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## Internal Factors Influencing Service Delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*Kenya adopted devolved administration in 2013 with an aim of improving efficiency in delivery of government services to citizens. Since the introduction of devolution, County governments have witnessed management and administration challenges in public service due to increased demand and expectations from the citizens. For effective service delivery, County governments develop a service delivery framework which is guided by the County Administration through public participation. The objective of the study was to determine the extent to which leadership style and resource allocation influenced service delivery in the County Government of Kitui. The study adopted a descriptive research design with a population of 303 respondents. Stratified random and simple random sampling methods were used to establish the study sample of 91 respondents. The study was based on primary data which was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Data was collected through questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS version 22 and presented in the form of tables. The study established that leadership style and resource allocation significantly affected the quality-of-service delivery. The study concluded that the County government has adopted a working leadership style and employed relevant strategy in allocating the available resources for effective service delivery. The study recommends that: The County management should adopt modern leadership styles and implement efficient Information Communication Technologies to enhance service delivery. The study further recommends for better planning procedures to maximize utilization of the available resources.*

**Keywords:** Leadership style, resource allocation, service delivery framework

## **1. Introduction**

### *1.1. Background of the Study*

Developed and developing third world countries are adopting devolved administration with an aim of improving efficiency in delivery of government services to citizens (Krishnan, 2014). The devolved way of delivering services continue to gain attention from investors, governments, policy makers and practitioners who are interested in the government operations. According to Mosud and Irene (2018), with the introduction of devolved government system in the public domain, the delivery of services has changed drastically decreasing turn-around time, making fund transfers more effective, improving revenue collection and enhancing management of human resources at the devolved units.

Governments across the world have witnessed management and administration challenges in public service due to increased demand and expectations from the citizens. For effective service delivery, any government must develop a service delivery framework which is guided by principles, policy and management standards (Mosud& Irene, 2018). The framework gives the basic component of the relationship between the government and the citizen. Many developed countries have improved their operations for timely and effective service delivery to meet increased citizens' expectations (Solomon & Zeleke, 2013).

The developed countries have made significant milestones in quality and reliable service delivery to the public. The United States of America has invested heavily in health services including disease surveillance to ensure quality healthcare provision to the society (Baqir&Iyer, 2010). Developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa are not in a position to offer adequate and quality services to the public due to economic factors and political instability issues which result to misuse of the scarce resources (Gichoya, 2005).

In Nigeria, the citizens are constantly protesting because of the quality of public services. Despite having high revenue from petroleum products, the country struggles to offer basic public services as a result of mismanagement. The effects of the mismanagement are felt more by the common citizens since their ability to cater for basic needs becomes impaired (Sarisar, 2015).

In Kenya, the County governments have experienced many challenges in the process of delivering services to the public since creation of devolved system of government (Maina, 2013). The challenges revolve around factors such as County leadership style, availability of resources, political climate and corruption. Service delivery is also affected by strategic factors which are based on the County governments' key objectives (Mbiya, Egessa&Musiega, 2014). The strategic factors include the service delivery planning, strategic leadership style, strategic orientation and strategic environmental influence from the National government. According to Maina (2013), the services frequently delivered by

the County governments are considered ineffective due to lack of coordination between the government and other stakeholders in addition to unprofessionalism which significantly affects proper management of public resources. In order to improve the quality-of-service delivery, the County administration must develop roadmaps to be used as guidelines by those offering county public services as well as the various stakeholders (Onyoni&Kavale, 2018).

Pursuant to the Constitution of Kenya 2010, majority of government functions were devolved to the County level. The key devolved functions include agriculture, health services, basic education, planning and infrastructure (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). The County governments have the responsibility to ensure that the provision of services is to a satisfactory level. The constitution of Kenya 2010 gives operational guidelines and frameworks for the delivery of services in the devolved units. Article 6 of the constitution divided the Country into 47 Counties to ensure that services are efficiently delivered to all citizens. It further states that a National state organ has a responsibility to ensure timely and quality public service access (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

Kitui County is mandated by the Kenyan Constitution to deliver services to the public through the devolved system of Government. For effective service delivery, the government has followed the laid down procedures to ensure efficient service delivery to the people of Kitui. Before the start of a financial year, the government conducts public participation in all planning units to collect information on the people's priorities using the need-based approach. The priorities are captured in the annual estimates and vetted by the County Assembly. Every County ministry is required to execute the approved projects, all of which pass through public participation, once resources are made available (Public Finance Management Act, 2012).

