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Influence of Volunteerism on Development in Kenya: A Literature Based Review

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Abstract

Volunteerism reduces the financial burden that befalls the government. The practice is also critical in the midst of the inability of national and county governments to deliver services to the people. However, this view does not imply that government should abdicate some of its responsibilities to volunteer institutions. In most instances and as result of weak governance, governments lack the capacity to deliver the development promised to the citizens. The study establishes the influence of volunteerism on development in Kenya. The paper employs a desk study review methodology. A critical review of empirical literature is conducted to identify main thematic concepts of the paper. International volunteering enhances socio economic development of county by building organizational capacity, developing international relationships, and performing voluntary labor. International volunteerism entails the developmental projects started by international voluntary organization to promote social wellbeing. The initiative is often driven towards achieving the goals and stated targets of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. International volunteering fosters international understanding between peoples and nations and while promoting global citizenship and intercultural cooperation. As a result of international volunteering, there is diffusion of human development skills, mindsets, behaviors and networks that prepare volunteers for living and working in a knowledge-based global economy. International volunteering allows the sharing of knowledge, technology and social norms that are essential for sustainable economic development. Volunteerism has promoted developmental projects in Kenya that include educational support, socio economic support, enhancing food security and provision of safe water for domestic use. International volunteer service is a practical way to promote global understanding, while making tangible contributions to the development of individuals, organizations and communities. In Kenya, community based volunteering in socioeconomic development is essential in building various infrastructure and cohesion in communities to further enhance governmental initiatives especially within individual communities. The

government actively engages in creating effective community based mechanisms and structures that can make use of resources and skills available within communities. Communities should be sensitized about the power of networking, and sharing experiences about volunteerism without financial benefit. Community members will understand the need to volunteer in providing both social and developmental programmes for the local people. There is need to increase the provision of secure and stable funding for the volunteering infrastructure especially volunteer-involving organisations to create an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering, and provide resources for development of impact management culture. This can be done through raising awareness amongst civil society staff, government and donor supporters on the importance of volunteerism in promoting economic development.

Key words: *International volunteering, community based volunteering and economic development*

1. INTRODUCTION

Development requires the efforts of the citizens, private sector, government and nongovernmental sector conjoined. People participate in development process by providing necessary human resource skills across various sectors of the economy. In return the people are paid for the work done, however, in most cases the government sector, nongovernmental sector and the private sector are unable to offer paying opportunities for all people and hence volunteerism is often encouraged. Volunteering is the most visible expression of promoting solidarity and facilitating social inclusion, building social capital and producing a transformative effect on society. It contributes to the development of a thriving civil society enabled to find innovative solutions to common challenges and issues (UN, 2018). Furthermore, it is a source of economic growth, a pathway to integration and employment, a positive outcome in itself and a mechanism for improving cohesion (Lough, 2014). Volunteering also contributes to reducing economic, social and environmental inequalities. Hence, an investment in volunteering is an investment in society's social cohesion. For these reasons, the value of volunteering needs full recognition as creating a sense of Kenyan identity and active citizenship, contribution to public good, human and social capital.

Volunteerism also forms the backbone of many national and international organizations and civil society organizations as well as social and political movements. The volunteerism contributes to sustainable development by encouraging persons to work for their country (Caprara, Mati,

Obadare & Perold, 2016). Volunteering is often the first step to individuals' long-term involvement in development. The relationship between volunteerism and development is brought out by Howard and Burns (2015) who, argue that development starts not from production (economic growth), but rather, from people and from human needs. In this regard development implies increased living standards, improved health and wellbeing for all, and the achievement of whatever is regarded as general good for society at large. Volunteerism emerged as a viable mechanism to complement the action of governments in addressing development challenges, particularly at the local level (Institute of Development Studies, 2015).

