

Significance of Local Government on Economic Development. Empirical Studies of Kisoro Municipality, Kisoro District.

Alex Akankwasa, Peace Turyomurugyendo, Teddy Akakikunda, Gerald Kwesiga, Evas Kemigisha

Correspondence

Alex Akankwasa Assistant Lecturer/ PhD Student Kabale University Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences,
alexakankwa@gmail.com

Peace Turyomurugyendo Assistant Lecturer/ PhD Student Kabale University Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Teddy Akakikunda Assistant Lecturer Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences Kabale University/ PhD Student Kampala
International University

Evas Kemigisha Assistant Lecturer/ PhD Student Kabale University Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Gerald Kwesiga Assistant Lecturer/ PhD Student Kabale University Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences

Abstract: *The study was carried out on the local government and economic development. The Study was guided by the following objectives; to find out the contributions of local government in economic development of Uganda in Kisoro Municipality, Kisoro district, to explore challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda in Kisoro Municipality, Kisoro district and to suggest possible strategies to solve challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda in Kisoro Municipality, Kisoro district. . The methodology used in the study was descriptive research design. The methods that were used in data collection were questionnaires, interview guide and Focus group discussion. The population of 80 respondents selected from Kisoro municipality Kisoro district. The study established that there is a significant known relationship between Local government and economic development. The study further recommended that strengthening the Local governments should be empowered to attract and retain well-trained technical people capable of mounting strategic planning for district implementation.*

Keywords: Local Government, Economic development, Sustainability.

1.0 Introduction

Globally, economic development strategy has in the recent past gained widespread popularity and acceptance as a grass-root-based approach, especially in the developing world. Local government is seen as an empowering strategy with the overall goal of empowering the grass-root people so that they are able to initiate and propel their local socioeconomic prosperity through the promotion of self-reliance (Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, MAAIF, 2012).

From the 1970s onwards, the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom began focusing on the local geographical areas as the centers of growth and development (Harvey, 2014). Accordingly, for example, there was a change in the policy in the United States, so that the Federal Government considered it her role to address the economic underdevelopment of the rural areas of American states. During the same period, a more structured strategy of LED emerged in the United Kingdom as a response to the neoliberal economic policies of centralized planning (Harvey, 2014).

Local government in economic development has been evolving as a development strategy, the world over, for a number of decades. The period from the 1960s to the early 1980s witnessed economic decline in many developed nations of Europe. During the said period, many of these countries experienced de-industrialization and capital flight, which, coupled with the effects of globalization, gave rise to the adoption and use of local government as a development strategy to assist in the regeneration of many local areas and cause development. During the same period, there was a marked shift in development thinking, in which local governments were no longer perceived as merely places of local administrations, but of local entrepreneurialism (Harvey, 2014).

In Kisoro municipality Kisoro district, this expectation of local government was not realized. That is, even though full-service delivery was available at the local level with citizen participation, the poverty levels remained high and no visible development was in sight. This led to a policy shift in the implementation of the local government to address the gap in the original design of the economic development (Mutabwire 2012). It is against this background that the researcher intends to find out the impact of local government in economic development of Uganda particularly Kisoro Municipality, Kisoro district.

2.0 Literature review

2.1 Contribution of local government in economic development of Uganda.

According to Binswanger et al., (2010) Local governments provide leadership and coordination in the planning and implementation of local economic development initiatives, either directly or through delegation to community based agencies. Local government

build social capital, connecting local governments with their communities in a myriad of ways, generating innovative solutions to local needs.

Local authorities are created to render services in defined geographical areas, primarily because of the inability of central government to attend in detail to all the requirements of society that have to be satisfied by a government institution. The range of urban services provided by local authorities in developing countries, more particularly in Africa, are, inter alia, parks, street cleaning, sanitation, refuse collection, road construction and maintenance, housing, water and sewerage, primary education, clinics, residential and industrial estates, planning and zoning, fire and ambulance services, camping sites and recreational services (Meyer, 1978).

Blakely (2004) asserts that local government create plans integrate efforts across sectors, developing both the formal and informal economy, with a view to realizing community goals, such as better quality jobs, reduced poverty, environmental sustainability, and the inclusion of marginalized groups, notably women, youth, people with disabilities, and indigenous peoples.

There are several reasons why local governments are indispensable to the process of economic development, beginning with their traditional roles. Local government must provide a Secure and stable environment in which enterprises can flourish. They are responsible for physical infrastructure roads, water supply, waste management, information and Communication technologies all of which are necessary prerequisites to economic activity. Local government also address the needs of their citizens for public health, education, housing, local transportation services, cultural and recreational facilities, child care, and other public goods and services that are essential to the nurturing of a healthy, skilled, and reliable workforce (Byabashaija, et al ..., 2017).

2.2 Challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda

Much research by international institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program has clearly shown that local governments in developing countries face several challenges of which the most important are financial, administrative and technical ones Farsky, (2013). Furthermore, a group of scholars agreed that local government units (LGUs) face a range of challenges, perhaps the most important of which are technical competence, financial viability, responsiveness to citizens' needs, public participation, capacity building and environmental protection (Holis & Fulton, 2002; Bingiston, Fletcher, & Kristen, 2004; Wong, Tang, & Horen, 2006).

Local governments in Jordan face a set of challenges represented by lack of training and development of their cadres, in addition to strict central control, alongside with low public participation. These challenges cannot be ignored if local governments want to advance their economic, social and developmental roles (Almeani, 2015).

