
Mechanisms of Youth Participation in Governance in Kenyan Counties: A Case of Tharaka-Nithi County

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Abstract: This research focused on examining the mechanisms of youth participation in governance in Kenya. The researchers limited their investigation to Tharaka Nithi county's four sub-counties. The study used a concurrent triangulation mixed-method research design which involved both quantitative and qualitative data collection phases simultaneously, then analysing the results. A total of 156 respondents were involved, 39 from each sub-county. The findings of the study were that the majority of the participants obtained governance training through the civil societies, followed by mass media, then the community, then politicians, and lastly the chiefs, however, they were not adequately involved in governance processes. Participants were taught how to monitor and ensure the following: accountability, transparency, participation, efficiency, rule of law, effectiveness, and responsiveness. This has an implication that the youths were trained on civic engagement, accountable decision making, and effective public service delivery in the whole Tharaka Nithi County. The training improved the youth's understanding of participation in governance. It was determined that 71.7% of the predictor factors account for training offered having improved the youth's understanding of participation in governance in Tharaka Nithi County. There are however other factors other than the predictor factors that also accounted for the training offered having improved the youths' understanding of participation in governance in Tharaka Nithi County. These unexplained factors account for 28.3%. The study, therefore, recommends that the youth be more involved in governance because they have sufficient training and can make rational decisions.

Keywords: Governance, Mechanisms, Civic Engagement

1. Introduction

The participation of youth in their own governance is a fundamental right guaranteed by the United Nations' guiding principles in their Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Their participation is necessitated and facilitated by various factors which include but are not limited to the availability of relevant tools such as knowledge of their civic rights and duties. During the tenth anniversary (1995) of the International Youth Year, the United Nations adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth which is a strategy aimed at improving the rate of youth participation in governance.

There have been attempts to adopt and implement strategies that will enable more youth to be involved in leadership and governance. Among these interventions include the adoption of affirmative action and the creation of posts in government which give the youth a platform to participate in affairs of

governance without limitations. To begin with, the government of Kenya established a Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in 2005. This ministry was meant to ensure that the vision of the Kenyan state of economic and social development was realized. This could not be achieved in the absence of youth involvement due to the fact that they consist of the majority of the population and their needs are also the needs of the rest of the population. In 2018, this ministry was merged with the Ministry of Youth and Gender and the Ministry of Public service. Its major role includes: overseeing the National Youth Service, ensuring they harness talented youth and nurture them on the highest levels possible, facilitating youth engagement in national policies and strategies, and managing youth policy, among other responsibilities [10].

There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate the importance of including the youth in all governance processes. The creation of this ministry had both intrinsic and instrumental

benefits. Firstly, there is an intrinsic benefit in that it proves that the government respects the rights of its citizens, regardless of age, to freely air out their views and participate in decision-making concerning matters that affect them. It also means that the instrumental value of these youth (the fact that they are valuable to the society in various contributions) is upheld and respected [9].

2. Literature Review

One of the mechanisms which can be adopted to increase youth participation is affirmative action which will involve a remedial rationale. This kind of affirmative action ensures that victims of discrimination or other forms of injustice (in this case, the youth), are compensated for past events and measures taken to protect against the recurrence of these injustices. For centuries, Kenya has been governed by older members of the society and the youth have been considered to be among the masses to be led by those thought to possess wisdom by virtue of having advanced ages [6]. Remedial affirmative action would guarantee that the youth will be given more opportunities to express their opinions as well as excel in leadership positions. Affirmative action would also have a rationale of social justice in which corrective measures are taken to facilitate easier integration of the society, achievement of justice in addition to the realization of equity in all processes. For instance, youth can be trained and molded into fine leaders through government programs such as the National Youth Service. Young people from diverse backgrounds meet at a central point and share ideas as well as their experiences on governance. Those from marginalized areas or those that lack sufficient skills in participation in major decision-making processes in their local governments can acquire skills that will be beneficial in integrating them into their communities. Affirmative action of this kind will ensure that the youth, who are underrepresented in the majority of public leadership positions, understand their democratic rights and equity in representation and leadership roles [2].

