

Full Length Research Paper

Anatomy of pay in decentralisation by devolution in Tanzania

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Received 3 January, 2018, Accepted 2 March, 2018

Decentralization has become an eminent discourse for boosting people's participation in decision making. Arguably, one of the pillars to boost good governance. Nevertheless, various levels of governance, which have resulted from decentralisation by devolution have varied perspectives on rewards for the work they perform especially the lowest namely village and ward levels. The contestation is on who deserves to receive payment for the elected posts. There are diversified opinions on the matter. Some opine that councillors, deserve more pay for their exertion. On the other hand, some opine that village chairpersons deserve pay for their work. Some people opine that both councillors and village chairpersons deserve pay. Hence, the main objective of the study is to find out which cadre deserves more attention to payment between the ward councillor's and village chairpersons. This is a case study design which focused on Hai district in Kilimanjaro. The literature has employed interview as the major information collection strategy. Observation and documentation were used as supportive strategies. The sample was drawn through purposeful sampling from four wards, which is 100% of the sample with which the chairpersons are also the councillors in Hai district. The analysis of information has utilised descriptive analysis, which is cemented on logical reasoning of the contents. The research has concluded that 100% of the respondents were in favour of a village chairperson to be paid than a councillor. In addition, it was evident that village chairperson work is more tasking than councillors.

Key words: Decentralization, devolution, councillors, village chairman, development.

INTRODUCTION

Development of the world over is the ambition of all types of government. People work hard, strategize on various ways of ascendancy, and create institution of governance and management with the ultimate goal of attaining development. It is from such perspective countries have opted for the best way of enabling the people to participate in decision making, hence decentralisation as the first stage and devolution as the second. Norman and

Massoi (2010) sought to explore the extent in which D-by-D has been implemented at the grassroots level with concentration on people's involvement in planning process. That means to see the extent at which individuals at grassroots level are involved in the preparation of the strategic plan and see whether the human resources at grassroots' level have the capacity to undertake planning process.

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This seems to be one of the key studies on the decentralization and devolution (Research Gate, 2016). The study by Norman and Massoi (2010) has been cited by 7600 scholars for the year 2015/2016 (Research Gate, 2017). However, the contestation on who deserves payment in local government authorities which are the pillars of decentralization has never been covered or sought to be of paramount. This study researches on the opinion of those in the field of councillors and chairmanship who served concurrently. Seeking opinion is sometime vague due to pretence. Nevertheless, seeking opinion on natural course of action suggest factual response.

Decentralization is highly linked with local government system and has been practised in the country in varying degrees since colonial times (Ngware and Haule, 1992). Historically, the concept of decentralization has never been a new concept in countries across the globe (Massoi and Norman, 2009; Othman and Liviga, 2002). The term attracted attention in the 1950s and 1960s when British and French colonial administrations prepared colonies for independence by devolving responsibilities for certain programs to local authorities. In East Africa, decentralization has equally become an axiom following what is perceived the failure of the top down approaches to development and demand for new approaches. Hence, decentralization came to the forefront of the development agenda alongside the renewed global emphasis on governance and human-centered approaches to human development in the 1980s. Discourse on decentralization in the 1980's associated decentralization with increased citizen's participation in decision making process. Today both developed and developing countries like Tanzania are pursuing decentralization policies. It is very evident that top down cannot be said to have failed nations all over the world. But tunes and rhythms depend on how each country carried the practice. For example, China is heavily practicing centrally planned economy, but with proper machinery of identifying needs of the people in every community through sound research. Most African countries have been carried with the decentralization by devolution. At times the challenge could be who are the lower echelon leaders, such as councilors and village chairman? Do mandates vested to them equal the responsibilities? Is the quality of education they have attained suggests ability to deal with the problems the societies face? Is the pay rendered to the leaders suggests reasonable pay? These and many other questions suggest that there is still more room for researches to give a proper value of decentralization and more importantly devolution. This master piece of literature tackles in a nutshell on the importance of payment to this elect office with the view to compare the roles of the two cadres: councilors and village chairmen.

