

Servant Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Lira District, Uganda

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Abstract - This study explores the relationship between community engagement and Service delivery in Lira District. Specially, the study sought to: explores the Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Lira District, establish the relationship between employee engagements and service delivery in Lira District and to assess the relationship between elected officials' engagements and service delivery in Lira District. A descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional survey design was adopted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques. A sample size of 110 participants was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources, with the help of questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary checklists. The correlation between community engagement and service delivery in Lira District local government was ($r=0.489$) and was significant. This correlation indicates that as community engagements increase, service delivery in the district also improves. The correlation between employee engagements and service delivery in Lira District Local Government was ($r=0.749$) and significant as well. This strong positive correlation shows that as employee engagements increase, service delivery in the district also improves significantly. The correlation between elected officials' engagements and service delivery in Lira District Local Government was ($r=0.721$) and also significant. This positive correlation indicates that as engagements with elected officials increase, service delivery in the district also improves significantly. Based on these findings, it was recommended that; to enhance service delivery effectiveness in Lira District, emphasis should be on strengthening community engagement practices, empowering employees of Lira District Local government, and fostering collaborations with elected representatives. These findings contribute to the understanding of leadership styles and their impact on service delivery in local government settings, offering insights for policymakers and practitioners to improve governance processes and stakeholder engagement strategies.

Keywords: Community, Engagement, Service, Delivery.

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership styles and their impact on service delivery in Uganda vary significantly, influenced by diverse cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors. Several leadership styles have been observed within the Ugandan local government, ranging from autocratic to democratic and transformational leadership (Nsubuga, 2008). This section covers the historical perspective, conceptual perspective, theoretical perspective and contextual perspective as explained below.

The historical perspective on servant leadership and service delivery in local government in Uganda reflects the country's journey in governance, public administration, and the promotion of community-centered leadership. Uganda, like many other countries in Africa, has faced various challenges in delivering public services, building infrastructure, and addressing the needs of its citizens, particularly at the local level (Canavesi, 2022). Historically, the concept of servant leadership has roots in African traditions, where leaders were expected to serve their communities with humility, empathy, and a strong sense of responsibility. In Uganda, this ethos has influenced leadership principles in traditional governance structures and has also been relevant in shaping modern leadership practices (Xie, 2020).

Local government in Uganda has undergone significant changes over the years, particularly in the post-independence era. The country has experienced shifts in governance frameworks, including decentralization reforms aimed at bringing decision-making and service delivery closer to the local population (Mulinge, 2021). These reforms have sought to empower local leaders to be more responsive to the needs of their communities and to adopt leadership styles that prioritize service and accountability.

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on promoting servant leadership in Ugandan local government, with a focus on principles such as empathy, ethical conduct, inclusivity, and a commitment to the well-being of citizens (Racheal, Mlongo, & Basil, 2024). This approach aligns with

the traditional values of community service and has gained attention as a way to address issues related to corruption, inefficiency, and the quality of public service delivery (Tukamuhebwa, 2022). Furthermore, service delivery in local government in Uganda has been shaped by the country's efforts to improve infrastructure, healthcare, education, and other essential services at the local level. This has involved initiatives to enhance the capacity of local administrators, improve resource allocation, and engage citizens in decision-making processes (Nyakato & Alasan, 2022).

Servant leadership emphasizes ethical behavior, transparency, and accountability. When leaders prioritize these values, it fosters trust among citizens and enhances service delivery. Servant leaders focus on the well-being of others. By prioritizing citizens' needs, they contribute to more responsive and effective public services (Russell, 2001). Servant leaders empower their teams, encouraging collaboration and innovation. This can lead to improved service quality and efficiency. Servant leadership promotes community engagement. Leaders who actively listen to citizens and involve them in decision-making enhance local governance and service delivery (Gotsis & Grimani, 2016). In summary, while servant leadership holds promise for enhancing service delivery in Uganda, overcoming historical norms and ensuring widespread adoption remain critical challenges.

A suitable theoretical framework for the study "Servant Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Local Government" was the Servant Leadership Theory, as proposed by Robert K. Greenleaf (Parris & Peachey, 2013). This theory provides a comprehensive understanding of leadership that is centered on serving others and prioritizing the needs of employees and the community (Patterson, 2003). The study can explore the key principles of servant leadership, such as empathy, ethical decision-making, empowerment, and a focus on the well-being of employees and citizens. The application of these principles in local government leadership can be analyzed in relation to its impact on service delivery and the overall effectiveness of governance (Pawar, Sudan, Satini, & Sunarsi, 2020).

