

## The Role of Governance Strategies in Service Delivery in Nyeri Central Sub-County, Nyeri County; Kenya

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### Abstract

**Background:** Both governments at central and sub-national levels have increasingly pursued mechanisms to improve governance and service delivery to the citizenry. Since the onset of devolution, expectations for public service delivery have been high among the citizenry. Governance strategies are an important component of service delivery in the devolved system of governance.

**Aim:** The study aimed to examine the role of governance in service delivery in county governments.

**Setting:** The study was conducted in Nyeri Central Sub-County

**Methods:** The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The study shall employ a descriptive research design targeting a population of 140, 338 individuals' persons living in the Nyeri Central sub-county. A sample of 178 participants was selected for this study. This study used a systematic sampling technique was used. The validity and reliability findings were used to assess the adequacy of the study tool. Quantitative data was collected using a structured questionnaire while an interview guide was the main qualitative research instrument. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS (v23). Qualitative data was summarized using a thematic analysis approach.

**Results:** The findings of this study are envisioned to inform policy for the evaluation of governance strategies to ensure the efficacy of service delivery in the county government.

**Conclusion and Contribution:** The study concludes that while governance strategies have improved decision-making and planning, they have not significantly increased service efficiency.

**Keywords:** Governance Strategies, County, Service Delivery

### Introduction:

The concept of good governance can be traced to its origins in the 1970s, as formulated by development agencies to measure governance.

However, it was not until the 1980s that the concept became seductive in the global developmental agenda. It emanates from the

concept of governance. The word ‘governance’ has its origins in the Latin word ‘*gubernaer*’ and the Greek word ‘*kubernaein*’ which means to steer. Governance is how governance actors manage the affairs of a country through a well-established legal and institutional framework to meet the needs of the citizenry (Gjaltema, Biesbroek and Termeer, 2020).

Devolution entails the transfer of functions, resources, and power from the central government to sub-national levels; say local governments, which thereafter assume full responsibility and accountability for the specified functions (Amah, 2018; Mudalige, 2019). Devolved governance contributes positively to the processes of citizen participation and management, which is effective, responsive, and accountable to the stakeholders (Galukande-Kiganda, & Mzini, 2019; Waddington et al., 2019). This is because devolved governance policies enable citizens to take part in the decisions that affect their livelihoods, allow experimentation and innovation, and have better responses to the preferences of the citizenry, and county government control enriches the process of policymaking (Bua, and Escobar, 2018). Among the more prominent arguments for a devolved system of governance is the issue of efficiency, the devolved governance system is regarded as an approach toward the achievement of greater efficiency in a globalized environment (Dick-Sagoe, 2020; Guha and Chakrabarti, 2019). A greater degree of autonomy is highly correlated with a stronger scope for enhanced efficiency in public spending which is a precursor for efficient public service delivery (Makara, 2018).

Globally, the United States of America runs perhaps one of the most successful devolution initiatives, spanning over two centuries now followed by India whose system has lasted more than half a century (Ferreira, 2023). Contrastingly, devolution has witnessed great failures with the former Union of Soviet Socialist

Republics having failed from the 1980s political liberalization (Kembayev, 2018). The political liberalization opened an avenue for ethnic grievances that translated into the disaggregation of the union first into thirteen different states and subsequent division among others (O'Brien, Pike and Tomaney, 2003).

Regionally, the South African devolved system is one of a kind to get inferences from, having regional governments headed by a premier but supervisory and oversight roles retained by the national government. For the South African nation, the regional government is the powerhouse of the state, commanding a significant contribution to the sectors of finance, manufacturing, telecommunication, and transport. The Nigerian federal system is no different, divided into thirty regional states run by governors, regional assemblies, and regional governments. Nonetheless, the state has been subject to several hitches and coups, and many governments are driven by the unequal use of state natural resources (Amah, 2018; Lynch, Fegadel, and Long, 2022). The Ethiopian context is no different either, with its former province of Eritrea exploiting the 1994 constitution that allowed a provision for secession.

The promulgation of the Kenyan constitution in 2010 opened a new window of change of moving from the central governance to the devolved governance system. What followed was a government commitment to the rapid transfer of functions and resources to the counties accompanied by the allocation of funds to the devolved systems. The county governments are mandated to oversee functions in sectors of health, agriculture, trade, transport, and sanitation as well as generate revenue for the country (Njagi, Kirimi, Onyango, 2018). The security, education, foreign policy, and economic planning sectors remain under the charge of the central government (Burbidge, 2017).

