

CITIZEN AWARENESS, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND BUDGETARY ALLOCATION IN THE NORTH RIFT ECONOMIC BLOC COUNTIES, KENYA

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Abstract

This study set out to examine the influence of citizen awareness on budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties and the mediating effect of public participation on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation. The research was anchored on Agency theory, Stakeholders theory and Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation theory. The study took on the explanatory study design and targeted 10,690 individuals including elected leaders, county budgetary and planning staff, sub location development committee and county ward administrators. The study utilized a sample size of 320, which was arrived at by use of the Yamane (1967) formula. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The eight counties forming the north rift economic bloc were first purposively selected. Purposive sampling was also utilized in selecting the strata which included elected leaders, the county budgetary and planning staff, the Sub-location development committee and County Ward administrators from the 8 counties. The study then used simple random sampling method to choose the members within the strata. The study further purposively sampled an equal proportion of male and female respondents across each stratum for purposes of representability. Reliability of the study items were assessed by determining the item Cronbach alpha coefficients. All items were found to be reliable, recording Cronbach's alpha coefficients above the 0.7 threshold. This included Citizen awareness ($\alpha=0.916$); demographic characteristics ($\alpha=0.753$); behavioral factors ($\alpha=0.757$); economic factors ($\alpha=0.875$); public participations in budgetary allocation ($\alpha=0.775$); and budget allocation ($\alpha=0.766$). A questionnaire was used to collect data. The study found that citizen awareness ($\beta = .884, p = .000 < .05$) had a significant effect on budgetary allocation. Public participation was also found to significantly mediate the association between citizen awareness ($\beta=.4075, LL=.3530, UL=.4651$) and budgetary allocation. It is concluded that citizen awareness is an important factor in enhancing budgetary allocation, hence the need to enhance public awareness. It is also concluded that the association between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation is hinged on citizen participation. It is recommended that county governments carry out sensitization campaigns to enhance citizen awareness of the whole budget process; and adopt participatory budgeting to increase the range of citizen participation.

Key Words: *Citizen Awareness, Public Participation, Budgetary Allocation*

Introduction

The growing complexity of the public administration environment marked by numerous reforms occasioned by the New Public Management (NPM) wave and the continuous necessity to align societal needs with limited resources presuppose that governments avail funds for a particular purpose and allocate the same to that purpose (Ahmad & Ahmad, 2019). The purpose of allocating budgets in the public sector is for the management of inadequate financial resources in order to guarantee resource efficiency in delivery of services. An adequate budgetary allocation enables the government to optimize its available resources and infrastructure to improve the standards of living and quality of life for its citizenry (Samadi, Keshtkaran, Kavosi & Vahnedi, 2018). This results in resource efficient governments that can raise revenue and manage expenditure in a manner that maximizes the impact of resources at the government's disposal (Kis-Katos & Sjahrir, 2016). A properly executed and well-prepared budget has the capability to

promote a people's socio-economic wellbeing, support public service administration and finance development projects. This in turn translates to delivery of services by citizens and governments getting such critical services as clean water, healthcare and education (Andrews, 2016). This cannot be achieved without a strong budgetary allocation process, characterized by accountability, efficiency, adequacy and transparency (Aminatu, 2015). Achieving the foregoing thus necessitate that the citizenry, from whose taxation governments pull funds for budgeting, participate in the allocation process. Budgetary allocation processes that involve the general public are more feasible compared to those that do not. This is because members of the public assist in ensuring that key challenges that communities face on a daily basis are incorporated in the budget as well as ensure transparency and accountability in the process (Kiilu & Ngugi, 2014).

Across empirical literature globally, regionally and in the Kenyan body of knowledge, effective budgetary allocation has been associated with a plethora of determinants, either at national or county government levels. These include economic factors such as citizen income level and employment status (Lismawati, 2013); citizen awareness levels including civic education and media campaigns (Andrade & Rhodes, 2012); political factors including the leadership manifesto and prioritization (Esonu & Kavanamur, 2011); demographic considerations including age, gender and education (Ihemeje, 2018; Odary, 2020); behavioral factors including attitude and trust (Lubis, Torong & Muda, 2016); and government policy and sectoral plans (Kis-Katos & Sjahrir, 2016).

