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CONTRIBUTIONS OF NEGOTIATED DEMOCRACY AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN DEVOLVED SYSTEMS IN KENYA: A RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

This paper reviews the extant conceptual and theoretical literatures on negotiated democracy and transformational leadership with a view of identifying its contribution on community development in devolved governance in Kenya. The introduction of devolved systems in country and regions previously marked by communal conflict, chronic insecurity, re-current shocks, marginalization and poverty underscores the need to assess elder-led negotiated democracy and transformational leadership and their contribution to community development. The level of development in a country are determined by the type and quality of leadership. Africa's and by extension Kenya's developmental failures are largely because of ineffective leadership, corruption, low public participation in political dispensation, ethnicity, weak institutional and governance structures. Negotiated democracy and transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in political and socio-economic agenda, democratic governance, conflict resolution in ethically divided communities, and development of the community and the Country. The paper summarizes the existing theoretical and conceptual knowledge gaps and proposes a theoretical model that will guide conducting of an empirical study.

Keywords: negotiated democracy, transformational leadership, devolution, Northern Counties, Kenya, community development

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between leadership democracy and development in Africa has morphed into one of the most contentious issues in the recent past owing to vast debate around it. Democracy is envisioned to offer every citizen a share in the government of the day and the role of transformational leadership (TFL) in public administration is a critical driver in democratic and community development (Burnell, 2014). Combined, democratic governance and leadership are critical ingredients for the development of communities and nations (Aliye, 2020). Arguably, no country or community can develop beyond the level of its leadership and democratic governance. Democracy and leadership in Kenya have seen mixed results since Kenya's independence in 1963 with these failures largely attributed largely to poor leadership, tribalism, corruption and institutional failures (Lawson, 2009, Mwangi, 2008). As a result, the need to design and implement new development models centred on negotiated democracy and TFL cannot be overstated given that most of the development blueprints adopted at Kenya's independence seem to be failing in form and substance.

Kenya has experienced significant political system reforms from a highly centralized autocracy to a decentralized democracy (Matsumoto, 2019). Notably, post-colonial Kenya was actuated with single party system, centralized power, and authoritarian regimes, with imperial presidency contributing largely to Kenya's political and development problems (Oriku et al., 2020). Kenya first adopted devolved governance in the Majimbo constitution right after independence in 1963 (Barkan & Mutua, 2010). After independence, political elites continued to surround themselves with people of the same ethnicity to exploit their divisions and such divisions impeded integration, unity and became a barrier to development (Hope, 2014). Despite Kenya transitioning into a multi-party system in 1992, this did not also end marginalization, ethnic conflicts and unequal distribution of resources and therefore ethnicity, mismanagement and corruption continued to heavily impact on the development ambitions of the country (Yieke, 2010). The 2007-2008 post-election violence necessitated sober discussions, challenged the status quo and provided the impetus for significant reforms. The promulgation of new constitution in August 2010 altered the division of political power in the county establishing a system of a devolved government- national government and 47 lower-level county governments (Oyugi, 2005; Berret, Mude & Omiti, 2007; CoK, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Although the population of North Eastern Kenya Counties is ethnically and religiously homogenous, disagreements and conflict between the various clans has often led to perennial violence, which is been aggravated by new trigger factors such as devolved governance leading

to competition between clans for political influence and disputes over land (Mwagiru & Oculli, 2006). A few studies have reviewed the classical model of negotiated democracy and transformational leadership in devolved systems and their contribution to community development. Armingeon (2002) conducted a study on effect of negotiation democracy through a comparative analysis based on data covering 22 OECD countries, between 1971–1996. The study demonstrated that negotiation democracy has higher capabilities for integrating large minorities and are better suited for segmented societies.

Kenya remains largely underdeveloped owing to poor economic policies that do not reflect the priority development needs of the country (Kagema, 2018). To ameliorate some of the development challenges, Kenya promulgated a new constitution that created devolved units of governance that were expected to enhance equity in resource distribution since politics of the day had always predicted resource allocation (Oriku, Josiah, Okiro, Nyamute, & Pokhariyal, 2020). Evidence shows that the Northern regions of Kenya face plethora of predicament in terms of underdevelopment, poverty, insecurity, clan conflict and corruption. These challenges appear to cast doubt on the strength of leadership and democratic governance in Kenya.

