



**DECENTRALISATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN UGANDA:
A CASE OF MBARARA CITY**

KARUSIGARIRA IYANGYE ALEX

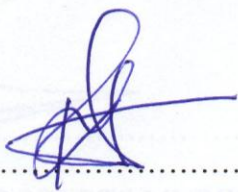
22/BSU/MAPAM/2050

**A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POST
GRADUATE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FOR THE AWARD
MASTER'S DEGREE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
MANAGEMENT OF BISHOP STUART
UNIVERSITY**

JUNE, 2024

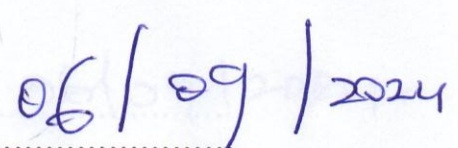
Declaration

I, Karusigarira Iyangye Alex, affirm that this research report is my own original work and has not been submitted for any academic qualification or award before

Signed


KARUSIGARIRA IYANGYE ALEX

22/BSU/MAPAM/2050

Date


Signed


MR. NUWAGANA EMIAS

(SUPERVISOR)

Date


Approval

This research report has been completed under our supervision and is now ready for examination

Goretti Karusigira, for their financial support and moral guidance throughout my academic journey.

Signed.....

PROFF. ROBERTS MURIISA KABEBA

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR.

Date.....06/09/2024.

Signed.....

MR. NUWAGABA ELIAS

(SUPERVISOR)

Date.....06/09/2024

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Mr. Karugairira Deogratus, and my mother, Mrs. Maria Goretti Karusigarira, for their financial support and moral guidance throughout my academic journey.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I express my gratitude to God Almighty for granting me the strength, confidence, and understanding needed to complete this research dissertation. I also sincerely thank my brothers and sisters for their contributions to the success of this work.

I am deeply grateful to my university supervisors, Professor Roberts Kabeba Muriisa and Mr. Elias Nuwagaba, for their guidance throughout this study. My heartfelt thanks also go to my friends and coursemates, especially Gracious, Nelson, and Ronald, for their support.

Finally, I extend my special thanks to my respondents, particularly the Mbarara City Mayor and all the division counselors, for their invaluable support during the data collection process

Abstract

Despite the implementation of decentralization policies aimed at transferring administrative, fiscal, and political powers to local governments, public service delivery in Uganda, particularly in Mbarara City, remains inadequate. This study aimed to identify and analyze the factors hindering the effectiveness of decentralization in enhancing public service delivery in Mbarara City. Specific objectives included assessing the effectiveness of decentralization policies, analyzing the challenges and opportunities in their implementation, and formulating evidence-based policy recommendations. A descriptive research design integrating both quantitative and qualitative data was employed. The study found that while decentralization has led to improvements in decision-making efficiency and resource allocation, significant challenges such as insufficient funding, lack of training, and coordination issues persist. These challenges impede the full potential of decentralization, despite some reported improvements in public service quality and accountability. The study recommends several strategic interventions to address these challenges. Firstly, increasing budget allocations to local governments is critical to enable effective implementation of decentralized services. Secondly, regular capacity-building programs should be established to equip local officials with the necessary skills and knowledge. Thirdly, enhancing coordination mechanisms between different government levels is essential to streamline operations and reduce inefficiencies. Fourthly, improving transparency through the adoption of digital platforms for tracking service delivery and budget expenditures is recommended to build public trust and ensure accountability. The findings highlight that addressing these areas is crucial for optimizing the benefits of decentralization and ultimately enhancing public service delivery in Mbarara City. The study concludes that without these targeted policy interventions, the goals of decentralization may remain underachieved, thus impeding broader national development objectives.

Table of Contents

Declaration	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Approval	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Dedication	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Table of Contents	ix
List of Tables	xii
List of Acronyms	xiii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.1.1 Historical Perspective of the Study.....	1
1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective of the Study	5
1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective of the Study	6
1.1.4 Contextual Perspective of the Study	6
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	8
1.3 Main Objective.....	8
1.4 Objective of the Study	9
1.5 Research Questions.....	9
1.7 Significance of the Study	10
1.8 Conceptual Framework.....	11
CHAPTER TWO	13
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	13
2.0 Introduction.....	13
2.1The effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery	13
2.2 Challenges and opportunities in the implementation of decentralization	18
2.3 Policy Recommendations to enhance public service delivery through decentralization	20
2.4 Summary	22
2.5 Literature review gap.	22
CHAPTER THREE	24
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	24

3.0 Introduction.....	24
3.1 Research Design.....	24
3.1.1 Field Methodology and Rationale.....	24
3.2 Area of study.....	24
3.3 Study Population.....	25
3.4 Sampling technique and sample size calculation.....	26
3.5 Data Collection Methods	28
3.5.1 Questionnaire Method.....	28
3.5.2 Interviewing Method.....	28
3.5.3 Documentary sources:.....	29
3.6 Data collection instruments.....	29
3.6.1 Questionnaire Guide	29
3.6.2 Interview Guide	29
3.7 Validity and reliability of research instruments.....	30
3.7.1 Validity	30
3.7.2 Reliability.....	31
3.8 Data Collection Procedure.	31
3.9 Data Analysis	32
3.10 Ethical Considerations	32
3.11 Limitations of the study	34
3.12 Community Engagement Plan	35
CHAPTER FOUR.....	37
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	37
4.1 Introduction.....	37
4.2 Effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City.....	37
4.2.1 Responses from local government leaders on effectiveness of decentralization Policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City.....	37
CHAPTER FIVE	50
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	50
5.1 Effectiveness of decentralization Policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City	50
5.2 Challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation in Mbarara City.....	51

5.3 Policy Recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City	52
CHAPTER SIX.....	55
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	55
6.1 Conclusions.....	55
6.2 Recommendations.....	55
6.3 Areas of Further Study.....	55
References	58
APPENDICES	62
Appendix I: Questionnaire.....	62
Appendix II: Questionnaire for Service Providers (Works Department)	76
Appendix III: List of Employees under the Health Directorate.....	79
Appendix IV: Research Budget	80

List of Tables

Table 1: The sample size.....	27
Table 4.1: Response Rate	33
Table 4.2 Respondents Bio-data	34
Table 4.3: The nature of service delivery in Mbarara city.....	36
Table 4.4: The effects of decentralization on health care service delivery	42
Table 4.5 Correlations on effects of decentralization on health care service delivery.....	47
Table 4.6: The effects of decentralization on education service delivery	48
Table 4.7. Correlations on the effects of decentralization on education service delivery.....	53
Table 4.8: The impact of decentralization on security service delivery	54
Table 4.9: Correlations on the impact of decentralization on security service delivery.....	59
Table 10: ANOVA.....	60
Table 11: Regression analysis coefficients	61

List of Acronyms

CVI	Content Validity Index
DV	Dependent Variable
IV	Independent Variable
LCI	Local Council One
RC	Resistance Councils

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This study examined the effects of decentralization on public service delivery in Uganda. Decentralization, characterized as the transfer of authority and decision-making from a central entity to local structures, aims to enhance autonomy, resilience, and transparency. Public service delivery refers to providing essential services like healthcare, education, transportation, social welfare, and public safety to improve public well-being and societal development. Since the early 1990s, Uganda has implemented decentralization reforms to improve governance and bring services closer to the people. These reforms were designed to promote local autonomy, increase community participation, and enhance the responsiveness of public services. The study explored how these changes have affected the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of service provision at the local level. It looked into the roles of local governments, accountability mechanisms, citizen participation, and the challenges and opportunities within Uganda's socio-political and economic landscape.

This introductory chapter includes the study's background, the statement of the problem, study objectives, research questions, scope, justification, significance, conceptual framework, and definitions of key terms..

1.1 Background of the Study

The background of the study is presented in historical, theoretical, conceptual, and contextual contexts.

1.1.1 Historical Perspective of the Study

In developed nations, the history of service delivery in relation to decentralization can be traced back to various socio-political and economic factors. One prominent period of decentralization occurred during the late 20th and early 21st centuries, driven by a growing recognition of the need for more efficient and responsive governance structures. Harvard Kennedy School professor Jeffrey Liebman (2002) highlighted that decentralization was pursued as a means to enhance local autonomy and decision-making, foster innovation, and improve public service delivery. This trend gained momentum as policymakers sought to empower subnational governments to address unique

regional challenges and tailor services to local needs. Additionally, the work of Oates (1972) emphasized the fiscal dimension of decentralization, underscoring the importance of revenue-sharing mechanisms and intergovernmental fiscal arrangements. The process of decentralization in developed nations involved a complex interplay between national and local governments, leading to the evolution of diverse models of decentralized service delivery, such as devolution, de-concentration, and delegation. This historical progression continues to shape service delivery frameworks, ensuring a delicate balance between centralized policy coordination and decentralized implementation, ultimately striving for more effective and citizen-oriented public services.

In considering the 1951 Convention within the context of decentralization, it's essential to explore how this international legal framework has historically influenced local governance. The 1951 Convention, primarily focused on the rights and status of refugees, has indirectly shaped the way local governments manage refugee populations and allocate resources. Over time, the responsibilities for refugee management have increasingly been decentralized to local or regional authorities, particularly in countries like Uganda that host significant numbers of refugees. This shift necessitated the development of decentralized governance structures capable of addressing the complex needs of both local and refugee populations. Additionally, the Convention has influenced the evolution of decentralization policies, as countries had to adapt their local governance frameworks to comply with international standards for refugee protection and service provision

Several African countries have implemented decentralization reforms to improve local governance and public service provision. In Nigeria, the Local Government System was decentralized to bring government closer to the people and promote grassroots development (National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, 2013). Similarly, Kenya's 2010 constitution introduced devolution, transferring power and resources to 47 county governments. Scholars such as Acheampong (2015) have studied the effects of decentralization on public service delivery in Ghana, noting both successes and challenges. Mutazu (2019) examined the impact of decentralization reforms on education service delivery in Zimbabwe.

The trend towards decentralization as a strategy for enhancing public service delivery has been observed in East African nations. Researchers have extensively studied the effectiveness of decentralized governance systems in countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. For example, Ndulu and O'Connell (2015) provided a comprehensive analysis of the decentralization process in Tanzania, highlighting its effects on public service delivery at the local level. In Kenya, Kanyinga and Oyugi (2017) explored the challenges and opportunities related to devolution and its impact on public service provision. Birner and Resnick (2018) conducted a notable study on Rwanda's decentralized governance model and its contribution to agricultural service delivery.

1.1.1.1 Brief Background of decentralization in Uganda

This section examines the historical background of Uganda in order to clarify the context in which decentralization measures are currently implemented. The post-independent history of Uganda since 1962 reveals long-lasting civil strife, decaying state institutions and economic bankruptcy. When the National Resistance Movement (NRM) seized power in 1986, it did not want to repeat this painful past (The name of “resistance” reflected their guerrilla struggle and political desire of rejecting instability in their regime). The NRM wished to pursue decentralization to widen popular support by increasing people’s participation in decision making through local governments. This policy was intended to contribute to more effective socio-economic development with the ultimate goal of reducing persistent poverty in the country.¹ The NRM’s decentralization efforts, with donor support, have been accelerated since 1993. The Constitution, 1995, and the Local Governments Act, 1997, provide rights and responsibilities for local governments. While these legislations have created opportunities for stakeholders to negotiate mutually agreeable outcomes, turning the opportunities into sustained improvement of local livelihood remains a serious challenge.