The youth need to be trained to understand their rights and freedoms as well as their role in the transformation of the society they live in (10). According to Smith, Marks, Novelli, Valiente, and Scandurra, empowerment is dependent on the realization that the youth have free will and do not necessarily need to align themselves with the demands and rules laid out by older generations [3]. Once they achieve autonomy, they can freely choose the best course of action for their problems and become agents of change in the Kenya society.

Paradigms of communication should also be revised so that elderly members of society learn to treat the youth like their equals and not as problems to be taken care of [11]. Lack of job opportunities would mean that the youth are less interested in participating in their civic duties and more engaged in finding means of survival in harsh economic times. This would be a disadvantage to them [16].

This research aims at identifying the mechanisms utilized in Kenya to ensure that the youth take part in governance-related

processes. The investigation will be limited to Tharaka Nithi County.

3. Methodology

The study was carried out in Tharaka Nithi County which is a typical representation of other counties in Kenya. The County has four sub-counties: namely, Meru South, Maara, Tharaka South, and Tharaka North. This area was purposively selected since it is a typical representation of the other 46 counties in Kenya. It is also the locale where the researchers reside, thus it was easier for them to sample the study population because they are conversant with the area population and the native languages. The study used a concurrent triangulation mixed-method research design. In this design, the researcher conducts both quantitative and qualitative data collection phases simultaneously and then analyzes the results. The purpose of this design is to validate the findings generated by each method through evidence produced by the other [7]. In this study, quantitative data were collected using survey questionnaires while qualitative data were collected through interviews after which integrated analysis was done.

Kenya has a population of 47, 564,296 [8]. Tharaka Nithi County has a population of 393,177 (Maara 114,894, Igamba 53,210, Tharaka North 58345, Tharaka south 75,250). The accessible population of the study was the 3,698 politically active youths in the counties. Cluster sampling was used to select respondents for the quantitative phase and purposive sampling was utilized to select respondents from each of the sub-counties for focus group discussions and interviews (qualitative phase). From the accessible population of 3,698, a sample size was drawn using Nassiuma's formulae [4].

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N - 1) e^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3,698 \times 0.252}{0.252 + (3,698 - 1) 0.022}$$

$$n = \frac{231.125}{1.5413}$$

$$n = 149.9546$$

Thus, the sample size was 150 respondents. The addition of six respondents was added to cater to any technical issues that might have invalidated data from a negligible number of respondents. The sample size was therefore 156.

Where: n = Sample size,

N = Population,

C = Coefficient of variation,

e = Standard error.

C=25% is acceptable according to Nassiuma (2000), e = 0.02 and N= 3,698.

In each of the four sub-counties thus, 39 respondents were selected. 2 of the respondents were interviewed, 7 were engaged in a focus group discussion and the other 30 answered the questionnaires.

The study used standard questionnaires, semi-structured

interview schedules, and a focus group discussion guide to collect data. The researchers used questionnaires to collect data from respondents. The questionnaires contained a 5-point Likert-Scale, closed-ended as well as open-ended questions. Section A contained questions on personal information and Section B and C captured data on youth participation in governance. The questionnaire sample was formulated after the reception of funding. Semi-structured interviews were also used in this study to collect qualitative data from key informants. The researchers made appointments with 2 key respondents in every sub-county and conducted the interviews at a place of their convenience. The interview schedule sample was formulated after the reception of funding. Focus group discussions were conducted with a selected number of youths. The researchers made an appointment with these selected youths and conducted the discussions in an area that was convenient for them. Discussions were tape-recorded with the permission of the respondents. The focus group discussion guide sample was formulated after the reception of funding.