Most common of the aforementioned factors particularly in developing economy contexts include citizen awareness of their voice in the budgetary allocation process and initiatives to create awareness through civic education and media campaigns (Kis-Katos & Sjahrir, 2016; Mkasiwa, 2018). In relation to citizen awareness of their voice in the budgetary allocation process and initiatives to create awareness through civic education and media campaigns, it has been established that among the main causes of poor budgetary allocation highlighted by underfunding of important sectors and budget deficits is lack of awareness of budget users about their role in the allocation process (Katos & Sjahrir, 2016). There is need to carry out civic education for citizens to create citizen awareness on their role in the budgetary allocation process (Mkasiwa, 2018). Civic education is particularly important as it helps citizens understand their part in the budgetary allocation process both at the national and the county levels. Among the most effective avenues to this end include media campaigns and grassroots forums (McCommon, 2019).

Whereas citizen awareness has been established as an antecedent of budgetary allocation (Lubis et al., 2016; Ihemeje, 2018; Mkasiwa, 2018; McCommon, 2019; Odary, 2020), its influence on the same is hinged on citizen participation, in the budgetary allocation process (Abelson & Eyles, 2018; Aiginger et al., 2019). In the NPM dispensation, public financial management, of which budgetary allocation is a significant part, is optimally expected to become responsive to societal needs, to deliver public value and functionalize citizen participation (Elhiraika, 2017.). Governments use various forms of public involvement, including citizen relationship management systems, public gatherings, neighborhood councils, surveys, social media, focus

groups, among others, as decision inputs about policies, plans or programs (Aiginger et al., 2019).

Citizen participation in the budgetary allocation process in Kenya is anticipated in Article One of Kenya constitution 2010 which considers that the Kenyan people enjoy sovereign power which shall be effected as anticipated in the constitution. In addition, article 10 of the Kenya Constitution emphasizes the need to enhance inclusivity and participation of the people. Article 201 states the principles of public finance and notifies the public participation as one of the principles. Article 196 of the Kenyan constitution in regards to the county governments and county assemblies, seeks to observe public participation in all their affairs; Article 232 – Public Participation among the principles and values of public service. In addition, the provisions of the constitution are part of the other legal provisions in the Public Finance Management Act 2012. Public participation is also provided for in the County government Act 2012 and urban areas and Cities Act 2013. The general principles and objects of public participation as stated by the County government Act 2012 is to ensure inclusivity, ownership, equity, respect, self-governance and solidarity.

The foregoing assertion suggests that public participation plays a mediating role, providing the avenue through which citizen awareness influences budgetary allocation. This is however largely implicit, as published empirical literature to this effect remains scanty. Extant studies have focused either on the direct determinants of budgetary allocation or the direct influence of public participation on budgetary allocation. For instance, Friyani and Hernando (2019) studied the determinants of the effectiveness of performance based-budgeting in county governments in Indonesia while in Ethiopia, Sado (2019) explored factors affecting allocation of budgets in Wollega administrative Zone. In Kenya, Orina et al. (2019) studied the factors determining the allocation of budgets in county governments. To the best knowledge of the researcher none of the published studies explores the indirect effect of citizen awareness on budgetary allocation through public participation with reference to county governments in Kenya.

Research Objectives

- i. To examine whether citizen awareness influences budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties
- ii. To determine the mediating effect of public participation on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties

Research Hypothesis

- i. A statistically significant association does not exist between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation (H_{01})
- ii. Public participation does not have a significant mediating effect on the association between the antecedents and budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties (H_{02})

Methodology

The study was grounded on the positivistic paradigm, due to the applications of empirical methods in producing new knowledge as per previous studies. In line with Collis and Hussey (2009), positivism allowed the researchers to operationalize definition, formulate variables and hypothesis based on the existing theory which involve the verification of the study hypothesis. A mix of explanatory and descriptive designs was also adopted in the study. The design was considered suitable as it minimizes biasness through probability sampling and at the same time maximizing the reliability of data collection method (Kothari, 2004). The design also allowed the use of questionnaires and inferential statistics in establishing the significance of the relationships between independent and dependent variables.