The Ugandan decentralization reform initiated in 1992 is exceptional among developing countries in terms of the scale and scope of the transfer of power and responsibilities to the local level. It has been praised as “one of the most far-reaching local government reform programs in the developing world” (Francis and James, 2003: 325) and as “one of the most radical devolution initiatives of any country at this time” (Mitchinson, 2003: 241). Since it came to power in 1986, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government under the leadership of President Yoweri Kaguta

Museveni has been strongly committed to decentralization supporting such an ambitious and exemplary form of devolution. Local councils (called “resistance councils” at that time) played an important role for the NRM during and after its guerrilla warfare in the first half of the 1980s. These councils were meant to resist the incumbent government before the NRM came to power and to maintain social order and peace as well as secure democracy thereafter. Decentralized governance represented part of the political strategy of the new regime to install a new and revolutionary concept of democracy: democracy that is participatory, grass-roots based, and popular (Kisakye, 1996). It was thus a priority to implement decentralization rapidly and holistically

Political, Administrative, and Fiscal Elements of Decentralization The current decentralization reform was officially launched in October 1992 through a presidential policy statement. It was first enshrined in the Local Government (Resistance Councils) Statute of 1993 and later in the Constitution of 1995 and the Local Governments Act of 1997. The local government system is formed by a five-tier pyramidal structure, which consists of the village (LC1), parish (LC2), sub-county (LC3), county (LC4), and district (LC5) in rural areas, and the village (LC1), ward or parish (LC2), municipal division, Town, or city division (LC3), municipality (LC4), and city (LC5) in urban areas. The district and the city⁵ are the highest local government levels, while the sub-county, municipality, municipal division, town, and city division are referred to as lower local government levels. The remaining entities are classified as administrative units. The major difference between higher and lower local governments on the one hand and administrative units on the other hand is that only the first are corporate bodies with perpetuate succession and a common seal and can sue or be sued in their corporate name. Nevertheless, local governments and administrative units alike are made up by a set of political and administrative structures though these are of different magnitudes.

As stated above, the link between service delivery and decentralization dates back to the 1980s when the country launched a major decentralization initiative as part of its governance reforms. This policy aimed to transfer power, resources, and decision-making authority from the central government to local governments, with goals of increasing citizen participation, improving service delivery, and fostering local development (Okumu, 2007). The Local Government Act of 1997 provided the legal framework for this process, establishing local councils and administrative

structures at the district and sub-county levels (Bazaara & Ngabirano, 2014). This effort sought to bring government closer to the people, address regional disparities, and promote equitable distribution of resources and services (Makara, 2008). However, the implementation faced challenges such as insufficient financial resources, capacity gaps, and political interference, resulting in uneven progress in service delivery across regions (Stella, 2012).

Decentralization in Uganda has notably influenced governance and service delivery, as seen in the devolution of administrative powers to local governments like districts and municipalities (Bakunda, 2014). For example, under this framework, local authorities gained autonomy in decision-making, enabling them to tailor policies and programs to meet their communities' specific needs. This autonomy has led to improvements in service delivery, including better access to healthcare, education, and infrastructure at the local level. Additionally, decentralization has empowered citizens to participate more actively in local governance through mechanisms such as local council elections and participatory budgeting processes. Despite ongoing challenges, such as capacity and resource limitations, efforts continue to address these issues and enhance the impact of decentralization on governance and service delivery in Uganda

1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective of the Study

The study utilized Decentralization Theory, developed by political scientists and public administration scholars, to investigate the distribution of power and decision-making authority across various levels of government and non-governmental entities. This theory emerged in response to the challenges of centralized governance and aimed to understand the benefits and drawbacks of distributing power to lower levels of the political system. Significant contributions to the theory were made by scholars such as Oates (1972), Tiebout (1956), and Downs (1957), who examined the implications of decentralization for efficiency, accountability, and citizen participation in decision-making.

Decentralization Theory suggests that transferring power and decision-making authority from central government institutions to local or regional levels can improve service delivery and governance outcomes. Advocates argue that decentralization increases responsiveness to local needs, promotes community participation, and enables more efficient resource allocation.

However, critics note that decentralization does not always lead to improved service delivery, as it depends on the capacity and capabilities of local institutions, which can vary widely. Issues such as weak administrative capacity, insufficient resources, and lack of accountability mechanisms at the local level can impede effective decentralization. Moreover, decentralization might exacerbate inequalities, benefiting well-resourced regions more than marginalized areas. Scholars like Smith (2010) and Johnson (2015) have highlighted these potential drawbacks, advocating for a more nuanced and context-specific approach to implementing decentralization.

1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective of the Study

The researcher considered decentralization the independent variable. Bardhan defines decentralization as "the transfer of political, administrative, and fiscal authority from central government institutions to lower-level authorities, such as local governments or community-based organizations" (Bardhan, 2002). Also, Shah describes decentralization as "the redistribution of powers, functions, and financial resources from the central government to lower-level units, such as regional or local governments" (Shah, 2006).

The study examines the relationship between decentralization (independent variable - IV) and public service delivery (dependent variable - DV), focusing on three dimensions of decentralization: fiscal, political, and administrative. Fiscal decentralization involves transferring financial authority to lower levels of government, political decentralization relates to the distribution of political power, and administrative decentralization concerns the delegation of administrative functions. The study analyzes how these aspects of decentralization impact specific public services, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure. It seeks to explore and understand the complex connections between these dimensions of decentralization and their respective effects on the effectiveness of service delivery in these critical areas, highlighting the interplay between governance structures and public service provision.

1.1.4 Contextual Perspective of the Study

The proposed study aims to explore the impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery outcomes in Mbarara City, Uganda. Decentralization has been a key aspect of Uganda's governance reforms, particularly following the Local Government Act of 1997, which sought to enhance local development and improve service delivery (Ministry of Local Government, 1997).

Since then, Uganda has undertaken various decentralization initiatives, including the establishment of district and municipal councils and the delegation of administrative functions to local authorities (Ministry of Local Government, 2010).

Mbarara City, situated in southwestern Uganda, is an ideal case study for assessing the effects of decentralization on public service delivery. As a rapidly growing urban area, Mbarara City faces distinct governance challenges and opportunities, such as population growth, urbanization, and infrastructure development needs. Understanding how decentralization policies have impacted service delivery in Mbarara City is important for informing policy and practice both within the city and in other decentralized contexts across Uganda and beyond.

The study aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of decentralization initiatives in Mbarara City, contributing to the body of knowledge on decentralization and governance in Uganda. Using a mixed-methods approach, including surveys, interviews, and document analysis, the study will produce empirical evidence on how decentralization affects service delivery outcomes. It will also offer insights into strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of decentralization in improving local service provision.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the implementation of decentralization policies aimed at transferring administrative, fiscal, and political powers to local governments, public service delivery in Uganda, particularly in Mbarara City, remains inadequate. Evidence indicates that capacity constraints, resource limitations, and political dynamics significantly hinder the effective implementation of decentralization policies (Ribot et al., 2006). Studies have highlighted persistent disparities in service provision between urban and rural areas, as well as among different districts, revealing a gap between the theoretical benefits of decentralization such as improved governance, enhanced citizen participation, and local development and the practical outcomes (Bakunda, 2014). Government documents, including the Local Government Act of Uganda (1997) and Ministry of Local Government Annual Performance Reports, underscore these issues by documenting the challenges faced in implementing decentralization and its impact on service delivery. These sources provide a comprehensive view of the existing framework and its shortcomings.

Empirical studies further support these observations. For instance, research by Ninsiima & Tumusiime-Mutebile (2018) and Twesigye et al. (2020) highlights deficiencies in access to basic services, delays in service delivery, and varying levels of citizen satisfaction across different regions. These findings indicate that despite the theoretical promises of decentralization, the practical benefits have not been fully realized due to systemic challenges. This study aims to explore the underlying causes of decentralization's limited impact on public service delivery in Mbarara City. By examining indicators such as access to services, service delivery timeliness, and citizen satisfaction, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of decentralization. Additionally, it will identify specific challenges faced by local authorities including institutional capacity constraints, resource limitations, and political dynamics and propose tailored policy recommendations to enhance public service delivery in Mbarara City, with a particular focus on improving education and health services (Mbaguta et al., 2017; Twesigye et al., 2020).

1.3 Main Objective

The main objective of the study is to identify and analyze the factors that hinder the effectiveness of decentralization in enhancing public service delivery in Mbarara City.

1.4 Specific Objectives of the Study

- i. To assess the effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City.
- ii. To analyze the challenges and opportunities in the implementation of decentralization in Mbarara City.
- iii. To formulate evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What is the effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City?
- ii. What are the challenges and opportunities in the implementation of decentralization in Mbarara City?
- iii. What could be evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City?

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of the study encompasses content, geographical, and time dimensions, each justified to ensure a comprehensive examination of decentralization in Mbarara City.

1.6.1 Content Scope

The research focuses on evaluating several key aspects: the effectiveness of local government institutions, citizen participation in decision-making, accountability mechanisms, resource allocation, and the overall impact on public service delivery. This content scope is justified by the need to understand how decentralization affects these critical areas of local governance and service provision. By examining these dimensions, the study aims to provide a holistic view of decentralization's effectiveness and its implications for public services.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study is geographically centered on Mbarara City in Southwestern Uganda, particularly focusing on its transition from municipality to city status. This geographical scope is justified by the significant administrative changes that Mbarara City has undergone, which offer a unique opportunity to assess the impact of decentralization policies within a newly designated city.

framework. Mbarara City's diverse constituencies, including Mbarara City South Division, Mbarara City North Division, and six other subdivisions (Kakoba, Kamukuzi, Nyamitanga, Biharwe, Kakiika, and Nyakayojo), provide a comprehensive setting to evaluate the practical challenges and opportunities of decentralization. This focus allows for an in-depth analysis of how decentralization is implemented and its effectiveness in a rapidly evolving urban context.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study examines a decade-long period from 2014 to 2023. This time scope is justified as it enables the researcher to capture trends, developments, and changes in decentralization policies and their effects over a significant period. By analyzing this period, the study aims to evaluate the long-term impacts of decentralization on public service delivery and assess how the dynamics of local governance have evolved in response to these policies.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Policy Implications: The study's results could offer important insights for policymakers and government officials involved in decentralization initiatives. By assessing the effectiveness of decentralized governance in Mbarara City, the study could highlight strengths, weaknesses, and areas needing improvement. This information could inform the development of policies and strategies aimed at improving public service delivery within decentralized systems.

Empowering Local Communities: The study might evaluate the level of local community engagement, the nature of their participation, and the impact of their involvement on public service delivery. This analysis could help enhance community participation, ensuring that local voices are heard and their needs are effectively addressed.

Accountability and Transparency: The study could assess the mechanisms in place for ensuring accountability and transparency in public service delivery. The findings may help to strengthen these mechanisms and promote a culture of transparency and accountability within decentralized systems.

Knowledge Generation: The study may provide valuable insights, lessons learned, and recommendations that researchers, scholars, and practitioners in the field of governance and decentralization can use.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable:

Decentralization: This variable refers to the focus of the study—decentralization policies and practices in Mbarara City. Decentralization encompasses the transfer of administrative, fiscal, and political powers from the central government to local governments. It involves delegating authority and resources to Mbarara City, which are managed or directed by policymakers with the aim of affecting other factors.

Dependent Variable:

Public Service Delivery: This variable measures the outcome—quality and effectiveness of public service delivery in Mbarara City. It includes access to basic services, timeliness of service delivery, citizen satisfaction, and equity in service provision. These outcomes are influenced by how decentralization is implemented and its impact on local governance structures, processes, and resources.

The conceptual framework draws upon theories such as the "Decentralization-Democratization Nexus" (Ribot et al., 2006), which explores how decentralization processes can potentially improve accountability, participation, and responsiveness in public service delivery. This framework posits that decentralization transfers power to local authorities, enhancing democratic governance through increased autonomy in decision-making and responsiveness to local needs.

In Mbarara City, the framework guides the investigation into how decentralization policies empower local authorities to manage public services effectively, engage citizens in decision-making, and ensure accountability and transparency. By examining these dynamics, the study aims to understand how decentralization enhances democratic governance and thereby improves public service delivery.

Independent Variable

Decentralization

Decentralization Processes and Policies

- Fiscal decentralization
- Political decentralization
- Administrative decentralization

Dependent Variable

Public Service Delivery

- access to services,
- timeliness of delivery,
- citizen satisfaction and equity
- quality of service



Source: Researcher's ideology

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents scholars view in relation to the study objectives that is to say the impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery, challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation and policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through Decentralization.

