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DETERMINANTS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGET MAKING PROCESS IN DEVOLVED GOVERNMENTS IN KENYA: A CASE OF TRANS NZOIA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Participatory budgeting has been supported in the legislative framework in Kenya, however, the process faces challenges characterized by low participation rates. This study therefore interrogated the influence of citizen's perceptions, information availability and citizen's knowledge on public participation in budget making process in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. The opinions of Sub County Administrators, members of the county assembly, Ward Administrators, County executive committee members and adult citizens of Kiminini Sub-county in Kenya were sort. In total, the study sampled 448 respondents through multistage sampling. A mixed methodology was adopted where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. A binary logit regression model was also used to show the relationship between the study variables. The study findings indicated that there is a low public awareness regarding public participation in the county in the tune of 29%. It was also established that the level of public participation in budget making process in the county was low at 7%. Additionally, the study established that majority of the citizens have a negative attitude towards participatory budgeting arguing that it was not adding any value to the development of the county.

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The county government was also not open to availing information regarding participatory budgeting and that access to reliable and relevant information was only achievable to a moderate extent. These insights led to the recommendation that the county government can run campaigns and create awareness in order to reverse the negative attitude and public relations they face from the citizens. There is also a need to show political goodwill in implementing some of the relevant suggestions from citizen's contributions. The county government should also avail relevant information to the citizens beforehand. This can be done through road shows, print media, local Community Based Organizations, Non-governmental organizations, Chief's *Barazas*, local radio stations and televisions. Programmes can be established to sensitize citizens about public budgeting procedures, public participation requirements, public financial management practices as well as social audit of the public sector in order to encourage boost their confidence to contribute on such matters.

Key Words : *Citizen's Perceptions, Information Availability, Citizen's Knowledge, Participatory Budgeting, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya.*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There has been shrinking trust of the public in their governments throughout the world (Edelman, 2012) attributed to a number of factors but not limited to ever increasing political scandals, corruption, cuts in public expenditure, individualism, and unreasonable expectations (Lorsuwannarat, 2017). This has led to increased public apathy and low turnout at elections. Bovaird and Loffler (2015) added that as a result of decreasing trust in public financial management and the inability to convert public wishes into actions has pushed up the desire of the citizens for participatory budgeting (Peters, 2010; Sintomer, Herzberg & Rocke, 2008). Rios, Benito and Bastida (2017) called for the urgency in improving the relationship between citizens and their governments. This is because it highly encourages the citizens to air out their desires for inclusion. Public participation is a process whereby governmental groups, individuals and not for profit groups participate majorly in influencing the process of making decision on legislations, policies and service delivery (Xie, Xia, Hu, Shan, Le & Chan, 2017). It is a crucial component of policy and legislative government functions. The participation applies to the process of enacting legislatures, financial planning and management and managing performance (Magani, 2018).

Compared to the developed economies, participatory budget making process in Africa is low. However, among the African countries, participatory budget making process is more advanced in South Africa owing to the well-developed legal framework (Finkel *et al.,* 2012). Nonetheless, the process still faces challenges where racial discrimination in engaging citizens in decision-making still exists as shown by discrimination of the whites. In as much as Nylen (2014) supported participatory budgeting in Mozambique, the process has been reserved for those with strong political connections and financial ability. In Nigeria, efforts at participatory governance have never received the full backing of the ruling class in Nigeria since the return of democratic rule in in 1999, because the ruling class see it as a threat to their collective interest. Thus, opportunities for citizens' participation in governance in Nigeria have always been limited. Budgeting in Nigeria is seen as an exclusive preserve of the executive arm of government, especially as it concerns budget preparation and implementation, with the legislature participating during the approval and audit stages. The only opportunity given to citizens to participate in the process is at the approval stage, during public hearings at the National Assembly (Iloh & Nwokedi, 2016).