Service delivery is affected by many aspects ranging from County culture, County management structure, leadership style and resource allocation. Other aspects include political interference, corruption and climatic changes. The County has prioritized Universal health care, Food and water, Wealth creation, Education and youth development and Women empowerment as the key service delivery targets.

### *1.2. Statement of the Problem*

Noticeable inefficiencies have been witnessed in the delivery of devolved government functions especially in the developing countries. Public service is faced with myriad of challenges ranging from corruption, political interference, poor working conditions, outdated systems, insufficient funds, tribalism, nepotism, ineffective procedures and practices among others (Krishnan, 2014). Past studies have identified misappropriation of County resources as a major factor influencing service delivery. Clients and stakeholders are constantly complaining about the deficiency of government services (Ojokuku, 2013)

The cardinal principle underpinning devolution is the need to decentralize administrative, financial and political power to the local level. As a result of devolution, County governments have significantly become the avenue for the delivery of government services which has now made resource allocation a key factor in government performance. County governments in Kenya have developed different mechanisms to address the factors influencing service delivery in order to improve efficiency of public services to the citizens and other stakeholders. These factors have affected the effectiveness and efficiency of public service. Kitui County was especially affected by leadership change. The County is also faced with financial constraints due to insufficient allocation from National government and poor performance in local revenue collection.

Since the establishment of the two levels of government, no specific scholar has investigated the relationship between the internal factors and service delivery specifically in Kitui County. This research will study the influence of internal factors on service delivery in the public sector focusing on the County Government of Kitui hence answer the question; what influence do internal factors have on service delivery in Kitui County?

### *1.3. Research Objectives*

- To establish the influence of leadership style on service delivery in the County Government of Kitui.
- To determine the influence of resource allocation on service delivery in the County Government of Kitui

### *1.4. Research Questions*

- What is the influence of leadership style on service delivery in the County Government of Kitui?
- How does resource allocation influence the service delivery in the County Government of Kitui?

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Theoretical Review*

The section explains the theoretical background of the study objectives which is underpinned on the institutional theory and Kurt Lewin's force theory of change.

### *2.2. Institutional Theory*

The theory was derived by Meyer and Rowan (1977) and is based on the institutional behavior and the extent of the service delivery resilience. The theory explains the organizational normative of innovation, developing and determining the institutional standards on service delivery. The leadership skills are related to the operational activities and the resources available in the provision of economic stability and promotion of social life for the organizational employees and stakeholders (Meyer & Rowan, 1977)

The theory gives an association of institutional activities which are transferred in different carriers of symbolic systems to promote service delivery. This is attributed to the organizational systems, work routines and culture which determine the level of service delivery jurisdiction from the international level to the personal contributions and to the institution goals. According to the theory, an institution experiences dynamic change, both incremental and discontinuous, subject to the delivery processes (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

The study targeted resource allocation and leadership style on which the theory is based. It considers organization working structures and processes which include the working rules and regulations, schemes of work established under the authoritative rules and guidelines for social behavior from the management. The theory explains how strategic plan creation is made effective, disseminated and adopted by the County administration and the staff. The County development plans are developed and implemented within a defined period of time as guided by the constitution of Kenya 2010 and other relevant legislations (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

### *2.3. Kurt Lewin's Force Theory of Change*

The theory was established by Kurt Lewin (1957) who developed a three-step change model. The basic objective of the model was to assist in implementing services within the public sector. The theory indicates that organizational performance behavior is a very dynamic working force which gives an opposing direction. The working forces facilitate and motivate the leadership style and employees to the expected goals. However, in most organizations restraining forces are experienced making the leadership style to operate in the opposite direction. The theory is based on the Lewin's three-step model which assists in maintaining equilibrium on the management shift within the organization.

The first step is to unfreeze which involves the process of changing the leadership style and employee behavior from the existing norms and work behaviors. The second step in the process of changing behavior is movement in which the change targets are promoted to next management level of equilibrium. The third step is refreezing after the first two steps have been achieved. In this stage, the management needs to be strategic enough for the change to be sustainable within a period of time. Lewin's third step in implementation of service delivery is enforced through introduction of innovative patterns and institutionalizing of policies and procedures. The theory is relevant in County government service delivery since counties have the mandate of transforming management and employees' behavior from the defunct local authorities' practices to productive norms guided by policies and guidelines under the devolved system of government.

