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Approaches to Change Resistance Management among County Governments in Kenya

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Abstract:

In 2018, the World Bank reported poor performance among counties in Kenya, citing low absorption rates and sluggish project delivery. This has been attributed to insufficient and late disbursement of funding, but the role of change resistance management has not been examined. The approaches to change resistance management have been addressed by scholars. However, there is limited evidence that county governments utilise these techniques. This paper explored the extent to which Kenya's 47 county governments utilise change resistance management techniques. Using the Social Action Theory as a foundation and a qualitative research design, a systematic assessment of 31 studies undertaken in Kenya's public sector, including 14 on county governments since 2011, was conducted. Thematic analysis of data gathered using a review guide reveals that county governments in Kenya employ agreement and negotiation, coercion, co-optation and manipulation, education and communication, assistance and facilitation, and involvement and participation. The recommendation is for county governments in Kenya to become more actively involved in managing change resistance and to conduct additional research on county governments to strengthen evidence and clarity.

Keywords: *Change resistance management, coercion, agreement and negotiation, support and facilitation, participation and involvement, co-optation and manipulation, education and communication*

1. Background Information

The term 'change management' refers to the planned, managed, or systematic implementation of changes (Burns, 2018). The rate of change is so rapid, and the degree of obsolescence for organisations that resist change is so great that many individuals are forced to choose between embracing change and perishing. Due to technological, economic, political, and social upheavals, the business climate of the twenty-first century is characterised by rapid change (Lysons & Farrington, 2012). Resistance management is essential to effectively embrace new processes and systems in an ongoing organisation, which is the primary objective of this transformation. Consequently, managing change includes controlling its human impact (Carnall & Todnem, 2014). Researchers and practitioners differentiate a reactionary response from an anticipatory or proactive one.

According to Senior and Swiles (2016), managers face resistance to change and respond to it differently depending on the circumstances and time period. Coercion is one of the methods used (Bremer & Lames, 2012). It involves employing force or threat to convince employees to accept or comply with a change that may be implicit or explicit. It includes harassment, bullying, and using direct or indirect threats to engender fear. Education and effective communication are further alternatives (Balogun, Gustafsson, and Hailey, 2015). This strategy can be useful when employees lack information or are only partially aware of the various facets of a change. Because knowledge is power, employees will resist change if they lack sufficient knowledge or have incorrect or insufficient information about the various components of the change. Partners who are convinced of the necessity of change are more inclined to contribute to its successful implementation. Participation and involvement are change formulation methods emphasising consultation and collaboration with change implementers. It is typically encouraged, particularly when the change's initiators lack sufficient information to make and implement the change or when the employees have significant authority to reject it.

The alternative option is to achieve a compromise and negotiate (Burnes, 2018). This process includes negotiations, deals, and sacrifices between resistance and management. The technique focuses on exchanging something good for less resistance to change. Managers can also employ strategies of coercion and manipulation. The focus is on convincing or swaying the personnel to approve the change. To persuade staff members to embrace the change, they may subtly attempt to:

- Conceal information,
- Twist or distort it to appeal to employees,
- Disseminate phoney information to appeal to employees or
- Fabricate false stories to spread throughout the organisation

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There have been numerous scenarios in which research in the disciplines of change management and change resistance management has been done. Karanja (2015) conducted a study on the effects of organisational transformation on employee performance in Nairobi for the Kenya Postal Corporation. She discovered that organisational transformation positively affected employee performance. VasANJI (2016) demonstrated through Kenbro Industries Limited that employees at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are exposed to various changes, including strategic, unplanned, and rapid change. Many resist these changes due to their unpredictability. Olajide (2014) conducted an empirical study on the effects of change on the organisational performance of Nigeria's telecom industries. According to the study, customers are strongly affected by technological advancements.

On the other hand, according to Nduta (2011), the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights (KNHCR) has successfully implemented various organisational transformation projects by managing employee opposition. After completing research at the KNCHR to determine how management handles resistance, he took this action. Martin and Mwirungi (2013) studied resistance to change in Kenya's security sector and determined that disengagement, misidentification, and disenchantment had an impact on how resistance to change was handled. Dortenzio (2012) discovered through a case study that public sector personnel require a 'voice' in change and change management processes and practices that affect them personally and professionally.