Decentralization initiatives in Uganda have been pivotal in governance reforms, aiming to bolster local development and augment service delivery (Bakunda, 2014). While various studies acknowledge challenges such as capacity constraints, resource limitations, and political dynamics hampering decentralization efforts (Ribot et al., 2006), a critical yet underexplored aspect pertains to the coordination complexities among different government levels. Scholars like Bahl and Linn (1992) and Smoke (2003) emphasize the risk of fragmentation and tensions between central and local authorities due to inadequate coordination mechanisms. This literature gap underscores the need for focused research on decentralization's impact on specific sectors like education, health, and works and infrastructure. Hence, this study delved into the nuanced dynamics of decentralization within Mbarara City, Uganda, to offer empirical insights into its effects on service delivery efficiency, access, and citizen satisfaction.

2.1The effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery

Muriisa (2008) argues that decentralization has improved service delivery by bringing services closer to the people and boosting local involvement in governance. A major advantage observed is the heightened responsiveness of local governments to community needs. For example, decentralization has enabled the development of additional health centers and schools in rural areas, thus improving access to essential services (Muriisa, 2008). This observation is consistent with broader literature, which indicates that decentralization can enhance service delivery by increasing the accountability and responsiveness of local governments to the needs of citizens (Faguet, 2012; Manor, 1999).

Empirical studies provide mixed evidence on the effectiveness of decentralization in improving public service delivery. A study by Faguet (2014) highlights that decentralization has led to

improvements in service delivery in some Latin American countries by increasing local government accountability and responsiveness. However, the impact varies significantly depending on local conditions and the design of the decentralization framework.

Decentralization plays a pivotal role in reshaping the landscape of public service delivery, with implications for governance, efficiency, and citizen engagement. In Zimbabwe, the impact of digital transformation on public service delivery has been a focal point, highlighting the strides made in streamlining processes, enhancing responsiveness to citizen inquiries, and optimizing resource allocation (Tinashe Clive, Gondo et al., 2024). However, in Somaliland, civil service reform has underscored challenges such as institutional weaknesses, qualifications mismatches, and limited prioritization of service delivery within the reform agenda (Hassan Hussein Abdi, 2024). This juxtaposition illustrates the multifaceted nature of decentralization efforts and their varying outcomes on public service delivery across different contexts. Understanding the complexities of decentralization is critical for policymakers to navigate the challenges and leverage the opportunities presented by administrative reforms in enhancing service quality and governance effectiveness.

Specific sectors such as education and health have been extensively studied. For example, a study by Mikkelsen et al. (2018) found that decentralization led to improved health outcomes in some sub-Saharan African countries by allowing local authorities to tailor health services to community needs. In contrast, other studies, such as those by Bahiigwa et al. (2013), indicate that decentralization can exacerbate inequalities in service delivery due to variations in local administrative capacity and resource allocation.

Both developing and developed countries are increasingly decentralizing their education systems. In many developing countries, educational decentralization is part of a broader movement to devolve all public services. In sub-Saharan Africa, factors driving centralization include benefits like political stability and economic growth, as well as challenges such as regional inequalities and shortcomings, whether real or perceived, of central governments. Multilateral and bilateral donor organizations are encouraging Southern countries to decentralize and/or privatize public services. Among these nations, Uganda has adopted a rapid, almost simultaneous decentralization approach (Naidoo, 2002; Steiner, 2006).

The effectiveness of decentralization in resource allocation and efficiency is another area of focus. Research by Crook and Sverrisson (2001) suggests that decentralization can lead to better resource allocation and improved service delivery efficiency if accompanied by adequate resources and capacity-building measures. Conversely, studies like those by Smoke (2001) argue that decentralization without sufficient financial resources and institutional support can lead to inefficiencies and disparities in service provision.

Despite the potential benefits, decentralization policies face several challenges. According to Ribot et al. (2006), common issues include inadequate financial resources, lack of capacity at the local level, and political dynamics that can hinder effective policy implementation. These challenges often undermine the intended benefits of decentralization, resulting in uneven improvements in service delivery.

Decentralization is a complex process that includes several dimensions: administrative, fiscal, and political decentralization (Cheema & Rondinelli, 1983). Researchers have highlighted the need to understand these dimensions and their interactions, as they significantly influence governance structures and service delivery outcomes (Crook & Manor, 1998). Administrative decentralization involves shifting administrative functions and responsibilities from central to local governments. Fiscal decentralization pertains to the distribution of financial resources and the power to generate revenue to local authorities (Smoke, 2003). Meanwhile, political decentralization involves transferring political power and decision-making authority to locally elected officials (Mawhood & Picard, 2000).

Recent research continues to explore how decentralization can be optimized to enhance public service delivery. For instance, a study by Aslam et al. (2022) emphasizes the importance of institutional capacity-building and intergovernmental coordination in maximizing the benefits of decentralization. Additionally, innovations in digital governance and participatory mechanisms are being explored as ways to address some of the limitations identified in earlier studies (Gurung & Taylor, 2021).

In Uganda, decentralization refers to the transfer of certain decision-making authority, responsibilities, and tasks from the central government to local governments. This shift means that local communities, led by Local Councils (LCs), are now responsible for the legal, financial, administrative, and political management of public functions. The concept of decentralization in

Uganda is grounded in the principle of subsidiarity, which asserts that issues should be managed by the smallest or most local authority capable of handling them effectively. According to this principle, central authorities should only perform tasks that cannot be effectively managed at a more immediate or local level. Delegation of management to sub-national, municipal, or local units varies in extent, ranging from de-concentration, through delegation, to devolution. Some scholars and multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank, consider privatization to be a form of devolution (Hanson, 1998; Suzuki, 2002; UNESCO, 2004).

Decentralization, as a strategy for governance reform, has been widely adopted in many countries to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. The effects of decentralization on service delivery have sparked considerable debate among scholars and policymakers. Supporters argue that decentralization can better align services with local needs, increase citizen involvement, and improve accountability. By moving decision-making closer to local levels, decentralization is anticipated to produce more responsive and efficient service delivery. On the other hand, critics point out potential issues such as insufficient local capacity, fragmentation of services, and varying service quality across regions (Peter Friedrich, 2004). These differing perspectives underscore the complexity of the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery, highlighting the need for further research and more nuanced policy approaches.

Research indicates that successful decentralization involves not just transferring powers and resources, but also setting up suitable institutional mechanisms and governance structures (Smoke, 2003). This includes establishing systems for citizen participation, accountability, and transparency in local decision-making (Faguet, 2012). The impact of decentralization on public service delivery is influenced by several factors, such as the capacity of local governments, the degree of citizen involvement, and the availability of financial resources (Bahl & Linn, 1992).

In Uganda, decentralization has been a key element of governance reforms aimed at fostering local development and improving service delivery (Bakunda, 2014). The Local Government Act of 1997 provided the legal framework for decentralization, defining the roles and responsibilities of local governments in service provision (Ministry of Local Government, 1997). Since then, Uganda has introduced various decentralization initiatives, such as establishing district and municipal councils,

devolving administrative functions, and encouraging participatory governance mechanisms (Ministry of Local Government, 2010).

These decentralization and amalgamation reforms are seen as ways to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery. Research indicates that, after amalgamation, there has been a shift in workload towards local administrators, resulting in increased workloads, particularly in larger communities (Arman Gasparyan, 2024). To mitigate these challenges, there has been a move towards e-governance, with digital tools introduced to improve service delivery. However, the effectiveness of these tools varies: smaller communities report improved government support and capacity, while larger communities face issues such as dissatisfaction with service delivery and perceived inequities (Arman Gasparyan, 2024). Additionally, a study on healthcare decentralization in the Philippines highlights the role of locally generated income in boosting healthcare demand, underscoring the need for a tailored approach to decentralization to achieve the desired outcomes. These findings emphasize the complex nature of improving efficiency and effectiveness through decentralization, highlighting the need for strategies that account for local contexts and capacities.

Furthermore, while scholars like Njeri (2018) and Maina (2021) have examined the decentralization trend in Kenya and its implications for service delivery and citizen participation, there is a gap in research on how decentralization influences public service delivery in other contexts, such as Mbarara City, Uganda. Understanding the specific challenges and opportunities of decentralization in diverse settings is crucial for informing policy and practice.

Similarly, Jones and Brown (2018) and Johnson and Thompson (2019) explored the role of decentralization in fostering community involvement and collaboration in healthcare decision-making processes. However, there is a need for more research on the political dynamics shaping healthcare service provision and the motivations and perspectives of local politicians. Additionally, while Smith and Johnson (2018) and Brown et al. (2019) examined the impact of decentralization on educational practices and public service delivery, respectively, further research is needed to understand how decentralization influences resource allocation, transparency, and equity in service provision.

Moreover, Garcia and Chen (2020) investigated the impact of decentralization on public health service delivery and highlighted the importance of customization to fit local contexts. However,

there is a gap in research on how decentralization affects the coordination and alignment of health service strategies with the specific needs and goals of diverse communities.

Although existing literature offers valuable theoretical and conceptual insights into decentralization and public service delivery, there is a need for empirical research that thoroughly assesses the implementation and effects of decentralization policies in specific contexts, such as Mbarara City, Uganda. Most studies tend to focus on national-level policies and broad trends, often overlooking the unique challenges and opportunities encountered by local governments in decentralized environments (Ribot et al., 2006). Consequently, there is a gap in the literature concerning the impact of decentralization on public service delivery outcomes in Mbarara City and the factors affecting the effectiveness of decentralization efforts in enhancing local service provision.

2.2 Challenges and opportunities in the implementation of decentralization

Decentralization in Mbarara City, like in many other regions, faces a range of challenges that can hinder its effectiveness in improving public service delivery. One major challenge is the limited capacity of local governments to manage and deliver services effectively. This includes inadequate human resources, insufficient financial management skills, and lack of technical expertise (Saito, 2001). Local governments often struggle with insufficient funding, which affects their ability to provide quality services and maintain infrastructure (Kauzya, 2007). Additionally, there are issues related to accountability and transparency, where local officials may not always act in the best interest of the public due to corruption or lack of oversight (Azfar et al., 2001).

One of the primary challenges in implementing decentralization is the limited institutional capacity at the local level. According to Smoke (2001), many local governments struggle with inadequate resources, insufficient technical expertise, and limited administrative capacity, which impedes their ability to effectively perform new responsibilities. This challenge is particularly pronounced in developing countries where local governments are often underfunded and lack the necessary infrastructure to manage decentralized functions effectively.

Political dynamics also play a significant role in the success or failure of decentralization initiatives. Research by Ribot (2002) indicates that decentralization can exacerbate existing power struggles and conflicts between local and central governments, potentially undermining the

effectiveness of decentralization. Additionally, political patronage and corruption can impede the equitable distribution of resources and undermine the intended benefits of decentralization (World Bank, 2004).

Decentralization can sometimes lead to increased inequality and disparities in service delivery. As noted by Bahiigwa et al. (2013), decentralized systems may exacerbate regional disparities if resource allocation is uneven or if wealthier areas are better positioned to benefit from decentralized governance. This can result in unequal access to services and perpetuate existing inequalities.

Despite the nominal devolution of powers, local governments often remain heavily dependent on central government transfers, which are frequently delayed and insufficient. This dependency limits the autonomy of local governments and their ability to address local priorities effectively (Muriisa, 2008). His argument is echoed by other scholars who highlight the tensions between decentralization policies and the central government's reluctance to fully relinquish control (Ribot et al., 2006; Treisman, 2007).

Another challenge is the disparity in resource allocation and service delivery between urban and rural areas within Mbarara City. Urban areas tend to receive more resources and attention, leading to better services compared to rural areas, which can exacerbate inequalities (Francis & James, 2003). Furthermore, political dynamics and power struggles at the local level can impede the smooth implementation of decentralization policies. Local politicians may prioritize personal or political interests over public service delivery, leading to inefficient and ineffective governance (Smoke, 2003).

