**INVESTIGATION OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION DURING BUDGETARY ALLOCATION IN NORTH RIFT ECONOMIC BLOCK (NOREB) COUNTIES**

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**Abstract**: The overall objective of this paper is determining demographic factors influencing effective citizenry participation during budgetary allocation among North Rift Economic Block (NOREB) counties. The secondary objective of the study is to examine the effect of gender, income level, education level, and age on effective citizen participation in budgetary allocation. The study was informed by stakeholder theory. Explanatory research design was adopted. The target population was 10,414 and a sample size 320 was utilized. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the respondent. The questionnaire was used to collect data. The study found that; gender has no significant effect (β2= -0.035, critical ratio < 1.96) while Age (β1 = 0.134, critical ratio > 1.96), education level (β3 = 0.149, critical ratio > 1.96), and income (β4 = 0.801, critical ratio > 1.96) respectively had a positive and significant effect on effective public participation. It is concluded that the community involvement is crucial for a successful and sustainable public development projects especially during budgeting process.

**Keywords:** Demographic characteristics, Budgetary Allocation, Public Participation

## 1.1 Introduction

Citizen engagement in community projects is both “means” and “ends” of any effective democratic government. The incorporating of citizen in development initiatives is a necessary effort in improving accountability and service delivery, and at the same time enabling them feel connected to their government (Musyoni, 2016). Governments should promote sustainable economic, social, political and legal environments by working collaboratively with citizens and this entails, amongst others, citizen empowerment and participation in decisions that directly affect them especially concerning development projects (Leduka, 2009). Embedded within the framework of participatory democracy it is the belief that budgetary allocations, especially within lower levels of government, is more responsive to popular demands if decided collectively. This has given rise to the idea of Participatory Budgeting (PB), which is defined as; decision-making process through which citizens deliberate and negotiate over the distribution of public resources , policy process that focuses on the distribution of resources and a democratic institution that enhances accountability, transfers decision-making authority to citizens, and empowers citizens (Wampler, 2007). Citizen participation facilitates dialogue in enhancing cooperation and consideration of various policy options (Adrain & Smith, 2006; Kim, 2010). The challenge is to shift the paradigm arrangement of the political system from ‘experts and professional’ led model with institutional and functional separation of powers to that where citizens are fully integrated into governance.

However the traditional paradigm of participation calls for citizen involvement through their elected representatives. According to Aulich (2009), this kind of participation is largely passive. Citizen participation in governance has traditionally centered on activities that enhance greater public access to information about government activities , facilitate the rights of citizens to be ‘consulted and heard’ on matters which directly affect them, and ensure that all voices can be heard equally through fair systems of representative democracy (Aulich 2009). Budgeting is a fundamental activity of any government world over. Through the process, the government is able to translate the use of physical resources to meet national priorities and fulfill their promise to the electorate. Citizens on their part expect the process of budgeting to be fair, transparent, and equitable (OECD 2007). Public participation process allows the people to identify and prioritize their needs, identify available resources from their communities, and to participate during the development, implementation and review of the integrated Development Plans. Meaningful citizen participation in governance is a key ingredient for public reforms that were instituted by the constitution of Kenya (CK) 2010 which is supreme law in Kenya and has brought emphasis on the need for public participation Vide Article 1 of CK which states that all sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya and shall be exercised as per the constitution.

Article 10 explores on the need to practice Democracy 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 as one of the values and principles of public service. Article 35 – covers on Right to information which is essential in providing rights to public participation and access to information. The provisions of the constitution are part of the other legal provisions in the public Finance management act 2012, County government act 2012 and urban areas and Cities Act 2013 have emphasized on the subject matter. 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. Therefore the study seeks to establish factors that influence public participation during budgetary allocation, putting into consideration the social consensus and political will within a country. Incorporating public participation mechanisms without social and political support, it will be difficult to initiate or sustain public participation, therefore the study seek to establish the effect of demographic characteristic on public participation.

## 1.2 The problem

Public participation is 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 (Robinson, 2007). According to Young (2008), public participation in budgetary formulation can only be enhanced through institutional frameworks. If the public’s institutional analysis is perceived to address their social-economic and cultural issues, then the public will engage (Frey *et al*., 2004 & Moller *et al.,* 2006). The level to which the public engages and endorses the structures of participation is directly related to the perception of individual, goodness of fit of the structures and mechanisms.

According to Ebdon and Franklin, (2014) limited effectiveness was associated largely to the timing of the input, unstated or unclear goals, implementation difficulties, and political and environmental constraints during the Budget Process. Citizen input appeared to have had little effect on budget decisions. For instant Elgeyo Marakwet county government suffered a blow after the high court stopped the controversial construction of the Kshs 50 million governor’s residence inside a stadium in Iten (kipsang 2016) the presiding judge justice Anthony Ombwayo cited lack of public participation as one of the main reason for stopping the construction of the palatial residence for the governor. The ruling came after the residence of kamariny in Elgeiyo marakwet moved to court seeking to stop the construction arguing that the county government ignored public input before starting the project (kipsang 2016). However the High Court ruling in Kiambu by Judge George Odunga; declared the controversial gazette Kiambu County Finance Bill which sought to introduce a range of taxes null and void as it was passed without public participation. In his ruling the judge said there was no clear indication that public participation was involved in the passing of the Kiambu Finance Bill 2013 and brushed off the county Government’s claim that it had advertised and held a meeting as part of consultation.

