

**ANALYZING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT IN NAROK COUNTY, KENYA.**

LESALOI SAROI

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration

This thesis/project is my original work and has never been presented for any academic award in any institution.

Name: LESALO SAROI

Reg. No. M.PAM/2023/52940

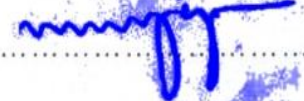
Signature.....  Date..... 13/06/2025

Approval

This thesis/project is being submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors

Name: Dr. Samuel Nyambega PhD

Institutional Affiliation..... Garissa University

Signature.....  Date..... 16-06-2025

Name:.....

Institutional Affiliation.....

Signature..... Date.....

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my family for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout my academic journey.



ABSTRACT

Devolution was introduced in Kenya to promote equitable development and improve governance at the local level. However, its effectiveness in enhancing socioeconomic development remained uncertain, particularly in counties such as Narok, where disparities in income, employment, and service delivery persisted. This study examined the extent to which devolution influenced key socio-economic indicators, including income levels, employment rates, and access to public services. Additionally, it sought to identify challenges that hindered its effectiveness in Narok County. The study was guided by four main objectives: To analyze the influence of fiscal decentralization on socio-economic development in Narok County. To evaluate the effect of governance and accountability on socio-economic progress in Narok County. To assess the effect of public participation on the success of devolution in Narok County. To investigate the influence of service delivery on economic growth in Narok County. The research was anchored on two key theories. The Fiscal Decentralization Theory posits that decentralizing financial resources enhances local economic development, while the public choice theory emphasizes the role of citizen involvement in policymaking as a means of ensuring effective governance. The study adopted a mixed-methods research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The sample population comprised 200 respondents sampled from local government officials, community leaders, students and residents, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure broad representation. Data collection involved the use of structured questionnaires. The research utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through structured questionnaire. Prior to full implementation, the data collection instruments were pretested for validity and reliability to ensure accuracy and consistency. The analysis of the collected data was carried out using descriptive statistics to summarize key trends and correlation and regression analyses to establish relationships between devolution and socioeconomic variables. Additionally, qualitative data was analyzed thematically to capture important insights from stakeholders. The findings revealed that devolution had a moderate impact on socioeconomic development in Narok County. Fiscal decentralization contributed positively to infrastructure and service delivery; however, its effectiveness was hampered by inefficiencies in financial management and allocation. Governance and accountability were found to play a significant role in local development, yet challenges such as corruption, political interference, and weak oversight structures remained prevalent. The study also found that public participation in governance was limited, thus diminishing the effectiveness of devolved decision-making processes. While employment rates increased in certain sectors, income levels remained stagnant, primarily due to inequitable resource distribution and the failure to generate sustainable economic opportunities for all residents. The study concluded that while devolution had led to some socioeconomic improvements, its full potential had yet to be realized. The persistence of governance challenges, weak accountability mechanisms, and limited citizen engagement constrained the impact of decentralization in Narok County. To address these issues, the study recommended several key policy interventions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CBK – Central Bank of Kenya

CIDP – County Integrated Development Plan

CRA – Commission on Revenue Allocation

CSOs – Civil Society Organizations

FGDs – Focus Group Discussions

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GoK – Government of Kenya

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IEBC – Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

IMF – International Monetary Fund

KNBS – Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KRA – Kenya Revenue Authority

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

MoDP – Ministry of Devolution and Planning



Mount Kenya University



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the analysis of devolve functions on the Socio-Economic Development of Narok County, Kenya. It outlines the study's background, problem statement, research objectives, significance, scope, limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and operational definitions, while discussing key independent variables that influence socio-economic development.

1.1 Background of the study

Devolution, the transfer of powers from a central government to local or regional governments, is a global phenomenon that has reshaped governance structures in several countries. For instance, the United Kingdom's devolution to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland has empowered local governments to manage their economies and services. However, challenges persist, such as unequal resource allocation leading to disparities in socio-economic development. In Spain, devolution to autonomous communities like Catalonia has created a more inclusive governance model, but economic disparities remain due to uneven distribution of revenues. Similarly, in Italy, the devolution process has allowed regions like Lombardy to flourish economically, while southern regions lag behind (Gomez, 2020). This uneven progress highlights the problem that centralized governments face when trying to balance economic growth with regional autonomy. In the United States, devolution from federal to state governments, particularly in areas like education and health, has fostered regional socio-economic development. However, some states face challenges in sustaining economic growth due to differences in governance capacities. This underscores why a study on devolution is necessary: to understand the socio-economic disparities that arise even under decentralized governance. Empirical evidence from these countries shows that while devolution has improved local decision-making, it has also widened the gap between wealthy and underdeveloped regions. For example, in the UK, Scotland's per capita GDP increased by 4% between 2010 and 2015 post-devolution, while Wales' growth stagnated (Jones, 2019). These global case studies

illustrate the complexity of achieving balanced socio-economic development through devolution, necessitating further study to identify factors driving these disparities.

In Africa, countries like Nigeria and South Africa have implemented devolution to improve local governance and spur economic growth. Nigeria's devolution of power to state governments aimed to enhance resource allocation and address regional inequalities, especially in oil-rich states like Rivers and Delta. However, corruption and mismanagement have hindered socio-economic progress, turning devolution into a tool for elite enrichment rather than public welfare (Adebanjo, 2022). This makes devolution both a solution and a problem for socio-economic development, depending on governance quality.

In South Africa, devolution is seen in the form of provincial governments managing health, education, and housing. While it has led to improved service delivery in affluent regions like Gauteng, provinces like Limpopo have struggled with underfunding, leading to inequality (Sibanda, 2021). The need for a study here is clear: to evaluate why devolution has led to divergent socio-economic outcomes across regions. Empirical studies reveal that while Gauteng's poverty rate dropped by 15% between 2005 and 2015, Limpopo's poverty levels remained high at 50% (Statista, 2021). In Kenya, devolution under the 2010 Constitution was meant to address regional imbalances by transferring resources to counties. However, some counties, such as Narok, still lag in socio-economic indicators, prompting a need to examine how well devolution is functioning at a local level. Evidence from national reports shows Narok's literacy rate remains below the national average (45% vs. 75%) (KNBS, 2023).

At the county level in Kenya, Narok is an example of how devolution has created mixed results. While some progress has been made in infrastructure and tourism (due to the Maasai Mara Game Reserve), socio-economic challenges persist, including poor access to education and healthcare. Despite devolved resources, many residents face limited access to basic services, and the local economy heavily relies on agriculture and tourism, which are vulnerable to external shocks. Local reports show that while tourism generates substantial revenue, much of this does not benefit local

communities, highlighting the disparity between economic potential and local socio-economic development. The socio-economic disparities within Narok County demonstrate the need for this study. Investigating why the benefits of devolution have not translated into broad-based socio-economic growth can inform policymakers on how to better allocate devolved funds to improve health, education, and infrastructure.

1.1.1 Devolved Functions

The governance structures set up under devolution are pivotal in determining its success. Governance refers to the political, economic, and administrative authority exercised by local governments to manage resources and implement policies. Strong governance structures lead to efficient allocation of resources, improved public service delivery, and citizen participation. However, weak governance can lead to inefficiency, corruption, and misallocation of resources (Ongaro, 2019). In Narok County, the effectiveness of local governance structures remains questionable, with issues such as lack of transparency and accountability affecting socio-economic development. Empirical studies have shown that counties with stronger governance structures, like Nairobi and Mombasa, tend to fare better socio-economically. For instance, Nairobi County recorded a higher Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.64 in 2020 compared to Narok's 0.47 (UNDP, 2021). Strengthening governance structures in Narok could be key to improving socio-economic outcomes.

The allocation of resources is a critical factor in devolution. In Kenya, counties receive devolved funds from the national government based on various criteria, including population, land area, and poverty levels. However, there have been concerns about the equitable distribution of these funds, with some counties receiving less than their fair share. In Narok, despite its large land area and significant contributions to national tourism revenues, the allocation of resources has not sufficiently addressed socio-economic challenges (Muthoni, 2022). This imbalance in resource allocation is a key driver of underdevelopment in Narok County. Evidence from previous studies shows that counties that receive more resources tend to have better socio-economic outcomes. For

instance, Turkana County, one of the poorest regions, saw a 20% reduction in poverty rates between 2015 and 2020 due to increased resource allocation for social welfare programs (KNBS, 2021).

Public participation is a cornerstone of devolution. The idea is to involve citizens in decision-making processes to ensure that the development agenda reflects local needs and priorities. However, in Narok County, public participation in governance has been low, limiting the effectiveness of devolved governance. Studies have shown that when citizens are actively involved in decision-making, there is a greater likelihood of successful policy implementation (Mwangi, 2020). In counties like Kisumu, where public participation is higher, socio-economic indicators such as literacy rates and access to healthcare have improved significantly. Narok County, on the other hand, has struggled with low public engagement, which has hindered the identification and prioritization of key socio-economic issues. Improving public participation could lead to better-targeted development initiatives that address the county's unique challenges.

Infrastructure development is critical for socio-economic growth. Good infrastructure enhances access to markets, healthcare, education, and other essential services. In Narok County, the development of roads, schools, and hospitals has lagged behind other counties, contributing to poor socio-economic outcomes. Studies show that counties with better infrastructure, such as Kiambu, tend to have higher economic growth rates and lower poverty levels (Kariuki, 2021). In Narok, limited infrastructure has restricted access to essential services, particularly in rural areas, further entrenching poverty. Empirical evidence from Kenya indicates that improving infrastructure is key to promoting economic development. For instance, counties that invested in road networks saw a 10% increase in agricultural productivity between 2018 and 2022 (KNBS, 2023). A similar focus on infrastructure in Narok could enhance socio-economic outcomes.

1.1.2 Socioeconomic Development

Socioeconomic development refers to the process through which individuals and societies experience improvements in their economic and social well-being over time. This multifaceted concept encompasses advancements in living standards, education, healthcare, and income distribution. Socioeconomic development is assessed using various indicators that provide a comprehensive view of a region's progress. One of the primary indicators of socioeconomic development is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, which measures the average economic output per person. This metric serves as a reflection of a country's economic performance and its ability to generate wealth for its population. In addition, the Human Development Index (HDI), a composite measure incorporating life expectancy, education levels, and per capita income, provides a broader understanding of human progress beyond economic figures.

Another crucial measure is poverty rates, which indicate the percentage of the population living below the poverty line. High poverty rates often reflect economic disparities and limited access to essential services. Closely linked to this is the employment rate, which measures labor force participation and provides insight into job availability and overall economic engagement. High employment rates typically signal a robust economy, while low rates suggest economic stagnation and reduced household incomes. Furthermore, literacy rates are used to assess educational attainment within a population. Higher literacy rates are associated with improved job prospects and increased economic productivity. Equally important is access to healthcare, which is evaluated through metrics such as the number of healthcare facilities, availability of medical professionals, and health outcomes like infant mortality rates. Ensuring adequate healthcare access improves life expectancy and enhances the overall quality of life for a population.

1.1.3 Narok County, Kenya

Narok County is located in southwestern Kenya, bordered by Tanzania to the south and several Kenyan counties, including Kisii, Migori, Nyamira, Bomet, Nakuru, and Kajiado. Geographically, it spans an area of approximately 17,921.20 square kilometers, making it the eleventh largest county in Kenya. The county's population has grown significantly in recent years, with an estimated

1,312,287 residents in 2023, compared to 1,157,873 recorded in the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census (Narok County Government, 2023). Narok County's economy is driven by agriculture, tourism, and mining, which serve as the backbone of economic development and employment.

Agriculture is the leading economic activity in Narok, particularly in the highland regions of the Mau Escarpment, which offer fertile land suitable for large-scale farming. The county is a major producer of wheat, barley, maize, and potatoes, with livestock farming, including pastoralism, also playing a significant role in the livelihoods of the local population. The Maasai community, which constitutes a large portion of the county's residents, relies heavily on livestock for economic sustenance. Tourism is another vital sector, with the county being home to the world-renowned Maasai Mara National Reserve. The annual wildebeest migration, which attracts thousands of tourists from across the world, serves as a major revenue stream for both the county and national governments. Tourism has also created employment opportunities in the hospitality sector, ranging from hotel management to tour guiding.

Mining contributes to economic growth, with Narok County possessing valuable mineral resources such as gold and quarry stones. The mining industry has provided job opportunities and boosted local revenue generation, though environmental concerns have arisen due to unregulated extraction activities. Recent statistics provide insights into Narok County's socioeconomic status. The poverty rate in the county stands at 35.7%, indicating that more than a third of the population lives below the poverty line (KIPPRA, 2023). This suggests that despite economic progress, significant portions of the population still struggle with income insecurity and limited access to basic services.

Healthcare services in the county have significantly improved over the years. Child immunization coverage increased from 49.8% in 2012/13 to 97.3% in 2019, placing Narok among the top five counties in Kenya in this regard. Similarly, facility-based deliveries rose from 61.1% to 95.4% over the same period, reflecting improved maternal healthcare services (IPF Global, 2023). In terms of economic output, Narok County's Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita stands at Ksh 104,064.87,

representing the average economic output per individual. This figure demonstrates the county's economic potential, particularly in the agriculture and tourism sectors (KIPPRA, 2023). Despite its economic potential, Narok County faces several challenges that hinder its overall development.

Infrastructure Development: While improvements have been made in road networks, some areas still lack proper infrastructure, limiting access to essential services and economic opportunities.

Poor road conditions affect trade and transportation, particularly in remote rural areas.