The target population of the study comprised of 334 elected leaders, 76 county budgetary and planning staff, 10,080 sub location development committees, each with 50% representation from the general public and 200 County ward administrators, all totaling to 10,690. The 10,690 target respondents also formed the units of analysis.

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Elected leaders	County budgetary and planning staff	Sub Location Development committee	County Ward admin	Population
Baringo	48	9	1967	30	2054
Uasin-gishu	50	10	679	30	769
Elgeyo Marakwet	36	9	1484	20	1549
Nandi	42	8	2093	30	2173
Westpokot	36	8	1568	20	1632
Turkana	50	12	1092	30	1184
TransNzoia	42	11	441	25	519
Samburu	30	9	756	15	810
TOTAL	334	76	10080	200	10690

Source, (CIDPs, 2018)

The study used Yamane (1967:886) and modified by Saunders *et al.* (2012) formula to calculate sample sizes.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N_e^2}$$

Where, N=population size, n=sample size, e=the sampling error. While the sampling error of 0.05.

$$n = 10,690 / (1 + 10,690 * 0.05 * 0.05)$$

$$n = 10,690 / 27.725$$

$$n = 385.57$$

$$n = 386$$

Therefore, using Saunders *et al.* (2012) formula the sample size of the study was 386 stakeholders from the north rift economic bloc who participate in budgetary formulation process. The determination of the sample size involved giving due recognition of the fact that it should be large enough for statistical analysis. The study used multi-stage sampling design because it allowed the researcher to segregate the population into several mutually exclusive sub-populations or strata which aided in increasing the sample statistical efficiency by providing adequate data for analyzing sub populations and allowing the researcher to use different research methods and procedures in different strata. The eight counties forming the north rift economic block was purposively selected.

The study also used simple random sampling method to choose the members within the strata. Finally, the study utilized purposive sampling in selecting the respondent in every category. Which includes: the elected leaders, the county budgetary and planning staff, the Sub-location development committee and the County Ward administrators from the eight counties selected systematically. The study further purposively sampled an equal proportion of male and female respondents across each category, for purposes of representability. The study used Neyman allocation formula to distribute the respondents into the two selected strata. The purpose of selecting the responded into the strata is to optimize the precision of survey, especially when provided a fixed sample size. The sample size for stratum h, employing Neyman allocation was:

$$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N} \right) n$$

Where:

N = The total population; n = Total sample size; n_h = The sample size for stratum h; N_h -The population size for stratum h

Sample determination for elected leaders:

$$n_h = (334/10,690)*386$$

$$n_h=12.1$$

$$n_h=12$$

Sample determination for county budgetary and planning staff:

$$n_h = (76/10,690)*386$$

$$n_h=2.7$$

$$n_h=3$$

Sample determination for sub-location development committee:

$$n_h = (10,080/10,690)*386$$

$$n_h=363.9$$

$$n_h=364$$

Sample determination for county ward administrators:

$$n_h = (200/10,690)*386$$

$$n_h=7.2$$

$$n_h=7$$

Hence, distribution was as follows:

Table 2: Sample Size

Population Category	Population	$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N}\right)n$
Elected leaders	334	012
County budgetary and planning staff	076	003
Sub-location development committee	10,080	364
County ward administrators	200	007
Total	10690	386

Source: Researcher (2019)

The sample of 386 was proportionately distributed among the eight counties of Baringo, Uasin-gishu, Elgeyo Marakwet, Nandi, Westpokot, Turkana, TransNzoia and Samburu as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Sample Distribution Per County

