

Effects of Devolution in Improving Living Standards of Marsabit County, Kenya

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Abstract: The main objectives of the study was to establish how the effects of the devolution improve living standards of Marsabit County. To obtain the required information, the study focuses on the impact of devolution especially in early childhood development, water and health sectors. Devolution is the statutory granting of powers from government of a sovereign state to the government at sub- national level. The government of Marsabit county should provide the best levels of services to the people of the Marsabit county in order to improve their living standards especially in the areas identified above. The health sector, water and early childhood development are the most crucial areas to communities living in the Marsabit County. The study was tried to explain the objectives, problems and scopes of the study in living standard in the Marsabit county and challenges faces in the health sector, water and early childhood programmes. The early childhood development education is the bedrock and foundation of all learning in the life of any child. It is said that a child who goes through ECDE learning successfully has higher chances of excel in the primary and secondary school. The ECDE is most important foundation in the education level and advent of the implementation of the constitution of Kenya (2010), the devolution process herald the devolution of pre- school amongst other devolved functions of the county government. The study based on the objectives and challenges of devolving ECDE services to county and at what extent the communities benefitted from devolved ECDE service to county. The water is the most crucial areas to the life of people living in the Marsabit County. The study was tried to explain at what extent the communities living in the Marsabit County were benefitted from devolved government especially at water sector and challenges the county may faced. The objectives of the devolved water services to the county. The health is also the most important areas to the communities living in the Marsabit County at large. This study was attempted to explain at what extent communities benefitted from devolved health service to county and objectives of devolved health services to the county. The study generally explained how the living standards in the Marsabit County improve in the identified areas above.

Keywords: Water, Early childhood development and health sector.

1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This chapter covered the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, the problem need discussion, turning specific objectives into questions, location and geographical coverage, significance and scope of the study on the effect of devolution in improving living standards of Marsabit County. Marsabit County is the largest county in Kenya situated in the upper eastern province. It covers the area of 70,961.kmsquare. It borders the Ethiopia to the north, the Turkana County to the west, Samburu and Isiolo to the south and Wajir County to the west. Their administrations are divided in four subs – counties namely; Moyale, Saku, North Horr and Laisamis. It has 20 wards and 4 constituencies. Its climatically regions are arid and semi-arid deserts except some high potential areas around Mt.kulai and Mt. Marsabit. The main activities of the communities in the areas are; keeping livestock, small scale farming and micro-business. Within the Marsabit County there are 14 ethnic communities with different cultures although few of them share the same language except few. Before the devolution put in place the Marsabit was marginalized areas. In this marginalized areas the living standard of the people was very poor and this is caused by the lack of enough resource.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS:

The Aballo and Bandan- Rero location has witnessed remarkable expansion, the growth and development activities such as road construction, construction of ECDE class and dispensary. In this regard the Marsabit has been facing a lot of problems such as poor water supply and sanitation, long stay on the queues by women and children waiting for hours for water, problem of noise and air pollution, inadequate of learning resource such as text book and lack of essential drugs in the Hospital. The aim of this study is to provide access to adequate potable water supply, a better sanitation, a better health facilities and also learning facilities through the use of research and advocacy. The objectives are; 1) to identify the pattern of access to public water supply and sanitation, public health care facilities and also learning facilities. 2) To identify the problem of water and sanitation, health sector and Education sector. 3) To design a water and sanitation, health and education with red print for the study area

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Soufflé theory:

The soufflé theory was introduced by Parker (1995) who argued there are three major elements of decentralization, namely: administrative, fiscal, and political decentralization. Parker (1995) emphasize that decentralization is multiple-dimensional process that proceed with success and setbacks. Thus, a successful program of decentralization must include just the right combination of political fiscal and institutional element in improving rural development outcomes (Farooq, Shamil, and Awais, 2008; Laryea – Adjei, 2006). Decentralization initiatives will therefore subject to a continuous process of modification which reflect changes in social, political, and economic conditions (Laryea-Adjei, 2006). There is therefore the need to include all dimensions of political, fiscal, and administrative decentralization.

Political decentralization transfers policy and legislative powers from the central government to the elected local authorities (Arfar, 1999). Local accountability might be promoted through various mechanisms such as third party monitoring by media and NGOs, extensive participation, and central government oversight of local governments (Godda, 2004). Soufflé theory is relevant as it provides an in-depth understanding of political decentralization variable that is examine in this study. The devolution will increase incomes, productivity and literacy hence decreased mortality and growth of civil society. This may improve living standard in Marsabit County.