In most African countries particularly, after

independence that is from 1961 to 1980, some developing countries set out ambitious social and human resources development plans including programmes generally aimed at the eradication of poverty, ignorance and diseases in a matter of two decades (Nyerere, 1967; Norman, 2003; Mmari, 2005). Currently, countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ghana, Canada, Nigeria and Brazil are practicing decentralization by devolution. The degree of autonomy may differ but at least they are similar but not the same, they differ because these countries vary. The utterance of culture, traditions, presence or absence of colonialism, traits of former regimes, and type of religion or religions could setup a vivid variation among the nations, hence the extent of decentralisation and thus devolution. Some challenges that faced Tanzania include how to properly serve the people with education facilities such as schools, health centres and water facilities. Therefore, the first president of Tanzania Julius Nyerere felt the easiest way to coordinate the people for development was to create a room for being together and thus do away with people living in their clans, hence, villages were formed for the purpose of serving the people. In 1972 to 1975, it was a period of forming villages (Max, 1991; Norman, 1998; URT, 2003).

To date, it is felt that Africa has always seen decentralization as an ideal approach to rural and urban development (Ngwilizi, 2002; Nelson, 2000). While central government administrative structures improved through these decentralization initiatives, actual participation by the rural and urban populace in the development process was not realized. This type of decentralization was more of deconcentration than devolution of power through local level democratic organs. Tanzania's ongoing administrative, political and economic reforms of early 1990's demanded effective decentralization in which the involvement of the people directly or through their democratically elected representatives is given paramount importance.

Objectives of the study

The main aim of the study was to find out which cadre deserves more attention to payment between the councilors on one hand and village chairpersons on the other hand.

Specific objectives

- (1) Classify the tasks of councilors and village chairperson
- (2) Investigate relevance of payments for the councilors and village chairperson
- (3) Propose ways of improving the decentralization and local government cadres.

Questions for the study

- (a) Is there relevance of payment for the councilor's and chairperson's work?
- (b) Given the two cadre of work (counselor and village chairperson), which job do you consider more tasking?
- (c) You are a councilor at the same time you are village chairperson, given a mandatory choice, which work would you advise the government to append payment?
- (d) What are the reasons for the option you have made?
- (e) What are the functions of the councilor and village chairperson?

The rationale of the study

The study provides an important piece of literature in regard to importance of financial rewards of the two cadres of job, namely councilors and village chairpersons. It further provides a policy guide on which job is more tasking than the other through research and thus make necessary decision on who should be paid and reasons for such a pay. Finally, it provides proper value of the work we do.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several authors have made their work known in decentralisation and devolution area. The list is huge. However, those who have indicated the importance of decentralization include (Max, 1991; Massoi and Norman, 2009; Lukamai, 2006; Ronald, 2005; REPOA, 2008; Fisher, 2008; TREECARE, 2006; Forje, 2006). While the list is huge, but literatures that have sought to cover for the extent of deservedness of pay are limited. There is another set of literatures which provides guidance to manage decentralization and the functions thereto. The list include publications with the government of United Republic of Tanzania (URT), which are (URT, 1996; URT, 1998).

There are several reasons for backing decentralisation. From democratic point of view, decentralisation allows practicability of people choosing their own leaders; hence, whether the leaders are weak or strong the tag is on the people who elected them. From institutional point of view, decentralization allows formalization of institutions that facilitates management of the people at the grassroots level. It is easy to say we want to have dispensaries in every village because of decentralization. We set up primary schools in every village because of decentralization.

Further, from governance point of view, decentralization allows governments to append resources for security and piece; development plans and so forth. Hence,

decentralization is vital for the development of the people. From social and economic perspectives, this simply means that through decentralization, opportunities are created for the people at the grassroots to be part of the highest political, administrative, legislative, planning and budgeting within their localities. In Tanzania, the local government is the largest employer. This automatically boosts the velocity of money through what is paid to the workers. Normally people do not consume notes or coins but they consume the values appended to the coins and notes through purchasing goods and services.