### *2.4. Empirical Review*

#### 2.4.1. Organizational Leadership style on Service Delivery

Organizational leadership style drives the effectiveness of service delivery in the public sector in Kenya and involves economic planning, power sharing, politics, government communications and staff motivation. Wangari (2011) in her study on implications of E-Government on public policy and challenges of adopting technology established that proper and timely planning ensures that the organization is effective in offering its services. This is attained through professionalism by the managers who act as drivers for the goals and objectives of the organization. Siddle and Koelble (2012) examined the failure of decentralization in South African local government and argued that technical skills of the service delivery staff promote transparency in forecasting project development in relation to resource allocation. Planning guarantees the expected outcome and provides strategic options in achieving set goals and core objectives using scarce resources.

A study carried out by Ojokuku (2013) in relation to implementation and evaluation of service delivery established that planning enables an organization to keep track of its performance. Lack of it on the other hand increases the chances of underperformance and resource under-utilization in service delivery. Onyoni and Kavale (2018) in their study on strategic factors affecting service delivery in County governments of Kenya stated that organization members with more power and political good will tend to influence the service delivery either positively or negatively especially in areas where their input will be recognized. Success in an organization is based on how strong and powerful individuals contribute to the organizations' goals and objectives.

#### 2.4.2. Resources Allocation on Service Delivery

Onyoni (2018) in his study on strategic factors affecting service delivery in County governments of Kenya indicated that due to mismanagement of funds experienced in most of developing countries, the financial spending should be subjected to an audit process to ensure that every expenditure is budgeted for and is consistent with laid down guidelines and procedures. Kline and Sulsky (2011) carried out a study on measurement and assessment issues in performance appraisal and established that proper management of financial resources guarantees effective service delivery to the public. Organizations with proper allocation of resources tend to achieve their goals and objectives in an efficient way as compared to those without. Efficient financial management ensures that bills and salaries are paid on time to avoid unnecessary litigations and keep employees motivated.

Egessa and Manyasi (2016) carried a study on allocation of resources to human capital for skills development with regard to ICT related training on customer service delivery. The Study established that an organization with well trained and high skilled employees is likely to offer quality service while poorly trained employees tend to minimize the probability of achieving an effective and efficient service. Krishnan (2014) in his study on electronic government maturity in Singapore established that for the last two decades, organizations have developed training departments to monitor the progress of the less skilled and the skilled employees who tend to gain more knowledge on their respective areas of work. In his study on factors that affect Municipal service delivery in Gauteng and North West provinces of South Africa in 2013,

Solomon argued that technology ensures smooth and fair resource allocation within the organization hence effective service delivery.

### 2.5. Conceptual Framework

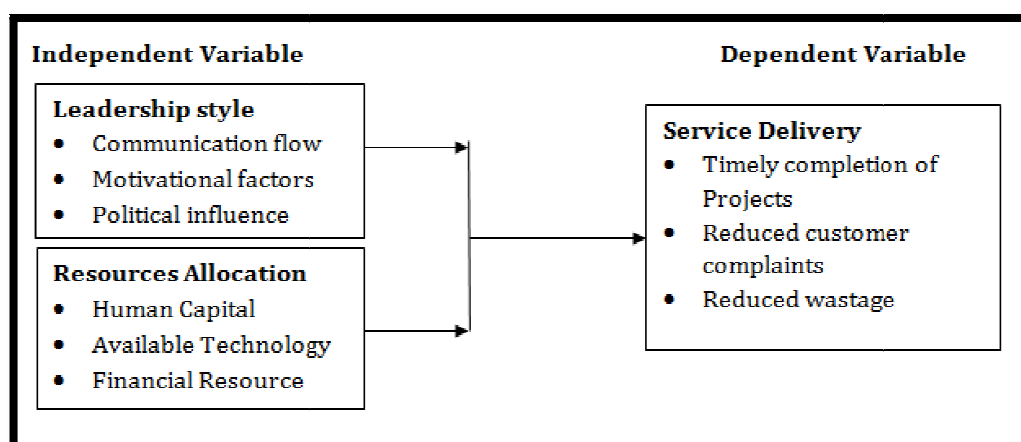


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1. Research Design and Sampling

The study adopted a descriptive research design with a target population of 303 employees from the County Executive, Top Management, Middle Management and Operations Level. The study employed stratified random sampling where staff were selected all the management levels. The study adopted a sample size of 30% for every stratum.