Accordingly, volunteerism increases the reach and inclusivity of action, it facilitates the scaling up of the initiatives from the local to the national level and beyond, it builds capacities and ownership and connects local communities to local and national authorities with the potential to develop more robust public-private approaches (Benenson & Stagg, 2016). Volunteerism can help to expand and mobilize constituencies and to engage people in national planning and implementation for sustainable development goals. Volunteer groups can help to localize the new agenda by providing new areas of interaction between Governments and people. Thomas (2000), observes that volunteerism brings in another dimension of development to encompass not just combating or ameliorating poverty but restoring or enhancing basic human capabilities and freedoms. This is often seen in terms of participation and empowerment, particularly by NGOs that seek to promote participatory development at a local level. Development has to be more concerned with enhancing the lives we lead and the freedoms we enjoy. Volunteering bring multiple benefits to organizations, communities and people. Organizations receive enormous contributions of time, talents and skills (Lockett & Boyd, 2012). Communities are healthier and more cohesive through active citizen engagement. People receive important services from volunteers and, through volunteering, people gain experience, improve their employment and educational options and have a greater sense of belonging and well-being (Caprara *et al.*, 2016).

At the same time, volunteerism is vital in growing shaping career prospects of individuals. Through persistent contributions as a volunteer leader, one will inevitably be able to develop valuable leadership skills that one may not be able to develop simply on the job (Smith, 2017). Service sectors provide volunteers with the opportunity to explore different career paths, gain

job-related skills, develop leadership skills, and network with community leaders, while engaged in activities that strengthen communities (Oostlander, Güntert, Van Schie & Wehner, 2014). Leadership competencies in volunteers are essential for volunteer administrators to enjoy a shared ownership and responsibility of extension volunteer programs with volunteers, and for volunteers to reach their maximum potential (Lockett & Boyd, 2012). Volunteer administrators and Extension volunteer programs can influence individual leadership capacity in volunteers within the context of all three of the categories of Developing Self, Developmental Influences, and Group Influences. An individual's leadership identity develops as a result of personal growth. Volunteerism cultivates leadership skills, self-awareness, self-confidence and interpersonal efficacy (Oostlander, Güntert, VanSchie & Wehner, 2014).

The volunteering makes a significant contribution to the economy all around the world. According to the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies 2011, approximately 140 million people in the 37 countries engage in volunteer work in a typical year. If those 140 million volunteers comprised the population of a country, it would be the 9th largest country in the world. Those 140 million volunteers represent the equivalent of 20.8 million full-time equivalent jobs. It's estimated that volunteers contribute around \$400 billion to the global economy annually. These estimates are produced using data on hours volunteered or the wage-based dollar value. One interpretation that could be given to this wage-based estimate is that it reflects what users of volunteer labor would have had to pay if they had had to hire the labor that instead was freely given to them (Geoghegan & Powell, 2011).

Lough (2006) stated that in the United States, volunteers produce services worth \$113 billion to \$161 billion annually. In 2009, 63.4 million Americans volunteered to help their communities, 8.1 billion hours of service is produced, which has an estimated dollar value of \$169 billion. In United Kingdom in 2003, according to the Institute for Volunteering Research and Volunteering England, 42 percent of people in England and Wales volunteered through a group, club or organization at least once, equivalent to approximately 17.9 million people. Each volunteer contributed an estimated 104 hours in the twelve months before the survey and the total contribution was 1.9 billion hours. This was equivalent of one million full-time workers (Yoga,

2006). The volunteering plays as the bridge of different parts in the society, which concerned of benefits and demands for different social sectors.

In Australia, volunteering activities make valuable contributions to the economy (Sherraden, Lough & McBride, 2018). In 2010, formal volunteering was worth \$25.4 billion to the Australian economy. According to Volunteering Australia (2014) and the 2010 ABS report on voluntary work in Australia, 6.1 million people or 36 per cent of all adults in Australia are engaged in some type of voluntary work. Overall, Australian volunteering rates are on par with other OECD countries (Australian Government, 2011), although one report suggests that Australians spend around half the amount of time volunteering than people in Canada, Finland, France and the United Kingdom(Australia, 2015).