From education perspective, decentralization infiltrates knowledge to the people through practising management and governance. People meet in their village government committees, they table agendas, discuss matters that the societies face, they do prioritization and suggest solution for each problem. This is a school by itself. People in these committees become leaders created by their own societies. No wonder some of these committee leaders are better than those with certificates known as degrees. Decentralization exposes people in a broader spectrum and removes mediocrity syndrome of leadership investing in certificates without practice.

Nyerere (1976) indicates that each person must be paid commensurate to work appended to him or her. King (2015) suggests that it is only competence based appointment, promotion and recruitment that will boost development. He adds that each personnel should be paid in accordance to his contribution to the society. King (2015) seems to be narrating that institutions should pay the ability of a person not a mere title. In other words, title should be granted to a person according to ability to contribute development to the society and thus payment as remuneration. Generally, decentralisation appeals for bringing government to the people.

Literally, vilagelization is a concept that was propounded in Tanzania, and when the purpose of vilagelization is examined, particularly when observing functions such as: (1) enabling people dwell together and make informed decision that are for the majority rather than of the few, (2) enabling people choose their own leaders at the level of 250 house hold (village) and execute the functions of the government at that very level, (3) enabling people exercise power of the central government at the grassroots level (village), and (4) enabling people make their preference in terms of economical, political and socially and move ahead towards the realization of the benefits of decision making and power utilization. One can be able to say the prominence of the so called decentralization; particularly in Africa it was indeed propounded in Tanzania and baptized a new name decentralization and later devolution. In the amplification of this study on decentralization, researchers have noted that China had village establishment policy of about 30 years before Tanzania attained her independence in 1961 (Msekwa,

2010; Norman, 2010). In this vein, it can be added that certainly Nyerere learned the importance of vilagelization, decentralization and finally devolution in China as he was a dear friend of Chairman Mao the then president of China.

That is why, some authors feel that decentralization and devolution may occur at the same time, it is quite possible to decentralize administrative functions without devolving the power to make meaningful decisions (Massoi and Norman, 2009; Fisher, 2008).

Although most authors (Max, 1991; Boon and Jong, 1991; King, 2012; Norman, 1998; Mollel and Tullenaar, 2013; Green, 2015) seem to link devolution with the transfer of power to the local authorities, yet what happened in Tanzania is the transfer of authority from the central government to the local government, enabling the later to pursue all matters regarding social, economical and political development which were formerly being done by the central government. For example, before devolution the mandates to determine collection of revenue on various agricultural products were vested on the central government but after the reforms which paved a way for devolution the mandate has been shifted to the local government authority up to the village level.

Hence, it can be narrated that decentralization by devolution means transfer of authority- functional responsibilities, and resources to all local government levels. This is geared towards making them largely autonomous, democratically governed and deriving legitimacy through service they deliver to people in accordance to grassroots level dwellers' priorities as communicated to government decision-makers (URT, 2004; Bonna, 2005). From the definition, it can be reiterated that the focus of the law and regulations governing decentralisation by devolution focused on Mtaa level (in case of urban authority and village in case of rural authority) due to the fact that these are the lowest level of authorities within the structure of local government, hence, making it possible for the participation of the people at the grassroots. While the essence and the importance of decentralization are clear, yet the attribution to the payment of leaders of lowest levels is arguably hence this study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a case study design, which has employed a qualitative approach to finalize the research work. In depth interviews were the leading information collection strategy. Observation and documentation acted as supportive measures. The data were collected at Hai districts in Kilimanjaro region. The information was collected using purposeful sampling as only leaders who served concurrently as village chairperson and ward councillors were involved in the study. In Hai district, there were only four villages which had their chairpersons elected as councillors.