The input mechanisms serve other purposes, such as education and support for specific proposals. Muchunu, (2015) did study on the influence of stakeholder’s participation in the budgetary process the results revealed that citizens did not have knowledge about the county budgeting process although a sizeable number attended county budget forums. The study however, was limited to government funded projects in Isiolo County and thus could not be generalized in the case study. However, the study failed to give deeper insights on the public participation challenges associated with budget making of the devolved units, and at the execution of budgeting process and the approaches to adopt in dealing with public participation challenges since it generally focused on the challenges encountered by county governments at the budget preparation stage. This study aimed at understanding public participation challenges faced by both the citizens and the county governments. In view of the aforementioned studies it is clear to the best knowledge of the researcher that none of the study has been done seeking to explicitly understand the factors influencing public participation towards an effective budgetary allocation in the North rift Economic bloc counties. There is therefore a gap in literature as far as the underlying factors influencing public participation on budgetary allocation. This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by assessing the effect of demographic characteristics on public participation during budgetary allocation.

## 1.3 Objectives

1. To examine whether age influences public participation in budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties.
2. To assess whether gender influence public participation in budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties.
3. To assess whether education level influence public participation in budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties.
4. To determine the effect of income level influences public participation in budgetary allocation in the North Rift economic bloc counties.

## 2.1 Literature Review

Scholarly interest in citizen participation has emerged as a result of growing urbanization patterns and people’s better access to information. The rural-urban migration influx has resulted in the resource management problems and consequently, population’s growing interest in being ‘a part of solution’ (Mapuva, 2010). At its simplest definition, citizen participation assumes “citizen involvement in decision making pertaining to the management of public affairs and service delivery” (Aikins & Krane 2010). The participation is determined by the cooperation needs between citizens and public officials, as well as certain mechanisms ensuring this cooperation (King, Feltey & Susel 1998). In addition, the precondition of citizen participation is illustrated in granting ordinary citizens with a decision making power that affects their own decisions/citizenship/life. Thus, participation requires not only listening to the public opinion but also creating mechanisms to ensure its proper implementation (Irland & Vincent, 1974). According to Robinson (2007), levels of public participation is defined as 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. Public participation in budgetary formulation can only be enhanced through institutional frameworks (Young, 2008).

The level to which the public engages and endorses the structures of participation is directly related to the perception of eh goodness of fit of the structures and mechanisms. According to OECD, (2001) public participation may be used interchangeably with the concept or practice of stakeholder engagement and popular participation. Generally public participation seeks and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision. Public participation implies that the public's contribution will influence the decision in regrds to development projects (Lukensmeyer, 2009). In retrospect, this establishes the level at which the public will engage the local or national governance in budgetary formulations and planning (Von Korff, *et al.,* (2010). Public participation may be regarded as a way of empowerment and as vital part of democratic governance. Participation is a fundamental human right. All people, particularly young, marginalized and vulnerable groups, have a right to express their views on decisions directly affecting their lives (OECD, 2001). Participation is not a gift or a privilege bestowed from above (adults to children or Government to citizens), but the right of every person capable of expressing a view. This fundamental right can only be honored if Government-citizen connections are further strengthened (Lukensmeyer, 2009).

According to Lammers (1988) Participation is not an end in itself; as a procedural right, it represents the means through which citizens may take part in and influence processes, decisions and activities. However Lukensmeyer (2009) concluded that Public participation implies that the public's contribution will influence the decision. Public participation may be regarded as a way of empowerment and as vital part of democratic governance. In the context of knowledge management the establishment of ongoing participatory processes is seen by some in the facilitator of collective intelligence and inclusiveness, shaped by the desire for the participation of the whole community or society. OECD, (2001) asserts that Public participation is part of “people centered” or "human centric" principles, which have emerged in Western culture over the last thirty years, and has had some bearings of education, business, public policy and international relief and development programs.

### 2.2 Theories of Public Participation

### 2.2.1 Agency Theory

The Agency theory is probably the most important theory of corporate governance both in private and public organizations. The theory was developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976) but originated from the works of Berle and Means (1932). Agency relationship is defined as a situation where one party (principal) appoints another (agent) to perform services on their behalf and delegates decision making authority to them. The under-lying premise of this theory is that those individuals tasked with representation of others should ultimately commit the corporate resources to value maximization for those they represent. Therefore elected leaders are expected by those they represent to act in good faith on their behalf especially when it comes development projects. The agents (elected leaders) are expected to exercise due diligence and care in making decisions and ensure the interests of the principal are safeguarded. An agency problem arises when there is a conflict of interest between the agents and the principals. This conflict comes into play when the agent makes decisions and policies aimed at self-benefit without considering what value such policies have on the principal’s interests. Moral hazard can occur when the agents take actions in their own best interests that are unobservable and detrimental to the principal. The problem also exists when there is asymmetric information where one party mostly the agent has more information than the principal.

This conflict of interest may be solved by constant monitoring of decision making, policy formulation and implementation by the citizens to ensure their interests are put into consideration throughout the process. It may also be solved by offering incentives to good performing agents through re-election, reappointment and general public support. The poor performers may also be punished through threat of replacement, dismissal and lack of support which may be through riots and public demonstrations or picketing. Good governance is a proper application of the ideals, accountability, efficiency, transparency, etc. of governance. Agbude (2011), state that good governance, as it relates to good should not violate the people fundamental right, should have equitable resource distribution, with a decentralized power sharing, enforcement of rule of law and proper accountability of public funds. Word bank (2001,2006) quoted Agbude and Yartey (2012), rightly emphasizing major characteristics of bad governance while trying to understand where you can contrast good and bad governance to comprise failure sustenance private and public resources to enact a frame-work law and government not giving a conducive environment for development to take place by enhancing such laws and regulations which would foster development rather than impedes its or clipper developments through proper resources allocation of the national resources, which Kenya now is enchained in 2010 constitution by establish the revenue allocation commission to equitability share the national cake. Good governance therefore resembles efficiency and operative public administration, good decision making and adequate management and control of the national resources.