In addition, Struijs and VanDam (2012) found that the link between resistance to change and intention to quit is completely mediated by job satisfaction, with employees who are more resistant to change being less satisfied with their positions. Gitonga and Kamure (2014) examined the effects of strategic shifts on businesses using the Capital Market Authority of Kenya as a case study and found a positive correlation. Olaside (2014) evaluated the influence of empirical change management on the performance of Nigerian telecoms firms. The studies revealed that technological advancements have a significant effect on customer loyalty. Other researchers, including Wanza and Nkararu (2016), Kisianganiq and Oparanya (2015), Kamau and Kamaria (2015), and others, have conducted an additional study (2014).

Although the empirical evidence on change management is substantial, it focuses on factors influencing change management, such as:

- Employee attitudes toward change,
- The relationship between resistance to change,
- The turnover ability of firms to accept innovations,
- Change management practices and their effects on performance,
- Causes of change resistance and employee voice in change and change management processes

The investigation also examines banks, the Revenue Authority, the Airport Authority, civil society, and other areas. The research's focus on the implementation and effectiveness of various change resistance methods was likewise limited. As a result, it is uncertain how various organisations approach change resistance management strategies and how effective they are. This competence is severely lacking in county government. However, the data could be useful in supporting counties in overcoming opposition to change and so enhancing their performance.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

According to the World Bank, counties generated 60% of the Gross Domestic Product in 2019. According to research issued by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis in 2020, the Gross County Product per capita in 2017 was greater in 10 counties than the national GDP per capita of Ksh 96,798,80. In addition, the World Bank identified poor performance in several nations in 2018, noting low absorption rates and delayed project delivery. The previous study has linked this to inadequate and late funding flow, but the role of change resistance management, specifically the strategies employed, has not been investigated. Numerous studies on change management have been conducted. However, they have primarily focused on the factors that influence change management, such as the causes of resistance to change, employees' attitudes toward change, the relationship between resistance to change and turnover, and employees' voices in change management processes. In addition, the analysis reveals a paucity of evidence regarding the extent to which change resistance management strategies are utilised in county administrations. Change resistance management approaches receive minimal attention. Therefore, it is uncertain how many unique techniques to change resistance management are utilised by county governments. In terms of county governments, this knowledge is lacking. Theoretically, such information is essential for supporting firms, including counties, in managing change resistance and enhancing performance. While the 47 Kenyan county governments may benefit from empirically validating this knowledge, scholars would benefit from the research gaps that were identified and left unaddressed in this work.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine to what extent county administrations in Kenya were modifying resistance management.

1.3. Research Question

How prevalent are change resistance management strategies applied within Kenyan county governments?

1.4. Significance of the Study

This report offers county governments in Kenya the opportunity to evaluate their policies by providing insight into how they approach and manage change. The findings of the study are intended to be useful to policymakers in Kenya's county administrations.

1.5. Methodology

As the study's methodology, the literature review was employed. According to Webster and Watson (2002), a competent and well-executed review as a research strategy provides a solid foundation for increasing knowledge and facilitating the creation of theories. A literature review can combine the findings and viewpoints of multiple empirical studies to address research topics with a potency that no one inquiry can match (Transfield, Denyer, and Smart, 2003).

1.5.1. Philosophy

A research philosophy is a system of views regarding the collection, processing, and application of evidence on a topic. A framework directs the conduct of research based on assumptions about the nature of reality and knowledge. The philosophy of this paper is interpretivism. This approach requires researchers to interpret study elements. Hence, human interest is included in the examination (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2012). It is a philosophy that integrates a research method involving personal interpretations and where meaning arises from data analysis near the conclusion of the study (Collins, 2010). According to this view, sometimes known as anti-positivism, individuals are not only reactive puppets to external society circumstances, as positivists believe. It is grounded in social action theory and posits that because humans are complicated and multifaceted, they experience and perceive the same objective world in different ways. A necessity exists for empathic comprehension. The study would need the evaluation and comprehension of secondary data from published articles on the subject of investigation, namely the extent to which county governments in Kenya employ change resistance management tactics. The process is qualitative due to the use of personal documents and an unstructured data collection method. Beginning with evidence, the researcher seeks to derive a theory regarding the phenomena. Using secondary data, the researcher will create a theory regarding the extent to which county governments in Kenya employ change resistance management tactics. Instead of hypothesis testing, this was performed through a process of sense-making.