Principal –Agent theory:

This theory was proposed by Jensen and Meckling (1976). Agency –Theory is relevant to devolved system of government because it provides a good basis for understanding the relationship in which one party (the principal) delegates works to another (agent), who performs the tasks. Politicians act as the agent of citizen and must act in good faith to fulfill the prin-

principles of principal. Agent theory to understand the social accountability practices between citizens and politicians. The principals are the citizens or services users, while politicians as representatives in decision-making organs are agents. This may increase proper governance of resources at the county level and also national level. This may lead to improvement of living standards.

Conceptual framework:

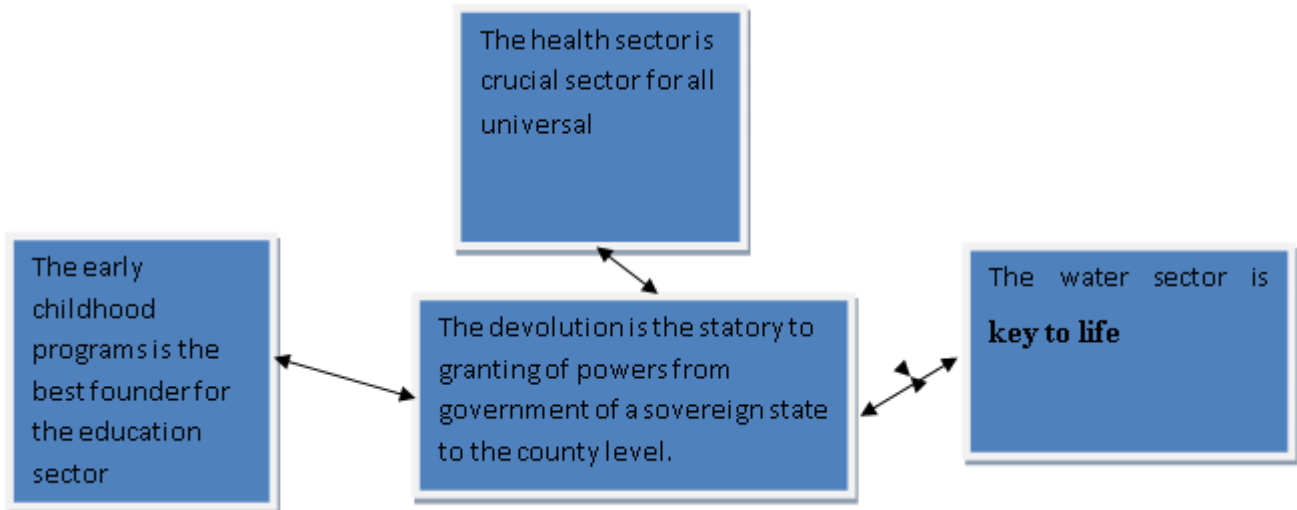


Figure: 1 conceptual framework

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection instrument:

The data this study was obtained from two different sources that are primary and secondary sources.

The primary sources of data used include the following;

1. Physical survey---This survey was under taken to determine the actual location.
2. Oral interview---A forum was organized with the community heads and government leaders.
3. Questionnaires---the questions were asked people especially the head families.

The secondary sources of data used include the following;

- 4 Software---the integrated land water information system was used for the digitization and composition of the maps

Research design:

It is the manner in which data is collected, measured and analyzed in order to accomplish its objectives. The many prefer the descriptive designs provide important clues regarding the issues that the investigator should focus on. This design made it to collect a large amount of data for details analysis since study focus on specific place within the county. Kothari (2008) observe that a descriptive research design is used to get information on the current status of people and their attitude, opinions or any variety of social issues. Therefore study aim at getting information about the effects of devolution in improving living standards of Marsabit County.

Target population:

Population refers to an entire group of events having common observable attributes from where a sample is drawn for the study. Population studies are more representative because everyone has chance to be included in the final sample that is drawn. The study population was based on two place include Amballo and Badan –Rero in Marsabit county. According to Kothari (2008), a target population is the specific population about which information is desired and results generalized. The comparison between previous study and current study are show below based on effects of devolutions on living standards.