The constructs of negotiated democracy, devolution and leadership has been studied in the past, however several scholars (World Bank report, 2012; Menocal, 2007; Issack, 2018; Adam, 2000; Lars, 2011) have reported mixed results. This casts doubt on the extent to which transformational leadership and negotiated democracy have affected community development. Hence, the critical need to review this literature and carry out empirical study and leverage on significance of negotiated democracy and transformational leadership in ethnically fragmented societies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Negotiated Democracy

The current body of literature is replete with information on the concept of democracy given that it is a recurring theme in governance systems across the world. Lincoln (1986) was one of the early individuals who coined and defined democracy to mean 'a government of the people, by the people and for the people'. This suggests that the expectation of democracy is to allow for equal participation of citizens in socio-economic and political decision-making processes. The concept of democracy has received extensive discussion in political arenas and in the social sciences literature. Democracy is generally understood as the process where voters choose their local and national leaders through regular elections (Lincoln, 1986). Democratic foundations can be traced back to the evolving political institutions and revolutions of 18th century Europe and North America. Democracy and development in Africa were expected to usher in era of opportunity, freedom and development. However, democracy, leadership and development has witnessed mixed results and in the absence of equal opportunity for all citizens to the dividends of these constructs, the significance of democracy is defeated (Przeworski, 1991).

In Kenya, the construct of democracy and devolution gave birth to the concept of negotiated democracy, where power was decentralized, and the responsibility of the people's representatives was placed at lower levels especially in regions previously marked by communal conflict, chronic insecurity, marginalization, poverty, and underdevelopment. It is instructive to note that negotiated democracy refers to a mechanism of agreeing how to distribute political positions in advance of elections through pre-election agreement brokered by Council of Elders (Cheeseman, 2019). Armingeon (2002) among other scholars argue that negotiated democracy is not a new concept and describes three types of negotiated democracies: consociational democracy, corporatism, and a regime of veto players. The Kenyan system has a combination of various forms of negotiated democracy (hybrid). Negotiated democracy in the context of this review refers to the practice of agreeing how to distribute political positions in advance of an election brokered by elders and based on ethnic formula. Today, democracy is popular and used as a vehicle for fulfilment and articulation of individual, community and nations aspirations, interests and the nurturing of civil society. Armingeon (2000) conclude that negotiated democracy can secure social peace in deeply divided societies.

The struggle for devolution and negotiated democracy are aimed improving people's socio-economic status especially in countries and regions characterized by conflicts, poverty and ethnic marginalization (Cheeseman, Bertrand, & Husaini, 2019). Consequently, in Kenya, this came into effect during the introduction of devolution in 2013, when political and community leaders in conflict affected regions decided to forge agreements about the distribution of seats between and within ethnic groups. Armingeon (2002) posit negotiation democracy has higher capabilities for integrating large minorities and are better suited for segmented societies. According to Issack (2018), the challenges of negotiated democracy in Kenya is the creation divisions among communities and heightened conflict during elections, contributing to systematic marginalization of women and youth from elective politics. The questions that begs answer is: Is negotiated democracy a good thing? And does it facilitate community democratic participation and economic development? The reasonable answer to these questions is in the affirmative. While competitive democracy is a good thing as it allows for political participation, competitive elections, accountable government and socio-economic development, negotiated democracy while still is a work in progress, has similar objectives and the answer to it will be an empirical one. Consequently, it may be the right time to review and take stock of this new model of democracy and consider the foundations on which it rests, the policies and structures required to strengthen or abandon it altogether.

Transformational Leadership

Kenya's aspiration and hope remain today largely unfulfilled in spite of the five decades of political and economic growth. This is due to the leadership challenges that has become a recurring issue on the political, governance and development discussions. Burns (1978) pioneered the idea of transformational leading noting that great leaders do more by building trust and articulating their constituents' deepest needs leading to community transformation. Avolio and Bass (1988) further developed this and refer to this type of leadership as value added that create an environment of opportunity and a shared future. The current body of academic literature is replete with information on the interplay between transformational leadership (TFL) and performance of private and public organizations, where there seem to be consensus among scholars that leaders with a transformational approach are sine qua non for efficient and effective organizations (Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017; Megheirkouni, 2017). This suggests that institutions that apply a transformative approach to their day-to-day operations can achieve the projected results.