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According to Kenya school of Government (2015) allowing citizens to participate in the government activities can result in greater understanding of responsibilities, breaks down barriers between citizens and government, empowers the people through education and also unlocks resource potential. This process has been provided for in the constitution under Article 10 where both the national and county government are obligated to facilitate it (Asingwa, 2019). Under section Art.174(c), the county government has been mandated to facilitate, create awareness and ensure that there is public participation. They are also supposed to build capacity on the public to be incorporated in the governance. Participatory budgeting is therefore well covered and supported by the constitution of Kenya. A report by Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC, 2010) indicated that high education levels and information accessibility determine to a large extent how the public is involved in governance. Citizens with low education levels get limited information insufficient for formulating interests in public activities such as budget formulation and implementation. However, Muriu (2013) agreed that citizen's participation in resource allocation meetings in Kenya is low and its effect on service delivery is negligible. Mugambi and Theuri (2014) added that even though the process is well documented in Kilifi county, political interference was an obstruction.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Participatory budgeting has been touted as a promoter of efficiency, transparency and reduced corruption in the public sector Government, 2015). It is an inexpensive exercise that can unlock resource potential. Despite its importance, the link between public participation and budget implementation is missing in Kenya since counties have inconsistencies in budget implementation (Jason, 2013). Wanyoike (2012) also postulate that despite its support in the legislative framework in Kenya, the process faces challenges characterized by low participation rates. Similarly, Wandaka, Mungai and Odindo (2014) supported the claim that participatory budgeting has been a struggle and the whole process is seen as just symbolic.

The existing research gaps in the previous works also inspire this interrogation. Some of the previous studies focused on oher economies thus presenting a contextual research gap. For instance, Mohammadi, Norazizan and Nikkhah (2018) in Iran, Waheduzzaman (2010) in Bangladesh, Hayrapetyan (2019) in Armenia, Juliana (2014) in Brazil and Herian (2011) in United States of America. Locally, the study by Imbo and Kiruthu (2019) focused on Kenya National Assembly while Moi (2019) focused on governance of projects presenting contextual and conceptual research gaps respectively. Other studies for instance, Mbithi, Ndambuki and Juma (2019) and Marine (2018) used secondary data thus presenting methodological research gap. To fill the gaps, this study used a mixed method.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i. To determine the influence of citizen's perceptions on public participation in budget making process in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya

ii. To establish the influence of information availability on public participation in budget making process in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya

iii. To establish the influence of citizen's knowledge on public participation in budget making process in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya


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THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study was anchored on the Cognitive Engagement Theory by Meece, Blumenfeld and Hoyle (1988), Stakeholder Theory by Freeman (1984) and Social Capital Theory by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in 1972. The discussion and contribution of the theories have been presented in the subsections below. The Cognitive Engagement Theory argue that an interactive process and public participation is reliant on availability of information. It also depends on the willingness of the citizens to use the information in a logical way to make a change. The level of literacy increases the chances of gaining and interpreting larger pieces of information. Therefore, the cognitive ability of the people depends on their level of education to trigger sharp information processing powers and make judgements. Thus, those with higher level of education and cognitive abilities, are likely to participate in public proceedings.

The Stakeholder theory on the other hand acknowledge the role of a stakeholder (Any person or a group which can affect or be affected by the actions of an organization) in holding an organization accountable. In the setting of a county government such as Trans Nzoia, the main stakeholders for those responsible in budgeting are the citizens of the county who demand better service delivery. Others can be the suppliers to the county as well as contractors and other groups who are directly affected by the decisions of the budget allocation committee. Unlike the Agency model which emphasizes principal-agent relationship where the agents are mandated to fulfill the interests of the principals, this theory (Stakeholder theory), demonstrates that other interested parties (stakeholders) should be considered and consulted when organizations are deciding on relevant matters.

The Social Capital theory on the other hand implies that social relationships can result in development of social capital which can be trust, networks and identity. Such capital can define collective actions and collaborations. Through mutual bonds of trust and norms, the people in the society can easily coordinate actions (Portes, 1998). People in the society who have higher social capital can agitate for better services on behalf of the society. Continuous interactions in the society between the government and the people can develop a mutual understanding of what is best for both parties (Siisiainen, 2003).

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Mohammadi, Norazizan and Nikkhah (2018) through a qualitative focus, established the perceptions of the Iran people on participation in government activities. From the content analysis, it was revealed that their perception was centered on their need for participation. In a study by McComas (2003) to get the views of the citizens regarding public meetings in New York, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used. The findings showed that there was low turnout because of the belief that the meetings were not credible and neither did they have high expectations. Aboelnaga (2017) conducted a study focusing on public participation in planning in the Egyptian context and established that most people felt that their opinion was not valued thus had a poor attitude towards public participation in such meetings.