Category	Population	% Proportion	Sample
Baringo	2054	19.2	74
Uasin-gishu	769	7.2	28
Elgeyo Marakwet	1549	14.5	56
Nandi	2173	20.3	78
Westpokot	1632	15.3	59
Turkana	1184	11.1	43
TransNzoia	519	4.9	19
Samburu	810	7.6	29
Total	10690		386

The study used primary data, which was collected by a researcher specifically for a research assignment. In other words, primary data is information that a study must gather because no one has compiled and published the information in a forum accessible to the public (Saunders et al., 2012) Researcher generally take the time and allocate the resources required to gather primary data only when a question, issue or problem presents itself that is sufficiently important or unique that it warrants the expenditure necessary to gather the primary data (Kothari, 2004). Primary data are original in nature and directly relates to the issue or problem and current data. Primary data are collected through various methods like interviews, surveys, questionnaires etc (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010).

The study used a structured questionnaire as a tool for data collection in regard to information on antecedents of public participation and budgetary allocation. The questionnaire was close ended questions because they are easier to administer and analyze since each item is followed by an alternative answer. The closed-ended questions ensure that the respondent stay focus within the study objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The study utilized questionnaires for data

collection because it has been considered to be economical method and provides standardized and structural questions into variables for data analysis. The questions for the variables of interest in the study were adopted from previous studies (Lubis *et al.*, 2016; Ihemeje. 2018; Mkasiwa, 2018; McCommon, 2019; Odary, 2020) that have been developed and tested. However, the wording and style of presentation was modified to fit the Kenyan context and scope of study. The instrument was simplified to make ease the target participants' comprehension of the questions thus enabling them to give reliable information. The same questionnaire was administered to all respondent categories, and means computed for analysis from the divergent respondents.

Whereas this study employed earlier determined models of measurements and not by introducing any new measurement form, the models that were constructed were evaluated and discussed with assistance from Kabarak University's teaching staff to ascertain face validity. This research additionally ensured content validity by administering questionnaires in a consistent manner and personally by the researcher. For ease of understanding and clarity, the questions were prepared in a language that is simple. The participants were given clear instructions and for those participants who could not read or write, the researcher filled the questionnaires.

A pilot study was carried out to determine the instrument's reliability, assessed by determining the item Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The results obtained depicted that cronbach's alpha of 0.916 was obtained from 16 statements explaining citizen awareness; 0.775 was obtained from eight statements explaining public participations in budgetary allocation; and 0.766 was obtained from five statements explaining budget allocation. Since all the coefficients were above 0.7 as shown in Table 4 the instruments were considered reliable in tandem with Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

Table 4: Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
Citizen awareness	0.916	0.900	16
Demographic characteristics	0.753	0.750	12
Behavioural Factors	0.757	0.755	9
Economic Factors	0.875	0.870	10
Public participation	0.775	0.770	8
Budgetary Allocation	0.766	0.700	5

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*

Data obtained from the field was cleaned, coded and keyed for analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). With a view to observe emergent issues and trends around particular themes, the data was summarized in accordance with the objectives and variables. The combination of scores from different variable indicators is grounded on an integration of both quantitative and qualitative techniques contingent on the data collected (Parveen & Leonhauser, 2004). Descriptive analytic operations including frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were performed with a view to offer contrasts and

comparisons between the factors inducing participation of the public during the allocation of budgets. There was an addition multiple regression analysis adopted to test the hypotheses. Multiple regression analysis is applied to analyze the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010).

