

Citation: Murogi, K.B. (2020). Socio-Economic Dynamics Influencing County Governance in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(6), 4 – 20.

Socio-Economic Dynamics Influencing County Governance in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the socio-economic dynamics influencing county governance in Kenya with particular reference to Tharaka Nithi County. The specific objectives of the study included establishing the effect of human resource capacity, resource allocation, accountability and strategic management of county resources on county governance. The study relied on decentralization theory. The scope of the study included employees, administrators and adult residents of Tharaka Nithi County. Descriptive research design was used in the study. Both primary and secondary data was collected and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study established that county governance is faced by a number of socio-economic dynamics. The study recommended that the county governments need to undertake the process of staff rationalization and redeployment so as to reduce overlap and redundancy at the county.

Key words: Kenya, Administration, Devolution, Governance, Rationalization, Revenue, Tharaka Nithi County

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Introduction

County governance is a result of devolution. Devolution involves the transfer of functions, resources and power to sub-national levels. These levels, for example local Government assumes full responsibility and accountability for the specified functions (Omari, Kaburi & Sewe. 2012). County governance contributes positively to the processes of citizen participation and management which is effective, responsive and accountable to the stakeholders. This is because county governance policies enable citizens to take part in the decisions that affect their livelihoods, allows experimentation and innovation and has better response to citizen preferences, and county government control enhances policy making (Winchester & Storey, 2008).

The national government retains supervisory and oversight roles. It is considered the economic hub of South Africa which contributes heavily in the financial, manufacturing, transport and telecommunication. Nigeria runs a federal system divided into thirty regional states headed by executive governors, regional assemblies and government. This country has had many governments and coups inspired by unequal use of their natural resources (Linder 1990).

The Kenyan constitution 2010 opened a new window of change of moving from the central governance to the devolved government. The Government thereafter committed itself to rapid transfer of devolved functions to the counties. This position marked by an allocation of funding to counties and phased transfer of functions. Now county governments are in charge of the new local administrations to oversee functions such as agriculture, health facilities, sanitation, transport and trade licenses, as well as the responsibility to generate revenue for the county. The national government remains in charge of education, security, foreign policy, and national economic policy and planning (Omari, Kaburi & Sewe, 2012).

The devolved system has pushed the need for rational resource allocation down through the administrative chain to the point at which services are delivered. This has forced managers at every level to focus on best way to allocate these resources to the various functions, projects and administrative units within the counties. The allocations of resources need to take into consideration government's objectives, to prudently manage the risks and to become more responsive to the requirements of the recipients of their services (Mwenda, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

The recent wave of devolutionary initiatives across the world has been in part fueled by an important change in the devolutionist discourse. Counties in Kenya now face socio-economic dynamics in capacity building, accountability, resource mobilization and utilization and even where the resources are available allocation has proved to be critical. Hence there have been poor resource allocation decisions with much of the resources being wasted or remaining unutilized. Unfortunately, county institutions have been slower to respond. This is due to the financial constraints and the bureaucratic process characteristic of most of these institutions. This problem is even worse because there is little that is known particularly with regard to second order devolution. Although much has been written about county governance, less has been documented on the many issues raised by the adoption of county governance especially on the socio-economic dynamics currently facing county governance. It is within this context that this study seeks to investigate the dynamics of county governance in Kenya.

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Specific Objectives

The following specific objectives guided the study

- 1) To investigate the effect of human resources capacity on county governance in Tharaka Nithi County.
- 2) To investigate resource allocation dynamic on the devolved system of governance in Tharaka Nithi County.
- 3) To explore the accountability dynamic in the devolved system of governance in Tharaka Nithi County.
- 4) To identify the challenge of strategic management of resources in the devolved system of governance in Tharaka Nithi County.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the effects of human resources capacity on the devolved system of governance in Tharaka Nithi County?
- 2) To what extent does resource allocation challenge affect county governance in Tharaka Nithi County?
- 3) How does accountability dynamic affect county governance in Tharaka Nithi County?
- 4) How does strategic management of resources affect the county governance in Tharaka Nithi County?