The devolved system of governance faces several challenges such as governors having overarching responsibilities across sectors as a consequence of the transfer of functions from the national government implying that they should rely on dedicated staff (Bulut, and Abdow, 2018; Ismail, 2018). However, several county governments still suffer from the inadequacy of capacity to absorb devolved functions in their entirety and accompanying powers for now because of the scarcity of trained and experienced workforce to cater to the 47 counties. The quick transition could be a precursor for the failure of counties, given the number of devolved functions to articulate and the dearth of the required capacity to accommodate it (Wanyande, 2021). Especially in marginalized areas, this has proved a challenge (Nyandiko, 2020).

Since the promulgation of the new constitution more than half a decade ago, several functions have been under the care of County governments. The promulgation of the constitution in 2010 enhanced decentralization through the creation of 47 county governments (based on the 1992 districts of Kenya) with the devolution concept enshrined in chapter 11 of the constitution. The constitution of Kenya defined the power of the 47 county governments established after the March 2013 general elections. The devolved units have the mandate to raise revenue on behalf of the government by administration of taxes including the imposition of rates and all other Acts of Parliament-approved taxes. The operations of the devolved governments have been such that counties borrow on conditions of loan guarantee by the national government and subject to the approval of the county government assembly (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). The constitutionally formed 47 devolved governments, each having a given administrative framework borrowed from the County Governments Act, of 2012. The county government structures to guarantee the

implementation and realization of devolution are also enshrined in the County Government Act. The constitution further gives the devolved governments executive and legislative authority, mandates, and powers to formulate policies, establish plans, raise revenue, and develop a budgeting and governance framework (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). An overview of the functionality of the devolved governments indicates they are better positioned in terms of delivery of social services given the background knowledge of local problems facing the populace.

### **Statement of the problem:**

A devolved system presents varied benefits including political, economic, and social benefits to the citizenry, creating sub-national entities to improve accountability and decentralize power (Kharel, and Acharya, 2023; Onyalo, 2021). Every region of the country through devolved governance has the power to address its regional challenges through inclusion and participation (Muchekehu, 2018). Public participation is a cornerstone of effective governance, ensuring that citizens have a voice in the planning and implementation of development initiatives. However, challenges remain in ensuring meaningful participation, as some community members report limited awareness of public forums, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and the perception that decisions are predetermined despite consultations.

Since the devolution of county governments, poor governance, leadership, and management have been experienced in most counties including Nyeri County. The Report of the Auditor-General on the County Government of Nyeri for the Year Ended 30 June 2022 highlights financial mismanagement, including unauthorized expenditures and procurement irregularities, which have adversely affected service delivery. According to the National Crime Research Centre, Nyeri County has reported significant

crime rates in areas such as burglary (55.0%) and stealing (71.7%), which are close to or exceed national averages, reflecting underlying social challenges. Fighting among the different offices has been witnessed. Governance has been hampered for so long that effectiveness and efficiency have been missing in the management of Nyeri County resources. The aspirations of the people of Nyeri in terms of service delivery have not been actualized up to date. This has led to competitive governance leading to nonperformance, corruption, lack of community involvement, high crime rate, and drug/alcohol abuse.

### **Aim of the Study:**

The purpose of this study was to assess the role of governance strategies in service delivery in Nyeri Central Sub-County.

### **Literature Review:**

Onyango (2015) conducted a study on operations strategy and service delivery by the County Government of Kisumu, intending to establish the relationship between operations strategy and the performance of service delivery in the county. The study specifically focused on the operations that had been devolved, the effects of decentralizing these operations, and the constraints facing service delivery in the county government. An exploratory descriptive survey design was adopted, targeting five key ministries: Health Care Services, Water, Agriculture, Roads and Public Works, and Trade. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation from all seven sub-counties, with a sample size of 105 residents (15 from each sub-county). Primary data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression models. The study found that the Roads and Public Works department was the most efficient, followed by the health and education sectors. However, there was an overlap in the roles of the national and

county governments in some functions, leading to conflicts in service delivery that impacted performance. Additionally, there was a lack of resources for service delivery that matched the level of devolved functions. The study concluded that there is a positive relationship between operations strategy and service delivery in the County Government of Kisumu. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the Kisumu County Government adopt a more cost-effective and efficient procurement system to improve service delivery.

