

Assessing the extent of Local citizen participation in the budgeting process in Turkana County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Local citizen participation is a fundamental aspect in the democratic development and governance processes fostering accountability, transparency and inclusive decision making. Turkana county government face unique development challenges despite receiving huge allocation from the national coffer yearly. However, Local citizen participation has remained uncertain, with a lot of questions directed to the level of community engagement and effectiveness of the participation mechanisms. The study seeks to assess the extent of Local citizen participation in the budgeting process in Turkana County, Kenya. The study was guided by Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation theory propounded by Sherry Arnstein in 1969. The study adopted descriptive research design while closed-ended questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data from 271 respondents from the Turkana central constituency particularly in Lodwar, Kalokol and Kerio ward. The qualitative and quantitative data sets were analyzed through thematic content analysis and inferential statistics respectively. The findings revealed that the local citizen actively participate in budgetary process, local citizen access information on policies, plans and frameworks, Local citizens participate in decision making, local citizens are consulted in the budgetary process, and they collaborate with other stakeholders in Turkana County to develop and implement budget through joint planning. The linear regression model's finding revealed that there was a positive correlation between extent of local citizen participation and budgetary process in Turkana County which was confirmed by the Pearson's correlation coefficient ($r = .526$ with a prediction of 27.4 of the variances. The model was a good fit for the data $F(1, 270) = 102.912, p < .000$). The study recommended that the future studies to assess level of local citizen participation in the budgetary process either at budgetary formulation, implementation or audit stage to influence development of interventions vital for creating efficient, effective, inclusive and transparent governance that serves the needs of citizens.

Keywords: Local citizen participation, Budgetary process, County

Introduction

The public participation concept has evolved overtime and adopted different wordings such as community participation, beneficiary participation, stakeholders' participation, and local citizen participation (Cornwall, 2006:62). In the early 1970s many reports, studies and programmes for the UN included principles of public participation as a key element for their actions and defined it as efforts contributing to the development of goals, policies formulation and implementation of social economic activities in respect to collective act (Midgely 1988:249). Profound challenge experienced in participatory processes in practice was as result of emergence of social movement witnessed in Latin America, United states, Asia and Europe (Cartliz, 2013:23). Cartliz further narrated that, civil societies across the globe criticized this notion to challenge discrimination, dominant ideologies and inequalities within balance of power and defend the political move championing dominance of few in the society. Calves (2009:735) mentioned that the movement advocated for changes to the way resources were managed, utilized and distributed and further called for structural and institutional transformation in state, market, Family, media and Education.

Public participation approach was theorized under principle of empowerment to focus on elevating poverty rather than transformation of ecosystem deemed fit to support human habitation (Calvès, 2009:735, Cornwall, 2008:269, Bacqué & Biewener, 2013:173). As noted by Cornwall (2008:269) & Cornwall (2006:62), participation was the only strategy used to increase efficiency and effectiveness for the developmental programs and initiatives. According to Calvès (2009:735),

empowerment techniques focused on helping impoverished people discover their own ways out of poverty rather than taking a collective approach to transforming social, political, and interpersonal realms. The empowerment strategies adopted as principle of public participation was based on the individual contribution in elevating vulnerable poor groups in the societies as opposed to collective decisions of the state with no citizen participation (Calvès, 2009:735). Transformation in 1980s-1990s following structural adjustment programmes was pegged on economic rather than social or political ground (Cornwall, 2008:269).

According to Cornwall this was perceived as a means of enlisting the public in tasks that were previously at province of the state by assigning them the delivery-related responsibilities. Because of their perceived cost-effectiveness and ability to reach impoverished groups beyond the purview of the markets, aid organizations supported civil society with resources and access to the affected groups building resilience towards shocks and stresses (Fowler, 1988:249). In South Korea, introduction of open budget discussion to the public as a public participation mechanism parallel to the rigid budget reforms since 2003 led to successful public meetings to review programmes priority and expenditure ceilings for 12 sectors. Moreso, the budget open discussion mechanism which was initially state monopolized was televised to reach a wider coverage of the public (IMF, 2018:43). Moreover, the government sponsored the public for a field trip across the country to provide input which led to formulation of the robust participatory budget with citizens' needs and priorities (IBP, 2012:15).