Theoretical Framework

This study relied on the decentralization theory. Decentralization theory will underpin the study as they are relevant and provide the background to the study variables and aspects related to and to be addressed by the study especially the dynamics of county governance in Kenya. Devolution is understood from the broader concept of decentralization. Decentralization Theory relies on Richard Musgrave's (1959), Wallace Oates (1972) notion on "Fiscal federalism" which contends that the Central Government should have the basic responsibility for the macroeconomic stabilization function and income redistribution in the form of assistance to the poor. According to Musgrave, there are three economic functions that should be assigned to the Government: stabilization, distribution and allocation (1989). In public finance theory, the stabilization function is assigned to the Central Government.

According to Oates (1991), the distribution task should be the responsibility of the central or sub-central levels of Government. Furthermore, allocation function, the provision of public goods and services is best placed with local Government organs. Oates (1991) formulated the decentralization theorem which confirms the inefficiency of uniform service provision by central Government. He argues that if there are no economies of scale from centralized provision, welfare can be maximized by diversifying services in accordance with local needs. Therefore, decentralized levels of Government have their *raison d'être* in the provision of goods and services whose consumption is limited to their own jurisdictions.

From the foregoing, decentralization is regarded as a process through which powers; functions, responsibilities and resources are transferred from central to local Governments and/or to other decentralized entities (Kauzya, 2005). It is a mechanism for bringing Government closer to the governed and helps to improve public administration by empowering counties to be the planning and decision-making bodies and thereby enhancing the capacity of Government to achieve local participation. Organizational theorists such as Rondinelli (1981) and Faltas (1982) view devolution as decentralization and describe the decentralization model as an administrative design which serves to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.

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Literature Review

County Governance

The shift from centralized regulation to decentralized system of Governance is a defining event in Kenya governance system. County governance compels managers to move from a passive compliance mentality to an active management mentality. The contractual emphasis in the devolution model pushes the need for intelligent decisions on resource allocation down through the administrative chain to the point at which services are delivered (Mwenda, 2010). This forces managers at every level to focus on the Government's objectives, to manage the risks to those and to become more responsive to the requirements of the recipients of their services. Freedom of information legislation, introduced prior to the reforms, was instrumental in changing attitudes to the value of information, and in improving the volume and quality of information about government. Decisions at all levels are now based on better information, better budgeting processes and a longer time frame (Mulwa, & Wekhuyi, 2010).

The process of clarifying objectives and then demanding good quality information on their achievement illuminates what public servants actually do and assist decisions around resource allocation, notably during a period in which government is being reduced in size. However, there are limits to the gains to be had through specification and monitoring. While the devolution reforms made government more manageable, they did not in themselves ensure that decisions affecting the longer-run interests of government as a whole were properly balanced against the particular interests of the component parts (World Bank 2012).

The devolved management system tends to obscure the fact that government is a single enterprise, which should be unified around commonalities of purpose, behaviour, management standards and reputation. The trigger for a strategic approach to managing government is the realization that effective public governance now requires the capacity to design and execute long-term solutions to complex problems, often with fuzzy boundaries and both international and inter-generational consequences (Me Cathy et al ,2010).

Challenge of Human Resources Capacity in the Implementation of Devolution

Devolution is hinged on the desire for locals to set their own economic, political and social agenda and to move away from the bureaucratic processes of the Central governments. However, the success of this depends on the various key functions of Human resource management namely training and development, performance management, recruitment and selection, change management and human resource planning (World Bank, 2012).

Counties have fewer professional cadres as compared to support staff at a ratio of one professional to four support staff at best (O'Brien, Pike & Tomaney, 2003). Notwithstanding, attitudinal challenges among staff, counties have un-standardized remuneration policies, lack of training opportunities, performance management mechanisms among others which hinder effective human resources performance at the county levels (Mwenda, 2010). The county governments need to undertake the process of staff rationalization and redeployment so as to reduce overlap and redundancy at the county. Level is necessary in order to attain lean public services characterized by the ability to deliver in an efficient and effective manner. Counties must therefore adopt performance management systems by which standards are established and recognized, outcomes and performance are measured and reward schemes institutionalized. They should further create conducive environment that would encourage entrepreneurship and investment through creativity and innovation in order to increase economic out-put and create more jobs within the counties (Mulwa & Wekhuyi, 2010).