The regression models that were used to test the study hypotheses are shown below:

Model Specification

Objective 1 (H₀₁):

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 1$$

Where Y = Budgetary allocation

X₁ – Citizen Awareness

β₁= Beta Coefficient

ε = Error term assumed to be randomly distributed

Objective 2 (H₀₂):

$$Y = \alpha_5 + C X_2 + bPP + \varepsilon_5 \dots\dots\dots 2$$

Where Y₂ = Budgetary Allocation (dependent variable)

C= Beta coefficient of antecedents

X_{5a} = Citizen Awareness

PP = Public Participation

α₅ – regression constant

ε₅ – Error term assumed to be randomly distributed

Results and Discussion

A total of 386 questionnaires were issued of which 320 were filled and returned thus representing a response rate of 82.9%. The response rate was considered satisfactory since Nyamjom (2013) argued that a response rate of 75% was considered excellent and representative of a population. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were then computed with a view to examine whether citizen awareness influences budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties. Accordingly, the corresponding null hypothesis that states that citizen awareness has no significant effect on budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties (H₀₁) was tested. The study also determined the mediating effect of public participation on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties. The corresponding null hypothesis was also tested, stating that public participation does not have a significant mediating effect on the association between the antecedents and budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties (H₀₂).

The descriptive analysis was used to elucidate the primary characteristics of the information under the research as they offer synopses about the study subjects and its indicators. Descriptive analysis in the present research entails graphical presentations, dispersion to the mean, means, percentages and frequencies. As a dispersion measure, the mean was employed to show how the dataset was spread. Normality was then assessed using Skewness and Kurtosis. In this regard, values that fell between -2. to 3.0 indicated normal skewness and kurtosis. Normality assumption

was considered to have been met among the studied variables.

Participants were requested to indicate on a five-point Likert scale their degree of affirmation on a number of statements describing the extent of awareness in regards to participation by members of the public in the counties. Such descriptive computations as dispersion to the mean and mean were jointly used to summarize the response as showcased on Table 5:

Table 5: Citizen Awareness

	Std. Dev			
	Mean		Skew.	Kurt.
I listen to the radio more often	4.02	1.040	-.806	-.202
The County government advertises for public participations through radio	3.81	.947	-.362	-.780
The advertisement on radio in regard to public participation is made on convenient time	3.92	.935	-.491	-.662
The radio advertisements are always clear and understandable	4.02	1.040	-.806	-.202
I watch TV more often	3.81	.947	-.362	-.780
The County government advertises for public participations through TV	3.92	.935	-.491	-.662
The advertisement on TV in regard to public participation is made on convenient time	4.02	1.040	-.806	-.202
The TV advertisement is always clear and understandable, especially the ones in relation to public participation	3.81	.947	-.362	-.780
I use SMS more often	3.92	.935	-.491	-.662
The County government informs the public-on-public participation forums using SMS	4.02	1.040	-.806	-.202
The SMS informing on public participation is sent on convenient time	3.81	.947	-.362	-.780
The SMS is always clear and understandable especially the ones in relation to public participation	3.92	.935	-.491	-.662
I read print media often e.g posters, newspaper, Banners etc	3.92	.935	-.491	-.662
The county government uses print media to invite individuals on public participation.	4.09	1.008	-2.029	6.085
The advertisements on print media are clear and understandable especially the ones in regarding public participation.	4.02	1.040	-.806	-.202
The advertisements are placed on accessible, convenient and visible locations for everyone.	3.81	.947	-.362	-.780
Citizen awareness	3.9256	.650003	-.448	-.698

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*

The findings showed that most participants in the survey affirmed that they listen to the radio more often as revealed by the mean score of (4.02), while the county government advertises for public participations through the radio had a mean of (3.81). However, in regard if the advertisement on the radio in relation to public participation is made on convenient time had mean of (3.92). Finally, they rated the radio advertisements as always clear and understandable indicated by a mean (4.02) an indication that radio advertisement is an important medium for creating public awareness. Further the findings showed that most participants in the survey affirmed that they watch TV more often as shown by the mean score (3.81). It is therefore deduced that TV advertisements are crucial especially in notifying the public in relation to public participation. Further the results obtained showed that most participants in the survey affirmed that they use short message services (SMS) more often to communicate while they were in agreement that the county government informs the public-on-public participation forums using SMS.