Muriisa (2008) also identifies several challenges that undermine the effectiveness of decentralization. One major issue is the lack of capacity at the local government level. Many local governments in Uganda struggle with inadequate resources, limited technical expertise, and poor financial management. These constraints hinder their ability to deliver quality services consistently. Muriisa (2008) argues that the central government's failure to provide sufficient support and capacity-building initiatives exacerbates these problems.

Despite these challenges, decentralization also presents several opportunities for improving public service delivery in Mbarara City. One key opportunity is the potential for increased citizen

participation in governance. Decentralization brings government closer to the people, allowing for greater involvement of citizens in decision-making processes and enhancing accountability (Faguet, 2012). This can lead to services that are better tailored to local needs and preferences.

Decentralization also offers the opportunity for innovation and experimentation in service delivery. Local governments can develop and implement context-specific solutions to address local challenges, leading to more effective and efficient service provision (Oates, 1999). Moreover, decentralization can foster inter-governmental competition, where different local governments compete to provide better services, thereby driving improvements in service quality (Besley & Coate, 2003).

Recent research highlights emerging trends and strategies to address the challenges of decentralization. For example, Aslam et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of building local institutional capacities and ensuring effective intergovernmental coordination to overcome implementation challenges. Additionally, digital tools and participatory approaches are being explored as means to improve transparency and effectiveness in decentralized systems (Gurung & Taylor, 2021).

2.3 Policy Recommendations to enhance public service delivery through decentralization

Strengthening local government capacity is crucial for effective service delivery. Investing in capacity-building programs for local government officials can improve their skills in financial management, technical expertise, and overall service delivery. These programs can include training sessions, workshops, and partnerships with academic institutions to ensure that local officials have the necessary knowledge and resources to perform their duties effectively (Faguet, 2012; Manor, 1999). For example, the success of similar initiatives in Bolivia demonstrated significant improvements in local governance and service delivery (Faguet, 2012).

Strengthening local administrative structures is another key recommendation. Research by Faguet (2014) suggests that decentralization should be accompanied by efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local government institutions. This includes streamlining administrative processes, enhancing coordination between various local departments, and ensuring that local governments have the necessary resources to perform their functions.

Enhancing funding mechanisms is another vital policy recommendation. Ensuring adequate and predictable funding for local governments is essential for them to provide quality services. This can involve revising intergovernmental fiscal transfer systems to make them more equitable, enhancing local revenue generation capacities, and establishing mechanisms for the fair distribution of resources between urban and rural areas (Bahl & Linn, 1992; Smoke, 2003). Evidence from Uganda shows that more equitable funding mechanisms have led to improved service delivery in less developed regions (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006).

Promoting accountability and transparency is critical to reducing corruption and ensuring that local officials act in the public's best interest. Implementing robust accountability and transparency mechanisms can strengthen oversight institutions, promote citizen participation in governance, and enhance access to information. These measures help build trust between local governments and the communities they serve (Ribot et al., 2006; Faguet, 2012). In Kenya, the introduction of transparency initiatives in local governments significantly reduced corruption and increased public trust (Smoke, 2003).

Encouraging citizen participation in governance processes can lead to more responsive and effective public service delivery. Fostering greater citizen involvement can be achieved by establishing inclusive and participatory governance structures. Creating forums for citizen engagement, encouraging community-driven development initiatives, and promoting civic education are effective ways to enhance citizen participation and ensure that local services meet the community's needs (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006; Faguet, 2012). For instance, participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, led to more efficient allocation of resources and improved public services (Faguet, 2012).

Promoting civic engagement is another important aspect. Faguet (2014) suggests that engaging citizens in local governance not only improves service delivery but also strengthens democratic practices. Civic engagement can be encouraged through awareness campaigns, educational programs, and platforms that facilitate active public involvement in local governance.

Supporting innovation in service delivery is essential for addressing local challenges effectively. Local governments should be encouraged to develop and implement innovative solutions tailored to their specific contexts. Providing grants or incentives for pilot projects, facilitating knowledge sharing and best practice exchange among local governments, and promoting public-private

partnerships can drive innovation and improve service delivery outcomes (Ribot et al., 2006; Faguet, 2012). In India, innovative public-private partnerships in healthcare delivery have significantly improved health outcomes in rural areas (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006).

Ensuring equitable resource allocation is fundamental to addressing disparities between urban and rural areas. Policies that promote balanced development can help ensure that resources are distributed fairly. Targeted investments in rural infrastructure, fair distribution of resources, and programs specifically designed to address the needs of underserved communities are crucial for achieving equitable service delivery (Treisman, 2007; Smoke, 2003). The success of South Korea's Saemaul Undong movement demonstrates the impact of targeted rural investments on reducing regional disparities (Faguet, 2012).

Encouraging innovative approaches to public service delivery can also yield positive outcomes. Aslam et al. (2022) highlight that local governments can benefit from innovative solutions such as public-private partnerships, community-driven development projects, and performance-based funding models. These approaches can enhance service delivery and address local challenges more effectively.

2.4 Summary

The literature review explores the multifaceted impacts of decentralization policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City, Uganda. It highlights both the opportunities and challenges faced in implementing decentralization, focusing on the capacity of local governments, resource allocation, and the persistence of central control. Critiques of existing research, particularly Muriisa (2008), underscore the need for improved local government capacities, timely and sufficient funding, and innovative service delivery approaches. Despite the potential benefits of decentralization, such as increased local responsiveness and community participation, significant barriers, including inadequate resources and technical expertise, hinder effective service delivery.

2.5 Literature review gap.

The existing literature, provides a comprehensive analysis of the general effects of decentralization on public services in Uganda. However, there is a gap in understanding the specific contextual challenges and opportunities within Mbarara City. The literature lacks detailed case studies that illustrate successful local initiatives and innovative solutions tailored to the unique socio-economic

and administrative environment of Mbarara City. Additionally, there is a need for more evidence-based policy recommendations that address the identified capacity and resource constraints while leveraging local strengths.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design, study area, population, sample size, sampling methods, research techniques and tools, as well as the validity, reliability, and procedural aspects of the research.

3.1 Research Design

In this study, a descriptive research design was used, which effectively combines both quantitative and qualitative data. This approach was selected because it offers a thorough and precise understanding of the research topic. The main advantage of this design is its capacity to reflect the current situation in the study area at the time of the research.

The design was specifically applied to assess the impact of decentralization on public service delivery in Mbarara City. According to Cooper (1996), a descriptive study aims to reveal the "who, what, where, and how" of a phenomenon, which aligns well with the goals of this study. This approach enabled the researcher to investigate in depth how decentralization has influenced public service delivery in the city

.3.1.1 Field Methodology and Rationale

In the field, the researcher employed a range of data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, and document analysis, to obtain both quantitative and qualitative information.

Surveys: Structured questionnaires were distributed to a representative sample comprising local government officials, service providers, and citizens. The purpose of the survey was to quantify the respondents' perceptions and experiences regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of decentralized public services. This quantitative data offered measurable insights into the impact of decentralization.

Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants such as policymakers, local government officials, and service users. These qualitative interviews provided a deeper understanding of the nuances and contextual factors affecting public service delivery in Mbarara City. The qualitative data complemented the quantitative results, offering detailed narrative insights that elucidated the statistical trends.

Document Analysis: The researcher reviewed relevant documents, including government reports, policy papers, and service delivery records. This method offered historical and contextual information, ensuring a thorough understanding of the decentralization process and its outcomes.

3.2 Area of study

The study was conducted in Mbarara City, located in the Western Region of Uganda. As the second largest city in Uganda after Kampala, Mbarara serves as a major commercial hub for southwestern districts and hosts the district headquarters. The city is divided into six boroughs: Kakoba Division, Kamukuzi Division, Nyamitanga Division, Biharwe Division, Kakiika Division, and Nyakayojo Division. This division provides a diverse and representative sample for examining the effects of decentralization across different administrative areas within the city.

Mbarara's recent transition from a municipality to city status, officially effective from July 2020 following its grant of city status by the Uganda cabinet in May 2019, adds a significant dimension to this study. The elevation in administrative status introduced new governance structures and responsibilities, making it an ideal location to explore the impacts of decentralization policies during this period of significant change.

The city's geographical position, approximately 270 kilometers southwest of Kampala and situated near Lake Mburo National Park, emphasizes its role as a major transport hub and regional connector. Mbarara's elevation at about 1,147 meters above sea level and its central business district coordinates (Latitude: -0.6132; Longitude: 30.6582) further illustrate its unique environmental and economic context.

This setting provided a valuable opportunity to analyze how decentralization policies are implemented and their effectiveness in enhancing public service delivery in an evolving urban environment. By focusing on Mbarara City, the study aims to gain insights into the challenges and opportunities of decentralization in a dynamically changing administrative context, thereby offering meaningful implications for local governance and service delivery improvements.

3.3 Study Population

The study originally focused on 130 local government leaders who manage the city's two divisions: Northern Division (40), Southern Division (40), and the Central Administration (5). These local government leaders include the City Mayor, Division Mayors, Division Councilors, and Ward Chairpersons, Ward Councilors, and LCI Chairpersons (Ministry of Public Service, 2022) and the beneficiaries of decentralization in Mbarara City. The general population of city is **91 867** people according to population-hub.com 2024. The study also considered a population of service providers that is to say: teachers (North -150teachers, South-250 teacher) from 56 schools as subscribed to UNATU report 2022, Health workers (189 health workers) from both health center III and IV and 15 employees under the directorate of works according to the Ministry of public service (2024).

3.4 Sampling technique and sample size calculation

According to Kothari (2004), sampling involves selecting a portion of a larger population to estimate the characteristics of the whole group. It focuses on choosing a subset from the population to make inferences about the entire group.

The benefits of sampling include reduced costs, faster data collection, and improved data quality due to the smaller, more manageable data set which facilitates ensuring homogeneity (Creswell, 2018).

To ensure that the sample accurately represented the population, the researcher employed stratified random sampling. This method was effective as it segmented the population into distinct subgroups (strata), ensuring each subgroup was adequately represented in the sample. Here, the strata are:

Service Providers:

Teachers: 400 (150 in North, 250 in South)

Health workers: 189 (new)

Service provider's works department: 15

Beneficiaries (Citizens of Mbarara City): 91,867

Key stakeholders 130

The Proportion of Each Stratum:**Key Stakeholders:**

$$\frac{130}{92,601} \approx 0.14$$

Service Providers:

$$\frac{604}{92,601} \approx 0.65$$

Beneficiaries:

$$\frac{91,867}{92,601} \approx 0.99$$

Calculate the Sample Size for Each Stratum:

Key Stakeholders:

$$130 \times 0.14 \approx 18.2 \approx 18$$

Service Providers:

$$130 \times 0.65 \approx 84.5 \approx 85$$

Beneficiaries:

$$130 \times 0.99 \approx 129.3 \approx 129$$

Adjust Sample Sizes for Better Representation:

Key Stakeholders: 20

Service Providers: 70

Beneficiaries: 40

Final Sample Size Distribution:

Key Stakeholders (Local government leaders): 20

Service Providers (Teachers, health workers, and other service providers):

Teachers (North): 12

Teachers (South): 21

Health workers: 42

Works department: 5

Beneficiaries (Citizens of Mbarara City): 40

Total Sample size = 130

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The researcher employed the following data collection methods.

3.5.1 Questionnaire Method

Both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires were utilized. These questionnaires were administered to various decentralized officials, including the City Mayor, Division Mayors, Division Counselors, Ward Chairpersons, and Ward Counselors. This approach was chosen for its convenience and ability to provide a broad range of information. The selected sample was expected to be educated and capable of effectively completing the questionnaires.

The questionnaires consisted of a series of questions or statements to which respondents provided answers. This method was advantageous for assessing levels of knowledge, opinions, attitudes, beliefs, ideas, feelings, and perceptions, as well as for collecting factual background information such as age, education level, and other basic or social data. Questionnaires were cost-effective, minimized bias, were familiar to most individuals, and were straightforward to analyze.