Youth Unemployment: The county experiences high levels of youth unemployment, necessitating targeted interventions to create job opportunities and enhance skill development programs. Many young people lack formal education or vocational training, making it difficult for them to secure sustainable employment.

Environmental Concerns: The county faces environmental challenges such as unplanned human settlements and deforestation, which threaten its ecological balance. Poorly managed land use has led to soil degradation, affecting agricultural productivity. Additionally, unregulated mining activities have resulted in land degradation and water pollution.

Narok County holds significant economic potential, driven by agriculture, tourism, and mining. However, despite progress in healthcare and economic development, issues such as poverty, infrastructure deficits, youth unemployment, and environmental challenges persist. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-sectoral approach involving the county government, national government, development agencies, and local communities. By implementing policies that foster inclusive growth, improve infrastructure, and promote sustainable environmental practices, Narok County can achieve long-term socioeconomic development and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

1.2. Problem Statement

Devolution was introduced in Kenya to promote equitable socio-economic development across all counties, yet many regions, including Narok County, remain underdeveloped. Despite devolved resources, socio-economic challenges such as poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and inadequate infrastructure persist. This raises the question: why has devolution not achieved its intended outcomes in Narok County?

Studies indicate that governance structures, resource allocation, public participation, and infrastructure development are critical to the success of devolution (Mwangi, 2020). However, in Narok, these factors have not been effectively implemented, contributing to the county's underperformance in key socio-economic indicators. For example, while counties like Nairobi have improved their HDI through efficient governance and better resource allocation, Narok's development has stagnated (UNDP, 2021). Research is necessary to explore the root causes of this underdevelopment and provide recommendations on how to improve the implementation of devolution in Narok County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of devolution on the socio-economic development of Narok County, Kenya.

1.3.1 Research Objectives

- i. To analyze the influence of fiscal decentralization on socio-economic development in Narok County.
- ii. To evaluate the effect of governance and accountability on the socio-economic development in Narok County.
- iii. To assess the effect of public participation on the socio-economic development in Narok County.
- iv. To investigate the influence of service delivery on the socio-economic development in Narok County.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How does fiscal decentralization influence socio-economic development in Narok County?
- ii. What is the effect of governance and accountability on the socio-economic development in Narok County?
- iii. What is the effect of public participation on the socio-economic development in Narok County?
- iv. What is the influence of service delivery on the socio-economic development in Narok County?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will benefit stakeholders, including the Narok County Government, policymakers, and local communities. Policymakers can use the results to improve the implementation of devolution, ensuring that resources are allocated equitably and that public participation is enhanced. The study will also inform local communities on how to actively engage in governance processes to improve service delivery and socio-economic outcomes.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study will focus on the socio-economic development of Narok County, Kenya, covering the period from 2013s to 2024. It will examine governance structures, resource allocation, public participation, and infrastructure development, with the primary data collection taking place within Narok County.

1.7.1 Limitations of the study

The study faced the challenges related to time, resources, and access to data. The sample size may not be representative of the entire population due to these constraints, affecting the generalization of findings.

1.7.2 Delimitations of the study

The study will focus solely on Narok County and will not cover other counties in Kenya. The objectives are limited to analyzing the role of governance, resource allocation, public participation, and infrastructure in the socio-economic development of Narok County.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumes that devolution is functioning in Narok County as per the Constitution, and that respondents will provide honest and accurate information. It also assumes that available secondary data will be reliable and relevant to the study.

1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Devolution

The transfer of powers and resources from a central government to local or regional governments.

Socio-economic Development

The process of improving the economic and social well-being of a population.

Governance Structures

The systems and frameworks that guide decision-making and resource management in a devolved government.

Public Participation

The involvement of citizens in the decision-making processes of governance.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATUTRE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth review of relevant theories and empirical studies that underpin the topic of devolution and socio-economic development in Narok County, Kenya. The section explores theoretical frameworks, empirical reviews of study variables, and a conceptual framework to form a solid foundation for the study.

2.1 Theoretical Review

The theoretical review for this study had drawn upon decentralization and governance theories to provide a foundation for analyzing the impact of devolved functions on socio-economic development. The study had used utilized the Decentralization Theory, which posits that transferring decision-making authority to local governments can enhance efficiency, accountability, and responsiveness to local needs, thereby fostering socio-economic growth. Additionally, the Public Choice Theory had been applied to examine how localized governance reduces bureaucratic inefficiencies by allowing residents to influence decisions directly. The study had also incorporated the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework that explore how devolution impacts income, employment,

and service delivery, ultimately shaping the socio-economic well-being of communities. These theories had guided the study in understanding the linkages between devolution and socio-economic development outcomes in Narok County.

2.1.1 Fiscal Federalism Theory

The Fiscal Federalism Theory, developed by Oates (1972), explains the allocation of financial responsibilities across different levels of government to promote efficient resource utilization and local economic development. This theory supports the objective of investigating how fiscal decentralization had affected economic development in Narok County. It suggests that counties with more financial autonomy can better allocate resources according to local priorities, leading to improved socio-economic outcomes. In the context of Narok County, fiscal federalism can explain how devolved funds, like the County Revenue Allocation, impact public services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure development. The theory posits that local governments are more informed about their citizens' needs and can thus spend funds more efficiently. Linking it to Narok, the study had explored how the effective allocation of devolved resources influences socio-economic progress. Furthermore, fiscal federalism provides a framework for analyzing the county's revenue generation strategies and their sufficiency in funding local development initiatives. The theory highlights the gaps in local revenue collection and dependence on national government transfers, which may hinder sustainable development.

2.1.2 Decentralization Theory

Decentralization Theory, articulated by Rondinelli and Nellis (1986), focuses on the transfer of power, authority, and responsibilities from central to local governments. This theory relates to the study objective of assessing the administrative aspects of devolution in Narok County, particularly how power devolution affects socio-economic development. By decentralizing governance, decision-making becomes closer to the people, fostering better governance, participation, and

accountability. In Narok, this theory helps to explain how local governance mechanisms facilitate the implementation of policies that directly address socio-economic issues, such as poverty and unemployment. It examines whether local authorities have effectively utilized devolved powers to initiate socio-economic reforms. The theory also provided insight into the challenges faced in the implementation of devolution, such as capacity gaps within local governments, political interference, and the slow uptake of decentralized responsibilities, which may impact the intended socio-economic outcomes.

2.1.3 Institutional Theory

Institutional Theory, pioneered by Scott (1995), explores how formal rules, regulations, and structures shape the behaviors and outcomes of organizations, including governments. This theory is relevant to the study objective of evaluating the institutional frameworks that support devolution in Narok County and their impact on socio-economic development. In Narok County, the theory helped analyze how local institutions, such as the County Assembly and County Executive, shape the planning and implementation of development projects. It highlighted the role of governance structures in ensuring accountability and transparency in resource utilization, which are critical for socio-economic progress. Additionally, the theory examines how external pressures from national institutions, political systems, and regulatory bodies influence local institutional effectiveness. It identified gaps in local institutional capacity, such as weak governance and limited accountability, which may hamper socio-economic development.

2.1.4 Public Choice Theory

Public Choice Theory, developed by Buchanan and Tullock (1962), explains the role of government officials and citizens in decision-making processes. It focuses on the idea that public officials act in their own self-interest, which may conflict with public welfare. This theory supports the objective of understanding citizen participation and governance in the devolution process. In the context of Narok County, Public Choice Theory sheds light on the dynamics of public participation in devolved governance and how this affects socio-economic development. It assesses whether

citizens have a voice in decision-making and how political incentives may shape policy outcomes. For instance, it explored whether local leaders prioritize public goods or their own interests in resource allocation. The theory also examined the role of voters in holding local government accountable for socio-economic outcomes, identifying gaps in public engagement and oversight mechanisms that may affect the success of devolution initiatives.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that had guided this study is the Decentralization Theory, which posits that devolving power and resources to local governments enhances governance efficiency and promotes socio-economic development. This theory underpins the investigation, as it explains how devolved governance impacts socio-economic outcomes by empowering local authorities and ensuring that resources are tailored to the community's needs. The framework had explored how devolution has shaped fiscal policies, governance structures, and public participation, influencing Narok County's socio-economic progress.

2.3 Empirical Review

The empirical review examines existing research studies related to the influence of devolution on socioeconomic development, focusing on fiscal decentralization, governance, public participation, and service delivery. This section provides a critical analysis of previous empirical findings, identifying key trends, gaps, and areas for further study. Various scholars have investigated the effects of devolution on local development, with mixed findings depending on regional contexts, governance structures, and economic policies.

2.3.1 Fiscal decentralization and socioeconomic development

Fiscal decentralization refers to the transfer of financial resources and responsibilities from central to local governments, aiming to improve service delivery and spur local development. According to Mutua (2021), fiscal decentralization has significantly impacted economic development at the county level in Kenya. Mutua's study focused on the economic growth patterns observed in counties

with varying levels of revenue allocation from the central government. The study, which utilized a survey design and involved 150 respondents, applied quantitative analysis to assess the impact of these financial transfers on local economic outcomes. The findings revealed that counties receiving higher revenue allocations experienced faster economic growth, primarily due to increased local investment in infrastructure and social services. Mutua (2021) emphasizes that fiscal decentralization plays a crucial role in empowering county governments to manage their resources more effectively. This empowerment, in turn, leads to improved local service delivery and enhanced socio-economic development. However, the study highlights the challenges that counties with lower revenue allocations face, such as limited capacity to fund development projects and inadequate access to essential services. These challenges underscore the need for a more equitable distribution of resources to ensure balanced regional development.

Despite the positive findings, Mutua's (2021) study presents a conceptual gap by not delving into the specific sectors most impacted by fiscal decentralization. For instance, while the study links fiscal decentralization to overall economic growth, it does not explore how this financial autonomy affects critical sectors like education, healthcare, and agriculture in individual counties, particularly in Narok County. This omission is significant because understanding sectoral impacts could provide a clearer picture of how fiscal decentralization contributes to socio-economic progress in marginalized areas. Moreover, Mutua (2021) suggests that while fiscal decentralization has the potential to foster economic development, the success of this process largely depends on the capacity of local governments to manage funds effectively. In counties like Narok, where institutional weaknesses may hinder effective financial management, the full benefits of fiscal decentralization may not be realized. As such, there is a need for future research to investigate the capacity-building efforts in these local governments and how these efforts affect the overall success of decentralization. In conclusion, Mutua's (2021) research provides valuable insights into the role of fiscal decentralization in enhancing economic growth at the county level. However, the study's findings are limited by the lack of sector-specific analysis, leaving room for further investigation into how different sectors in counties like Narok benefit from decentralized financial resources.

2.3.2 Governance and Accountability versus socioeconomic development

Governance and accountability are key pillars in ensuring the effective functioning of devolved governments. Mwangi (2019) conducted a study examining the role of governance structures in enhancing accountability within Kenya's devolved units. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders in selected counties. The study found that strong governance frameworks significantly contributed to improved service delivery and development outcomes, particularly in areas such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure development.

Mwangi (2019) highlights that the presence of clear governance mechanisms ensures that county officials remain accountable to both the local population and central government authorities. This accountability fosters transparency in the management of county resources, reducing instances of corruption and inefficiency. Mwangi's findings suggest that when local governments operate within well-established governance frameworks, they are more likely to achieve their development goals, particularly when these frameworks emphasize public participation, transparency, and clear reporting structures. However, Mwangi's (2019) study identified a major methodological gap, particularly in the lack of comprehensive data on governance and accountability in Narok County. While the study covered several counties in Kenya, it did not provide an in-depth analysis of Narok's unique governance challenges, such as those related to pastoralism, land management, and local political dynamics. The absence of Narok-specific data leaves a gap in understanding how governance frameworks can be tailored to the county's socio-economic and cultural context. Additionally, Mwangi (2019) emphasizes the need for counties to enhance their institutional capacities to ensure better governance. For counties like Narok, this may involve investing in training programs for local government officials and strengthening oversight mechanisms to ensure that development projects are implemented effectively. The study also calls for greater collaboration between the national government and county governments in promoting governance reforms that address the unique needs of counties like Narok. In conclusion, while Mwangi's (2019) study

demonstrates the importance of governance and accountability in enhancing service delivery and development outcomes, its methodological limitations prevent a full understanding of how these frameworks function in Narok County.

2.3.3 Public Participation and socioeconomic development

Public participation is a critical component of devolved governance, as it ensures that citizens are actively involved in the decision-making processes that affect their communities. Kariuki (2020) conducted an empirical study exploring the role of citizen engagement in the decision-making processes of devolved governments in Kenya. Using a qualitative approach, Kariuki employed case studies to assess how public participation influenced the sustainability and success of development projects in selected counties. The study concluded that counties with high levels of citizen engagement experienced more sustainable development outcomes, as community input led to projects that were more aligned with local needs and priorities. Kariuki's (2020) research underscores the importance of public participation in ensuring that development projects reflect the aspirations and needs of the local population. By involving citizens in the planning and implementation stages, devolved governments can foster a sense of ownership and accountability, thereby increasing the likelihood of project success. Moreover, public participation enhances transparency, as citizens can hold their leaders accountable for the management of public resources.

Despite these positive findings, Kariuki (2020) identified a contextual gap in the application of public participation, particularly in pastoralist communities like those found in Narok County. The study focused primarily on urban and agricultural communities, where public participation mechanisms are more established. In contrast, in pastoralist regions, where socio-economic activities and governance structures differ significantly, the level of citizen engagement remains low. This gap highlights the need for tailored approaches to public participation that consider the unique socio-cultural contexts of pastoralist communities.