1.5.2. Design

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken as part of the investigation. A systematic review is a technique and procedure for locating and evaluating pertinent research, as well as collecting and analysing data from that study (Collins, 2010). The systematic review process involved the formulation of a research topic, the design of a methodology, the conduct of a search, and the selection of studies according to inclusion criteria. In addition, pertinent study data was retrieved and examined. The results of the analyses were then interpreted. The study will employ a qualitative research design, which focuses on assessing the degree to which or identifying the influential factors. The study will be thematic and will be presented through narratives or explanations.

2. Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The literature on change resistance management in Kenya's public sector from 2011 to 2021 was reviewed to accomplish the objective of this article. Then, a six-theme-category analysis was undertaken to highlight the change resistance management tactics that were utilised. The outcomes are detailed below.

2.1. Results: Literature Review and Thematic Analysis

2.1.1. Literature Review

The evaluation was separated into two categories. Public sector literature on change resistance management was the first category to be reviewed. The second area investigated was the literature on change resistance management in Kenyan county administrations.

2.1.1.1. Change Resistance Management Approaches: Evidence from Public Sector

Wakonyo (2020) examined the impact of change management strategies on the functioning of the Uasin Gishu National Police Service. The research design was explanatory and descriptive. 1,055 junior National Police personnel were targeted in Uasin Gishu County. The sample consisted of 158 individuals recruited by stratified random sampling. Structured questionnaires were the primary technique of data gathering. The acquired data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In Uasin Gishu County, the National Police Service is substantially more effective due to senior management backing, excellent communication, and personnel participation. According to the core concept of chaos theory, a little alteration to organisational processes can have a significant effect on future outcomes.

Karaxha (2019) researched successful strategies for addressing resistance to business transformation. The purpose of the study is to provide knowledge about ways to overcome resistance to change and empirical evidence for each practice. According to the study's findings, most companies under consideration use help as a resistance therapy strategy. These tactics have proven to be more effective in increasing profits, enhancing organisational performance, and preserving a stable market position.

Njenga and Gachunga (2016) investigated the effects of change management strategy on performance in Public Universities in Kenya (PU-K) with reference to the Technical University of Kenya (TUK). The study examined the influence of change communication strategies on performance in Kenya's public universities, focusing on the Technical University of Kenya. According to the study, the TUK's communication strategy had a significant impact on its performance.

Okava and Anyieni (2016) explored how Kenyan authority reacts to resistance to the implementation of change management. Despite changing the organization's name through reorganisation, the study revealed that Kenya Power Ltd was able to maintain change in its operations leading to service delivery, but was unable to achieve employee satisfaction and the ultimate goal of improving the organization's culture.

Muia (2015) investigated change management challenges affecting employee performance at Kenya Airports Authority in Nairobi, Kenya, with the objectives of determining:

- How management change impacts employee performance at Kenya Airports Authority,
- How technological change impacts employee performance at Kenya Airports Authority, and
- How structural change impacts employee performance at Kenya Airports Authority

According to the findings of the study, training and the absence of incentives were significant factors influencing change management at the Kenya Airports Authority. Changes in information technology, leadership styles, and company culture appeared to be similarly influenced by politics, making organisational reform challenging.

Munyalo and Were (2015) explored the relationship between organisational performance and change management strategies. In addition, the study indicated that individuals should anticipate change without being incentivized to embrace or adopt it. Change should be deliberate and inclusive. The project lead for the change should be established, and project champions should assist with planning and implementation. Conflicts in the change process should be identified and resolved appropriately so as not to impede the implementation process, as persons opposed to the change may become obstinate and impede the change process.