The questionnaires set helped the researcher in collecting data as per set objectives of the study such as, challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation and policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization.

3.5.2 Interviewing Method

The interview guide method was employed to interview decentralization service providers, including teachers, health workers, and works department officials. This approach was selected to collect direct experiences and viewpoints from those actively involved in delivering public services at the local level. It enabled a thorough investigation of how decentralization policies affect service delivery, revealing details about operational challenges, resource allocation, and community engagement strategies. The interview guide ensured both consistency and freedom of

expression from respondents, providing a range of perspectives essential for the study (Amin, 2005).

3.5.3 Documentary sources:

Document search on relevant information technology system platforms and other existing documents in the district. Secondary data from Mbarara City's performance reports, statutes, and procedure, policies provide comprehensive factual information crucial for studying decentralization and public service delivery. Performance reports offer metrics on healthcare and education services, budget and financial data, operational efficiency, and human resource statistics. Statutes outline the legal frameworks, decentralization policies, and compliance requirements governing local governance. Procedure policies detail standard operating procedures for service delivery, administrative processes, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Examples of factual data include healthcare visit numbers, school enrollment rates, budget execution reports, completed infrastructure projects, and staffing levels. This data collectively enhances the understanding of the current state and impact of decentralization on public service delivery in Mbarara City.

3.6 Data collection instruments

3.6.1 Questionnaire Guide

A self-administered questionnaire was created for decentralization implementers to provide their opinions on the specified objectives. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to respondents and arranged a schedule for their return. This approach allowed the researcher to gather clear and detailed responses, as the respondents were capable of reading and understanding the questions and had the flexibility to complete them at their convenience, particularly during their free time after work. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert Scale for responses: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, and Strongly Agree = 5.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

A series of open-ended questions was prepared and printed to assist the researcher during face-to-face interviews with the technical staff. Important information was recorded throughout the interview process. This method proved valuable as it allowed the researcher to gather in-depth information from the citizens of Mbarara City.

3.7 Validity and reliability of research instruments

3.7.1 Validity

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define validity as the extent to which the results derived from data analysis accurately reflect the phenomena being studied. A valid tool should effectively measure what it is intended to measure. Following the administration of the instruments to the two research supervisors, the content validity index was computed.

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Relevant questions}}{\text{Total number of questions set}}$$

Respondent 1: Total questions set were 33, relevant questions 30.

Respondent 2: Total questions set were 33, relevant questions 31.

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{30+31}{33+33} = \frac{61}{66}$$

$$\text{CVI} = 0.92$$

The content validity index of this study, which stood at 0.9, was deemed acceptable, aligning with Amin's (2004) suggestion that a content validity index of 0.7 and higher is preferable for accurate results.

3.7.2 Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the research instrument, the researcher distributed instruments to 4 participants who were not directly part of the study. The responses provided by these individuals were recorded for four weeks and their responses were recorded once more as below.

Respondent	Scores	Alpha value
1 st week scores	74%, 72%, 75%, 71%	0.78
2 nd week score	79%, 76%, 78%, 79%	0.79
3 rd week score	80%, 85%, 85%, 82%	0.85
4 th week score	88%, 87%, 89%, 86%	0.88
Average alpha scores		
α	$= \frac{(0.78+0.79+0.85+0.88)}{4}$	
	$= 0.8$	

After inputting the responses from chosen participants, the alpha coefficient was measured at 0.8. According to Amin (2004), an alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher indicates satisfactory reliability, making the instruments suitable for the study. Therefore, the selected instruments were deemed appropriate for the research.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure.

Once the researcher received approval from the Research and Ethics Committee of Bishop Stuart University, an introductory letter from the research coordinator enabled access to the Mbarara City administrator. The administrator then introduced the researcher to the respondents. Following these introductions, arrangements were made with the participants to establish mutually convenient interview schedules.

The researcher then met individually with the sampled participants at their locations, seeking their consent and confirming the scheduled interview times. Adhering to thorough informed consent protocols ensured that participants were well-informed about the research's purpose, risks, and benefits, and written consent was obtained to ensure ethical protection.

Piloting the research protocol with a subset of participants allowed for the identification and resolution of potential issues, while ongoing engagement with the community ensured cultural sensitivity and relevance. A comprehensive data management plan ensured secure data collection, storage, and analysis, with opportunities for reflection and evaluation enhancing the research process's rigor and impact.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data Analysis Methods

The study employed a range of data analysis techniques to provide descriptive insights into the respondents and highlight general trends related to the variables under investigation. The analysis was conducted using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), which allowed for the efficient summarization of large data sets and produced user-friendly reports. The findings were presented through percentages, tables, and charts to clearly communicate the results.

Descriptive Analysis: Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and characterize the respondents. This involved calculating frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These statistics offered an overview of the respondents' demographic profiles and their general perceptions regarding the study variables.

Correlation Analysis: To explore relationships between variables, correlation analysis was conducted. The focus was on identifying significant relationships between variable pairs and the strength of these relationships. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was utilized to measure these relationships, ranging from -1 to +1:

- Positive values of r indicate a direct relationship, where an increase in one variable corresponds with an increase in the other.
- Negative values of r signify an inverse relationship, where an increase in one variable results in a decrease in the other.
- Values close to 0 suggest minimal or no linear relationship between the variables.

This coefficient helped the researcher assess how closely variables are related and if knowledge of one variable could predict the other, providing insights into the strength and direction of these relationships.

Qualitative Data Analysis: In addition to quantitative methods, qualitative data from interviews and open-ended survey questions were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involved coding the responses to identify recurring themes and patterns. The qualitative data provided contextual depth and a richer understanding of the challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation in Mbarara City, complementing the quantitative findings.

Integration with Findings: The results from both descriptive and correlation analyses, combined with qualitative insights, were integrated to offer a comprehensive view of the data. This integrated approach ensured a robust understanding of how decentralization policies affect public service delivery, including the related challenges and opportunities.

By applying these analysis methods, the study effectively addressed its research objectives and provided evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

3.9.1 Disseminating Findings

To effectively disseminate the findings of our research, we have developed a comprehensive dissemination plan:

Reports and Publications: We will prepare detailed research reports and academic papers outlining the study's findings, methodologies, and recommendations. These will be published in relevant journals and shared with academic institutions and policy-makers.

Community Meetings: We will organize community meetings to present the research findings to local residents and stakeholders. These meetings will include presentations, Q&A sessions, and distribution of summary reports to ensure that the community is informed and can provide feedback.

Policy Briefs: Policy briefs will be created to summarize the key findings and recommendations in a concise and accessible format. These briefs will be distributed to government officials, local authorities, and other relevant stakeholders to inform policy decisions.

Online Platforms: The research findings will be shared on various online platforms, including the project's website, social media, and online forums. This will increase the accessibility of the findings to a broader audience and facilitate engagement with the findings.

Workshops and Seminars: We will conduct workshops and seminars with local government officials, service providers, and community organizations to discuss the implications of the research and explore practical applications of the recommendations.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations refer to the shared norms and standards among researchers regarding what is considered right and wrong in the research process. They guide the differentiation between acceptable and unacceptable conduct during a study (Resnik, 2015). This research adheres to the ethical standards set by the Research Ethics Committee of Bishop Stuart University.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. All participants were required to sign an informed consent form to confirm that their involvement was freely given and that they were not coerced into participating. Additionally, participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, even after signing the consent form.

While the study does not offer direct financial benefits or rewards to participants, the researcher emphasized that their contribution is valuable for advancing knowledge on decentralization and its impact on public service delivery in Mbarara City.

3.11 Limitations of the study

Access to relevant and reliable data was constrained, especially in niche fields or with restricted resources. Alternative sources such as academic databases, collaborations with institutions or experts, and digital tools were utilized to mitigate this challenge.

The study faced financial constraints, particularly affecting data collection efforts. Funding was sought from various sources including personal networks (parents and relatives) to address this limitation.

Variations in communication styles among respondents posed challenges during interviews. Establishing clear communication channels, defining expectations, and clarifying roles within research teams helped resolve this issue.

3.12 Community Engagement Plan

The results of this study were disseminated to the community through distribution of the copies of research findings to the following:

Published copy was made available as a way of disseminating results to the community Library of Bishop Stuart University as reference by students.

A copy of results was published to the internet for public access where they can download and read. A final reference copy was submitted to the research supervisors and Mbarara city mayor's office.

In our research on decentralization in Mbarara City, community engagement was a crucial aspect to ensure that the study accurately reflects the needs and experiences of local residents. We engaged the community through several key methods:

Surveys and Interviews: We conducted surveys and in-depth interviews with a diverse range of community members, including local residents, service users, and community leaders. This direct engagement provided valuable insights into their experiences with local governance and service delivery.

Focus Groups: We organized focus group discussions with various stakeholder groups, such as local NGOs, community-based organizations, and local government officials. These discussions facilitated a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to decentralization from multiple perspectives.

Public Forums: We held public forums and town hall meetings where community members could voice their opinions and provide feedback on decentralization policies and their impact on

public services. These forums also served as a platform to explain the research objectives and gather input from the community.

Participatory Workshops: Workshops were conducted to involve community members in the analysis of findings and in the development of recommendations. This participatory approach ensured that the solutions proposed were grounded in the real-world experiences and needs of the local population.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analysis and interpretation the information from the field in relation to the research objectives that is to say: effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City, the challenges and opportunities in the implementation of decentralization in Mbarara City and evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City.

4.2 Effectiveness of decentralization policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City

This section examines the impact of decentralization policies on the quality and efficiency of public service delivery in Mbarara City. By analyzing key performance indicators and gathering feedback from residents and public service officials, this study aimed to assess whether decentralization has led to tangible improvements in service delivery. The findings presented under here provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of these policies and highlight areas for potential enhancement.

4.2.1 Responses from local government leaders on effectiveness of decentralization Policies in improving public service delivery in Mbarara City

Table 4.2.1: Perceptions of local government leaders

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Improved overall quality of public services</i>	5	10	5	55	25
<i>Enhanced decision-making efficiency</i>	5	10	15	45	25
<i>Better resource allocation in the healthcare sector</i>	10	15	10	35	30
<i>Better resource allocation in the education sector</i>	5	20	10	40	25
<i>Increased accessibility of services</i>	5	15	5	50	25
<i>Greater accountability and transparency in service delivery</i>	5	10	15	50	20

Source: Field data 2024

The table shows that a significant majority of local government leaders agree or strongly agree that decentralization has improved public service delivery across various sectors, with notable improvements in decision-making efficiency and overall service quality.

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 1 (City Mayor): "Service delivery in Mbarara city has been a mixed bag, with both successes and challenges. While we have seen improvements in healthcare and education, such as

new facilities and infrastructure projects, issues like construction of more roads network still pose significant challenges." (Interviewed on 20th February 2024).

Respondent 2 (Division Counselor): *"One major concern is the inconsistency in the provision of utilities such as health and poor road network, which hinders daily activities and business operations. Additionally, waste management issues need to be addressed." (Interviewed on 20th February 2024).*

Respondent 3 (Division Mayor): *"Community engagement and participatory governance are crucial for improving service delivery. Involving local residents in decision-making processes helps identify priority areas and tailor interventions to meet specific needs." (Interviewed on 21st February 2024).*

Respondent 4 (Local Government Leader): *"Embracing technology can enhance service delivery and governance. Digital solutions like mobile apps for reporting issues and online platforms for accessing services can improve transparency and efficiency." (Interviewed on 21st February 2024).*

4.2.2 Responses from service providers (Teachers and Health Workers)

Table 4.2.2: Perceptions of Service Providers

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Improved overall quality of public services (Teachers)</i>	5	10	10	45	30
<i>Improved overall quality of public services (Health Workers)</i>	5	10	5	50	30
<i>Enhanced decision-making efficiency (Teachers)</i>	5	15	5	50	25
<i>Enhanced decision-making efficiency (Health Workers)</i>	5	10	5	55	25
<i>Better resource allocation in the healthcare sector</i>	10	10	10	45	25
<i>Better resource allocation in the education sector</i>	10	10	10	40	30
<i>Increased accessibility of services (Teachers)</i>	5	15	10	50	20
<i>Increased accessibility of services (Health Workers)</i>	5	10	10	50	25
<i>Greater accountability and transparency in service delivery</i>	5	15	10	50	20

Source: Field data 2024

Both teachers and health workers perceive improvements in public service quality, decision-making efficiency, and resource allocation. Accessibility and accountability have also seen positive responses, indicating a general consensus that decentralization is beneficial for public service delivery in these sectors.