Petrie & Shields (2010:9) stated that, Ghana government in 2006 published a public participation guideline for the budgeting process with the support from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Petrie further mentioned that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning encouraged citizens to adopt a culture for participation in formulate on of fiscal policies and legal frameworks to facilitate preparation of annual budgets. The public participation guide provides a clear framework which stipulates purpose and objective summarized in the budget statement and economic policy (2007). Ghana has continuously ensured the public are informed of government processes through publication, fact sheets, and newsletters to ensure transparency in government operations. Incorporation of fiscal transparency principles in the budgeting process in Benin and Rwanda showed an improvement in the open Budget survey report (2021:51). Benin and Rwanda improvement reflects a continuous effort by the government and its institutions in ensuring the budget process is inclusive and reflects local citizen's interest and demands. The open budget survey report (2019) showed Benin transparency score had jumped from 49 surpassing threshold score of 61 becoming the only francophone country in Africa to be ranked the best improved based on performance (Open budget survey, 2021:51).

In Kenya, public participation is a matter of national interest and has been emphasized in various provisions under Constitution of Kenya 2010, Public finance management Act 2012, County government Act 2012 and Intergovernmental act 2013. These legal frameworks provide guidelines to enforce implementation of principles of public participation in the development processes in county government and national government. In Turkana County since devolution, development of budgets and implementation of the projects has been criticized for not addressing the challenges faced by the Turkana community such as Lack of access to clean water, health, education services and poor infrastructures as results of misplaced priorities, incomplete projects, shift of funds to support emerging activities which were not budgeted. It is a result of this; Turkana County is still underdeveloped despite receiving huge allocations from national coffer making it necessary to conduct this study to examine not only controversies surrounding credibility of the budgetary process and extent of local citizens participations in Turkana County but also contribute to the academic literature.

Literature review

Justice & Dulger (2009:254) noted that there is no authentic and meaningful public participation in the budgetary process without explicit transparency. Fölscher (2010:14) echoed this idea by observing that lack of transparency hinders accountability hence preventing public participation. Moreso, Ott et al (2016:16) argue that the citizen can effectively participate in any activities which concern them only if they have access to tangible and reliable information budget and its processes in particular. According to Petrie (2011:6) availability of information, accountability, clarity of roles and responsibilities, forms and levels of participation are tenets of fiscal transparency. Musa, et al (2015:415) noted that without systems which enhances transparency and accountability there will be no inclusion or participation of the public hence paving ways for corruption in the entire process of budgeting process which Musa (2014:7) gave a meaning that a non-transparent government cannot be considered as accountable, efficient, effective and legitimate.

Fornes (2014:16) pointed out that there is evidence attributing improvement of a country's economy to the connection between fiscal transparency and public participation, since transparency and public participation can help control leaks and improve allocation of public spendings as well as promoting equality in distribution of resources in line with citizen preferences. In this regard, transparency can help the government to obtain international credit at a lower cost. According to Ott et al (2016:17) access to complete, accurate, timely and comprehensible budget information by citizens can

increase transparency and accountability in management and utilization of the budget's estimate to meet government goals.

Heimans (2002:6) noted that public participation reduces clientelism and corruptions because it leads to public having trust and confidence in the management of institutions' affairs thus increasing democratization in formulation of macro-economic policies which may by virtue of public learning about the resource allocation decision government faces lead to realization of the public expectation on what the government can deliver through budget policies. Heimans also noted that lack of personnels and funds may lead to slow public participation in budgetary process which might leads to delay in approval and implementation of the budget but as long as the government provides citizens with timely, accurate and accessible information in regards to budget process public participation will be truly counterproductive.

Bräutigam (2004:654) stated that there are numerous ways in which the public can provide inputs in the budget making process. Indirect public participation refers to activities such as choosing elected leaders to represent citizens in public meetings, while direct public participation involves citizen holding meetings to discuss fiscal priorities, and communicating conclusions to decision-makers through public mass demonstration, referenda or taking legal action on matters which concerns them (Mostert, 2003:179). Ambali & Fajonyomi (2014:178) alluded that active and direct public participation favors the highest level of fiscal policy decision making and provides the public with more control over management of resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development. It further increases opportunities for citizens to have interest in public affairs (Tenorio & Saraiva, 2006:126). In contemporary society, the politicians have made it difficult to allow the public to participate in public affairs for the reasons known to themselves. The assumption has always been, if the public participate in public affairs, they will have control over management and utilization of resources which the politicians will make it difficult to happen.