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Every member of the County Government requires to be subjected to a performance management process to establish how well they are achieving their pre-set performance standards and it's through this only that the County governments can hold their employees accountable and question their preparedness in delivering on their key performance indicators hence there is a relationship between performance management and devolution (Mwenda, 2010a).

To effectively run the Counties there is need to have very clear human resource policies that are also in line with the various labour legislations, ILO standards and Kenyan Constitution for the success of the devolution (Omari, Kaburi, & Sewe, 2012). There exists a lot of skills gap in the County Governments and inherited unskilled and illiterate workforce that can never drive the devolution train to its destination. Systems are still lacking since most Counties do not even have proper offices and therefore Human Resource policies are sparingly absent and the making of decisions based on ad hoc compromises. Lack of clear policies on the various aspects of Human resource management in Counties negatively affect decision making and results in incidences of inconsistencies and unfairness in handling staff issues. Most of the County officers lack training both Technical and experiential since most of them have been brought on board as politically correct individuals hence it becomes hard to apprehend them in the event of failure to perform. If the recruitment process is wrong then there becomes a big problem in managing them daily to make them have any contribution. (Mwenda, 2010).

Challenge of Allocation of Resources and Implementation of County governance

Resources include revenues, human resources, equipment, materials, and corporate information. Resources consist of physical and virtual resources (Winchester & Storey, 2008). County government faces constraints over resources which further exacerbated by uncertain environments in which they operate in. Hence this requires effective and efficient allocation of the available resources. The complexity of finding an optimum resource allocation is exponential in devolved governments. Since resource demand and supply can be dynamic and uncertain, various strategies for resource allocation are essential (World Bank, 2012).

The process of clarifying objectives and then demanding good quality information on their achievement illuminated what county leaders actually do and assisted decisions around resource allocation (Staheli, Janet & Collin, 1997). While the devolved system of Governance made government more manageable, they did not in themselves ensure that decisions affecting the longer-run interests of government as a whole are properly balanced against the available resources. The devolved system tends to illuminate the fact that government is a single enterprise, which should be unified around commonalities of purpose, behaviour, management standards and reputation which are all determined by efficient resource allocation (O'Brien, Pike & Tomaney, 2003).

The devolved system has pushed the need for rational resource allocation down through the administrative chain to the point at which services are delivered. This has forced managers at every level to focus on the Government's objectives, to prudently manage the risks and to become more responsive to the requirements of the recipients of their services (Mulwa & Wekhuyi, 2010). Kenya's devolution project is particularly ambitious as it is one of few in the world that shifts power from the centre to entirely new local administrations set up from scratch. Previously, the country was divided into eight provinces and over 100 districts, but executive power was largely vested in the central government. Now devolved governments are in charge of the new local administrations to oversee functions such as agriculture, health facilities, sanitation, transport and trade licenses, as well as the responsibility to generate revenue for the county. The national government remains in charge of education, security, foreign policy, and national economic policy and planning (Mwenda, 2010).

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Challenge of Strategic Management of Devolved Resources

The general mood of the public has been that county managers must do more with less the situation that requires strategic thinking in order to 'reduce wastes (Bana & Shitindi, 2009). The county's strategic management has its ultimate objective in the development of its corporate values, managerial capabilities, institutional responsibilities and operational decision making at all hierarchical levels and across all operational and functional lines of authority while taking into consideration the internal and external environmental factors (Wechsler & Berry, 2000).

Managing strategically implies looking to the future as well as trying to link a county to its environment (Bana & Shitindi, 2009). As Hughes (2003) insists strategic management goes beyond routine management tasks and consider in a systematic way a long- term county mission and vision. The use of strategic management is triggered by the desire to control expenditure via enhanced efficiency, to set a clear mission and direction; a desire to emulate good governance practice and fiscal discipline and the need resolve competing pressure to allocate resources (Berry 2001). Strategic management consists of three interrelated component processes: Strategic planning to determine institutional goals, objectives and implementation strategies,

The application of strategic management to devolution may increase the operational efficiency, service delivery and in the initiation and implementation of public projects rate by county governments (Winchester & Storey, 2008). On the basis of the information received through analysis of internal and external environment county managers can making a maximum use of the available resources (Halachmi, 2000). By county managers involving officers and employees in strategic implementation it becomes an important training process for them (Matheson, Scanlan& Tanner, 2004).

