# Effect of Governance on Performance of Selected County Assemblies in Kenya

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**Abstract:** The county assemblies in Kenya ideally play a crucial role in terms of representation, legislation, and oversight of county governments within their respective jurisdictions. However, their expected performance has been questioned. The foregoing necessitated an investigation into the assemblies' performance and the extent to which it is possibly influenced by governance. The specific objective was to examine the influence of governance on organizational performance of county assemblies in Central Kenya region. The study was guided by the balanced scorecard theory. A cross-sectional research design was adopted. The clerks, MCAs, and speakers of the aforementioned county assemblies constituted the study population. Whereas all the 5 clerks and 5 speakers were expected to participate in the study, a sample of 73 MCAs was obtained from the five county assemblies using stratified random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the MCAs while interview guides were used to collect data from the clerks and speakers. The questionnaire was pilot tested in order to assess its validity and reliability. Whereas content validity was determined through expert opinion of supervisors, reliability was tested using the Cronbach's alpha. The collected data were analyzed with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. The results of the analyses were presented in tabular formats and were accompanied by pertinent interpretations and discussion. According to the study findings, governance (r = 0.558; p = 0.000 < 0.05) had statistically significant relationship with organizational performance. It was also established that governance (t = 4.855; p = 0.000) had statistically significant effect on performance of county assemblies in the Central Kenya region. It was concluded that there was transparency in county assembly debates and committee meetings. The presence of the MCAs in the assembly should not only be when issues touching on their interests and the committees they represent are being debated.
**Key Word**:Balanced scorecard theory, county assemblies, governance, organizational performance

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## I.  Introduction

**Background of the Study**

Organizational performance is defined in accordance with insights borrowed from different scholars. It is described as a complex relationship that involves parameters such as efficiency, quality, effectiveness, productivity, innovation, and quality of work, and which compares outcomes with the objectives.[1,2] It is stated that the quality and effectiveness of representation of political parties is one of the major factors that determined the performance of the parliament in every county.[3] The foregoing is founded on the fact that, in all representative democracies, political partied perform important roles. These include provision of vehicles for politicians to represent the interests of citizens, defining political choices, as well as creating the basis upon which governments are founded.

In the case of the Arab Parliament, its relationship with governmental organizations is paramount.[4]In the same light, it is postulated that the performance implementation of the aforesaid parliament is pegged on the acquiescent on both the cooperation and coordination between the executive and parliament. Activating the parliament's performance especially in standardizing legislation is one of the means by which political efficacy of the parliament is quantified.[5] The parliament also perpetuates communication with the citizens and/or communities of the member states through such avenues as conferences, workshops, and seminars.[4]

In sub-Saharan Africa, the underperformance of the parliaments has been a tradition.[6] This notwithstanding, the parliaments have demonstrated a capacity to carry out reforms as well as engage more fully with the voters.[3] The foregoing is advanced in the case of Nigeria. It is reported that e-parliament implementation in the country, though important, is still at infancy stage due to low supporting instruments for consulting and interacting with constituents. The challenges of application of information and communication

technology (ICT) tools notwithstanding, e-parliament is anticipated to bridge the gaps between the citizens and their representatives in the parliament.[7]

In Kenya, the performance of county assemblies is inked on Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which seeks to reduce bribery and corruption in all forms as well as develop effective, transparent and accountable institutions with the view of ensuring there is decision-making which is responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative.[8] Granted the fact that, the overriding role of the county assemblies is to oversight the executive arm of the county governments, it is imperative to state that the assemblies seek to ensure that the devolved governments are not only transparent but also accountable. In accordance with the Constitution of Kenya, performance of county assemblies is viewed from three dimensions which are oversight, legislative as well as representation.[9]The oversight role requires a particular county assembly to ensure that the county executive prudently utilizes and manages the human, financial, physical and other related resources allocated to it or those which are under its jurisdiction. Legislative role involves making of laws used to govern the county governments. The county assembly is also expected to represent the interest of the constituents in respective counties.[10]