According to Agbude and Yartey (2012), argued that where there is no good governance there will be misappropriate and misuse of public resources as it has been recently witnessed in the chicken gate, NYS and Afya House scandal in Kenya. It’s important that good budgeting shares the same features with good governance .It will entails accountability and transparency in allocation of both social benefits and burden where tax payers’ money will be used by those who are not able to pay tax and enjoy the good service of its government, which will entail the welfare of the generality of the people rather than the welfare of particular sector of the society or organization. Selinder (2010), state that the concepts of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the justifiable use of material resources and the protection of the environment .The component of good governance is efficiency and effectiveness means the processes and institution produce results that meet the needs of the society while making the best use of resources at the disposal. United nation (2007), Kaufman and Kraay (2008), state that to the value of its citizen, the government must demonstrate effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability and discipline as a major attribute as good budgeting. According to Lasswell (1936), there can be no good budgeting without good governance be-cause good governance is a ground to achieving good budgeting. Kenya promulgated a new constitution in 2010, this has accelerated the impetus for improving governance structures and entrenching reforms, the re-searcher therefore tested if monitoring has a significant effect on budget implementation.

### 2.2.2 Stakeholder’s Theory

The study was also based on the stakeholders’ theory whose proponent is Freeman R.E. (1984). The theory posits that Corporations have stakeholders who benefits or are harmed by, and whose rights are violated or respected by corporate actions. Traditionally, a stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives, Fontaine, Haarman, and schmid (2006). The concept of stakeholders is a generalization of the notion of stakeholders who themselves have some special claim to the firm, Freeman (1984). The organization should be thought of as grouping of stakeholders and the purpose of the organization should be to manage their interests, needs and viewpoints. This stakeholder management is thought to be fulfilled by the managers of a firm. A common way of differentiating the different kinds of stakeholders is to consider groups of people who have classifiable relationships with the organization, Fontaine, Haarman, & schmid (2006). The main groups of stakeholders are: customers, employees, local communities, suppliers and distributors and shareholders, Friedman & Miles (2006).

Donaldson & Preston (1995), critique of the stakeholders’ theory has concluded that the theory is justified in the management literature on the basis of its descriptive accuracy, instrumental power, and normative validity. It descriptive accuracy is grounded on that it presents a model describing what the corporation is; a constellation of cooperative and competitive interests possessing intrinsic value. The instrumental power of this theory is based on the fact that it establishes a framework for examining the connections, if any, between the practice of stakeholder management and the achievement of various corporate performance goals. In addition, the normative validity is based on the fact that the theory is about acceptance of the idea that stakeholders are persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity regard-less of whether the corporation has any corresponding functional interest in them. Secondly, it is posited on the idea that the interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value. It’s on these bases that stakeholder’s theory was relevant to budget allocation.

Kenya after the enactment of 2010 constitution and thereafter the legislation of new Public Financial Management Act 2012, requires that the budget process has to go the public participation where the process will be published and publicize in the Kenya dailies with a wide circulation be it the National or County government. Pierre and Peters (2011) argue that the government should have capability of collecting information on preferences of electorate, in the absence of which it would be difficult to allocate resources efficiently. International government and non-governmental agencies realized more and more that the main reason of many unsuccessful development projects was and still is the lack of active, effective and lasting participation of the intended beneficiaries. Community participation is an important aspect of the vision 2030, because, of its importance in the social and economic pillars is devolution G. o. K (2010). It is anticipated that policy-making, public resource management and revenue sharing especially in devolved funds become key drivers of development; communities will need to be actively engaged so that there is better distribution of resources. In addition to this, there is also a need for a deepened and enhanced consultation and information sharing process in the budgeting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation aspects in development projects, Barasa and Eising (2012).

## 3.1 Developing Hypothesis

Most of the researchers emphasize the need of systematic way of developing and testing the hypothesis. Following their view, this research study aims to develop four hypotheses. All of them deal with the structural relationship of demographic characteristic measures and public participation. While partial least square based structural equation modeling has been used to test these hypotheses.

### 3.1.2 Demographic Factors that Influence Public Participation

#### 3.1.2.1 Age and Public Participation

This section classifies age into two categories namely Youth and Non-Youth. Youth can play a very important role in any development programs. They are indeed invaluable resources to any nation, because their fresh motivation, capabilities, and innovativeness can act as a catalyst for achieving excellence goals. Opportunities to the youth to engage in governance and participate in political decision making processes depend largely on the political, socio economic and cultural contexts where social norms in many parts of the world result in multiple forms of discrimination against the youth (UNDP and IPU, 2012). There is strong evidence that participation of young people in formal, institutional political processes is relatively low when compared to older citizen across the globe. This challenges the representativeness of the political system and leads to disenfranchisement of young people (UNDP, 2012). Enhancing Youth political participation throughout the Electoral cycle. In a survey conducted by UN IANYD (2012) in 186 countries, it was highlighted that the main challenge for youth were limited opportunities for effective participation in decision making processes.