To ensure internally, construct, and content validity of the research instrument, the research instruments were examined for expert judgment, and thereafter corrections were made as necessary. This was done by checking the instrument items against the study objectives. Data source triangulation was also ensured by the objective selection of different people for the discussions. Triangulation enriched the study and ensured shortcomings of using only one method of data collection were mitigated. Validity ensures research that outcomes truly reflect the phenomenon the study is trying to measure [13]. Pilot testing was done to test the reliability of the questionnaire and its internal consistency gauged. To test the internal consistency of the items listed on the questionnaire, the researchers used the Cronbach alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha is a statistic coefficient (a value between 0 and 1) that is used to rate the reliability of an instrument. The questionnaires were pilot tested among youths in Meru County. The county neighbors the study counties and has similar characteristics as the study counties. A pilot sample study should be 10% of the sample project for the larger parent study [1]. Therefore, 16 questionnaires were given to the youths at the pilot. After getting the results, the data set was split into two, and a score for participants was calculated from each half of the scale. Cronbach alpha value of at least 0.7 was considered acceptable thereby indicating reliability [5]. If a scale is very reliable, respondents get the same scores on either half of the scale such that, the correlation between the two halves is very high. Reliability denotes the degree to which findings can be reproduced by another researcher [12].

The entire research process was conducted with due respect to the ethical considerations of research. The researchers obtained informed consent from the respondents to participate in the study. The researchers were careful to avoid causing physical or psychological harm to respondents by asking embarrassing or irrelevant questions, using threatening language, or making respondents nervous. The researchers also treated the respondents' views with respect and utmost confidentiality.

4. Results and Discussions

The findings of the survey revealed that the sample of citizens for this study consisted of 62% male youths and 38% females. This means that the majority of male youths tend to engage more in governance issues compared to their female counterparts. The average age of youths engaging in governance was also found to be 26 years. This means that those who engage in governance are middle-aged youths. It is noted that the majority of the participants obtained governance training through the civil societies, followed by mass media, then the community, then politicians, and lastly the chiefs. This has an implication that the majority depended on civil societies to train them on governance issues while at the same time owned mass media vessels such as the radios, and televisions among others as an important source of training.

These quantitative findings were also supported by some of the following statements:

In the many pieces of training I have obtained, the organizers were actually members of mass media especially our local radio station here. They have on many occasions held rode shows that are aimed at educating the youths on the concept of good governance (Key Informant 1; Male, Tharaka South).

Those who always provide governance training to the youths have been the mass media as well as different members of different the civil societies who come through to do the training not only in this county but also in other counties as well (Discussant A; Male, Tharaka North).

I can recount that those who have offered governance training even at the headquarters were members of the civil societies in conjunction with some prominent members of the community including the chiefs and their assistants (Key Informant 2; Male, Maara).

Personally, I was trained for the first time by some members of the local radio station, in fact, it was even aired on a very prominent television network. The second time receiving this pertinent training was when a local NGO did organize the same while the third one was actually done by some members of the community in a public Barraza (Discussant G; Female, Igamba).

These pieces of training are conducted by very many sources. For instance, I was in a training that was conducted by an aspiring politician here in our sub-county. He really reiterated various tenets of good governance and the majority of those who were invited consisted of the youths. So politicians also take part in training the youths whenever they have the chance (Discussant D; Female, Tharaka South).

I am allowed to ask questions on issues pertaining governance in my county.

Table 1. Number of Participants allowed to ask questions on governance.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	13	10.8
	No	107	89.2
	Total	120	100.0