The evidence that transformational leadership makes a positive difference in a community is both substantial and positive. There is evidence at the global, regional, and local level on the essentials of TFL (Andersen, Bjørnholt, Bro, & Holm-Petersen, 2018). Attributes of TFL have been given considerable attention, where the current body of literature seem to be agreeing that transformational leaders prioritize the needs of the organization by going beyond immediate self-centeredness and egocentricity through individualized consideration, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation (Amanchukwu, Stanley, & Ololube, 2015; Obeidat & Tarhini, 2016; Zareen, Razzaq, & Mujtaba, 2015). Lussier and Achua (2015) suggests that leaders with a transformational approach communicate vision of the organization to their followers in a clear manner and taps into the motives and higher ideals of their followers. Bronkhorst et al. (2015) suggests that transformations leaders serve to change the basic attitudes, beliefs, and values of the followers with a view to ensuring that the followers go beyond the prescribed minimum levels specified by the top management teams of the organization.

Ahmad, Mohamed, and Manaf (2017) suggests that transformational leaders possess characteristics that support effective implementation of change within organizations, where these attributes of the leader include, but not limited to inspiring, motivating, supporting, empathetic, adaptability, charisma, and communication. Shen, Ju, Koh, Rowlinson, and Bridge (2017) stated that the characteristics of leaders with a transformative agenda is that they place the interests of their followers and those of the organization above self-aggrandizement. Study by Samson and Kepha (2016), however reveal that transformative leadership had a significant negative relationship on governance in Kajiado County in Kenya and recommended that performance of a county government to be reviewed and monitored frequently through some measures of performance. Linda and Anyira (2017) offer their perspective on devolved system of government in Kenya and state that Counties have strategic plans but, their service delivery fall below customers expectation. They recommended leaders to adopt transformational leadership practices to achieve the desired performance. Krishnan (2005) on the other hand described transformational leadership as a leader who motivates followers to performance beyond expectations. The challenges facing the world and in Kenya in contemporary times require a new kind of leadership-transformational leadership.

Community Development

Mattessich and Monsey (2004) defined community as individuals who live within a geographically defined area and who have social and psychological ties with each other and with the place where they live. Green and Haines (2002) posit community development as a planned effort to produce assets that increase the capacity of residents to improve their quality of life. Christenson and Robinson (1989) cited in Mattessich and Monsey (2004) agrees with this assertion by stating that community development generally refers to the social capital or social capacity, which describes the abilities of residents to organize and mobilize their resources for the accomplishment of consensual defined goals. According to the United Nations (2010) community development refers to an approach which relies upon local communities as units of action and which combines external assistance with local development resources and stimulates local initiative and leadership.

The constitution of Kenya described the objectives of devolution as to improving service delivery, community participation in decision making, make governance more responsive and accountable creating downward accountability mechanisms thus leading to community development. Negotiated democracy and transformational leadership in the realm of devolved systems can facilitate public participation, minimize ethnic conflict, integrate marginalized communities, improve service delivery, encourage peaceful co-existence among communities and improve development outcomes (CoK, 2010; Ghai, 2008). Several views also attest to this assertion and one school of thought sees democracy as a necessary precondition for the achievement of development. Knutsen (2010) and Smith (2009) point to the fact that democracy provides necessary institutions for development which can eventually provide avenue for economic development. Ndung'u (2014) posit that Kenya has experienced episodes of political instability from indepence, leading to negative effect on not only community's but the country's economic performance and social cohesion. Arguments presented in extant literature clearly show a strong relationship between effective leadership, democracy, devolution and community development. In poor and ethnically fragmented societies, negotiated democracy, devolution and transformational leadership has been thought to be instrumental in diffusing community tension, embracing diversity and inclusion, improving accountability and encouraging community participation socio-economic matters (Green, 2008; Muia, 2008). Leadership, democracy and development are inseparable and cultivating transformational leaders and negotiated democracy in devolved systems in critical to community development.