Management Level	Population	Sample
Top Management	8	2
Middle Management	9	3
Lower Management	30	10
Operational Staff	256	76
Total	303	91

Table 1: Population and Sample

### 3.2. Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

The study was based on primary data which was both qualitative and quantitative; and collected by use of questionnaires. Collected data was coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22 and presented using tables. In addition, Regression analysis was used to ascertain the relationship between the dependent (service delivery) and independent variables (organizational leadership style and resource allocation). The study model was:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon$$

Where Y=Service Delivery;  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta_1$  &  $\beta_2$ =Constant;  $X_1$ =Leadership Style;  $X_2$ =Resource Allocation;  $\epsilon$ =Error

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Reliability Test

Before the real research was carried on, a reliability test was conducted to establish how effective the procedure of answering the study questions was. The reliability test Cronbach alpha was above 0.7 hence treated as reliable as shown in table 1.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.862	.867	59

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

### 4.2. Analysis of Response Rate

Response rate was used to determine the reliability of data collection. From the study, 91 questionnaires were administered across management levels within the County where 86 were filled and returned. This gave a 94.5% response rate as shown in the table 2 below.

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Responded	86	94.5 %
Declined	5	5.5 %
Total	91	100%

Table 3: Response Rate Analysis

#### 4.3. Gender Analysis of Respondents

The table Manasi 4 below shows the gender of the respondents from all management levels.

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	40	46.5
Female	46	53.5
Total	86	100.0

Table 4: Gender

#### 4.4. Age of Respondents

Figure 1 below presents the respondent's age. The study indicated that majority in the service delivery team are aged between 31-40 years, meaning that the County workforce is composed mainly of the productive age.

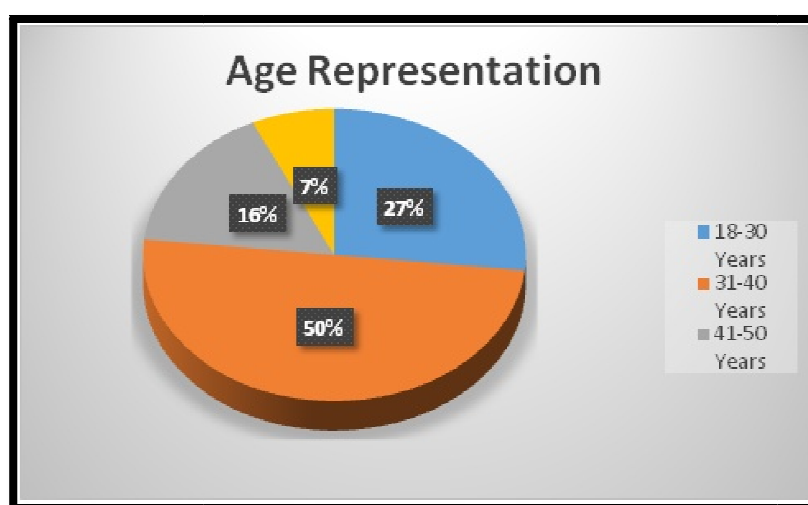


Figure 1: Age

#### Table 5: Education Level of Respondents

Table 4 below presents the respondents' level of education. From the study, the County government has employed qualified staff to drive service delivery.

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Secondary	4	4.7
College	30	34.9
University	52	60.5
Total	86	100.0

Table 5: Level of Education

#### 4.5. Job Designation of Respondents

Table 6 below presents the job designation of the respondents. The study established that service delivery in Kitui County involves all level of management within the government hierarchy. It was also established that the County Government has a lean organizational structure with few officers at the top management and a bulk of the employees placed at implementation level. This created room for improved efficiency since decision making and feedback systems take shorter time, while also improving communication.