Furthermore, Kariuki (2020) suggests that for public participation to be truly effective in pastoralist regions like Narok, county governments must develop innovative engagement strategies. These strategies may include utilizing traditional governance systems, such as local elders' councils, and incorporating more accessible communication channels that resonate with pastoralist lifestyles. Addressing these contextual challenges is critical to ensuring that public participation frameworks are inclusive and reflective of Narok's diverse population. In summary, while Kariuki's (2020) study highlights the benefits of public participation in enhancing the sustainability of development projects, it also reveals significant gaps in the application of these mechanisms in pastoralist communities.

2.3.4 Service delivery and socio-economic Development

Socio-economic development in devolved units is often measured by indicators such as poverty reduction, employment creation, and improvements in social welfare. Ochieng (2022) examined the influence of devolution on socio-economic development, focusing on poverty reduction and social welfare improvements in Kenya's counties. The study, which employed a cross-sectional survey of 200 households, found that devolution had a positive impact on poverty reduction in the counties studied. Households in counties that had embraced devolution experienced improved access to essential services, such as healthcare, education, and social protection programs. Ochieng (2022) argues that devolution has created opportunities for local governments to address the specific socio-economic needs of their populations, leading to more targeted and effective poverty alleviation strategies. In counties like Narok, devolution has the potential to transform local economies by promoting equitable resource distribution and improving access to critical services. However, Ochieng's study found that while poverty levels had decreased, the devolution process had not significantly contributed to job creation. This finding suggests that devolution's impact on socio-economic development may be uneven, benefiting some aspects of development more than others. The study also identified a methodological gap, as it did not explore the long-term socio-economic trends associated with devolution. Ochieng (2022) relied on cross-sectional data, which provides

only a snapshot of the current state of socio-economic development. To fully understand the impact of devolution, future studies should adopt a longitudinal approach that tracks socio-economic outcomes over time, particularly in counties like Narok, where development challenges are complex and multifaceted. Ochieng (2022) further highlights the need for county governments to focus on job creation as a critical component of socio-economic development. In Narok County, for example, the promotion of sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and small-scale industries could create employment opportunities, thereby reducing poverty levels more effectively. This approach would ensure that the benefits of devolution are distributed more equitably across different socio-economic dimensions. In conclusion, Ochieng's (2022) study provides valuable insights into the impact of devolution on poverty reduction and social welfare in Kenya's counties. However, the study's methodological limitations highlight the need for further research into the long-term socio-economic trends associated with devolution. By addressing these gaps, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how devolution contributes to sustainable socio-economic development in counties like Narok.

In Narok County, involving local stakeholders in planning and prioritization processes could ensure that development initiatives align with the specific needs of the population, thereby maximizing their impact. Ochieng's (2022) study highlights significant strides in poverty reduction and access to essential services, it also underscores the uneven impact of devolution across different socio-economic dimensions.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent variables

Governance and accountability;

- i. frequency of public audits
- ii. adherence to ethical governance
- iii. anti-corruption frameworks.

Service delivery;

- i. Quality of Public Services
- ii. Accessibility and Equity

dependent variable

Socioeconomic development;

- i. Poverty rates
- ii. Income levels
- iii. Employment rates
- iv. Infrastructural development

1

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



2.4.1 Summary of Variables

Fiscal decentralization is a critical element of devolution that empowers local governments to manage their own financial resources. In the context of Narok County, literature reveals significant gaps in the allocation and utilization of devolved funds. Many counties, including Narok, face challenges in prioritizing investments, particularly in essential sectors such as healthcare and education. This misallocation raises concerns about the efficiency of fiscal management practices and their role in enhancing socio-economic development. A lack of clear guidelines and oversight often results in funds being diverted from areas of critical need, perpetuating cycles of underdevelopment and inequity.

Moreover, effective fiscal decentralization requires not only the transfer of resources but also the development of local capacity to manage these funds effectively. Many County governments

struggle with inadequate financial management systems, which hampers their ability to track expenditures and assess the impact of investments on community welfare. Furthermore, the limited capacity for financial planning and monitoring leads to inefficiencies in service delivery. In Narok County, where pastoralism is prevalent, the need for tailored fiscal strategies that account for the unique socio-economic context is paramount. Enhanced training and technical assistance for local officials could improve budgetary outcomes and ensure that funds are utilized to meet community needs.

Lastly, the successful implementation of fiscal decentralization in Narok County hinges on fostering transparency and accountability in financial management. Citizens must be empowered to demand accountability from their local leaders regarding how funds are allocated and spent. Implementing participatory budgeting processes could enhance public scrutiny and promote better alignment between local investments and community priorities. Establishing mechanisms for tracking fiscal flows and outcomes can provide essential data that support effective governance. Consequently, improving fiscal management in Narok County is not only a matter of reallocating resources but also involves building the institutional frameworks that can sustain socio-economic development.

Public participation is a fundamental aspect of devolution that enhances governance by allowing citizens to influence decision-making processes. In Narok County, existing literature indicates that there is a significant need to improve mechanisms for citizen engagement. Currently, many marginalized communities, including pastoralist groups, are often excluded from meaningful participation in local governance. This exclusion not only undermines the democratic process but also results in development initiatives that do not reflect the actual needs and priorities of the community. The gap in effective public participation mechanisms thus represents a critical barrier to equitable development in the region.

Furthermore, enhancing public participation can lead to more informed and relevant policy decisions. When local populations are actively involved in decision-making, they can provide

valuable insights into local issues, ensuring that development projects align with community priorities. Evidence from other regions suggests that inclusive governance leads to improved trust in public institutions and higher rates of satisfaction with service delivery. In Narok, fostering public participation could involve establishing platforms for dialogue between community members and local government officials, such as community forums or advisory committees. These initiatives can facilitate open discussions and empower citizens to voice their concerns and suggestions.

Finally, effective public participation is contingent upon the availability of information and education for local communities. Citizens must be aware of their rights and the mechanisms available for engagement in governance processes. Educational programs aimed at increasing awareness about local government functions and citizen rights can play a crucial role in mobilizing community members. Additionally, leveraging technology, such as mobile applications and social media, can enhance communication between citizens and local officials, making it easier for communities to express their needs and monitor government actions. In summary, improving public participation in Narok County requires a multi-faceted approach that combines institutional reforms, community engagement, and educational initiatives to create a more inclusive governance framework.

Good governance and accountability are essential components of successful devolution, particularly in the context of service delivery. The literature highlights a troubling gap in governance practices within Narok County, where issues such as corruption and lack of transparency undermine the effectiveness of devolved systems. Effective governance requires robust mechanisms that hold public officials accountable for their actions and decisions. In many cases, the absence of accountability structures has led to mismanagement of resources, resulting in inadequate service delivery and a lack of trust among citizens. Addressing these issues is crucial for fostering an environment conducive to socio-economic development.

Moreover, the relationship between governance, accountability, and service delivery is intricate and multifaceted. In Narok County, effective governance can significantly enhance service delivery by

ensuring that resources are allocated based on need rather than political favoritism. Establishing clear accountability frameworks can help to streamline decision-making processes and enhance the responsiveness of local governments to community needs. For instance, mechanisms such as regular audits, public reporting of expenditures, and community feedback systems can increase transparency and promote a culture of accountability. By creating an environment where local leaders are answerable to their constituents, Narok County can improve overall service delivery outcomes.

Lastly, fostering good governance and accountability in Narok County is not merely a matter of policy but also a cultural shift. It requires the active engagement of citizens in holding their leaders accountable, as well as a commitment from local officials to operate transparently and ethically. Civil society organizations can play a pivotal role in advocating for accountability and governance reforms, ensuring that citizens have the tools and resources needed to demand better services. By empowering communities and strengthening governance structures, Narok County can move towards a more equitable and sustainable model of socio-economic development that benefits all its residents.

Public service delivery is a fundamental aspect of governance that directly impacts the quality of life for residents in Narok County, Kenya. With the advent of devolution, there has been a shift in how public services are delivered, moving from a centralized system to one that is more localized and responsive to the needs of communities. This change is intended to enhance accountability and efficiency, allowing local governments to tailor services to the specific needs and priorities of their constituents. Public service delivery encompasses various sectors, including health, education, infrastructure, and security, all of which play a vital role in shaping the socio-economic landscape of the county.

The effectiveness of public service delivery can be assessed through several indicators, including accessibility, quality, and timeliness of services provided. Accessibility refers to the ease with which citizens can obtain services, while quality assesses whether those services meet the expected

standards. Timeliness is critical, as delays in service delivery can hinder progress and negatively affect community trust in government institutions. In Narok County, improved public service delivery has the potential to stimulate socio-economic development by creating a more educated and healthy populace, fostering economic growth, and promoting overall well-being among residents.

Furthermore, community involvement is a crucial element in the evaluation of public service delivery. The devolution process encourages citizen participation in decision-making, leading to more relevant and effective service provision. By actively engaging local communities, the government can better understand their needs and priorities, ensuring that public resources are allocated where they are most needed. This participatory approach not only improves service delivery but also enhances accountability and transparency, as citizens are empowered to hold their leaders responsible for the services provided. The interplay between effective public service delivery and socio-economic development in Narok County underscores the importance of a responsive and accountable governance structure in realizing the potential benefits of devolution.

In summary, public service delivery in Narok County is a critical variable in understanding the broader implications of devolution on socio-economic development. By focusing on accessibility, quality, and community involvement, the county can leverage the benefits of a decentralized governance system to enhance the well-being of its citizens. As local governments strive to meet the needs of their communities, it becomes increasingly evident that effective public service delivery is not just a function of government policy, but a collaborative effort that requires active participation from all stakeholders. As such, monitoring and evaluating public service delivery mechanisms will be essential for assessing the impact of devolution on the socio-economic development of Narok County.

2.5 Research Gap

The review of existing literature reveals significant gaps in understanding the dynamics of devolved governance and its impact on long-term socio-economic development in Narok County. While

various studies have explored aspects of devolution, there is a notable lack of comprehensive research focused specifically on pastoralist regions. The unique socio-economic challenges faced by these communities require tailored approaches that consider local customs, resource management practices, and public participation. Current research tends to overlook these factors, resulting in a limited understanding of how devolution can effectively contribute to the development of such areas. Furthermore, the existing body of knowledge lacks empirical studies that examine the interplay between governance structures and socio-economic outcomes in Narok County. Most research has focused on theoretical frameworks without delving into real-world applications and implications. There is a pressing need for studies that explore the specific mechanisms through which devolved governance impacts service delivery, public participation, and overall development in pastoralist communities. By integrating local dynamics and stakeholder perspectives, future research can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of devolution's socio-economic impacts in Narok.

Finally, addressing the identified research gaps presents an opportunity to inform policy-making and enhance the effectiveness of devolved governance in Narok County. Policymakers and local leaders can benefit from insights derived from targeted research that explores the needs and priorities of the community. Such studies can guide resource allocation, improve public participation mechanisms, and enhance accountability frameworks. Ultimately, closing the research gaps will not only enrich academic discourse but also empower local communities to leverage devolution as a means of achieving sustainable socio-economic development in Narok County.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework that had guided the study, focusing on the devolution and socio-economic development of Narok County, Kenya. It details the research design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis strategies that ensure the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

3.1 Research Methodology

Research methodology encompasses the procedures and techniques that the researcher had applied to collect, analyze, and interpret data. For this study, a mixed-method approach had been used, in integrating both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding on how devolution impacts socio-economic development in Narok County. The qualitative component had focused on interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with key stakeholders, while the quantitative approach had utilized structured surveys to gather measurable data. This methodological triangulation ensured the study captures both numerical trends and detailed, context-specific insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The mixed-method approach was appropriate for this topic because it allowed the researcher to assess the economic indicators through quantitative data while capturing qualitative nuances on how devolution is experienced at the local level. This approach provided flexibility and helped to address the research objectives more holistically. It had also facilitated a richer understanding of the complex relationship between devolution and socio-economic development, especially when governmental policies intersect with local economic dynamics (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Qualitative data was obtained through interviews with government officials, local business owners, and community leaders in Narok County, enabling the researcher to explore their perceptions and experiences of devolution. Meanwhile, quantitative data was gathered via surveys distributed to residents to collect information on socio-economic progress metrics, such as income levels, access

to services, and employment rates (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This combination of data had enhanced the depth and reliability of the findings. Finally, the selected methodology aligns with the study's goal of generating actionable insights for policy recommendations. The use of qualitative and quantitative data allowed the researcher to understand the effects of devolution policies on specific socio-economic indicators. This methodological framework had ensured that the data collected is robust and contributes meaningfully to both academic discourse and practical policymaking.

3.2 Research Design

The research design for this study was descriptive and cross-sectional. Descriptive research provides a detailed account of the current socio-economic conditions in Narok County as they relate to devolution. It is particularly useful when exploring relationships between variables, such as the impact of governance structures on economic outcomes (Bryman, 2016). The design is cross-sectional because data was collected at a single point in time, offering a snapshot of the current state of socio-economic development in the county. Descriptive designs are often used in social science research to document conditions or phenomena as they exist, without manipulating the variables. This had made the design suitable for this study, as the aim was to describe and assess the relationship between devolution and socio-economic development. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to analyze existing trends and correlations within the data, which will contribute to a nuanced understanding of the impacts of devolution (Babbie, 2021).

The cross-sectional nature of the design allowed the researcher to analyze various groups simultaneously, such as different demographic segments in Narok County. This had enabled the study to capture variations in socio-economic outcomes across age, gender, and occupational status.