Wachira and Anyieni (2015) sought to investigate the influence of change management strategies on the performance of the Teachers Service Commission of Kenya. The objective of the study was to determine how communication affects TSC performance. According to the findings, communication significantly impacts TSC performance. Therefore, TSC should incorporate improved communication mechanisms within its structures to enhance communication and, consequently, performance.

In a paper, Ayesha and Muqqadas (2018) explored the key reasons for change resistance and the effects of such resistance on the entire organisation. According to the force field analysis of Kurt Lewin, a manager who wants to 'push' an organisational change procedure must make every effort to lower the impact of inhibiting factors while boosting the impact of major driving forces and work with employee resistance to change along these lines.

Njenga and Kiraka (2019) studied the impact of change management on the organisational performance of Kenyan media firms. According to the study's findings, all four characteristics have a considerable effect on the performance of Kenyan media enterprises. In contrast, organisational culture was determined to have the least impact compared to the other components. In addition, the study discovered that the authority's hierarchy structure fosters good supervisory and working interactions. The poll also revealed that the leadership of media companies is knowledgeable in their respective fields, fostering innovation and creativity. It was also revealed that media businesses have developed guiding principles that affect employee performance and that teamwork is encouraged to achieve business objectives. One of the positive findings of the study was an improvement in consumer satisfaction, which was attributed to media companies' technological and information technology (IT) advancements, which enabled them to meet client demand and test. On the basis of an analysis of organisational structure, the study reveals that media companies have a framework that employees are subjected to while providing the necessary human resources.

Bogonko (2013) explored the difficulties of change management in secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County. 56% of secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County are unable to adopt potentially advantageous management adjustments due to financial issues. In addition, 44 percent of secondary school principals in Trans-Nzoia County do not include students, teachers, or other stakeholders when creating and implementing changes that may affect students' current behaviour or conduct. 36% of survey respondents attempted to engage these stakeholders. The most prevalent change management concerns confronting secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia k2 are legal issues (3.64 average), opposition (3.16 average), and severe weather (3.12). Finally, the study revealed that many secondary public schools in Trans-Nzoia County face financial and legal obstacles to applying change management strategies.

The objective of Kalima's (2015) study was to determine the strategic change management strategies employed by the Malawi Enterprise Development Fund (MEDF) and the implementation issues that arose. According to the report, MEDF both utilised and planned emergent approaches to change management. New positions, such as Deputy Chief Executive Officer/Chief of Operations, were formed as the MEDF's organisational structure expanded. According to the report, continuous good communication, employee training, and support from upper management contributed to the institution's successful transformation. Throughout the whole transition process, stakeholders provided tremendous support, and the effectiveness of the move resulted in promotions for concerned staff.

The objective of Vasanji's (2016) study was to uncover ways for managers in Kenyan SMEs to reduce resistance to change. The objectives of this study were to identify the types of change that occur at Kenbro Industries Ltd, the factors

that contribute to employee resistance to change at Kenbro Industries Ltd, and the strategies that managers may take to mitigate employee resistance to change at Kenbro Industries Ltd. According to the research, Kenbro industries encountered difficulty in communicating organisational strategy during implementation. According to the study, communication and employee participation in decision-making aid in overcoming resistance to change inside the organisation.

Ngugi (2011) researched how management responds to employee disagreement for the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights. According to the findings, KNCHR has effectively implemented multiple organisational transformation programmes by managing employee opposition. Employee opposition to the planned organisational changes was managed by:

- Adjusting the organisational culture,
- Altering the strategic direction,
- Securing the support of senior management,
- Communicating the changes in a timely manner,
- Providing training,
- Involving employees,
- Modifying work schedules, and
- Using coercion

Kamau (2014) investigated the important success factors for effective change management at Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). The specific objectives of the study were to determine the relationship between organisational stakeholder engagement in change initiatives and effective change management, employee motivational structures and effective change management, and the existence of a clear and practical change implementation strategy. According to the report, stakeholders play a crucial role in ensuring effective change management. Furthermore, the study indicated that employee motivations increase their productivity in achieving change objectives, and that stakeholder support and transparency regarding change concerns is crucial.

