	69	4.6377	.59337
There is adequate coordination among devolved leadership levels to enhance service delivery in Wajir County.	69	3.9855	.67503
Devolved leadership fosters community involvement and participation in service delivery initiatives.	68	4.1765	.77153
Challenges in devolved leadership structures hinder effective service delivery in Wajir County.	69	3.9130	0.99518
Devolved leadership promotes transparency and accountability in service delivery processes.	69	4.4348	.60581
The public perceives devolved leadership as positively impacting service delivery outcomes.	69	4.3478	.74412
Continuous evaluation and improvement of devolved leadership structures are necessary to enhance service delivery in Wajir County.	69	4.0000	.89113
Valid N (listwise)	68		

Source: Researcher (2025)

Table 4.6 indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that devolved leadership has significantly improved service delivery compared to the centralized system, as shown by the mean of 4.6377 and a standard deviation of 0.59337. This finding is consistent with Muriu (2018) who conducted a comprehensive analysis of Kenya's

devolution process and found that decentralized governance structures significantly enhanced service delivery efficiency by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks and bringing decision-making closer to the people. Similarly, Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2019) in their study "Decentralization in Kenya: The Governance of Governors" demonstrated that devolved systems improved public service responsiveness and reduced the time taken for service provision compared to the previous centralized approach.

The majority also strongly agreed that devolved leadership promotes transparency and accountability in service delivery processes, as evidenced by the mean of 4.4348 and a standard deviation of 0.60581. This finding aligns with Korir and Kiprotich's (2021) research on transparency in county governments, which revealed that devolution created multiple accountability channels that enhanced openness in resource allocation and service delivery processes. The study by Ngigi and Busolo (2019) on "Accountability and Transparency in Kenya's Devolved System" further supports this finding, noting that devolved structures established clearer lines of accountability between local leaders and citizens.

The study revealed that the majority of respondents strongly agreed that the public perceives devolved leadership as positively impacting service delivery outcomes, as shown by the mean of 4.3478 and a standard deviation of 0.74412. This finding is corroborated by Opalo's (2019) survey evidence on devolution in Kenya, which found high levels of public satisfaction with devolved governance and its impact on service delivery outcomes. Additionally, Kimathi and Mukoya's (2020) study on public perception of devolution found that 78% of respondents believed devolution had improved their access to government services.

The respondents agreed that devolved leadership fosters community involvement and participation in service delivery initiatives, as indicated by the mean of 4.1765 and a standard deviation of 0.77153. This finding is supported by Cold-Ravnkilde et al. (2019) who found that devolution in Kenya created new avenues for citizen participation in local governance and service delivery planning. Mwangi and Nyabari's (2018) research on "Citizen Participation in Devolved Governance" similarly demonstrated that county governments provided more opportunities for community engagement compared to the centralized system.

The respondents also agreed that continuous evaluation and improvement of devolved leadership structures are necessary to enhance service delivery in Wajir County, as indicated by the mean of 4.0000 and a standard deviation of 0.89113. This finding aligns with Kisaka and Mwangi's (2020) study on institutional learning in devolved governance, which emphasized the importance of continuous assessment and adaptation of governance structures to optimize service delivery outcomes. The research by Ochieng' and Mutua (2019) on "Adaptive Governance in County Systems" similarly stressed the need for ongoing evaluation mechanisms to ensure devolved structures remain effective and responsive to changing citizen needs.

The study further revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that there is adequate coordination among devolved leadership levels to enhance service delivery in Wajir County, as shown by the mean of 3.9855 and a standard deviation of 0.67503. However, this finding contrasts with Ndung'u and Thugge's (2019) study which identified coordination challenges between county and national governments as a significant impediment to effective service delivery. The difference may reflect variations in county-

specific experiences or recent improvements in inter-governmental coordination mechanisms in Wajir County.

Regarding the current devolved leadership structures effectively prioritizing service delivery in Wajir County, respondents agreed with this statement as indicated by the mean of 3.93 and a standard deviation of 0.734. This finding is consistent with Kivuva et al.'s (2019) assessment of county governance effectiveness, which found that counties with well-structured leadership hierarchies demonstrated better service delivery prioritization. However, the moderate agreement level suggests room for improvement in leadership effectiveness.

Finally, the respondents agreed that challenges in devolved leadership structures hinder effective service delivery in Wajir County, as shown by the mean of 3.9130 and a standard deviation of 0.99518. This finding aligns with Smoke's (2019) comprehensive review of devolution challenges in Kenya, which identified structural and capacity constraints as significant barriers to optimal service delivery. The study by Kimenyi and Ndung'u (2019) on "Implementation Challenges in Devolved Governance" similarly found that despite the benefits of devolution, various structural challenges continued to impede service delivery effectiveness.

On Interview

Theme 1: Enhanced Local Responsiveness and Contextual Priority Setting

Respondents consistently emphasized that devolved leadership has fundamentally transformed the identification and prioritization of service delivery needs in Wajir County.

The enhanced local responsiveness reflects a paradigmatic shift from centralized decision-making to community-centered governance approaches.

A County Executive Committee Member articulated this transformation:

"Prior to devolution, service delivery priorities were predetermined in Nairobi without adequate understanding of our unique challenges as a pastoralist community. The current devolved system enables us to prioritize essential services such as strategic water points, comprehensive livestock services, and mobile health clinics that directly address our population's specific needs."

Departmental leadership emphasized the strategic advantage of proximity in understanding local contexts and needs. The Director of Health Services provided specific insights:

"Contemporary leadership demonstrates nuanced understanding that Wajir requires differentiated service delivery models. Consequently, we have prioritized mobile clinic services over static healthcare facilities, recognizing our semi-nomadic population patterns. This contextual understanding was fundamentally impossible under the previous centralized leadership framework."

County assembly representatives reinforced this thematic finding, with the Majority Leader noting:

"Current budget deliberation sessions now incorporate critical discussions on drought preparedness strategies, cross-border health challenges, and pastoralist education systems—issues that received minimal attention under centralized decision-making processes. This shift has substantially improved the relevance and effectiveness of our service delivery interventions."

Theme 2: Enhanced Inter-sectoral Coordination and Integration

Key informants revealed that devolved leadership has significantly facilitated improved coordination mechanisms among various departments and governmental levels. This enhanced coordination has resulted in more integrated and comprehensive service delivery approaches.

The Chief Officer for Water and Environment highlighted this improvement:

"We have institutionalized regular inter-departmental coordination meetings involving health, water, and livestock departments. When planning water point installations, we now systematically consider healthcare service accessibility and livestock migration routes. This integrated approach has demonstrably improved our overall service delivery effectiveness and community impact."

However, informants identified persistent coordination challenges between county and national government levels. A senior county administrator observed:

"While internal departmental coordination has significantly improved, we continue experiencing challenges in coordinating with national government agencies. Occasionally, parallel programs operate without adequate synchronization, which compromises our overall service delivery efficiency and resource optimization."

Theme 3: Democratic Participation and Community Ownership Enhancement

Key informants emphasized how devolved leadership has substantially enhanced community participation in service delivery decision-making processes. This enhanced

participation has fostered greater community ownership and sustainability of development interventions.

The Deputy Governor emphasized this participatory approach:

"We have established structured public participation processes enabling communities to provide direct input into our development planning processes. This approach has created genuine community ownership and enhanced sustainability of our projects, as communities actively protect and maintain facilities they helped conceptualize and plan."

Ward representatives provided concrete examples of enhanced community participation.

A County Assembly Member from Eldas Constituency noted:

"Through established ward development committees and regular public forums, citizens now directly influence budget allocation decisions for their respective areas. This participatory approach has significantly improved both the relevance and community acceptance of our service delivery interventions."

