
A Study On The Relevancy Of Village Local Council Leadership On The Implementation Of Government Programs: A Case Study Of The Youth's Livelihood Program In Kasana Town Council In Luwero District Local Government

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Abstract.

The evolution of local government systems in Uganda has spanned pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods, resulting in a structured framework governed by statutes and acts. This study delves into the roles, challenges, and potential remedies encountered by village local councils in Uganda, with a focus on their involvement in implementing government programs like the Youth Livelihood Program (YLP). Through a quantitative research design and a sample size of 132 respondents in Luweero, the study examines the multifaceted roles of village local councils, revealing a concentrated effort in program implementation, monitoring and evaluation, policy formulation, resource mobilization, and advocacy. Challenges faced by these councils include limited funding, lack of technical support, insufficient infrastructure, political interference, and community resistance. Proposed remedies encompass increased funding, training, infrastructure development, policy advocacy, and community engagement. The study concludes by emphasizing the critical role village local councils play in grassroots governance and the need for collaborative efforts to address challenges and empower these councils effectively.

Keywords: Local government, Village local councils, Uganda, Youth Livelihood Program, Roles, Challenges, Remedies.

Background to the study

Local government systems in Uganda have had a very long history as their genesis can be traced since the period pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial to date (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). The system started off with the creation of small units at the village level called Resistance committees. These were later regulated through the Resistance Council/Committee's (RC's) Statute 9 of 1987 which dealt with details of their mandate and operation (Allan et al., 2023). These formed the initial structures and over the years, a robust structure including local councils at the district level, municipal level, and Sub

County / division / town council levels evolved and were regulated by the Local Government Act of 2017 (Wegulo et al., 2023). It has gone through a series of amendments to make the system adapt to contemporary issues. The foundational structure of the Local governance system is laid down in Chapter eleven of the Constitution of Uganda 2015. The Constitution provides that the district is the basic unit under which lower local governments are run in such a way as Parliament may stipulate (Jane et al., 2023). This does not affect the possibility of a merger of more districts to come up with a regional

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government (Victoria et al., 2023). The Constitution goes ahead to set out the principles that apply to local government systems which include: local governments are to ensure that “functions, powers and responsibilities are devolved and transferred...” systematically from the government to the lower local government levels; it is meant to ensure “...peoples’ participation and democratic control in decision making; ensure ... democratic governance at all local government levels...” put in place mechanisms to ensure a stable financial base; through plan and policy implementation, deal with matters affecting their people; persons serving in the system and the lower local governments have to democratically elected (Gladys et al., n.d.). A Local

Council (LC) is a form of local elected government within the districts in Uganda. A district is made up of several counties and any municipalities in that area. A district is led by an elected local council V (LCV) chairperson and his executive. There is also an elected LCV Council, with representatives from the sub-counties and technical staff in the district (Christopher et al., 2022). The council debates budgets, decisions, and bylaws. On the technical side, the district is led by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), appointed by the central government (Alex et al., n.d.). The district also has heads of various departments such as education, health, environment, and planning, which are responsible for relevant matters in the whole district.

Problem Statement

Decentralization was anticipated as the most practical panacea to the poor service delivery in Uganda and across the globe, however, experience indicates uneven success in the above course and more so in the developed countries unlikely in a majority of LDCs like Uganda (Rosebell & Julius, n.d.). Local governments and local councils in particular are mandated to provide a wide range of services and empowered or granted a lot of powers and these may include, planning powers in which they are the planning authorities of their areas, political powers in which they are to organize free and fair elections, judicial powers in which they constitute the lowest courts under the hierarchy of courts and execute judicial functions, legislative powers where they make ordinances and by-laws, among others (Asha et al., n.d.). The local council civil officials are mandated to implement government policies such as the YLP whereas the political leadership are mandated to supervise the implementations of the above programs make reports to higher authorities (Mugabi et al., 2023). Unfortunately in Uganda, village local councils are not efficient in the above responsibility because the government has not built their capacity to deliver as expected (Mafabi, 2019). Many government programs seem to be unsuccessful such as the YLP, Emyoga and many others due to number of factors that intrigues the researcher to investigate but more focused on the local council-based factors (Fred et al., n.d.).