In India, volunteerism has long been an integral part of the Indian society shaped by traditions and value systems rooted in the religion and cultural interactions. The volunteers from diverse backgrounds have gone about celebrating the spirit of volunteerism in the best manner they know – rendering selfless service to their fellow beings and the community at large. India has a rich and proud history of volunteerism (Kundu, 2010). The tradition of shramdaan, offering to work in the service of humanity is practiced by millions of people in India. As the largest democracy with one of the fastest growing economies in the world, India continues to address the challenges of inequality and uneven human development, with volunteers playing a critical role in ensuring that neighborhoods, villages and communities become a little better every day. Many voluntary organizations in India came into being in different parts of the country mainly engaged in production of khadi and some items of village industries (Jain, 2015). It plays an important role in development of the rural population. The growth of volunteerism emerged from the inspirations of Gandhi's leadership (Chakravarti, 2018). The teaching that volunteerism and voluntary social service took roots in India and is now recognized as a vital instrument of generating moral climate, of promoting overall well-being of the community and socioeconomic development of the country.

In Nigeria, communities both from rural and urban settlements are faced with several development challenges. Historical facts have shown that, the government as an institution of the

government cannot provide all these services. Therefore is where volunteerism becomes needful in supporting the development process (Attah & Anam, 2017). Volunteering is both an opportunity and an asset for development. It represents a tremendous resource for addressing many of the development challenges of our times. Volunteerism is classified among the less visible types of support that create social and economic opportunities for improving the wellbeing of other. However, it is very significant in promoting social welfare to the under privileged in the society. Concerned with the challenges of prevalence poverty in the country and success stories of volunteerism as a viable strategy, the study advocates for the involvement of more Nigerian in delivering selfless services for the benefit of others and their immediate communities (Muhammad & Ndaaji, 2013). Volunteering is therefore a form of social capital, with particular reference to the role of volunteering in promoting social inclusion, assisting marginalized social groups, its relationship to other forms of civic participation and unpaid work, creating a civil society, social action, in community building and community renewal. Volunteering promotes people to be more active in civic engagement and concerned of citizenship (Gombe, Suandi, Ismail, & Omar, 2015). It will help deliver public services by encouraging more people work in public section, contributing to the development of social infrastructure and improving the wellbeing of the people. In addition, these leaves positive impact on volunteers as individuals, increase their self-esteem, enhance various skills and capacities, expand career paths and be healthier physically and mentally. It concludes that volunteering promotes people to be more active in civic engagement, contributing to the overall development of the community and nation at large. It is a strategy for supporting the course of community development in Nigeria. The volunteer sector plays a key role in social life (Laurie & Baillie, 2018). The social impact of voluntarism in Nigeria has had tremendous impact on community development includes strengthening social connections, building strong, safe, cohesive community; enhancing civic engagement; and delivering public goods and services.

In Kenya, the National Volunteerism Policy is anchored on the Constitution of Kenya, the Kenya Vision 2030 strategy and the Second Medium Term Plan (MTP II). The overall objective of this policy is to provide guidelines on efficient and effective coordination, management and sustenance of volunteerism in Kenya (National Volunteerism Policy, 2015). The National

Volunteerism Policy ensures that volunteerism is embedded within the national economic development policies. At independence, this volunteering spirit was adopted by the government through the “Harambee” slogan, loosely translated as pooling resources for national development. This policy provides a framework through which the country can inclusively engage volunteers to optimize on their resources and opportunities (Kiuna, 2012). This will go a long way to supplement government efforts in attaining planned national goals, both at national and county levels. In 2017, a report by commissioned by the State Department for Social Protection indicated that Kenyan volunteers contributed a total of 669,630,288 hours to the economy translating to an approximated USD 2.362 billion or 3.66 per cent of gross domestic product.