4.4.2 Administrative Capacity on Service Delivery

The study sought to investigate the influence of administrative capacity on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya. The results are as shown in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4. 7: Administrative Capacity on Service Delivery

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Administrative capacity within Wajir County Government adequately supports service delivery initiatives.	69	4.29	.571
There is a sufficient number of qualified personnel to manage and implement service delivery projects.	69	4.3333	.72084
Administrative inefficiencies negatively affect the timeliness of service delivery in Wajir County.	69	4.2319	.66741
Adequate training and capacity-building programs are provided to enhance administrative skills in service delivery.	69	4.1884	.69567
Administrative capacity challenges hinder effective coordination among departments in service delivery efforts.	69	4.3478	.66102
The availability of modern technology enhances administrative capacity and improves service delivery outcomes.	69	4.1014	.64500
Administrative capacity gaps contribute to disparities in service delivery across different regions of Wajir County.	69	4.3623	.78536
Strengthening administrative capacity is essential for overcoming service delivery challenges and achieving sustainable development in Wajir County.	69	4.2319	.71011
Valid N (listwise)	69		

Source: Researcher (2025)

Table 4.7 indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that there is a sufficient number of qualified personnel to manage and implement service delivery projects, as shown by the mean of 4.3333 and a standard deviation of 0.72084. However, this finding contrasts with Kiprotich and Kimani's (2020) assessment of human resource capacity in Kenyan counties, which identified significant staffing gaps in technical positions across most county governments. The discrepancy may reflect recent

improvements in Wajir County's recruitment practices or specific investments in human resource development.

The respondents also strongly agreed that administrative capacity challenges hinder effective coordination among departments in service delivery efforts, as shown by the mean of 4.3478 and a standard deviation of 0.66102. This finding is consistent with Mwangangi's (2019) research on inter-departmental coordination in county governments, which found that weak administrative linkages significantly impeded service delivery efficiency. The study by Ochieng' and Aluoch (2018) on "Administrative Challenges in Devolved Units" similarly identified coordination gaps as major barriers to effective service provision.

The study revealed that administrative capacity gaps contribute to disparities in service delivery across different regions of Wajir County, as indicated by the mean of 4.3623 and a standard deviation of 0.78536. This finding is consistent with Karanja and Makokha's (2021) spatial analysis of service delivery in Kenya, which found significant intra-county variations in service access linked to administrative capacity differences across sub-counties. Hassan and Mwangi's (2020) research on "Regional Disparities in County Service Delivery" similarly found that administrative capacity variations contributed to unequal service distribution within counties.

Respondents strongly agreed that administrative capacity within Wajir County Government adequately supports service delivery initiatives, as shown by the mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.571. This finding is supported by Kivuva, Olende, and Ng'etich's (2019) study on institutional capacity in Kenyan counties, which found that counties with stronger administrative capacity demonstrated better service delivery outcomes. The research by Mwanzia and Strathdee (2018) on "Capacity Building in

Kenya's County Governments" similarly emphasized the critical role of administrative competence in effective service provision.

The study revealed that administrative inefficiencies negatively affect the timeliness of service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.2319 and a standard deviation of 0.66741. This finding aligns with Mwangangi's (2019) research on administrative bottlenecks in county governments, which found that bureaucratic inefficiencies were a major cause of service delivery delays. Similarly, Ochieng' and Aluoch's (2018) study on "Administrative Challenges in Devolved Units" identified process inefficiencies as significant barriers to timely service provision.

Additionally, respondents agreed that strengthening administrative capacity is essential for overcoming service delivery challenges and achieving sustainable development in Wajir County, as shown by the mean of 4.2319 and a standard deviation of 0.71011. This finding is supported by Mutua and Kimenyi's (2021) research on capacity building in devolved governance, which emphasized that sustained administrative capacity development was crucial for long-term service delivery improvements. The study by Rotich and Kimani (2020) on "Institutional Strengthening in County Governments" similarly found that administrative capacity building was fundamental to achieving sustainable development outcomes.

The respondents agreed that adequate training and capacity-building programs are provided to enhance administrative skills in service delivery, as indicated by the mean of 4.1884 and a standard deviation of 0.69567. This finding aligns with Wanyama and Kisubi's (2019) assessment of capacity building initiatives in Kenyan counties, which found that counties investing in staff training demonstrated improved service delivery

performance. However, the moderate agreement level suggests that while training programs exist, there may be room for enhancement in their scope and effectiveness.

Finally, the respondents agreed that the availability of modern technology enhances administrative capacity and improves service delivery outcomes, with a mean of 4.1014 and a standard deviation of 0.64500. This finding is consistent with Kimeu and Mwenda's (2020) study on digital governance in county governments, which found that technology adoption significantly improved administrative efficiency and service delivery quality. The research by Mbaya and Otiso (2021) on "Technology Integration in Public Service Delivery" similarly emphasized the positive impact of modern technology on administrative capacity and service outcomes.

On Interview

Theme 4: Strategic Skills Development and Capacity Building Initiatives

Key informants acknowledged substantial improvements in administrative capacity through targeted and systematic capacity building programs. These initiatives have enhanced the technical competency and professional capabilities of county personnel.

The County Secretary explained the comprehensive approach:

"We have established strategic partnerships with institutions such as the Kenya School of Government to systematically enhance our staff capabilities. Over sixty percent (60%) of our senior personnel have completed specialized training in project management, financial management, and public service delivery within the past three years."

Departmental heads highlighted specific capacity enhancement outcomes. The Chief Officer for Education observed:

"Our technical staff now demonstrate comprehensive understanding of devolved education functions. We have provided specialized training to teachers in early childhood development education and vocational training—both county-level functions. This capacity enhancement has significantly improved our service delivery quality and educational outcomes."

Theme 5: Technology Integration and Digital Transformation

Informants described progressive adoption of technological solutions to enhance administrative efficiency and service delivery effectiveness. These digital transformation initiatives have streamlined operations and improved transparency.

The Director of ICT Services noted:

"We have successfully implemented an integrated financial management system that has enhanced budget tracking capabilities and reduced procurement processing delays. Additionally, our revenue collection processes have been digitized, resulting in reduced corruption incidents and improved operational transparency."

However, technological implementation challenges persist in remote geographical areas.

A senior administrator from Tarbaj Sub-County observed:

"While significant progress has been achieved in Wajir town, persistent connectivity challenges in remote areas continue limiting our capacity to provide efficient digital

services. This technological divide creates service delivery disparities across different county regions."

Theme 6: Human Resource Adequacy and Strategic Distribution

Key informants highlighted ongoing challenges related to human resource adequacy and optimal distribution across county operations. These challenges significantly impact service delivery capacity and quality.

The Chairperson of the County Public Service Board stated:

"We continue facing substantial challenges in attracting qualified professionals, particularly medical doctors, engineers, and veterinarians. The harsh climatic conditions and security concerns in certain areas significantly complicate recruitment efforts, thereby affecting our overall service delivery capacity."

Departmental heads provided specific examples of these human resource challenges. The Chief Officer for Health noted:

"We currently have only twenty-three (23) medical doctors serving a population exceeding 780,000 people. This doctor-to-population ratio falls significantly below World Health Organization recommendations and substantially impacts our healthcare service delivery quality and accessibility."