Legal Framework and Devolution in Kenya

Potter (2001) describes devolution as a process of transfer of political, administrative and fiscal management powers between central government and lower levels of government. According to Jiwaji (2014) devolution is one of the ways to fully attain people's participation in governance, enable power and resources to be transferred from higher national levels to lower levels. Devolution in Kenya is legally recognized approach where political, administrative and fiscal power have been transferred to 47 lower level county Governments. The constitution of Kenya (2010) is the main legal backbone of the devolution architecture, outlining the objectives and the actual governance structures (CoK, 2010), though several legal, policy and institutional frameworks by the national government, the Senate, the National Assembly and the County Assemblies also support and guide the devolution implementation process. Among many reforms, devolution is arguably the most significant and meant to address long-standing inequalities in economic opportunities, investment, and service delivery.

Emerging evidence from extant literature on democracy, devolution and community development seems to confirm that, African countries have tended to perform better as agents of economic development. Bosire (2013) posit that devolution helps to mitigate underdevelopment, centralization of power and partially addressed issue pertaining to ethnic conflict. According to Schou and Haug (2005) decentralization may have a positive impact by encouraging equitable distribution of resources with ability to reduce perennial conflicts thereby promoting political stability and unity amongst communities. Grasa and Gutierrez (2009) state

decentralization improved service delivery and public participation at the local level and promoted solutions to local problems. Emma and Anders (2019) offer decentralization as a model used to mitigate the effects of winner-takes-all politics at the national level in societies affected by violent conflict over central government power.

Kanyinga (2016) concluded that devolution under the Kenya 2010 Constitution is a workin-progress and there are signs that implementation is eroding the basis for patronage-based development. This appears to suggest that devolution, if well implemented, will address longstanding challenges including minimizing ethnic-based conflict and improving socioeconomic development. Richard (2003) revealed worrying trends that decentralization may not empower affect the effort of elites who are against pro-poor program and policies and concluded that for decentralized governance to fully function, it must uphold and broaden accountability mechanisms at all levels of governance. Devolution as a governance model has not only been implemented in Kenya, but also in other countries in Africa such as Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Uganda.

The Case of North Eastern Kenya Counties

Kenya's North Eastern Counties face unique challenges ranging from communal violence, competition between clans for political influence, disputes over land, and external attacks especially by Al-Shabaab militants from Somalia (Mwagiru & Oculli, 2006; Atta-Asamoah, 2015). While ethnicity has been used as a tool for defining exclusion and inclusion in Country's politics and undermine socio-political interests, most ethnic conflicts and underdevelopment in northern counties are attributed to many years of political, socio-economic and ethnic marginalization.

Negotiated democracy and transformational leadership has been used as advocates for finding solutions to the problems within the devolved system. The elder-led concept has gained prominence since the inception of devolution in Kenya in 2013 and used to allocate political positions ahead of elections in order to resolve ethnic conflicts, incorporate marginalized and neglected groups and improve prospect of socio-economic development. Othieno (2012) believed that devolution can be a solution to problems afflicting communities such as conflicts, corruption, inequalities, rent seeking, inefficient use of public resources, and economic stagnation. Ghai (2008) observed that devolution in Kenya has the potential to de-ethicize the state and democratize the society. However, there is little empirical evidence on the effect of devolution and negotiated democracy on community development and these previous studies face limitations especially considering new models of democracy and leadership that call for more studies. It is on this basis that the author found the need to examine the extant literature on constructs under review.

Emerging Conceptual Issues

The reviewed literature has elucidated the constructs of negotiated democracy, transformational leadership and community development in devolved system. The literature is valuable in advancing scholarly work in these areas. The construct of negotiated democracy will be operationalized using community elders, minorities and marginalized groups, conflict resolution, peaceful co-existence of communities, elected politicians, youth and women in political participation. Transformational leadership is operationalized using the 4ls of transformational leadership- individualized consideration, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation while community development is operationalized using community participation, social equity, ethnic cohesion, inclusion of minority and marginalized groups, socio-economic development and equitable distribution of resources.

Previous studies have given insight on how the constructs have been understood and applied. A study by Schou and Haug (2005) from comparative qualitative case studies on decentralization in conflict and post conflict situations revealed that decentralization may have a positive impact by encouraging equitable distribution of resources with ability to reduce perennial conflicts thereby promoting political stability and unity amongst communities. A study by Armingeon (2002) on effect of negotiation democracy through a comparative analysis based on data covering 22 OECD countries, between 1971-1996, demonstrated that negotiation democracy has higher capabilities for integrating large minorities and are better suited for segmented societies. Kariuki (2015) described the role council of elders play in traditional African societies as achievement of unity and harmony among and within communities, ensuring communities participate in development, resolve conflicts, maintain the customs and traditions and preside on communal properties.