In devolved government, one of the greatest benefits arising from the adoption of a strategic approach to decision-making is the premium it places on identifying and strengthening core competence. Government's essential competence lies in its ability to: make quality long-term decisions; create and distribute knowledge; implement decisions effectively; and mediate amongst competing interests. Other benefits include: strategic co-ordination of function, better information sharing about the intentions and impact of the county government, strategic alignment, commitment to collective interests, future capability and long-run cost effectiveness and cohesion within the county government (De Toni & Tonchia, 2003).

The Dynamic of Accountability in the Implementation of County Governance

Accountability is defined as holding agents to account for meeting standards and expectations of various principals including executives, legislatures, various publics – for the use of financial resources, compliance in meeting legal obligations, efficiency of operations and effectiveness in achieving results and goals. Ideally, accountability systems should provide for transparent reporting of these issues, identification of causes these representatives are strongly downwardly accountable to the rest of the community governance system of local government, focusing on four core principles: enhancing local democracy; serving the customer better; developing efficiency; and providing proper resources (Mwenda, 2010).

However, Councils can support MCAs through initiatives such as devolved ward budgets, or through increased powers to committees, which many MCAs sit on. The main concern about increased levels of public visibility of elected officials is that it [can encourage voting and decision making behaviour based on purely populist grounds. This populism can be fueled by the national media and unwarranted concerns for, for example, things like 'postcode lotteries'. There are also concerns that increased attention on local MCAs would prevent people wanting to be MCAs, especially when the remuneration for their work is often perceived as insufficient for the work that they do. Public visibility at the local level could actually be seen as an opportunity to engage in a

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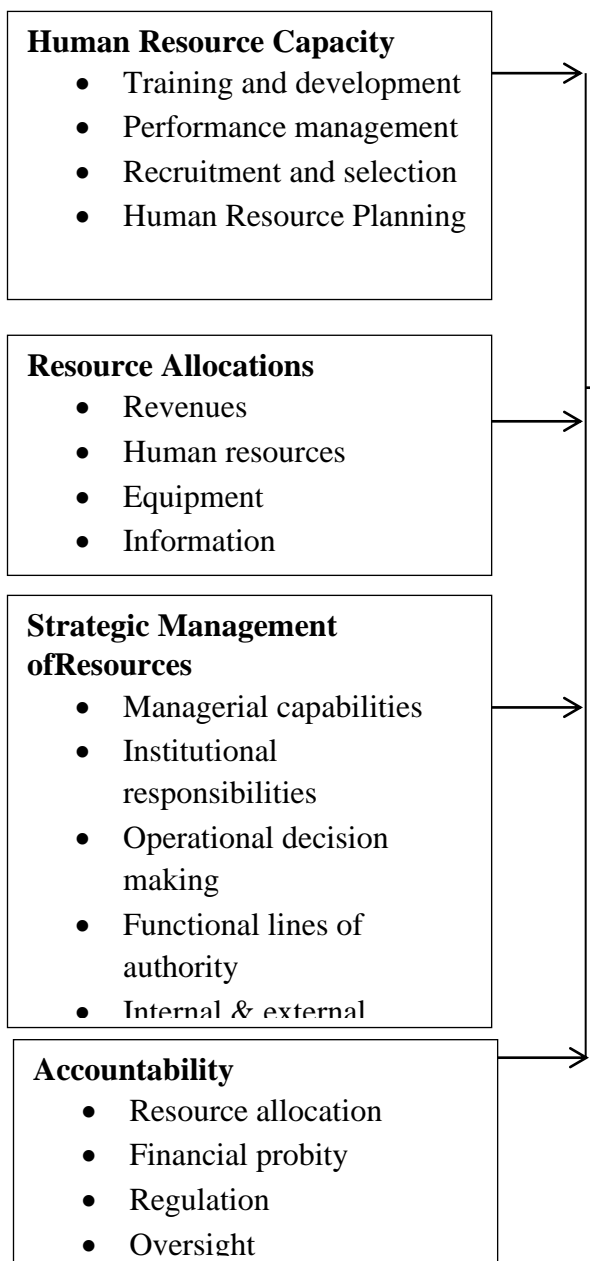
dialogue with local residents about some of these entrenched views, and begin to question the current way of doing things. Ultimately this may begin to allow counties to do things in different and more interesting ways.