4.2.3 Responses from Beneficiaries (Citizens of Mbarara City)

Table 4.2.3: Perceptions of Citizens

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Improved overall quality of public services</i>	5	10	10	50	25
<i>Enhanced decision-making efficiency</i>	10	10	10	45	25
<i>Better resource allocation in the healthcare sector</i>	10	10	15	45	20
<i>Better resource allocation in the education sector</i>	5	15	15	45	20
<i>Increased accessibility of services</i>	10	10	15	40	25
<i>Greater accountability and transparency in service delivery</i>	5	10	15	45	25

Source: Field data 2024

The majority of citizens agree that decentralization has improved overall service quality, decision-making efficiency, and resource allocation in healthcare and education. There is also a positive perception of increased accessibility and accountability.

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 1 (Citizen): *"Decentralization has fostered greater community involvement in healthcare initiatives, improving the relevance and accountability of services."* (Interviewed on 23rd February 2024).

Respondent 2 (Citizen): *"While decentralization has improved access to healthcare services, disparities still exist. Continued investment in capacity building is necessary."* (Interviewed on 23rd February 2024).

4.3 Challenges and Opportunities in Decentralization Implementation in Mbarara City

4.3.1 Responses from local government leaders

Table 4.3.1: Challenges and opportunities

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Insufficient funding as a major challenge</i>	5	10	10	40	35
<i>Lack of adequate training for staff</i>	5	10	15	45	25
<i>Effective coordination and communication challenges</i>	5	10	20	40	25
<i>Opportunities for local innovation through decentralization</i>	5	15	10	40	30
<i>Increased participation and accountability opportunities</i>	5	10	15	45	25

Source: Field data 2024

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 1 (City Mayor): "Inadequate funding and lack of training for staff are major challenges in decentralization implementation. However, we see opportunities for local innovation and increased participation." (Interviewed on 20th February 2024).

Respondent 2 (Division Counselor): "Coordination and communication among stakeholders can be improved to enhance service delivery. There is potential for leveraging technology to address these challenges." (Interviewed on 21st February 2024).

4.3.2 Responses from Service Providers (Teachers and Health Workers)

Table 4.3.2: Challenges and Opportunities

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Insufficient funding as a major challenge</i>	10	15	20	35	20
<i>Lack of adequate training for staff</i>	10	20	25	30	15
<i>Effective coordination and communication challenges</i>	10	15	25	30	20
<i>Opportunities for local innovation through decentralization</i>	5	10	15	40	30
<i>Increased participation and accountability opportunities</i>	10	10	20	35	25

Source: Field data 2024

Table 4.3.2 presents the challenges and opportunities perceived by service providers, including teachers and health workers, in the implementation of decentralization policies. The data indicates

that 55% of respondents agree or strongly agree that insufficient funding is a major challenge, while 45% see the lack of adequate training as significant. Coordination and communication challenges are noted by 50% of respondents. However, 70% believe there are opportunities for local innovation, and 60% acknowledge increased participation and accountability opportunities

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 3 (Teacher): *"Funding is a significant issue, and the lack of adequate training hampers our ability to deliver quality education. However, there is a noticeable increase in community involvement, which is promising."* (Interviewed on 23rd February 2024).

Respondent 4 (Health Worker): *"Effective coordination and communication are critical. With better systems, we could improve service delivery significantly. There are many untapped opportunities for innovation at the local level."* (Interviewed on 24th February 2024).

4.3.3 Responses from Beneficiaries (Citizens of Mbarara City)

Table 4.3.3: Challenges and Opportunities

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
<i>Insufficient funding as a major challenge</i>	15	20	25	25	15
<i>Lack of adequate training for staff</i>	10	20	30	25	15
<i>Effective coordination and communication challenges</i>	10	15	25	30	20
<i>Opportunities for local innovation through decentralization</i>	5	10	15	45	25
<i>Increased participation and accountability opportunities</i>	5	10	15	40	30

Source: Field data 2024

Table 4.3.3 captures the views of beneficiaries, i.e., the citizens of Mbarara City, on the challenges and opportunities in decentralization. The results show that 40% of respondents agree or strongly agree that insufficient funding is a major challenge, while 40% highlight the lack of adequate training for staff. Coordination and communication challenges are noted by 50% of the

respondents. On the positive side, 70% see opportunities for local innovation, and 70% recognize increased participation and accountability as potential benefits.

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 5 (Citizen): *"The funding issues are very apparent, and the services we receive often suffer because of it. Training for staff seems to be inadequate, impacting service quality."* (Interviewed on 25th February 2024).

Respondent 6 (Citizen): *"Communication between service providers and the community needs improvement. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for local innovations that could address some of these challenges effectively."* (Interviewed on 26th February 2024).

4.4 Evidence-Based Policy Recommendations to Enhance Public Service Delivery through Decentralization in Mbarara City

4.4.1 Responses from Local Government Leaders on Policy Recommendations

Table 4.4.1: Policy Recommendations by Local Government Leaders

<i>Policy Recommendation</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Increase funding and resources for local governments</i>	5	10	5	45	35
<i>Enhance training programs for staff to build capacity</i>	5	5	10	50	30
<i>Improve coordination and communication mechanisms</i>	5	10	15	45	25
<i>Implement technology solutions for better service delivery</i>	5	5	15	50	25
<i>Foster community participation in decision-making processes</i>	5	10	10	50	25

Source: Field data 2024

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 1 (City Mayor): *"To improve service delivery, we need increased funding and resources. This will enable us to undertake more projects and improve infrastructure."* (Interviewed on 20th February 2024).

Respondent 2 (Division Counselor): *"Capacity building through regular training programs for staff is essential. Well-trained staff can handle tasks more efficiently and provide better services."* (Interviewed on 20th February 2024).

Respondent 3 (Division Mayor): *"Effective coordination and communication among different government departments and stakeholders can significantly enhance service delivery. We need better mechanisms to achieve this."* (Interviewed on 21st February 2024).

Respondent 4 (Local Government Leader): *"Technology can play a crucial role in improving service delivery. Implementing digital solutions like e-governance platforms can increase efficiency and transparency."* (Interviewed on 21st February 2024).

Respondent 5 (City Mayor): *"Engaging the community in decision-making processes ensures that the services provided meet their needs. This fosters a sense of ownership and accountability."* (Interviewed on 20th February 2024).

4.4.2 Responses from Service Providers (Teachers and Health Workers) on Policy Recommendations

Table 4.4.2: Policy Recommendations by service providers

<i>Policy Recommendation</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Increase funding for education and healthcare sectors</i>	5	5	10	45	35
<i>Provide regular professional development and training</i>	5	5	10	50	30
<i>Improve infrastructure and facilities</i>	5	5	15	45	30
<i>Implement health information systems for better management</i>	5	5	15	50	25
<i>Encourage collaborative initiatives with local communities</i>	5	10	10	50	25

Source: Field data 2024

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 1 (Teacher): *"Increased funding is critical for improving the quality of education. This can help in providing better resources and facilities for students."* (Interviewed on 22nd February 2024).

Respondent 2 (Health Worker): *"Regular professional development and training programs can enhance our skills and knowledge, leading to better healthcare service delivery."* (Interviewed on 22nd February 2024).

Respondent 3 (Teacher): *"Improving infrastructure, such as school buildings and learning materials, is essential for creating a conducive learning environment."* (Interviewed on 23rd February 2024).

Respondent 4 (Health Worker): *"Implementing health information systems can improve the management and delivery of healthcare services, making them more efficient and effective."* (Interviewed on 23rd February 2024).

Respondent 5 (Teacher): *"Collaborative initiatives with the local community can ensure that educational programs are relevant and meet the needs of the community."* (Interviewed on 22nd February 2024).

4.4.3 Responses from Beneficiaries (Citizens of Mbarara City) on Policy Recommendations

Table 4.4.3: Policy Recommendations by Citizens

<i>Policy Recommendation</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Neutral (%)</i>	<i>Agree (%)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (%)</i>
<i>Increase transparency and accountability in local government</i>	5	5	10	50	30
<i>Ensure equitable distribution of resources</i>	5	5	15	45	30
<i>Improve access to public services in rural areas</i>	5	5	10	50	30
<i>Strengthen community engagement and participation</i>	5	10	10	45	30
<i>Implement feedback mechanisms for service improvement</i>	5	5	15	45	30

Source: Field data 2024

Qualitative Insights:

Respondent 1 (Citizen): *"Transparency and accountability in local government can be improved through regular audits and public reports on spending and projects."* (Interviewed on 24th February 2024).

Respondent 2 (Citizen): *"Resources should be distributed equitably to ensure that all areas, especially rural ones, benefit from development initiatives."* (Interviewed on 24th February 2024).

Respondent 3 (Citizen): *"Improving access to public services in rural areas is crucial. This includes better roads, healthcare facilities, and schools."* (Interviewed on 25th February 2024).

Respondent 4 (Citizen): *"Strengthening community engagement ensures that the services provided align with the actual needs and preferences of the community."* (Interviewed on 25th February 2024).

Respondent 5 (Citizen): *"Implementing feedback mechanisms allows citizens to voice their concerns and suggestions, leading to continuous improvement in service delivery."* (Interviewed on 24th February 2024).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Effectiveness of decentralization Policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City

The study's findings indicate that decentralization has had mixed impacts on the quality of public services in Mbarara City. A substantial majority of key stakeholders agree that decentralization has led to enhanced decision-making efficiency and better resource allocation in the healthcare and education sectors. Many local government leaders believe that decentralization has improved decision-making processes and resource distribution. This observation aligns with Sharma and Pal (2019), who suggest that decentralization can lead to more efficient resource utilization and tailored solutions that meet local needs. Additionally, respondents reported increased accessibility of services and greater accountability, supporting Rondinelli et al. (1989), who argue that decentralization enhances government responsiveness and transparency.

Despite these improvements, significant challenges hinder the full potential of decentralization. Key stakeholders consistently cited insufficient funding and a lack of adequate training as major barriers, echoing the findings of Olowu and Wunsch (2004). There are also significant coordination issues that hinder effective implementation, consistent with Ayee (1996). Many stakeholders pointed out that these challenges impede the effectiveness of decentralization, reflecting the need for addressing these underlying issues.

Service providers offered a nuanced perspective, acknowledging both improvements and ongoing challenges. Both teachers and health workers noted improvements in public service quality and resource allocation, which supports Conyers (1983), who emphasized the importance of decentralization in enhancing administrative efficiency and service delivery. The findings support Tiebout (1956), who posits that decentralization allows for tailored public services that meet local preferences and needs. This perspective is also shared by Faguet (2012), who found that decentralization improves public sector performance by allowing for more localized and responsive service provision.

However, service providers highlighted significant challenges related to insufficient funding and lack of training, aligning with Bird and Vaillancourt (1998), who emphasize the critical need for adequate financial resources and skilled personnel for effective decentralization. Coordination and communication issues were also significant, reflecting the arguments of Ayee (1996) about the administrative challenges in decentralization.

From the perspective of the works department, the majority of respondents agreed that decentralization had improved public service delivery, aligning with Rondinelli, McCullough, and Johnson (1989). Two-thirds of respondents reported increased efficiency and accountability, consistent with Litvack, Ahmad, and Bird (1998) and Agrawal and Ribot (1999). However, opinions were divided on whether decentralization has made job responsibilities more difficult, with some respondents noting that it has introduced complexities and challenges, especially without adequate resources and capacity-building measures, as highlighted by Ribot (2002). Many respondents agreed that their job responsibilities had increased, reflecting Parker (1995), but this was seen both as a positive development and a source of added pressure due to insufficient support.