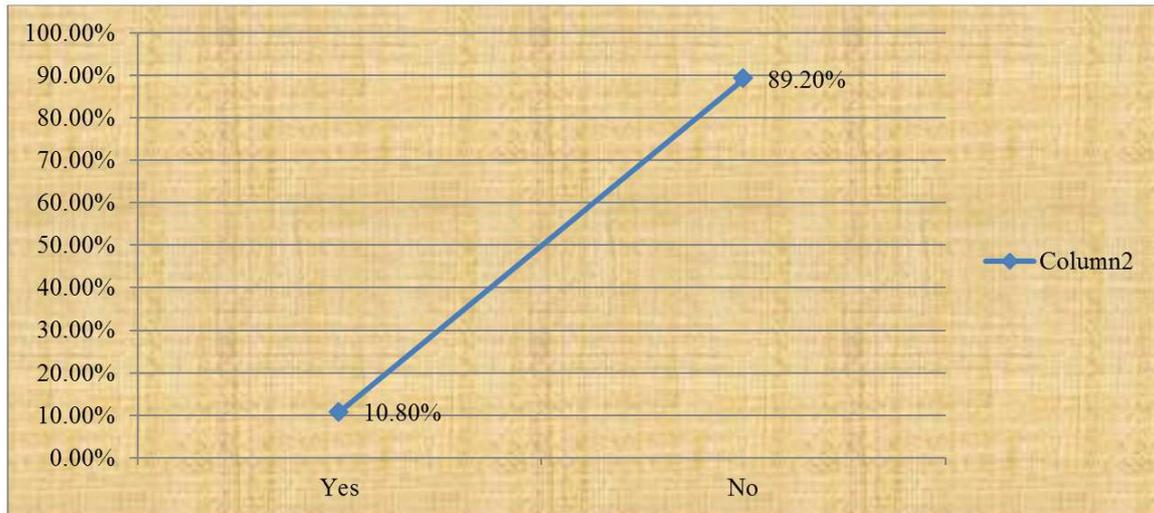


Figure 1. Number of Participants allowed to ask questions on governance.

The participants who said that they were allowed to ask questions on issues pertaining governance in my county were only 10.8% while those that said they were not allowed to ask questions on issues pertaining governance in my county were only 89.2%. This has an implication that the majority had no ability to ask questions on issues pertaining governance in the county.

These quantitative findings were also supported by some of the following statements:

The truth is we have been trained by the various sources we had discussed. The only problem is that a few of us have influence and the capacity to ask questions about governance in our country. Not everyone has that capacity (Key Informant 1; Female, Igamba).

The trainings we have received have actually enabled understand what is expected of us to participate in governance and that encompasses asking of questions pertaining governance issues in our county. This has not been a walk in the park as the majority of these trained youths have not had the chance to poke holes into issues of concern about governance in the county (Discussant B; Male, Tharaka South).

More often than not, the youths are trained to exercise their right of free access to information and especially when they think that an issue has been done which requires accountability. The youth's too being electorates reserve the right to access any information from the county and demand for explanation with recourse to accountability. Those however have been untenable as most youths have either been shunned away from accessing information or even given an audience with the relevant department (Discussant F; Male, Maara).

Let's put it open that there are only a few youths who are allowed to ask questions about issues pertaining to governance and in this case, those youths tend to be the ones with some degree of influence such as student leaders or representatives of various youth organizations. As to whether the response they are accorded meet their expectation is what

we do not know (Discussant C; Female, Tharaka North).

Only a handful of the youths are in fact allowed near the concerned department to seek clarification on issues that concerns governance (Key Informant 2; Male, Maara).

The county officials rarely giving the youth time to meet up with them over issues affecting the county. It is easier to meet the politicians in their daily tours within the county or during the local burials, raise your concerns in an informal way and just hope they'll act on them. However, meeting the members of the county executive is a very difficult task, and therefore meeting them up and engaging them over county matters is a far-fetched vision (Discussant E; Male, Tharaka South).

How many times do you participate in governance matters in a month?

Table 2. Frequency of Participation in Governance Matters.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid			
Not at all	92	77.0	77.0
Whenever it happens	22	18.0	18.0
Once a month	6	5.0	5.0
Twice a month	0	0.0	0.0
Five times a month	0	0.0	0.0
More than five times a month	0	0.0	0.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0

It is noted that those who did not participate in governance matters in a month were 77% (where the majority falls), those who participated in governance matters whenever they happened were 18.0% those who participated in governance matters once a month were 5.0%, those who participated in governance matters twice a month were 0.0%, those who participated in governance matters five times a month were 0.0% while those who participated in governance matters more than five times a month were 0.0%. This has an implication that the majority of the people only participated in governance matters whenever there was need to.