4.4.3 Accountability Mechanisms on Service Delivery

The study sought to assess the influence of accountability mechanisms on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya. The results are as shown in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4. 8: Accountability Mechanisms on Service Delivery

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Accountability mechanisms within Wajir County Government effectively monitor and evaluate service delivery performance.	69	4.4203	.73576
There is transparency in the allocation and utilization of resources for service delivery purposes.	69	4.3188	.60616
Accountability mechanisms hold government officials and service providers accountable for their actions and decisions.	69	4.4058	.75379
Citizens have adequate access to information regarding service delivery processes and outcomes.	69	4.1449	.89567
Public participation mechanisms enable citizens to provide feedback and hold leaders accountable for service delivery failures.	69	4.2319	.90983
Weak accountability mechanisms contribute to corruption and mismanagement of resources in service delivery.	69	4.0725	1.00468
There is a need for stronger oversight and enforcement mechanisms to enhance accountability in service delivery.	69	4.4783	.90112
Strengthening accountability mechanisms is crucial for building public trust and confidence in the Wajir County Government's ability to deliver services effectively.	69	3.9275	.84573
Valid N (listwise)	69		

Source: Researcher (2025)

Table 4.8 indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that there is a need for stronger oversight and enforcement mechanisms to enhance accountability in service delivery, with a mean of 4.4783 and a standard deviation of 0.90112. This finding is consistent with Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's (2020) report on governance oversight in county governments, which emphasized the critical need for enhanced monitoring and enforcement systems. The study by Ngugi and Waititu (2019) on

"Strengthening Accountability Systems" similarly found that robust oversight mechanisms were essential for effective governance and service delivery.

The majority of respondents also strongly agreed that accountability mechanisms within Wajir County Government effectively monitor and evaluate service delivery performance, as shown by the mean of 4.4203 and a standard deviation of 0.73576. This finding is consistent with Abuodha's (2019) comprehensive study on accountability mechanisms in Kenyan local governments, which found that counties with robust monitoring systems demonstrated better service delivery outcomes. The research by Kimeu and Mwenda (2020) on "Governance and Accountability in County Governments" similarly emphasized the positive correlation between effective accountability systems and service delivery performance.

The study revealed that accountability mechanisms hold government officials and service providers accountable for their actions and decisions, as shown by the mean of 4.4058 and a standard deviation of 0.75379. This finding aligns with Ngugi and Muiru's (2018) study on "Democratic Accountability in Kenya's Devolved System," which found that devolution created multiple accountability channels that enhanced official responsiveness to citizen needs. The study by Mutua and Kimenyi (2021) on accountability in devolved governance further supports this finding, noting improved official conduct in counties with stronger accountability frameworks.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed that there is transparency in the allocation and utilization of resources for service delivery purposes, as indicated by the mean of 4.3188 and a standard deviation of 0.60616. This finding is supported by Transparency International Kenya's (2020) assessment of county transparency, which noted significant

improvements in budget transparency and public access to financial information in many counties. However, Wanyama and Kisubi's (2019) research on resource transparency found considerable variation across counties, with some still struggling with information disclosure.

Respondents agreed that public participation mechanisms enable citizens to provide feedback and hold leaders accountable for service delivery failures, as demonstrated by the mean of 4.2319 and a standard deviation of 0.90983. This finding is consistent with Cold-Ravnkilde et al.'s (2019) research on citizen participation in Kenya's devolved system, which found that county governments had established various platforms for citizen engagement and feedback. The study by Maina and Kiprotich (2020) on "Participatory Governance in Counties" similarly emphasized the importance of citizen feedback mechanisms in enhancing accountability.

The respondents agreed that citizens have adequate access to information regarding service delivery processes and outcomes, as evidenced by the mean of 4.1449 and a standard deviation of 0.89567. This finding is consistent with Mbaya and Otiso's (2021) study on information access in devolved governance, which found that counties had generally improved citizen access to government information compared to the centralized system. However, the moderate agreement level and relatively high standard deviation suggest that information access may still be inconsistent across different segments of the population.

The study found that weak accountability mechanisms contribute to corruption and mismanagement of resources in service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.0725 and a standard deviation of 1.00468. This finding aligns with Transparency International Kenya's (2021) corruption assessment, which found a strong correlation between weak

accountability systems and increased corruption risks in public institutions. The research by Ngugi and Waititu (2019) on "Governance Challenges in County Governments" similarly identified weak accountability as a key factor enabling corruption and resource mismanagement.

However, while many respondents acknowledged the importance of strengthening accountability mechanisms in building public trust and confidence in Wajir County Government's ability to deliver services effectively, the mean response of 3.9275 and a standard deviation of 0.84573 suggests a slightly lower level of agreement compared to other aspects. This finding indicates that while respondents recognize the importance of accountability for building trust, there may be skepticism about the current effectiveness of these mechanisms in actually building public confidence. This aligns with Cheeseman et al.'s (2019) research on trust in devolved governance, which found that building genuine public trust required sustained improvements in accountability practices over time.

On Interview

Theme 7: Strengthened Oversight and Performance Monitoring Systems

Key informants described enhanced accountability mechanisms implemented under devolved leadership structures. These systems have created more robust oversight and continuous performance monitoring frameworks.

The Speaker of the County Assembly explained:

"We have established comprehensive oversight committees that conduct regular monitoring of service delivery performance. Our health committee, for instance, conducts

monthly facility visits to assess service quality standards and resource utilization efficiency."

The County Executive emphasized internal accountability measures:

"We have institutionalized quarterly performance review meetings where each department presents service delivery achievements against predetermined targets. This systematic approach has cultivated a culture of accountability and continuous improvement across all county operations."

Theme 8: Transparency Enhancement and Public Information Access

Informants highlighted significant improvements in government operational transparency and citizen access to information. These transparency measures have enhanced public trust and civic engagement.

The Director of Communication and Public Participation noted:

"We now systematically publish quarterly budget implementation reports and service delivery scorecards through our website and local radio stations. Citizens can readily access information regarding tax utilization and expected service standards, promoting informed civic participation."

However, information accessibility challenges remain in certain areas. A County Assembly Member observed:

"While transparency improvements are evident, many citizens, particularly in remote areas, continue experiencing limited information access due to low literacy levels and

restricted media coverage. This limitation constrains their capacity to effectively hold government accountable."

Theme 9: Citizen Engagement in Accountability Processes

Key informants described various mechanisms facilitating citizen participation in accountability processes. These participatory accountability mechanisms have enhanced government responsiveness and service quality.

The Chief Officer for Gender and Social Services explained:

"We have established comprehensive social accountability mechanisms including citizen report cards and community scorecards. These instruments enable communities to systematically evaluate our service delivery performance and provide constructive feedback for continuous improvement."

Ward representatives highlighted grassroots accountability mechanisms. A County Assembly Member from Wajir North noted:

"Through monthly baraza meetings, citizens directly engage with leadership regarding service delivery performance. This direct accountability mechanism has substantially improved our responsiveness and overall service quality standards."

4.4.4 Resource allocation on Service delivery

The study sought to find out the influence of resource allocation on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya. The results are as shown in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4. 9: Resource allocation on Service delivery

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The current allocation of resources adequately meets the service delivery needs of Wajir County.	69	4.3913	.78996
Resource allocation processes prioritize marginalized areas and communities in service delivery planning.	69	3.8551	1.03292
Limited financial resources hinder the implementation of critical service delivery projects in Wajir County.	69	4.2609	.77937
Transparent and equitable resource allocation mechanisms enhance service delivery equity across Wajir County.	69	4.1739	1.18764
There is a need for improved budgeting processes to ensure efficient resource allocation for service delivery.	69	4.3623	.93888
External funding sources complement government allocations to enhance service delivery outcomes.	69	4.3768	.72965
Challenges in resource allocation result in delays and inefficiencies in service delivery project implementation.	69	4.1449	.67028
Innovative financing mechanisms are necessary to address resource constraints and improve service delivery in Wajir County.	69	4.3548	.57536
Valid N (listwise)	69		

Source: Researcher (2025)

Table 4.9 indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the current allocation of resources adequately meets the service delivery needs of Wajir County, as shown by the mean of 4.3913 and a standard deviation of 0.78996. This finding, however, contrasts with Githinji and Holmquist's (2018) study on resource adequacy in Kenyan counties, which found that most counties, particularly in the ASAL regions, faced significant resource constraints that limited their service delivery capacity. The discrepancy may reflect recent improvements in Wajir County's resource mobilization or effective utilization of available resources.