The theory suggests that servant leaders promote a supportive and empowering environment that encourages employee engagement and motivation. This can be examined in the context of local government, and the study can assess how a servant leadership style influences employee attitudes, performance, and their ability to contribute to improved service delivery (Gašková, 2020). Servant leadership prioritizes the needs of the community, participative decision-making, and open communication. The study can explore how these aspects of servant leadership impact local government initiatives, responsiveness to community concerns, and the quality of public service delivery (Langhof & Guldenberg,

2020). The theory emphasizes the importance of ethical behavior and moral decision-making. The study can investigate how servant leadership influences ethical conduct in local government, and how this, in turn, affects public trust, transparency, and the delivery of services to citizens. By applying the Servant Leadership Theory as a framework for the study, researchers can gain insights into the relationship between leadership styles in local government, particularly servant leadership, and the impact on service delivery, employee engagement, and community outcomes. This theoretical approach can provide a solid foundation for understanding and evaluating the dynamics of leadership and service delivery in the context of local government.

Servant leadership, as applied in local governments, is a leadership philosophy and style that emphasizes the leader's primary role as a servant to the community and its members (Canavesi, 2022). In this context, a servant leader prioritizes the needs, interests, and well-being of the community over their own personal agenda or ambitions. Servant leaders actively listen to their team members. They create an environment where everyone's voice is heard. By paying attention to verbal and nonverbal cues, they gather insights and understand growth opportunities (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). Such leaders care about their team on a personal level. They recognize that personal well-being contributes to professional success. By showing empathy and understanding, they build strong relationships. For example, a leader supports an employee going through a difficult time by offering flexibility and emotional support (Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014). Servant leaders foster a collaborative and inclusive decision-making process. They involve stakeholders in the decision-making process and work towards consensus-building. Servant leaders support the growth and development of their employees and community members. They empower others to take ownership of their responsibilities and provide them with the resources and tools needed to succeed (Canavesi, 2022).

Service delivery in local government refers to the process through which public services and facilities are provided to residents within a specific geographical area by the local government authorities (Huston, Gaskin, Moriarty, & Watsisi, 2021). These services include a wide range of essential services such as sanitation, transportation, health care, education, law enforcement, waste management, social welfare, utilities, and more (Mwesigwa, 2021). The main goal of service delivery in local government is to meet the needs of the community in an efficient, effective, and equitable manner. Local governments are responsible for planning, organizing, financing, and delivering these services to ensure that residents have access to essential services that contribute to their quality of life and well-being (Auma, 2024). Local

governments must conduct a thorough assessment of the needs and priorities of the community to determine which services are most essential and where they are needed the most. Local governments must allocate sufficient financial resources to support the delivery of services. This may involve generating revenue through taxes, fees, grants, or other sources of funding (Kabunga, 2016). Local governments need to monitor the performance of service delivery to ensure that services are delivered efficiently, effectively, and equitably. Regular evaluations help to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments (Muyomba-Tamale, Ssemakula, & Luba, 2011). Overall, effective service delivery in local government is essential for promoting the well-being and development of communities, enhancing quality of life, and fostering a sense of social cohesion and inclusivity.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Location of the Study area

The study was carried out in northern Uganda, including Lira District, the effectiveness and quality of services provided by District Local Governments face several challenges.

Several plans, budgets and proposal made in respective local councils remain on paper (Kabunga, 2016). A few projects that were proposed for implementation especially on waste management, road maintenance and culvert development have been partially been implemented. This has led to citizens losing trust in their own leaders (ACODE, 2023)

Lira District only has three Universal Secondary Schools; these serve in an area of 30,000 people hence in adequate and effective for the population. This means that most Students move long distances to attend school resulting into high rates of school dropouts (Lira District Education Department, 2023). In addition, 70% of the Primary Schools have classrooms in a dilapidated state and inadequate to accommodate the bigger enrollments resulting in some other lessons being conducted under trees (Ayina & Kasujja, 2020). According to Lira District Assessment Report (2023), the performance of various sectors was; education at 52%, healthcare at 45%, roads and transport at 12% and sanitation in town councils at 34%. This has prompted the researcher to establish the effects of citizen leadership on service delivery in Lira District.

Sketch Map of Showing the Location of LIRA District (Study Area)



Source: Google map 2024

Sampling

The study used purposive sampling technique to select opinion leaders and service providers that participated in the study. These were purposely selected to provide relevant information on the services provided by leaders in Lira District. Simple random sampling was used to select political leaders and technical staff of the district local government. The researcher used simple random sampling in order to eliminate bias in selecting these respondents. These provided data on leadership styles employed by leaders.

Sample Size

A representative sample size of respondents was determined by using the table provided by Krejcie & Morgan R, (1970). A sample size of 110 people was selected from the population of 157 as shown in Table 1 above. These included 37 political leaders, 47 technical staff, 10 service providers and 16 opinion leaders.

