Capacity Building and Service Delivery in Local Government: A Case of Lira District Local Government

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Abstract

This study sought to establish the effect of capacity building on service delivery within Lira District Local Government. The study specific objectives were to assess the effect of career development on service delivery at Lira District Local Government, generic training on service delivery at Lira District Local Government and study tour on service delivery at Lira District Local Government. This study employed a cross-sectional design with mixed methods. A sample of 160 permanent staff across the District, Sub-county, and Parish levels were selected using stratified simple random sampling. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires and key informant interviews, then analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression models to provide a comprehensive understanding of how career development, generic training, and study tours impact service delivery outcomes. This study examined the predictors of service delivery using an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model. The analysis assessed the influence of career development, generic training, and study tours on service delivery outcomes. Results indicated that career development (B=0.13, p=0.010) and study tours (B = 0.15, p = 0.030) had statistically significant positive effects on service delivery in Lira District Local Government, suggesting that initiatives in these areas contribute to improved service delivery outcomes. Conversely, generic training (B=-0.01, p=0.982) was not a significant predictor. The regression model explained 7% of the variance in service delivery (adjusted R2 = 0.07), implying that other unmeasured factors also influence service delivery. The study concludes that career development and study tours significantly enhance service delivery, while generic training has no notable impact. Strengthening targeted capacity-building initiatives can therefore play a crucial role in improving service delivery outcomes. The study recommended that Lira District Local Government prioritizes career development by establishing clear growth pathways for staff, expands study tour opportunities to promote learning and adoption of best practices, and ensures that generic training programs are tailored to meet the specific needs of employees. Additionally, continuous monitoring and evaluation of capacity building initiatives should be implemented to assess their impact on service delivery and guide future improvements. The study also informed policy suggesting that there is need for institutionalized structured capacity-building frameworks, including clear career progression pathways, mentorship programs, and exposure visits for knowledge sharing and innovation. Policymakers should integrate these elements into human resource and service delivery strategies to strengthen employee motivation, skills, and performance. Furthermore, the insignificance of generic training implies that training policies should emphasize relevance, context-specific content, and practical application rather than generalized programs. Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the outcomes of capacity-building interventions will also ensure that policies remain responsive and results-oriented, ultimately leading to more efficient and accountable public service delivery.