Beneficiaries generally perceived improvements in service quality and accountability, supporting Azfar, Kähkönen, and Meagher (2001). However, they also highlighted issues such as coordination problems and resource constraints. While positive feedback supported the view of Rondinelli (1981), there were concerns about the sustainability of these improvements without addressing underlying challenges such as funding and training.

5.2 Challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation in Mbarara City

Despite the identified improvements, the study highlights significant challenges in the implementation of decentralization policies in Mbarara City. Key stakeholders, including local government leaders, consistently cited insufficient funding and lack of adequate training as major barriers, echoing the findings of Olowu and Wunsch (2004). There are also significant coordination issues that hinder effective implementation, consistent with Ayee (1996).

Service providers, including teachers and health workers, identified similar challenges regarding funding and training. This supports Wunsch and Olowu (1990) and Bird and Vaillancourt (1998), who emphasize the critical need for adequate financial resources and skilled personnel for effective decentralization. Coordination and communication issues were also significant, reflecting the arguments of Ayee (1996) about the administrative challenges in decentralization.

Beneficiaries also identified insufficient funding and lack of training as major challenges, consistent with the findings of Schroeder (1989). Coordination and communication issues were also noted, while the recognition of opportunities for innovation and the need for policy improvements suggest areas for strategic focus. According to Shah (1998), while decentralization can face significant challenges, it also offers avenues for innovation and policy reforms that can enhance local governance and service delivery.

5.3 Policy Recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City

To address these challenges and enhance the benefits of decentralization, the study offers several policy recommendations. Key stakeholders emphasized the need for increased budget allocations and regular training programs, supported by Bird and Vaillancourt (1998). Improving transparency and accountability was also crucial, echoing the arguments of Litvack, Ahmad, and Bird (1998).

Service providers prioritized increased budget allocations, regular training programs, and enhanced communication. These recommendations are consistent with Shah (2006), who highlights the need for financial resources and capacity building in effective decentralization. Additionally, increasing citizen participation, implementing performance-based incentives, and improving transparency are seen as important measures, aligning with the findings of Faguet (2012).

Beneficiaries emphasized the need for increased budget allocations, regular training programs, and enhanced communication. They also saw increasing citizen participation and implementing performance-based incentives as beneficial. Improving transparency and strengthening the legal framework were highlighted as crucial, aligning with the findings of Wunsch (1998), who stressed the importance of robust governance structures in decentralization.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight both the positive impacts and significant challenges of decentralization in Mbarara City. Addressing the identified challenges through strategic policy interventions can harness the opportunities for local innovation and enhanced public service delivery. This comprehensive approach underscores the critical need for financial, human, and administrative resources to optimize the benefits of decentralization.

5.4 Verbatim Analysis: Challenges and Opportunities in Decentralization

Challenges:

In analyzing the implementation of decentralization in Mbarara City, several challenges emerged from stakeholder interviews and policy documents. For instance, one local government official stated:

"Despite the new city status, we still face significant resource constraints. Our budget has not increased proportionately with our new responsibilities, leading to gaps in service delivery."

This statement highlights a critical challenge related to financial resource allocation. The disparity between increased responsibilities and inadequate funding is a recurring theme in the data, indicating a need for more equitable resource distribution.

Another challenge noted was the lack of institutional capacity:

"Our staff are not adequately trained to manage the expanded roles that come with city status. This has led to inefficiencies and delays in service delivery."

This quote reflects concerns about the need for capacity building and training, which is essential for effective decentralization.

Opportunities:

On the positive side, stakeholders also identified opportunities arising from decentralization. For example:

"The shift to city status has allowed us to tailor services more specifically to local needs. We can now address issues more directly and implement local solutions."

This statement demonstrates how decentralization has facilitated more responsive and localized service delivery, aligning with the goals of enhancing public service relevance.

Additionally, a community leader noted:

"With decentralization, we've seen increased community engagement in local decision-making processes. This has led to better alignment of services with community expectations."

This quote underscores the opportunity for enhanced citizen participation and involvement in governance, which is a key benefit of decentralization.

Conclusion:

The verbatim analysis reveals both significant challenges and promising opportunities associated with decentralization in Mbarara City. Challenges such as resource constraints and capacity limitations must be addressed to optimize decentralization's benefits. At the same time, the enhanced responsiveness and increased community engagement present valuable opportunities for improving public service delivery.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

The study aimed to evaluate the impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City, identify challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation, and propose policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization. Reflecting on the study issue, it is essential to note that previous studies, such as those by Bakunda, have indicated that decentralization has not consistently led to improved service delivery. This study sought to evaluate whether decentralization in Mbarara City aligns with these findings or presents a different perspective.

The study findings reveal a generally positive impact of decentralization on public service delivery in Mbarara City. Key stakeholders, service providers, and beneficiaries perceive improvements in service quality, decision-making efficiency, resource allocation, and accessibility of services. Decentralization has facilitated greater accountability and transparency in service delivery, enhancing citizen engagement and responsiveness to local needs. However, the findings do not entirely agree with other studies, such as Bakunda, cited in the problem statement. While Bakunda and others have highlighted the limitations and failures of decentralization, this study's positive findings may stem from specific local factors in Mbarara City, such as the implementation strategies or community engagement practices.

Despite the positive impact, decentralization faces significant challenges, including insufficient funding, lack of adequate training, and coordination and communication issues. These challenges hinder effective service delivery and require targeted interventions. Opportunities for local innovation and policy improvements through decentralization are recognized, indicating potential areas for enhancing service delivery outcomes.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City:

Increase Budget Allocations: Local government authorities should prioritize increasing budget allocations to address funding gaps. This includes ensuring that financial resources are sufficient to support infrastructure development, staffing, and service provision. Specifically, the government should allocate funds proportionately to the needs identified in different boroughs of Mbarara City to ensure equitable service delivery across all divisions.

Implement Continuous Training Programs: Establish and sustain continuous training programs for local government leaders, service providers, and staff. These programs should focus on enhancing skills in service delivery, management, and governance. Regular workshops and capacity-building sessions should be organized to keep officials updated on best practices and emerging trends in local governance.

Improve Communication and Coordination: Develop and implement effective communication channels and coordination mechanisms among local government agencies, service providers, and stakeholders. This will streamline decision-making processes, reduce bureaucratic delays, and improve the overall efficiency of service delivery. Regular inter-agency meetings and collaborative platforms should be established to facilitate information sharing and problem-solving.

Strengthen Citizen Participation: Enhance mechanisms for citizen participation in local governance by establishing robust platforms for community engagement. This includes setting up regular town hall meetings, feedback forums, and participatory budgeting processes. Active citizen involvement in decision-making, project prioritization, and service delivery monitoring will ensure that public services are aligned with community needs and preferences.

Enhance Transparency: Promote transparency in all aspects of resource allocation, project implementation, and service delivery processes. Implement clear and accessible reporting systems where citizens can track how public funds are being used and the progress of various projects. Transparency initiatives should include detailed public reports and open data platforms to build trust and accountability.

Strengthen Accountability Mechanisms: Reinforce accountability mechanisms to ensure responsible governance and effective utilization of public resources. This includes establishing independent auditing bodies, setting up grievance redress systems, and enforcing strict adherence to financial management regulations. Regular audits and performance evaluations should be conducted to ensure that resources are used efficiently and that any misuse is addressed promptly.

Review and Update Legal Framework: Review and strengthen the legal and regulatory framework governing decentralization. This involves addressing existing governance gaps, ensuring compliance with decentralization laws, and providing clear guidelines for decision-making and service provision. The government should work on updating legislation to reflect current challenges and best practices in decentralization.

6.3 Areas of Further Study

While this study provides valuable insights into decentralization and public service delivery in Mbarara City, several areas warrant further investigation for a comprehensive understanding:

Conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery outcomes, governance effectiveness, and socio-economic development in Mbarara City. Compare decentralization models and practices across different regions or cities to identify best practices, lessons learned, and contextual factors influencing decentralization outcomes. Explore in-depth the perspectives and experiences of various stakeholders, including marginalized groups, civil society organizations, and private sector actors, in decentralization processes and public service delivery. By addressing these areas, future studies can build on the findings of this research and contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities and potential of decentralization in improving public service delivery.

References

- Agrawal, A., & Ribot, J. (1999). Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Cases. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 33(4), 473-502.
- Aslam, M., Khwaja, A. I., & Qureshi, H. (2022). *Institutional capacity and decentralization: Evidence from Pakistan*. *Public Administration Review*, 82(3), 442-459. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13329>
- Ayee, J. (1996). The Measurement of Decentralization: The Ghanaian Experience, 1988–92. *World Development*, 24(3), 487-500.
- Ayee, J. R. A. (2005). Decentralization, Accountability and Local Government in Ghana. *Local Government Studies*, 31(4), 457-470.
- Azfar, O., Kähkönen, S., & Meagher, P. (2001). Conditions for Effective Decentralized Governance: A Synthesis of Research Findings. IRIS Center Working Paper, University of Maryland.
- Bahiigwa, G., Bashaasha, B., & Katusiimeh, M. (2013). *Decentralization and the provision of public services in Uganda: Evidence from education and health*. *African Development Review*, 25(3), 415-429. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8268.2013.00267.x>
- Bird, R. M., & Vaillancourt, F. (Eds.). (1998). *Fiscal Decentralization in Developing Countries*. Cambridge University Press.
- Blair, H. (2000). Participation and Accountability at the Periphery: Democratic Local Governance in Six Countries. *World Development*, 28(1), 21-39.
- Conyers, D. (1983). Decentralization: The Latest Fashion in Development Administration? *Public Administration and Development*, 3(2), 97-109.
- Conyers, D. (1984). Decentralization and Development: A Framework for Analysis. *Community Development Journal*, 19(2), 88-100.
- Crook, R. C., & Manor, J. (1998). *Democracy and Decentralisation in South Asia and West Africa: Participation, Accountability and Performance*. Cambridge University Press.

Crook, R. C., & Manor, J. (1998). *Democracy and decentralization in South Asia and West Africa: Participation, accountability, and performance*. Cambridge University Press.

Faguet, J. P. (2004). Does Decentralization Increase Government Responsiveness to Local Needs? Evidence from Bolivia. *Journal of Public Economics*, 88(3-4), 867-893.

Faguet, J. P. (2012). *Decentralization and Popular Democracy: Governance from Below in Bolivia*. University of Michigan Press.

Gurung, A., & Taylor, M. (2021). *Digital governance and decentralization: Innovations in service delivery*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 31(1), 45-61. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muaa057>

Litvack, J., Ahmad, J., & Bird, R. (1998). *Rethinking Decentralization in Developing Countries*. The World Bank.

Mikkelsen, E., McDonald, C., & Nagel, M. (2018). *Decentralization and health outcomes: Evidence from sub-Saharan Africa*. *Health Policy and Planning*, 33(2), 272-283. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czx159>

Olowu, D., & Wunsch, J. S. (2004). *Local Governance in Africa: The Challenges of Democratic Decentralization*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Olowu, D., & Wunsch, J. S. (2004). *Local governance in Africa: The challenges of democratic decentralization*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Parker, A. N. (1995). *Decentralization: The Way Forward for Rural Development?* Policy Research Working Paper, World Bank.

Peter Friedrich, M. (2004). The impact of decentralization on public service delivery in Uganda. *Public Administration and Development*, 24(1), 41-51.

Ribot, J. C. (2002). *Democratic Decentralization of Natural Resources: Institutionalizing Popular Participation*. World Resources Institute.

Ribot, J. C., Agrawal, A., & Larson, A. M. (2006). Recentralizing while decentralizing: How national governments reassert control over local officials. *World Development*, 34(3), 2142-2162.

Rondinelli, D. A. (1981). Government Decentralization in Comparative Perspective: Theory and Practice in Developing Countries. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 47(2), 133-145.