## Statement of the Problem

The county assemblies play a fundamental role under devolution. Their functions of representation, legislation, and oversight, mirror those of the national assembly. Under their legislative authority as enshrined in the Constitution, the county assemblies are expected to be independent of the executive in carrying out their functions.[9] However, this has not been the case, at least, as witnessed in several counties. In some counties, the assemblies are blamed for sabotaging the executive (the governor and his team) by failing to pass key bills such as the ones required to pass the budget as well as approving the drawing of funds from the county treasury. This brings out a problem of lack of objective legislation. This raises the question of what could be the genesis of poor legislative and oversight performance of county assemblies.

An instance of the poor performance of the county assemblies is documented in a report by the Office of the Controller of Budget (OCOB) for FY 2020/21, where a total of 26 county governments delayed in submitting their financial reports to the COB.[11] Given that budgets and financial reports must be approved by the county assemblies, the aforesaid delay could be linked to the county assemblies' failure to approve the stated financial documents in time. This is demonstrative of sluggish oversight performance of county assemblies. There are weak auditing as well as financial practices reflected in incomplete financial reports compiled by county governments.[12]Consequently, the citizens who are expected to benefit from the devolved functions are bound to be denied the very benefits.

The existing literature has fallen short of sufficiently providing empirical evidence with regard to governance and performance of county assemblies in Kenya. A case in point is a study which focused on managerial ties, citizen participation and performance of county assemblies in Kenya.[13] Yet, it did not explicitly centre on governance and their effect on county assemblies' performance. Another study examined the government practices that influence performance of county governments in Kenya.[14] Evidently, the study was concerned with county governments without being specific on county assemblies. It was, therefore, clear that both knowledge and research gaps exist in respect of influence of governance on performance of the county assemblies in Kenya. It is against this backdrop that this study was conducted with the objective of putting into perspective governance and its influence on organizational performance of county assemblies in the Central Kenya region.

## Research Objective
To examine the effect of governance on performance of selected county assemblies in Kenya

## Research Question
What is the effect of governance on performance of selected county assemblies in Central Kenya region?

## Balanced Scorecard Theory

The balanced scorecard (BSC) was developed by Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton in the early 1990s. The balanced scorecard model was developed with the objective of measuring organizational performance using financial as well as non-financial metrics.[15] According to the model, the performance is measured against the strategic objectives of the organization. The background of the model is founded on four key dimensions, which are financial perspective, customer perspective, internal perspective, and learning and growth perspective.[15]

Pertinent to this study, all the three perspectives except the financial dimension, are reviewed. From customer perspective, the focus is satisfaction of customers (the recipients of services) which can be measured using the level of returns or service rating. Of importance in this case, is the appearance of an entity to its

customers or consumers of its or their services.[16] Internal processes perspective focuses on the efficiency of the organization or the concerned entity and can be measured using lead time (that is, the time it takes to produce a new product or service). The learning and growth perspective is also referred to as the organizational capacity. This centres on innovation and knowledge and could be measured using employee retention as well as the flow of ideas. Other crucial aspects of this perspectives are the training of employees as well as the attitudes of an organization towards the employees and organizational improvement.[16]

Arguably, the balanced scorecard has several weaknesses. The BSC is unable to establish performance measurements as a two-way process.[17]This is due to failure of top-levels and operational-levels measures in an organization being integrated. Granted that the model fails to integrate the aforesaid levels, then there is likelihood of strategic problems arising in an organization. Moreover, the lack of the stated integration can orchestrate limitations in the use of BSC from higher organizational levels.[18]Consequently, there are chances that strategic plan of a given organization can fail due to lack of coherence and integration across the levels in an organization.[19]