From the results obtained, it is noted that the responses to the 16 statements used to measure citizen awareness ranged between 3.81 and 4.03, with the overall mean being (3.9256). This shows that most participants of the study were in agreement with the statements that were used to measure citizen awareness. Therefore, as Thwala (2010) advances, participation by members of the public bears a myriad of benefits to communities with regard to capacity building, empowerment, improving efficiency and effectiveness of projects; enhancing ownership and project cost sharing. The degree of involvement ranges from action initiation, information sharing, decision making and consultation. The notion is efficacious in circumstances in which community-based organizations and members of the community take up active responsibilities and role as opposed to where they are merely targeted by meetings of consensus building and baseline surveys (Thwala, 2001; 2010).

On a five–point Likert scale, participants were required to affirm their agreement levels on numerous statements elucidating the public participation of citizens. Such descriptive computations as dispersion to the mean and mean were jointly used to summarize the response as showcased on Table 6:

Table 6: Public Participation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
I do understand the concept of public participation in budget allocation process	4.02	1.040	-.806	-.202
The number of participating members of the local community in budgetary allocation has increased	3.81	.947	-.362	-.780
Projects on development that the county government started are adequately in operation under the supervision of the members of the general public.	3.92	.935	-.491	-.662
Local community support projects on development that the county government started has increased	3.81	.953	-.346	-.823
In the last two years, I have participated in most of the budgetary allocation forums at my ward level	3.92	.990	-.590	-.674
The mechanisms of engagement by members of the public in budgetary allocations provided for in the constitution	3.82	1.112	-.567	-.772
Provided an occasion, I would take part (again) in budgetary allocation forums	4.03	1.047	-1.220	1.236
The amount of grievances raised by members of the local community on policies and/or programs started by the county government has decreased	3.86	.933	-.491	-.593
Overall Public Participation Mean	3.899	0.995	-0.609	-0.409

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*

The results showed that most participants in the survey affirmed that they understand the concept of public participation in budget allocation process as shown by a mean of (4.02). However, most of them were not sure if the number of participating members of the local community in budgetary allocation has increased (3.81), the projects on development that the county government started are efficiently operating and managed by members of the local community (3.92). Local community support for projects on development that the county government started has increased in the last two years (3.81), they have participated in most of the budgetary allocation forums at my ward level (3.92).

From the results obtained it is noted that the responses of the eight statements used to measure public participations, their mean ranged between 3.82 and 4.03, with the overall mean being 3.888. This shows that most participants of the study were in agreement with the statements that were used to measure public participation. The findings were in line with Robinson (2007), who concluded that the levels of public participation are the degree to which citizens of devolved units actively engage the governance system, and decision-making structures so as to influence how they are to be governed, or how resources attributable to the citizens are accrued, planned for, and spent.

On a five–point Likert scale, participants were required to affirm their agreement levels on numerous statements elucidating the allocation of budget in the devolved governments. Such descriptive computations as dispersion to the mean and mean was jointly utilized to summarize the response as showcased on Table 7.

Table 7: Budget Allocation

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
A number of projects undertaken by the county government were initiated by the members of the public	4.02	1.040	-.806	.272
The number of grievances from members of the public on county budgetary process has increased	3.81	.947	-.362	.272
Projects on development that the county government started have been supported by the local citizen	3.92	.935	-.491	.272
More positive comments from the citizen to the county government have been received in regards to projects that are ongoing	3.81	.953	-.346	.272
Projects proposed and prioritized by participants were allocated during budgeting	3.92	.990	-.590	.272
Budget Allocation	3.896	0.973	-0.519	0.272

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*

The findings showed that most participants in the survey affirmed that number of projects undertaken by the county government were initiated by the members of the public as shown by a mean of 4.02. However, most of them affirmed that projects proposed and prioritized by participants were allocated during budgeting (3.92), Projects on development that the county government started have gotten a raise budgetary allocation supported by the local citizen (223; 3.92). More positive comments from the citizen to the county government have been received in regards to projects that are ongoing (206; 3.81).