The Kenya Vision 2030, the Second Medium Term Plan (MTP II) and the Government’s Social Economic Development Agenda consider volunteerism as a critical national asset to facilitate Kenya’s attainment of its socio-economic goals; including the SDG’s and thereafter contribute to Post-2015 development agenda. Volunteerism contributes immensely to the country’s social, economic and political development. Volunteer activities and practices have however remained uncoordinated and inadequately supported at national level. Volunteerism is meant to promote good practice or improve the quality of life for the beneficiaries and society at large. Volunteerism reduces the financial burden that befalls the government. The limited resources are thus channeled for development activities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Volunteerism reduces the financial burden that befalls the government. The practice is also critical in the midst of the inability of national and county governments to deliver services to the people. However, this view does not imply that government should abdicate some of its responsibilities to volunteer institutions. In most instances and as a result of weak governance, governments lack the capacity to deliver the development promised to the citizens. This is often attributed to poor governance, mismanagement and too much international dependency (Lough & Matthew, 2014). Furthermore, the lack of capacity by the state to deliver some services efficiently results in an increase in non-state actors, for example church, self-help groups and

cooperatives to freely offer the services. Volunteerism should be seen as complementing government effort in development.

The contributions of volunteers to national development are significantly enormous yet they are not included in the Kenya national accounts. Few governments have attempted to collect systematic data on the impact of volunteerism activities on development. In Kenya, not much study has been done in this area, and therefore it remains difficult to quantify volunteerism contribution to development. A report by the State Department for Social Protection (2017) indicated that Kenyan volunteers contributed a total of 669,630,288 hours to the economy translating to an approximated USD 2.362 billion or 3.66 per cent of gross domestic product. This is an indication that volunteerism is necessary in supporting efforts from the private sector, the government and NGOs in an attempt to promote development. However, the effects brought by volunteerism on development are not clearly documented. A gap however exists in volunteerism and development specifically in quantifying the economic effects of volunteerism in development.

1.3 Objective of the Study

- i. To establish influence of international volunteering on economic development in Kenya
- ii. To establish influence of community based volunteering on economic development in Kenya

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of Volunteerism

Volunteerism as a social development concept refers to the act of rendering service by choice or free will for the benefit of the wider community by an individual, group, or organisation without necessarily expecting a monetary gain in full knowledge and appreciation of being a volunteer (Howard & Burns, 2015). Various governments across the globe have recognized the critical contribution of volunteerism on socioeconomic growth (Caprara, *et al.*, 2016). The initiative has helped built a strong and cohesive society since government cannot do alone and has therefore supported volunteering as the essential act of citizenship, a means for combating social exclusion, and promoting self-help for community development.

Volunteerism often entails working on behalf of others without being motivated by financial or material gain. It is an engagement based on free will, commitment and solidarity, with the aim to promote human development by supporting the delivery of economic and social services, fostering reciprocity among people and contributing to social cohesion (Lough & Matthew, 2014). Volunteering as the ultimate expression of the willingness and ability of people to help others, brings significant benefits to individuals and communities and helps to nurture and sustain a richer social texture and a stronger sense of mutual trust and cohesion (Rochester, *et al.*, 2016). Volunteerism can help to expand and mobilize constituencies and to engage people in national planning and implementation for sustainable development goals.

2.2 Theoretical Background

2.2.1 Social Capital Theory

The paper is anchored on the Social Capital Theory. The Social Capital Theory was postulated by Bourdieu (1986). According to Bourdieu (1986), social capital is said to refer to traditions of engagement, trust, solidarity and reciprocity that exist in every society, although they are more manifest in some. In broader definitions, social capital refers to the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions when defining the concept of social capital (Lin, Cook & Burt, 2001). Social cohesion, an outcome of positive social interactions, is critical for societies to interact positively and prosper economically (Lin,

2017). Social interactions resulting in social capital enable individuals, groups and communities to achieve their needs by using their strengths such as norms, values, and interactions (Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001).