The bottom line of the BSC is organizational performance. The deficiencies in financial measures of performance informed the development of the BSC model which is more holistic. The model has been applied to demonstrated measurement of performance in both profit and not-for-profit organizations.[15]In an entity like county assembly, which is a public institution, the desired outcome with regard to customer perspective is stakeholder satisfaction. Stakeholders include the electorate who vote for members of county assemblies to represent them, the national government which disburses funds to the devolved governments, and watchdog agencies which oversee the operations of the county assemblies, for instance, the Senate. Another important aspect of performance is budget which in the public sector its priorities are defined by the legislators, leadership, and funding agencies.[16]The foregoing demonstrates how the BSC can be applied to illustrate the performance of county assemblies in Kenya. The balanced scorecard has been used in a past empirical study to demonstrate performance evaluation of universities in Sri Lanka.[20] The study indicated the importance of the BSC in assessing the overall organizational performance of the surveyed universities.

## Empirical Review

Past studies are reviewed with regard to governance and organizational performance. The review follows a funnel approach where global studies are reviewed followed by regional and local studies respectively.

## Review of Empirical Studies on Governance

A global survey of parliamentary monitoring organizations sought to evaluate the strengthening of parliamentary accountability, engagement of citizens as well as information access.[21]The objective was to document good practices (governance) in parliamentary monitoring. A survey of parliamentary monitoring organizations (PMOs) was conducted. The survey involved PMOs drawn from Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe. In particular, data were collected the websites of the respective PMOs. According to the findings of the survey, 94% of the surveyed PMOs monitored the national parliaments while 24% monitored sub-national assemblies or legislatures. It was revealed that a majority of the aforementioned PMOs monitored the activities as well as the performance of the individual members of parliament (MPs). Additionally, it was indicated that there were many PMOs which also monitored legislatures as institutions, and also components of parliaments as exemplified by parliamentary committees.

In Nigeria, a study on critical exposition focused on the Nigerian State and the governance crisis in the country.[22]The objective was to examine the state of governance in Nigeria. Another objective was to evaluate the factors that contributed towards the promotion of public good and effective delivery of service in Nigeria. Pertinent data were collected from both primary and secondary data sources. The results of the study revealed that political leadership and governance were driven by vested interests and other primordial considerations. Additionally, it was revealed that the Nigerian State had failed in three crucial arears, which include promotion of the rule of law, provision of visionary leadership, and security of lives and properties. It was inferred that the State's incapacity for effective governance was attributed to the political leadership's nature and characters in Nigeria.

In a case of Kwale County Assembly, the contribution of county assemblies to the enhancement of the devolved governance was examined.[23] The specific objectives were to examine the strategies that influence devolved governance, and the efficacy of the aforesaid strategies. Probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed. Both interview schedules and questionnaires were used to collect data. The study findings indicated that it was evident that the county assemblies faced challenges. However, they are still a crucial part in the devolved governance. It was also noted that there were many strategies the county government had adopted in order to promote governance. Some of these strategies include public participation forums, legal competences as well as holding the county government accountable on the resources allocated to it.

**Review of Empirical Studies on Organizational Performance**

A study undertaken in Europe focused on measuring the effectiveness of parliament in the case of the French National Assembly. The objective was to assess the effectiveness of the National Assembly.[24] All the 577 French MPs constituted the study population. The parliamentary activity was the indicator of the Assembly's performance. It was found out that there were considerable disparities amongst individual MPs in terms of both the attendance and participation rates. It was found that the most assiduous members of parliament attended not less than 110 sessions especially in the case of cultural affairs, finance, and economic affairs committees. In the aforesaid committees, the most active members made at least 600 oral contributions during sessions. Whereas the members were more active in economic affairs and finance committees, they are less active in the committees of national defense, cultural affairs, and foreign affairs.

An empirical study conducted in Uganda brought to the fore how the scrutiny of the legislative budget improved in the country.[25]The objective was to establish factors that demonstrated how members of parliament improved the budget scrutiny. The causal process tracing (CPT) was adopted. Qualitative data were obtained from documents, reviews, newspapers, and interviews. Empirical data were collected and analyzed. According to the results of the analysis, it was observed that political entrepreneurs employed a window of opportunity to build a coalition of change. Legislation is part of the performance metrics of the parliament. In this regard, it was revealed that there was improved scrutiny of the legislative budget despite the strong executive systems as well as strong patronage.