In a study by Kasozi-Mulindwa (2013) in Uganda to find out the feelings of the citizens on participation in local government initiatives, it was demonstrated that public participation was hampered by lack of information as well as poor attitude based on the belief that it could not yield any substantial outcomes. In Kenya, Moi (2019) interrogated whether citizen's perception played a role in governance of projects in Two counties, Elgeyo Marakwet and Nandi and established that citizen's expectations guided their participation in governance of the projects. Msofe (2016) established the factors affecting citizen participation in village assembly in Akeri and Patandi villages in Meru District Council of Tanzania and


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revealed that citizen participation in the area is poor due to lack of government responsiveness and transparency in information dissemination, unclear time table for participation as well as low awareness and knowledge among the citizens. Ebdon and Franklin (2006) analyzed the involvement of the citizens in local government decisions in Kenya and Uganda and indicated that the defining factors were vibrant civil organizations, information availability and the nature of leadership.

Mugambi and Theuri (2014) also investigated the challenges which the county government of Kilifi faces in ensuring public participation and showed that the rate of public participation was low attributed to information in availability and low awareness. In Bangladesh, Waheduzzaman (2010) investigated the effect of public participation in good governance and demonstrated that multiple setbacks such as lack of awareness and low level of knowledge defined poor public participation. In Ghana, Ahenkan, Bawole and Domfeh (2013) established the practices aimed at improving public participation in the Wiawso Municipality. Capacity building to enhance an understanding of budget making process in the public sector was recommended. In a comparative analysis of Kenya and Uganda, Devas and Grant (2003) showed that due to pressure from civil organizations, Kenyan government was involving its citizens in decisions. However, in Uganda, even though the centralized system encouraged participation, there still lacked transparency of the process and lack of information.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