In key informant interviews, the participants were asked the number of times they participated in governance in a

month. Most respondents said that they were not accorded the right opportunities to participate in governance. In fact, the majority alluded that they did not actually take part at all and if they did then only a handful took part but whenever they did so. This could be illustrated by the following statements:

.....the youths do not participate in governance. They are not even involved in planning and designing those programs that affect them alert alone demanding accountability on issues affecting the county (Key Informant 1; Female, Maara).

Most of the youths do not actually engage in issues governance unless they ones organized by themselves in “base” which cannot be taken hide by the county government (Discussant G; Male, Tharaka North).

Very few youths are actually involved in participating in governance issues in a year let alone in a month. Probably the ones that do engage are very few and must be very influential (Key Informant 2; Male, Igamba).

SECTION C (2): Types of trainings done to the youths.
List trainings done to the youths.



Figure 2. List of Trainings concerning governance done.

It can be noted from the Figure above that the list of trainings done to the youths in the last few months in Tharaka Nithis County include: Accountability (112), Transparency (110), Participation (106), Efficiency (76), Rule of Law (71), Effectiveness (70) and Responsiveness (64). This has an implication that the youths are taught more of civic engagement, accountable decision making and effective public service delivery in the whole Tharaka Nithi County.

These quantitative findings were also supported by some of the following statements:

I think in all the trainings I have received, a lot of emphasis has been on good governance with the main tenets focusing on accountability, transparency and efficiency. In other words, when things are not going according to the way they should be, them one and especially the youth need to demand for accountability and transparency (Key Informant 1; Female,

Tharaka North).

We are majorly taught about key facets to governance which encompass, the rule of law, effectiveness, responsiveness, participation, accountability, efficiency as well as accountability. All these are key to effective governance in any administration whether at the national or county levels of governance (Discussant B; Male, Maara).

We have been taught about what transparency and accountability entails in governance as being information and undertakings of the government especially those that relate and impact on citizens directly should be open and accessible. If that is not the case then the youths need to rise up and ask questions. This is being patriotic to ensuring that good governance is practiced always (Discussant D; Male, Igamba).

What is the relationship between the various training offered about youth participation in governance?

Table 3. Relationship between the various trainings offered about youth participation in governance.

To whom is information passed	I got trained by the civil societies	Pearson Correlation Coefficient Values	Sig. (2-tailed)
I got trained by the Chief/community	I got trained by the politicians	.339**	.004
I got trained by the Chief/community	I got trained by the mass media	.094	.439
I got trained by the Chief/community	I got trained by the civil societies	.013**	.018
I got trained by the mass media	I got trained by the politicians	.102**	.007
I got trained by the mass media	I got trained by the civil societies	.096	.430
I got trained by the politicians		.323	.216

** - Means significant at 5% level.

The Table above presents the analysis of the relationship between the various trainings offered about youth participation in governance in Tharaka Nithi County i.e. Chief./community and civil societies, Chief./community and politicians, Chief./community and mass media, mass media and civil societies, mass media and politicians as well as politicians and the civil societies.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the content of the trainings offered by Chief/community and civil societies, Chief/community and mass media well as mass media and civil societies. This is because the Pearson correlation coefficients were .339, .013 and .3102 respectively, with the P-values of .004, .018 and .007 all less than .05 i.e. This implies that the content and relevance of youth participation training offered amongst the three sources of training was in tandem with one another in Tharaka Nithii County. There was however, no statistically significant relationship the content and relevance of youth participation training offered amongst the Chief/community and politicians, mass media and politicians as well as civil societies and politicians. This is because the Pearson correlation coefficients were .094, .096 and .323 respectively, with the P-values of .439, .430 and .216 all being more than .05 i.e. This implies that the teachings offered by politicians were far different with those offered by other sources.