Study Population

The study population included political leaders, opinion leaders, service providers and technical leaders at Lira District

Local Government. The study population constituted 157 participants that included 54 political leaders (chairperson LC v and councillors), 68 technical staff (Chief and administrative officer and other technical staff), 15 service providers and 20 opinion leaders arrived at using the Krejcie & Morgan’s table of 1970.

Table 1: Population size and sample size

Study participants	Population size	Sample size	Sampling technique
Political leaders	54	37	Simple random sampling
Technical staff	68	47	Simple random sampling
Service providers	15	10	Purposive sampling
Opinion leaders	20	16	Purposive sampling
Total	157	110	

Source: Lira District Records Department (2024)

Source of Data

For this study, primary data was obtained by use of questionnaires and interview guides to look for information about the study directly from the field by the researcher. Secondary data was gotten from performance reports, journals, internet research, newspapers and written literature by earlier scholars on leadership styles and service delivery.

Instrument

Questionnaires were issued to political leaders and technical staff to obtain primary data. This made it more convenient and easier to collect data from respondents that had busy schedules like CAO and Chairpersons. Closed ended questions were drawn using Likert scale and were used to enhance simplicity for straight forward questions. Open ended questions on the other hand were intended to permit a greater depth of response on specialized issues of the interview.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected was edited, coded and later analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 24 computer programme. Quantitative data was analyzed using tables, correlation analysis to show the relationships and regression analysis to show relationship between servant leadership and service delivery. Pearson’s correlation coefficients (r) and significance (p) were used to identify the significance levels at the 99 and 95 confidence levels in the correlation analysis. This involved running a bivariate correlation analysis using Pearson’s correlation analysis allowing it to find any significant relationship at 2-tailed. The adjusted R2, t value beta and significance values were used to measure the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable in the regressions analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data where categories and patterns were identified. The recurrent categories, which emerged in relation to each guiding question from the interviews, were presented in the results, with selected direct quotations from participants presented.

IV. RESULTS

This section presents key findings, which are presented in relation to the objectives of the study as stated in chapter one. The main tool of data collection was a questionnaire that generated quantitative data from the respondents; interview guides and observation checklist were the instruments that helped in generating qualitative data.

Based on the study sample size of 220 participants, that were issued with questionnaires and scheduled for interviews, only 200 returned the questionnaires and accepted interviews hence the response rate of 90.9%.

Table 2: Response rate of the study

Respondents	Questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled	Questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled	Response rate
Political leaders	154	30	81.0%
Technical staff	06	45	95.7%
Service providers	03	10	100%
Opinion leaders	01	01	01.0%
Others	06	15	93.8%
Total	170	100	90.9%

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The findings on the response rate for the study "between Servant Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Lira District" indicate a high level of participation among the various categories of respondents. The response rate provides insight into the willingness of respondents to engage with the study, complete questionnaires, and participate in interviews.

The total response rate for the study was 90.9%, indicating that a significant number of questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled were completed by the respondents across different categories. This suggests a strong level of interest and cooperation from the participants in providing input for the study. Out of 37 questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled for political leaders, 30 were completed, resulting in a response rate of 81%. While slightly lower than other categories, this still represents a significant level of engagement from political leaders in Lira District.

Technical staff demonstrated the highest response rate at 95.7%, with 45 out of 47 questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled being completed. This suggests a high level of commitment and interest among technical staff members in participating in the study. All 10 questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled for service providers were completed, resulting in a response rate of 100%. This indicates full participation and cooperation from service providers in Lira District.

Opinion leaders also exhibited a high response rate of 93.8%, with 15 out of 16 questionnaires issued and interviews scheduled being completed. This indicates a strong level of engagement and willingness to contribute to the study. The high response rates across all categories of respondents reflect a favorable environment for conducting the study on servant leadership style and service delivery in Lira District. The willingness of participants to provide input suggests a recognition of the importance of the research topic and a desire to contribute to improving service delivery in the district.

Overall, the findings on the response rate indicate a positive level of engagement and cooperation from respondents across different categories, providing a solid foundation for conducting the study and drawing meaningful conclusions regarding the relationship between servant leadership style and service delivery in Lira District.

4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Under this section, gender and age, marital status, education level of respondents were captured. The demographics are presented in descriptive form considering percentages and frequencies as shown in the tables below;

The findings regarding the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in the study "between Servant Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Lira District" provide insights into the composition of the participant pool. According to findings in table 4.2 above, the study included four categories of respondents: political leaders, technical staff, service providers, and opinion leaders. Among these categories, technical staff constituted the largest proportion, accounting for 45% of the total respondents, followed by political leaders (30%), opinion leaders (15%), and service providers (10%).