Alberto & Miguel (2016:31) recognizes two public participatory processes i.e. formal public participation in which initiative comes from public administration while informal public participation involves initiative arising from the social groups or local citizens and these two approaches can be framed as top-down design and bottom-up design respectively. The level of public participation is dependent on the approach with greater consideration on participatory mechanism and contextual attributes such as engagement, communication and consultation (Carty, 2015:23 & Chess, 2000:769). Espluga et al. (2011:3) argue that evaluation of public participation involves three participatory processes which includes; consultation, engagement and active participation with an aim to increase availability of information and ownership of processes.

Carty (2015:23) maintained that citizens' assembly as a public participation mechanism has received much attention across the divide as it positively impacts citizens' knowledge and trust in public institutions. According to Mcallum (2006:1), level of participation in relation to Wilcox's cut ladder reduced from eight to five levels which includes; deciding together, consulting, acting together, providing information and supporting in public processes. These levels are intertwined and seem to be repetitive; levels should be aligned in the sense that there is a continuous flow in process such that at the first level there is engagement, secondly; consultation, thirdly; deciding, and fourthly; adoption while evaluation will cut across the whole levels.

Morgner & Chêne (2015:21) reiterated that Significance of public involvement via official or informal channels has the potential to improve accountability and transparency at many phases of the budget cycle. IBP (2013:23) & Wampler, (2007:19) alluded that involvement of the public in the budgetary process offers a chance to revitalize democracy and accountability. Torcal & Christmann (2021:20) maintain that this is especially crucial in light of the worldwide democratic deficit and the declining public confidence in political figures and institutions. Participatory budgeting has become more popular as a means of strengthening democracy, both in the framework of the contemporary state and in the complex state (Wampler & Touchton 2017:5).

According to Bronić & Urban (2015:2) & Goncalves (2014:94), participation of locals in the budget decision making process at all levels is attributed to significant change in their lives. Tanaka (2007:167) argued that given budget choices significantly affect people' lives, it makes sense for citizens to be able to participate in and have an impact on the creation and execution of budgets. Such efforts build locals' citizens' trust in the government thus strengthening their relationships because resources are judiciously utilized to respond to their needs and priorities (Malena & Khallaf n.d). The urge to meet self-interest is what usually drives the public to participate in the public meetings and forums.

Fölscher (2010:41) provides a good definition of distinctions between empowered and consultative engagement. In the first case, residents and their representatives are given an opportunity to be heard by the government, but there is no assurance that their involvement will be taken into consideration. This means that decision-makers are free to agree or

disagree with citizens. In the second case, decision-making authority (right) and influence are granted to participating parties, e.g., by placing citizen representatives on boards that manage public services provided locally. Authors' views are a reflection of what happens in most public engagement meetings because not all issues raised by the public are taken into consideration by the decision makers.

Fölscher (2010:14) argues that when it comes to the implementation, the participants' engagement is limited specifically to their representatives who are mandated to oversee local public services delivery. Rubin (2006:140) alluded that the attitude of governments is a major predictor of whether participation will be undertaken or it will be meaningful and whose interest comes first. Rubin further emphasized that, with respect to participation, the main determinant of successful participation is the government of the day and its expectations and involvement in leading the process will strongly determine the quality of the process. The end goal of public participation is making quality decisions which considers variant views and opinions of the participants.

Carliz (2013:34) explained that information on budget papers and policies should be made public so that the governments' technical team mandated to develop these tools will guide the public on how to access and utilize it while debating their priorities areas during public participation in the budgeting process. While Doane et al, (2000) postulated that budget restructuring at macro-level destroys the initial goal of design of viable budget without involving citizens thus creating loopholes for alteration of budget estimates. In this regard, according to the urban institute report (2000) this reduces public belief and diminishes their interest with the process and its viability which they end up pointing fingers at the government with an assumption to whether it will really solve their problems or not. These assumptions are based on the premise that the public has limited access to information and lacks knowledge on budget estimates. Tiurin (2003) supports this assertion in the sense that lack of access to information on budget estimates undermines citizens' interest in tracking how their tax contributions are judicially utilized leading to dissatisfaction on how the government implements the budgets. Ignorance of the public on the government initiatives contribute to flawed budgetary processes because they feel that the process is not important to them. Moreover, the use of technical terms and publication of the budget in English is a hindrance to public participation.

Theoretical framework

Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation theory.

Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation theory was propounded by Sherry Arnstein in 1969. Sherry Arnstein advanced a central argument that in a genuine and practical sense, citizen participation is citizen power and requires redistribution of power among the citizens. Moreso without equal reallocation of power in the form of authority or money there will be participation of only a few cliques of citizens to maintain the status quo (Arnstein, 1969:216). Arnstein added that redistribution of power enables underprivileged citizens excluded from economic and political processes to be included in the current or future processes. This will provide avenue for excluded group to determine how the information and resources are shared, policies, legal and goals are sets and implemented to meet citizen needs and preferences (Penrose, 1959:173; Teece, 1982:39; Rumelt, 1991:167).