These quantitative findings were also supported by some of the following statements:

Basically, from the trainings I have received, you find that the contents that are taught by the civil societies, NGOs and the mass media are absolutely the same. In fact, they all teach about the importance of accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. However, the teachings of politicians on the other hand seems to be a bit different in the sense that they believe in having a representative like them to do the questioning or the demand of accountability on behalf of the people i.e. youths included (Discussant F; Male, Tharaka North).

The content of what is taught by different sources seem very different. For instance, the civil societies and mass media

believe in taking individual ownership of the process and participating in governance matters while others sources like the politicians believe that they are the people with influence and correct know how of putting to task the concerned or affected county departments (Key Informant 1; Female, Igamba).

I really appreciate the kind of training that is offered by different organizers. Most of them are unique and quite different and I think this kind of uniqueness is good in terms of getting other perspectives. It's high time we learn how to appreciate the uniqueness of different teachings (Discussant A; Male, Tharaka South).

Virtually, the content of the teachings in the trainings offered are almost the same across the various organizers or sources (Key Informant 2; Male, Maara).

Donors and NGOs have greatly and immensely supported a myriad interventions which have encouraged youth participation whether formally or informally [15]. Research suggests that increasing youth participation through training has intrinsic and instrumental values that could go a long way in producing positive results for young people as well as society in general. However, despite the potential benefits, the content of youth training in governance matters has remained uncoordinated and fragmented which therefore means that improved government accountability becomes limited, mixed up as well as content that is subject to misinterpretation [14]. The findings are in agreement with the current study which found that the contents that were offered by the chief/community, mass media and the civil societies were very different from those offered by politicians.

How do you air your grievances about governance in your county?

It can noted from the figure below that the majority of the youths aired their grievances about governance using social media platforms, or emailed the department as opposed to going in person or making a phone call. This implies that the majority preferred using means where they do not get to meet up with the departments that they demand accountability for fear of being victimized in Tharaka Nithi County.