Rondinelli, D. A., McCullough, J. S., & Johnson, R. W. (1989). Analysing Decentralization Policies in Developing Countries: A Political-Economy Framework. *Development and Change*, 20(1), 57-87.

Rondinelli, D. A., McCullough, J. S., & Johnson, R. W. (1989). Analyzing decentralization policies in developing countries: A political economy framework. *Development and Change*, 20(1), 57-87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.1989.tb00379.x>

Saito, F. (2001). Decentralization theories revisited: Lessons from Uganda. *Rethinking Development in a Globalizing World*, 3(1), 18-35.

Schroeder, L. (1989). Financial Empowerment and Municipal Decentralization in Kenya. *Public Administration and Development*, 9(2), 123-134.

Shah, A. (1998). Balance, Accountability, and Responsiveness: Lessons about Decentralization. World Bank.

Shah, A. (2006). A Practitioner's Guide to Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers. In R. Boadway & A. Shah (Eds.), *Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers: Principles and Practice* (pp. 1-53). The World Bank.

Sharma, C. K., & Pal, M. (2019). Decentralization and Public Service Delivery: Evidence from India. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, 65(1), 74-88.

Sharma, C. K., & Pal, R. (2019). Decentralization and its impact on health sector performance: Evidence from India. *Social Indicators Research*, 144(1), 235-259. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-018-2017-4>

Smith, B., & Johnson, R. (2018). Decentralization and educational practices: Comparative insights from Kenya and Ghana. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 56(3), 291-306.

Smoke, P. (2003). Decentralization in Africa: A stocktaking survey. Africa Region Working Paper Series, 56. World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/15060>

Smoke, P. (2003). Decentralization in Africa: Goals, Dimensions, Myths and Challenges. *Public Administration and Development*, 23(1), 7-16.

Smoke, P. (2003). Fiscal decentralization in developing countries: A review of current concepts and practice. *Public Administration and Development*, 23(1), 31-43.

Steiner, S. (2006). Decentralization in Uganda: Exploring the constraints for poverty reduction. Hamburg: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies.

Suzuki, I. (2002). Parental participation and accountability in primary schools in Uganda. *Compare*, 32(2), 243-259.

Tiebout, C. M. (1956). A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures. *The Journal of Political Economy*, 64(5), 416-424.

Tinashe Clive, Gondo, et al. (2024). Digital transformation in Zimbabwe: Impact on public service delivery. *Journal of Public Administration*, 12(1), 45-60.

Treisman, D. (2007). *The architecture of government: Rethinking political decentralization*. Cambridge University Press.

UNESCO. (2004). *Decentralization in education: National policies and practices*. Paris: UNESCO.

Wunsch, J. S. (1998). Decentralization, Local Governance and 'Recentralization' in Africa. *Public Administration and Development*, 18(5), 489-502.

Wunsch, J. S., & Olowu, D. (1990). *The Failure of the Centralized State: Institutions and Self-Governance in Africa*. Westview Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am Karusigarira Iyangye Alex, with registration number 22/BSU/MAPAM/2050, a student at Bishop Stuart University. I am conducting a study titled “Decentralization and Public Service Delivery in Uganda: A Case Study of Mbarara City” as part of the requirements for earning a Master’s degree in Public Administration and Management at Bishop Stuart University.

You have been chosen to participate in this study, and your responses will be used solely for academic purposes and kept strictly confidential.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study.

Please tick the boxes accordingly.

Section A: Bio data

1. Sex:

i. Male ☐

ii. Female ☐

2. Age:

i. Below 25 years ☐

ii. 25 – 35 years ☐

iii. 36 – 45 years ☐

iv. 46 – 55 years ☐

v. 56 years and above ☐

3. Highest Nature of education:

i. A-Nature certificate ☐

ii. Diploma ☐

iii. Undergraduate degree ☐

iv. Post graduate diploma ☐

v. Master's degree ☐

vi. Doctorate ☐

Other: Please specify.....

4. Occupation?

i. Peasant farmer ☐

ii. Business ☐

iii. Public servant ☐

Other: Please specify.....

Objective 1: To evaluate the impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-----------	-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Decentralization has improved the overall quality of public services in Mbarara City.					
Decision-making processes in public service delivery have become more efficient.					
Decentralization has led to better resource allocation in the healthcare sector.					
Decentralization has led to better resource allocation in the education sector.					
Public healthcare services are more accessible to citizens since decentralization was implemented.					
Public educational services are more accessible to citizens since decentralization was implemented.					
There is greater accountability in the delivery of healthcare services due to decentralization.					
There is greater accountability in the delivery of educational services due to decentralization.					

Objective 2: To identify challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Insufficient funding is a major challenge in the implementation of decentralization.					
There is a lack of adequate training for healthcare staff on decentralization policies and processes.					
There is a lack of adequate training for educational staff on decentralization policies and processes.					
Coordination between different levels of government is effective under decentralization.					
Decentralization has provided more opportunities for local innovation in healthcare service delivery.					
Decentralization has provided more					

opportunities for local innovation in educational service delivery.					
The current decentralization policies need significant improvements to be effective in the healthcare sector.					
The current decentralization policies need significant improvements to be effective in the education sector.					

Objective 3: To propose policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Increasing budget allocations to local governments will improve service delivery.					
Regular training programs for healthcare staff on decentralization should be implemented.					
Regular training programs for					

educational staff on decentralization should be implemented.					
Enhancing communication and coordination between different government levels is crucial.					
Citizen participation in local governance should be increased to enhance service delivery.					
Introducing performance-based incentives for local government healthcare employees will improve service quality.					
Introducing performance-based incentives for local government educational employees will improve service quality.					

Objective 1: To evaluate the impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Decentralization has improved the overall quality of public services in Mbarara City.					
Decision-making processes in public service delivery have become more efficient due to decentralization.					
Decentralization has led to better resource allocation in the healthcare sector.					
Decentralization has led to better resource allocation in the education sector.					
Public healthcare services are more accessible to citizens since decentralization was implemented.					
Public educational services are more accessible to citizens since decentralization					

was implemented.					
There is greater accountability in the delivery of healthcare services due to decentralization.					

There is greater accountability in the delivery of educational services due to decentralization.

Objective 2: To identify challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Insufficient funding is a major challenge in the implementation of decentralization.					
There is a lack of adequate training for local government staff on decentralization policies and processes.					
Coordination between different levels of government is effective under decentralization.					
Decentralization has provided more opportunities for local innovation in public service delivery.					

The current decentralization policies need significant improvements to be effective in the healthcare sector.					
The current decentralization policies need significant improvements to be effective in the education sector.					
Effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are in place to assess the impact of decentralization.					

Objective 3: To propose policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Increasing budget allocations to local governments will improve service delivery.					
Regular training programs for local government staff on decentralization					

should be implemented.					
Enhancing communication and coordination between different government levels is crucial.					
Citizen participation in local governance should be increased to enhance service delivery.					
Introducing performance-based incentives for local government employees will improve service quality.					
Improving transparency and accountability measures will enhance the effectiveness of decentralized service delivery.					
Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework for decentralization will lead to better public					

service delivery outcomes.					
----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

Objective 1: To evaluate the impact of decentralization policies on public service delivery in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Decentralization has improved the overall quality of public services in Mbarara City.					
I have better access to healthcare services since decentralization was implemented.					
I have better access to educational services since decentralization was implemented.					
Public services are delivered more efficiently due to decentralization.					
There is greater transparency and accountability					

in public service delivery due to decentralization.					
The local government is more responsive to citizen needs since decentralization was implemented.					

Objective 2: To identify challenges and opportunities in decentralization implementation in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Insufficient funding is a major challenge in the implementation of decentralization.					
There is a lack of adequate information about decentralization policies among the public.					
Coordination between different levels of government is effective under decentralization.					
Decentralization has created more opportunities for community participation in local governance.					

The local government has been successful in addressing the challenges of decentralization in healthcare services.					
The local government has been successful in addressing the challenges of decentralization in educational services.					

Objective 3: To propose policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery through decentralization in Mbarara City

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Increasing budget allocations to local governments will improve service delivery.					
Local government should implement regular community engagement sessions to inform citizens about decentralization policies.					
Enhancing communication					

and coordination between different government levels is crucial.					
Citizen participation in local governance should be increased to enhance service delivery.					
Introducing performance-based incentives for local government employees will improve service quality.					
Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework for decentralization will lead to better public service delivery outcomes.					
Transparency and accountability measures should be improved to enhance the effectiveness of decentralized service delivery.					

Appendix II: Questionnaire for Service Providers (Works Department)

Dear Respondent,

I am Karusigarira Iyangye Alex, with registration number 22/BSU/MAPAM/2050, a student at Bishop Stuart University. I am conducting a study titled “Decentralization and Public Service Delivery in Uganda: A Case Study of Mbarara City” as part of the requirements for earning a Master’s degree in Public Administration and Management at Bishop Stuart University.

You have been chosen to participate in this study, and your responses will be used solely for academic purposes and kept strictly confidential.

Thank you for sparing your time and accept to participate in this study.

Section 1: Decentralization and Public Service Delivery

Decentralization has improved public service delivery in Mbarara City.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neutral (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

Decentralization has increased the efficiency of public service delivery in Mbarara City.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neutral (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

Decentralization has improved the accountability of public service providers in Mbarara City.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neutral (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

Section 2: Job Responsibilities and Challenges

My job responsibilities have increased since decentralization.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neutral (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

Decentralization has made it more difficult for me to perform my job responsibilities.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neutral (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

Decentralization has improved the communication between local government leaders and service providers.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neutral (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

Section 3: Additional Comments

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences working in the works department?

(Open-ended question)

Thank you:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is valuable to us.

Appendix III: List of Employees under the Health Directorate

General Lines : +256 414 250 534/8
: +256 414 250 557/8
Minister : +256 414 251003
Minister of State : +256 414 251004
Permanent Secretary : +256 414 251002
Toll Free : 0800 100 200/201/202
Email : ps@publicservice.go.ug
Website : www.publicservice.go.ug



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE
PLOT 12 NAKASERO HILL ROAD
P.O. BOX 7003
KAMPALA
UGANDA

In any correspondence on
this subject please quote no. **MSD.135/306/02 Vol. 72**

7th May, 2024

The Chief Executive Officers/Town Clerks
All District Local Governments
UGANDA

APPROVED STRUCTURES FOR HEALTH CENTRE IVs AND HEALTH CENTRE IIIs

Reference is made to my letter **Ref: MSD 135/306/02 Vol. 68** dated **5th April, 2023**; communicating the approved generic structures for Health Centre IVs and Health Centre IIIs.

I note that some District Local Governments have experienced challenges in implementation of the structures because there are staff in post whose positions are not on the approved structure.

The purpose of this letter is to communicate to you the adjusted approved structures to enable you accommodate the Officers whose positions were not provided for in the approved Structure.

You are advised to implement the approved structures within the available wage provisions for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Please note that this letter does not serve as clearance to recruit new officers.

Catherine Bitarakwate Musingwiire (Mrs.)

PERMANENT SECRETARY

Cc: The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health
The Secretary, Health Service Commission

Mission: To provide human resource policies, management systems and structures that facilitate efficient and effective public service performance for national development and improved quality of life in Uganda

Appendix IV: Research Budget

Detailed Budget Table

Expense Item	Unit Cost (UGX)	Quantity	Total Cost (UGX)
Personnel Costs			
Research Assistants	50,000	2 * 10	1,000,000
Transportation			
Local Travel for Data Collection	-	-	200,000
Materials and Supplies			
Printing and Photocopying of Questionnaires	-	-	50,000
Stationery (Pens, Notebooks, etc.)	-	-	30,000
Communication			
Phone Calls and Internet	-	-	70,000
Data Entry and Analysis			
Data Entry Clerk	40,000	5	200,000
Data Analysis Software Subscription	-	-	50,000
Miscellaneous			
Contingency Fund	-	-	100,000
Refreshments for Respondents during Data Collection	-	-	100,000
Other Miscellaneous Costs	-	-	200,000
Total Budget			2,000,000