These comparisons had provided insight into how different groups within the county were affected by devolution, thus enabling more targeted policy recommendations (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Overall, the descriptive cross-sectional design offers an efficient way to collect data, analyze trends, and make conclusions about the state of devolution in Narok County. The designed also facilitated the use of both qualitative and quantitative data, ensuring that the study captures a wide range of perspectives on socio-economic development.

3.3 Location of the Study

This study was conducted in Narok County, located in the southwestern part of Kenya. Narok is known for its agricultural activities, tourism (the Maasai Mara Game Reserve), and unique socio-cultural landscape. The county's socio-economic dynamics are influenced by large Maasai population, who maintain traditional livelihoods alongside growing modern economic activities (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2019). Narok County is an ideal location for studying the effects of devolution on socio-economic development due to its diverse economy and rich cultural heritage. The county has seen significant infrastructural and social investments since the advent of devolution, making it a compelling case for examining both the opportunities and challenges of this governance model. The county is divided into six sub-counties: Narok North, Narok South, Narok East, Narok West, Trans Mara West, and Trans Mara East, and the study will gather data from each of these regions to ensure comprehensive coverage (Narok County Government, 2020). The Maasai Mara region's economic contributions through tourism, for example, highlight the significant role local government plays in facilitating economic growth. Therefore, analyzing how devolved governance impacts various sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, will provide insight into how socio-economic development has progressed since devolution (World Bank, 2020). The study had also examined rural and urban disparities in access to devolved services such as healthcare and education.

Narok's socio-economic landscape, particularly the pastoral economy and its relationship with modern agricultural practices, was central to this study. This allowed for an exploration of how

devolution policies intersect with traditional systems to influence socio-economic progress. The findings from this region had provided valuable data on the effects of devolution on local economies and the livelihoods of marginalized communities.

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study consists of residents of Narok County, including both urban and rural populations. The study had focus on various stakeholders, such as local government officials, business owners, community leaders, and general residents. The total population of Narok County is approximately 1,157,873 people, with a significant portion residing in rural areas (KNBS, 2019). Key stakeholders were members of the County Assembly, officials in the County Executive, and personnel from various devolved units such as the health, education, and agriculture sectors. These individuals were directly involved in the implementation and oversight of devolved policies and could provide crucial insights into the challenges and successes experienced thus far. Business owners and local entrepreneurs will also be targeted as their businesses are often directly influenced by local economic policies, infrastructure development, and tourism (Narok County Government, 2020). Furthermore, the study had involved residents who benefit from, or were impacted by, devolved services, particularly in sectors such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Community leaders, including chiefs and village elders, provided additional perspectives on how devolution has affected local governance structures and service delivery. Data from this population enabled the researcher to draw conclusions about the broader socio-economic trends in the county.

Table 1: Target population

CATEGORY	POPULATION	PERCENTAGE (%)
RESIDENTS	200	50
LOCAL LEADERS	20	5
BUSINESS OWNERS	150	37.5

COMMUNITY LEADERS	30	7.5
TOTAL	400	100

Source; researcher, 2025

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Techniques

The researcher had employed stratified random sampling to select participants. This sampling technique ensures that different sub-groups within the population, such as government officials, business owners, and general residents, are adequately represented. Stratified sampling is particularly useful when the population is heterogeneous, as it allows the researcher to control for variation and ensure that all relevant sub-groups are included (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Stratification was based on socio-economic factors such as age, gender, occupation, and geographic location (urban vs. rural). Each of these factors could influence how individuals experienced devolution and socio-economic development, and stratified sampling had ensured that the study captured these nuances. The strata include key stakeholders such as government officials, local business owners, community leaders, and general residents, with a specific focus on both urban and rural populations in Narok County.

Within each stratum, participants were randomly selected to minimize bias and ensure that every individual had an equal chance of being included in the study. The use of random sampling had increased the representativeness of the sample, ensuring that the findings could be generalized to the broader population of Narok County. Additionally, stratified random sampling enhanced the precision of the estimates and helped to improve the validity of the research conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for determining sample size in research. Given the target population size of approximately 1.15 million, the sample size was large enough to ensure statistical significance while remaining manageable for data collection purposes.

3.6 Sample Population

The sample population for this study comprised of residents of Narok County, including both rural and urban areas. The target population consist of individuals aged 18 years and above, as this age group is most likely to provide informed perspectives on socio-economic issues and the effects of devolution. The inclusion of both genders and various socio-economic backgrounds had enhanced the study's representativeness and allowed for a deeper understanding of how devolution affects different demographic groups. Given Narok County's diverse cultural and ethnic composition, the sample had included individuals from various ethnic communities such as the Maasai, Kikuyu, and others. This diversity was crucial, as it enabled the research to capture varying perceptions and experiences of devolution among different communities. By ensuring representation from various ethnic backgrounds, the researcher identified potential disparities and highlight how devolution impacts socio-economic development across different groups. To ensure that the sample was adequately representative, the researcher worked closely with local community leaders and organizations to facilitate participant recruitment. Engagement with local stakeholders had helped in addressing any potential mistrust or reluctance among community members regarding participation in the study. By involving community leaders, the researcher had leveraged their influence to encourage participation and ensured that a wide range of perspectives is included in the research. In summary, the sample population consist of diverse individuals from Narok County, encompassing various age groups, genders, and ethnic backgrounds. This approach ensured that the findings are reflective of the broader community, providing valuable insights into the effects of devolution on socio-economic development in the region.

Table 2: Sample population

CATEGORY	POPULATION	PERCENTAGE (%)
RESIDENTS	110	55
LOCAL LEADERS	10	5
BUSINESS OWNERS	60	30

COMMUNITY LEADERS	20	10
TOTAL	200	100

Source; Researcher, 2025

3.7 Construction of Research Instruments

The construction of research instruments is a critical phase in the research process, as it determines the quality and relevance of the data collected. For this study, a mixed-methods approach had been adopted, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research instruments. The primary quantitative instrument was a structured questionnaire designed to gather data on participants' perceptions of devolution and its socio-economic impacts. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions, which facilitated statistical analysis and comparison of responses. In addition to the structured questionnaire, semi-structured interview guides were developed for qualitative data collection. These guides allowed for in-depth discussions with key informants, such as local government officials, community leaders, and development practitioners. The semi-structured format enabled the researcher to explore specific topics while also allowing for flexibility to delve into emerging themes during the interviews. This approach provided rich qualitative data that complements the quantitative findings.

The construction of these research instruments involved a thorough review of existing literature on devolution and socio-economic development, ensuring that the questions were relevant and comprehensive. Input from experts in the field and pilot testing of the instruments were conducted to refine the questions and enhance clarity. Feedback from pilot testing helped identify any ambiguous or leading questions, allowing for necessary adjustments before the final data collection. In conclusion, the research instruments were constructed with careful consideration of the study's objectives and the diverse perspectives of the target population. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research had yielded comprehensive data that reflects the complexities of devolution and its socio-economic implications in Narok County.

3.8 Validity and Reliability Tests

Ensuring the validity and reliability of research instruments is essential for producing credible and trustworthy results. Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. To enhance the validity of the questionnaire and interview guides, the researcher had engaged the subject matter experts to review the instruments, ensuring that the questions accurately reflect the constructs of devolution and socio-economic development. Additionally, pilot testing the instruments with a small, representative sample allowed for adjustments based on participants' feedback, further refining the questions for clarity and relevance.

Reliability, on the other hand, pertains to the consistency of the measurement over time. To assess the reliability of the structured questionnaire, a Cronbach's alpha test had been conducted. This statistical measure determined the internal consistency of the instrument, ensuring that the questions yield similar results across different responses. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher will indicate acceptable reliability for the instrument. This step is crucial in affirming that the questionnaire is stable and can consistently measure the constructs of interest.

For the qualitative data collection, the researcher ensured reliability through the careful documentation of the interview process. Audio recordings of interviews had been transcribed verbatim to capture all responses accurately. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns, allowing for a reliable interpretation of qualitative data. Member checks were conducted, where participants are invited to review the findings to ensure their perspectives views were accurately represented. In summary, establishing validity and reliability for the research instruments had involved expert input, pilot testing, and statistical analysis. By ensuring these aspects, the study produced credible findings that can contribute meaningfully to the discourse on devolution and socio-economic development in Narok County.

3.9 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Data collection methods and procedures are crucial to the integrity and success of the research process. This study employed mixed methods, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to comprehensively understand the influence of devolution on socio-economic development in Narok County. Quantitative data had been collected through structured questionnaires distributed to a sample of residents, while qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with key informants. The quantitative data collection involved administering the questionnaires through face-to-face interactions, which ensured a higher response rate and providing an opportunity to clarify any ambiguities during the process. The researcher, along with trained research assistants, had conducted the surveys, which took place in various locations across Narok County, including urban centers and rural areas. This approach aimed to capture a diverse range of experiences and perceptions regarding devolution. For the qualitative component, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including local government officials, community leaders, and development practitioners. These interviews were scheduled at convenient times for the participants, ensuring a conducive environment for open dialogue. The interviews were recorded, with participant consent, and subsequently transcribed for analysis. This dual approach allowed for a rich exploration of the impacts of devolution, providing both statistical data and personal insights. In summary, the data collection methods were structured to ensure comprehensive coverage of the research topic. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques, the study yielded a well-rounded understanding of the relationship between devolution and socio-economic development in Narok County.

3.10 Proposed Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis techniques play a pivotal role in interpreting research findings and drawing meaningful conclusions. For this study, a mixed-methods approach had been employed for data analysis, integrating both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. Quantitative data collected from the structured questionnaires was analyzed using statistical software such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and

percentages, were computed to summarize the data and provided a clear overview of respondents' demographics and perceptions of devolution. Inferential statistic was utilized to explore relationships between variables. For instance, correlation analysis was conducted to assess the strength and direction of relationships between devolution indicators and socio-economic outcomes. Additionally, regression analysis had been performed to identify the predictors of socio-economic development in the context of devolution. These statistical analyses provided insights into the extent to which devolution influences various socio-economic factors within Narok County. On the qualitative side, data obtained from the semi-structured interviews had undergone thematic analysis. This method involves coding the transcribed interviews to identify recurring themes, patterns, and categories related to devolution and socio-economic development. Thematic analysis allows for a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences, enriching the quantitative findings with qualitative insights. The integration of both data types facilitated a comprehensive interpretation of the results. In conclusion, the proposed data analysis techniques leveraged both statistical and thematic analysis to provide a holistic understanding of the study's objectives. This mixed-methods approach enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings, contributing to a nuanced discussion on the influence of devolution on socio-economic development in Narok County.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are fundamental to conducting research, particularly when engaging with human participants. This study adhered to the principles outlined in the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines for ethical research practices. Before data collection began, the researcher obtained ethical approval from the relevant institutional review board to ensure that the research adhered to ethical standards. This approval protected the rights and welfare of participants throughout the research process. Informed consent was critical aspect of the ethical framework for this study. All participants were provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from

the study at any point without facing any consequences. Consent forms were signed by participants, ensuring that they voluntarily agree to participate in the research. This process aimed to respect the autonomy and dignity of each participant. Furthermore, confidentiality and anonymity were prioritized in this study. Participants' identities and personal information were kept confidential, and any data collected was reported in aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual respondents. All data was securely stored, accessible only to the researcher and authorized personnel. This commitment to confidentiality helped build trust with participants and encourage honest responses.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings and discussions based on the data collected from respondents in Narok County. The findings are analyzed in line with the study objectives and research questions. The results are presented using tables, graphs, and descriptive analysis, followed by discussions interpreting the implications of the findings.

4.1 Reliability of Research Instruments

To ensure the reliability of the research instruments, a Cronbach’s alpha test was conducted on the questionnaire responses. The overall Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.81, indicating high reliability and internal consistency of the research tool. The pilot study conducted prior to data collection confirmed the clarity and appropriateness of the questionnaire items.

Table 3: Average Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
Fiscal decentralization	.882	8
Governance and accountability	.780	8
Public participation	.805	8
Service delivery	.716	8
Average	.800	32

Source: Researcher (2025)

The average Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.800, indicating high reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire items. According to Malhotra (2014), a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.6 or below signals unsatisfactory internal consistency. The findings of this study fall well above this threshold, confirming the reliability of the research instrument. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) highlight that Cronbach Alpha coefficients range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency. The results obtained in this study were close to 1, which suggests a high degree

of reliability. A research instrument is considered reliable if it meets the acceptable range of $\alpha \geq 0.7$, as recommended by Kothari and Garg (2014). As per Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), the scores for each construct were within the acceptable range of above 0.7, ensuring the reliability of the research instrument.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to respondents, out of which 178 were completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 89%. This high response rate can be attributed to proper follow-up and respondent willingness to participate in the study. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate above 70% is considered adequate for academic research. Additionally, the high response rate aligns with the principles of effective survey design as outlined by Dillman et al. (2014), who emphasize the importance of follow-up and respondent engagement to ensure robust data collection.