Job Designation	Frequency	Percent
County Executive	2	2.3
Chief Officer	3	3.5
Director	3	3.5
Deputy Director	1	1.2
Assistant Director	5	5.8
Operational Staff	72	83.7
Total	86	100.0

Table 6: Job Designation

#### 4.6. Work Experience of Respondents

Figure 2 below presents the respondents working experience in public service. From the study, most of the staff were recruited after devolution in 2013 to coordinate service delivery since 37.2% had between 1-5 years of experience. The staff devolved or transferred to County level represented 11.6% with experience between 11-15 years, 10.5% for 16-20 years, 4.7% for 21-25 years and 4.7% for 26 years and above. From the respondents' experience analysis, the research established that a higher number of employees have above 5 years of experience translating to a workforce which is conversant with organizational and management practices.

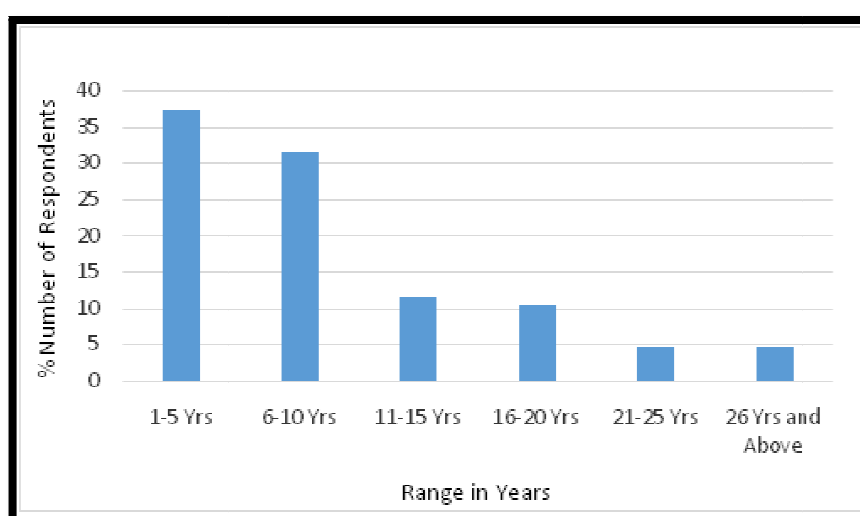


Figure 2: Work Experience

#### 4.7. Influence of Leadership Style and Resource Allocation on Service Delivery

Table 7 below presents how respondents agreed on the influence of leadership style and Resource Allocation on service delivery within the County. The study established that Leadership style and resource allocation influenced service delivery in the County government. This meant that service delivery would be greatly affected by the exercise of inappropriate leadership styles as well as non-strategic allocation of resources.

Aspect	SD(1)	D(2)	U(3)	A(4)	SA(5)
Leadership Style	5.8	4.7	12.8	31.4	45.3
Resource Allocation	3.5	9.3	9.3	41.9	36

Table 7: Internal Factors and Service Delivery

#### 4.8. Empirical Findings of the Study

##### 4.8.1. Leadership Style

From the study, there is availability of leadership styles within the County government supported by 83.7% of the population. The County government has mainly adopted three main types of leadership styles which are: autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style and strategic leadership style. Other leadership styles which may be found in the County government are transformational style, team leadership style, cross-cultural leadership style, facilitative leadership style and laissez-faire leadership style.

#### 4.9. Leadership Style Influence on Service Delivery

Table 8 below presents leadership aspects and their influence on service delivery. The study indicates that political opinion influenced service delivery in the County since the executive and the assembly members are politically elected and therefore carrying political promises.

Leadership Style Influence	Frequency	Percent
Communication Flow	28	32.6
Staff Motivated	20	23.3
Political opinions	38	44.2
Total	86	100.0

Table 8: Leadership Style Influence on Service Delivery

#### 4.9.1. Leadership Style Aspects

Table 9 below presents the leadership style aspects and their influence on service delivery in County government. The study established that County management has the skills and ability to make timely and achievable strategic goals with a mean of 3.6 and standard deviation of 1.181, Management has the skills and ability to make timely and achievable strategic goals with mean of 3.66 and standard deviation of 1.123 indicating a general agreement of the respondents to the aspect, Management has the skills and ability to monitor and evaluate the service delivery strategies with mean of 3.56 and standard deviation of 1.001, Leaders in the County consistently demonstrate mutual trust and behaviour focused on driving exceptional performance with mean of 3.03 and standard deviation of 1.260, Staff within the County consistently demonstrate mutual trust and behaviors focused on driving exceptional performance with mean of 3.14 and standard deviation of 1.209.