Target population

Place	Previous study	Current study
Amballo	30%	56%
Badan rero	20%	60%

Sample and sampling techniques:

In this section only described how the sample size was determined and the sampling techniques used. Sample is a portion of population which are interest to researcher. The important of sampling is to gain an understanding about some attributes of population depend on the nature of sample. The study adopted purposive and stratified sampling methods where subjects are selected in such a way that the existing subgroup in the population.

Data presentation and analysis:

The identification of the areas with inadequate access to potable water supply, sanitation facilities and ECDE of inhabitants of Marsabit County on environmental are issues discussed below; (1) Inadequate to access to people borne (2) The distance travelled from dwelling to source of water. (3) Sources of waste generation in the Marsabit County. (4) High quality ECDE programmes have been found with positive impact.

Respondents

- The communities
- The Marsabit county government officials
- youths and women groups
- CBOS ,NGOS and Religious leaders

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the objectives of the study presents the outcome and discussion of findings. The study sought to set up the effects of devolution in improving living standards of Marsabit county .In this chapter there are analysis and interpretation of questionnaire return rate; respondents' demographic data and areas that the devolution affects the living standards within the Marsabit County. The findings should depend on effects of devolution in these areas; the water sector, health sector and early childhood program in the Marsabit County. The descriptive and statistics such as Pearson correlation and multiple regression computations have been used to present and interpret the findings of the study. The households connected to public water supply are very few and majority uses rain water which is not fit for human consumption and not reliable. Many children less than 10 years of age are engaged in activities of fetching water and this may affect their learning as result the school dropout and poor performance is high.

Also lack of proper water disposal system in the study area where the inhabitant live with no choice than disposing both their solid and liquid waste in open spaces while this dumping leave the environment very untidy. Therefore the total yield of all alternative water sources in the Marsabit County is about 25000 litres and this cannot cater for the ever increasing number of population in the Marsabit County'

RESPONSE RATE:

This is proportion of the sample that attended in all the research procedures. Out of the 72 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, a total of 60 were finished and returned which represents a response rate of 85%. The response rate was fully met the conclusions from the study and was, therefore, representative. According to mugenda and mugenda (2008), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting, 59% is generally good while a response of above 71% is excellent. If there are high response rate indicate that researcher and the trained assistants are personally issued the questionnaires to the respondents so that respondents queries are clearly addressed at point of data collection. The high rate of 85% helps in gathering enough data that could be generalized to determine the effects of devolution in improving living standards of Marsabit County.

Response rate

Number of questionnaires issued	Number of questionnaires filled and returned	Response rate (%)
72	60	85

RESPONDENTS DEMOGRAPHIC:**Gender of the respondents:**

Both men and female participated in the study. Out of 60 respondents who participated in the study, 28 were male representing 50% while 32 were female representing 50%. This indicates that equality is considered between the genders collecting views on the living standards of marsabit.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage frequency
Male	28	47
Female	32	53

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS:

Age of the respondents should be considered in this study. Age could be an important in

Determining who collect views from public on the living standards in the areas

Age bracket	Frequency	percentage
Less than 20 years	8	16
21-35 years	17	34
36-45 years	7	14
46-55 years	12	24
56 and above	6	12
Total	50	100

The finding shows the majority of the residents were age between 21-35 years 34% followed by ages 46-55 years with 24%. Residents with age less than 20 years were represented by 16% while those with 36-45 years were represented by 14% and those with 56 and above years were represented by 12%. This shows that views collected from residents were equally treated regardless of age you are.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS:

This study sought to find out whether the respondents have clear academic qualifications based on the devolution about the living standards in the marsabit.

Academic Qualification	Frequency	percentage
Certificate level	4	6.7
Diploma	9	15
Degree	40	66.7
Masters	7	11.6
	60	100

The above table indicates that the majority of the respondents have a degree with 66.7%, followed by those with diploma with 15%, 11.6% had masters and 6.7% had a certificate. The study shows that the respondents have enough knowledge based on devolution about living standards in Marsabit County.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS:**

The general aims of the study were to determine the effects of devolution on improving living standards of the Marsabit County in Kenya. The study specially determines the effects of devolution on early childhood program, health and water in the Marsabit County. The reviewed literature showed that effective and equal distribution of resources leading to improve living standards in the Marsabit since some of the resources are brought to county level from the national government. This help the marginalized county like marsabit benefitted from the devolved government which lead to improve living standards especially in the health sector , early childhood program and water. The devolution brought positive

change in the place like Marsabit especially in the health sector, education and water. This may aid in improvement living standard of the Marsabit. The previous studies confirm that the living standards of the Marsabit especially in those identified areas are so low. This study further shows that the devolution has positive effect on the health sector, education and water sector. The findings indicated that at least 50% of sub-county of Marsabit is benefitted from devolution which leads to improvement in their living standards.