The study revealed that external funding sources complement government allocations to enhance service delivery outcomes, as demonstrated by the mean of 4.3768 and a standard deviation of 0.72965. This finding aligns with Kimenyi and Mbaku's (2018) research on development partnerships in Kenya's devolved system, which found that counties leveraging external funding achieved better service delivery outcomes. The study by Mwega and Ndung'u (2019) on "Aid Effectiveness in Devolved Governance" similarly emphasized the positive impact of well-coordinated external support on county service delivery.

Respondents strongly agreed that there is a need for improved budgeting processes to ensure efficient resource allocation for service delivery, with a mean of 4.3623 and a standard deviation of 0.93888. This finding is supported by Mumias and Kiprotich's (2021) assessment of budgeting practices in Kenyan counties, which identified significant weaknesses in budget planning and execution processes. The research by Odhiambo and Wawire (2018) on "Public Financial Management in County Governments" similarly emphasized the need for enhanced budgeting systems to improve resource utilization efficiency.

The majority also strongly agreed that innovative financing mechanisms are necessary to address resource constraints and improve service delivery in Wajir County, as reflected by a mean of 4.3548 and a standard deviation of 0.57536. This finding is consistent with Smoke's (2019) analysis of financing innovations in devolved governance, which emphasized the need for counties to explore alternative financing mechanisms to bridge resource gaps. The study by Rotich and Kimani (2020) on "Innovative Financing in County

Governments" similarly found that counties adopting creative financing approaches achieved better service delivery outcomes despite resource constraints.

The study found that limited financial resources hinder the implementation of critical service delivery projects in Wajir County, as reflected by a mean of 4.2609 and a standard deviation of 0.77937. This finding is consistent with Smoke's (2019) comprehensive analysis of fiscal decentralization in Kenya, which identified inadequate financing as a major constraint to effective service delivery in county governments. Similarly, Rotich and Kimani's (2020) study on "Fiscal Challenges in Kenya's Devolved System" found that resource limitations significantly impacted project implementation timelines and quality.

Respondents agreed that transparent and equitable resource allocation mechanisms enhance service delivery equity across Wajir County, as evidenced by a mean of 4.1739 and a standard deviation of 1.18764. This finding aligns with Karanja and Makokha's (2021) research on equitable resource distribution in counties, which found that transparent allocation processes significantly improved service delivery equity. However, the relatively high standard deviation (1.18764) suggests considerable variation in respondent views, possibly reflecting different experiences across various constituencies within the county.

Furthermore, the study indicated that challenges in resource allocation result in delays and inefficiencies in service delivery project implementation, as reflected by a mean of 4.1449 and a standard deviation of 0.67028. This finding is supported by Mwangangi's (2019) study on implementation challenges in county governments, which found that resource allocation bottlenecks were major causes of project delays. The research by Ochieng' and

Mutua (2019) on "Project Implementation in Devolved Governance" similarly identified resource allocation challenges as significant impediments to timely project completion.

Moreover, respondents agreed that resource allocation processes prioritize marginalized areas and communities in service delivery planning, with a mean of 3.8551 and a standard deviation of 1.03292. This finding suggests moderate agreement with some variation in responses, which aligns with Hassan and Omar's (2019) study on targeting mechanisms in ASAL counties. Their research found that while counties had policies to prioritize marginalized areas, implementation was often inconsistent due to various political and administrative factors. The relatively lower mean score and higher standard deviation indicate that while some progress has been made in prioritizing marginalized areas, there is still room for improvement and some skepticism among respondents about the effectiveness of current targeting mechanisms.

On Interview

Theme 10: Participatory Budgeting and Community-Driven Priority Setting

Key informants described how devolved leadership has enabled participatory resource allocation processes, ensuring community priorities inform budget decisions and resource distribution strategies.

The County Executive explained:

"Our budget preparation process now incorporates extensive public participation mechanisms. We conduct comprehensive ward-level meetings where communities identify their development priorities, which subsequently inform our budget allocation decisions."

This participatory approach has significantly improved resource allocation relevance and community satisfaction."

The Chief Officer for Finance and Planning provided implementation details:

"We now allocate resources based on ward development priorities identified through systematic public participation processes. For instance, when a ward prioritizes water infrastructure over road development, we accordingly allocate proportionally higher resources to water projects in that specific area."

Theme 11: Equitable Distribution and Marginalized Area Prioritization

Informants highlighted systematic efforts to ensure equitable resource distribution across county regions, with particular attention to marginalized and underserved areas.

The Deputy Governor noted:

"We utilize a comprehensive formula considering population demographics, poverty indices, and geographical challenges to ensure equitable resource distribution. Previously marginalized areas such as Diff and Hadado now receive proportionally higher budget allocations reflecting their development needs."

However, implementation challenges persist in achieving complete equity. A senior administrator from Eldas Sub-County observed:

"While policy frameworks promote equity principles, practical implementation faces significant challenges. Areas with superior road infrastructure and enhanced security conditions tend to receive more development projects compared to remote, security-challenged regions."

Theme 12: Strategic Resource Mobilization and Partnership Development

Key informants described innovative approaches to resource mobilization through strategic partnerships and collaborative frameworks that supplement government allocations.

The County Executive Committee Member for Trade and Investment explained:

"We have developed strategic partnerships with development partners, diaspora communities, and private sector stakeholders to supplement government budget allocations. These collaborative partnerships have enabled implementation of additional service delivery projects that would otherwise be financially unfeasible."

The Chief Officer for Agriculture highlighted specific partnership outcomes:

"Our strategic partnerships with FAO and USAID have enabled implementation of comprehensive drought resilience programs that county budget allocations alone could not support. These partnerships have significantly enhanced our service delivery capacity and community resilience building efforts."

4.4.5 Service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya

The study sought to investigate the service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

The results are as shown in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4. 10: Service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am satisfied with the quality of services provided by the Wajir County Government.	69	4.5942	.55090
Service delivery in Wajir County has improved over the past few years.	69	4.0000	.66421
I feel that my community's needs are adequately addressed by the Wajir County Government.	69	3.5217	.58432
There is a need for more transparency in how resources are allocated and used for service delivery.	69	4.6667	.47486
I believe that the Wajir County Government listens to and values the opinions of its citizens regarding service delivery.	69	4.2319	.68909
Certain areas or communities within Wajir County receive better services compared to others.	69	4.5072	.58469
Corruption and mismanagement negatively impact service delivery in Wajir County.	69	4.3043	.57661
I am optimistic about the future of service delivery in Wajir County, with the implementation of better policies and practices.	69	4.4783	.58432
Valid N (listwise)	69		

Source: Researcher (2025)

Table 4.10 indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that there is a need for more transparency in how resources are allocated and used for service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.6667 and a standard deviation of 0.47486. This finding is consistent with Transparency International Kenya's (2021) governance assessment, which found that while transparency had improved under devolution, citizens still demanded greater openness in resource management. The research by Maina and Kiprotich (2020) on "Citizen Demands for Transparency" similarly found high citizen expectations for

transparent governance in county governments. The low standard deviation indicates strong consensus among respondents on this issue.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the quality of services provided by the Wajir County Government, as shown by the mean of 4.5942 and a standard deviation of 0.55090. This finding is consistent with Cheeseman et al.'s (2019) citizen satisfaction survey in Kenya's devolved system, which found generally high levels of satisfaction with county government services, particularly in counties that had invested significantly in service delivery improvements. However, this finding differs from some national-level studies such as Afrobarometer's (2020) survey, which showed mixed satisfaction levels across different counties.

The study also revealed that certain areas or communities within Wajir County receive better services compared to others, as shown by the mean of 4.5072 and a standard deviation of 0.58469. This finding aligns with Hassan and Omar's (2019) spatial analysis of service delivery inequities in ASAL counties, which found significant disparities in service access between urban and rural areas within counties. The study by Kiprotich and Mwangi (2021) on "Geographic Equity in Service Delivery" similarly identified intra-county service disparities as a persistent challenge in Kenya's devolved system.