There is a clear case to improve the level of accountability of local representatives over anything from remuneration claims to their voting and attendance record. Again, there are some questions about the level of data and bureaucracy, and there are also questions over the applicability of a standard template between areas. The most sensible starting point is for counties to begin to release all information relevant to the work of MCAs including attendance record, beliefs, vision, declared interests and committees. Involving residents in the development of long-term plans and visions can lead to greater levels of political accountability. There are many ways in which counties can get their residents more directly involved in the daily activities of their wards. This may involve more traditional methods such as surveys and other more innovative methods such as deliberative mapping, participatory appraisals, role plays, stakeholder decision analysis, to mention just a few arguably, it is the issues which matter most to local people who are likely to get more people interested in local affairs, and hence increase local accountability.

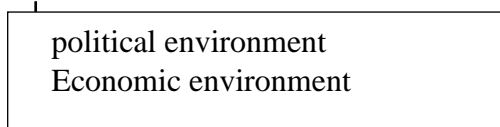
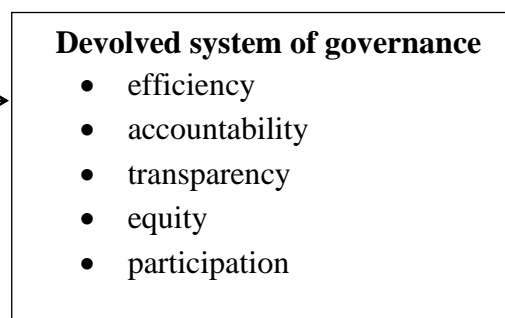
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Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable



Dependent Variable



Intervening Variables

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher

The decentralization theory and devolution model indicate the challenges affecting the implementation of devolved system of governance. Based on the above theories the study can be conceptualized in a framework explaining the relationship between the independent variables (factors) which include, human resource capacity, resource allocation, strategic management of devolved resources and accountability and how devolved system of governance which is the dependent variables (outcomes) as shown in the schematic diagram below.

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Methodology

Site of the Study

Tharaka Nithi County is a county in the former Eastern province of Kenya. Tharaka Nithi County is one of the 47 counties of Kenya located in Kenya's former Eastern Province. The county has an area of 2609 km² and had a population of 365,330 as of the 2009 census.

Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey approach in collecting data from the respondents. Descriptive survey research portrays an accurate profile of persons, events, or account of the characteristics, for example behaviour, opinions, abilities, beliefs, and knowledge of a particular individual, situation or group (Bums and Grove 2003).

Target Population

The target population was drawn from the eighteen (18) departments in Tharaka Nithi County and consisted of eighteen head of departments and their deputies making it a total of thirty-six respondents as indicated by the population frame availed by Tharaka Nithi country human resource department. The choice of the head of Departments and their deputies was hinged on the fact that they hold the relevant information as they are directly in charge of County operations hence have first-hand information on the challenges facing devolution.

Sample size and Sampling techniques

The study undertook census survey which involved the use of the entire target population of thirty-six (36) respondents consisting of departmental heads and their deputies as a sample. A census is attractive for small populations. Census eliminates sampling error and provides data on all the individuals in the population (Kothari, 2003).

Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires to collect primary data. Questionnaires used in collecting data consisted of close ended questions. As an instrument of data collection questionnaires are appropriate because they are easy to analyze, and are cost effective (Streubert & Carpenter, 2003). The questionnaire was used to capture data on dependent variable (Devolved system of governance) and independent variables (human resource capacity, resource allocation, accountability and strategic management of county resources). The questionnaires were self-administered and each respondent received the same set of questions in exactly the same way.

Research Findings

Response Rate

Out of the 36 issued questionnaires, 33 questionnaires representing 91.6% of the total questionnaires distributed were returned fully completed, while 3 questionnaires were not returned representing 8.4% of the total questions distributed to the respondents. It can be inferred that the response rate was good.