Hence, the sample was 100% of the respective population. The target interviewee was those leaders who concurrently held

positions of councillors and village chairmen. Further, interviews were made to those who either served one at a time as chairman later as councillor. The reason for such sample was to eliminate pretence. The sample was small but from people who are practicing and thus stood the best position to opine on who deserves pay and who do not. Hence, the total sample was four wards, which happened to have leaders on both categories. The chairpersons/ councillors who were involved in the study are of villages (with names of wards in brackets) namely Roo (Masama Mashariki), Shirimgungani (Mnadani), Kware (Masama kusini) and Longoi (Machame weruweru). The content analysis is employed to come up with the conclusions.

FINDINGS

The findings of this imperative study are provided here. In this study, the responses have observed the logicity of the questions put forward for the study. The study has set cognovits of respondents as R, and thus R1 means the first respondent in the series of interview. In addition, R2 means the second respondent in the series of interview. The content analysis is employed to set up the conclusion. Therefore, in this part responses are captured per question. Nevertheless, the main objective of the study is to find out which job among the two, namely, village chairperson on the one hand and the ward councillor on the other hand, is more tasking and thus deserves pay comparatively. Hence, the conclusion has taken care of the total responses of the respondents, without deviating from the objectives of the study.

Regarding the first question, is there need for payment of salary or any allowance for the councilors work? Responses indicate that indeed there is. In this question, all respondents indicated the need for the pay. Hence, 100% of the respondents were in favor for paying allowances to the councilors. Here, allowances refer to payment appended on event, in this regard on meetings as scheduled by the District Executive Director or of similar stature pending the type of the local government council. While salary refers to formalized payment paid on every month irrespective of event/meetings.

Regarding the corresponding question on whether village chairperson deserve pay or any allowance? Also, all respondents were in favor for the payment of the village chairpersons. What is noted during the two corresponding questions is that on the need for payment of village chairpersons the gist for the respondents was of the opinion that village chairperson work needs salary and not a mere allowance. R1, had this to say, *"I serve as a counselor and as village chairman but sincerely, with councilor's work, I just attend the meetings at the headquarter of the council that is all. With chairman of a village work, meetings are many in numbers than those at the councilors. The meetings at this stage are problem solving meetings, yes more than 90% are problem solving meetings. No rest at all."*

R3 had this to say, he seemed amazed when the

researcher posed this question. *“Look village chairman is everything in this community. I walk up in the morning every day to supervise projects that we implement at this level. I must organize meetings to provide feedback to the people regarding the use of funds remitted to us by the central government, donors, and even the local government council. When roads are bad, complaints go to the village chairman and may be the member of the parliament, nobody complains to me as a counselor. It could be, but rarely”*. This response seem to be covering question 3, which sought to know which job is more tasking between the two cadres.

Question 3 sought to know which work is more tasking. All the respondents affirmed that village chairperson's duties and responsibilities were more than those of a ward councilor.

Question 4 is comparative in nature. It sought to know which work deserves payment had there been a choice of one, among the two cadres. This again had a similar response for all respondents. To them, there seems no even need for comparing as one is too heavy as compared to the other. R2 had this to say, *“It is even not right to compare the two cadres. The government has not sought to know. I guess, if your research is government sponsored, they should know that village chairperson does more work than anyone in the village. You cannot compare with village executive nor the councilor”*.

R4, added that, *“from ensuring peace and tranquility, development of infrastructure, electricity, health centers, and schools in both primary and secondary much as they are in your village, the responsible person is the village chairman. In this regard payment must be made to the chairperson of the village”*.

Question 5 intended to find reasons for question 4. There are several tasks that were put across. Nevertheless, it is summarized as village chairperson are the supra in the development programs of a village. It is village chairperson who ensures that peace is maintained. R3, had this to say, *“the village chairperson emphasize on volunteerism on village development activities such as breeks preparation, household contribution to village projects, and awareness creation for villagers on matters related with health, economy and general welfare of the society. Any activity that needs volunteerism is subjected to the village chairperson”*.