Arnstein's ladder features eight rungs to demonstrate the degree of tokenism (Counterfeit power), Nonparticipation (no power), and degree of citizen power (actual power). The manipulation also known as illusory form occurs when officials, administrators, politicians or institutions mislead the public or citizens into believing that they are being given power in the pretext of allowing them to lead the process but they are intentionally done to deny them power for political reasons or gain (Arnstein, 1969:218, Brender & Drazen, 2008:1271). Arnstein's simplified this assertion that manipulation ladder places citizens as rubber stamps in advisory boards or committees to advance the interest of those in power. Moreso, citizen power at manipulation level rests in the hands of power holders paving way for deceptions in decision making to benefit a few in the society (Galli & Rossi, 2002:283; Akhmedov & Zhuravskaya, 2004:1301).

Arnstein's therapy ladder assumes mental illness is synonymous with powerlessness which creates perceptions that citizens are the cause of the problem instead the established institutions' legal and policy frameworks are the cause of the problems (Arnstein, 1969:217). The established instruments in contemporary society have been accused of the problems citizens face in their quest to survive in the country that is struggling with economic and political crisis (Brender & Drazen, 2008:1271). Arnstein explained that citizens usually engage in extensive activities in the society but institutions have made it difficult to integrate excluded citizens into the system because of racism and victimization fueled by powerholders.

The Arnstein's information ladder maintains that informing citizens of their rights, options and responsibilities is the first step legitimizing citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969: 219). She further emphasized that awareness of rights and access to information enable activities participation leading to formation of inclusive decisions. Arnstein added the flow

of information should be one way from officials to citizens but this can be conducted with lack of trust marred with discouraging questions and irrelevant answers. Arnstein concluded that in informing ladder, citizens are treated inhumane and intimidated by legalistic, and futility to accept information and endorse it for the benefit of those in power.

The Arnstein's Consultation level assumes that if the citizens are not informed of economic and political processes, this consultation ladder becomes a sham since there is no assurance that citizens' concerns and opinions will be taken into consideration. She asserts that methods used for consultation are survey testing on attitudes, public hearing and meetings where the citizens inputs are solely taken for formality purposes to satisfy the powerholders that the process of involving citizens as required by the law is achieved.

The Arnstein's Placation ladder occurs when the citizens are granted access to information and limited degree of influence in the process but their participation is entirely tokenistic and carried to show that they have been involved in the process (Tritter & McCallum, 2006:157, Reuther, 1965:3). Arnstein alluded that very poor members of the society are the ones placed as boards of public bodies like of police commission, education. In an event they are brought into the decision-making process the token given to them by those in authority dictate what the decision they will make and, in most cases, it favors those in power (Rogoff, 1990:21).

The Arnstein's partnership ladder allows citizens to negotiate better terms, use their veto power over choices, share money, or make demands that are at least partially realized constitutes participation as a partnership with public institutions, officials, or administrators. At this rung of the ladder, citizens and powerholders negotiate to transfer power. Through arrangements like shared policy boards, planning committees, and procedures for breaking deadlocks, they consent to sharing planning and decision-making duties. Arnstein points out that in many partnership scenarios, citizens seize power through initiatives like community organizing, campaigns, and protests rather than public institutions willingly sharing it.

The Arnstein's delegate power ladder occurs when the citizens are assigned power of administration, control, funding, or decision-making authority by public authorities, institutions, or administrators. Arnstein gave an example that, a company or citizen board entrusted with overseeing a community program, as opposed to just taking part in one run by the city. At this stage, the ladder has been lowered to the point where citizens possess the important cards that guarantee the program's accountability to them, in Arnstein's words. Instead of caving in to pressure from the opposing side, power holders must initiate the negotiating process in order to overcome conflicts.

The Arnstein's citizen control ladder occurs when the citizens have full control of the administration, and decision-making authority of economic and political processes. Citizens exercise power to ensure there is access to resources and take control of the management and distribution of the resources to target the less privileged in society. In scenarios where citizens exercise authority, public funds would be directed directly to community organizations, giving them complete discretion over the distribution of these funds (Nelson & Winter 1982:62; Teece, 1982:39; Rumelt, 1991:167)

The Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation theory is relevant to this study as it provides diagrammatic lens to assess the depth and quality of public participation in the context of the budgetary process. Instead of looking at the public participation from the conceptual way, Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation theory helps to differential between meaningful participation from symbolic participation. Applying this concept enables the researcher to critically assess whether public participation influences budgetary process or it is merely for formality purposes.