There is a dearth of literature on the role of governance in the provision of service delivery in Kenya. Since Kenya adopted the devolved governance system, the aspect of service delivery and governance ought to be an issue that has now picked up and the citizens are differentiating the services. While the role of governance in service delivery has taken place in different parts of the world, very few have been Kenya-specific; none has been conducted in the county of Nyeri. Furthermore, the relationship between the role of governance and the provision of service delivery has not been drawn from the local studies. The impact of governance strategies on service delivery under devolved governments is hardly understood. From the previous studies, this study attempts to bridge the gap in scholarly evidence in Kenya and provide a broader context of the study with comparable experiences from different parts of the country. This study aims to bridge the gap of knowledge by examining the role of governance in service delivery.

### **Theoretical Review:**

Theory brings out the tool for explaining reality and this serves two very important purposes. First, it links philosophical foundations to empirical data (ontology and epistemology). Secondly, it explains the relationship that a given phenomenon has with other phenomena. Concerning this, the study adopted two theories;



the theory of governance and the theory of performance.

### **Theory of Good Governance:**

The theory of good governance is championed by organizations like the World Bank, UNDP, and OECD, which promote it in aid-receiving countries to foster democracy, accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. The theory of good governance is proposed by the World Bank, UNDP and OECD. The theory states good governance is embedded in the principle of public engagement, transparency, accountability, adaptability, and the rule of law will eventually lead to sustainable growth and better overall well-being. The United Nations in the United Nations Charter advocated for the theory of good governance. It is all about handling the public in a transparent, accountable, and participatory way centred on the rule of agreeability. The service providers always stand to provide good services to the people. In most cases, people in the society have encountered poor governance in most times instead of the required good governance (Weiss, 2000). According to the United Nations Development Program, good governance consists of eight characteristics and they include; Transparency, Accountability, Effectiveness and Efficiency, Responsiveness, Rule of law, participation, equity and inclusiveness, and consensus building.

The relevance of this theory lies in its capacity to enhance comprehension within this research and serve as criteria for gauging governance in Nyeri County. Therefore, an adequate grasp of the theory of good governance and its principles is indispensable for comprehending and evaluating governance in Nyeri County. This understanding is crucial for proposing substantial recommendations for enhancement and considering potential implications for governance policy and practice in Nyeri County. Regrettably, in terms of contemporary good governance

practices worldwide, Kenya, much like many African nations, significantly lags in comparison to more advanced democratic countries in Europe and America, assessed using the benchmarks of good governance or democracy.

### **Theory of Performance:**

The theory of performance seeks to link six foundational concepts forming a framework that can be used to expound on performance as well as performance improvements. Performance means to be able to produce valued results. A performer is an individual or a group of people who take part in a collective work. To develop performance is sort of a journey and not a destination. In this theory, the location of the journey is a level of performance that describes the location during the journey. The level of performance currently is contingent wholly on the six foundational mechanisms; the environment of performance, level of knowledge, identity level, level of skills, individual factors, and other permanent factors. Each level is considered by the quality and effective performance. For instance, as a manager advances his level of performance in an organization, he or she can organize resources and people more effectively to achieve an output that is of high quality within a short period.