The weakness and lack of financial resources is one of the most important obstacles to the development of local administrations (Raco, 2018). This weakness affects the independence of local councils, as local unit independence depends mainly upon the availability of their own resources to achieve the completion of required local projects

2.3 Strategies to solve challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda

Local government may, therefore, assist to put some measure of power in the hands of the masses, thereby making the notion of government of the people, by the people, and for the people a little more realistic. Latib (1995), in this regard, remarks: Far too much attention has historically been placed on compliance and process. What is needed is the building of a broader community perception of accountability. This broader perspective implies that accountability should be based on an overall concept of governance. This approach emphasizes not only political representation and the supremacy of political structures in the accountability process, but also interactive processes with civil society.

Local funding is one of the most important tools and mechanisms that contribute to the local development process. Local funding can be defined as all available financial resources that can be provided from various sources to finance local development in order to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the local community in such a way as to achieve the highest rates of development (Taamneh, 2018).

In many cities, towns, and villages of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, most people pursue their livelihoods in the informal economy, that is, by economic activity that is outside of government regulation, taxation, and observation. Estimates of its extent range from at least one-third to over half of all economic activity in many countries of the Global South. It is, therefore, critically important for local governments to attend to the informal economy in their local government plans and practices George (2013).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The study used a descriptive research design with a combination of both Qualitative and quantitative research designs.

3.2 Study area.

The study was conducted in Kisoro Municipality, Kisoro district.

3.3 Study population.

The study covered the population of 80 respondents in Kisoro municipality. The Sample size was determined using Sloveni formula

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

$$n = \frac{80}{1 + 80(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{80}{1+0.2} = 67$$

$$n = 67$$

3.4 Sample size

Category	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Town Clerk	1	1	Purposive sampling
Community Development Officer	1	1	Purposive Sampling
Commercial Officer	1	1	Purposive sampling
Community members	77	64	Simple Random Sampling
Total	80	67	

3.5 Source of data.

The study used both secondary and primary data.

3.6 Data collection methods

The methods of data collection involved Questionnaire, and Interview.

3.7 Reliability and validity

Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a test or procedure of data collection yields similar results under constant conditions in all occasions (Bell, 1997). This may be realized basing on scales and tests. The research study ensured that the questionnaire conformed to the research problem to ensure consistencies.

Validity

Validity refers to the level at which the data collection presents what is necessary and important to avoid variances. This was achieved by using valid and applicable tools.

3.13 Data analysis and processing

The collected data was entered, edited, coded and processed into information using SPSS.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1.1 Age of the respondents

Table 1 Age of respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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18-25	18	27
26-35	22	33
36-45	14	21
46 and above	13	19
Total	67	100

Source: Researchers computations, 2022

From the table above it is noted that majority of the respondents were between 26 – 35 were presented by 33%, 18-25 were expressed by 27%, 36-45 were shown by 21% and 46 and above were stated by 19%.

4.1.2 Sex of respondents

Table 2 showing Sex of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Females	36	54
Males	31	46
Total	67	100

Source; Field source 2022

As shown from the table above, Females represented 54%, Males stipulated by 46%.

4.3 Education of the respondents

Table 3 Educational level of respondents

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary Level	30	45
Diploma	20	30
Bachelor's Degree	12	18
Postgraduate	05	7
Total	67	100

Source: Field source 2022

According to the findings from the table above, 45% of the respondents were secondary level, 30% were Diploma holders, 18% were Bachelor's degree and 7% were post graduates holders.

4.2 Contribution of local government in economic development of Uganda.

Table 2: Contribution of local government in economic development of Uganda.

Contribution of local government in economic development of Uganda	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Leadership and Coordination	25	37
Meet requirements of the community	22	33
Development of formal and informal economy	20	30
Total	67	100

Source: Researchers computations, 2022

From the table above, Leadership and coordination is a great contribution to economic development by local government as stated by 37% of the respondents, 33% came up with Meeting the requirements of the community and 30% states that development of formal and informal economy contributes a lot towards economic development.

4.3 Challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda

Table 3: Challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda

Challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Financial challenges	24	36
Lack of training	22	33
Administrative and technical challenges	21	32
Total	67	100

From the table **Source: Field work, 2022**
and 32 % expri

cial challenges, 33% stated lack of training

4.4 Strategies to solve challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda

Table 4: Strategies to solve challenges faced by local government in economic development of Uganda

Strategies to solve challenges faced by local government	Frequency	Percentage
Mass sensitization	30	45
Local Funding	25	37
Government regulation	12	18
Total	67	100

Source: Field work, 2022

Research findings show that 45% of the respondents expresses that mass sensitisation may be used solving issues of Local government, 37% expressed Local Funding and 18% stated Government regulation.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The research study concluded that there is a high and positive relationship between Local government and economic development at Kisoro Municipality Kisoro District. The findings indicate that if local government policies are embraced, then increased levels of economic development are achieved.

The study found out that local government policies and programs are very fundamental in gearing economic development. The study established that Local government help in boosting economic growth and development, Provision of essential services, proper public expenditure and improving value for money in order to boost the general welfare of the members of the community.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that; there is need to strengthen agencies by creating awareness among all the members of the public to ensure accountability and quality service delivery, recruitment of competent and skilled human resources, Ensuring proper planning and implementation of government programs and projects to ensure sustainability,

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