In the context of development social capital is a complement to the established capital categories (physical, financial, human) to explain how development can occur in some situations and not in others. Social capital attempts to achieve development through individualized efforts. As a development strategy, social capital directs individuals, groups, and communities to achieve their needs through collective action. In this sense, social capital is interpreted as the cumulative capacity of social groups to mutually and beneficially co-operate and work together for the common good. In this regard, it may be said that strong links exist between the mobilization of social capital and volunteerism. Volunteerism and volunteers are at the core/heart of Social Capital. It is very important to bring about a better understanding and acceptance of the vital contribution volunteering can make in mobilizing social capital for development as volunteerism constitutes an enormous reservoir of skills, ingenuity, creativity, solidarity and local knowledge. As a form of social capital, volunteerism benefits the recipients of service and the broader community. As people continue as volunteers, commitment to the community increases. Commitment, in turn, increases the incidence of volunteer actions on behalf of the community. Thus, volunteerism represents selfless actions that promote community spirit and civic participation in socioeconomic development.

2.2.2 Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is employed in as the paper considers both the social context (autonomy-supportive leadership) and individual differences (causality orientations) as antecedents of motivation. Causality orientations alter the way individuals perceive their social context as either autonomy-supportive or controlling. To study volunteer motivation, it is important to understand the role played by self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008b). The focus of Self-determination theory lies in the autonomous versus controlled quality of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Self-determination theory allows deeper understanding of the quality of volunteer motivation and the occurrence of feelings of autonomy or control as a result of the

nature of leadership practices. Additionally, Self-determination theory proposes the social environment as a main antecedent of motivation making it possible to have a closer look at the relationship between management practices and volunteer motivation.

Autonomously motivated volunteers, who act based on interest and fun or because of an underlying personal value, reported higher job satisfaction (Millette & Gagne, 2008) and greater work effort (Bideet *et al.*, 2013). Volunteering is negatively affected when individuals feel obliged by external contingencies and thus act based on controlled motivation (Gagne, Ryan & Bargmann, 2003). Autonomous motivation consists of intrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, and identified regulation. Intrinsically motivated volunteers act based on self-determination and engage in an activity because they find it interesting and enjoyable. Identified regulated volunteers act based on identification with the value of a specific volunteering activity. Autonomy-supportive leadership can be characterized as understanding and acknowledging subordinates' perspectives, giving opportunities for choice, supporting individuals' competences, and encouraging personal initiative (Gagne *et al.*, 2003). In the volunteering context, autonomy-supportive leadership refers to the interpersonal climate created between a supervisor and a volunteer. Autonomy- supportive leadership affects both types of motivation.

In the context of the study, motivational is the driving force behind volunteerism. Additionally, the nature of leadership provided by voluntary projects coordinators is necessary in ensuring the success of the volunteerism activity. Appropriate leadership should support individuals' competences while encouraging personal initiative.

2.3 Empirical Literature

Empirical studies have shown that volunteerism has significant impact economic development. In the paper, influence of volunteerism on economic development happen in two dimensions namely international development and community based development.

2.3.1 International volunteering and economic development

In an empirical literature on how international volunteering characteristics influence economic development, Lough and Tiessen (2018) noted international volunteering enhances socio economic development of county by building organizational capacity, developing international relationships, and performing voluntary labor. In another empirical study on international volunteering for development noted that, Lough, Thomas and Asbill (2013) noted volunteerism entails the developmental projects started by international voluntary organization to promote socio wellbeing. The initiative is often driven towards achieving the goals and stated targets of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

International volunteering fosters international understanding between peoples and nations and while promoting global citizenship and intercultural cooperation. As a result of international volunteering, there are diffusion of human development skills, mindsets, behaviors and networks that prepare volunteers for living and working in a knowledge-based global economy. According to McBride (2010) while conducting an empirical study on perceived impacts of international service on volunteers, it was established that international volunteering allows the sharing of knowledge, technology and social norms that are essential for sustainable economic development. When the citizens of a country travel abroad or to the neighboring countries to undertake voluntary activities, the international experiences encountered often enhances the understanding of social, economic and political issues in a global context.