A related local study was concerned with the benchmarking and operational performance of the National Assembly in Kenya.[26] The objective was to assess the benchmarking practices that had been adopted by the National Assembly and their influence on the Assembly's operational performance. A case study research design was adopted. A census survey method was used in data collection. The pertinent data were collected using a questionnaire. It was established that benchmarking activities carried out by the National Assembly had a positive and statistically significant effect on the operational efficiency of the August House. This led to the conclusion that there were several benchmarking activities where were being carried out by the parliament. However, the study inferred that source of benchmarking was inconsequential to the parliament's operational performance. It was recommended that there ought to be efforts directed towards relevant benchmarking activities that are bound to enhance the operational performance of the parliament.

**Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework illustrates the variables of a study and their relationships or how they are perceived to relate as shown in Figure no 1. It is defined as a variables or factors addressed in a given study.[27]
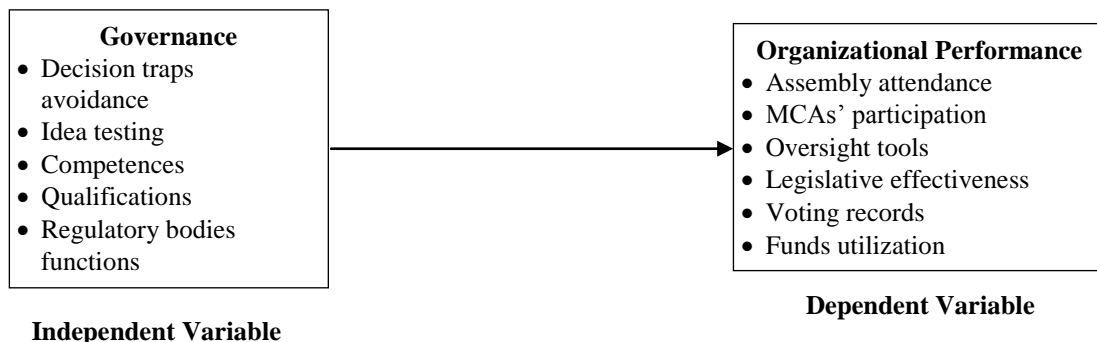


**Governance**
- Decision traps avoidance
- Idea testing
- Competences
- Qualifications
- Regulatory bodies functions

**Independent Variable**

**Organizational Performance**
- Assembly attendance
- MCAs' participation
- Oversight tools
- Legislative effectiveness
- Voting records
- Funds utilization

**Dependent Variable**

**Figure no 1: Conceptual Framework**

As shown in Figure no 1, there are two distinct sets of study variables: Independent and dependent variables. Independent variable is governance while organizational performance of county assemblies is the dependent variable. Each of the aforementioned variables has been operationalized using measurable indicators. It was presumed that governance influenced performance of county assemblies.

## II.  Material And Methods

**Research Design**

A cross-sectional research design was adopted. A research design refers to a framework that acts as the blueprint of a research study, that is, it offers specific direction for conducting the research.[28]The choice of cross-sectional research design is informed by the fact that this study was carried out at a specific period of time. It is indicated that cross-sectional studies are conducted at a given point in time. This means that the data in

respect of such studies are collected at one point in time.[29]In this study, pertinent data were collected at a specified time and inferences were consequently drawn from the analysis of the aforesaid data.

