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ABSTRACT

The current study assessed the effects of intergovernmental relations on healthcare provision in Wajir County. Specifically, the study examined the influence of the fiscal, administrative and jurisdictional relations on healthcare provision in Wajir County. Descriptive research design was utilized. Structured and unstructured questionnaires for primary data gathering were emailed to heads of all health institutions in the county as well as director coordinating intergovernmental relations. Journals, books and the internet at the University's Modern library were used in generating secondary data. Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed using regression (SPSS v21) and content analysis respectively before presenting outcomes in frequencies and percentage. On fiscal relations, it was established that there was no agreed revenue sharing formula, ambiguous fiscal laws and systems, inability to absorb more funds, delayed funds disbursement, stringent tax collection conditions, borrowing restrictions as well as wastage and lack of prioritization. On administrative relations, there was no consultation on regulation, supervision, controlling, establishment of new government level, boundaries review, amalgamation of government levels and termination of government levels. On jurisdiction relations, there was no comprehensive consultation on legislation of laws creating government levels, government structure, government composition, government financing law, government functions, interdependency laws and laws on inconsistent legislation. For better fiscal relations, there is need for an agreed revenue sharing formula, do away with awkward fiscal laws and systems, county capacity building to absorb more funds, quick funds disbursement, abolish stringent tax collection conditions, lessen borrowing restrictions and partnership to mitigate fraud, wastage and lack prioritization. To improve administrative relations, there is need for consultation between the tiers of government on regulation, supervision, controlling, establishment of new government level, boundaries review amalgamation of government levels and termination of government levels. To improve jurisdiction relations, there is need to engage comprehensive consultation on legislation of laws creating government levels, government structure, government composition, government financing law, government functions, interdependency laws and laws on inconsistent legislation.

Key words: Inter-governmental, Relations, Healthcare, Provision, County

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of intergovernmental relationships (IGR) is the interface or collaboration between various tiers of government on jurisdiction, administrative, financial, political and legislative relations in terms of processes and functions (Ugoh, 2011). As such, IGR mechanism is meant to offer crucial aspects of understanding, friendliness stability and partnership to improve service delivery the world over.

Rarely can one tier of government achieve its set goals single handedly and hence the need for interdependence. Essentially, coordination and cooperation beget cordiality, consultation, conflict settlement willingness and readiness, balancing, bargaining, understanding and collaboration. It is these areas that are key to effectiveness of jurisdictional/constitutional, administrative/political, and fiscal relations (inter-governmental relations) (Hakijamii, 2015).

As such, devolution or any form of decentralizing power and resources is perceived to advance network support and responsibility, upgrade specialized effectiveness and fairness in the administration of ever-rare public assets such as healthcare in many countries (Kosec & Mogues, 2015). Notably, healthcare is one of the services that have been decentralized or devolved to improve access and service delivery in most countries. For decentralization of services such as healthcare to succeed, an intergovernmental relation is very fundamental.

However, sharing of such power and functions is not without issues that create suspicion, tension and rivalry between county and national governments in Kenya since devolution. Consequently, health sector continue to experience inadequate medical facilities, demoralized medical personnel, poor vaccination and immunization, demoralization of healthcare workers, poor or inadequate healthcare policies, fewer healthcare centers, corruption, brain drain, lack of

innovation and technology, inadequate drugs, equipment and tools, congestion, dilapidated and dysfunctional facilities and unavailable medical data challenges (Kipruto & Letting, 2017). This study, therefore, prominently explored jurisdictional /constitutional, administrative / political and fiscal relations and their influence on healthcare provision in reference to Wajir County.

Problem Statement

Despite the importance placed on IGR, increasing suspicion, tension and competition that amounts to cold war, continue to negate service delivery especially healthcare in Kenya. Notably, the situation of health services in Wajir County was rated as the worst in the country in terms of prolonged period without drugs and other equipment supply, worker fleeing to other counties due to insecurity among others. Breakdown of primary health, vital vaccinations and disease prevention programs are all suffering (World Bank, 2015; Twaweza, 2017). To that end, this study, sought to address the nature of intergovernmental relations and its influence on healthcare provision in counties with special attention to Wajir County.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive research design. Using simple random, two (2) patients from each of the 56 health facilities were picked while one County Executive Committee Member for health and equally one of finance, one Sub-County Administrator, one of the National and County Healthcare Coordinator based at the national Ministry of Health Nairobi and one Intergovernmental Coordinator qualified to for consideration by way of census technique totaling to 119 sample size. This study used primary data (questionnaires) and secondary data. A multiple correlation and regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between IGR and healthcare provision in Wajir County.

RESULTS

The study findings revealed a significant and negative correlation between fiscal relations and healthcare provision in Wajir County. Statistically, it was established that a unit change in fiscal relations changes leads to -0.613 units change in healthcare provision in Kenya. Further, it was found out that a strong significant relation of a p-value of 0.005 existed between fiscal relations and healthcare provision in Wajir County. The study found that there was a strong and negative association between the administrative relations and healthcare provision in Wajir County with $r=-0.823$ and a p-value of 0.049. The study also established that a unit change in administrative relations changes, would lead to -0.823 units change in healthcare provision in Wajir County.

Further, it was revealed that there was a significant and negative connection between jurisdictional relations on healthcare provision in Wajir County with $r=-0.847$ and a p-value of 0.041. The study found that a unit change in jurisdictional relations between county and national government changes would lead to -0.847 units change in healthcare provision in Wajir County .

RECOMMENDATIONS

Essentially, the study recommended that established mechanisms to improve IGR especially between the county and national government ought to be revisited and embraced to enhance fiscal, administrative and jurisdiction relations. The most effective way to improve intergovernmental relations is to address sharing of fiscal, administrative and jurisdiction roles.

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First, it is necessary for adequate and elaborate consultation on fiscal functions, revenue sharing formula, do away with awkward fiscal laws and systems, county capacity building to absorb more funds, quick funds disbursement, abolish stringent tax collection conditions, lessen borrowing restrictions and partnership to mitigate fraud, wastage and lack prioritization.

To improve administrative relations, there is need for consultation between the tiers of government on regulation, supervision, controlling, establishment of new government level, boundaries review amalgamation of government levels and termination of government levels. To improve jurisdiction relations, there is need to engage comprehensive consultation on legislation of laws creating government levels, government structure, government composition, government financing law, government functions, interdependency laws and laws on inconsistent legislation.

Other researchers were encouraged to work further in this topic but with more focus on specific issues that this study amalgamated into broad perspective. As such more emphasis on specific inter-governmental issues such as fiscal, administrative and jurisdiction among others. Also, increasing sample size and giving attention to comparative studies, would be beneficial in providing more empirical evidence. Focusing of different methodologies like adopting case study design unlike this study which adopted a cross sectional study design.

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