Rono (2018) evaluated the role of selected management strategies in fostering strategic transformation at Telkom Kenya. This study's objective was to examine the role of incentives as a management tool for enabling strategic change inside the organisation. According to the report, two strategies, namely, transition management and employee empowerment, played a crucial role in facilitating Telkom's strategy change.

Situma (2012) investigated the municipal council of Kakamega's devolution difficulties. It also determined how the local government handled change management. The study aimed to determine how devolution-related changes were handled and what impediments existed in managing changes at the municipal council. Interviews were held with the municipality's four change management-centrally located divisions' main offices to get a deeper knowledge of the obstacles impeding the seamless implementation of the devolved governance system. According to the conclusions of the study, a lack of training and incentives was a significant factor affecting the strategic change management at the municipality. Similarly, it appeared that the municipality's information technology advances and leadership style, as well as the government as a whole, were influenced by politics, making voluntary devolution unfeasible.

Through innovative behaviour, Sung and Kim (2021) investigated the effect of change management on organisational creativity in the public sector. The four pillars of change management (organisational objective, transformational leadership, engagement and communication, and education and training) are independent factors. In contrast, organisational innovation is a dependent variable, and member innovation is a mediating variable. KIPA's 2018 Public Service Recognition Survey provided the data for this study (the). Hayes' Process Macro analysis (Model 4) was utilised to verify the mediating variable. The study found that features of change management had a positive impact on innovative behaviour and organisational innovation. In addition, public officials' innovative behaviour acted as a bridge between change management and organisational innovation.

Makina and Kengara (2018) explored:

- The primary causes for Nzoia Sugar Company milling cane below its daily goal of 7,000 tonnes and how strategies are developed, implemented, and monitored,
- The reasons for change resistance

Most workers who opposed change were subordinates, accounting for 67.7% of the total, while managers accounted for only 6.5%. 0.05 was the significance level of the correlation. There was a +0.363 correlation between increased performance and strategy implementation. The relationship between resistance to change and involvement in it was unfavourable.

2.1.1.2. Change Resistance Management Approaches: Evidence from County Governments

A number of researches on change resistance management measures have been undertaken on Kenyan county administrations. This is demonstrated in a study by Bosire (2018). The drivers of strategic change management methods among Kenyan county governments were investigated in this study. According to the findings, strategic transformation effectiveness necessitates the cooperation of aspects such as human resources, leadership, strategy implementation, and organizational culture. These were discovered to be essential for strategic change success.

Bore, Chepkilot, and Tanui (2019) investigated the impact of leadership on strategic organizational change management in the Nakuru County Government in Kenya. The study's specific goal was to investigate the impact of leadership communication and strategic direction on strategic change in the Nakuru county government. According to the findings, communication and strategic direction had a beneficial and statistically significant impact on strategic change.

The study concluded that leadership had an impact on the county government's strategic organizational transformation in Nakuru, with communication, strategic direction, organizational culture, and dynamics management all having a positive and significant impact on the strategic shift.

In Kenya, Karama and Linge (2019) investigated the impact of managerial support on the delivery of devolved services in a few counties. The article looked into the impact of management support on the delivery of devolved services in a few Kenyan counties. The results showed that management support had significant coefficients of estimate based on $1 = 0.761$ (p -value = 0.000, which is less than $= 0.05$). Management support was found to have a considerable impact on service delivery.

In Mombasa County, Kakucha (2018) sought to determine how organizational structure effects strategic change management. Organizational Structure and Strategic Change Management were found to have a positive and significant association ($r=0.318$, $p=0.000$) in the study. The study indicated that organizational structure has a favorable and significant impact on strategic change management based on the findings. According to this study, organisational structure has a larger role in the change management process.

Toroitich (2017) investigated the impact of institutional determinants on the adoption of e-procurement by Kenyan county administrations. The study's particular goals were to investigate the impact of staff competency, ICT infrastructure availability, and management support on the deployment of e-procurement in Kenya's selected county governments. County governments have not fully implemented e-procurement, according to the research. According to the study, institutional variables have a considerable favourable influence on the implementation of e-procurement in county governments. To improve the adoption of e-procurement, county governments should train workers on how to use e-procurement tools.