With limited opportunities and exposure to meaningfully participate in inclusive decision making processes, young men and women feel excluded and marginalized in their societies and communities. The need for participatory structures and greater trust between youth and institutions were also stressed. Thus study proposes its first testable hypothesis as follows:

**Ho1:** *There is no statistically significant relationship between age and public participation in budgetary allocation.*

#### 3.1.2.2 Gender and Public Participation

Concepts of' participation' and' gender’ have been a part of emancipator discourse and practices for the last decade. Advocates of these concepts have claimed that they allow the representation of the most marginalized groups - women and the poor (Akerkar, 2001). The study of historical, philosophical, political texts show that "women have been kept outside the public domain of politics as most of the political thinkers and philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, John Lock, Thomas Hobbes and Hegel considered women fit only for domestic roles in the private sphere and maintained that there was no place for women in politics because of their suitability hi caring roles as mothers and wives" (Bari, 2005). The low patronage of women in politics and public decision-making is a global phenomenon. Throughout history, men have monopolized and dominated strategic decision making positions. Despite the achievement of universal suffrage, increased education and incomes for women, and efforts to increase participation of women in public life, women everywhere remain marginalized and under-represented in those areas of public life where important decisions and policies are made.

Doorpersad (2014) concluded that in order to emancipate women and ensure that they fully participate in democratization processes that it is vital to review and revise existing constitutional, political, legislative and regulatory frameworks, including electoral systems, to remove provisions that hinder women's equal participation in the decision- making processes. Studies undertaken in Africa by Baah - Ennumh, *et al,* Karpowitz*et al* (2012) Zaman (2007) Agbalajobi (2010), Ihmeje (2013) and Omodia *et al* (2013) argues that women participation in governance in Africa face a myriad challenges including religious and cultural beliefs, lack of economic empowerment, lack of effective means of implementing affirmative action, men dominance of political power, Relatively low education levels of women, multiple roles of women in the family setup , women attitude to the process of governance, lack of confidence on the part of women and demanding nature of the work at the local assembly level. According to Themeje (2013) marginalization of women in local governance is nothing but an elongation of male dominance in virtually all political affairs.

According to Mukhopadhyay (2005), democratic decentralization is critical for women not only because of the proximity of local government to their lives but because- they are often excluded from government decision-making at the national level. Contrary to views that local government is the level that women can easily break into and thus serve as springboard to national politics, the hierarchical and embedded nature of local government in local social structures make it difficult for women to break in as independent political actors. While supporting this position, Goetz (2002) argues that where women are given the opportunity to participate in local government, the terms of their inclusion determine the sustainability of their representation. Zaman (2007) on her part argue that in order to involve women in local bodies and for their active participation in local and national decisions, they have to be mobilized and organized at various levels through the equal representation of gender in all parts of it. Thus study proposes its second testable hypothesis as follows:

**Ho2:** *There is no statistically significant relationship between gender and public participation in budgetary allocation.*

#### 3.1.2.3 Education and Public Participation

According to Pharr & Putnam (2000), and Edwards (2005), demands for increased public participation in the affairs of government is generally influenced by a better educated, more articulate and more demanding citizenry, many of whom are the ones who express a declining level of trust in their politicians and the political institutions. The belief is usually expressed in demands for more engagement of citizens with meaningful exchanges with government beyond the traditional democratic processes of four or five year elections cycles. According to John, (2009), education level of citizenry has a negative significant correlation in the level of public participation. Education often enhances citizen’s awareness of governance programs and how to engage the governance system (Ahmad, *et al* 2005). Bratton.*et al,* conducted a research in six Sub-Saharan countries to determine whether education levels has a correlation with the level of public participation in decentralized units. In their findings, the more a community and its citizenry became educated, the more they engaged in public participation duties like budget formulation.

Similarly, Joshi and Houtzager (2012), contends that education has a high positive correlation with publics engagement in local Governance. Equally, Mwenda (2010) links levels of education to the public's ability to express their interests in self-determining governance of the people and by the people, but argues that lack of sufficient education -particularly in marginalized communities, hampers information dissemination, hence, low levels of participation. Oyugi and Kibua (2008) similarly argue that public citizens who sit on development and planning board for county governments on volunteer basis are all educated. Pasek.*et al* (2008) argues that level of education elevates citizen’s ability to participate in public functions that require a level of technical skills and ability. They contend that the reason public doesn't have the desire to participate in forums like budget participation is that they feel inadequately informed or educated to be of value. Finkel, *et al,* (2012), conducted a research in South Africa and Dominican Republic to determine how engaged the public was on issues of devolved governance and budgetary processes.

Higher levels of education are critical in entrenching democratic principles of public involvement in governed (KHRC. 2010). Higher public involvement triggers quest for efficiency and effectiveness in utilization of public resources. KHRC (2010) report on public participation highlights the reality of education in civic process that informs public participation. The report findings argue that citizens without education, lacks ability to assimilate information, therefore, can rarely formulate interests in civic duties like budget formulation. Mboga (2009) draws the correlation to the impact levels of education have in public participation in Kenya. He argues that education expands the ability of the public to appropriate desires, interests, and has their voice heard in logical concise and organized process like budget formulations. Mwenda (2010) however argues that merely seating in budgetary forums, by those who are educated does not constituted participation.