In an empirical study on effects of international volunteering and service: Individual and institutional predictors, Sherraden, Lough and McBride (2018) noted that international volunteerism helps create social capital can be used to coordinate action or generate additional resources. Volunteers have used social contacts to coordinate humanitarian aid projects, exchanges, economic research development projects, internships or return trips to the host

country. These contacts may also be used to facilitate future employment opportunities or to leverage resources for host communities. International career intentions address respondents' intentions to work in a career related to international or social and economic development issues. The intercultural learning process can also be applied to developing awareness and knowledge about international development. This initial understanding, however, may progress to a deeper appreciation for the complexities of the issue, including historical, cultural, political, social and economic determinants, which may evolve into nuanced awareness of power relations and the challenges for development and progress.

Locally, Kiuna (2012) while conducting an empirical study on voluntarism and development in Kenya noted that volunteerism for instance of "Harambee" play a crucial role in economic development. In Kenya, the institutionalization of volunteerism has been proliferated. However, the dynamics of voluntarism and its role in development in the current situation in Kenya is not documented. In another study by Lough (2014) on participatory research on the impact of international volunteerism in Kenya, it was established that volunteerism has promoted developmental projects in Kenya that include educational support, socio economic support, enhancing food security and provision of safe water for domestic use. International volunteer service is a practical way to promote global understanding, while making tangible contributions to the development of individuals, organizations and communities. The impacts of international volunteer service as a development strategy ultimately depend on whether programs recognise and implement effective institutional practices based on the outcomes they desire to achieve. International voluntary services enhance the education, employment and participation of citizens in host countries. However, critics of international volunteerism contend that many international volunteer programs are imperialistic, volunteer---centered and ineffective at tackling the real challenges of development.

In another study, Ochieng, Kaseje and Wafula, (2012) argue that, the involvement of international voluntary organizations in national development has increased with the proliferation of Non-Governmental Organizations and Community Based organization that require volunteers to do development work in Kenya. They also assert that in a number of development areas, the Kenya government has handed over the responsibilities of delivery of

services to international voluntary organizations. This is out of the realization that NGOs and CBOs are better placed to reach people than government. Further, Kimemia (2014) asserts that the international voluntary organizations operations have expanded to include expertise of nationals in their respective countries in development and humanitarian programs. This expansion process has led to a steady growth for the need of National United Nations Volunteers (NUNVS) by many development partners in implementing several development initiatives in the Third World including Kenya.

2.3.2 Community based volunteering and economic development

The community based volunteering is a dynamic field of socio development impacting immensely to the wellbeing of the people (Rosol, 2012). The initiative reflects the building of relationships among diverse groups of residents in pursuit of common community interests (Lamb, 2011). Through voluntary efforts, individuals interact with one another and begin to mutually understand common needs. According to Lamb (2011) voluntary participation in community economic development (CED) leads to positive benefits for the community and society at large through the provision of needed goods and services, such as social housing, worker training, and immigrant services.

Community based volunteerism is a social activity targeted at community development. By identifying people as local volunteers, the initiative is important because it recognizes people for the work that they do and helps build solidarity between people working towards a common goal. From this interaction, voluntary efforts to improve the social, cultural, and psychological needs of local people emerge. The development of the community is an active process involving diverse segments of the locality. The key component to this process is found in the creation and maintenance of channels of interaction and communication among diverse local groups that otherwise are directed toward more limited interests. Through this process and through active volunteer efforts, the socio economic growth of the community is enhanced. Social and economic development results in the transformation of social structures in a manner which improves the capacity of the society to fulfill its aspirations. According to Scanlon, Powell, Geoghegan and Swirak (2011), the recognition of the valuable contributions of traditional forms

of mutual aid and self-help, service delivery and other forms of civic participation to economic and social development and the recognition of volunteerism as an important component of any strategy aimed at poverty reduction, sustainable development and social integration.