Leadership Style Aspects	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Management has the skills and ability to make good, timely and achievable decisions	86	1	5	3.60	1.181
Management has the skills and ability to make timely and achievable strategic goals	86	1	5	3.66	1.123
Management has the skills and ability to monitor and evaluate the service delivery strategies.	86	1	5	3.56	1.001
Leaders in the County consistently demonstrate mutual trust and behaviour focused on driving exceptional performance	86	1	5	3.03	1.260
Staff within the County consistently demonstrate mutual trust and behaviors focused on driving exceptional performance	86	1	5	3.14	1.209

Table 9: Leadership Style Aspects

#### 4.10. Resource Allocation on Service Delivery

From the study, the respondents agreed that resource allocation has significant influence on service delivery within the County since there is resource allocation strategy in the County government. The study established that there are strategies to allocate the available resources, both financial and human.

#### 4.11. Resource Allocation Methods

Figure 3 below presents the resource allocation methods used by the County government in service delivery. The study established that the County government resources are allocated majorly based on needs of the citizens as expressed through public participation forums. In some other instances however, the allocation is done by merit and random assignment. Allocation by social worth was barely used.

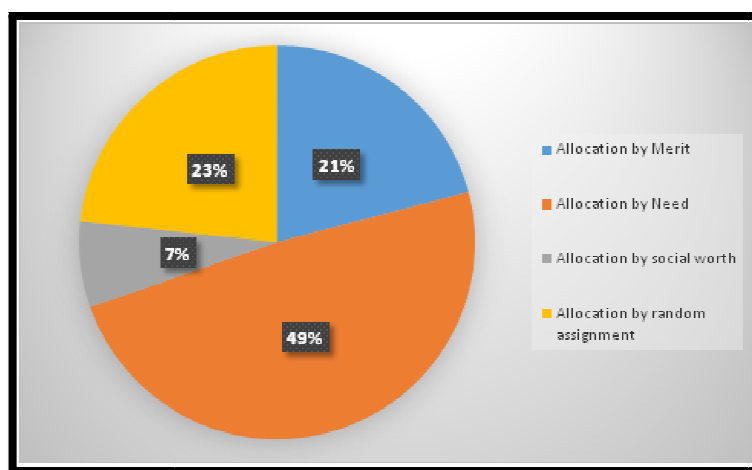


Figure 3: Resource Allocation Methods

#### 4.11.1. Influence of Resource Allocation Method on Service Delivery

Table 10 below presents how the methods of resource allocation have influenced service delivery. The study established that the use of appropriate resource allocation method influenced service delivery through effective public participation, timely service delivery, uniform distribution of resources and delivery of quality services.

Service Delivery Influence	Frequency	Percent
Uniform distribution of services	17	19.8
Timely service delivery	25	29.1
Public participation	30	34.9
Quality service delivery	11	12.8
Any Other	3	3.5
Total	86	100.0

Table 10: Influence of Resource Allocation Method

#### 4.11.2. Resource Allocation Factors Influence on Service Delivery

Resource allocation in Kitui County is influenced by human capital with mean of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.219, technology with mean of 3.57 and standard deviation of 1.112 and financial resources with mean of 3.86 and standard deviation of 1.170 as presented in table 11 below. The study established that human capital, technology and financial resources influence service delivery at similar levels.

Resource Allocation Factor	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Human capital	86	1	5	3.62	1.219
Technology	86	1	5	3.57	1.112
Financial resources	86	1	5	3.86	1.170

Table 11: Resource Allocation Factors

#### 4.12. Resource Allocation Aspect

Table 12 below presents how aspects of resource allocation influence service delivery in the County government. From the study, there are sufficient resources available to enable smooth service delivery at a mean of 3.12, each Ministry/department has adequate budget for staff training at a mean of 2.98, and there is fairness or uniform resource distribution across the ministries within the County at a mean of 2.86.