Oyugi and Kibua, (2008) contends that in as much as education elevated understanding, and versatile opportunities to engage in budgetary formulation, the actual is not easily articulated when you divorce self-interest form actual desire to engage in public participation. In the case of participation by representation in budget formulation, the citizenry o f a constituency usually engage persons with educational and engaging skills to effectively represent their views (Michels, 2012).

Most people who attend public forums on county development budgetary consist largely of the educated with self-aggrandizing interest, instead of that of the public Mboga (2009). According to Michels (2012), devolution and democratization is supposed to enhance the concept of self-governance through actual participation in decision making on how the to be governed. Joshi and Houtzager, (2012), argues that to enhance public participation in budgetary formulation, then each devolved unit should consider empowering the citizenry through adequate education, and not just civic education or public forums that are reactionary. Various other researchers like Oyugi and Kibua (2008). Joshi and Houtzager, (2012), and. Mwenda (2010) argue that there exists a significant positive correlation between levels of education and public participation. Thus the study proposes its third testable hypothesis as follows:

**Ho3:** *There is no statistically significant relationship between education level and public participation in budgetary allocation.*

#### 3.1.2.4 Income Levels and Public Participation

In a traditional society, income level of a person is considered as an important criterion for judging one’s ability. Similarly to assess the extent of participation of common people in development project, income level of participants indicates the participation of the people. Personal income may be defined as the sum of the market value of rights exercised in consumption and the change in the store of property rights between the beginning and end of period (Simons, 1938). The notion of personal income also corresponds to that put forward by John Hicks (1946), who described an individual income as maximum value he could consume during period and still be as well off at the end of the period as he was at the beginning. The Calvert-Henderson Income Indicator focuses on trends in the standard of living as reflected in monetary measures of family income. The trends in the level and distribution of family income since 1947 are explained with a particular focus on what has been the key determinant of family income trends - changes in hourly wages.

The growing income inequality since 1973 is explored, along with changes in people's wealth holdings. The Income Indicator offers a provocative and thoughtful way to assess our economy's performance in raising living standards during the economic boom of the 1990s. Nazleen (2004) found that the participation of the poor and marginalized in rural development has not increased significantly rather some touts and intermediaries have enjoyed more access to these projects and grasped its fruits. There is a general assumption that the interest of the poor and disadvantaged cannot be safeguarded in the exploitative social structure unless it is protected by legislation. Brady (2003) argues that since political and civic process is also a form of participation, like economic participation which takes place in the market place, it seems that known models of economic participation may provide insights into the relationships between income, income inequality, and political and civic participation.

Brady (2003) further observes that for labor force and marketplace participation, a change in income affect the amount of participation. In order to provide a positive relationship between income and political activity, participation may also provide intrinsic pleasure just like a hobby Bartels, (2003) & Verba *et al*. (1995) argue that the wealthy segments of society and those who are more highly educated take a greater role in public participation. This is because they have greater stakes in the affairs of government because they understand and appreciate political and social life better. The authors argue that the higher income segments are more likely to be interested and engaged in political and civic engagement activity. Bartels (2003) & Verba *et* al. (1995) further note that the higher segments of society are usually interested in whom to contact, and how to make their voices heard. Weber (2000) agrees with this notion and further argues that citizen participation committees and forums are usually crowded with members of the highest socioeconomic group. The lack of low-income participants is illustrated in a developing world context by scholars such as Russell and Vidler (2000), who have argued that such citizen participants are difficult to engage in civic activities because their main priorities are to fend for and to provide basic commodities such as food for their families, and not spend time in meetings. Thus study proposes its fourth testable hypothesis as follows:

**Ho4:** *There is no statistically significant relationship between income level and public participation in budgetary allocation.*

# 4.0 Research Methodology

# 4.1 Research Design

The study adopted a mixed design of descriptive and explanatory research design since we focused on getting inferences from the findings on the Demographic Characteristics Influencing Citizen Participation in Public participationin North Rift Economic Block (NOREB) Counties. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2009) a researcher should use more than one design to enhance the study; the mixed design was used to achieve the optimal results as recommended by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009). The design was considered suitable because it minimizes biasness through probability sampling and at the same time maximizing the reliability of data collection method, the design will also allow the use of questionnaires and inferential statistics in establishing the significance of the relationships between independent and dependent variables.

# 4.2 Population and Sample Size

Copper and Schindler (2014) define population as the total collection of elements about which the researcher wishes to make inferences. According to Saunders *et al*.,(2014) target population is complete collection of individuals or objects with homogeneous characteristics under investigation by the researcher. The target population of the study was 10,690 individual according to the CIDPs of the various counties (CIDPs, 2018). The target population will comprise; of 334 elected leaders, 76 county budgetary and planning staff, 10,080 sub location development committee and 200 County ward administrators as shown in table 1.

## Table 1: Target Population

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | Elected leaders | county budgetary and planning staff | Sub Location Development committee | County Ward administrators | 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 |

Sourse, (CIDPs, 2018)

The study followed the following sampling design in selecting the sample size that was used to test the study hypothesis. The larger the samples size the lower the likely error in generalizing the population (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003; Creswell, 2009). The study used Yamane (1967:886) and modified by Saunders *et al*. (2003) formula to calculate sample sizes.

$$n= ^{N}/\_{1+N\_{e^{2}}}$$

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

Therefore, using Saunders *et al*. (2003) formula the sample size of the study was 386 stakeholders from the north rift economic bloc who participate in budgetary formulation process.