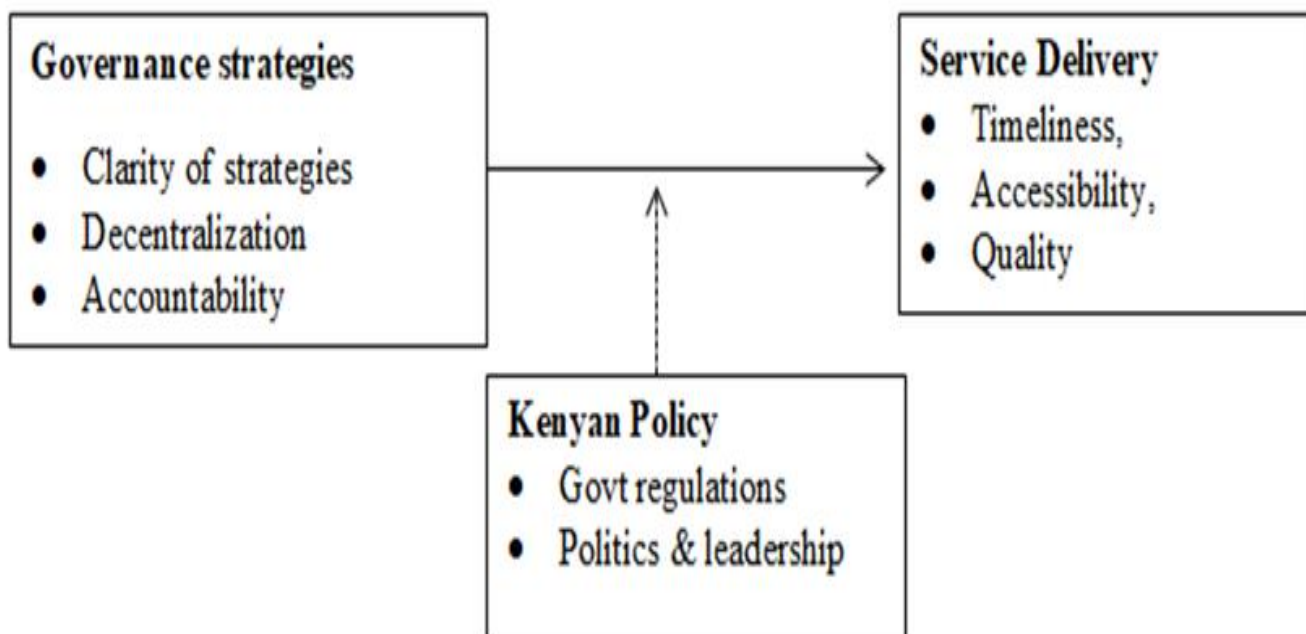
The Theory of Performance holds considerable relevance in the investigation of the government's role in service delivery in Nyeri Central Sub-County, Nyeri County, Kenya. Emphasizing the production of valued results, the theory aligns with the collaborative nature of governance as a collective effort to manage resources and institutions. It underscores continuous improvement, portraying service delivery as an ongoing journey rather than a static destination. The six foundational mechanisms of the theory, including environment, knowledge level, identity level, skills level, individual factors, and other permanent factors, offer a framework to assess

and understand the factors influencing governance in the specified context. The theory's insights into managerial performance and the incorporation of three adages for improvement, focusing on mindset, enriched environments, and reflective practices, contribute to the study's exploration of effective governance and service delivery optimization. Moreover, the theory's

emphasis on empowerment, learning for understanding, and making a difference aligns with the study's goal of comprehending the practical impact of governance on service delivery outcomes in the community.

#### Conceptual framework:

Independent variables                      intervening variables                      Dependent variable



Source: Researcher 2023

**Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework**

#### Research Methodology:

##### Research Design:

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The descriptive research design uses studies that are preliminary and exploratory to provide room for the researcher to collect data, summarize the information, present the data, and then interpret the information therein for purposes of clarity. The primary goal of this research is to gain insights into the current state of service delivery

in Nyeri Central Sub-County, specifically focusing on the role of governance. This approach allows the researcher to not only identify patterns and trends but also to generate a rich narrative that contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play.

##### Target population

The research targeted ho Nyeri Central Sub-County residents, Sub-county Ward

administrators, and Chiefs. The target population for this study comprises 49,945 persons living in Nyeri Central Sub County (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019).

### Sampling procedures and techniques

Sampling refers to the process of selection of individuals, objects, and items of study from a larger population with similar characteristics. The process involves the researcher gathering information from a whole group, then singling out a subset of the population (sampling), and then coming up with findings that give a representation of the general population (Wallen and Fraenkel, 2013). This study used random sampling. According to Yamane (1967), there is a simplified formula that is used for calculations of populations, and it is always used in place of Cochran's formula. According to Yamane, a sample size can achieve a 94% level of confidence and a  $p=0.06$  if,

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;  $N$  = is the size of the population,  $n$  = is the sample size of the population, and,  $e$  = an error of 5%. From the use of the formula, the precision error was 5% with a confidence level of 95%. The sample size from the population was given by:

$$n = \frac{49,945}{1 + 49,945 (.075)^2} = \frac{49,945}{280.940625} = 177.778 = 178 \text{ households.}$$

The calculations above conclude that the sample size for Nyeri Central Sub-County residents is 178. At the household level, all members of households aged above 18 years were subjected to a random selection process where one member above 18 years was selected to participate in this study. For the Key informants, the study employed purposive sampling techniques to have respondents who have the right information and play an oversight role in the implementation of service delivery. These included; Sub-county Ward administrators, Chiefs, and Ass Chiefs.