Methodology

The researcher adopted descriptive research design while closed-ended questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data from 271 respondents from the Turkana central constituency particularly in Lodwar, Kalokol and Kerio ward because of its proximity to the county headquarters and representation of urban and rural set ups of Turkana County. The research tool was scored on a 5-point Likert scale (SD=Strongly disagree; D=Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA=Strongly agree). The qualitative and quantitative data sets were analyzed through thematic content analysis and inferential statistics respectively. Anova test using SPSS 26 was conducted to establish the correlation between the extent of public participation and the budgeting process in Turkana County.

1. Extent of public participation

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL	M	SD
The local citizens are invited by the county government to participate in the budgeting process in public hearing, online platforms, town hall, and focus group events/sessions	87	110	18	33	23	271	3.76	1.26
	32%	41%	7%	12%	8%	100		

Local citizens have access to information on their roles and responsibilities during public participation in the budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya	96 35%	101 37%	21 8%	42 16%	11 4%	271 100	3.85	1.18
The local citizen participates in the decision making during budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya.	79 29%	130 48%	11 4%	21 8%	30 11%	271 100	3.76	1.26
The local citizens are consulted during public participation in the budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya.	93 34%	111 41%	30 11%	19 7%	18 7%	271 100	3.89	1.15
The local citizen control or take lead in conducting budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya.	96 35%	117 43%	13 6%	21 7%	24 9%	271 100	3.89	1.15
The local citizen collaborates with stakeholders in the budgetary process in Turkana County to develop and implement budget through joint planning.	99 38%	98 36%	23 8%	28 10%	23 8%	271 100	3.82	1.26
The citizen feedback is incorporated into the final budget decisions during the budgeting process	50 18%	62 23%	30 11%	91 34%	38 14%	271 100	2.98	1.36

SA= Strongly agree, A=Agree, N= Neutral, DA= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree, M= Mean, SD= standard deviation.

The descriptive statistics findings indicate that 41% (81) agreed that the local citizens are invited by the county government to participate in the budgeting process in public hearing, online platforms, town hall, and focus group events/sessions. Key informant added that *Turkana County government has utilized the local media platforms to disseminate information on budget process to the public in terms of the plans and policy areas to be considered during the budgeting process, budget policy documents, community participation and Steps for budgeting process.* Additionally, 37% (101) agreed that Local citizens have access to information on their roles and responsibilities during public participation in the budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya while 48% (130) agreed that the local citizen participates in the decision making during budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya. Furthermore, 41% (111) agreed that the local citizen control or take lead in conducting budgetary process in Turkana County, Kenya. One of the key informants stated that *the use of the Turkana community as a control tool in the budgeting process in the Turkana County has received a lot of praise from both the local and international organizations, with more pressure put on the local leadership to ensure the local citizen's involvement in the process in terms of decision making is supported fully. The communities have been enlightened on their roles in leading the budgeting process by setting out priority areas, and selecting subcommittees from the community level to provide oversight roles in the implementation of the budget estimates and documentation of the community projects.*

Additionally, 38% strongly agreed that the local citizen collaborates with stakeholders in the budgetary process in Turkana County to develop and implement budget through joint planning. One of the key informants maintained that *the stakeholders from development partners have supported the county government in the development of joint work plans during the budgeting process to reduce duplications to maximize the impact.* In contrast, 34% disagreed that the citizen feedback is incorporated into the final budget decisions during the budgeting process. The key informant added that *the county government has failed to strengthen feedback mechanisms in most of the development activities conducted in the county despite passing legislation requiring public participation and feedback. In most cases, the government officials participating in community meetings such as town hall meetings, stakeholder forums, and public hearings for budget development, project execution, law formulation and enforcement, and civic education usually promise to provide feedback to the community members after documenting community priorities but in the long run, fail to do so. The community members have raised great concerns in subsequent meetings when finding out the proposed priority areas have been changed and replaced with projects that were not originally proposed by the community members during public participation*