**Target Population**

The clerks, MCAs, and speakers of the county assemblies constituted the target population. Such population is described as the refined part of the general population which comprises a group of participants possessing the specific attributes relevant or of interest to a given study.[30]Similarly, the aforementioned staff share similar characteristics in that they work at the same organization. The 5 clerks, 263 MCAs, and 5 speakers of county assemblies in the Central Kenya region's counties of Nyeri, Murang'a, Kiambu, Nyandarua, and Kirinyaga, constituted the accessible population about which this study was conducted. Accessible population is part of the target population which can be reached by the researcher over the period of study.[31]The aforesaid state officers and/or staff working with the indicated county assemblies were accessible by the researcher over the specified period of the study.

**Sampling Design**

Sampling refers to the procedure of obtaining a representative of the study population for the purpose of including in a survey.[32] When the study population is considerably large, then there is a need to undertake sampling.[33]To this effect, the Nassiuma'sformula was used to determine a sample of 73 MCAs.[34]It is important to note that, due to their apparent small number and homogenous distribution, the clerks and speakers of county assemblies were not sampled. The total number of respondents involved 73 MCAs, 5 clerks, and 5 speakers totaling 83. Whereas a complete enumeration of the MCAs and speakers was done, stratified random sampling technique was employed to draw the 73 MCAs from the sampling frame constituting 263 members of the 5 county assemblies. This sampling technique ensures that strata (small subgroups) are represented in the study proportionate to their part of the study (accessible population).[33]

**Data Collection Instrument**

Structured questionnaires (contains close-ended questions or data items) were employed in collecting primary data. Structured questionnaires enabled collection of numerical data which were in tandem with the research methods adopted by this study. The questions (or data items) in respect of the study variables (or objectives) were structured in conformity to a 5-point Likert scale.

**Pilot, Validity, and Reliability Testing**

The research questionnaire was pilot tested in order to assess its suitability in the collection of data. The piloting involved the speaker, clerk and 8 randomly selected MCAs of the Laikipia County Assembly. The research questionnaire was pilot tested with the objective of identifying (and consequently addressing) probable weaknesses in the instrument through both validity and reliability testing. Validity demonstrates the extent to which a test measures what it is intended to measure.[35]The content validity of the research questionnaire was determined. In order to determine the content validity, the assigned supervisors were consulted on the content and structure of data items under each variable. The validity of the interview guides was determined by engaging the supervisors who assessed their content relative to the objectives of the study.

Reliability describes the degree of consistency of the results obtained from the use of a given measurement and procedure. In other words, it is the replicability of the aforesaid results.[36] The Cronbach's alpha was used to statistically test the reliability of the research questionnaire. The acceptable reliability threshold was alpha coefficient at least equal to 0.7. All the five study constructs returned alpha values greater than 0.7. Therefore, the research questionnaire was concluded to be reliable for data collection. In line with existing assertions, the reliability of interview guides was determined by the supervisors.[37]

**Data Analysis and Presentation**

The collected data were screened to ensure their appropriateness and completeness as guided by the study objectives. The foregoing ensured that there were minimal, if any, outliers. The clean data were analyzed with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25. Qualitative Data collected through interviews were analyzed using content analysis method. A combination of deductive-inductive approach constituted the content analysis protocol that the qualitative data analysis adopted. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive as well as inferential statistics. On one hand, descriptive statistics assumed the measures of distribution, central tendencies, and dispersion. In particular, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were the descriptive statistics used in analyzing the data. On the other hand, inferential statistics included correlation, and simple linear regression analyses. The results of the analyses were presented in tabular formats and were accompanied by pertinent interpretations and discussion.

# III. Results

**Descriptive Analysis**

      The data collected from the sampled MCAs were on a 5-point Likert scale where numbers 1 to 5 represented the extent of agreement/disagreement, that is, strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly disagree respectively.

**Descriptive Statistical Results for Governance**

      The views of the MCAs with regard to governance as well as organizational performance of county assemblies are outlined in Table no1.