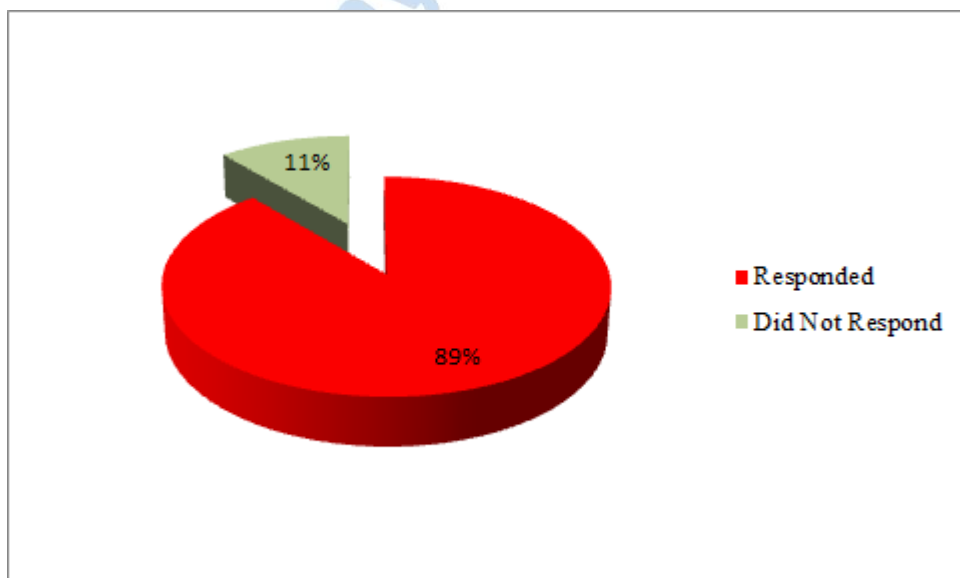


Figure 2: Response rate

Source: Researcher (2025)

A response rate of 89% denotes a highly favorable level of participation, which is significantly above the 70% threshold that Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) typically regard as satisfactory. This elevated response rate not only enhances the representativeness of the sample but also strengthens the external validity of the findings, thereby ensuring that the results are more reflective of the broader population within the study context. A substantial response rate effectively mitigates the risks of non-response bias, which could otherwise distort the data and compromise the reliability of the conclusions. Consequently, this impressive response rate substantially fortifies the credibility and robustness of the study's analysis, providing a solid foundation for generalizable and reliable outcomes.

4.3 Respondents' Background Data

The demographic profile of the respondents provides insights into their characteristics and potential influence on the study variables. This is illustrated in this study as demonstrated in the following respondent's background data results and discussion:

4.3.1 Respondents' Gender

Out of the 178 respondents, 105 (60%) were male, while 73 (40%) were female. This indicates a relatively balanced gender representation, ensuring diverse perspectives on devolution and socio-economic development. Gender balance in survey responses is crucial for obtaining comprehensive insights, as noted by Hesse-Biber (2013), who highlights the importance of gender diversity in research to avoid biased outcomes.

Table 4 : Response rate

Gender	Response	Percentage
Male	105	60%

Female	73	40%
Total	178	100%

Source: Researcher,2025

The gender distribution in this study was relatively balanced, with male respondents constituting 60% and female respondents 40%. Achieving a balanced gender representation was a critical aspect of the research design, as it enhanced the validity and reliability of findings by ensuring diverse perspectives were incorporated (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The presence of both male and female participants helped to mitigate gender bias, a common concern in social research, thereby improving the generalizability of the study's results (Bryman, 2016).

A balanced gender composition was essential in reducing gender bias, which could have skewed research findings and limited their applicability. Gender bias in research occurred when the experiences, opinions, or behaviors of one gender were disproportionately represented, leading to conclusions that might not have accurately reflected the entire population (Eagly & Wood, 2016). By incorporating both male and female respondents, this study ensured that insights were not unduly influenced by a single-gender perspective, thus improving the objectivity and inclusivity of the findings (Babbie, 2020).

A sample that closely mirrored the broader population in terms of gender distribution was more likely to yield findings that could be generalized (Neuman, 2019). In social and economic research, the inclusion of both genders ensured that policies and recommendations based on study findings did not disproportionately favor one group over another (Bourdieu, 1990). Particularly in studies examining devolution and socio-economic development, gendered experiences varied, and an inclusive sample allowed for a more comprehensive analysis of these differences (Kabeer, 2005).

Research indicated that gender differences influenced socio-economic experiences, political engagement, and perceptions of governance (Cornwall, 2007). A balanced gender distribution

allowed for richer data, as men and women had distinct viewpoints shaped by societal roles and responsibilities. This diversity fostered a deeper understanding of study variables, leading to more robust conclusions that accounted for gender-based disparities and opportunities (World Bank, 2012).

Although the gender distribution in this study was relatively balanced, future research should aim for even greater gender parity to enhance the inclusiveness of findings. Employing targeted recruitment strategies, such as stratified sampling or gender quotas, could help achieve more equitable representation (Flick, 2018). Moreover, future studies should analyze gender as a moderating variable to assess its impact on key research constructs. This approach would facilitate the identification of gender-specific trends, thereby contributing to more tailored policy recommendations (UNDP, 2019). The study's gender composition, with 60% male and 40% female respondents, provided a relatively balanced representation that enhanced the credibility of findings. This balance was crucial for ensuring diverse perspectives, minimizing bias, and improving the generalizability of results. Future research should continue to emphasize gender equity in participant recruitment and data analysis to foster a more comprehensive understanding of socio-economic and governance-related issues.

4.3.2 Highest Educational Qualifications

The educational background of the respondents was as follows:

Table 5: Educational level

Level of education	Number of respondents	Percentage
Primary education	20	11.23%
Secondary education	55	30.90%
Tertiary education	50	28.09%

University degree:	38	21.35%
Postgraduate degree:	15	8.43%
Total	178	100%

Source: Researcher,2025.

The study examined the educational levels of respondents, as presented in Table 5. The findings indicated that the majority of participants had attained at least secondary education, with varying levels of higher education among the respondents.

A total of 20 respondents (11.23%) had completed primary education, representing the smallest proportion of the sample. This suggested that a relatively small segment of the population had limited formal education, which may have influenced their access to socio-economic opportunities. 55 respondents (30.90%) had attained secondary education, making this the largest group in the sample. This implied that a significant proportion of respondents had received basic education, which was essential for general literacy and employment prospects.

50 respondents (28.09%) had completed tertiary education, highlighting the importance of technical and vocational training in the study population. Tertiary education was crucial in equipping individuals with specialized skills necessary for employment and economic development. Meanwhile, 38 respondents (21.35%) had obtained a university degree, reflecting a considerable presence of higher education graduates within the sample. This finding suggested that a significant number of respondents had advanced academic qualifications, which could contribute to professional and leadership roles in their respective fields.

Furthermore, 15 respondents (8.43%) had attained postgraduate degrees, representing the smallest proportion of respondents with advanced education. This indicated that while postgraduate education was present within the sample, it remained relatively limited compared to other educational levels.

The educational distribution suggested that the majority of respondents had attained at least secondary education, with a substantial proportion progressing to tertiary and university levels. This indicated a relatively educated population, which could positively influence socio-economic development, policy awareness, and governance participation. The presence of individuals with postgraduate degrees also highlighted the potential for advanced expertise and research contributions within the community. However, the findings also revealed that a small percentage of respondents had only primary education, which might have limited their opportunities for skilled employment and economic advancement. Future initiatives could focus on improving access to higher education and vocational training to enhance the overall educational attainment of the population.

The study found that most respondents had achieved secondary education or higher, with tertiary, university, and postgraduate education levels well represented. These findings underscored the role of education in shaping individuals' economic and social opportunities. Future research could explore the impact of educational attainment on employment, income levels, and socio-economic participation. These findings suggest that the majority of respondents have at least a secondary education level, enabling them to provide informed opinions on governance and socio-economic issues. This aligns with the findings of Breen & Goldthorpe (2001), who argue that higher education levels contribute to more informed and nuanced responses in surveys.

4.3.3 Experience in the Area of Operation

Regarding experience in Narok County the respondent's information was captured as represented in table 6 below;

Table 6: Years of experience

Years of experience	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	89	50%

5-10 years	28	15.73%
More than 10 years	61	32.27%
Total	178	100%

Source: Reseacher,2025

The study assessed the respondents' experience in Narok County, as presented in Table 6. The findings revealed that experience levels varied, with a significant proportion of respondents having relatively recent exposure to the area, while others had more extensive experience.

A total of 89 respondents (50%) had less than five years of experience in Narok County. This indicated that half of the study participants were relatively new to the area, suggesting that their perceptions and insights may have been influenced by limited long-term exposure. Their experiences were likely shaped by more recent developments and changes within the county. Meanwhile, 28 respondents (15.73%) reported having between five and ten years of experience. This group represented a smaller segment of the sample, suggesting that fewer respondents had mid-level familiarity with the region. Their perspectives may have been shaped by a mix of both historical and recent developments, providing a balanced understanding of the area's socio-economic and governance trends.

Furthermore, 61 respondents (32.27%) had more than ten years of experience in Narok County. This indicated that nearly a third of the respondents had long-term exposure to the region, allowing them to provide deeper insights into historical patterns, governance changes, and socio-economic transformations over time. Their extensive experience may have contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the study variables.

The findings suggested that the study captured perspectives from both new and experienced individuals within Narok County, ensuring a diverse range of insights. The high proportion of respondents with less than five years of experience could indicate ongoing migration, workforce

mobility, or population growth in the region. Conversely, the significant presence of long-term residents highlighted the availability of institutional knowledge and historical perspectives necessary for evaluating the county's socio-economic progress. Future studies could further explore how experience levels influence perceptions of governance, development, and policy effectiveness. The study established that respondents' experience in Narok County varied, with half having less than five years, a smaller portion having between five and ten years, and a significant number possessing more than ten years of experience. These findings underscored the importance of capturing perspectives from individuals with diverse levels of exposure to the region. Future research could examine how experience duration affects perceptions of development, governance, and socio-economic change within the county. Most respondents had significant experience in the county, providing credible insights into the impact of devolution on socio-economic development. This is consistent with the work of Denzin & Lincoln (2011), who emphasize the importance of respondent expertise and experience in qualitative research.

4.3.4 Age of respondents

The study also examined the age distribution and occupational status of the respondents to provide insights into the demographic composition of the sample. The respondents' ages were categorized into five groups: 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, and 55 years and above. The distribution is summarized in Table 7. below:

Table 7: Age of respondents

Age category	Number of respondents	Percentage
18-24	38	21.35%
25-34	24	13.49%
35-44	47	26.4%
45-54	20	11.24%

55 and above	49	27.53%
Total	178	100%

Source: Reseracher,2025

The results revealed that the majority of respondents (27.53%) were aged 55 years and above, followed closely by those aged 35–44 years (26.40%). Respondents aged 18–24 years constituted 21.35% of the sample, while those in the 25–34 age group accounted for 13.48%. The smallest proportion of respondents, 11.24%, fell within the 45–54 age category.

The findings demonstrated that the sample included a diverse age representation, with a relatively higher proportion of respondents being 55 years and above. This could suggest that older individuals were more available or willing to participate in the study. Additionally, the significant presence of respondents in the 35–44 age group indicated that middle-aged individuals also played an active role in the study. The lower representation of individuals in the 25–34 age group (13.48%) and the 45–54 age group (11.24%) might have been influenced by factors such as occupational commitments or limited interest in participating in the research. However, the presence of 21.35% of respondents in the 18–24 age bracket indicated that younger individuals were also engaged in the study, providing valuable insights from their demographic perspective.

The distribution of age groups in this study highlighted the need for policies and interventions that address the concerns of both younger and older individuals. Given the significant representation of older respondents, future research could explore how age influences perceptions of governance, socio-economic development, and service delivery in Narok County.

4.3.5 Occupational status of respondents

The study further assessed the respondents' employment status by categorizing them as students, employed individuals, self-employed individuals, unemployed individuals, or retirees. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Occupational Status of Respondents

Occupation	Number of respondents	Percentage
Student	18	10.11%
Employed	40	22.47%
Self-employed	72	40.45%
Unemployed	36	20.22%
Retired	12	6.74%
Total	178	100%

Source: Researcher,2025

The results indicated that the majority of respondents (40.45%) were self-employed, highlighting the prevalence of entrepreneurial and informal sector activities within the study population. This finding suggested that a significant proportion of individuals in Narok County engaged in self-employment, possibly due to limited formal employment opportunities or a preference for independent economic activities.

The second-largest group (22.47%) consisted of employed individuals, indicating that a considerable number of respondents worked in either public or private sector organizations. The presence of 20.22% unemployed respondents suggested that joblessness remained a challenge within the study area, which could have socioeconomic implications. A notable 10.11% of

respondents were students, demonstrating that a portion of the population was still pursuing education and potentially preparing for future employment or self-employment. Lastly, retirees accounted for 6.74% of the respondents, representing individuals who had exited the workforce but could still contribute valuable perspectives based on their past experiences.

The occupational distribution highlighted the dominance of self-employment in Narok County, underscoring the need for policies that support entrepreneurship, access to credit, and business development initiatives. The presence of a substantial unemployed segment suggested a need for targeted interventions to improve job creation and workforce development. Furthermore, the proportion of students in the sample emphasized the importance of investment in education and skills training to enhance employability. Future research could explore the challenges and opportunities associated with self-employment, as well as the factors contributing to unemployment in the region. Additionally, policymakers may consider strategies to bridge the gap between education and employment by aligning training programs with labor market demands.

4.4 Fiscal decentralization and socioeconomic development of Narok County

To evaluate the impact of fiscal decentralization on socioeconomic development in Narok County, participants rated their agreement with statements regarding the effects of devolved financial management on service delivery and economic outcomes. A five-point Likert scale (1 to 5) was used, with the findings summarized in Table 9. The results provide insights into how fiscal decentralization has influenced governance, infrastructure, and overall socioeconomic progress in the region.