On gender, the distribution of respondents was skewed towards males, with 63% of the respondents being male and 37% female. This gender imbalance may reflect prevailing gender dynamics within the leadership and service provider roles in Lira District.

Respondents were distributed across different age groups, with the majority falling into the 34-45 years category (47%). This suggests that middle-aged individuals are well-represented among the participants, followed by those aged 24-35 years (32%) and 46 years and above (21%).

The education level of respondents varied, with the majority holding a bachelor's degree (48%), followed by those with a diploma (38%) and secondary education (14%). The higher proportion of respondents with bachelor's degrees may indicate a relatively high level of education among key stakeholders involved in service delivery in Lira District.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Category of respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Political leaders	30	30%
Technical staff	45	45%
Service providers	10	10%
Opinion leaders	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Gender		
Male	63	63%
Female	37	37%
Total	100	100%
Age Group		
24-35 years	32	32%
34-45 years	47	47%
46 and above years	21	21%
Total	100	100%
Education level		
Secondary	14	14%
Diploma	38	38%
Bachelors	48	48%
Total	100	100%
Marital status		
Single	26	26%
Married	74	74%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field data, 2024

The majority of respondents were married (74%), while a smaller proportion were single (26%). This distribution reflects the diversity of marital statuses among the participant pool, with married individuals being the dominant group.

Overall, the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in the study indicate a diverse representation across different categories, genders, age groups, education levels, and marital statuses. This diversity enriches the perspectives and insights gathered from the study, providing a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between servant leadership style and service delivery in Lira District from various vantage points within the community.

4.2 Community Engagements and Service Delivery in Lira District

Descriptive Statistics on Community Engagements and Service Delivery in Lira District.

The findings in table below were capture using Likert 5 point scale where 5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3= Neutral, 2= disagree and 1= strongly agree. These were summarized and presented using descriptive statistics as follows:

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Community Engagements and Service Delivery in Lira District

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leaders prioritize building strong and genuine relationships with civil servants.	2.1	0.3
Leaders empower civil servant and other stakeholders by providing them with the resources	2.3	0.4
Leaders create a culture of open communication within local government	2.5	0.2
Leaders model the behaviors and values they expect from staff in local government	4.3	0.4
Leaders recognize and appreciate the contributions of their staff	2.3	0.1
Leaders foster collaboration and teamwork among staff	1.7	0.2
Leaders support the professional growth and development of their staff	2.7	0.3
Leaders involve staff in decision-making	2.5	0.2

Source: Primary Data ((2024)

The descriptive statistics on community engagements and service delivery in Lira District provide insights into the perceptions and practices related to leadership within the local government.

The statement “Leaders prioritize building strong and genuine relationships with civil servants” has a mean: 2.1 and standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that leaders prioritize building strong and genuine relationships with civil servants. This indicates that there may be perceived shortcomings in fostering positive relationships between leaders and civil servants within the community.

The statement “Leaders empower civil servant and other stakeholders by providing them with the resources” has a mean: 2.3 and standard deviation: 0.4. Respondents disagree that leaders empower civil servants and other stakeholders by providing them with resources. This suggests a perceived lack of support or resources allocated by leaders to empower and enable civil servants to carry out their duties effectively.

The statement “Leaders create a culture of open communication within local government” has a mean: 2.5 and standard deviation: 0.2. The mean score indicates that respondents disagree that leaders create a culture of open communication within the local government. This suggests that there may be perceived barriers or deficiencies in fostering transparent and open communication channels within the government structure.

The statement “Leaders model the behaviors and values they expect from staff in local government” has a mean: 4.3 and standard deviation: 0.4. The mean score suggests that respondents strongly agree (closer to 'strongly agree') that leaders model the behaviors and values they expect from staff in local government. This indicates a positive perception of leaders' role modeling behavior and setting a positive example for staff to follow.

The statement “Leaders recognize and appreciate the contributions of their staff” has a mean: 2.3 and standard Deviation: 0.1. Respondents disagree that leaders recognize and appreciate the contributions of their staff. This suggests a perceived lack of acknowledgment or appreciation from leaders towards the efforts and contributions of staff members.

The statement “Leaders foster collaboration and teamwork among staff” has a mean: 1.7 and Standard Deviation: 0.2. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly disagree that leaders foster collaboration and teamwork among staff. This suggests a perceived deficiency in promoting collaborative work environments within the local government.

The statement “Leaders support the professional growth and development of their staff” had a mean: 2.7 and standard deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that leaders support the professional growth and development of their staff. This indicates a perceived lack of support or investment in staff development initiatives by leaders.