2. Public participation and Budgetary process in Turkana County

Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL	M	SD
Public participation promotes openness in the budgetary process, making it clearer on how funds are allocated and utilized.	87 32%	97 36%	21 7%	32 12%	34 13%	271 100	3.63	1.37
Public participation enables citizens to engage in budget discussions, it holds government officials accountable for their financial decisions, making it less likely for corruption to occur.	141 52%	81 30%	10 4%	19 7%	20 7%	271 100	4.12	1.22
Participation allows citizens to voice their needs and priorities, leading to a budget that better reflects the community's interests and necessities.	101 37%	78 29%	21 8%	43 16%	28 10%	271 100	3.67	1.38
Public participation in decision-making fosters trust between the government and its citizens, as people feel their opinions are valued and considered	120 44%	81 30%	23 9%	27 10%	20 7%	271 100	3.94	1.26
Participating in the budget process encourages civic education and engagement, empowering citizens to take an active role in governance	89 33%	111 41%	31 12%	20 7%	20 7%	271 100	3.85	1.17
Open forums for public input can help address community disputes regarding funding priorities, promoting dialogue and understanding among different stakeholder groups.	78 29%	129 48%	17 6%	27 10%	20 7%	271 100	3.80	1.17
Participation can educate the public about budgetary constraints, fiscal challenges, and the importance of responsible financial management.	120 44%	98 36%	18 7%	25 9%	10 4%	271 100	4.08	1.1

SA= Strongly agree, A=Agree, N= Neutral, DA= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree, M= Mean, SD= standard deviation

The descriptive statistics findings indicates that 36% (96) agreed public participation promotes openness in the budgetary process, making it clearer on how funds are allocated and utilized. *Key informant added that participation of local citizens in the budgetary making process enhances transparency and accountability in the allocation of community resources and it also boost the community trust on the governance of their resources. However, the government should strengthen governance mechanisms to ensure other than promoting transparency in the management of the community resources they should also take into consideration feedback from the community members.* Additionally, 51% (141) strongly agreed public participation enables citizens to engage in budget discussions, it holds government officials accountable for their financial decisions, making it less likely for corruption to occur. In agreement, the key informant maintained that, *Turkana County government has lost a lot of monies through corruption and mismanagement of resources and recently more than six senior government officials were arrested by EACC for embezzling 600millions shillings meant for development financial years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 and during search 6.5million was recovered from the van (Standard newspaper, April 11, 2025). This tells you how much the county government has lost through corruption but evidence has shown that with constant civic education and involvement of the local citizens in the budgetary process, cases of mismanagement and corruption has drastically reduced.*

Furthermore, 37% (101) strongly agreed participation allows citizens to voice their needs and priorities, leading to a budget that better reflects the community's interests and necessities. Key informant added that, *inclusive budget take into consideration diverse views and opinion of the local citizens regardless of the color, race, religion and social status. Implementation of budgets addresses needs and preferences of the community members building their resilience towards shocks and stresses.* 44% (120) strongly agreed public participation in decision-making fosters trust between the government and its citizens, as people feel their opinions are valued and considered. In support, key informant alluded that *local citizens feel honored and appreciated when their inputs, opinions and views are considered in the budgeting process hence building their trust to the government.*

On other hand, 41% (111) agreed that Participating in the budget process encourages civic education and engagement, empowering citizens to take an active role in governance. Key information opined that, *Turkana County government has invested in programs aimed at improving the community skills, and knowledge on the budgets which include community public participation meetings, budget education program, and civic education campaigns. The local citizens are enlightened through such initiative necessitating their participation in the budgetary process with informed mind.* However, 48% (129) agreed open forums for public input can help address community disputes regarding funding

priorities, promoting dialogue and understanding among different stakeholder groups. Finally, 44% (120) Strongly agreed Participation can educate the public about budgetary constraints, fiscal challenges, and the importance of responsible financial management. Key informant added *that open and transparent budgetary process seals loops for corruption and attract investors and donors across the world to invest in an economy which they believe would give them returns and achieve the set goals and objectives.*

Test for hypothesis

Simple linear regression was used to test for the null hypothesis which states that,

H₀ 1: $\mu = k$, i.e., there is no significant Participation of Local Citizens in the budgetary process in Turkana County

Model Summary of impact of extent of local citizen participation on the budgetary process

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.526	.277	.274	4.255	.277	102.912	1	270	.000

. Predictors: (Constant), Extent of local Citizen_Participation

o. Dependent Variable: Budgetary process

The findings shows that there is a positive correlation between extent of local citizen participation and budgetary process which was confirmed by the Pearson's correlation coefficient of = .526 with a prediction of 27.4 of the variances. The model was a good fit for the data $F(1, 270)=102.912, p < .000$.