## 4.2.1 Sampling Procedure

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 will be 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 8 counties selected systematically? The study used Neyman allocation formula to distribute the respondents into the two selected strata. The purpose of the method is to maximize survey precision, given a fixed sample size. With Neyman allocation, the best sample size for stratum h would be:

$$n\_{h= }\left(\frac{N\_{h}}{N}\right)n$$

Where,

nh- The sample size for stratum h,

n - Total sample size,

Nh -The population size for stratum h,

N - The total population

Hence, distribution will be 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)

# 4.3. Data Collection Instruments

The study used structured and semi structured questionnaires as a tool for data collection in regard to information on demographic information and public participation. 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*., 2014). The study utilized questionnaires for data collection because it is an economical research method and provides a way to standardize and structure questions into variables for data analysis. The questions for the variables of interest in the study will be adopted from previous studies that have been developed and tested. However the wording and style of presentation will be modified to fit the Kenyan context and scope of study. The instrument will be simplified to make it easy for the target respondents to comprehend the questions thus enabling them to give reliable information.

Before the actual data collection exercise takes place, the researcher undertook preliminary survey within the selected medium enterprises in order to familiarize with the study area and also make appointments with the identified persons. During the appointment day, the researcher and the research assistant will distribute the questionnaires to the selected individual from the eight counties and collect them once they are filled on the same day but the researcher will work together with the respondents to help them answer the questions in the questionnaire as some of the respondents. The selff-administered questionnaire should be accompanied by a covering letter, which explains the purpose of the study and assures respondents strict confidentiality. Closed ended offer the respondent a list of responses, any of which they can choose. The list of responses must be defined clearly and meaningfully by research assistants.

# 4.4 Measures of Variables

Demographic characteristics were conceptualized following four prominent dimensions: income level, gender, education and Age. We measured knowledge Demographic characteristics using the five item instrument developed by Hickey and Seligson (2003) and modified for this study. Responses were recorded on a 5-point likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Gender was measured using four items I participate in budget formulation because I am a woman/ man, Being a woman/ Man influenced my choice of participating in public budget forums, Women/ men have equal opportunities to participate in budget formulation, Being a man enables one to participate better, Being a Woman enables one to participate better. Age was also measured using four items My age influences my ability to effectively participate in the Budget formulation, Younger (the youth) people participate more effectively, Older people participate more effectively. Education; My education level influences the degree to which I participate in budget formulation, People who have higher educated level participate more effectively and People who have lower education level participate more effectively. Finally income level was measured using four items my income level influences my level of participation in budget formulation; my income level does not influence my level of participation in budget formulation; People of higher income level participate more effectively and People of lower income levels participate more effectively

Public Participation was measured using 6 items adopted from Esonu and Kavanamur, (2011), the items comprised of: do you understand the concept of public participation in budget formulation, In the last two years, you have participated in budget formulation at your constituency level, The constitution provides for mechanisms for public participation in budget formulation and Given a chance, I would participate (again) in budget formulation at my constituency. The items were measured on a 1- 5 scale, with 1 = ‘Strongly Disagree’, and 5 = Strongly Agree’. The definition of public participation of Frey *et al*., (2004), and Moller *et al.,* (2006) was adopted. The level to which the public engages and endorses the structures of participation is directly related to the perception of eh goodness of fit of the structures and mechanisms. In retrospect, this establishes the level at which the public engage the local or national governance in budgetary formulations and planning (Von Korff, *et al.,*2010).

# 4.5 Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected from the respondent was coded and entered in SPSS V20 for data analysis. Before analysis was, test for normality was done so as to ascertain whether to use parametric or non-parametric test in subsequent analysis. Descriptive statistics was done to identify characteristics of demographic data of respondents while inference statistics was done for the purpose of Correlation i.e. identify the relationship between demographic characteristics and public participation. The model below was used to predict public participation.

To test for the effect *demographic characteristic (Age, Gender, Education level and income level) on public participation*, Multiple regression analyses was conducted and the coefficient significances being examined at every step of the process. The multiple linear regression models that was used for the study is as shown below;

**y = βo + β1X1 + β2X2 + β3X3 + β4X4+ ε…………........…………………….. (i)**

Simple regression analysis with X1-X4 (demographic characteristics dimensions) predicting Y (*public participation*); to test *effect of* demographic characteristics dimensions *on public participation*. Significant levels was measured at 95% confidence level with significant differences recorded at [p < 0.05]

# 4.6 Preliminary analysis

To ensure the reliability of the data collection instrument, Cronbach’s alpha was used. Reliability is extent to which variables is consistent in what was supposed to measure (Hair *et al*. 2006). The instruments were considered reliable if their reliability coefficient were above the recommended 0.7 threshold (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). The generally acceptable level of cronbach’s alpha is above 0.70 and it may decrease to 0.60 in exploratory research (Hair *et al*.,2006) and the desired minimum level of cronbach’ alpha for the study was 0.70. The study findings depicted that cronbach’s alpha of 0.916 was obtained from 4 statements explaining Age, 0.753 was obtained from 4 statements explaining Gender, 0.757 was obtained from 4 statements explaining education level and lastly 0.875 was obtained from 4 statements explaining income level. Since all the coefficients were above 0.7 as shown in **table 3**, the instruments were considered reliable as their reliability coefficients were above the recommended 0.7 threshold (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). As such based on Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) all item were therefore retained for further analysis.