The paradoxes of leadership are as many as its definition and the success of a society economically, socially and politically depends on effective and efficient guidance of leaders (Lussier & Achua, 2007). According to Bass (1990), in all nations, the appropriate type of leadership is transformational. Abdullah, Shamsuddin, and Wahab (2015) states that TFL is a key enabler of organizational commitment since transformational leaders cultivate an organizational culture that encourages organizational citizenship. ElKordy and Hancott (2014) contends that the 4Is of TFL enables top management teams to articulate strong visions for their organizations since leaders with TFL attributes prioritize professional development of the employees by demonstrating empathy and encouraging followers to take risks and be creative.

Theoretical Review

The extant conceptual literature has shade light on how the constructs have been conceptualized. This further requires an examination of the relevant theories to delineate the phenomenon. These theories guiding the discussions include negotiated democracy theory (Armingeon, 2000), transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Avolio & Bass, 1995) and community development theory (Allison, 2009).

Negotiated Democracy Theory

The theory of negotiated democracy has been widely applied to underline the centrality of negotiations in fragile democracies. Armingeon (2000; 2002) discussed widely the theory of negotiated democracy and divided it into three types: Consociational Democracy, Corporatism and Regimes of Veto Players. According to Armingeon (2000), Consociational democracies are systems that attempt to integrate several large minorities, such as women, marginalized groups and youth ensuring more participation of public in political dispensation, public interests in politics and governance and to better govern and guarantee political stability. The premise for this theory is power sharing among the various community segment or ethnic or political groups. Negotiation as an important democratic tool has the citizens and their representatives both political and otherwise make collective decisions that affect their lives. Through this kind of political negotiation, local population promote democracy from within, rather than from outside. This process is shaped by people's interest, security, common goals that help improve stability and socio-economic development. Thus, negotiated democracy represents a mode of sociopolitical integration and participation in which the main pillars and principles are to demonstrate inclusive politics, makes way for conflict resolution in already fragile communities, enhance transparency and accountability and allow community development. This provides diversity of levels and interrelations between public involvement in political bargaining processes (Lehmbruch 2003). The contribution and relevance of the theory is that it helps us understand the various democratic models and framework that can be used to resolve socio-economic, ethno-political conflict and enhance development in plural societies.

Leadership Theories

Leadership theories, such as TFL theory have been applied to explain reasons why specific individuals become leaders and which characteristics are essential in defining leadership attributes. Moreover, leadership theories delineate characteristics of leaders and attempts to define the code of conduct or attributes that individuals should possess to increase influence on their followers. TFL theory was developed by Burns (1978) and later enhanced by Avolio and Bass (1995). Burns defines transformational leadership as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems, that has the potential to create valuable and positive change in the followers and society. The theory postulate that transformative leaders inspire and motivate followers to achieve high levels of performance by converting vision into reality and inspiring followers to perform, walking the extra mile beyond the call of duty. Contributions of the theory is that it seeks to explain how and why certain people become leaders and attempt to identify the behaviours that people can adopt to improve their leadership abilities and influence their followers and organizations.

Community development Theory

Several theories have been propounded to explain the essentials of community development since this is sine qua non for empowering communities at the grassroot level. This paper adopts community development theory to describe how communities and leaders can bring about lasting change for individuals and societies in which they live (Allison, 2009). York (1994) summarizes the foci of Community Development Theory as the organization of community agencies, the developing of local competences, and political action for change. Community development is meant to address several concerns involving building relationships, structure, power, shared meaning, communication for change, motivations for decision making, and integration. These concerns are the basis for the community development theory and the theory helps in understanding people's behaviour and act as a framework from which community developers can explain and comprehend events, help guide and frame the complexity of community work (Burnell, 2014).