The study indicated that every resource allocation is factored in the annual estimates and approved by Assembly at a mean of 3.43 indicative of a general agreement, the resources allocation involved the public and other stakeholders within the County at a mean of 3.27, internal controls within the County are frequently reviewed and improved at a mean of 2.98 as the members remained mainly neutral, resources are allocated to the most urgent projects and programmes at a mean range of 3.33, there is timely allocation and disbursement of resources to all ministries at a mean range of 2.88.



Resource Allocation Aspect	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
There are sufficient resources available to enable smooth service delivery.	86	1	5	3.12	1.212
Each Ministry/department has adequate budget for staff training.	86	1	5	2.98	1.301
There is fairness or uniform resource distribution across the ministries within the County.	86	1	5	2.86	1.276
Every resource allocation is factored in the annual estimates and approved by Assembly.	86	1	5	3.43	1.203
The resources allocation involved the public and other stakeholders within the County.	86	1	5	3.27	1.142
Internal controls within the County are frequently reviewed and improved	86	1	5	2.98	1.227
Resources are allocated to the most urgent projects and programmes	86	1	5	3.33	1.269
There is timely allocation and disbursement of resources to all ministries.	86	1	5	2.88	1.314

Table 12: Resource Allocation Aspect

#### 4.13. Regression Analysis

Table 13 below presents the study model summary. From the study, the R squared value of 0.177 measured the extent of variability of service delivery as predicted by Resource Allocation and Leadership style. The study value presented a medium effect of independent variables to the dependent. The R squared value means that the study variables of internal factors have a 17.7% influence on the level of service delivery.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.420 <sup>a</sup>	.177	.136	.888

Table 13: Model Summary

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

b. Predictors: (Constant), Resource Allocation, Leadership Style

Table 14 below presents the ANOVA analysis. The study established that the F-value of 4.345 is more than the confidence level 0.05 hence rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant relationship between the service delivery and resource allocation, leadership style in Kitui County Government. In addition, the P-value from the study is 0.003 which is less than the confidence level of 0.05 thus rejecting the null hypothesis.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.707	4	3.427	4.345	.003 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	63.886	81	.789		
	Total	77.593	85			

Table 14: Anova Analysis

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

b. Predictors (Constant): Resource Allocation, Leadership Style

Table 15 below presents the study coefficients in the regression model. From the study, the variables constants are 0.156 and 0.093 which results to regression model:  $Y = 2.128 + 0.156x_1 + 0.093x_2$ . The regression model implies that a unit increase in independent variable ( $x_1$ ) results to increase in service delivery by 0.156 while a unit increase in independent variable ( $x_2$ ) results to increase in service delivery by 0.093.

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.128	.437		4.872	.000
Leadership style( $x_1$ )	.156	.114	.186	1.361	.177
Resource Allocation( $x_2$ )	.093	.117	.105	.794	.429

Table 15: Study Coefficients

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Leadership Style on Service Delivery

The first objective of the study was to determine the influence of leadership style on service delivery in Kitui County. From the study, there is availability of leadership styles within the County government as indicated by eighty-three-point seven percent of the total sample. The respondents agreed that leadership styles in the County significantly affect the service delivery at a rate of seventy-six-point seven percent. The findings are supported by Novo and Garrido (2010) who established that leadership is key in organizational performance. From the study, leadership styles adopted by the County government include autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, strategic leadership style, transformational style, team leadership style, cross-cultural leadership style, facilitative leadership style and laissez-faire leadership style.

The study investigated the influence of leadership aspects on service delivery and established that timely and detailed information flow from the executive to service delivery staff has significant influence on service delivery. Staff motivation improves service delivery when staff salaries, allowances and other benefits are paid on time according to Chen (2012). Moreover, political opinions influenced service delivery in the County since the executive and the assembly members are elected politically. The study on the leadership aspects and their influence on service delivery indicated that the County management has the skills and ability to make good, timely and achievable decisions hence effective service delivery.

The County management has the skills and ability to make timely and achievable strategic decisions which are need based with the available resources both human and financial. The County management has the skills and ability to monitor and evaluate the service delivery strategies. Due to this, the County government has developed a monitoring and evaluation department which coordinates service delivery. On the contrary, Cater and Pucko (2010) lacked monitoring and evaluation for their projects which resulted to partial implementation. The County leaders and employees have consistently demonstrated mutual trust and behavior focused on driving exceptional performance. The study established that County management has the skills and ability to make timely and achievable strategic goals.