The study revealed that the majority of respondents are optimistic about the future of service delivery in Wajir County, with the implementation of better policies and practices, as shown by the mean of 4.4783 and a standard deviation of 0.58432. This finding aligns with World Bank's (2020) assessment of citizen attitudes toward devolution in Kenya, which found generally positive expectations about future improvements in county governance and service delivery. The study by Opalo (2019) on "Citizen Expectations in

Devolved Governance" similarly found high levels of optimism about future service delivery improvements among county residents.

The study also revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that corruption and mismanagement negatively impact service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.3043 and a standard deviation of 0.57661. This finding aligns with Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's (2020) report on governance challenges in county governments, which identified corruption as a significant impediment to effective service delivery. The study by Ngugi and Waititu (2019) on "Corruption and Service Delivery in Devolved Governance" similarly found that governance challenges significantly affected public service efficiency and effectiveness.

The respondents agreed that the Wajir County Government listens to and values the opinions of its citizens regarding service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.2319 and a standard deviation of 0.68909. This finding is supported by Cold-Ravnkilde et al.'s (2019) research on citizen-government engagement in Kenya's devolved system, which found that county governments had generally improved citizen consultation processes compared to the centralized system. While this suggests a level of public engagement, the variation in responses indicates differing perceptions among residents about the extent of genuine government responsiveness to citizen input.

The respondents agreed that service delivery in Wajir County has improved over the past few years, as indicated by the mean of 4.0000 and a standard deviation of 0.66421. This finding is supported by World Bank's (2020) assessment of devolution outcomes in Kenya, which noted service delivery improvements in many counties, including those in marginalized regions. Similarly, USAID's (2021) evaluation of county government

performance found positive trends in service delivery across various sectors. This suggests that while progress has been made, there is still room for further improvement.

Finally, the respondents showed moderate agreement that they feel their community's needs are adequately addressed by the Wajir County Government, as shown by the mean of 3.5217 and a standard deviation of 0.58432. This finding suggests that while some citizens believe their needs are met, others feel underserved. This aligns with Kiprotich and Mwangi's (2021) study on community needs assessment in devolved governance, which found significant variations in how different communities within counties perceived the adequacy of government response to their specific needs. The moderate mean score indicates that while there has been progress, there remains substantial room for improvement in addressing diverse community needs across the county.

The study revealed that the majority of respondents strongly agreed that there is a need for more transparency in how resources are allocated and used for service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.6667 and a standard deviation of 0.47486. This finding is consistent with Transparency International Kenya's (2021) governance assessment, which found that while transparency had improved under devolution, citizens still demanded greater openness in resource management. The research by Maina and Kiprotich (2020) on "Citizen Demands for Transparency" similarly found high citizen expectations for transparent governance in county governments.

The respondents agreed that service delivery in Wajir County has improved over the past few years, as indicated by the mean of 4.0000 and a standard deviation of 0.66421. This finding is supported by World Bank's (2020) assessment of devolution outcomes in Kenya, which noted service delivery improvements in many counties, including those in

marginalized regions. Similarly, USAID's (2021) evaluation of county government performance found positive trends in service delivery across various sectors.

The study also revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that corruption and mismanagement negatively impact service delivery, as shown by the mean of 4.3043 and a standard deviation of 0.57661. This finding aligns with Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's (2020) report on governance challenges in county governments, which identified corruption as a significant impediment to effective service delivery. The study by Ngugi and Waititu (2019) on "Corruption and Service Delivery in Devolved Governance" similarly found that governance challenges significantly affected public service efficiency and effectiveness.

These results indicate that while service delivery in Wajir County has shown improvement under devolution, challenges such as transparency, corruption, and equitable distribution of services remain significant areas requiring continued policy intervention and institutional strengthening.

4.5 Pearson Correlation Analysis

The study conducted correlation analysis to examine the linear relationships between devolved governance variables and service delivery in Wajir County Government. Karl Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was employed to measure the strength and direction of these relationships. The analysis was performed at both 95% and 99% confidence levels to ensure robust statistical inference, with results presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4. 11: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrix

	DLS	AC	AM	RA	SD
DLS	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	69			
AC	Pearson Correlation	.651**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	69	69		
AM	Pearson Correlation	.678**	.712**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	69	69	69	
RA	Pearson Correlation	.587**	.695**	.663**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	69	69	69	69
SD	Pearson Correlation	.742**	.689**	.726**	.634**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	69	69	69	69

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

Key: *DLS: Devolved Leadership Structures, AC: Administrative Capacity, AM: Accountability Mechanisms, RA: Resource Allocation, SD: Service Delivery*

Relationship between Devolved Leadership Structures and Service Delivery

The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship between devolved leadership structures and service delivery ($r = .742$, $p < 0.01$). This correlation coefficient indicates that approximately 55% of the variance in service delivery can be explained by devolved leadership structures ($r^2 = 0.55$). This finding suggests that as the effectiveness of devolved leadership structures increases, service delivery outcomes in Wajir County Government significantly improve.

This strong correlation aligns with the theoretical foundations of decentralization theory, which posits that bringing decision-making closer to the people enhances service responsiveness and effectiveness. The finding is consistent with Muriu's (2018) comprehensive analysis of Kenya's devolution process, which demonstrated that

decentralized governance structures significantly enhanced service delivery efficiency. Similarly, it supports Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis's (2019) assertion that devolved systems improved public service responsiveness compared to centralized approaches.

The practical implications of this correlation suggest that continued investment in strengthening devolved leadership structures including capacity building for county executives, improving inter-governmental coordination mechanisms, and enhancing participatory governance frameworks will likely yield significant improvements in service delivery outcomes for Wajir County residents.

Relationship between Administrative Capacity and Service Delivery

The analysis demonstrates a strong positive correlation between administrative capacity and service delivery ($r = .689$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that approximately 47% of the variance in service delivery outcomes can be attributed to administrative capacity factors ($r^2 = 0.47$). This substantial correlation underscores the critical importance of administrative competence in achieving effective service delivery.

This finding is particularly significant given Wajir County's unique challenges as an ASAL region. The correlation suggests that investments in human resource development, technological infrastructure, and administrative systems directly translate into improved service outcomes. This aligns with Kivuva, Olende, and Ng'etich's (2019) study, which found that counties with stronger administrative capacity demonstrated better service delivery outcomes.

The correlation coefficient also reflects the multifaceted nature of administrative capacity identified in the descriptive analysis, including personnel adequacy, technological

integration, and inter-departmental coordination. The relatively high correlation suggests that addressing administrative capacity gaps through targeted interventions—such as specialized training programs, technology adoption, and improved recruitment strategies—will yield substantial improvements in service delivery effectiveness.

Relationship between Accountability Mechanisms and Service Delivery

The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship between accountability mechanisms and service delivery ($r = .726$, $p < 0.01$). With approximately 53% of service delivery variance explained by accountability mechanisms ($r^2 = 0.53$), this finding emphasizes the crucial role of transparency, oversight, and citizen engagement in enhancing service outcomes.

This correlation is particularly noteworthy as it demonstrates that accountability serves not merely as a governance principle but as a practical driver of service improvement. The finding supports Abuodha's (2019) research, which found that counties with robust monitoring systems demonstrated better service delivery outcomes. It also aligns with the theoretical framework of democratic accountability, which suggests that transparent and responsive governance systems inherently improve public service quality.

The strength of this correlation has important policy implications for Wajir County. It suggests that continued investment in strengthening oversight mechanisms, enhancing transparency in resource allocation, improving citizen feedback systems, and developing performance monitoring frameworks will directly contribute to better service delivery outcomes. The correlation also validates the county's efforts to establish participatory governance structures and citizen engagement platforms.

Relationship between Resource Allocation and Service Delivery

The analysis shows a moderately strong positive correlation between resource allocation and service delivery ($r = .634$, $p < 0.01$), with approximately 40% of service delivery variance explained by resource allocation factors ($r^2 = 0.40$). While this correlation is the lowest among the predictor variables, it remains statistically significant and practically meaningful.