## Table 3 Reliability Analysis

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Cronbach’s Alpha** | **Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items**  | **No. of Items** |
| Age  | 0.916 | 0.900 | 4 |
| Gender  | 0.753 | 0.750 | 4 |
| Education Level | 0.757 | 0.755 | 4 |
| Income level  | 0.875 | 0.870 | 4 |
| Public participation  | 0.775 | 0.770 | 4 |

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*

Factor analysis was also conducted for purposes of construct reduction. To ensure that the items loaded into their constructs, a principal component analysis with a VARIMAX rotation was performed. Demographic characteristic yielded four-factor solution with eigen value of 2.69 extracted which cumulatively explained 57.242% of variance and item loadings of greater than the rule of thumb of 0.50, indicating evidence of convergent validity in our measure (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). None of the items loaded on their corresponding factor levels lower than .50, and so all items in the instrument were retained for the rest of the analysis. The Demographic characteristic indicated that the KMO was 0.641 and Bertlett’s Test of sphricity was significant (p< .05) as shown in (**Table 4**).

## Table 4: Factors Analysis of Demographic characteristic

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| I participate in budgetary allocation because of my gender. | .937 |  |  |  |
| My gender influenced my choice of participating in public budget forums | .971 |  |  |  |
| Either gender have equal opportunities to participate  | .951 |  |  |  |
| My gender enables me to participate better | .873 |  |  |  |
| I participate in budgetary allocation because of my age. |  | .871 |  |  |
| My age influences my effectively participate Budgetary allocation |  | .770 |  |  |
| The youth participate more effectively during budgetary allocation. |  | .550 |  |  |
| Older people participate more effectively |  | .624 |  |  |
| I participate in Budgetary allocation because of my education levels. |  |  | .937 |  |
| My education level influences the degree to which I participate |  |  | .971 |  |
| People who have higher educated level participate more effectively |  |  | .951 |  |
| People who have lower education level participate more effectively |  |  | .701 |  |
| Most of the Participants are Higher Income earners |  |  |  | .986 |
| Most of the Participants are Materially Wealthy |  |  |  | .966 |
| My income level influences my level of participation  |  |  |  | .978 |
| The perceived income level influences public participation  |  |  |  | .986 |
| People of higher income level participate more effectively. | .966 |
| *Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity (df=15)* | 0.000 |
| *Total Variance Explained*  | 57.242 |
| *Approx. Chi-Square* | 2434.534 |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. |

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*

# 5.1 Results

 A total of 386 questioners were issued of which 320 were filled and returned and represented a response rate of 83.55%. The response rate was considered satisfactory as recommended by Nyamjom (2013), who postulated that a response rate of 75% was considered excellent and a representative of the population. Majority of the respondents were male (54.7%). This was an indication that individual participating in public participation in the NOREB Counties where more males than female. The marital statuses of the respondents were of the percentage since the single people were 40.9% while the married were 45.9%. This was a clear indication that individuals in the NOREB counties constituted of both single and married people. The single people were due to the young age of graduates. Majority of the respondents were of 31-40 years (35%). This was an indication that individual participating in public participation where mature and experienced in terms of community projects initiatives. Majority of the respondents (66%) were graduates. This was indication that the NOREB counties citizens are educated even though majority of them are not employed (50%). Majority of the respondents 41.6% rated the level of public participation in there counties as good, hence allocation of resources, access to information on public participation, availability of enabling legislation on public participation are attributable to the level of public participation on legislative procedure and access of information on public participation.

Regression result reviled that Age had significant effect on public participation, which was in line with the findings of correlation analysis. This indicates that hypothesis **H01** was rejected (β1 = 0.134, p-value = 0.000 which was less than α = 0.05 and critical ratio > 1.96). Therefore it was concluded that Citizen Age had a positive and significant effect on public participation. Further hypothesis **H02** was accepted postulating that gender had no significant effect on public participation (β2= -0.035, p-value = 0.034 which was more than α = 0.05 and critical ratio < 1.96). Hence, diversity in terms of gender will not increase public participation effectiveness. Thus, hypothesis **H03** was also rejected (β3 = 0.149, p-value = 0.000 which was less than α = 0.05 and critical ratio > 1.96). It was concluded that education level had a positive and significant effect on public participation. This infers that citizen education level will influence public participation. Finally, hypothesis **H04** that stated income levels have no significant effect on public participation was also rejected. An indication that income level had a positive and significant effect on public participation (β4 = 0.801, p-value = 0.000 which was less than α = 0.05 and critical ratio > 1.96) as shown in table 5 below;

## Table 5: Generalized Least Squares Estimates

|  |  |  | **Estimate** | **S.E.** | **C.R.** | **P** | **Label** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Public participation | <--- | Age | .134 | .030 | 4.513 | \*\*\* | par\_1 |
| Public participation | <--- | Gender | -.035 | .016 | -2.116 | .034 | par\_2 |
| Public participation | <--- | Income level | .801 | .018 | 43.832 | \*\*\* | par\_3 |
| Public participation | <--- | Education level | .149 | .029 | 5.055 | \*\*\* | par\_4 |

Source: *Research Data, (2019)*



## Figure 2: Structural Equation Model

# 5.2 Discussion

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of demographic characteristic (Age, Gender, Education level and Income level) on Citizenry participation among county government devolved unity. The devolved unit has been going through difficult moments in trying to involve the citizens to participate in budgetary process but they seem less effective compared to the developed countries. This study strived to find out if Citizenry demographic characteristic (age, gender, income level and education level) would influence Citizenry participation.