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the role of village local councils in the implementation of government programs such as YLP
2. To assess the challenges that village local councils face when executing their mandate

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3. To devise feasible remedies to the challenges faced by the village local councils while executing their mandates.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of village local councils in the implementation of government programs such as YLP?
2. What are the challenges that village local councils face when executing their mandate?
3. What are the various feasible remedies to the challenges faced by the village local councils while executing their mandates?

Methodology.

The Researcher adapted to a quantitative research design. Quantitative research design was used because the researcher carried out research in Luweero which had a big population. The choice of the study area was because the researcher used all the languages used in the study area and more so the researcher understood all the study area properly which made data collection easy and concrete. The researcher adopted both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary sources of information included using questionnaires to collect data and secondary source of information included use of articles related to the study, publications and books. The study population included officials and the Residents of Kasana town council of Luwero district local government. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling table the researcher selected a sample size of 132 respondents from a population of 201 residents who are above the

age of 18 years (Chuan, 2016). This in accordance with Morgan Krejic, (1970) sample determination table. The researcher interviewed 40 respondents from the study area using stratified sampling technique because it was the most effective when handling large populations. The researcher developed both primarily and secondary sources of information and data. In collecting Primary Data, the researcher used questionnaires as tools for collecting data. For Secondary Data, publications by re known authors in this field for example magazines, articles, books and News Papers will be used by the researcher to gather information that is required. Data analysis was conducted in SPSS and all results were presented in a tabular (Nelson et al., 2022). Frequencies and percentages were reported at univariate level, correlation and regression analysis were considered for further analysis.

Results.

Role of village local councils in the implementation of government programs such as youth livelihood program.

Role	Frequency.	Percentage
Policy formulation	25	20
Program implementation	45	36
Monitoring and Evaluation	30	24

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Resource Mobilization	20	16
Advocacy and Communication	10	8
Total	130	100

The analysis of the roles of village local councils in the implementation of the Youth Livelihood Program reveals a diversified distribution of responsibilities. Notably, the majority of their efforts (36%) are directed towards program implementation, showcasing the pivotal role they play in executing policies at the local level. Monitoring and evaluation constitute a substantial portion (24%), emphasizing their commitment to assessing program impact and ensuring accountability (Wegulo et al., 2023). Policy formulation (20%) underscores their involvement in designing overarching strategies. Resource mobilization (16%) showcases their responsibility in securing funding and resources, while advocacy and communication (8%) highlight their role in fostering community awareness. This comprehensive approach illustrates the multifaceted contribution of village local councils, emphasizing the collaborative nature of their engagement in the successful implementation of government programs, particularly the Youth Livelihood Program (Faith et al., 2023).

Challenges that village local councils face when executing their mandate

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Limited funding and resources	40	32
Lack of technical support	25	20
Insufficient infrastructure	30	24
Political interference	15	12
Community resistance and awareness	10	8
Total	130	100

The analysis of challenges faced by village local councils in executing their mandate reveals a range of obstacles. The most prominent challenge is the limitation of funding and resources, constituting 32% of the identified issues. This reflects the financial constraints hindering the effective implementation of programs. Another significant challenge is the lack of technical expertise, accounting for 20%, indicating the need for capacity-building initiatives. Insufficient infrastructure, at 24%, poses an obstacle, impacting the councils' ability to deliver services efficiently. Political interference, though relatively lower at 12%, remains a concern, potentially affecting the autonomy of councils in decision-making. Community resistance and awareness, at 8%, highlight the importance of fostering community support and understanding. In summary, the challenges faced by village local councils include financial constraints, technical limitations, infrastructure gaps, political interference, and the need for community engagement, illustrating the complex landscape within which they operate and the diverse set of issues they must navigate to fulfill their mandate effectively (Ntirandekura & Friday, 2022).