### 5.2. Resource Allocation on Service Delivery

The second objective of the study was to establish the effect of resource allocation on service delivery within the County government. The study indicated that there is a resources allocation strategy within the County government through annual budgets whose development process includes public participation. The study is supported by Awino (2015) who showed that public involvement in budgeting is a basic component of sustainable development. The County service delivery hugely depends on the equitable share, grants and own revenue which ought to be procedurally budgeted for in accordance with the County strategy. This gives the management road-map for fair distribution of resources. From the study, the respondents uniformly agreed that resource allocation is a key factor in service delivery with seventy seven percent.

The study established that the resource allocation methods used by the County government in service delivery included merit allocation whereby projects are factored on first come first served basis. In this method, benefiting services may be ignored when they come last in the merit. According to Bauer, Braun, and Clark (2008) resource allocation by need basis gives the organization management the ability to implement the urgent services which are highly beneficial to the people. The social worth of the people is also considered in the resource's allocation for fair distribution among the social classes. Some services are allocated resources based on the random assignment where the service to be implemented is picked by random sampling.

The method of resource allocation influenced service delivery through uniform distribution of services, timely service delivery, public participation and delivery of quality services. The study established that the service delivery method was improved by effective public participation at thirty-four-point nine percent. Solomon and Zeleke (2013) argued that resources allocation determines the level of service delivery in the public sector.

The study established that aspects of resource allocation influence service delivery in County government through the distribution of human capital, availability of information technology and financial resources as supported by Sarisar (2015). In addition, the study established that there are sufficient resources available to enable smooth delivery of services, each ministry/department has adequate budget for staff training and that there is fairness or equitable resource distribution across the ministries within the County.

The study indicated that financial allocations are factored in the budget in form of annual estimates and approved by the County Assembly, resources allocation involved the public and other stakeholders within the County, there are internal controls within the County which are frequently reviewed and improved, all resources are allocated to the most urgent projects and programmes and that there is timely allocation and disbursement of resources to all ministries.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 6.1. Conclusion

County governments have achieved a number of milestones as a result of devolved planning for some government functions. However, there are challenges such as negative politics and insufficient allocation of resources which have influenced the quality of services delivered. Due to public involvement in planning and evaluation of services, counties are obligated to enhance service delivery to the citizenry failure to which they face public wrath.

The study concludes that leadership style plays a major role in service delivery and thus the County management should embrace major reforms in the styles they employ guided by the constitution of Kenya 2010. The County public service must ensure that service delivery is not affected by the political climate and that there is always smooth flow of timely information across the ministries and with other stakeholders.

Although resources are always scarce and insufficient in project implementation, those available should be maximally utilized through proper budgeting and prudent management. The County employs need and merit-based planning and ensures that social audits are done after project execution as part of evaluation.

## 6.2. Recommendations

### 6.2.1. County Government

The researcher recommends that the County Government adopts modern service delivery techniques in order to attain high levels of service delivery with respect to effectiveness and efficiency. The County management should employ proper leadership style and offer staff trainings on management. In addition, the County public service should be highly motivated especially those working in hardship areas.

The study also recommends that the County government embraces timely planning and proper allocation of resources through preparation of strategic plans and effective budgeting. Staff should also be empowered to make crucial decisions in the County government since this not only promotes creativity but also boosts their morale.

### 6.2.2. Policy Makers

The researcher recommends that the national government, the council of governors and County assemblies make enhanced policies in relation to County management for effective service delivery. These policies will ensure smooth management of both financial and human resources available within the County. In addition, the Senate should ensure fair distribution of resources to counties with the national treasury ensuring timely disbursement of funds.

### 6.2.3. Academia

The researcher recommends for more studies on devolved system of government in Kenya with this study being used as a reference. The researchers should share study results and recommendations to County governments for improvement of service delivery to the public.

## 7. Suggestion for Further Research

The study recommends that further study be carried out on the external factors affecting service delivery in the County Government of Kitui or any other government for purposes of improving public service.

The researcher recommends that similar studies be carried out across all the other forty-six counties factoring both internal and external factors which influence public service delivery.

The study was based on the executive part of the County management who implement the services to the public. From the research, a further study can be carried out with respondents from the County assembly, members of the public, NGOs, FBOs and social groups.

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