**Table 1: Sample Size**

Department (Units)	Target Population	Sample size	Sample Procedure
Public	140,338	178	Yamane formula
Ward Administrator	8	4	Purposive
Chiefs. Ass Chiefs	11	6	Purposive
Total	140,338	188	

Source: KNBS (2019)

### **Construction of research instruments**

This study shall employ both qualitative and quantitative research instruments to obtain information relative to answering the research questions and comprehending the research problem. The study shall develop a research questionnaire as the main quantitative research instrument in line with the research questions. This comprised closed and open-ended questions. An interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from the key informants. To improve the reliability, a pilot study was conducted where questionnaires were administered to sample respondents and ascertain the measure of consistency of results. Further, the Cronbach's alpha of reliability was computed as a statistical measure of desired reliability. To assess the face validity of the study tool, the tool was subjected to five experts in forensic nursing for a rating of the relevance of the study questions in assessing. The experts rated the questions on a scale of 1-5. Construct validity was assessed using factor analysis. The validity and reliability findings were used to assess the adequacy of the study tool. Variables with Cronbach's alpha > 0.700 were considered to have internal consistency. In construct validity variables with factor loading exceeding > 0.60 and average variance explained >0.40 were considered valid.

### **Data collection methods and procedures**

This study shall focus on obtaining both primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained using a questionnaire and interview guide. Questionnaires were self-administered while in cases of literate persons from the community, the research assistant assisted by ticking given responses. In cases where some respondents are unable to respond due to fixed time schedules, the researcher shall employ the drop-and-pick method in the administration of questionnaires. An introductory letter from Mount Kenya University and a permit from NACOSTI were

acquired before embarking on data collection. Approval documents were presented to respondents at the time of the interview.

### **Data analysis techniques and procedures:**

After collecting, data was organized and cleaned to prepare data for collection. To improve the quality of the reactions, the data pre-processing step involved checking and correcting any incorrect or incomplete reactions. Subsequently, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to summarize the responses. The original data was preserved before any adjustments were made to the dataset used for analysis. Data collected using the quantitative method was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis of field data incorporated both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Descriptive and inferential statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, median, quartiles, minimum and maximum values, and percentages are utilized to summarize various variables.

### **Ethical considerations:**

The researcher sought approval from Mount Kenya University's Ethical Research Board and a National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation permit. During the consenting period, all targeted participants were provided with details of the study and all their concerns were clarified. Oral consent was sought before administering the questionnaire. To ensure confidentiality pseudonyms were used to refer to participants. Also, the data collected will be stored under password password-protected files while the hardcopies are stored in locked cabinets.

### **Results:**

#### **Participants Demographic Information**

Table 2 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. It covers key categories such as gender, age of participants, and level of education.



**Table 1: Participants demographic information**

	Categories	n	%
Gender	Male	77	45.3
	Female	93	54.7
	Total	170	100.0
Age	18-25 years	31	18.2
	26-35 Years	63	37.1
	36-45 Years	41	24.1
	46 Years and above	35	20.6
	Total	170	100.0
Level of Education	Primary	4	2.4
	Secondary	39	22.9
	certificate	52	30.6
	Diploma	46	27.1
	Degree	24	14.1
	Master's Degree	5	2.9
	Total	170	100.0

Most of the participants were female, accounting for 54.7%, while males comprised 45.3%. Although the difference is not vast, the slightly higher percentage of female participants suggests a gender imbalance, with more women involved

in the study. Most participants were aged 46-55 years age range, making up 37.1% of the group. This was followed by 24.1% of participants aged 56-65 years. A notable portion, 20.6%, were aged 66 years and above, while the least represented

age group was 35-45 years, comprising 18.2% of participants. The highest proportion of participants held certificates (30.6%), 27.1% held

diplomas. Participants with secondary education made up 22.9%, while those with degrees accounted for 14.1%. Only a small proportion held a master's degree, indicating that advanced

education was less common among participants. Those with primary education were 2.4%.

### Impact of Governance Strategies on Service Delivery

Table 3 presents participants' perceptions of the impact of governance strategies on service delivery in Nyeri Central Sub-County.

