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Management of Decentralisation and Performance of Local Governments in Uganda: A Case Study of Bugiri District Local Government.

The decentralisation system in Uganda has evolved powers and functional responsibilities to local governments. The system has provided autonomy for governance, human resource management, and financial management. This research evaluated the management of decentralisation and performance of local governments measured by welfare of community members. The components of decentralisation management considered in this research include; governance, human resource management and financial management while performance of local government was assessed through community welfare. The study adopted a case study with a quantitative research approach in a cross sectional time dimension. The survey population consisted of elected leaders, appointed officers, local government inspectors and community members.

The findings show that there exists a significant positive relationship between management of decentralisation and performance of local governments as shown by community welfare improvement. Performance of local governments was measured by welfare of the community members. Performance of local governments is judged by the welfare of local population, which is the ultimate outcome government has formulated under the development plan. The findings also revealed that financial management and human resource management are the critical variables in explaining variation in welfare of the community in government. The findings further revealed that decentralised governance has resulted in improved service delivery in government. However, the study also showed that there are still some challenges which need to be addressed by policy implementers and these include; feedback by councillors to community members, pension management, procurement and accountability weaknesses in local government system. The study concludes that the decentralisation system is a good policy for service delivery as shown by details in the findings of this study, although there are still some challenges which call for serious attention by policy makers to address them. Therefore, the study recommends that a critical review should be undertaken to understand the challenges faced by local governments in order to address accountability, procurement, and pension management weaknesses which appear to greatly affect peoples' welfare.

Key Words: Decentralisation, Performance, Local Governments, Bugiri District