This correlation reflects the complex relationship between resource availability and service outcomes. The moderate strength suggests that while adequate resources are necessary for effective service delivery, their impact is mediated by other factors such as administrative capacity and accountability mechanisms. This finding is consistent with Smoke's (2019) analysis, which emphasized that resource adequacy alone is insufficient without effective utilization mechanisms.

The correlation has important implications for Wajir County's resource mobilization and allocation strategies. It suggests that while securing additional resources is important, equal attention should be paid to improving resource utilization efficiency, enhancing budget planning processes, and strengthening financial management systems to maximize the service delivery impact of available resources.

4.6 Regression Analysis Results

4.6.1 Model Summary

The study aimed to determine the influence of independent variables devolved leadership structures, administrative capacity, accountability mechanisms, and resource allocation on service delivery in Wajir County government, Kenya. As presented in Table 4.111, the

regression model explained 66.2% (R Square = .662) of the variation in service delivery performance. The adjusted R Square value of .616 indicates that after accounting for the number of predictors in the model, approximately 61.6% of the variance in service delivery can be attributed to the four independent variables under investigation.

Table 4. 12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.7512 ^a	.662	.616		.48774

a. Predictors: (Constant), Devolved Leadership, Administrative Capacity, Accountability Mechanisms, and Resource Allocation,

Source: Researcher (2025)

4.6.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 4. 13: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.413	4	1.353	5.688	.001 ^b
	Residual	15.225	64	.238		
	Total	20.638	68			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery in the Wajir County Government, Kenya

b. Predictors: (Constant), Devolved Leadership, Administrative Capacity, Accountability Mechanisms, and Resource Allocation,

Source: Researcher (2025)

The ANOVA results in Table 4.12 confirm that the regression model is statistically significant ($F(4, 64) = 5.688, p = .001$). This statistical significance demonstrates that devolved leadership structures, administrative capacity, accountability mechanisms, and resource allocation collectively have a significant positive effect on service delivery in Wajir County government. The model's validity is established with 68 degrees of freedom, providing sufficient statistical power for the analysis.

4.6.3 Regression Coefficients

The coefficients presented in Table 4.13 provide detailed insights into the individual contributions of each independent variable to service delivery outcomes. When all variables are held constant, the baseline service delivery performance is 3.843 (constant).

Table 4. 14:Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.843	.904		4.253	.000
	Devolved Leadership	.223	.097	.297	2.306	.001
	Administrative Capacity	.138	.085	.181	1.625	.004
	Accountability Mechanisms	.204	.095	.279	2.139	.006
	Resource Allocation	.101	.056	.217	1.810	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery in the Wajir County Government, Kenya

Source: Researcher (2025)

The regression equation derived from the unstandardized coefficients is: $Y = 3.843 + 0.223X_1 + 0.138X_2 + 0.204X_3 + 0.101X_4$

Where:

Y = Service Delivery in Wajir County Government

X_1 = Devolved Leadership

X_2 = Administrative Capacity

X_3 = Accountability Mechanisms

X_4 = Resource Allocation

Influence of Devolved Leadership on Service Delivery

Devolved leadership structures demonstrated the strongest influence on service delivery with a coefficient of 0.223 ($\beta = .297$, $t = 2.306$, $p = .0001$). This statistically significant relationship indicates that a unit increase in devolved leadership structures corresponds to a 0.223 unit improvement in service delivery performance, holding other factors constant. The standardized beta coefficient of .297 further confirms that devolved leadership has the largest relative contribution to service delivery among the four variables.

Influence of Administrative Capacity on Service Delivery

Administrative capacity showed a positive influence on service delivery with a coefficient of 0.138 ($\beta = .181$, $t = 1.625$, $p = .004$). This statistically significant result suggests that enhancing administrative capacity by one unit leads to a 0.138-unit improvement in service delivery, when other variables remain unchanged. The p-value of .004 confirms that this relationship is statistically significant at the 1% level.

Influence of Accountability Mechanisms on Service Delivery

Accountability mechanisms demonstrated a substantial positive influence on service delivery with a coefficient of 0.204 ($\beta = .279$, $t = 2.139$, $p = .006$). This result indicates that strengthening accountability mechanisms by one unit corresponds to a 0.204-unit improvement in service delivery performance. With the second-highest standardized beta coefficient (.279), accountability mechanisms represent a critical factor in enhancing service delivery in Wajir County.

Influence of Resource Allocation on Service Delivery

Resource allocation exhibited a positive influence on service delivery with a coefficient of 0.101 ($\beta = .217$, $t = 1.810$, $p = .001$). This statistically significant relationship suggests that

improving resource allocation practices by one-unit results in a 0.101-unit enhancement in service delivery performance. Although this coefficient is the smallest among the four variables, its statistical significance ($p = .001$) confirms that resource allocation remains an important determinant of service delivery outcomes.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This part presents an overview of the research study together with result discussions and conclusion statements and recommendations alongside suggestions for improvement and future research plans. A comprehensive analysis of the study's findings occurs as the research objectives drives the final conclusion.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Devolved leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

The study found that devolved leadership structures significantly influence service delivery in Wajir County. Descriptive statistics revealed strong agreement (mean=4.6377, SD=0.59337) that devolution improved service delivery compared to the centralized system. Respondents also agreed that devolution promotes transparency (mean=4.4348, SD=0.60581) and fosters community involvement (mean=4.1765, SD=0.77153). The regression analysis further confirmed this relationship with devolved leadership demonstrating the strongest influence on service delivery ($\beta=0.223$, $t=2.306$, $p=0.001$). The standardized coefficient ($\beta=0.297$) indicates that among all variables studied, devolved leadership has the largest relative contribution to service delivery. This implies that strengthening devolved leadership structures could yield substantial improvements in service delivery outcomes throughout Wajir County.

5.2.2 Administrative capacity on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

The study found that administrative capacity positively influences service delivery in Wajir County. Descriptive statistics indicated strong agreement that administrative capacity adequately supports service delivery initiatives (mean=4.29, SD=0.571) and that qualified personnel are sufficient (mean=4.3333, SD=0.72084). However, respondents also acknowledged that administrative inefficiencies affect service delivery timeliness (mean=4.2319, SD=0.66741) and capacity gaps contribute to service disparities across regions (mean=4.3623, SD=0.78536). The regression analysis confirmed a significant positive relationship between administrative capacity and service delivery ($\beta=0.138$, $t=1.625$, $p=0.004$). Although this relationship is the third strongest among the variables studied (standardized $\beta=0.181$), it remains statistically significant, indicating that enhancing administrative capacity would lead to measurable improvements in service delivery performance.

5.2.3 Accountability mechanisms on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

The study found that accountability mechanisms substantially influence service delivery in Wajir County. Descriptive statistics revealed strong agreement that accountability mechanisms effectively monitor service delivery (mean=4.4203, SD=0.73576) and hold officials accountable (mean=4.4058, SD=0.75379). Respondents strongly agreed that stronger oversight mechanisms are needed (mean=4.4783, SD=0.90112) while acknowledging that weak accountability contributes to corruption (mean=4.0725, SD=1.00468). The regression analysis confirmed a significant positive relationship between accountability mechanisms and service delivery ($\beta=0.204$, $t=2.139$, $p=0.006$), representing the second strongest influence among the variables studied (standardized

$\beta=0.279$). This indicates that investments in strengthening accountability frameworks would yield substantial improvements in service delivery outcomes, particularly through enhanced transparency and reduced corruption.