Effective and sustainable community development programmes are those which involve local people at all stages. The social impact of volunteerism on community development includes strengthening social connections, building strong, safe, cohesive community; enhancing civic engagement; and delivering public goods and services (Attah & Anam, 2017). In this regard, volunteering has certain positive impact on the volunteer, such as social recognition, better health and self-esteem, building social relationship, training and career enhancement; economic benefits and capacity in the labor market (Georgeou, 2012).

In Kenya, community based volunteering in socioeconomic development is essential in building various infrastructure and cohesion in communities to further enhance governmental initiatives especially within individual communities (National Volunteerism Policy, 2015). The government actively engages in creating effective community based mechanisms and structures that can make use of resources and skills available within communities. Socially, community volunteering helps to build more cohesive communities, fostering greater trust between citizens and developing norms of solidarity and reciprocity that are essential to stable communities (UN, 2018). The social capital represented by volunteering plays a key role in economic regeneration. Volunteering is both an opportunity and an asset for development. It represents a tremendous resource for addressing many of the development challenges of our times. The value of volunteerism to community development and its contributions in various forms is widely acknowledged. Guchiki (2018) noted that in Kenya, community based volunteerism has provided momentum to further integrating voluntary efforts into national plans and policy, and to the strengthening of national infrastructure.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study establishes influence of volunteerism on development in Kenya. The paper employs a desk study review methodology. A critical review of empirical literature is conducted to identify main thematic concepts of the paper.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

International volunteering enhances socio economic development of county by building organizational capacity, developing international relationships, and performing voluntary labor. International volunteerism entails the developmental projects started by international voluntary organization to promote socio wellbeing. The initiative is often driven towards achieving the goals and stated targets of the United Nations Millennium Declaration or the Millennium Development Goals.

International volunteering fosters international understanding between peoples and nations and while promoting global citizenship and intercultural cooperation. As a result of international volunteering, there are diffusion of human development skills, mindsets, behaviors and networks that prepare volunteers for living and working in a knowledge-based global economy. International volunteering allows the sharing of knowledge, technology and social norms that are essential for sustainable economic development. When the citizens of a country travel abroad or to the neighboring countries to undertake voluntary activities, the international experiences encountered often enhances the understanding of social, economic and political issues in a global context.

In Kenya voluntarism plays a crucial role in economic development. In Kenya, the institutionalization of volunteerism has been proliferated. However, the dynamics of voluntarism and its role in development in the current situation in Kenya is not documented. Volunteerism has promoted developmental projects in Kenya that include educational support, socio economic support, enhancing food security and provision of safe water for domestic use. International volunteer service is a practical way to promote global understanding, while making tangible contributions to the development of individuals, organizations and communities. The impacts of international volunteer service as a development strategy ultimately depend on whether programs

recognize and implement effective institutional practices based on the outcomes they desire to achieve. International voluntary services enhance the education, employment and participation of citizens in host countries. The involvement of international voluntary organizations in national development has increased with the proliferation of Non-Governmental Organizations and Community Based organization that require volunteers to do development work in Kenya. They also assert that in a number of development areas, the Kenya government has handed over the responsibilities of delivery of services to international voluntary organizations. This is out of the realization that NGOs and CBOs are better placed to reach people than government. Voluntary organizations operations have expanded to include expertise of nationals in their respective countries in development and humanitarian programs. This expansion process has led to a steady growth for the need of National United Nations Volunteers (NUNVS) by many development partners in implementing several development initiatives in the Third World including Kenya. Voluntary activities and services promote social cohesion, social inclusion and integration both for the beneficiaries of the actions and the volunteers themselves. Volunteering leads to the direct involvement of citizens in local development, and therefore plays an important role in fostering civil society and democracy in Kenya.