**Table no1: Descriptive statistics for governance**

| | SD (%) | D (%) | NAND (%) | A (%) | SA (%) | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The MCAs and their staff are competent enough to execute their mandate as enshrined in the Constitution. | 0 | 4 (5.5) | 2 (2.7) | 38 (52.1) | 27 (37.0) | 4.24 | .765 |
| The conduct of MCAs is always anchored to the rule of law. | 0 | 5 (7.1) | 5 (7.1) | 33 (47.1) | 27 (38.6) | 4.17 | .851 |
| The county assembly's activities are regulated by key agencies such as the Controller of Budget, Auditor General, Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) | 1 (1.4) | 3 (4.2) | 7 (9.9) | 38 (53.5) | 22 (31.0) | 4.08 | .841 |
| The county assembly conducts its activities (including debates and committee meetings) in a transparent manner. | 2 (2.8) | 3 (4.2) | 10 (13.9) | 37 (51.4) | 20 (27.8) | 3.97 | .919 |
| The county assembly responds to issues raised by the stakeholders (mostly members of the public and watchdog agencies) promptly and sufficiently. | 2 (2.8) | 10 (13.9) | 9 (12.5) | 29 (40.3) | 22 (30.6) | 3.82 | 1.105 |
| The MCAs are fully accountable to their actions both in and out of the chambers. | 1 (1.4) | 7 (9.7) | 20 (27.8) | 25 (34.7) | 19 (26.4) | 3.75 | 1.004 |
| The MCAs' qualifications (academic/professional) are inconsequential to their conduct in the chamber. | 7 (9.7) | 12 (16.7) | 6 (8.3) | 24 (33.3) | 23 (31.5) | 3.61 | 1.349 |
| MCAs ensure that the decisions made do not take unnecessarily lengthy duration to the chagrin of service delivery to the public. | 3 (4.1) | 21 (28.8) | 6 (8.2) | 40 (54.8) | 3 (4.1) | 3.26 | 1.054 |
| The county assembly embraces idea testing whereby the validity of the bills is tested before they are debated in the chamber. | 9 (12.3) | 17 (23.3) | 20 (27.4) | 22 (30.1) | 5 (6.8) | 2.96 | 1.148 |
| The county assembly ensures that it does not fall into decision traps when making critical decisions. | 5 (6.8) | 27 (37.0) | 11 (15.1) | 25 (34.2) | 4 (5.5) | 2.94 | 1.112 |
| **Composite score (mean)** | | | | | | **3.68** | |

      As shown in Tableno 1, the sampled MCAs, on average, concurred that alongside their staff they were competent enough to execute their mandate as enshrined in the Constitution (mean = 4.24; std dev = 0.765); their conduct was always anchored to the rule of law (mean = 4.17; std dev = 0.851); and that the activities of the county assemblies were regulated by key agencies like the Controller of Budget, EACC, and Auditor General (mean = 4.08; std dev = 0.841). Most of the MCAs either agreed or strongly agreed that the county assemblies conducted their activities transparently (79.2%), and responded promptly and sufficiently to issues raised by the members of the public and watchdog agencies among other stakeholders (70.9%).

      Whereas, on average, it was admitted that the MCAs were fully accountable to their actions both in and out of the chambers (mean = 3.75), a considerable number of MCAs (27.8%) remained indifferent. Most of the MCAs (64.8%) agreed that their qualifications mattered with regard to their performance in the chamber. The respondents were generally indifferent with regard to the assertion that they ensured that the decisions made were not unnecessarily delayed hence compromising service delivery (mean = 3.26; std dev = 1.054). Only 36.9% of the MCAs opined that the county assemblies in the Central Region tested bills before they were debated. Whereas some county assemblies ensured that they did not fall into decisions traps when making crucial decisions (agree/strongly agree = 39.7%), others held contrary views (disagree/strongly disagree = 43.8%). On average, the sampled MCAs were in concurrence with the issues presented to them regarding governance of county assemblies (composite score = 3.68).

According to the results of the interviewed clerks, all the county assemblies in the Central Kenya region conducted their business in a transparent and accountable manner. They indicated that transparency and accountability were ensured through open assembly sessions, transparent procurement procedures, and involving stakeholders in county assembly business. The speakers ensured good governance in county assemblies by involving stakeholders, following the rule of law, and being transparent.