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Remedies to the challenges faced by the village local councils while executing their mandates

Remedy	Frequency	Percentage
Increased funding and resource allocation	35	28
Training and capacity building	30	24
Infrastructure development	25	20
Policy advocacy and autonomy Protection	20	16
Community engagement and education	15	12
Total	130	100

Examining potential remedies to the challenges faced by village local councils during the execution of their mandates reveals a strategic approach to address these issues. The most prevalent remedy is advocating for increased funding and resource allocation, accounting for 28%. This underscores the importance of financial support to enhance the councils' capabilities. Training and capacity building, at 24%, emerge as crucial remedies, indicating a recognition of the need to empower councils with the necessary skills and knowledge. Infrastructure development, comprising 20%, highlights the significance of investing in essential facilities to improve service delivery. Policy advocacy and autonomy protection, at 16%, suggest the importance of safeguarding councils from undue interference. Community engagement and education, at 12%, signify efforts to build community support and awareness. In summary, the identified remedies encompass financial support, capacity building, infrastructure development, policy advocacy, and community engagement, reflecting a comprehensive strategy to empower village local councils in overcoming the challenges they encounter during the execution of their mandates.

Discussion of findings.

The analysis of the roles undertaken by village local councils in the implementation of the Youth Livelihood Program showcased a diverse and collaborative engagement. Program implementation emerged as the primary focus, constituting 36% of their responsibilities, indicating the councils' pivotal role in executing policies at the grassroots level. The significant emphasis on monitoring and evaluation (24%) highlighted their commitment to assessing the program's impact and ensuring accountability. The distribution of roles across policy formulation (20%), resource mobilization (16%), and advocacy and communication (8%) underscored the multifaceted nature of their involvement. This comprehensive approach illustrated the councils' integral contribution to the success of government programs, emphasizing their collaborative efforts in ensuring effective implementation, particularly in the context of the Youth Livelihood Program.

Turning to the challenges faced by village local councils during the execution of their mandates, the analysis revealed a landscape fraught with obstacles. The most pervasive challenge was the limitation of funding and resources, accounting for 32% of the identified issues. This financial constraint hindered the effective implementation of

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programs and underscored the councils' struggle to secure adequate resources. The lack of technical expertise (20%) pointed to a need for capacity-building initiatives, while insufficient infrastructure (24%) highlighted the impact on service delivery. Political interference (12%) and community resistance and awareness (8%) represented additional hurdles, underscoring the complex environment within which village local councils operated. These challenges necessitated strategic remedies to empower councils in addressing financial limitations, enhancing technical capabilities, improving infrastructure, safeguarding autonomy, and fostering community support.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, the analysis of the roles, challenges, and potential remedies faced by village local councils in the execution of their mandates, particularly in the context of the Youth Livelihood Program, illuminates the intricate and vital role these councils play in the grassroots implementation of government initiatives. The distribution of roles underscores the councils' multifaceted engagement, while the identified challenges highlight the complex landscape within which they operate. Recognizing these challenges is crucial for implementing targeted remedies, such as increased funding, capacity building, and infrastructure development, to empower village local councils in overcoming obstacles and further contribute to the success of government programs. Addressing these aspects collectively is imperative for fostering resilient and effective local governance structures that can truly make a positive impact on community development and well-being.

Recommendations.

The researcher recommends the following.

There should be a concerted effort to foster collaboration between local, regional, and national levels of government. This collaboration can include joint planning sessions, sharing of best practices, and the establishment of mentorship programs.

There should be targeted efforts to engage and educate the local population about the roles and objectives of village local councils. Implementing awareness campaigns can enhance community understanding and support for government programs, reducing resistance and fostering a sense of ownership.

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