Additionally, the F test established that the null hypothesis that there is no significant Participation of Local Citizens in the budgetary process in Turkana County, $p=.05$. In other words, $R^2= 0$, with $F(1, 270) =102.912, p=.000$, the test is highly significant. Thus, we can assume that there is significant Participation of Local Citizens in the budgetary process in Turkana County as shown in the table below,

ANOVA on the effects of local citizen participation on the budgetary process

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	263.207	1	1863.207	102.912	.000
	Residual	470.202	270	18.105		
	Total	33.410	271			

a. Dependent Variable: Budgetary process

o. Predictors: (Constant), Extent of local Citizen_Participation

In support of the F-test results, the regression results in figure below show a significant relationship between extent of local citizen participation and budgetary process with a scores of $(t=11.037, p<0.000)$. The slope coefficient for the extent of local citizen participation is .526, so budgetary process increases by a factor .526 as shown in the Table below,

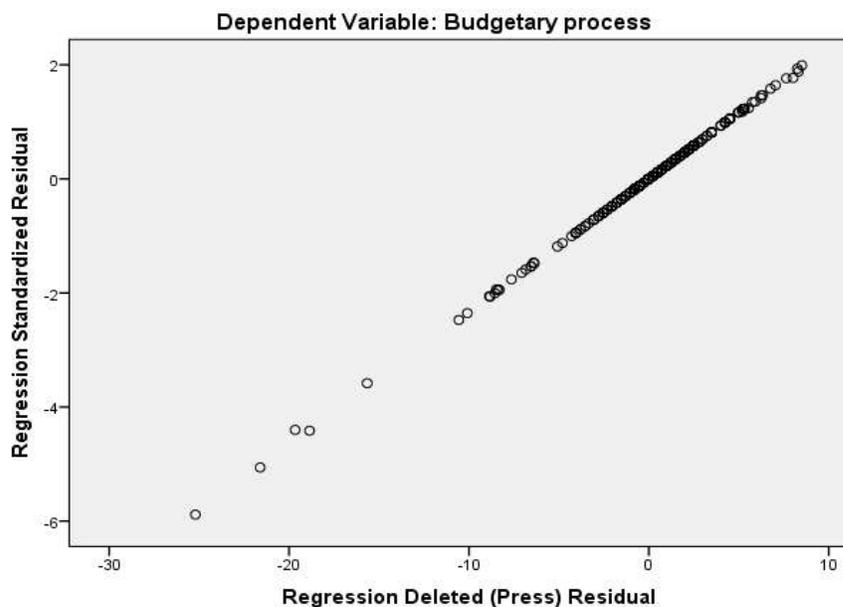
Coefficients of the effect local citizen participation on the budgetary process

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1					
	(Constant)	1.058	.246	.304	.000
	Extend of local Citizen_Participation	.019	.014	.526	.352

. Dependent Variable: Extent of local Citizen_Participation and budgetary_ process

The researcher sought to assess the visual representation of the data points to understand the relationship between the extent of local citizen participation and budgetary process. The finding is presented in the diagram below

The scatterplot shows the relationship between extent of local citizen participation and budgetary process



The findings indicates that data points trend upwards which means as the X-variables increases, Y-variables also increases. In terms of strength of relationship, the data points are clustered around the line showing a strong correlation between the variables. This finding rejects the null hypothesis confirming the positive hypothesis which states that there is significant Participation of Local Citizens in the budgetary process in Turkana County.

Discussion

Einstein & Sherry (2004) finds that sharing information with the public enhances participation in the budgetary process increases the likelihood of citizens to make informed decisions, thus improving accountability and transparency in management and utilization of resources. On the other hand, the absence of public information on actual government revenue and expenditure, along with the lack of accountability and transparency in the administration of public resources, directly leads to corruption, incompetence, and ineptitude in public service delivery for taxpayers (IBP, 2013:27), which was supported by the study key informants.

Additionally, Wandaka et al. (2013:4) finds that access to information on the budgeting process improves citizen political efficacy, public trust in authorities, and the quality of policy decisions and enhances democratic ideals. Wandaka et al. (2013) opined that by putting pressure on the government to be open about how it raises money and spends it, citizen involvement in the budget process improves accountability. In support, the study key informants maintained that

government would find it difficult to maintain transparency throughout the entire budgeting process unless under scrutiny of a watching populace and a strong civil society. It is simpler to keep an eye on whether resources are being used effectively and efficiently when pertinent information is readily available.