**Table 2: Governance Strategies on Service Delivery**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Decisions at all levels are now based on better information, better budgeting processes, and a longer time frame	34	20.0	71	41.8	43	25.3	22	12.9	0	0.0
Implementation of governance strategies has improved staff productivity	28	16.6	81	47.9	43	25.4	15	8.9	2	1.2
Implementation of governance strategies has reduced the time taken to provision of service delivery	31	18.3	70	41.4	53	31.4	13	7.7	2	1.2
Working procedures have been eased following the implementation of governance strategies	32	18.8	85	50.0	40	23.5	12	7.1	1	.6
Strategies employed have ensured a proper feedback mechanism for service provision.	39	23.2	56	33.3	55	32.7	16	9.5	2	1.2

A significant portion of participants, 41.8%, felt that decisions at all levels were now based on better information, improved budgeting processes, and longer time frames. However,

20.0% strongly disagreed, and 25.3% remained neutral on this issue. A smaller proportion, 12.9%, agreed, while none of the participants strongly agreed, indicating mixed perceptions

about improvements in decision-making processes. Regarding the impact of governance strategies on staff productivity, most participants (47.9%) disagreed, suggesting that these strategies may not have contributed significantly to enhancing productivity. Additionally, 16.6% strongly disagreed, and 25.4% were neutral. Only a small percentage agreed (8.9%) or strongly agreed (1.2%), showing limited agreement on the strategies' effectiveness in boosting productivity. When asked whether governance strategies had reduced the time taken for service delivery, 41.4% of participants disagreed, and 18.3% strongly disagreed, indicating that many did not perceive a reduction in service delivery times. A notable proportion, 31.4%, remained neutral, while 7.7% agreed, and 1.2% strongly agreed, suggesting limited perceived impact in this area. Participants also shared their views on whether working procedures had been eased by governance strategies. Half of the participants (50.0%) disagreed, and 18.8% strongly disagreed, reflecting concerns about the strategies' effectiveness in simplifying processes. Meanwhile, 23.5% were neutral, with smaller groups agreeing (7.1%) or strongly agreeing (0.6%). Finally, when asked if the strategies employed had ensured a proper feedback mechanism for service provision, 33.3% disagreed, and 23.2% strongly disagreed, reflecting concerns about the adequacy of feedback mechanisms. Around 32.7% were neutral, while 9.5% agreed, and 1.2% strongly agreed.

The qualitative data suggests that the existing governance strategies had both positive and negative impacts on service delivery in Nyeri Central Sub-County. While devolution has brought governance closer to the people, allowing for a better understanding of local needs, issues like delayed disbursement of funds, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and political interference have

hampered the effectiveness of service provision. Chiefs and ward managers emphasized that the slow approval of projects and the underutilization of community input have affected the overall quality and timeliness of services.

*“.....the strategies we have in place don't fully address the needs of the community, and there are cases where bureaucratic inefficiencies and political interference slow down the implementation of key projects.”*

*“.....projects are delayed due to administrative bottlenecks and the slow disbursement of funds, which affects the overall efficiency of service delivery.”* **Chief 2**

*“.....inconsistent budget allocations, overlapping roles between county and national government functions, and sometimes slow bureaucratic processes have limited the overall effectiveness of service delivery.”* **Ward Manager**

### **Service Delivery by the County Government of Nyeri**

Service Delivery provides an overview of participants' views on various service delivery aspects. It covers primary and secondary healthcare services, agricultural extension support, clean water and sanitation, public entertainment and amenities, infrastructure development, and early childhood education and vocational training. Participants' responses, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, reflect their perceptions of the effectiveness and quality of these services. The table offers a comprehensive participant view of the provision of key services by the county government of Nyeri.

**Table 4: Service delivery by the county government of Nyeri**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Primary and secondary healthcare services, managing hospitals, and ensuring access to quality healthcare.	3(1.8)	10(5.9)	14(8.3)	112(66.3)	30(17.8)
Agricultural extension services provide support to farmers through training, input provision, market access facilitation, and pest and disease control measures, which are crucial for food security and economic empowerment of rural populations.	5(3.0)	8(4.7)	43(25.4)	85(50.3)	28(16.6)
The availability of clean and safe water, waste management, and sanitation services.	1(0.6)	16(9.6)	24(14.4)	84(50.3)	42(25.1)
Public Entertainment, and Public Amenities: Promotion of local cultural activities, sports, public entertainment, libraries, museums, and recreational facilities	5(3.0)	11(6.5)	29(17.2)	64(37.9)	60(35.5)
construction and maintenance of county roads, markets, public spaces, and other infrastructure	4(2.4)	7(4.1)	22(13.0)	94(55.6)	42(24.9)
support early childhood education and vocational training institutions	2(1.3)	9(5.7)	26(16.6)	69(43.9)	51(32.5)