Performance Indicators of Devolved System of Governance

Majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the county governance: ensures transparency of government operations (57.6%); guarantee people participation in decision

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making (45.5%); ensure efficient and effective public services delivery, (33.3%) and facilitates equitable distribution or allocation of resources (45.5%).

From the study, it can be concluded that county governance ensures transparency of government operations; guarantee people participation in decision making; ensure efficient and effective public services delivery and facilitates equitable distribution or allocation of resources. The findings agree with the views of Mwenda, (2010) and Mboga (2009) that devolved system of governance pushes the need for intelligent decisions on resource allocations down through the administrative chain to the point at which services are delivered and lead to efficient provision of effective and efficient services.

Human Resource Capacity

Human resource capacity was the first objective of the study hence its necessary to establish whether the Human resources in terms of numbers and the skill levels affect the implementation of devolved system of governance.

Study findings shown that majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that : the county is faced by lack of Training and development opportunities for staff hence affecting governance (33.3%),; the county does not have effective mechanism to measure and manage employees performance(51.5%); the county has a poor recruitment and selection structures resulting in the recruitment of unqualified staff (57.6%); the county does not undertake human resource planning and at it ends up with skill and capacity gaps which affect the smooth operation of county government(54.5%).

It can be deduced from the findings that the county is faced by lack of training and development opportunities for staff which affect the implementation of devolution as a system of governance; that the county has a poor recruitment and selection structures resulting in the recruitment of unqualified staff, and that it does not undertake human resource planning ending up with skill and capacity gaps which affect the smooth operation of county government; that the county does not have effective mechanism to measure and manage employees' performance and this affect the implementation of devolution as a system of governance. These findings are in line with the findings of O'Brien, Pike, and Tomaney (2003) which established that counties have less professional cadres as compared to support staff at a ratio of one professional to four support staff at best, while Mwenda observes that lack of training opportunities, performance management mechanisms among others hinder effective human resources performance at the county levels.

Resource Allocation

Resource allocation was the second objective of the study and consists of finance, human resources, equipment, materials, and corporate information hence it was important to establish whether resource allocation affects the implementation of devolved system of governance.

The results of the analysis shows that majority of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the following statements: the county is not involved in the effective equitable allocation of resources for various purposes in the county (57.5%); the county does not facilitates the definition of county strategic goals or objectives and the resources required to achieve those goals (48.5%); the county has not ensured that the allocated resources are efficiently utilized (60.6%); the county rarely facilitates the review of the allocated resources with the goal of identifying gaps (51.5%); the county has not effectively distributed revenues to all wards and regions within the county(39.4%); the county has not effectively allocated human resources within the operation areas of the county(54.5%); the county has been unable to effectively allocated equipment and other material within the county based on need, priority and policy (48.4%) and that the county has not ensured that information is shared effectively within the county (45.5%).

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From the study results it can be inferred that the county faces the challenge of defining county strategic goals or objectives and the resources required to achieve those goals, facilitating effective equitable allocation of resources for various purposes in the county, and ensuring that the allocated resources are efficiently utilized; that the county faces the challenge of facilitating the review of the allocated resources with the goal of identifying gaps, effectively distributing revenues to all regions within the county; that the county also faces the challenge of effectively allocating human resources equipment and other material within the county based on need, priority and policy and ensuring that information is shared effectively within the county. The findings concur with the findings of Mulwa & Wekhuyi, (2010) which established that even though the devolved unit may possess reliable resources, it experiences challenges in allocating and managing resources dynamically across the most areas of the county and devolved government unit's allocation of resources lead to an under-provisioning of resources.

Accountability

Accountability is the third objective of the study and involves holding county managers to account for meeting standards and expectations of various principals including executives, legislatures, various publics for the use of resources, compliance in meeting legal obligations, efficiency of operations and effectiveness in achieving results and goals.

Findings of the study indicate that majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that: the county has not facilitated the development of control measures of the various operation functions (52.9%); county managers have not ensured that resources are effectively utilized for the intended purpose (61.8%); county management has not facilitated the allocation of necessary resources to monitor and evaluate the performance of the county (50.0%); county managers have facilitated the development of necessary skills and participation of stakeholders in the monitoring and control of resources (54.5%); county managers have not ensured effective and equitable allocation of resources (57.6%); county does not adhere to the highest financial probity (66.7%); county does not comply with the various regulation and policies of the central government and county in its operations (42.5%); county does not submit to oversight to other constitutional mandated oversight bodies (51.5%) and that the county does not adhere to the highest ethical consideration in its operations (54.5%).