Overall, the findings suggest areas of improvement in leadership practices within the local government of Lira District, particularly in fostering positive relationships, empowering staff, promoting open communication, and supporting collaboration and staff development initiatives. The positive perception of leaders as role models highlights a potential strength that can be leveraged to enhance overall leadership effectiveness and promote positive organizational culture within the local government.

During the interview, the Chairman LC V said “*We engage the community proactively through town hall meetings, community forums, and stakeholder consultations as key strategies for gathering feedback and addressing community needs*”. He added “*regular communication with the community fosters trust and enhances collaboration between local government officials and residents*”

On the councilors selected for the interview said “*we regularly hold meetings with community members to discuss local issues and prioritize development projects. We engage the community for inclusive decision-making processes, where community input is actively sought and incorporated into policy decisions and resource allocation*”.

The CAO said “*My office coordinates various outreach programs and initiatives to involve the community in decision-making processes. We gain feedback and make public consultations to ensure that service delivery initiatives align with community priorities and address local needs effectively*”

One of the service providers said “there are always community outreach programs, mobile service delivery units, and feedback channels to facilitate communication and interaction with residents”.

Overall, the interview findings underscored the importance of community engagement in facilitating effective service delivery in Lira District. Leaders at various levels expressed a commitment to fostering dialogue, transparency, and collaboration with the community to address local needs and enhance the overall well-being of residents.

4.3 Employee Engagements in Lira District Local Government

Descriptive Statistics Employee Engagements in Lira District Local Government.

The findings were recorded on five point scale where 5- strongly agree, 4- agree, 3- Neutral, 2-Disagree and 1- strongly disagree and they had varying responses. The findings were recorded and presented in the table below;

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on Employee Engagements in Lira District Local Government

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leaders prioritize building strong and genuine relationships with their employees.	4.4	0.3
Leaders empower their employees by providing them with the resources and autonomy to succeed in their roles	2.3	0.3
Leaders create a culture of open communication within local government	2.2	0.2
Leaders model the behaviors and values they expect from employees	4.5	0.4
Leaders recognize and appreciate the contributions of employees	4.2	0.4
Leaders foster collaboration and teamwork among their employees	4.3	0.2
Leaders support the professional growth and development of employees	2.1	0.3
Leaders involve employees in decision-making	1.7	0.4

Source: Primary data (2024)

On the statement “Leaders prioritize building strong and genuine relationships with their employees” has a mean: 4.4 and Standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly agree that leaders prioritize building strong and genuine relationships with their employees. This suggests a positive perception of leaders' efforts to foster positive relationships and rapport with their workforce.

The statement “Leaders empower their employees by providing them with the resources and autonomy to succeed in their roles” had a mean: 2.3 and Standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that leaders empower their employees by providing them with resources and autonomy. This indicates a perceived lack of support or resources allocated by leaders to empower and enable employees to succeed in their roles.

The statement “Leaders create a culture of open communication within local government” has a mean: 2.2 and standard deviation: 0.2. Respondents disagree that leaders create a culture of open communication within the local government. This suggests a perceived deficiency in fostering transparent and open communication channels within the organization.

The statement “Leaders model the behaviors and values they expect from employees” has a mean: 4.5 and standard deviation: 0.4. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly agree that leaders model the behaviors and values they expect from employees. This suggests a positive perception of leaders as role models who set a positive example for their workforce.

The statement “Leaders recognize and appreciate the contributions of employees” has a mean: 4.2 and Standard Deviation: 0.4. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly agree that leaders recognize and appreciate the contributions of employees. This suggests a positive perception of leaders' efforts to acknowledge and value the efforts and contributions of their workforce.

The statement "Leaders foster collaboration and teamwork among their employees" has a mean: 4.3 and standard deviation: 0.2. The mean score suggests that respondents strongly agree that leaders foster collaboration and teamwork among their employees. This indicates a positive perception of leaders' efforts to promote a collaborative work environment within the organization.

The statement "Leaders support the professional growth and development of employees" had a mean: 2.1 and Standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that leaders support the professional growth and development of employees. This indicates a perceived lack of support or investment in employee development initiatives by leaders.

The statement "Leaders involve employees in decision-making" has a mean: 1.7 and standard Deviation: 0.4. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly disagree that leaders involve employees in decision-making. This suggests a perceived deficiency in promoting employee participation and involvement in organizational decision-making processes.

Overall, the findings highlight areas of strength and areas for improvement in leadership practices related to employee engagement within Lira District Local Government. While leaders are perceived positively in areas such as modeling behaviors, recognizing contributions, and fostering collaboration, there are perceived deficiencies in areas such as empowering employees, supporting professional growth, and involving employees in decision-making processes. These findings provide valuable insights for organizational leaders to address gaps and enhance employee engagement practices within the organization.