**Table no 2: Descriptive statistics for organizational performance**

| | SD (%) | D (%) | NAND (%) | A (%) | SA (%) | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Individual MCAs participate in debates proposed/fronted on the floor of the chamber by the committee(s) in which they are members. | 2 (2.8) | 0 | 3 (4.2) | 45 (63.4) | 21 (29.6) | 4.17 | .756 |
| Voting records clearly indicate that there is a consensus in a majority of the debates which leads to efficiency in passing of bills. | 4 (5.6) | 2 (2.8) | 6 (8.5) | 35 (49.3) | 24 (33.8) | 4.03 | 1.028 |
| The county assembly is relatively effective in its legislative role as backed by the number of bills it successfully passes. | 1 (1.4) | 6 (8.5) | 6 (8.5) | 38 (52.1) | 20 (27.4) | 3.99 | .918 |
| The County Assembly has sufficient and reliable tools to oversight the activities of the executive in the county government. | 5 (7.0) | 9 (12.7) | 0 | 34 (47.9) | 23 (32.4) | 3.86 | 1.211 |
| The MCAs always ensure that their contributions in select committee meetings are actively captured. | 5 (6.9) | 6 (8.3) | 8 (11.0) | 46 (63.0) | 7 (9.6) | 3.61 | 1.015 |
| In a majority of debates (at least 75%) taking place in the county assembly, individual MCAs make their contributions. | 1 (1.4) | 15 (21.1) | 8 (11.3) | 40 (56.3) | 7 (9.9) | 3.52 | .984 |
| The MCAs have attended a majority of the sittings in the chamber (at least 75% of sittings). | 3 (4.2) | 22 (30.6) | 7 (9.7) | 33 (45.8) | 7 (9.7) | 3.26 | 1.126 |
| The MCAs rarely skip the committee meetings. | 19 (26.4) | 26 (36.1) | 3 (4.2) | 18 (25.0) | 6 (8.3) | 2.53 | 1.342 |
| The MCAs have never skipped any committee meeting. | 36 (50.0) | 25 (34.7) | 7 (9.7) | 4 (5.6) | 0 | 1.71 | .863 |
| **Composite score (mean)** | | | | | | **3.41** | |

The study findings shown in Table no 2 indicated that, the MCAs were generally in agreement that they individually participated in debates proposed by their committees in which they are members (mean = 4.17; std dev = 0.756), and that voting records clearly indicated that there was a consensus in a majority of debates hence efficient passing of bills (mean = 4.03; std dev = 1.028). On average, the sampled MCAs held largely similar views in agreeing that the county assemblies were relatively effective in their legislative role based on the number of bills they successfully passed (mean = 3.99; std dev = 0.918).

Most of the surveyed MCAs admitted that the assemblies had sufficient and reliable tools to oversight the executive (agree/strongly agree = 80.3%); they always ensured that their contributions in select committee meetings were actively captured (agree/strongly agree = 72.6%); and that, they individually made their contributions in at least 75% of debates (agree/strongly agree = 66.2%). The MCAs were, however, generally indifferent with regard to the proposition that they had attended most of the sittings in the chamber (mean = 3.26; std dev = 1.126). It was refuted by a majority of the MCAs that they rarely skipped the committee meetings (disagree/strongly disagree = 62.5%) or never skipped such meetings (disagree/strongly disagree = 84.7%). On average, the sampled MCAs neither agreed nor disagreed with the issues brought to their attention in respect of the performance of their respective county assemblies (composite score = 3.41).

According to the interviewed clerks, the performance of the county assemblies in the Central Kenya region varied from good to excellent. In absence of major issues being debated on the floor of the house, a majority of MCAs only attended sessions briefly and walked hence their contribution to debates being rendered insufficient. However, the MCAs' participation in debates on key issues was above average.