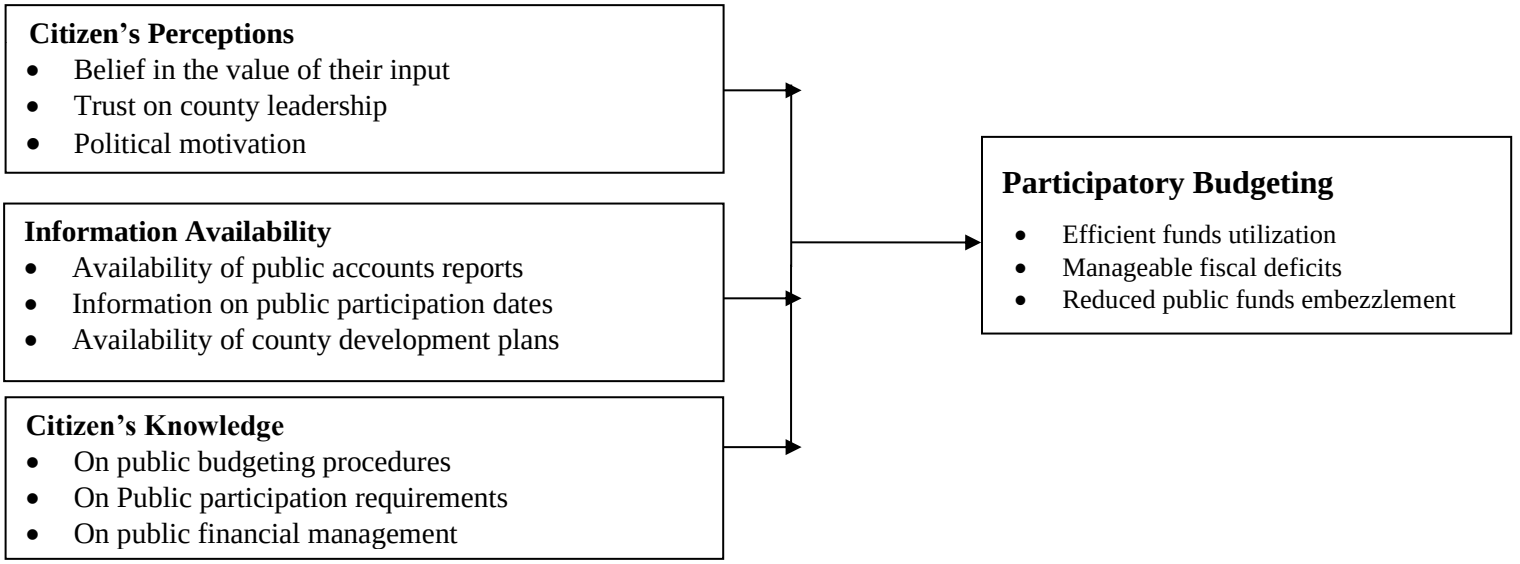


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study embraced the descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey design, as argued by Mackey and Gass (2015) is not only suitable in description of state of affairs, but also the best design in answering ‘‘What’’ research questions. It also supported the adoption of questionnaires in data collection. The study focused on Trans Nzoia County located in Kenyan Rift Valley approximately 380 KMs from the country’s capital of Nairobi. After devolution, just like other counties in Kenya, the county has made efforts to ensure participatory processes. However, challenges in fully ensuring public participation exist and that motivated this interrogation. The target population of the study comprised of the Sub County Administrators of the 5 sub counties of Trans Nzoia, Ward Administrators of the 25 wards, 25 Members of the County Assembly (MCAs) of Trans Nzoia, the County executive committee members (CECs) who total to 9 according to the CIDP, 2018-2022 and the citizens from Kiminini Sub-County. The study also targeted the households from Kiminini Sub County in the County whereby, 222,762 citizens aged above 18 years were targeted (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, KNBS, 2019).

The study adopted two stage sampling methodology. First, the focus on Sub-County Administrators, MCAs, Ward Administrators and County Executive Committee Members was conveniently done. Non-probabilistic sampling technique of convenience sampling was adopted and the same has been suggested by Barlett, Kotrlik and Higgins (2011). The second method adopted was in selection of the citizens to participate in the study. In this approach, a simple random sampling method was adopted. Before sampling, the sample size of 384 was determined through Fisher formula suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) as shown below:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{\varepsilon^2} \quad \ldots\ldots (1)$$

Where n = the desired sample size when the target population is greater than 10,000 as is the case for this study ; P = the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured. This is placed at 50% (0.5) as suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) ; q = (1-P) ; e = margin of error set at 5% ; Z = the standard normal deviation at the required confidence level of 95% which is 1.96. Therefore, a sample of 384 citizens from that of the Sub-County were randomly sampled as distributed in Table 1.

Table 1 : Sample Size

Category	Population
Sub County Administrators	5
Ward Administrators	25
County Executive Committee Members (CECs)	9
MCAs	25
Citizen (18 Years and above)- Kiminini Sub-County	384
Total	**448**

A questionnaire was used to collect primary data. It facilitated collection of quantitative data from the citizens because there was a need to capture their perceptions, knowledge as well as opinion on information availability. The questionnaire was also administered to Ward Administrators and MCAs. The study also adopted an interview guide in collecting

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qualitative data from the leaders in the county government. An interview was scheduled with randomly selected Sub County Administrators and County Executive Committee Members (CECs) in order to obtain in-depth analysis of the participatory budgeting in the county. The qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed through qualitative analysis methods.

On the other hand, descriptive (Percentages, Means, Standard deviations) and inferential statistics (regression analysis) were conducted through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 on the quantitative data. To establish the determinants of public participation in budget making process in devolved governments in Kenya, the study adopted a binary logit regression model. This regression model was suitable because the dependent variable (public participation in budget making process) was a binary variable, that is, participated (Yes) or not participated (No).

The binary logit model was of the general form:

$$p(y_i = 1/x_i) = x_1^3\beta + \mu \quad \text{...} \quad (2)$$

Where **p** represented the probability odds, $\mathbf{y_i}$ is a binary variable representing **1** if the respondents participated in budget making process, and **0** otherwise, $\mathbf{x_i}$ represents the vector of determinants that determine the likelihood of participating in budget making process in this case (Citizen Perceptions, Information Availability and Citizen Knowledge), $\boldsymbol{\beta}$ was a vector of parameters that was estimated , and $\boldsymbol{\mu_i}$ was the disturbance term, which has a symmetric distribution that is either normal or logistic.