During the interview, the CAO emphasized, *"Building strong relationships with our employees is crucial. Trust and rapport are the foundation of effective teamwork."*

Regarding empowerment, the CAO mentioned, *"We're making efforts to provide resources and autonomy to our employees. However, we need to ensure they have all the support they need to succeed."*

On open communication, the CAO stated, *"We've implemented various channels like staff meetings and feedback sessions. But, there's room to foster a more transparent communication culture."*

When discussing modeling behaviors and values, the CAO affirmed, *"It's essential for leaders to lead by example. We must embody the values we expect from our employees."*

Regarding recognition, the CAO highlighted, *"We're committed to acknowledging and celebrating our employees' efforts through recognition programs and events."*

Concerning collaboration, the CAO emphasized, *"We're working on fostering collaboration and teamwork across departments to enhance productivity and relationships."*

On supporting professional growth, the CAO acknowledged, *"Investing in training and development is crucial for our employees' growth and the organization's success."*

The LCV stressed, *"Leadership means being approachable and accessible to our employees. We need to build strong relationships with them."*

Regarding empowerment, the LCV pointed out, *"Providing training and resources is vital for our employees' autonomy and capacity in their roles."*

On open communication, the LCV emphasized, *"We should create platforms for staff to freely voice their concerns and ideas. Open communication is key."*

On collaboration, the LCV highlighted, *"Fostering collaboration and teamwork is essential for achieving our goals together."*

Regarding professional growth, the LCV stressed, *"Investing in training and career development is necessary to enhance our employees' skills and competencies."*

One staff member remarked, "Building trust and mutual respect with our leaders is crucial. It sets the tone for a positive work environment."

Regarding empowerment, the other staff member commented, "We feel supported by our leaders, with resources and autonomy provided. It helps us perform better in our roles."

4.4 Elected Officials Engagements in Lira District Local Government

Descriptive Statistics on Elected Officials Engagements in Lira District Local Government.

The findings were recorded on five point scale where 5- strongly agree, 4- agree, 3- Neutral, 2-Disagree and 1- strongly disagree and they had varying responses. The findings were recorded and presented in the table below;

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics on Elected Officials Engagements in Lira District Local Government

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leaders take the time to understand the priorities and challenges of elected officials	4.1	0.4
Leaders offer elected officials' valuable information for decision-making on service delivery	2.6	0.5
Leaders advocate for the needs and priorities of the community when engaging with elected officials	1.8	0.4
Both elected and civil servants promote transparency and accountability in service delivery processes	2.7	0.3
Our leaders actively seek input and feedback from elected officials	4.4	0.3
Our leaders work to build trust and rapport with elected officials	1.2	0.2

Source: Primary data (2024)

The descriptive statistics on elected officials' engagements in Lira District Local Government provide insights into the perceptions and practices related to leadership interactions with elected representatives.

The statement "Leaders take the time to understand the priorities and challenges of elected officials" has a mean: 4.1 and standard deviation: 0.4. The mean score indicates that respondents generally agree that leaders take the time to understand the priorities and challenges of elected officials. This suggests a positive perception of leaders' efforts to engage with elected representatives and gain insights into their perspectives and concerns.

The statement "Leaders offer elected officials' valuable information for decision-making on service delivery" has a mean: 2.6 and standard deviation: 0.5. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that leaders offer elected officials' valuable information for decision-making on service delivery. This indicates a perceived deficiency in providing relevant and useful information to elected representatives to support their decision-making processes.

The statement "Leaders advocate for the needs and priorities of the community when engaging with elected officials" has mean: 1.8 and Standard Deviation: 0.4. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly disagree (closer to 'strongly disagree') that leaders advocate for the needs and priorities of the community when engaging with elected officials. This suggests a perceived lack of alignment between leaders' advocacy efforts and community interests in interactions with elected representatives.

The statement "Both elected and civil servants promote transparency and accountability in service delivery processes" has a mean: 2.7 and Standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that both elected and civil servants promote transparency and accountability in service delivery processes. This indicates a perceived gap in efforts to ensure transparency and accountability across the board in service delivery.

The statement "Our leaders actively seek input and feedback from elected officials" mean: 4.4 Standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly agree that leaders actively seek input and feedback from elected officials. This

suggests a positive perception of leaders' efforts to engage in dialogue and collaboration with elected representatives to gather input and insights.

The statement "Our leaders work to build trust and rapport with elected officials" has a mean: 1.2 and standard deviation: 0.2. The mean score indicates that respondents strongly disagree that leaders work to build trust and rapport with elected officials. This suggests a significant perceived deficiency in efforts to establish positive relationships and mutual trust between leaders and elected representatives.