Muigei, Jemaiyo, and Bogonko (2017) looked into the factors influencing IFMIS implementation in the Uasin Gishu County Government. This research examines the impact of organizational structure and system complexity on the effective implementation of IFMIS in Uasin Gishu County based on the findings of the study. A correlation research design was used in this study. 170 respondents were chosen using a stratified random selection method from a target population of 566 County employees who utilized IFMIS. A questionnaire was used to collect data, which was then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Organizational arrangement ($=.51$, $P-.000$) had a substantial impact on IFMIS implementation in Uasin Gishu County, according to the findings of this study. However, system complexity ($=.01$, $P-.000$) had no statistically significant effect on IFMIS implementation.

Onge (2018) investigated the impact of leadership styles on devolved government implementation in Kenya, focusing on the Kisii County Government. The results revealed that the transactional leadership style had the greatest impact on devolved governments, with a correlation coefficient of 0.9536, followed by transformational leadership, with a correlation coefficient of 0.5526. It positively affects followers and institutional performance, servant leadership, where a leader serves as a model for others in his revolutionary approach, with a correlation coefficient of 0.148, and participative leadership, which drags a leader's followers and institutional performance.

Mwikali and Wafula (2015) investigated the effects of devolved governance on organizational performance using Mombasa County as a case study. The study looked at secondary literature on the implications of devolution on Mombasa County's performance. The impacts of devolution on an organization's performance were studied using a desk analysis design. Clearly, devolution of power and financial resources leads to improved organisational performance. In devolved government, employee training, motivation, and the availability of funding improve performance, resulting in the provision of higher-quality services to residents.

Mungai (2017) wanted to see how management approaches affected program execution in Murang'a County. The study's specific goals were to:

- Determine the relationship between management practices and project implementation in Murang'a County,
- Analyze the effects of public participation on program implementation in Murang'a County,
- Investigate the effects of financial management on program implementation in Murang'a County, and
- Investigate the effects of human resource management practices on program implementation in Murang'a County

The study's findings revealed that the effect of public participation explains 60.6 percent of project implementation, while financial management explains 44 percent of project implementation. Human resources account for 87.2 percent of county project implementation. In contrast, the combination of all of the aforementioned four elements accounts for 44% of project implementation.

The impact of organizational culture and leadership on strategic change management at Kenya's Makueni County Government was examined by Mulwa, Kilonzo, and Ochieng in 2020. The study used Kotter's change management paradigm as a theoretical framework to analyze the aforementioned issue. A theoretical model was developed and assessed based on the proposed relationship between organizational culture and strategic change management. The Makueni county government found that organizational culture had an impact on the implementation of strategic change management, with organizational leadership and culture having a greater impact with R^2 values of 0.850 and 0.862, respectively. According to the study's findings, organizational culture accounts for how effective strategic change management is.

Wandaka (2016) focused on Kakamega County and examined the effect of human resource functions on the implementation of reform in county administrations. The subsequent, with an r -value of 0.581, was a substantial positive correlation between transformational leadership and change management and a 0.463 positive association between transactional leadership and change management. With an r -value of -0.286, there was a negative link between *laissez-faire* leadership and change management. With a coefficient of 0.699, there was a substantial positive link between

autocratic leadership and change management. Finally, with an r-value of 0.549, the association between democratic leadership and change management was shown to be positive.

Nkatha (2018) investigated the impact of strategy execution on county government performance in Kenya, with a focus on Embu County. The study's precise goals were to investigate the impact of personnel training, organizational structure, and culture on Embu County Government performance. The study reveals that, while staff training had a significant impact on Embu County Government performance, improper personnel skills and insufficient employee assistance were concerns. The study discovered that organisational structure had a moderate impact on Embu County Government performance; rigidity of the County Government structure, delegation, and bottom-up communication were uncommon practices in various County ministries, contributing to the County's overall underperformance. The Embu County Government's worsening performance was also ascribed to the authorities' inability to inspire teamwork through an open-door culture.