Overall, the following binary logit regression model was used:

$$\frac{\Pr(y_i = 0)}{\Pr(y_i = 1)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \mu \quad \text{..} \quad (3)$$

Where :

y_i – dependent variable defined by $y = 1$ if the respondents participated in budget making process, and $y = 0$ otherwise ; x_1 – Citizen's Perceptions ; x_2 – Information Availability ; x_3 – Citizen's Knowledge ; μ – is the error term which represents other determinants other than the three ; β – Beta Parameters to be estimated.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

A total of 409 respondents were targeted to respond to the questionnaire and 39 were targeted for the interviews. Out of the 409 questionnaires issued, a response of 256 (63%) was obtained while out of the 39 interviews scheduled, 22 were successful giving a response rate of 56%. Overall, a response rate of 62% was recorded. According to Smith (2015), a response rate above 50% is satisfactory. Therefore, the response rate of 62% was considered satisfactory especially since the data collection process was faced with challenges that ranged from COVID-19 and bureaucracy. The high response rate was achieved through persistence.

Description of Participatory Budgeting

Asked what measures the county government has put in place to ensure that the turnout for participatory budgeting is high, the interviewees indicated that there is public awareness where the citizens are notified through local administration and leaders about upcoming dates on budget making. One of the interviewees noted the following:

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''…among the programmes we are running to ensure accommodative PB is creation of awareness where through the local administration, Chiefs barazas we sensitize the citizens on the importance of their turnup. We also publish dates on relevant platforms such as the county websites…''

Other interviewees indicated that the participants are encouraged to participate and are facilitated to do so. As a result, it has improved the turnout significantly. One of the interviewees noted the following:

''…the county has mandated to take care of the logistics for the participants as a way of encouraging more turnout to give views on the process and priorities…''

The respondents further rated the impact of participatory budgeting on improving public financial management. Up to 43% of the respondents felt that it improved Public Financial Management (PFM) to a moderate extent and 48.8% stated that it only improves it to a low extent. Only 8.2% felt that it does to a high extent. In a similar study, Papa (2016) indicated that participatory decision making in the public sector does not yield any significant outcomes in Busia County, Kenya as a result of weak or lack of good will. The participation rate was further established. It was established that only 17% of the respondents had participated in the budget making process in the county. Consequently, the majority, 83%, had never taken part. The rate of PB in the county was thus rated as low at 17% similar to Kilifi County (Mugambi & Theuri, 2014) and Busia county (Papa (2016) which was lower than 20%. The need for this study in interrogating the determining factors for this low rate was thus justified.

This was supported by the interviewees who acknowledged that there was still low awareness on PB despite efforts to create more awareness. They further indicated that the citizens had a negative attitude towards the whole process and felt that their opinion won't be counted nevertheless. Some of the interviewees noted the following:

''…despite the efforts to create awareness on the importance of PB as required by law, most citizens don't buy the idea and feel they have no incentive to contribute…''

''…some of the citizens see the county government as corrupt and feel that even though they give their opinion, there is no goodwill to incorporate them thus they opt not to waste their time…''

To find out whether the citizens were willing to participate given a chance, only 41% of them agreed that they could participate but still a larger percentage, 38.3%, stated that they could not participate even when given a chance. The interviewees reiterated that the citizens had a negative attitude towards the PB process. They stated that the citizens were unwilling to participate in budget making process citing reasons among them corruption and lack of political good will. In Nyandarua county Kenya, Wacera (2016) also indicated negative perceptions on Participatory Budgeting (PB) among the citizens. Some of the interviewees noted the following:

''…most citizens are not reactive to the news of PB feeling that it was a waste of time…''

''…some citizens indicated that PB is for those close to the governor and so no need of indulging in fruitless activities …''

Description of Citizen's Perceptions towards Participatory Budgeting

The respondents rated statements on their perception regarding participatory budgeting. A perception index of 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree was adopted. The results are presented in Table 2 indicated that majority of the respondents disagreed that the county government takes their contribution

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seriously (M = 1.88 ; SD = 0.92), agreed that they can participate in budget making process since they trust the county leadership adherence to the rule of law (M = 3.51 ; SD = 0.50) and neither agreed nor disagreed that they can participate in budget making process since they believe in the county government leadership's transparency (M = 2.73 ; SD = 1.11).

Majority also disagreed that they can participate in budget making process since they believe in the county government leadership's accountability (M = 2.22; SD = 0.97) but agreed that their desire to make change drives their willingness to participate in budget making process (M = 4.53; SD = 0.50). Additionally, majority of the respondents felt that their desire to influence policies drives their willingness to participate in budget making process (M = 4.57; SD = 0.50). On average though, the citizen's perception on PB is ambivalent. Related results were established by Aboelnaga (2017) who established that most Egyptians had mixed feeling about public participation given that they felt their opinion was not valued.