5.2.4 Resource allocation on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya.

The study found that resource allocation significantly influences service delivery in Wajir County. Descriptive statistics showed strong agreement that current resource allocation adequately meets service delivery needs (mean=4.3913, SD=0.78996), though respondents also acknowledged that limited financial resources hinder critical projects (mean=4.2609, SD=0.77937). There was strong agreement that improved budgeting processes (mean=4.3623, SD=0.93888) and innovative financing (mean=4.3548, SD=0.57536) are necessary. The regression analysis confirmed a significant positive relationship between resource allocation and service delivery ($\beta=0.101$, $t=1.810$, $p=0.001$). Although this represents the smallest coefficient among the variables studied (standardized $\beta=0.217$), its statistical significance underscores that strategic improvements in resource allocation practices would lead to measurable enhancements in service delivery outcomes across the county.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concluded that devolved leadership structures play a crucial role in enhancing service delivery in Wajir County. The findings indicated that devolution has led to improved efficiency, greater transparency, and increased community participation in decision-making. The study also highlighted that devolved leadership had the strongest influence on service delivery compared to other factors examined. This underscores the

importance of strengthening governance structures at the county level to ensure better service provision. The study recommended further decentralization of administrative functions and capacity-building initiatives to enhance local governance. Ultimately, enhancing devolved leadership structures is essential for fostering accountability, improving responsiveness to community needs, and ensuring sustainable development in Wajir County.

The study concluded that administrative capacity significantly impacts service delivery in Wajir County. It found that while existing administrative frameworks provide substantial support for service provision, inefficiencies and capacity gaps hinder effective implementation. The study emphasized the need for competent personnel, well-structured management systems, and adequate resources to enhance administrative efficiency. Weak administrative structures were identified as contributing to delays and regional disparities in service delivery. Therefore, strengthening administrative capacity through professional development, policy reforms, and improved operational strategies is critical. By addressing these gaps, Wajir County can achieve a more effective, equitable, and responsive service delivery system that meets the diverse needs of its residents.

The study concluded that accountability mechanisms are vital in improving service delivery in Wajir County. The findings indicated that strong oversight frameworks enhance transparency and ensure public officials are held accountable for their actions. Weak accountability structures were identified as enabling corruption and inefficiency, thereby negatively affecting service provision. The study emphasized the need for strengthening monitoring systems and enforcement measures to enhance institutional accountability. Additionally, promoting citizen engagement and independent oversight bodies was

recommended as a way to improve governance. Strengthening accountability frameworks would lead to more transparent resource utilization, reduced corruption, and overall improvements in service delivery across the county.

The study concluded that resource allocation significantly affects service delivery in Wajir County. While respondents acknowledged that current allocations address some service delivery needs, financial constraints limit the execution of critical projects. The study found that inefficiencies in budgeting and financial management negatively impact service provision. It recommended strategic improvements such as enhanced budgeting processes, innovative financing, and equitable distribution of resources. Strengthening financial oversight and prioritizing essential services in budgetary allocations were also identified as necessary steps. Improving resource allocation mechanisms would lead to better infrastructure development, efficient service delivery, and sustainable county growth, ultimately benefiting residents across Wajir County.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommended that devolved leadership structures should be further strengthened through policy reforms and institutional capacity-building initiatives. This would ensure that county governance mechanisms are more effective in decision-making, transparency, and community engagement. By reinforcing leadership accountability, service provision can become more responsive to local needs and development priorities.

The study recommended that administrative capacity should be enhanced through targeted training programs and strategic recruitment of qualified personnel. Investing in human resource development will address inefficiencies in public administration and improve

service delivery. Furthermore, restructuring administrative frameworks to streamline operations and improve coordination between county departments will facilitate more efficient service implementation.

The study recommended that accountability mechanisms should be reinforced by establishing independent oversight bodies and promoting citizen participation. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems will enhance transparency and minimize corruption in public service delivery. Additionally, introducing digital governance tools, such as e-governance platforms, can improve efficiency and ensure real-time tracking of service provision and resource utilization.

The study recommended that resource allocation should be optimized through improved financial management strategies and equitable distribution frameworks. This includes adopting data-driven budgeting processes, implementing stringent financial oversight measures, and exploring alternative funding sources such as public-private partnerships. Prioritizing critical sectors like healthcare, infrastructure, and education in resource allocation will contribute to sustainable development and improved service delivery across Wajir County.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

Future research should examine the long-term impact of devolved leadership on service delivery across diverse counties, focusing on sustainability, fiscal autonomy, and citizen satisfaction. Investigating political dynamics such as clan influence, patronage, and elite capture can offer deeper insights into governance quality. Studies should also explore the integration of digital tools in county management, assessing their effectiveness, accessibility, and security. Additionally, analyzing the role of public-private partnerships

in enhancing essential services, particularly in marginalized areas, is vital. Lastly, research should assess how inclusive leadership especially youth and women's participation influences the responsiveness, equity, and effectiveness of devolved service delivery systems.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Introduction Letter

Dear Respondent,

RE: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a graduate student at Mount Kenya University pursuing a Master of Arts in Public Administration and Management. As part of the requirements for my degree, I am conducting research entitled “The Influence of Devolved Leadership Structures on Service Delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya.”

This research forms part of the requirement for my degree qualification. I would appreciate it if you could kindly take a little of your time to complete the questionnaire provided. Any information shared will be used solely for academic purposes, and all responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Your cooperation is most valued and appreciated. I take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your quick return of the completed questionnaire.

Yours faithfully,

.....

Abdirashid Yussuf Abdinur

Appendix II: Questionnaire

I am Abdirashid Yussuf Abdinur, a master's degree student from Mount Kenya University. I am undertaking a research study on "*The influence of devolve leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County government Kenya*". Your cooperation in completing this survey for a study is greatly appreciated. All data submitted will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes.

NB: Do not write your name on this questionnaire

1. Gender

Male Female

2. What is your Age Bracket?

18-25 Years 26-30 Years
31-40 Years 41- 50 Years Over 50 Years

3. For how long have you worked for County?

1-5 years 5-10 years Over 10 years

4. What is your Highest Level of Education?

College Diploma Undergraduate Degree
Graduate Higher Diploma Post Graduate

SECTION B: THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES ON SERVICE DELIVERY

PART A: Influence of Devolved Leadership Structures on Service Delivery (DLS)

5. Please, mark each statement with your degree of agreement using the scale below.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Opinion	1	2	3	4	5
1	The current devolved leadership structures effectively prioritize service delivery in Wajir County.				
2	Devolved leadership has significantly improved service delivery compared to the centralized system.				
3	There is adequate coordination among devolved leadership levels to enhance service delivery in Wajir County.				
4	Devolved leadership fosters community involvement and participation in service delivery initiatives.				
5	Challenges in devolved leadership structures hinder effective service delivery in Wajir County.				
6	Devolved leadership promotes transparency and accountability in service delivery processes.				

7	The public perceives devolved leadership as positively impacting service delivery outcomes.					
8	Continuous evaluation and improvement of devolved leadership structures are necessary to enhance service delivery in Wajir County.					

Part B: Administrative Capacity on Service Delivery (AC)

6. Please, mark each statement with your degree of agreement using the scale below.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Opinion					
1	Administrative capacity within Wajir County Government adequately supports service delivery initiatives.				
2	There is a sufficient number of qualified personnel to manage and implement service delivery projects.				
3	Administrative inefficiencies negatively affect the timeliness of service delivery in Wajir County.				
4	Adequate training and capacity-building programs are provided to enhance administrative skills in service delivery.				
5	Administrative capacity challenges hinder effective coordination among departments in service delivery efforts.				
6	The availability of modern technology enhances administrative capacity and improves service delivery outcomes.				
7	Administrative capacity gaps contribute to disparities in service delivery across different regions of Wajir County.				
8	Strengthening administrative capacity is essential for overcoming service delivery challenges and achieving sustainable development in Wajir County.				