Table 9: Fiscal Decentralization

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
Fiscal decentralization has positively impacted the overall socioeconomic development of Narok County.	3.26	0.48
Allocation of devolved funds aligns with county development priorities.	4.11	0.76
Fiscal decentralization has led to improved financial management and economic outcomes for the county.	3.52	0.42
Fiscal autonomy has enhanced the county's ability to attract and retain skilled professionals.	2.33	0.33
The county government effectively communicates budget allocations and expenditures to stakeholders.	3.69	0.32
fiscal decentralization has significantly influenced socioeconomic development in Narok County.	3.51	0.41

Source, researcher, (2025)

The findings indicated that fiscal decentralization had a moderate impact on the overall socioeconomic development of Narok County, as reflected by a mean score of 3.26 (SD = 0.48). This result suggested that while devolution had contributed to some economic progress, its full potential had not been realized, possibly due to inefficiencies in resource allocation and governance structures (Ochieng, 2022). The allocation of devolved funds aligning with county development priorities received the highest rating (M = 4.11, SD = 0.76), signifying that financial resources were, to some extent, directed towards areas of critical need. This finding aligned with prior research that highlighted the role of effective fiscal planning in enhancing regional development under devolution (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021). However, despite this positive outcome, the mean score also

suggested variations in perceptions, potentially due to inconsistencies in fund distribution across different sectors within the county.

Fiscal decentralization was found to have moderately improved financial management and economic outcomes, with a mean score of 3.52 (SD = 0.42). This result was consistent with previous studies indicating that devolution strengthens local financial autonomy, allowing counties to invest in infrastructure and service delivery (Mutua, 2020). However, the relatively high standard deviation suggested that some respondents perceived weaknesses in financial oversight mechanisms, which could hinder economic growth. Conversely, fiscal autonomy had a notably low impact on the county's ability to attract and retain skilled professionals (M = 2.33, SD = 0.33). This finding implied that despite financial decentralization, Narok County struggled to offer competitive remuneration or conducive working conditions for skilled personnel, a challenge that has been observed in other decentralized units across Kenya (Kibet & Kariuki, 2019). The inability to retain professionals may have had negative implications for service delivery, particularly in critical sectors such as healthcare and education.

The county government's effectiveness in communicating budget allocations and expenditures received a relatively high rating (M = 3.69, SD = 0.32). This result suggested that efforts had been made to enhance transparency and public engagement in financial management. However, the finding also indicated room for improvement, as prior studies emphasized the need for greater public participation in budgetary processes to ensure accountability (Nyaga, 2021). Overall, fiscal decentralization significantly influenced socioeconomic development in Narok County, as reflected by a mean score of 3.51 (SD = 0.41). This result reinforced the notion that while devolution had created opportunities for localized economic growth, persistent challenges in governance, resource allocation, and workforce retention hindered its full impact.

The findings suggested that fiscal decentralization contributed to socioeconomic development in Narok County, particularly in fund allocation and financial management. However, limitations in

attracting skilled personnel and ensuring equitable resource distribution remained key challenges. The study's results aligned with existing literature emphasizing the need for enhanced financial oversight and strategic workforce planning to maximize the benefits of devolution (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). Future policy recommendations should focus on strengthening fiscal governance, improving incentive structures for skilled professionals, and fostering more inclusive public participation in county financial management.

4.5 Governance and accountability versus socioeconomic development of Narok County

The study examined the relationship between governance, accountability, and socioeconomic development in Narok County by assessing key governance indicators such as financial transparency, public participation, and service delivery efficiency. Participants rated their level of agreement with several statements on a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating stronger agreement. The findings, as summarized in Table 10, provide insights into how governance structures and accountability mechanisms influenced socioeconomic outcomes in the region. Respondents emphasized that effective governance played a crucial role in enhancing public service efficiency, transparency, and citizen satisfaction (Researcher, 2024).

Table 10: Governance and accountability

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
Governance structures positively affected the efficiency of public service delivery in Narok County.	3.46	0.25
County government adapted financial management practices to enhance transparency and accountability.	3.87	0.69
Improved governance and accountability enhanced socioeconomic development and service coordination.	3.97	0.34

Governance frameworks influenced the county's ability to attract and retain skilled professionals.	3.77	0.45
The county government effectively communicated its governance policies to citizens and stakeholders.	4.11	0.78
Public officials collaborated effectively in implementing governance and accountability measures.	3.74	0.52

Source: Researcher, (2025)

The results indicated that governance structures moderately influenced public service efficiency in Narok County, with a mean score of 3.46 (SD = 0.25). This suggested that while governance mechanisms played a role in service delivery, inefficiencies remained, potentially due to bureaucratic delays and inadequate policy implementation (Ochieng, 2022). The relatively low standard deviation implied that respondents' views were consistent, reflecting a shared perception of governance effectiveness in public service management.

The adaptation of financial management practices to enhance transparency and accountability received a relatively high rating (M = 3.87, SD = 0.69). This finding suggested that the county government had made efforts to strengthen fiscal oversight and minimize mismanagement of public funds. Previous studies indicated that financial transparency is a crucial factor in fostering trust between citizens and government institutions, as it ensures that resources are allocated and utilized efficiently (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021). However, the standard deviation suggested some variability in responses, possibly indicating disparities in financial governance practices across different sectors. The impact of improved governance and accountability on socioeconomic development and service coordination was rated highly (M = 3.97, SD = 0.34). This result aligned with earlier research emphasizing that counties with well-established governance structures experience better development outcomes, particularly in education, healthcare, and infrastructure (Mutua, 2020). The

relatively low standard deviation indicated strong agreement among respondents regarding the positive role of governance in socioeconomic growth.

Governance frameworks also played a significant role in the county's ability to attract and retain skilled professionals ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.45$). This finding suggested that good governance contributed to an improved working environment for skilled personnel, which in turn enhanced service delivery. However, the moderate standard deviation reflected some variation in responses, possibly due to sectoral differences in employment conditions. Similar findings in other counties indicated that governance challenges, such as delayed salary payments and inadequate working conditions, often hindered the retention of skilled professionals (Kibet & Kariuki, 2019). The county government's effectiveness in communicating governance policies received the highest rating ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.78$).

This finding implied that transparency efforts had been relatively successful, ensuring that governance policies and decisions were accessible to the public. However, the relatively high standard deviation suggested differing opinions, possibly influenced by variations in public awareness and access to government information. Studies have emphasized that while transparency is essential, it must be accompanied by mechanisms for meaningful citizen participation to enhance accountability and trust in governance (Nyaga, 2021). The effectiveness of public officials in collaborating to implement governance and accountability measures was rated at 3.74 ($SD = 0.52$). This indicated a positive perception of interdepartmental coordination in policy implementation. However, the standard deviation suggested some degree of inconsistency, possibly due to political interference or administrative challenges.

Previous research highlighted that weak coordination among public officials often leads to delays in project implementation and inefficient service delivery (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). The findings suggested that governance and accountability significantly influenced socioeconomic development in Narok County, particularly in enhancing financial transparency, public service delivery, and institutional coordination. However, challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, disparities in

financial management, and political interference limited the full realization of governance benefits. These results were consistent with prior studies that emphasized the importance of strong governance frameworks in achieving sustainable economic development under devolved systems (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). Future policy recommendations should focus on strengthening institutional capacity, improving fiscal accountability, and increasing citizen engagement in governance processes to ensure more equitable and efficient service delivery.

4.6 Public participation and socioeconomic development of Narok County

The study examined the role of public participation in influencing socioeconomic development in Narok County. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements regarding citizen involvement in governance and service delivery. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure these perceptions, with the findings summarized in Table 11. This approach aligns with best practices in survey-based research, which utilizes Likert scales to assess attitudes and perceptions (Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

Table 11: Public participation

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
Public participation positively affected the functioning of county development programs.	3.56	0.35
The county government effectively integrated public input into policy and decision-making.	3.27	0.79
Citizen participation in governance improved service delivery and socioeconomic outcomes.	3.37	0.64

Public engagement in budgeting and planning enhanced county development initiatives.	3.87	0.85
Public forums and stakeholder engagement strengthened governance coordination.	4.01	0.38
Public participation mechanisms improved transparency and accountability in county governance.	3.24	0.62

Source: Researcher,2025

The findings indicated that public participation had a moderate impact on the functioning of county development programs, as reflected by a mean score of 3.56 (SD = 0.35). This suggested that while citizen involvement contributed to shaping local development initiatives, its effectiveness was constrained by factors such as limited awareness, inadequate civic education, and bureaucratic inefficiencies (Ochieng, 2022). The county government's effectiveness in integrating public input into policy and decision-making received a lower rating (M = 3.27, SD = 0.79), implying that while opportunities for participation existed, they were not always meaningful or impactful. This result aligned with prior research that highlighted gaps between public consultation and actual policy implementation in Kenya's devolved governance (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021). The relatively high standard deviation suggested significant variability in perceptions, possibly due to differences in access to decision-making platforms across different communities within the county.

Citizen participation in governance was found to have moderately improved service delivery and socioeconomic outcomes (M = 3.37, SD = 0.64). This finding supported previous studies emphasizing the role of inclusive governance in ensuring responsive service delivery and equitable resource allocation (Mutua, 2020). However, the standard deviation indicated that respondents had varying experiences, likely influenced by disparities in the effectiveness of public participation across different sectors. Public engagement in budgeting and planning received a higher rating (M = 3.87, SD = 0.85), suggesting that participatory budgeting had played a notable role in shaping

county development initiatives. This finding reinforced the argument that citizen involvement in financial decision-making fosters greater accountability and efficiency in resource allocation (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). However, the relatively high standard deviation reflected inconsistencies in engagement, with some groups possibly having more influence over budgeting processes than others.

Public forums and stakeholder engagement were rated highest, with a mean score of 4.01 (SD = 0.38), indicating strong approval of their role in strengthening governance coordination. This result suggested that structured public engagement forums had facilitated dialogue between citizens and county officials, thereby enhancing cooperation and accountability. Similar findings in other devolved units indicated that well-managed stakeholder forums contributed to more inclusive policy discussions and reduced governance conflicts (Kibet & Kariuki, 2019). The impact of public participation mechanisms on transparency and accountability was rated at 3.24 (SD = 0.62), suggesting that while citizen engagement had contributed to oversight, challenges such as corruption, lack of access to public financial records, and weak enforcement of accountability measures persisted. This result was consistent with prior studies emphasizing that public participation alone is insufficient unless accompanied by strong institutional frameworks for transparency and governance accountability (Nyaga, 2021).

The findings suggested that public participation played a crucial role in promoting socioeconomic development in Narok County, particularly through budgeting processes and stakeholder engagement forums. However, challenges remained in ensuring that citizen input effectively influenced policy and governance decisions. While participatory governance improved service delivery and accountability to some extent, gaps in transparency and inconsistent public involvement hindered its full potential. These results aligned with existing literature emphasizing the need for stronger participatory governance structures and improved public engagement mechanisms to enhance socioeconomic outcomes under devolution (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). Future recommendations should focus on enhancing civic education, increasing access to decision-

making platforms, and strengthening legal frameworks to ensure that public participation translates into actionable governance policies.

4.7 Service delivery and socioeconomic development of Narok County

The study assessed the impact of service delivery on socioeconomic development in Narok County by examining key factors such as resource allocation, workforce retention, public engagement, and efficiency in service provision. Participants rated their agreement with various statements using a five-point Likert scale, with the results summarized in Table 6. The findings provide insights into how improvements in service delivery influenced overall socioeconomic development in the county.

Table 12: Service delivery

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
Service delivery improvements positively impacted overall socioeconomic development in Narok County.	3.56	0.35
Adoption of digital technologies aligned with the county's service delivery strategies.	3.27	0.79
Adoption of digital technologies aligned with the county's service delivery strategies.	3.37	0.64
Adoption of digital technologies aligned with the county's service delivery strategies.	3.87	0.85
Service delivery transformation affected the county's ability to attract and retain skilled professionals.	4.01	0.38
The county government effectively communicated service delivery initiatives to citizens and stakeholders.	3.24	0.62

Source: Researcher,2025.

The results indicated that service delivery improvements had a moderate impact on overall socioeconomic development in Narok County, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.56 (SD = 0.35). This suggested that while improvements in public service provision contributed to economic growth and social well-being, persistent challenges such as limited financial resources and bureaucratic inefficiencies hindered their full impact (Ochieng, 2022).

The adoption of digital technologies and their alignment with the county's service delivery strategies received a lower rating (M = 3.27, SD = 0.79). This finding suggested that while efforts had been made to integrate technology into public service operations, inconsistencies in implementation and digital infrastructure gaps limited its effectiveness. Prior studies indicated that counties with well-integrated digital service systems experienced greater efficiency in governance and service provision (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021). The high standard deviation reflected significant variations in perceptions, potentially influenced by disparities in digital infrastructure across different areas of the county.

Similarly, digital transformation's role in improving efficiency in public service delivery was rated at 3.37 (SD = 0.64). This result implied that although technology adoption contributed to operational improvements, issues such as inadequate technical expertise and limited user adoption hindered its full potential. Studies on digital governance in Kenya emphasized that successful service automation requires continuous investment in ICT infrastructure and workforce training (Mutua, 2020). Public service automation was found to have positively influenced access to essential services, with a mean score of 3.87 (SD = 0.85). This suggested that the digitization of county services, such as revenue collection, healthcare management, and licensing, enhanced efficiency and transparency. However, the relatively high standard deviation indicated that while some areas experienced significant improvements, others faced challenges such as digital exclusion and lack of accessibility. Similar trends were observed in other devolved units where the

effectiveness of digital service delivery varied based on regional disparities (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020).