Table 2 Description of Citizen's Perceptions towards Participatory Budgeting

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I believe that the county government takes my contribution seriously	1.88	0.92
I can participate in budget making process since I trust the county leadership adherence to the rule of law	3.51	0.50
I can participate in budget making process since I believe in the county government leadership's transparency	2.73	1.11
I can participate in budget making process since I believe in the county government leadership's accountability	2.22	0.97
My desire to make change drives my willingness to participate in budget making process	4.53	0.50
My desire to influence policies drives my willingness to participate in budget making process	4.57	0.50
Average	**3.24**	**0.75**

Description of Information Availability in regard to Participatory Budgeting

The respondents rated statements on information availability through a perception index of 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The results are presented in Table 3. It was established that majority of the respondents disagreed on whether the county government readily avails information on public accounts (M = 2.41; SD = 1.18), they also disagreed on whether the county readily avails information showing its track record and the development plans (M = 2.21; SD = 1.00), disagreed on whether the information available to the public is comprehensive (M = 2.23; SD = 1.10) as well as whether the information available to the public is reliable (M = 2.21; SD = 1.06) and on whether the county government is timely in releasing information (M = 2.20; SD = 1.04).

The respondents however agreed that the county government conducts public awareness on participatory budgeting (M = 4.52; SD = 0.50) and neither agreed nor agreed on whether the county government readily avails information regarding the public participation dates (M = 3.45; SD = 1.32). On average, it was established that information availability on PB was to a low extent in the county. The findings are consistent with that of Papa (2016) who indicated that there was low public participation in Busia County as a result of lack of proper institutional frameworks to facilitate information dissemination for the process.

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Table 3 Description of Information Availability in regard to Participatory Budgeting

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
The county government readily avails information on public accounts	2.41	1.18
The county government conducts public awareness on participatory budgeting	4.52	0.50
The county government readily avails information regarding the public participation dates	3.45	1.32
The county readily avails information showing its track record and the development plans	2.24	1.00
The information available to the public is comprehensive	2.23	1.10
The information available to the public is reliable	2.21	1.06
The county government is timely in releasing information	2.20	1.04
Average	**2.77**	**1.03**

Description of Citizen's Knowledge in regard to Participatory Budgeting

The respondents rated statements on citizen's knowledge through a perception index of 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The results are presented in Table 4. It was established that majority of the citizens are not informed on matters regarding public budgeting procedures (M = 2.44; SD = 1.35), public participation requirements (M = 2.34; SD = 1.35), public financial management practices (M = 2.45; SD = 1.31) as well as social audit of the public sector (M = 2.45; SD = 1.37). The results also indicated that majority of the citizens are not informed on matters regarding promotion of interest of minorities (M = 2.44; SD = 1.42) as well as matters regarding their rights as citizens (M = 2.46; SD = 1.33). Overall, it was established that the citizens had low knowledge on matters surrounding PB. Waheduzzaman (2010) similarly indicated that in Bangladesh, one of the critical hindrances to PB was lack of awareness and low level of knowledge.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Citizen's Knowledge

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I am informed on matters regarding public budgeting procedures	2.44	1.35
I am informed on matters regarding public participation requirements	2.34	1.35
I am informed on matters regarding public financial management practices	2.45	1.31
I am informed on matters regarding social audit of the public sector	2.45	1.37
I am informed on matters regarding promotion of interest of minorities	2.44	1.42
I am informed on matters regarding my rights as a citizen	2.46	1.33
Average	**2.43**	**1.35**

Determinants of Public Participation in Budget Making Process

To establish the determinants of public participation in budget making process in devolved governments in Kenya, the study adopted a binary logit regression model since the public participation in budget making process was a binary

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variable. The results in Table 5 indicated that the three predictor variables, that is, citizen's perception, information availability and citizen's perception account for up to 40.1% of the variation in participatory budgeting in the county (Cox & Snell R Square = 0.401). This implies that the three factors are important in explaining PB in the county. Other factors other than the three account for the remaining variation (59.9%).

Table 5 Binomial Logistic Regression Model Summary

-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
103.538	0.401	0.668
Estimation terminated at iteration number 8 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.		