The findings to the study showed that the responses to the five statements used to measure budget allocation ranged between 3.81 and 4.02, with the overall mean being 3.896. This shows that most participants of the study were in agreement with the statements that were used to measure budget allocation. The study concludes that most of the respondent were in agreement that budget allocation was highly dependable on public participation, the findings were consistent with study of Tsang (2009) argue that for adequate policy implementation and formulation, trust ought to be gained by governments from the citizens to ensure that all the projects will be implemented by the citizens during budget allocation process.

The study first sought to examine whether citizen awareness influences budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties. This informed the null hypothesis that a statistically significant association does not exist between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation (H_{01}). To test the hypothesis, a simple linear regression analysis was performed, results of which are showcased on Table 8.

Table 81: Test Results for Hypothesis 1 (H₀₁)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.903 ^a	.815	.815	.27423

a. Predictors: (Constant), Citizen awareness

ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	105.431	1	105.431	1401.980	.000 ^b
	Residual	23.914	318	.075		
	Total	129.345	319			

a. Dependent Variable: Budgetary Allocation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Citizen awareness

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.421	.094		4.481	.000
	Citizen awareness	.884	.024	.903	37.443	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Budgetary Allocation

Results in Table 8 reveal a correlation value (R) of .903, indicating a strong linear relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation. An adjusted R Square of .815 was also recorded, implying that 81.5% of the variation in budgetary allocation attributed to citizen awareness, while the remaining 18.5% is attributed to attributes not included in this regression model. An F value of 1401.980 was further revealed with a P value of .000 (<0.05) indicating that the adopted regression model is statistically significant and can be relied upon to make further inferences.

Regression coefficients for the model further revealed that citizen awareness has a significant effect on budgetary allocation at 95% confidence level ($\beta = .884$, $p = .000 < .05$). The null hypothesis that citizen awareness does not have a significant effect on budgetary allocation (H₀₁) is therefore rejected. It was then concluded that citizen awareness had a positive and significant effect on budgetary allocation.

The study sought to determine the mediating effect of public participation on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties. This informed the null hypothesis that public participation does not have a statistically significant mediating effect on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation (H₀₂). To test the hypothesis, the study adopted Hayes model 4 by Hayes (2017), results of which are showcased on Table 9.

Table 92: Test Results for Hypothesis 2 (H₀₂)

Model 1: Outcome Variable: Public Participation

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.8404	.7063	.0721	764.5674	1.0000	318.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.3862	.0920	15.0664	.0000	1.2052	1.5672
ComAwar	.6394	.0231	27.6508	.0000	.5939	.6849

Model 2: Outcome Variable: Budgetary Allocation

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.9418	.8871	.0461	1245.0783	2.0000	317.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-.4623	.0963	-4.7998	.0000	-.6518	-.2728
ComAwar	.4770	.0341	13.9813	.0000	.4099	.5441
APPP	.6373	.0448	14.2128	.0000	.5491	.7255

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.4770	.0341	13.9813	.0000	.4099	.5441

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
APPP	.4075	.0286	.3530 .4651

The study established a correlation value (R) of .8404 in Model One indicating a linear relationship between the citizen awareness and public participation. An R Square value of .7063 was also recorded implying that 70.6% of the variation in public participation is accounted for by direct effect of citizen awareness, while the remaining 29.4% is accounted for by other factors not included in this regression model. A p value of .0000 was further established at 95% confidence level implying that the regression model adopted is statistically significant and can be relied upon to make further inferences.

The regression Model One further revealed that citizen awareness has a significant effect on

public participation at 95% confidence level ($\beta = .6394$, $p = .000 < .05$). In model Two, the direct effect of citizen awareness on budgetary allocation recorded statistical significance ($\beta = .4770$, $p = .000 < .05$). The mediating variable, public participation also showed statistical significance ($\beta = .4075$), with both the lower limit (.3530) and the upper limit (.4651) not crossing zero (0). The null hypothesis (H_{02}) stating that public participation does not have a statistically significant mediating effect on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation was therefore rejected.