**Correlation Analysis**

The Spearman's rank correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between governance and organizational performance of county assemblies. The results of the aforesaid correlation analysis are presented in Table no 3.

**Table no 3: Spearman'srank correlation matrix**

| Spearman's rho | Governance | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | |
| | | n | 73 | |
| | Organizational Performance | Correlation Coefficient | .558** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | n | 73 | 73 |

**\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

The results shown in Table no 3 indicate that the relationship between governance and organizational performance (r = 0.558; p = 0.000) was positive and statistically significant at p-value = 0.05. The results implied that enhancing government in the county assemblies was likely to have a moderate improvement on the performance of these assemblies.

**Simple Linear Regression Analysis**

This analysis was conducted with the object of establishing the effect of governance on organizational performance of county assemblies in Central Kenya region. The pertinent results are presented in Tables no 4 to no 6.

**Table no 4: Model summary of governance against organizational performance**

| Model | r | r Square | Adjusted r Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .499a | .249 | .239 | .47549 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Governance

According to the $r^2$ = 0.249 shown in Table no 4, it is apparent that governance explained 24.9% of variance in organizational performance. This meant that governance was an important element in as far as the performance of county assemblies in the Central Kenya region was concerned.

**Table no 5: ANOVA of governance against organizational performance**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 5.329 | 1 | 5.329 | 23.570 | .000b |
| | Residual | 16.052 | 71 | .226 | | |
| | **Total** | **21.381** | **72** | | | |

**a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance**
**b. Predictors: (Constant), Governance**

Similar to the results of coefficient of determination shown in Table no 4, the F-statistic results presented in Table no 5 ($F_{1,71}$ = 23.570) were found to be statistically significant at p-value = 0.05. This meant that the sample data fitted the adopted linear regression model (Y = ß$_0$ + ß$_4$X$_4$+ ε) that linked governance to organizational performance. Therefore, the model was effectively applied to demonstrate the effect of governance on performance of county assemblies in the Central Kenya region as shown in Table no 6.

**Table no 6: Regression coefficients of governance against organizational performance**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.823 | .328 | | 5.550 | .000 |
| | Governance | .429 | .088 | .499 | 4.855 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

According to the results shown in Table no 6 (Y = 1.823 + 0.429X$_4$), in order to change organizational performance by 1 unit, governance was supposed to be changed by 0.429 unit while other factors were held constant. Moreover, it was revealed that that the effect of governance on organizational performance was statistically significant (t = 4.855; p = 0.000) at p-value = 0.05. These results underlined the importance of governance with regard to performance of county assemblies in Central Kenya region.

## IV. Discussion

The participation of individual MCAs during debates was highly skewed towards issues they considered important to them. The speakers alluded to a majority of the MCAs lacking capacity to appropriately use available legislative and oversight tools. The foregoing raises pertinent issues with regard to the performance of county assemblies on the dimensions of legislation and oversight. Enhancing government in the county assemblies was likely to have a moderate improvement on the performance of these assemblies. These results underlined the importance of governance with regard to performance of county assemblies in Central Kenya region.

## V.  Conclusions and Recommendations

From the perspective of the MCAs, it was concluded that they were competent enough to carry out the mandate given to them by the electorate. The rule of law is the cornerstone of all the activities carried out by the county assemblies, and to a large extent, defines governance in the assembly. Transparency in debates and departmental committee meetings are some aspects of governance that county assemblies uphold. Accountability is another key feature in county assemblies. Yet, it was concluded that, MCAs held the view that their qualifications hardly affected how county assemblies conducted business.

In line with governance requirements, benchmarking should be seen or perceived (by the electorate) to be meaningful not just to their representatives in the county assemblies but more importantly to the citizens. There should be policies developed to ensure that there is improved participation of MCAs in debates on the floor of the house. The presence of the MCAs in the assembly should not only be when issues touching on their interests and the committees they represent are being debated.

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