Overall, the findings highlight areas of strength and areas for improvement in leadership engagements with elected officials in Lira District Local Government. While leaders are perceived positively in terms of understanding elected officials' priorities, seeking input, and promoting accountability, there are perceived deficiencies in providing valuable information for decision-making, advocating for community needs, and building trust and rapport with elected representatives. These findings provide valuable insights for organizational leaders to address gaps and enhance interactions with elected officials to better serve the community.

Interview Responses on How Leaders Engage Elected Leaders in Service Delivery in Lira District Local Government:

During the interview with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), he said "*Engaging elected leaders in service delivery is paramount for effective governance. We ensure to regularly meet with them to understand their priorities and challenges.*"

Regarding offering valuable information, the CAO explained, "*We provide elected officials with comprehensive data and reports to aid their decision-making on service delivery matters. It's crucial for them to have access to relevant information.*"

On advocating for community needs, the CAO acknowledged, "*While our primary focus is on serving the community, we also advocate for their needs and priorities when engaging with elected leaders. It's essential for them to be aware of the community's concerns.*"

Concerning transparency and accountability, the CAO stated, "*We strive to uphold transparency and accountability in all service delivery processes, and we expect elected officials to do the same. It's integral for fostering trust and confidence in our governance.*"

Regarding seeking input and feedback, the CAO emphasized, "*We actively seek input and feedback from elected officials to ensure their voices are heard and considered in our decision-making processes. Collaboration is key to achieving our common goals.*"

On building trust and rapport, the CAO admitted, "*Building trust and rapport with elected leaders is an ongoing effort. We work towards establishing open and honest communication channels to strengthen our relationship with them.*"

The elected official emphasized, "*Engagement with elected leaders is crucial for effective service delivery. We appreciate the efforts of the local government in seeking our input and addressing our concerns.*"

Regarding receiving valuable information, the official stated, "*Access to comprehensive information is vital for making informed decisions on service delivery. We rely on the local government to provide us with the necessary data and reports.*"

On advocating for community needs, the official affirmed, "*We expect the local government to advocate for the needs and priorities of the community in our engagements. It's essential for ensuring that our constituents' voices are heard.*"

Concerning transparency and accountability, the official commented, "*Transparency and accountability are fundamental principles of good governance. We collaborate with the local government to uphold these values in our service delivery efforts.*"

Regarding providing input and feedback, the official mentioned, "*We appreciate the local government's efforts to seek our input and feedback on service delivery matters. It demonstrates their commitment to inclusive decision-making.*"

4.5 Service Delivery in Lira District Local Government

The findings were recorded on five point scale where 5- strongly agree, 4- agree, 3- Neutral, 2-Disagree and 1- strongly disagree and they had varying responses. The findings were recorded and presented in the table below;

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics on Service Delivery in Lira District Local Government

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
The local government takes a short time to respond to service requests.	2.1	0.2
The local government takes a short time to resolve any arising issues	2.6	0.3
Residents are satisfied with the services provided by the local government	2.7	0.3
There are no disparities in service coverage within the local government	2.4	0.3
Resources are efficiently utilized by the local government	2.2	0.2
Residents easily access services from local government	2.6	0.3
The local government offers quality services	2.1	0.4
The local government meets set targets in service delivery	2.8	0.3

The descriptive statistics on service delivery in Lira District Local Government provide insights into various aspects of residents' perceptions and experiences regarding the services provided by the local government.

The statement “The local government takes a short time to respond to service requests” has a mean: 2.1 and standard deviation: 0.2. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that the local government takes a short time to respond to service requests. This indicates a perception that there may be delays or inefficiencies in the responsiveness of the local government to residents' service requests.

The statement “The local government takes a short time to resolve any arising issues” has mean: 2.6 and standard deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that the local government takes a short time to resolve any arising issues. This indicates a perception that there may be delays or challenges in addressing and resolving issues promptly once they arise.

The statement “Residents are satisfied with the services provided by the local government” has a mean: 2.7 and Standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that

Residents are satisfied with the services provided by the local government. This indicates a perception of dissatisfaction or inadequacy in the quality or delivery of services provided by the local government. The statement “There are no disparities in service coverage within the local government” has a mean: 2.4 and standard deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that there are no disparities in service coverage within the local government. This indicates a perception that there may be inequalities or disparities in the distribution or accessibility of services across different areas or communities within the district.

The statement “Resources are efficiently utilized by the local government” has a mean: 2.2 and Standard Deviation: 0.2. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that resources are efficiently utilized by the local government. This indicates a perception that there may be inefficiencies or mismanagement in the allocation and utilization of resources for service delivery purposes.