Volunteerism may lead to effective and sustainable community development programmes. The social impact of voluntarism on community development includes strengthening social connections, building strong, safe, cohesive community; enhancing civic engagement; and delivering public goods and services. In Kenya, community based volunteering in socioeconomic development is essential in building various infrastructure and cohesion in communities to further enhance governmental initiatives especially within individual communities. The government actively engages in creating effective community based mechanisms and structures that can make use of resources and skills available within communities. Socially, community volunteering helps to build more cohesive communities, fostering greater trust between citizens and developing norms of solidarity and reciprocity that are essential to stable communities. The social capital represented by volunteering plays a key role in economic regeneration. Volunteering is both an opportunity and an asset for development. It represents a tremendous resource for addressing many of the development challenges of our times. The value of

volunteerism to community development and its contributions in various forms is widely acknowledged. Community based volunteerism has provided momentum to further integrating voluntary efforts into national plans and policy, and to the strengthening of national infrastructure.

It is further established that, skills and competencies gained through volunteering can be transferred into professional contexts. Volunteer administrators and Extension volunteer programs can influence individual leadership capacity in volunteers within the context of all three of the categories of Developing Self, Developmental influences, and group influences. Understanding these categories will help volunteer administrators of extension volunteers focus their efforts for building the leadership identity of those volunteers in both a positive and effective manner. Volunteer administrators can have a direct impact on the developmental influences.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study viewed volunteering is essential in promoting economic development. Volunteerism play a critical role in promoting social inclusion, assisting marginalized social groups, its relationship to other forms of civic participation and unpaid work, creating a civil society, social action, in community building and community renewal. It concludes that volunteering promotes people to be more active in civic engagement, contributing to the overall development of the community and nation at large.

It is concluded that volunteerism as mutual social responsibility is ingrained in Kenya. Volunteerism has been instrumental in promoting socio welfare of the people while at the same time promoting overall economic development of the country. Voluntary organizations are key players in the economy in their own right as employers and service providers, adding to the overall economic output of a country and reducing the burden on government spending. The sector also plays a key role of creating the conditions where the economy can flourish by investing in people through training, boosting skills and improving the employability of people on the margins of the labor market.

It is also concluded that volunteerism has contributed immensely in building partnerships between local, regional, national and global institutions were some of the most commonly described contributions. At the local level, international volunteers often lent visibility to institutions, which in turn facilitated inter-institutional collaboration on the local and regional levels. The advocacy skills, confidence and competence which host organisations and local communities acquired through many of these programs gave them the individual and community capacity to engage in national networking. This further helped to foster global connections through the volunteer sending organisations' international connections.

It is also concluded that leadership is an important aspect of all volunteer programs. Extension programs are most impactful when Extension professionals and volunteers have a partnership and a balance of program ownership and responsibility. The nature of leadership provided by voluntary projects coordinators is necessary in ensuring the success of the volunteerism activity. Appropriate leadership should support individuals' competences while encouraging personal initiative.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the empirical literature, volunteerism is resource efficient. Investing in supportive public policies and legal frameworks will directly assist governments to tap into the enormous resource that volunteerism represents. Governments can proactively nurture an enabling environment for volunteerism through the creation of public programmes and schemes and the development of enabling policies and legislation for volunteerism.

Both governments and development agencies can take the lead in supporting volunteer schemes that enable or create special incentives to engage disadvantaged or marginalized groups in volunteering, including in development programming. This can occur through various modalities, including facilitating volunteer schemes that target the contributions or integration of particular groups. The study finds that it is important to build the image of volunteering to give it credibility to potential volunteers. There is need to motivate volunteers through financial support and capacity development. In order to encourage people to volunteer, it is necessary to recognize volunteers and volunteerism. Further there is need to conceptualize a structure within volunteer

organizations that attracts funding. To this end, writing a handbook on volunteerism would be useful.

Communities should be sensitized about the power of networking, and sharing experiences about voluntarism without reward. Community members will understand the need to volunteer in providing both social and developmental programmes to the local people. There is need to increase the provision of secure and stable funding for the volunteering infrastructure especially volunteer-involving organisations to create an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering, and provide resources for development of impact management culture. This can be done through raising awareness amongst civil society staff, government and donor supporters on the importance of volunteerism in promoting economic development.

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