Part C: Accountability Mechanisms on Service Delivery (AM)

7. Please, mark each statement with your degree of agreement using the scale below.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Opinion					
1	Accountability mechanisms within Wajir County Government effectively monitor and evaluate service delivery performance.				
2	There is transparency in the allocation and utilization of resources for service delivery purposes.				
3	Accountability mechanisms hold government officials and service providers accountable for their actions and decisions.				
4	Citizens have adequate access to information regarding service delivery processes and outcomes.				
5	Public participation mechanisms enable citizens to provide feedback and hold leaders accountable for service delivery failures.				
6	Weak accountability mechanisms contribute to corruption and mismanagement of resources in service delivery.				

7	There is a need for stronger oversight and enforcement mechanisms to enhance accountability in service delivery.					
8	Strengthening accountability mechanisms is crucial for building public trust and confidence in the Wajir County Government's ability to deliver services effectively.					

Part D: Resource allocation on Service delivery (RA)

8. Please, mark each statement with your degree of agreement using the scale below.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Opinion					
1	The current allocation of resources adequately meets the service delivery needs of Wajir County.				
2	Resource allocation processes prioritize marginalized areas and communities in service delivery planning.				
3	Limited financial resources hinder the implementation of critical service delivery projects in Wajir County.				
4	Transparent and equitable resource allocation mechanisms enhance service delivery equity across Wajir County.				
5	There is a need for improved budgeting processes to ensure efficient resource allocation for service delivery.				
6	External funding sources complement government allocations to enhance service delivery outcomes.				
7	Challenges in resource allocation result in delays and inefficiencies in service delivery project implementation.				
8	Innovative financing mechanisms are necessary to address resource constraints and improve service delivery in Wajir County.				

Part E: Service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya (SD)

9. Please, mark each statement with your degree of agreement using the scale below.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Opinion					
1	I am satisfied with the quality of services provided by the Wajir County Government.				
2	Service delivery in Wajir County has improved over the past few years.				
3	I feel that my community's needs are adequately addressed by the Wajir County Government.				
4	There is a need for more transparency in how resources are allocated and used for service delivery.				
5	I believe that the Wajir County Government listens to and values the opinions of its citizens regarding service delivery.				
6	Certain areas or communities within Wajir County receive better services compared to others.				

7	Corruption and mismanagement negatively impact service delivery in Wajir County.					
8	I am optimistic about the future of service delivery in Wajir County, with the implementation of better policies and practices.					

Thank you for participating



Appendix III: Interview Guide

Objective (a): To determine the influence of devolved leadership structures on service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya.

- a) How do you perceive the role of devolved leadership structures in prioritizing service delivery initiatives within Wajir County?
- b) Can you provide examples of how devolved leadership has positively impacted service delivery compared to the centralized system?
- c) What challenges do you foresee in achieving effective coordination among different levels of devolved leadership to enhance service delivery in Wajir County?

Objective (b): To investigate the influence of administrative capacity on service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya.

- a) How would you assess the current administrative capacity within Wajir County Government in supporting service delivery efforts?
- b) What specific measures are being taken to address administrative inefficiencies that may hinder timely service delivery in Wajir County?
- c) In your opinion, what role does technology play in enhancing administrative capacity and improving service delivery outcomes in Wajir County?


Objective (c): To assess the influence of accountability mechanisms on service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya.

- a) How effective do you believe accountability mechanisms are in monitoring and evaluating service delivery performance within Wajir County Government?
- b) What steps are taken to ensure transparency and accountability in the allocation and utilization of resources for service delivery purposes?
- c) How do you perceive the level of citizen engagement and participation in holding government officials and service providers accountable for service delivery outcomes in Wajir County?

Objective (d): To find out the influence of resource allocation on service delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya.

- a) From your perspective, how well does the current resource allocation meet the diverse service delivery needs across Wajir County?
- b) What challenges do you encounter in ensuring transparent and equitable resource allocation mechanisms to enhance service delivery equity?
- c) Can you discuss any innovative financing mechanisms being explored to address resource constraints and improve service delivery in Wajir County?

Appendix IV: ERC Certificate



Mount Kenya University

REF: MKU/ISERC/4729 Date: 28 January 2025
TO: Abdirashid Yussuf Abdinur REG: MPAM/37357/2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN WAJIR COUNTY GOVERNMENT KENYA

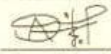
This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **3451**. The approval period is **28/01/2025 - 27/01/2026**.

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



MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY
ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE
P. O. Box 342 - 01000,
THIKA

Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika.
Tel: +254 20 287 8000, Cell: +254 709 153 000
Email: info@mku.ac.ke, Web: www.mku.ac.ke
ISO 9001:2015 Certified

Appendix V: Introduction letter from MKU



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MPAM/37357/2015

29th January, 2025

*National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA*

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: ABDIRASHID YUSSUF ABDINUR – REGISTRATION NO. MPAM/37357/2015

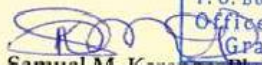
The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Arts in Public Administration and Management** in the department of **Management** in the school of **Business and Economics**

The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Arts in Public Administration and Management** in the department of **Management** in the school of **Business and Economics**

The title of the research is “**Influence of Devolve Leadership Structures on Service Delivery in Wajir County Government, Kenya.**” It has been cleared by the University’s Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **February, 2024 and April, 2024.**





Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.


Dr. Samuel M. Karenga, Ph.D
Director, Graduate Studies
Enc.

Mount Kenya University
P. O. Box 342 - 01000, THIKA
Office of the Director
Graduate Studies

Appendix VI: Research Permit

 <p>REPUBLIC OF KENYA</p>	 <p>NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION</p>
<p>Ref No: 638940</p>	<p>Date of Issue: 11/February/2025</p>
<p>RESEARCH LICENSE</p>	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Mr., Abdirashid Yussuf Abdinur 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 Wajir on the topic: INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN WAJIR COUNTY GOVERNMENT KENYA for the period ending : 11/February/2026.</p>	
<p>License No: NACOSTI/P/25/415843</p>	
<p>Applicant Identification Number 638940</p>	
<p><i>W. Mwangi</i> Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION</p>	
<p>Verification QR Code</p> 	
<p>NOTE: This is a computer generated License! To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.</p>	
<p>See overleaf for conditions</p>	

Appendix VII: Field Entry Authorization

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF WAJIR



11th February, 2025

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
SECRETARY & HEAD OF COUNTY
PUBLIC SERVICE WAJIR COUNTY P.O
BOX 9-70200
WAJIR

Ref: OCS/ADM/VO.X19 (098)

All County Executive Committee Members,
Wajir County
All County Chief Officers
Wajir County

RE: CLEARANCE TO UNDERTAKE ACADEMIC RESEARCH AT WAJIR COUNTY GOVERNMENT MR. ABDIRASHID YUSSUF ABDINUR


This is to introduce to you Mr. Abdirashid Yussuf Abdinur who is a Masters Student at the Mount Kenya University (MKU). He has been cleared to undertake Research entitled "Influence of Devolved Leadership structures on Service Delivery in Wajir County Government Kenya".

Mr. Abdirashid is now here to collect his data. He will be visiting the various Administrative Departments. Kindly give him all the cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

HILLOW ISSACK MUMIN
COUNTY SECRETARY &
HEAD OF COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE

Appendix VIII: Turnitin Report

Similarity Report ID: oid:3618:93442731

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1	Mount Kenya University on 2023-07-21 Submitted works	1%
2	ir-library.ku.ac.ke Internet	<1%
2	ir-library.ku.ac.ke Internet	<1%
3	Taita Taveta University on 2020-05-01 Submitted works	<1%
4	Kenyatta University on 2018-03-02 Submitted works	<1%
5	Mount Kenya University on 2019-03-17 Submitted works	<1%
6	Mount Kenya University on 2019-06-23 Submitted works	<1%
7	KCA University on 2025-03-09 Submitted works	<1%
8	Kampala International University on 2025-01-15 Submitted works	<1%

Appendix IX: County of Wajir Map