The foregoing findings have revealed that citizen awareness positively and significantly influences budgetary allocation ($\beta = .884$, $p = .000 < .05$), in line with the first objective of the study, which was to examine whether citizen awareness influences budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties. The findings imply that citizen awareness was an important factor in enhancing budgetary allocation. This points to the need to enhance public awareness through media advertisement such as radio, Tvs posters and short message services. This will consequently improve citizen awareness on the importance of public participation and generally enhancing budgetary allocation effectiveness.

The results obtained were in line with both Agency theory as proposed by Berle and Means (1932) and developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976). While Agency theory elucidates that, public officials (Agents) hold the office in trust by the public (Principals) and therefore ought to maximize value for the public, Stakeholder theory argues that organizations ought to work in a nexus with all the stakeholders to ensure equity and utility driven development. As such, by creating awareness among members of the public who are the principals and key stakeholders in budgetary allocation, participation in the same is facilitated.

The findings are also in line with those of Thwala, (2010), Omolo, (2010) and Warburton, 2000 Warburton, (2000) who attributed citizen involvement in budgetary process always result in deviation from what was actually attributed. Participation by members of the public bears a myriad of benefits to communities with regard to capacity building, empowerment, improving efficiency and effectiveness of projects; enhancing ownership and project cost sharing. The results obtained were consistent with findings of McCommon, (1993) who attributed that in a majority of developing economies, participation and citizen awareness are appreciated in educating people in local administration, cultivating community welfare and extending the control of government through self-initiatives.

Public participation was also found to significantly mediate the association between citizen awareness ($\beta=.4075$, $LL=.3530$, $UL=.4651$) and budgetary allocation. The foregoing findings have thus revealed that public participation has a significantly mediating effect on the relationship between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties, in line with the objective of the study, which was to determine the effect of citizen awareness on budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties. The finding implies that the extent to which citizen awareness influences budgetary allocation is hinged on the level of public participation. Therefore, citizens and the community at large need to be sensitized on the importance of taking part in public participation so as to enhance budgetary allocation effectiveness when they take part in the budgetary allocation process.

Through public discussion, deliberation, and negotiation on budget issues, participatory budgeting increases the range of citizen participation and enhances the citizens' awareness of the whole budget process. The study findings further lend support to Agency theory and Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation Theory. The findings have shown that conducting public participation to involve members of the public, who are the principal stakeholders in budgetary allocation, offers a platform upon which various factors influencing budgetary allocation, get consideration.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Basing on the findings it is concluded that citizen awareness positively and significantly influences budgetary allocation. The findings imply that citizen awareness was an important factor in enhancing budgetary allocation. This points to the need to enhance public awareness through media advertisement such as radio, Tvs posters and short message services. This will consequently improve citizen awareness on the importance of public participation and generally enhancing budgetary allocation effectiveness. Generally, governance is critical and has significant effects on community to participate into development projects.

Further, the study established that public participation had a substantial mediating influence on the association between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation. This indicated that citizens and the community at large need to be sensitized on the importance of taking part in public participation so as to enhance budgetary allocation effectiveness. In addition, participatory budgeting educates people with the knowledge of public affairs. Through public discussion, deliberation, and negotiation on budget issues, participatory budgeting increases the range of citizen participation and enhances the citizens' awareness of the whole budget process. To enhance citizen awareness information required to inform the public on the importance of participation by members of the public ought to be publicized through the social media platforms, the county government professional social forums and websites.

Results of the study reveal that citizen awareness positively and significantly influences budgetary allocation. As such, it is recommended that the government makes use of more platforms when informing the public on the date, time, venue and topic of discussion and also on the relevance of the topic to the members of the public. This can be done through use of social media and key personalities in the community like local pastors, priests, chiefs and other influential persons in the community. This will ensure that the locals attend these fora and give their views so that the projects implemented meet their needs

Finally, public participation was found to significantly mediate the association between citizen awareness and budgetary allocation. As such, it is recommended that the views and concerns raised during public participation fora are taken into consideration during project identification, implementation and evaluation. This will ensure that only the priority projects identified by the locals are implemented.

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