The majority of respondents expressed positive sentiments regarding primary and secondary healthcare services, with 84.1% (66.3% agreeing and 17.8% strongly agreeing) implying that these services are well-managed and provide access to quality care. This suggests widespread support

for the healthcare system's effectiveness, although some areas might still benefit from further improvement. A majority, 75.4% of participants (50.3% agreeing and 25.1% strongly agreeing) agreed that agricultural extension services, including farmer training and market access, are

crucial for the sector. However, a notable portion remained neutral or disagreed, indicating that while many appreciate these services, there is still a need to enhance their outreach and effectiveness. Regarding essential services like clean and safe water, waste management, and sanitation, 75.4% of respondents (50.3% agreeing and 25.1% strongly agreeing) felt that these services were adequately provided. Nevertheless, a considerable number of participants were neutral or disagreed, reflecting ongoing concerns about the consistent quality or availability of these critical services. On public entertainment and amenities, 73.4% of respondents (37.9% agreeing and 35.5% strongly agreeing) supported the promotion of cultural and recreational activities, reflecting a broad appreciation for these community-oriented services that enhance social engagement and cultural participation. The construction and maintenance of infrastructure, such as roads and public spaces, also received positive feedback, with 80.5% of respondents (55.6% agreeing and 24.9% strongly agreeing) stating that these services are effectively managed. Despite this, there were some

dissenting opinions, suggesting room for further improvements in infrastructure development and maintenance. Also, 76.4% of respondents (43.9% agreeing and 32.5% strongly agreeing) felt that support for early childhood education and vocational training was adequate, although a significant portion of neutral responses indicates that these services may still require further strengthening to fully meet community needs. In conclusion, the majority of participants had a favourable view of healthcare, infrastructure, and education services, while areas such as agriculture, water, and sanitation saw a mix of satisfaction and concerns, highlighting opportunities for continued enhancement in service delivery.

#### Association between Governance Strategies and Service Delivery:

Table 5 illustrates the relationship between governance strategies and service delivery. It shows an association between the implementation of governance strategies and improvements in service delivery.

**Table 5: Correlation between Governance Strategies and Service Delivery**

		Services Delivery	Governance Strategy
Services Delivery	Pearson Correlation	1	.515**
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.000
	N	169	169
Governance Strategy	Pearson Correlation	.515**	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.000	
	N	169	170
**. Correlation Is Significant At The 0.01 Level (2-tailed).			



The Pearson correlation coefficient between governance strategies and service delivery is 0.515, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as the effectiveness of governance strategies improves, there is a corresponding improvement in service delivery. The positive coefficient reflects that better governance practices were associated with enhanced service outcomes. The significance level (p-value) of 0.000 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This low p-value confirms that the observed relationship between governance strategies and service delivery is unlikely to be due to random chance, reinforcing the validity of the findings.

### Discussion:

A significant portion of participants, 41.8%, felt that decisions at all levels were now based on better information, improved budgeting processes, and longer time frames. This finding supports the findings of Nogueira and Jorge (2017), who observed that while improved information access and budgeting processes can enhance decision-making, perceptions of their effectiveness often vary among stakeholders. However, 20.0% strongly disagreed, and 25.3% remained neutral on this issue. A smaller proportion, 12.9%, agreed, while none of the participants strongly agreed, indicating mixed perceptions about improvements in decision-making processes. Regarding the impact of governance strategies on staff productivity, most participants (47.9%) disagreed, suggesting that these strategies may not have contributed significantly to enhancing productivity. The findings align with those of Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2015), who found that governance reforms do not necessarily translate into immediate productivity gains. Additionally, 16.6% strongly disagreed, and 25.4% were neutral. Only a small percentage agreed (8.9%) or strongly agreed (1.2%), showing limited

agreement on the strategies' effectiveness in boosting productivity.