THE HEALTH SECTOR:

According to the findings, majority of the respondents strongly agreed those health sectors are greatly improved in their services delivery under the devolved government in the Marsabit County. These improve living standards of the people in the Marsabit County. The correlation and multiple regression analysis results aid the findings.

The most of the respondents also agreed that the efficiency in the delivery of health care could improve the living standards.

Cheema and Rondinelli (1983) and (mill et al., 1990) generally argue that a decentralized system can lead to improved:

- Locative efficiency is therefore achieved when health resources are devoted to the most need services.
- Quality, accountability and transparency, due to community participation in the oversight and decision-making processes
- Technical efficiency, through cost-consciousness at the periphery levels.
- Equity, through distribution of resources targeting the marginalized and neglected regions.

In an attempt to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of health care services in the Marsabit County improve living standards.

WATER SECTOR:

According to the findings, the most of the respondents agreed that devolution brought great improvement in the water sector in the Marsabit. The data analyzed from the responses in the questionnaires indicated devolution has significant effect on water sector with both correlation and multiple regression analysis results supporting the findings. Some of the respondents views that the constructing a catchment and dam in the marginalized areas like Badan ro improve living standards. As a devolved institution, local authorities largely perform functions delegated to them by the central government.

In addition, the most of the respondents agreed that sufficient water levels in human biological system and physical environment, human beings use water for industrial, agricultural and domestic purposes. The county government should have responsibility of ensuring that water is available, accessible, adequate, safe and affordable.

The respondents agreed that ensuring citizen accessible to water supply their living standards will automatically improved.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM:

The findings of the study revealed that devolution has positive effects in education levels especially in the early childhood programs in the Marsabit County as supported by the correlation and multiple regression analysis results. Majority of the respondents agreed that the devolution brought great and positive change in the education level especially early childhood program. The equipment of ECDE class will improve living standards of Marsabit because it is the best crucial at education level. This study shows that at least 70% of people in the Marsabit are beneficiaries especially special and need people.

CONCLUSION:

This study aimed at establishing the effects of devolution in improving living standards in the Marsabit. The findings of the study revealed that the devolution significantly and positively affects the living standards of the marsabit people. The revealed further revealed that enhancing the health facilities at the county level lead to improve living standard in the marsabit. The county government equips many dispensaries in each ward within the county level making sure that anyone can access to health care facilities.

The study also show that the special and need people were accessed to the health facilities at the nearest place.

The study further revealed the devolution bring great change at the education level especially early child hood program and this is done by equipping many ECDE classes within each ward. The providing sufficient learning facilities should improve living standards of the marsabit people. Water, health and ECDE are importance to life and lack of these services is destructive to human sanitation as well as the environmental. Despite the existing county government efforts ECDE has not been given adequate attention so as to give all children the necessary formal education. To end the water, health and ECDE problems of Marsabit County the views of the inhabitants should integrated into proper planning. In doing this, a proper hydrological survey to be carried out to ensure the availability of permanent water source and to have proper sanitation. Construction ECD classes in all centers to ensure all children has access to education. Availability of health facilities in all centers and fully equipping of the same.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the basis of the stated findings and conclusion, the devolution was made to help improve living standards especially in the water, health and education sector. The level of significance attached to water, health and ECDE in Marsabit county needs to be raised through the development of appropriate measures. Specific recommendations include the following;

1. Advocacy on importance of access to quality ECDE services.
2. Access to proper sanitation supports from national government.
3. Policy for enhancing proper provision of potable water

The county government of marsabit should ensure that all its citizen accessed to learning and health facilities.

AREAS FOR RESEARCH:

There is need for further research on the emerging issues relating to the devolution which may have positive effects on improving living standards in the Marsabit County. The future study similar to this should be carried out in the other county across the country and findings be compared to help the intended planners and managers find concrete solution to the effects of devolution on improving living standards. Since the study has concentrated on effects of devolution only in the Marsabit County, there is also need to undertake similar studies in the other county in Kenya.

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