Mwakamba and Theuri (2016) investigated the importance of change management techniques in achieving effective devolution in the Taita Taveta County Government. Devolution's success hinges on effective change management. However, there are a few types of research on change management methods in county governments. Therefore it is unclear how these strategies affect the devolution process. As a result, the study's overall goal was to assess the impact of change management methods on effective devolution in Kenya, with a particular focus on the Taita Taveta County Government. Its goal was to see how directive, educational, participatory, and expert change management tactics influenced effective devolution in the County. The study used a case study research design to target the Taita Taveta County Government's administration and workforce. According to the findings, the directive approach, as a change management method, had a weak influence on devolution in the Taita Taveta County Government ($= 0.174$). However, the educational approach ($= 0.277$) and the participative strategy ($= 0.733$) as change management strategies were found to have a significant impact on the county's devolution process. Expert strategy does not play a big role as a change management method. However, it was found to have a considerable impact on effective devolution in the county ($= 0.268$).

2.1.2. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was systematic and focused on change resistance management techniques. Themes were created based on these principles. Coercion, both explicit and implicit, participation and involvement, assistance and facilitation, education and communication, persuasion (co-optation) and manipulation, and agreement and negotiation are among them.

2.1.2.1. Themes from Empirical Evidence on Approaches by County Government for Change Resistance Management

The literature review uncovers a variety of issues. The subjects discuss explicit or implicit techniques for managing change resistance. Multiple studies have indicated that involvement and participation are prevalent themes. Wandaka (2016) uncovered a strategy of participation and involvement in these investigations. According to the study, employee contacts are crucial during change implementation in Kakamega County. Ongige (2018) outlined servant leadership and participative leadership approaches for change management, implying that involvement and participation were utilised to overcome change resistance. Mungai (2017) reported involvement and participation during project execution in Murang'a County. Kung'u and Were (2019) reported a *laissez-faire* and democratic approach to leadership for transformation in numerous counties. Mwakamba and Theuri (2016) designed a participative model for managing opposition to change inside the Taita Taveta County Government.

The second theme to the surface was support and facilitation. This is demonstrated by Ongige's (2018) demonstration of the transformational leadership style utilised by the Kisii County Government in its devolution implementation. Mwikali and Wafula (2015) also highlighted the allocation of money for devolution implementation in Mombasa County. According to Mungai (2017), help and facilitation were also present during the Murang'a County project execution. Kung'u and Were (2019) noted facilitation and assistance when the investigation revealed the presence of transactional leadership during a transition. Nkatha (2018) further emphasised the insufficient employee support during the implementation of the new method.

As demonstrated by empirical evidence from county governments, education and communication emerge as a theme in the review. Despite the fact that bottom-up communication was inadequate and the skills supplied to personnel were ineffective, Nkatha (2018) identified employee training and communication as measures in the Embu County Government. Mwakamba and Theuri (2016) identified an instructional strategy employed by the Taita Taveta County Government to reduce resistance to change. Influence and manipulation are issues of additional research. Mulwa, Kilonzo, and Ochieng (2020) cite business culture and leadership as change resistance management approaches. Mwakamba and Theuri (2016) uncovered a specialised technique utilised by the Taita Taveta County Government to manage resistance throughout change. These studies feature coercion as a motif as well. During times of change, Kung'u and Were (2019) report autocratic leadership, which implies or implies coercion. Mwakamba and Theuri (2016) offered a guided strategy to change resistance management for the Taita Taveta County Government.

2.1.2.2. Themes from Empirical Evidence on Approaches by Other Public Sector Entities for Change Resistance Management

Existing evidence supports diverse ways to change resistance management in the public sector. The 2.1.1 analysis reveals distinct themes that represent these methods. Education and communication on a broad scale is one such method. Several researchers' efforts have uncovered this strategy in various organisations, as should be noted. Wakonyo (2020) implemented the use of communication during change management at the Kenya National Police Service in Uasin Gishu.

Wachira and Anyieni (2015) identified communication as a change management strategy that reduced resistance and enhanced change outcomes at Kenya's Teachers Service Commission. Sung and Kim (2021) examined the influence of change management on organisational innovation through innovative behaviour in the public sector and other variables and discovered a positive effect.