When asked whether governance strategies had reduced the time taken for service delivery, 41.4% of participants disagreed, and 18.3% strongly disagreed, indicating that many did not perceive a reduction in service delivery times. A notable proportion, 31.4%, remained neutral, while 7.7% agreed, and 1.2% strongly agreed, suggesting limited perceived impact in this area. The findings are consistent with Kosec, and Wantchekon (2020), who argue that governance strategies often fail to yield immediate improvements in service delivery due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and limited institutional capacity. Participants also shared their views on whether working procedures had been eased by governance strategies. Half of the participants (50.0%) disagreed, and 18.8% strongly disagreed, reflecting concerns about the strategies' effectiveness in simplifying processes. Meanwhile, 23.5% were neutral, with smaller groups agreeing (7.1%) or strongly agreeing (0.6%). The findings correspond with Jerab and Mabrouk (2023), who emphasize that organizational restructuring efforts often introduce new complexities instead of simplifying processes. Finally, when asked if the strategies employed had ensured a proper feedback mechanism for service provision, 33.3% disagreed, and 23.2% strongly disagreed, reflecting concerns about the adequacy of feedback mechanisms. Around 32.7% were neutral, while 9.5% agreed, and 1.2% strongly agreed which aligns with Maracha, V. (2016), who highlights that feedback mechanisms are often inconsistently implemented across different departments or agencies.

The majority of respondents expressed positive sentiments regarding primary and secondary healthcare services, with 84.1% (66.3% agreeing and 17.8% strongly agreeing) implying that these services are well-managed and provide access to

quality care. The findings support the findings of Chukwuma, Bossert and Croke, (2019), who found that effective healthcare management and access to quality care significantly improve public trust in service delivery. This suggests widespread support for the healthcare system's effectiveness, although some areas might still benefit from further improvement. A majority, 75.4% of participants (50.3% agreeing and 25.1% strongly agreeing) agreed that agricultural extension services, including farmer training and market access, are crucial for the sector. However, a notable portion remained neutral or disagreed, indicating that while many appreciate these services, there is still a need to enhance their outreach and effectiveness. The findings are consistent with the work of Opolot, Isubikalu, Obaa and Ebanyat, (2018), who found that access to farmer training and market information plays a crucial role in enhancing agricultural productivity.

Regarding essential services like clean and safe water, waste management, and sanitation, 75.4% of respondents (50.3% agreeing and 25.1% strongly agreeing) felt that these services were adequately provided. The findings are findings by Patariaia, Jinchveladze and Magalashvili, (2025), who reported that while urban sanitation services tend to receive positive ratings, rural and peri-urban areas often exhibit mixed perceptions due to inconsistent service quality. Nevertheless, a considerable number of participants were neutral or disagreed, reflecting ongoing concerns about the consistent quality or availability of these critical services. On public entertainment and amenities, 73.4% of respondents (37.9% agreeing and 35.5% strongly agreeing) supported the promotion of cultural and recreational activities, reflecting a broad appreciation for these community-oriented services that enhance social engagement and cultural participation. The findings echo the findings of Jennings, et al (2024) who highlighted the role of cultural and

recreational activities in promoting social cohesion and community well-being.

The construction and maintenance of infrastructure, such as roads and public spaces, also received positive feedback, with 80.5% of respondents (55.6% agreeing and 24.9% strongly agreeing) stating that these services were effectively managed, which is consistent with prior research by Chowns, (2015). Despite this, there were some dissenting opinions, suggesting room for further improvements in infrastructure development and maintenance. Also, 76.4% of respondents (43.9% agreeing and 32.5% strongly agreeing) felt that support for early childhood education and vocational training was adequate, although a significant portion of neutral responses indicates that these services may still require further strengthening to fully meet community needs. The findings align with findings by Sairmaly (2023), who emphasized the importance of sustained investment in education services to enhance workforce readiness and long-term economic stability. In conclusion, the majority of participants had a favourable view of healthcare, infrastructure, and education services, while areas such as agriculture, water, and sanitation saw a mix of satisfaction and concerns, highlighting opportunities for continued enhancement in service delivery.

### **Conclusion:**

The study concludes that while governance strategies have introduced improvements in decision-making, budgeting, and longer planning horizons, these efforts have not significantly improved productivity or service delivery efficiency.

### **Recommendations:**

- i. The study recommends that county leadership refine governance strategies to target increased productivity, streamline service delivery processes, and improve

staff efficiency. Developing clear operational guidelines and policies, as well as ensuring leadership commitment to these practices, will contribute to better service outcomes.

- ii. The study recommends that county governments align resource availability with the demands of devolved functions to ensure effective service delivery. Equitable distribution of resources should be prioritized to ensure all sectors, particularly health, education, and infrastructure, receive adequate funding to meet service needs.

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