The key interviewer's arguments resonate with Oyakojo (2015) that the budget, regardless of individual or collective views, is less technical and more of a political process. On the other hand, Frank (2012) finds that community participation, be it directly or indirectly, provides space for economically and politically marginalized groups' decisions to be incorporated into policy-making. The involvement of marginalized groups in the budgetary process improves the development of the budget policy documents and increases the demand for transparency and accountability in the operationalization of the budgets to meet their needs and preferences (Ipek, 2018). Abdullah (2016) find that every decision made by community members affects the categories of needs and preferences in terms of levels, amount, successes, fostering good governance thus reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation of the budget estimates and corruption because of the creation of public participation stages in each level.

Wandaka et al. (2013:4) find that the incorporation of decisions of the local citizens and their full participation in the budget-making process increases accountability by putting pressure on the government to be open and transparent about how it raises revenues and spends it. This is because the government of the day will remain transparent during the whole budgeting process when it is closely monitored by a watchful populace and a strong civil society. When pertinent data is accessible, it is simpler to keep an eye on whether resources are being used effectively and efficiently.

The findings of those who strongly disagreed and disagreed with the study resonate with Amrhein's (2012) arguments that incentivization of community members' mobilization activity to turn up for the budgeting process has reduced the degree of openness and citizen influence as the procedure for engagement would not provide a platform for local citizens to express their views and opinions. Klages (2010) opined that incorporation of tokenism in the budgeting process would allow local citizens to propose short-term priorities and not use consultative framework to discuss priorities with long-term implementation measures. Service Center Municipalities in One World (2012) backed this proposal by urging the local citizens to put the interest of the community first and rally against the use of the funds as a token for mobilization during the budgeting process.

According to Märker & Nitschke (2008:21) German citizens do not make decisions concerning the implementation of the budgeting process directly from the local authorities because the process is consultative, and the budgeting process has been designed in a manner that allows feedback on how the opinions and ideas of the citizens were being utilized in the budget planning and execution. This engagement motivates them to invest once again their time in participating in the budgeting consultative meetings. Wehner & Märker (2013) find that the development of systems such as Web. 2 has triggered a new wave of public consultation as the systems show visible figures of the public consultation meetings, which is a measure of success in public engagement in the budgeting process.

Mulikuza et al. (2019) contend that consulting local citizens during the budgeting process stimulates information flow, making it easy for scrutinization of procedures and public accounts by the local citizens, enhancing accountability and transparency in the planning and execution of the budget's estimates. Mulikuza et al. (2019) recommended an increase in the involvement of local citizens from the lower levels of local government in budget planning. Mulikuza added that the local citizens should be provided with channels of accessing information and, more so, support in terms of logistical and financial resources to promote their participation in planning and budgeting processes.

Moseti (2010) opined that local citizen participation closes the gap that exists between the county government, national government, and civil societies by enhancing the development of understanding about programs, projects, and community priorities, thus promoting accountability, transparency, ownership, and governance of the development initiatives. Additionally, Brinkerhoff et al. (2007) find that institutionalization of the local citizen voices in the structures and systems of governance will promote the implementation of communities locally led, owned, and managed priorities. Esonu & Kavanamur (2011) opined that this can be done by strengthening participation mechanisms such as the establishment of local committees for public participation, promoting civic education, and developing public participation procedures for local citizen engagement during town hall meetings and public hearings. In agreement, Zakharchenko (2002) affirms that raising awareness of public participation in the citizen's rights, responsiveness, and its benefits to societal development is when the lost interest in the credibility of the process would be restored.

Conclusion

The study investigated the extent of local citizens' participation on budgetary processes in Turkana County. Based on the study findings, it was evidenced that local citizens participate in the budgeting process in Turkana County with an informed mind because they have access to information on the budget policy documents, are fully involved in the decision-making process, and are consulted during priority identification and implementation stages. Furthermore, it was

concluded that the local citizens were able to keep track of the budgeting process and disseminate information to the public, particularly those unable to read and write, and ensure the budget items were implemented to address their needs and preferences. In support, the Pearson correlation analysis established a positive correlation between the extent of local citizen participation and the budgetary process backed up by three-quarters of the respondents who uphold its effectiveness in promoting the budgeting process in Turkana County.

Future research studies

The future studies should examine the level of local citizen participation in the budgetary process either at budgetary formulation, implementation or audit stage to influence development of interventions vital for creating efficient, effective, inclusive and transparent governance that serves the needs of citizens.

Disclaimer

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Conflict of interest

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