Furthermore, Kamau (2014) pioneered the use of staff knowledge and planning for effective change management by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). Ngugi (2011) also asserts that the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights successfully managed change opposition by utilising real-time communication and k8 scheduling. In addition, Njenga and Gachunga (2016) evaluated the effects of change management strategy on performance in Kenyan public universities (PU-K) with a focus on the Technical University of Kenya (TUK). They found that the usage of communication strategy during change had a significant influence.

The second common theme is involvement and participation. Several authors have emphasised using this strategy to alter resistance management based on empirical evidence. Wakonyo (2020) demonstrated the use of participation during change at the Kenya National Police Service in Uasin Gishu, as did Bosire (2018), who recognised human resource aspects as a key success factor in the successful implementation of strategic change among Kenyan county governments. According to Kamau (2014), the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) utilised stakeholder involvement for effective change management, whereas Bogonko (2013) confirmed the use of stakeholders in the management of resistance to change management among secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County. Moreover, Sung and Kim (2021) found that participation influences change management and organisational innovation in the public sector via innovative behaviour. Makina and Kengara (2018) found a negative association between resistance to change and involvement in change at Kenya's Nzoia Sugar Company, but Ngugi (2011) reported the use of participation as a strategy for controlling resistance to change at the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights. According to Munyalo and Were (2015), a structured and inclusive strategy employing change champions is beneficial in reducing opposition to change.

Support and facilitation are additional noticeable parts. Bosire (2018) observed a need for leadership and organisational culture to help strategically change management in Kenya's county administrations. Rono (2018) examined how various management methods contributed to strategic change-facilitation. According to the study, Telkom Kenya Ltd employed incentives to manage the transition. Similarly, Kamau (2014) found that the Kenya Revenue Authority efficiently managed change using staff incentives (KRA). Ngugi (2011) recognised the development of a needed culture, the support of senior management, and training as methods for overcoming resistance to change at the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights, allowing it to successfully execute many organisational transformation initiatives. According to Njenga and Kiraka (2019), the Kenyan media industry's leadership is governed by strict rules that regulate employee performance and team orientation, which facilitates change.

Co-optation and manipulation are other aspects demonstrated by empirical investigation. Situma (2012) established political control over technology use and leadership style throughout the strategic management of change at Kakamega Municipal Council. The implication is that manipulation is also employed to manage change opposition. Muia (2015) separately examined the influence of change management issues on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority in Nairobi, Kenya. The study identified the use of political influence over information technology, leadership, and organisational culture during times of transition. In periods of transition, explicit coercion is also employed. Ngugi (2011) pioneered the use of scheduling change and coercion as a tactic for overcoming change opposition at the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights, enabling the commission to successfully conduct multiple organisational change projects. Finally, Munyalo and Were (2015) discovered that public organisations in Kenya employ amicable solutions to issues during change implementation as a change resistance management strategy.

2.2. Conclusions and Recommendations

2.2.1. Conclusions

In terms of the paper's objective, it is possible to conclude that county governments in Kenya apply all of the theoretically proposed ways to alter resistance management based on the results in Section 2.1.2.1, which are mirrored in the themes derived from the available empirical evidence. These strategies include explicit or implicit coercion, agreement and negotiation, persuasion and manipulation, education and communication, involvement and participation, and aid and facilitation. Management and administration of Kenya's devolved units appear to be focusing on education and communication, engagement and involvement, as well as support and facilitation.

On the basis of the 2.1.2.2 themes, it can be concluded that the Kenyan public sector applies all six theory-based change resistance management approaches. Among them include:

- Coercion, co-optation and manipulation,
- Education and communication,
- Support and facilitation, and
- Involvement and participation

Regarding the goal of the study, these pieces of evidence support the direct evidence regarding county governments. Due to the public nature of county governments, the evidence presented here verifies that they employ the ways that the direct evidence suggests.

2.2.2. Recommendations

Based on the finding of the stated objective in 2.2.1, the study recommends that county governments in Kenya, which are a component of the public sector, become more actively involved in the management of change resistance in

order to improve change outcomes. Second, additional evidence is required to describe the strategies employed by Kenyan county administrations to counter change opposition. There is a need for more research specifically focusing on these county governments, as there is a paucity of data regarding the methods they use to address change resistance and the resulting outcomes.

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