Question 6 purported to know the functions of the councilor from perceptual and practical point of view. Just like members of parliament, the main functions of the councilor are narrated as making bylaws, debating bills, and passing budgets of the councils. The general comments of the respondents were that, councilors attend meetings in the council headquarter and in their committees, that is all. R2 adds that, *“we are not disregarded as poor performers because they know we pass the budget at council level and the priorities are made at council level. Nevertheless, at village levels,*

chairpersons of the villages need to make priorities, which will then be discussed at Ward Development Committee (WDC), which I being the councilor, chairs. Even in this WDC, we indulge into discussing the programs of villages, which have been literally brought by village chairpersons while assisted by the village executives. I am just a coordinator, chairing village businesses.”

Question 7, was similar with question six as it sought to know the functions of the village chairpersons. The functions of the village chairperson are stipulated in the law. However, this study eludes the deep praxis of the functions as opined by those who practice it. Generally, the respondents indicated that a village chairperson is responsible in the persecutions and fortunes of the village. *“When something go wrong, the complaints are availed to the chairman of the village, but when things are right heroes go to all the villagers”* narrated R4.

DISCUSSION

It is important to reveal here that all respondents held posts of councilor and chairperson of the village concurrently. They were elected as village chairmen a year before contesting the seat of a councilor. The interviewees were seconded into the office for the second time prior to contesting the seat of councilor. All were in office for six years as village chairperson prior to contesting. This provides another important piece of information as far as orientation on the two works is concerned. They were elected in office as village chairmen in 2004 for the first time, and were re-elected in 2009. In 2010 they contested for the seat of councilor and won. Thus, they became councilors after having served as chairperson of the villages for at least six years. When the interview was conducted they had both at least two years' experience as councilors and seven years' experience as village chairpersons. The opinion thus is of paramount as they emerge from the people practicing the two cadres of work. This study does not intend to dilute the responsibilities of the councilors, rather it calls for thorough research for governments to engage elites who are professional in problem identification and solving prior to making decisions. No doubt, village chairperson, according to what they perform in their daily activities suggests payment of salary to be appended to them.

The articulation made by respondents is that one can decide not to attend the meetings of the council but he cannot abscond the meeting of the village. One can decide not to participate in the council committees but cannot abscond the programs of the village. The development programs of the village require the chairperson to be there all the time. From reporting the revenue collection, expenditures, progress of the various projects of the village which include schools, dispensaries,

bridges, houses, agricultural implements and so forth, they require time and mental work of the chairperson. It is noted in the findings part, that all respondents had the view that councilors can be paid allowances pending the meetings they attend at the headquarters of the council. They further add that village chairperson deserve salary as their work require day to day time.

Conclusion

It is evident now to conclude that the two cadres of elect namely councillors and village chairpersons are crucial in the episode of development of the communities and thus our countries. Indeed, both require some packages of facilitation in the discourse of implementing their work. However, the study has revealed that the tasks performed by the village chairpersons are incomparable. Indeed the councillor chairs the Ward Development Committee (WDC), and also ought to represent the views of the people at the council level. The responsibilities of the councillors are group responsibility; it includes attending the meetings, debating bylaws and budgets of the council among others. Presence or absence of a councillor does not render any decision to be forfeited. People of the ward cannot tell if the councillor attended a meeting or not. The cause is different when the gauge is made to the village chairperson. The responsibilities and tasks of the chairman of the village are solely at personal level. All villagers would be aware of the presence and absence of the chairman. It requires the chairman in the initiation of the development projects of the village, setting priorities of development programs, monitoring the projects to completion, and intervening development priorities such as health, education, water and agriculture. It has been noted that 100% of the respondents are of the view that village chairman work is more tasking compared to councillors and thus deserve pay in the form of salaries or allowances that comprehend with the village executive officer or more.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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