Arising from the study it can be concluded that the county faces the challenge of facilitating the development of control measures of the various operation functions and in ensuring that resources are effectively utilized for the intended purpose. It can be inferred that the county management faces the challenge of facilitating the allocation of necessary resources to monitor and evaluate the performance of the county. These findings concur with those of Mwenda (2010) with the observations that creating stronger local accountability of local government is critical to rebalancing power between central and local government, and in providing a platform for a devolved system of performance and assessment.

Stakeholder Capacity Building

Stakeholders' capacity building was the fourth objective of the study focuses on the development of the county awareness, managerial capabilities, institutional responsibilities and operational decision making at all hierarchical levels and across all operational and functional lines of authority while taking into consideration the internal and external environmental factors. Hence the study sought to establish whether stakeholders affect the implementation of county governance in Kenya.

Results of the study shown on table 4.6 above indicate that majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that County management: has not successfully facilitated the coordination of organization functions so as to improve the performance of organization

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(51.5%); county management has not effectively provided the linkage of department goals with those of the organization (54.5%); county management has not successfully facilitated the development of necessary managerial capabilities that each departmental functions require to meet both departmental and organizational objectives (66.7%); county management has not effectively facilitated the allocation of necessary required by each departmental function to deliver the required performance level to meet the organization objectives (57.6%); county management has not successfully facilitated the deployment of institutional responsibilities among the various units of the county(45.5); County management has not effectively enhanced operational decision making in the county(57.6%); county management has not enhanced functional lines of authority within the county(51.5%); county managers rarely take into consideration internal & external environment when making operational decisions (57.6%) and that the county management has not effectively ensured that appropriate information for the performance of the organization functions is available and shared (51.5%).

From the study it can be inferred that county government faces the challenge of strategically facilitating the coordination of organization functions; providing the linkage of department goals with those of the organization, facilitating the development of necessary managerial capabilities that each departmental function requires to meet both departmental and organizational objectives. The study is in alignment with De Toni and Tonchia, (2003) views that in devolved government, one of the greatest benefits arising from the adoption of a strategic approach to decision-making is the premium it places on identifying and strengthening core competence and in achieving strategic co-ordination of function and better information sharing within the devolved system

Test of Significance

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown on table 4.9 below was used to test the , significance of the regression model: $Y = \sim O + \sim 1X1 + \sim 2X2 + \sim 3X3 + \sim .JC4 + E$, using human resource capacity, allocation of resources, accountability and strategic management of resources (independent variables) to determine if they predict the implementation of devolution as a system of governance (dependent variable).

Table 4.7: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.557	5	3.426	3.761	.001
	Residual	23.686	26	.911		
	Total	44.242	31			

Dependent Variable: Implementation of devolution as a system of governance.

Source: Researcher

Findings on table 4.7 above shows that ANOVA test produced an F-value of 3.761 which was significant at $p=0.001$. Hence the variation in the independent variables and dependent variable was explained by the smaller significance value of the F value of 0.001 which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05 implying that that human resource capacity, allocation of resources, accountability and strategic management of resources (independent variables) assists in predicting the implementation of devolution as a system of governance (dependent variable) hence the model fits the data hence significant in explaining the deviations in the dependent variable.

The study used coefficient of determination (R²) for multiple regression to measure the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable that would be explained by variations in the

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independent variables. It also used adjusted coefficient of determination (adjusted R²) to measure the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that would be explained by variations in the independent variables. In analyzing the data, the study used significance level (alpha) of 0.05 (95%), degrees of freedom (df) of 5, and two-tailed test.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std. Error Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.751	0.421	4.159	0.000
Human Resource Capacity	0.112	0.557	2.010	0.002
Resource Allocation	0.308	0.439	2.068	0.000
Accountability	0.216	0.105	2.057	0.003
Strategic Management of Resources	0.203	0.125	2.024	0.001