## 5.2.1 Age and Public Participation

All of the listed demographic characteristics are significant accept for gender. Most county governments and organizations ensure that the youth are involved in their daily activities to ensure effectiveness. There is strong evidence that participation of young people in formal, institutional political processes is relatively low when compared to older citizen across the globe. This challenges the representativeness of the political system and leads to disenfranchisement of young people (UNDP, 2012). The findings of this study agree with Ochieng (2014) as his study also brought out age as an important element in enhancing effective budget. This also agrees with United Nation Development Projects (2012) findings on youth effectiveness in public participation.

## 5.2.2 Gender and Public Participation

Concepts of' participation' and' gender’ have been a part of emancipator discourse and practices for the last decade. Advocates of these concepts have claimed that they allow the representation of the most marginalized groups - women and the poor (Akerkar, 2001). The findings of this study agree with Doorpersad (2014) concluded that in order to emancipate women and ensure that they fully participate in democratization processes that it is vital to review and revise existing constitutional, political, legislative and regulatory frameworks, including electoral systems, to remove provisions that hinder women's equal participation in the decision- making processes. According to Themeje (2013) marginalization of women in local governance is nothing but an elongation of male dominance in virtually all political affairs. This was also confirmed trough a research by Baah - Ennumh, *et al,* Karpowitz*et al* (2012) Zaman (2007) Agbalajobi (2010), Ihmeje (2013) and Omodia *et al* (2013) argues that women participation in governance in Africa face a myriad challenges including religious and cultural beliefs, lack of economic empowerment, lack of effective means of implementing affirmative action. Democratic decentralization is critical for women not only because of the proximity of local government to their lives but because- they are often excluded from government decision-making at the national level.

## 5.2.3 Income level and Public Participation

 In a traditional society, income level of a person is considered as an important criterion for judging one’s ability. Similarly to assess the extent of participation of common people in development project, income level of participants indicates the participation of the people. The findings of this study agree with Bartels, (2003) and Verba *et al*. (1995) argue that the wealthy segments of society and those who are more highly educated take a greater role in public participation. This is because they have greater stakes in the affairs of government because they understand and appreciate political and social life better. It was also echoed by Nazleen (2004) that the participation of the poor and marginalized in rural development has not increased significantly rather some touts and intermediaries have enjoyed more access to these projects and grasped its fruits. There is a general assumption that the interest of the poor and disadvantaged cannot be safeguarded in the exploitative social structure unless it is protected by legislation. Brady (2003) argues that since political and civic process is also a form of participation, like economic participation which takes place in the market place, it seems that known models of economic participation may provide insights into the relationships between income, income inequality, and political and civic participation.

## 5.2.4 Education level and Public Participation

The findings of the study was in line with the findings of Pharr & Putnam (2000), and Edwards (2005), who demands for increased public participation in the affairs of government is generally influenced by a better educated, more articulate and more demanding citizenry, many of whom are the ones who express a declining level of trust in their politicians and the political institutions. The belief is usually expressed in demands for more engagement of citizens with meaningful exchanges with government beyond the traditional democratic processes of four or five year elections cycles. According to John, (2009), education level of citizenry has a negative significant correlation in the level of public participation which was not in line with the study findings. Education often enhances citizen’s awareness of governance programs and how to engage the governance system (Ahmad, *et al* 2005). Bratton.*et al,* conducted a research in six Sub-Saharan countries to determine whether education levels has a correlation with the level of public participation in decentralized units. In their findings, the more a community and its citizenry became educated, the more they engaged in public participation duties like budget formulation.

# 6.0 Recommendations and Areas for Further Study

The findings of this study designated that civic contribution in transferred ascendency in County assemblies was disabled by the lack of the source of information and also poor advertisement. The public ought to defend their rights when they participate in the public participation which also makes the public more knowledgeable on the issues of their counties and leaders. This will create awareness as majority of the public will be aware of the right to participate and also know the acts guiding public participation. Stakeholders may interact with government agencies, political leaders, non-profit organizations and business organizations that create public policies and programs.

Creating awareness among the stakeholders allows them to get involved in every step of the decision making. Lack of the know how to participate could prevent people from getting involved but if people are aware and understand the processes and the expected results then the successful public participation is achieved. Availability of enabling legislation means developing successful public participation through enabling laws and regulations in giving effective citizen participation and also enabling a successful development and performance management so that every member may adhere to the requirement of the nation and county itself during the public participation. The information that is to educate the public of the public participation should be advertised and through channels like the social media, the county assembly websites and professional and unprofessional social forums. Since not all the people have access to the internet the county assembly. Counties should advertise on the newspapers and also the televisions and radio stations. The wealthy segments of society and those who are more highly educated take a greater role in public participation. This is because they have greater stakes in the affairs of government because they understand and appreciate political and social life better.

# 6.1 Further Studies

This study only focused on demographic characteristics and Its Effect on public participation in NOREB counties, Kenya. The limitations of this study necessitate improved research that takes care of the weakness identified. A research analyzing the effect of public participation on service delivery of county governments among different county governments can be pursued so as to determine options in the counties as well as the economy. This study can give direction on county governments that can be promoted and which can give high efficiency in service delivery. This study mainly looked at the factors affecting public input in NOREB counties. Therefore, further exploration should be commenced in the private area and other counties outside NOREB to examine the devolved governance effects. Finally, further study need to be conducted on influence of political dynamics on public participation among county governments.

# 6.2 Conclusions.

The study can conclude that indeed demographic characteristics have a influence on effective citizenry participation in budgetary allocation. The overall public participation of citizen in the devolved units of government in Kenya is affected by individual demographic characteristics such as Age, gender, income level and education level.

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