Unlike ANOVA and adjusted R-square in ordinary Least Square, a binary logistic regression model fitness is tested using Hosmer-Lemeshow statistic. In this method, the model is said to be significant if the Sig < 0.05 (Smith, 2015). As indicated in table 6, the binary logistic regression model predicting the determinants of participatory budgeting was a good fit (Sig < 0.05) implying that it was closer to the actual model hence a good predictor.

Table 6 Hosmer-Lemeshow statistic test of Binomial Logistic Regression Model Fitness

	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Model	131.392	3	0.000

The regression model coefficients were also established as shown in Table 7. From the Table, it can be demonstrated that the predictor three variables, that is Citizen's Perception, Information Availability and Citizen's Knowledge had a positive relationship with participatory budgeting ($\beta > 0$). Additionally, the influence on participatory budgeting was significant (P-value < 0.05) at 5% level of significance. Specifically, the results indicated that an improvement in the level of Citizen's positive Perception can increase the chances of participating in the budget making process by 71.337 times (Odds Ratio = 71.337). The study findings are consistent with that of a study by Aboelnaga (2017) who indicated that the moment the citizens felt that their opinion was valued, it increased their public participation rate.

The results also established that an increase in information availability can increase the chances of participating in the budget making process by 2.812 times (Odds Ratio = 2.812). Mugambi and Theuri (2014) also established that the citizens are likely to increase their publication participation rate given availability of information and high awareness. Similarly, it was established that an increase in the level of Citizen's Knowledge can increase the chances of participating in the budget making process by 7.484 times (Odds Ratio = 7.484). The findings are consistent with that of a study by Hayrapetyan (2019) which indicated that in Armenia, citizen's level of awareness and knowledge increased the chances of public participation.

Table 7 Binomial Logistic Regression Model Coefficients

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Odds Ratio
Citizen's Perception	4.267	1.056	16.325	1	0.000	71.337
Information Availability	1.034	0.502	4.246	1	0.039	2.812
Citizen's Knowledge	2.013	0.4	25.265	1	0.000	7.484
Constant	-25.502	4.233	36.304	1	0.000	0
Variable(s) entered on step 1: Citizen's Perception, Information Availability, Citizen's Perception						

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CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there is a low public awareness regarding PB in the county in the tune of 29%. The study also concluded that in the county, there is high illiteracy level. Another conclusion is that the level of public participation in budget making process in the county was low at 7%. The study also concluded that majority of the citizens in the county had a negative attitude towards participatory budgeting arguing that it was not adding any value to the development of the county. However, an improvement in the level of Citizen's positive Perception can increase the chances of participating in the budget making process significantly.

It was also concluded that the county government was not open in availing information regarding PB and that access to reliable and relevant information was only achievable to a moderate extent. However, an improvement in information availability can increase the chances of participating in the budget making process significantly. Another conclusion is that more than two thirds of the citizens are not informed about PB implying low awareness and knowledge about PB in the county government in regard to public budgeting procedures, public participation requirements, public financial management practices, social audit of the public sector, promotion of interest of minorities as well as their rights as citizens. However, an improvement in the level of Citizen's knowledge can increase the chances of participating in the budget making process significantly.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There is a need for the county government to run campaigns and create awareness in order to reverse the negative attitude and public relations they face from the citizens. The county government needs to relook at its image and public relations and improve where necessary and at the same time, sensitizing the citizens on the importance of participatory budgeting. The county government also needs to show political goodwill in implementing some of the relevant suggestions from citizen's contributions. Furthermore, there is a need for the county government to win the trust of its citizens through promoting transparency and accountability n management of the public resources in an effective, efficient and economical manner.

Since majority of the citizens have ow literacy level with secondary education and below, the county government needs to rethink its education policy in order to ensure that access to education, which is a human right, is advanced. The county government can implement programmes that aim to promote adult education since education was established to be a significant determinant of PB. Given that the county government was not open in availing comprehensive and reliable information regarding PB, the study recommends the county government to ensure that they avail relevant information to the citizens beforehand. This can be done through road shows, print media, local CBOs, NGOs, Chief's *Barazas*, local radio stations and televisions. In doing so, it increases turnout rates. Given that majority of the citizens are not informed about PB, the county government can enhance the efforts and programmes aimed at creating awareness in order to increase the chances of PB. Programmes can be established to sensitize citizens about public budgeting procedures, public participation requirements, public financial management practices as well as social audit of the public sector in order to encourage boost their confidence to contribute on such matters.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No potential conflict of interest was recorded by the authors.


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