Emerging Theoretical Issues

The reviewed theories raise several issues. Interestingly, the different advocates of the theories brought out the areas of agreement. These areas of convergence provide opportunities for theorizing in conceptual and empirical work in negotiated democracy, transformational leadership and community development in devolved systems. For instance, negotiated democracy theory argue for expanding the scope and domain of democracy and assume that democratic experiences will transform individuals especially in plural societies. However, the conditions necessary for community transformation is dependent on leadership and devolution structure. The literature connecting devolution, negotiated democracy and transformational leadership and its effect on community development is still work in progress.

Scholars and previous studies have used some of these theories to guide conceptualization in leadership, democracy and development. For example, Armingeon (2002) used the negotiated democratic theory to explain how negotiation democracies perform differently than competitive democracies and how negotiation democracy has higher capabilities for integrating large minorities and are better suited for segmented societies. Several scholars including Lussier and Achua (2007); Burns (1978) and Bass (1997) used the transformational leadership theory to explore the contribution of this type of leadership in transforming organizations and society. Puttnam (2000); Rose (2000), and Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002) used community development social capital theory as a practical framework used by communities, social worker and leaders to transform societies and enhance development. What however emerges from these previous empirical attempts is the fact that studies used concepts that go beyond the constructs in this review. The studies also did not consider negotiated democracy and transformational leadership in devolved systems as in the case in this paper. In the absence of this kind of information, much of the evidence in empirical literature is anecdotal. This demonstrate that there is need for consideration of rich study evidence to meet this conceptualization and perspective and assess the extent negotiated democracy and transformational contributes to community development in devolved governance.

CALL FOR THEORETICAL MODEL

Fox and Bayat (2007) define theory as "a set of interrelated propositions, concepts and definitions that present a systematic point of view of specifying relationships between variables with a view to predicting and explaining phenomena" (p.29). Kerlinger and Lee (2000) define a theory as "a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena" (p. 11).

Proposed Theoretical Model

The review has pointed to important issues that demonstrate the need for a new or revised theoretical model. First, the need to review issues emanating from the conceptual and the theoretical understanding of negotiated democracy, transformational leadership in devolved systems. Secondly, the need to better understand the role of each in devolved system and provide an avenue for empirical research to be mounted. There is also the need to systematically employ the constructs to integrate the theories and practice from empirical work. Thus, the proposal for a new theoretical framework upon which empirical work can advanced and tested. Below framework is proposed, where several relationships are considered critical in understanding the phenomenon for purposes of theorizing, empirical studies and practice in negotiated democracy and transformational leadership in devolved systems.

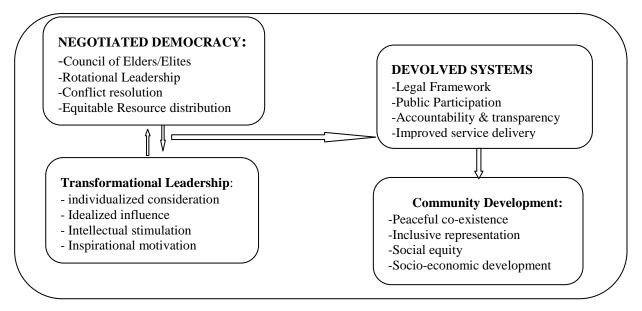


Figure 1. Theoretical model linking negotiated democracy, transformational leadership and community development

Proposition 1: The dimensions of negotiated democracy when conceived, developed and implemented in line with democratic principles will have a significant impact on community development.

Proposition 2: Transformational leadership will act as a necessary condition and engine for sustaining socio-economic development within the realm of negotiated democracy.

Proposition 3: The devolved governance if properly developed and implemented along with transformative leadership and community led- consensus democracy will have positive impact of lives of people.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper sought to review the state of the theoretical and empirical literature on the constructs of negotiated democracy, transformational leadership and community development in devolved system in Kenya. The local elder-led negotiated democracy and transformational leadership has the potential to resolve ethno-political conflicts and improve prospects of socio-economic

developments. The empirical literature on Kenya's power-sharing arrangement has largely examined the political groupings and at national level. It is critical to note that the role of negotiated democracy and transformational leadership in community development at county level is less explored and that devolution, negotiated democracy and transformational leadership work and literature is still a work in progress. The emerging conceptual and theoretical issues have identified, and a theoretical framework proposed that link the constructs in the review. The propositions of the model are suitable to guide future research in the area and be tested using primary data/ The author also envisions to carry out empirical work based on the constructs proposed in this paper to test and validate these propositions.

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