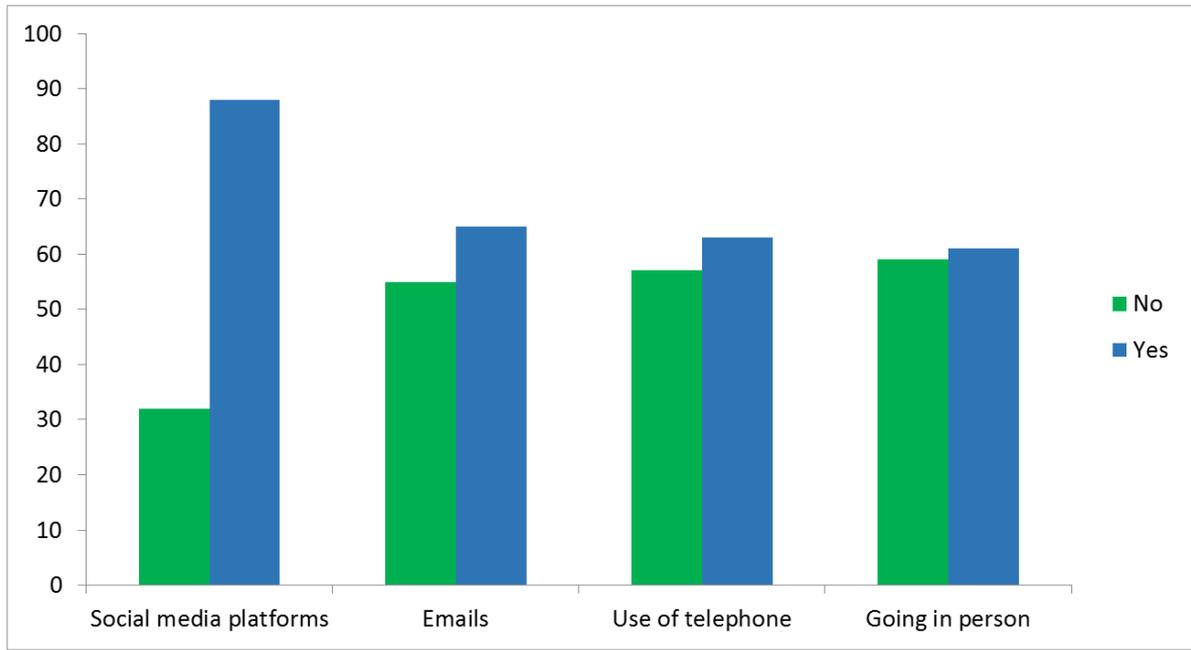


Figure 3. Means of communicating grievances on governance.

SECTION C (3): Impact of Training

Table 4 gives an interpretation that 71.7% of the predictor factors account for trainings offered having improved the youths understanding of participation in governance in Tharaka Nithi County. There are however other factors other than the predictor factors that also accounted for the trainings offered having improved the youths understanding of participation in governance in Tharak Nithi County. These unexplained factors account for 28.3%.

Table 4. Predictor factors accounting for trainings.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.622 ^a	.717	.328	.85258

- a. Predictors: (Constant), training on accountability, participation, rule of law, responsiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency have helped improve the youths understanding of participation in governance.
- b. Dependent Variable: The pieces of training have the youths' understanding of participation in governance.

Impact of Training

Table 5 below shows that governance pieces of training have significantly improved the youths' understanding of participation in governance in Tharaka Nithi County. This is because a P-Value of .000 which is less than a .05 confidence level was obtained. Therefore, it can be inferred that pieces of training had significantly improved the youth's understanding of participation in governance in Tharaka Nithi County.

Table 5. Youths' understanding of participation in governance.

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.848	6	4.808	6.615	.000 ^b
	Residual	45.794	63	.727		
	Total	74.643	69			

- a. Dependent Variable: The pieces of training improved the youths' understanding of participation in governance.
- b. Predictors: (Constant), pieces of training on accountability, participation, rule of law, responsiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency have helped improve the youths' understanding of participation in governance.

Table 6. Impact of training on the youths' understanding of participation in governance.

Coefficients											
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.086	.593		1.831	.072					
	Participation	.436	.108	.425	1.263	.011	.398	.157	.125	.737	1.357
	Accountability	.556	.149	.463	3.733	.000	.573	.426	.368	.633	1.580
	Responsiveness	.509	.115	.319	2.515	.008	.337	.065	.051	.736	1.360
	Transparency	.520	.145	.449	3.006	.002	.152	.017	.013	.504	1.984
	Efficiency	.197	.135	.401	1.461	.049	.150	.181	.144	.513	1.949
	Rule of Law	.191	.154	.360	1.238	.120	.315	.154	.122	.581	1.720
	Effectiveness	.131	.121	.342	1.215	.064	.218	.172	.113	.419	1.561

- a. Dependent Variable: The pieces of training improved the youths' understanding of participation in governance.

$$Y=K+X1+X2+X3+X4+X5+X6...$$

The pieces of training improved the youths' understanding of participation in governance = 1.086 + .425 (participation training improved the youths understanding of participation in governance) + .463 (accountability training improved the youths understanding of participation in governance) + .319 (responsiveness training improved the youths' understanding of participation in governance) + .449 (transparency training improved the youths understanding of participation in governance) + .401 (efficiency training improved the youths understanding of participation in governance) + .360 (rule of law training improved the youths understanding of participation in governance) + 3.42 effectiveness training improved the youths understanding of participation in governance).