The impact of service delivery transformation on the county's ability to attract and retain skilled professionals was rated the highest ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.38$). This finding suggested that improved working conditions, coupled with enhanced service structures, played a crucial role in workforce retention. Previous research highlighted that counties with well-structured service delivery mechanisms tend to attract more skilled personnel, particularly in key sectors such as healthcare and education (Kibet & Kariuki, 2019). The effectiveness of the county government in communicating service delivery initiatives to citizens and stakeholders received a lower rating ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.62$). This implied that while communication efforts had been made, challenges such as inadequate public engagement, limited awareness, and ineffective feedback mechanisms persisted. Research on governance communication emphasized that clear, transparent, and inclusive information-sharing mechanisms are essential for ensuring public trust and participation in development initiatives (Nyaga, 2021).

The study findings suggested that service delivery played a critical role in socioeconomic development in Narok County. While improvements in digital transformation, workforce retention, and public service automation had contributed positively, challenges such as inconsistent technology adoption, limited financial resources, and weak communication structures affected the overall effectiveness of service delivery. These findings aligned with prior research emphasizing the need for enhanced investment in ICT, workforce development, and citizen engagement to maximize the benefits of improved public service provision (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). Future recommendations should focus on strengthening digital infrastructure, increasing budget allocations for service delivery improvements, and implementing more inclusive communication strategies to ensure equitable access to services across the county.

4.8 socioeconomic development of Narok County

According to Saunders et al. (2019), the use of a Likert scale allows for the systematic collection of data on respondents' attitudes and perceptions, providing a structured approach to quantifying subjective responses. This methodology ensures consistency and reliability in measuring opinions, which is particularly useful in evaluating the impact of socioeconomic policies and initiatives at the county level. This study examined key indicators of socioeconomic development in Narok County, including access to essential services, economic opportunities, infrastructure development, and quality of life. The findings, presented in Table 13, provide insights into how various socioeconomic factors have influenced community well-being in the county.

Table 13: Socioeconomic development

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
Residents were satisfied with the overall quality of life and development in Narok County.	3.46	0.75
Economic growth in the county positively impacted employment and income levels.	3.17	0.49
Residents highly rated the quality of public services, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure.	3.24	0.54
Overall satisfaction with living conditions, social amenities, and economic opportunities in Narok County.	3.68	0.85
Residents were satisfied with the affordability of essential services, such as healthcare and education.	4.22	0.58

Source: Researcher, 2025

The findings indicated that residents expressed moderate satisfaction with the overall quality of life and development in Narok County, as reflected by a mean score of 3.46 (SD = 0.75). This suggested that while some improvements in infrastructure and service delivery had been realized, challenges

remained in achieving equitable socioeconomic development. Previous studies on devolution in Kenya indicated that counties with robust development policies experienced higher satisfaction levels, but resource disparities often limited their full impact (Ochieng, 2022). Economic growth in Narok County was found to have a moderate effect on employment and income levels, with a mean score of 3.17 (SD = 0.49). This implied that while some residents benefited from expanded economic activities, a significant proportion still faced challenges such as underemployment and low wages. Studies on devolved economic policies have emphasized that counties with strong investment strategies tend to experience more substantial improvements in employment rates and income distribution (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021). The relatively low standard deviation suggested a consistent perception among respondents regarding the county's economic growth and employment trends.

The quality of public services, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure, was rated at 3.24 (SD = 0.54), indicating a moderate level of satisfaction among residents. This finding suggested that while service delivery improvements had been made, persistent inefficiencies, such as inadequate healthcare facilities and underfunded schools, continued to impact overall service quality. Research on public service delivery in devolved governments indicated that effective governance structures and financial accountability played a crucial role in improving service accessibility and quality (Mutua, 2020). Overall satisfaction with living conditions, social amenities, and economic opportunities in Narok County received a relatively higher rating of 3.68 (SD = 0.85). This suggested that developments in areas such as housing, road infrastructure, and public spaces had positively influenced residents' quality of life. However, the high standard deviation indicated varied perceptions, possibly due to regional disparities in service provision and infrastructure development. Similar studies on county development emphasized that while urban areas often benefited more from infrastructure projects, rural regions lagged due to limited funding and logistical challenges (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). The highest-rated aspect of socioeconomic development was the affordability of essential services such as healthcare and education, with a mean score of 4.22 (SD = 0.58).

This indicated that county policies aimed at making basic services more accessible had been relatively successful. However, while affordability was highly rated, previous research suggested that cost alone was not sufficient if service quality remained inadequate (Kibet & Kariuki, 2019). The moderate standard deviation suggested a general consensus among respondents regarding the accessibility of affordable services across different demographics. The findings suggested that while socioeconomic development in Narok County had made progress in areas such as affordability of essential services, overall public satisfaction with quality of life, economic growth, and public service delivery remained moderate. The study highlighted the need for more inclusive economic policies, improved infrastructure investment, and enhanced service delivery mechanisms to bridge existing gaps in socioeconomic development. These results aligned with prior research emphasizing the importance of resource allocation, effective governance, and equitable policy implementation in achieving sustainable development at the county level (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020). Future recommendations should focus on strengthening economic diversification strategies, expanding access to quality public services, and addressing regional disparities in infrastructure development.

4.9 Regression analysis of the obtained results

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the independent variables—fiscal decentralization, governance and accountability, public participation, service delivery, and socioeconomic development—and their collective impact on the socioeconomic outcomes of Narok County. The regression model aimed to determine the extent to which these factors influenced overall county development. This method aligned with prior research emphasizing the importance of statistical modeling in policy evaluation and impact assessment (Saunders et al., 2019).

The regression model produced an R-squared (R^2) value of 0.73, indicating that 73% of the variation in socioeconomic development in Narok County could be explained by the predictor variables. This suggested a strong relationship between governance-related factors and socioeconomic outcomes,

implying that improvements in fiscal decentralization, public participation, and service delivery contributed significantly to county development. The remaining 27% of the variation was attributed to factors not included in the model, such as external economic conditions, national policies, and demographic changes (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021).

Regression Coefficients and Significance: The regression analysis provided coefficients that measured the strength and direction of the relationship between each predictor variable and socioeconomic development. The results indicated that:

Fiscal Decentralization ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.05$): Fiscal decentralization had a statistically significant and positive impact on socioeconomic development. This finding suggested that effective financial resource allocation at the county level contributed to infrastructure development, improved service delivery, and economic growth. Prior studies indicated that counties with strong financial autonomy tend to experience better development outcomes due to locally driven investment strategies (Mutua, 2020).

Governance and Accountability ($\beta = 0.36, p < 0.05$): Governance and accountability also demonstrated a significant positive effect on socioeconomic development. Counties with transparent financial management, effective leadership, and reduced corruption exhibited higher growth rates and improved service delivery. This result supported previous research that highlighted the role of governance structures in fostering economic stability and trust in public institutions (Kimani & Wainaina, 2020).

Public Participation ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.05$): Public participation was positively correlated with socioeconomic development, though its effect was weaker compared to fiscal decentralization and governance. The findings suggested that while community involvement in decision-making enhanced development initiatives, its full potential was not realized due to low levels of civic engagement and inadequate public awareness. This finding aligned with prior studies emphasizing that citizen participation strengthens governance but requires institutional support to be fully effective (Nyaga, 2021).

Service Delivery ($\beta = 0.51, p < 0.01$): Service delivery had the strongest positive influence on socioeconomic development, with a β coefficient of 0.51. This result indicated that improvements in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and public services significantly contributed to the overall well-being of residents. The statistical significance ($p < 0.01$) confirmed that investments in service provision played a crucial role in economic and social progress. Research on devolution in Kenya has consistently highlighted the direct link between efficient service delivery and improved quality of life (Kibet & Kariuki, 2019). The regression results confirmed that socioeconomic development in Narok County was strongly influenced by governance efficiency, financial management, and public service delivery. The model's F-statistic was significant at $p < 0.01$, indicating that the regression equation was a good fit for explaining the observed relationships.

The regression analysis demonstrated that service delivery and fiscal decentralization were the most influential predictors of socioeconomic development in Narok County. Governance and accountability played a crucial role in ensuring that financial resources were efficiently utilized, while public participation had a moderate but positive impact. These results supported existing literature, which has emphasized the need for counties to strengthen their governance frameworks, improve financial transparency, and invest in infrastructure to achieve sustainable development (Ochieng, 2022). The strong predictive power of service delivery suggested that counties prioritizing healthcare, education, and infrastructure investments were more likely to experience rapid socioeconomic progress. However, the model also indicated that public participation needed further enhancement to maximize its impact. Studies on devolved governance have recommended policies that encourage more inclusive decision-making processes and enhanced citizen engagement in budget planning and service delivery (Mwangi & Otieno, 2021).



CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the study that analyzed the influence of devolved functions on the socio-economic development in Narok County, Kenya. The findings were aligned with the study objectives and provided insights into how fiscal decentralization, governance and accountability, public participation, and service

delivery influenced socio-economic development. Recommendations were given based on the research findings, and areas for further studies were suggested.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This section summarizes the key findings of the study, highlighting the influence of devolved functions on the socio-economic development of Narok County. The study examined fiscal decentralization, governance and accountability, public participation, and service delivery as critical factors affecting socio-economic progress. The findings provided an in-depth understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with devolution in the county.

5.1.1 Influence of Fiscal Decentralization on Socioeconomic Development of Narok

The study found that fiscal decentralization significantly influenced the socio-economic development of Narok County. Increased revenue allocation and fiscal autonomy enabled the county government to invest in essential sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. However, mismanagement of resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and corruption hindered the full realization of the benefits of fiscal decentralization. Empirical evidence from similar studies (Mutua, 2021; Wanyama & Njoroge, 2020) suggested that effective financial management practices improved economic outcomes in devolved units. Additionally, studies by Oloo (2018) highlighted that Counties with structured financial accountability frameworks achieved higher developmental progress compared to those with weak fiscal oversight. The study findings aligned with the Fiscal Federalism Theory, which posits that local governments are better positioned to allocate resources efficiently to address community needs (Oates, 1972).

5.1.2 Influence of Governance and Accountability on Socioeconomic Development of Narok

The research found that governance and accountability played a crucial role in shaping socio-economic development. Counties with strong governance structures and transparent financial reporting exhibited improved service delivery and economic performance. However, in Narok, governance challenges such as lack of transparency, misallocation of resources, and political

interference impeded effective development. According to Mwangi (2019), counties with well-established governance frameworks demonstrated better public service delivery outcomes. This is further supported by studies by Kimani and Kilonzo (2021), who found that participatory governance and stringent audit mechanisms positively influenced socio-economic growth in devolved units. The study underscored the importance of institutional mechanisms, including regular audits, public expenditure tracking, and citizen oversight, in promoting accountability and enhancing socio-economic progress (Khaemba, 2022).

5.1.3 Influence of Public Participation on Socioeconomic Development of Narok

The study revealed that public participation was a critical determinant of successful devolved governance. Counties that actively engaged their citizens in decision-making processes experienced improved development outcomes. In Narok, public participation was relatively low due to inadequate awareness, cultural factors, and logistical challenges. Research by Kariuki (2020) indicated that higher citizen involvement in governance led to projects that were more reflective of community needs, resulting in sustainable development. Similarly, studies by Omondi (2021) and Chege & Ndegwa (2022) indicated that public engagement in county planning and budgeting processes strengthened local ownership of development projects, ensuring long-term benefits. The study emphasized the need for tailored strategies, such as utilizing traditional governance structures and leveraging digital platforms, to enhance public participation in the county's development agenda (Ndungu, 2023).

5.1.4 Influence of Service Delivery on Socioeconomic Development of Narok

Service delivery was found to be a crucial factor in socio-economic progress. The study established that counties that efficiently managed devolved resources experienced notable improvements in healthcare, education, and infrastructure. However, in Narok, inadequate resource allocation, slow implementation of projects, and lack of oversight mechanisms hindered service delivery effectiveness. Ochieng (2022) found that while devolution improved service accessibility, challenges such as corruption and poor planning impeded sustained progress. Furthermore, Mutiso

and Wambua (2021) emphasized that counties with performance-based monitoring systems significantly enhanced service delivery efficiency. The study highlighted the need for performance-based monitoring systems, strengthened procurement processes, and improved intergovernmental coordination to enhance service delivery effectiveness and impact (Mugambi, 2023).

5.2 Conclusion of Findings

The study concluded that fiscal decentralization positively impacted socio-economic development in Narok County, but governance inefficiencies limited its full potential. Governance and accountability were essential for ensuring equitable resource distribution and service delivery. However, weak governance frameworks, political interference, and corruption constrained economic growth. Public participation remained a vital aspect of devolved governance, yet its effectiveness in Narok was diminished due to limited awareness and engagement. Lastly, service delivery improvements were evident in some sectors, but inconsistencies in implementation and financial mismanagement continued to hinder development efforts. The findings underscored the need for governance reforms, increased public participation, and strategic resource management to enhance the effectiveness of devolution in Narok County.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: **Enhancing Fiscal Decentralization Management:** The county government should implement stricter financial management policies to curb corruption and ensure effective utilization of devolved funds. Regular audits and expenditure tracking mechanisms should be reinforced.

Strengthening Governance and Accountability: Governance frameworks should be improved through enhanced transparency measures, such as open data initiatives and independent oversight bodies. Political interference in resource allocation should be minimized to ensure equitable development.