Dependent Variable: implementation of devolution as a system of governance

Source: Researcher

Table 4.9: Regression Coefficients

The Adjusted (*r*) shows that 34.1% (Adj *r*=0.341) of the variance in the implementation of devolution as a system of governance can be explained by the linear relationship between human resource capacity, allocation of resources, accountability, strategic management of resources and implementation of devolution as a system of governance, while the other 65.9% of the total variance in the implementation of devolution as a system of governance remains unexplained. The regression analysis shown on table 4.19 below sought to determine the combined effect of Human Resource Capacity (HRC), Resource Allocation (RA); Accountability (AC) and Strategic Management of Resources (SMR) on the Implementation of the Devolved System of Government (IDSG):

Summary of Findings

The study established that county governance in Tharaka Nithi County has a number of dynamics. The county is faced by lack of training and development opportunities for staff which affect the implementation of devolution as a system of governance. The study found out that the county does not have effective mechanism to measure and manage employees' performance and this affect the implementation of devolution as a system of governance.

The study found out that the county faces the dynamic of defining county strategic goals or objectives and the resources required to achieve those goals, facilitating effective equitable allocation of resources for various purposes in the county, and ensuring that the allocated resources are efficiently utilized. The study found that the county also faces the challenge of effectively allocating human resources equipment and other material within the county based on need, priority and policy and ensuring that information is shared effectively within the county

The study revealed that the county faces the dynamic of facilitating the development of control measures of the various operation functions and in ensuring that resources are effectively utilized for the intended purpose. The study established that the county faces the challenge of adhering to the highest financial probity, complying with the various regulation and policies of the

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central government, submitting itself to oversight by other constitutional mandated oversight bodies and in adhering to the highest ethical consideration in its operations.

The study found out that county government faces the dynamic of strategically facilitating the coordination of organization functions; providing the linkage of department goals with those of the organization, facilitating the development of necessary managerial capabilities that each departmental function requires to meet both departmental and organizational objectives. The study found out that the county government faces the dynamic of taking into consideration internal & external environment when making operational decisions and in ensuring that appropriate information for the performance of the organization functions is available and shared

5.4: Conclusion of the Study

The county has a poor recruitment and selection structures resulting in the recruitment of unqualified staff, besides lack of training and development opportunities for staff which affect the implementation of devolution as a system of governance. The county does not have effective mechanism to measure and manage employees' performance and this affect the implementation of devolution as a system of governance.

The county faces the dynamic of defining county strategic goals or objectives and the resources required to achieve those goals, facilitating effective equitable allocation of resources for various purposes in the county, and ensuring that the allocated resources are efficiently utilized.

The county faces the dynamic of facilitating the development of control measures of the various operation functions and in ensuring that resources are effectively utilized for the intended purpose, allocation of necessary resources to monitor and evaluate the performance of the county; facilitating the development of necessary skills and participation of stakeholders in the monitoring and control of resources and in ensuring that there is effective and equitable allocation of resources and in adhering to the highest financial probity, complying with the various regulation and policies of the central government, submitting itself to oversight by other constitutional mandated oversight bodies and in adhering to the highest ethical consideration in its operations.

The county government faces the dynamic of strategically facilitating the coordination of organization functions; providing the linkage of department goals with those of the organization, facilitating the development of necessary managerial capabilities that each departmental functions require to meet both departmental and organizational objectives; strategically managing the allocation of necessary resources required by each departmental function to deliver the required performance level to meet the organization objectives.

Recommendations

To reduce overlap and redundancy at the county the county governments need to undertake the process of staff rationalization and redeployment. This is necessary in order to attain lean public services characterized by the ability to deliver in an efficient and effective manner.

To overcome the dynamic of under-provisioning of resources to some sectors during the process of resource allocation, devolved units may allocate and manage resources by optimizing some objective function such as minimizing cost function, cost performance function and meeting objectives; policy-based resource allocation and dynamically allocate resources to high priority areas.

In order to enhance strategic management, the county governments need to focus on the design of work practices management style; and the process for selection, socialization, and development of human capital. The institution structure needs to focus not only on the fit between the institutions and its environment, but also on the harmony among constituent design elements.

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Suggestion for further research

The study only focused on human resources capacity, resource allocation, accountability and strategic management of resources. Hence there is need to widen the study by including a bigger sample size and to include other variables that have not been covered by this study.

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