A factor analysis was also conducted on the variables so as to group the factors into significant components. The table of descriptive statistics below simply shows the means, standard deviations, and sample size for each variable. It appears that

the average score for all the tests is very similar and all have a similar spread. Next is the observed correlation matrix: if there are few correlations above 0.3 it is a waste of time carrying on with the analysis, clearly we do not have that problem. The KMO value indicates that we have is pretty poor – just above miserable, however, Bartlett's test of sphericity with an associated p-value of 0.000 indicates we can proceed. Next comes a table showing the importance of each of the seven principal components. Only the first three have eigenvalues over 1.00, and together these explain over 64.580% of the total variability in the data. This leads us to the conclusion that a three-factor solution will probably be adequate.

Table 7. KMO and Bartlett's Test.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.768
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	187.035
	Df	54
	Sig.	.000

Table 8. Eigenvalues of the seven components of governance service delivery.

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.093	44.179	44.179	3.093	34.179	44.179
2	2.417	20.247	64.426	2.417	20.247	20.247
3	1.749	10.704	75.129	1.432	10.154	64.580
4	.593	8.473	83.602			
5	.458	6.544	90.146			
6	.376	5.366	95.512			
7	.314	4.488	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 9. Component Matrix showing 3 factors.

Component Matrix ^a	Component		
	1	2	3
	Accountability	.599	.560
Transparency	.622	.314	.312
Participation	.746	.387	.224
Efficiency	.614		
Rule of Law	.677	-.556	
Effectiveness	.624	-.646	
Responsiveness	.752		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 3 components extracted.

5. Conclusions

- The study's objective was to determine the mechanisms of youth participation in governance in Kenya. After the research, it was determined that governance training was done by the civil societies, followed by mass media, then the community, then politicians and lastly the chiefs.
- The participants who said that they were allowed to ask questions on issues pertaining governance in my county

were only 10.8% while those that said they were not allowed to ask questions on issues pertaining governance in my county were only 89.2%.

- Those who did not participate in governance matters in a month were 77% (where the majority falls), those who participated in governance matters whenever they happened were 18.0% those who participated in governance matters once a month were 5.0%, those who participated in governance matters twice a month were 0.0%, those who participated in governance matters five times a month were 0.0% while those who participated in governance matters more than five times a month were 0.0%.
- Governance training done to the youths in the last few months in Tharaka Nithis County include: Accountability (112), Transparency (110), Participation (106), Efficiency (76), Rule of Law (71), Effectiveness (70) and Responsiveness (64).
- There was a statistically significant relationship between the content of the trainings offered by Chief/community and civil societies, Chief/community and mass media well as mass media and civil societies because the Pearson correlation coefficients were .339, .013 and .3102 respectively, with the

P-values of .004, .018 and .007 all less than .05 while there was no statistically significant relationship the content and relevance of youth participation training offered amongst the Chief/community and politicians, mass media and politicians as well as civil societies and politicians because the Pearson correlation coefficients were .094, .096 and .323 respectively, with the P-values of .439, .430 and .216 all being more than .05.

- vi. The majority of the youths aired their grievances about governance using social media platforms, or emailed the department as opposed to going in person or making a phone call.
- vii. It was determined that 71.7% of the predictor factors account for trainings offered having improved the youths understanding of participation in governance in Tharak Nithi County. There are however other factors other than the predictor factors that also accounted for the trainings offered having improved the youths understanding of participation in governance in Tharak Nithi County. These unexplained factors account for 28.3%.

6. Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendations from this study include:

- i. The youths should be engaged right from the onset in planning, designing, and implementing policies that directly affect them as such was make the acquainted with what is expected and hence participate in governance matters.
- ii. The county and the national government should endeavor to encourage and foster the participation of the youths at all levels of governance as that was boost their confidence and subsequent gaining of experience in matters of governance.
- iii. The youths should be accorded a chance to hold both leadership and political positions since a good bunch of the youths are well-educated, brilliant, and academic luminaries. This was also ensured that they have their own representatives that can articulate matters on their behalf at decision-making levels.

7. Limitations and Future Research

The first limitation is that the study was conducted in one county; therefore the reliability of the results restricts the extent to which the findings can be generalized across the Kenyan counties. Future research work especially on how remote engagement via social media can be achieved will help improve governance significantly.

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