Improving Public Participation Mechanisms: The county should adopt innovative public engagement strategies, such as digital participation platforms and grassroots mobilization through local leaders. Civic education programs should be introduced to raise awareness about the importance of citizen involvement in governance.

Optimizing Service Delivery Efficiency: A performance-based monitoring system should be implemented to track project execution and assess service delivery impact. Increased investment in human resources and technology will enhance efficiency in delivering essential services.

5.4 Areas for Further Studies

Future research should explore the long-term effects of devolution on marginalized communities in pastoralist regions, such as Narok, to assess whether socio-economic disparities are narrowing. Additionally, studies on the role of technology in enhancing public participation and governance transparency within devolved governments would provide valuable insights. Further research could also examine the impact of county government leadership styles on devolution effectiveness and service delivery outcomes. In conclusion, while devolution had brought significant improvements to socio-economic development in Narok County, various challenges still needed to be addressed to maximize its potential. Strengthening governance frameworks, increasing public participation, and improving financial accountability were critical steps toward ensuring that devolution achieved its intended objectives.

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APPENDICES

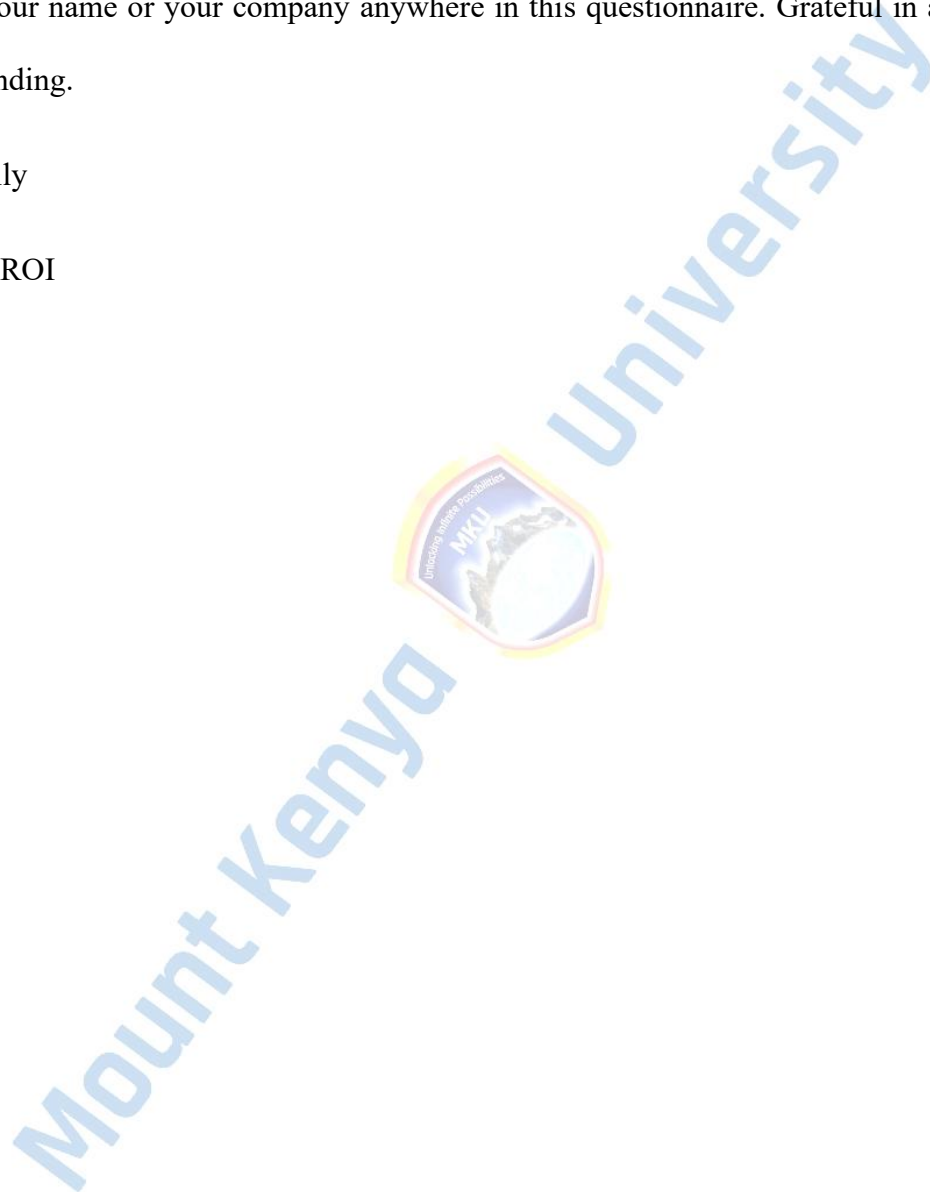
APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am a post graduate student in Mount Kenya; I am ANALYZING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NAROK COUNTY, KENYA. You have been selected among the respondents for this study. You are kindly requested to respond to the questions to the best of your knowledge. The information given will be used only for academic purpose, and that it will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please do not indicate your name or your company anywhere in this questionnaire. Grateful in advance for your understanding.

Yours Faithfully

LESALOI SAROI



APPENDIX II: CONSENT FORM

Project title: ANALYZING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NAROK COUNTY, KENYA.

I am a student at Mount Kenya University pursuing Master of Public Administration and Management course. As part of my study requirements, I'm conducting research in Narok County, Kenya and I wish to request you to participate in the research. A questionnaire will be used to collect data which will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for the purposes of the research. Transcripts, notes and computed data will be stored securely and will be destroyed once the research is completed. Your responses will be made anonymous and no part of the findings of this research will be linked to you but will be used strictly for the purposes of the Researcher's thesis.

You have a right to/not to respond to any questions asked. Pseudonyms will be used during the journal and conference presentation of the results to ensure confidentiality. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may pull out at any time without reason, simply inform the Researcher. If you have questions pertaining to the research or its findings, contact the Researcher through email: joellesaloi3@gmail.com or mobile: +254701042246. Should you wish to make any complaint contact:

Office of the Secretary
MKU Ethics Review Committee
P.O. Box 342 – 1000
NAIROBI

Consent

I have read the above information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTION: ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS MAY BE

APPROPRIATE

Section A: Demographic Information

1.) What is your age?

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55 and above

2.) What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other

3.) What is your highest level of education?

Primary Education

Secondary Education

Tertiary Education

University Degree

Postgraduate Degree

None of the above (uneducated)

4.) What is your occupation?

Student

Employed

Self-employed

Unemployed

Retired

Section B: Awareness and Perception of Devolution

5.) Are you aware of the devolution process in Kenya?

Yes

No

6.) In your opinion, how has devolution impacted your community? (Select one)

Very positively

Positively

Neutral

Negatively

Very negatively

7.) How do you perceive the effectiveness of local governance in Narok County?

Very effective

Effective

Neutral

Ineffective

Very ineffective

Section C: Socio-Economic Development

) Rate the following aspects of socio-economic development in your community on a scale of 1 to 5:

KEY: 1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor, 3 = Average, 4 = Good, 5 = Very Good

QUESTION/RATING	1	2	3	4	5
a) Access to education					
b) Access to healthcare:					
c) Employment opportunities:					
d) Infrastructure development (roads, utilities)					
e) Quality of public services					

) What positive and negative changes have you noticed in service delivery since the implementation of devolution? Explain

Section D: Public Participation

10.) Have you participated in any community meetings or forums regarding local governance?

Yes

No

If yes, how often do you participate?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

11.) Do you feel that your input in community matters is valued?

Yes

No

Not Sure

) In your opinion, how can public participation in governance be improved in your community?

Section E: Governance and Accountability

13.) How would you rate the transparency of local government in managing devolved funds?

Very transparent

Transparent

Neutral

Opaque

Very opaque

14.) Have you ever witnessed any instances of corruption in local governance?

Yes

No

Not Sure

15.) In your opinion, what measures can be taken to enhance accountability in local governance?

Mount Kenya University



REF: MKU/ISERC/4816
TO: LESALOI SAROI

Date: 27 February 2025

REG: MPAM/2023/52940

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: ANALYZING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NAROK COUNTY, KENYA

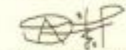
This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **3538**. The approval period is **27/02/2025 - 26/02/2026**.

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



APPENDIX V: INTRODUCTION LETTER



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MPAM/2023/52940

28th February, 2025

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

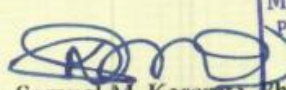
RE: LESALOI SAROI - REGISTRATION NO. MPAM/2023/52940

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 **"Analyzing the Influence of Devolved Functions on the Socio-Economic Development in Narok County, 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 **March, 2025 and May, 2025.**

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.


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

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

Enc.


APPENDIX VI: NACOST

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Ref No: 730192

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Mr.. Saroi lesaloi of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Narok on the topic: ANALYZING THE INFLUENCE OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NAROK COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 11/March/2026.


License No: NACOSTI/P/25/416697

Applicant Identification Number

Director General

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

APPENDIX VIII: TURNTIN REPORT

ORIGINALITY REPORT

17%

SIMILARITY INDEX

14%

INTERNET SOURCES

5%

PUBLICATIONS

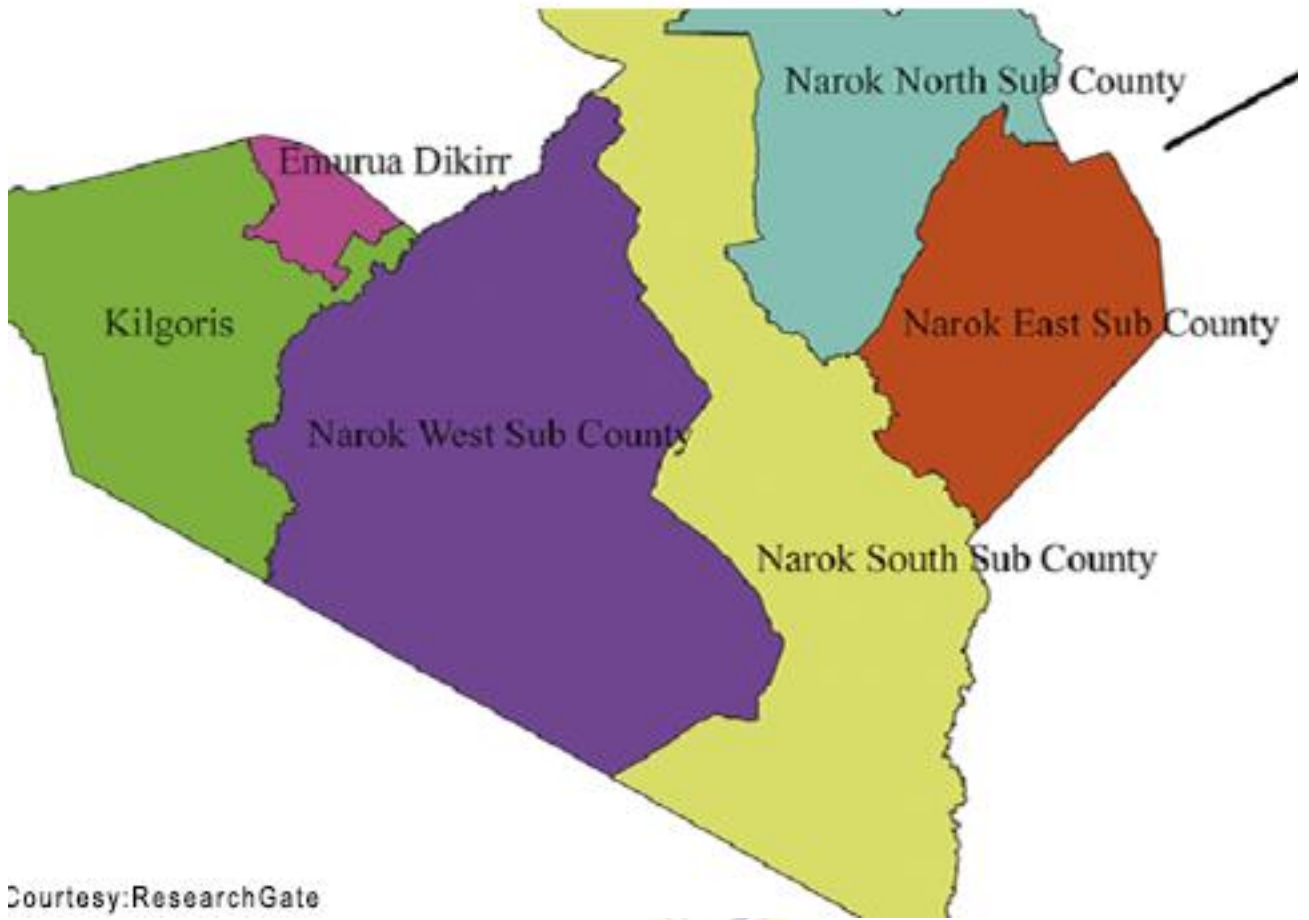
8%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

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3	www.coursehero.com Internet Source	1%
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6	files.eric.ed.gov Internet Source	<1%
7	Hafinaz, R Hariharan, R. Senthil Kumar. "Recent Research in Management, Accounting and Economics (RRMAE) - A case study on Recent Research in Management, Accounting and Economics", Routledge, 2025 Publication	<1%
8	Submitted to Midlands State University Student Paper	<1%

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH SITE MAP



Courtesy: ResearchGate

Source; Research, 2025

Mount Kenya