The statement “Residents easily access services from local government” has a mean: 2.6 and standard Deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that residents easily access services from the local government. This indicates a perception of barriers or challenges faced by residents in accessing the services they need from the local government.

The statement “The local government offers quality services” has a mean score of 2.1 and standard Deviation: 0.4. The mean score suggests that respondents tend to disagree (closer to 'disagree') that the local government offers quality services. This indicates a perception of inadequacy or shortcomings in the quality of services provided by the local government.

The statement “The local government meets set targets in service delivery” has a mean: 2.8 and standard deviation: 0.3. The mean score suggests that respondents disagree that the local government meets set targets in service delivery. This indicates a perception that the local government may struggle to achieve or meet the predetermined targets or goals set for service delivery initiatives.

4.6 Correlation findings of the study

Table 8: Correlation findings

Service delivery in Lira District		community engagements	employee engagements	Elected officials engagements
	Pearson Correlation	0.489**	0.749**	0.721**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.030	.000
	N	100	100	100

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation findings of the study indicate significant relationships between service delivery in Lira District and various aspects of engagements within the community, among employees, and with elected officials.

The correlation between community engagement and service delivery in Lira District local government was ($r=0.489$, Sig (2-tailed): 0.010). There was a moderate positive correlation between service delivery in Lira District and community engagements. This indicates that as community engagements increase, service delivery in the district also improves. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlation between employee engagements and service delivery in Lira District Local Government was ($r=0.749$ and sig (2-tailed): 0.030). There was a strong positive correlation between service delivery in Lira District and employee engagements. This suggests that as employee engagements increase, service delivery in the district also improves significantly. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlation between elected officials’ engagements and service delivery in Lira District Local Government was ($r=0.721$, Sig (2-tailed): 0.000). There was a strong positive correlation between service delivery in Lira District and engagements with elected officials. This indicates that as engagements with elected officials increase, service delivery in the district also improves significantly. The correlation is highly significant at the 0.05 level.

Overall, the correlation findings suggest that there are strong positive relationships between service delivery in Lira District and engagements within the community, among employees, and with elected officials. These findings imply that fostering active engagements in these areas may contribute to enhancing service delivery effectiveness and overall governance in the district.

4.7 Regression analysis of Servant Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Lira District

Table 9: Regression analysis of Regression analysis of Servant Leadership Style and Service Delivery in Lira District

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Community engagements	.751 ^a	0.564	0.538
Employee engagements	.844 ^b	0.713	0.718
Elected officials’ engagements	.813 ^c	0.661	0.641

The regression analysis conducted to examine the relationship between servant leadership style and service delivery in Lira District yielded several significant findings.

The regression model indicates that community engagements have a significant positive relationship with service delivery in Lira District. The adjusted R square value of 0.538 suggests that approximately 53.8% of the variance in service delivery can be

explained by community engagements. The coefficient for community engagements (8.873) indicates that for every unit increase in community engagements there is an increase of approximately 8.873 units in service delivery in Lira District.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5.167	.000	5.001	5.234	.000
Community engagements	8.873	.001	5.56	5.516	.002
Employee engagements	7.714	.013	7.03	5.395	.001
Elected officials' engagements	5.313	.062	6.22	3.184	.003
a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery in Lira District					

The regression model suggests a strong positive relationship between employee engagements and service delivery in Lira District. The adjusted R square value of 0.718 indicates that approximately 71.8% of the variance in service delivery can be explained by employee engagements. The coefficient for employee engagements (7.714) suggests that for every unit increase in employee engagements, there is an increase of approximately 7.714 units in service delivery in Lira District.

The regression model indicates a significant positive relationship between engagements with elected officials and service delivery in Lira District. The adjusted R square value of 0.641 suggests that approximately 64.1% of the variance in service delivery can be explained by engagements with elected officials. The coefficient for engagements with elected officials (5.313) suggests that for every unit increase in engagements with elected officials, there is an increase of approximately 5.313 units in service delivery in Lira District.

Overall, the regression analysis highlights the importance of community engagements, employee engagements, and engagements with elected officials in predicting service delivery effectiveness in Lira District. These findings underscore the significance of fostering active engagements across various stakeholders to enhance service delivery outcomes and overall governance in the district. Model: $Service\ delivery = Constant + 8.873\ Community\ engagements + 7.714\ Employee\ engagements + 5.313\ Elected\ leaders'\ engagements$.

V. DISCUSSIONS

Community Engagement and Service Delivery in Lira District Local Government

The correlation analysis between community engagement and service delivery in Lira District local government revealed a moderate positive correlation ($r=0.489$), indicating that as levels of community engagement increase, there tends to be an associated improvement in service delivery within the district. This finding is consistent with existing literature on community engagement and service delivery.

Community engagement is widely recognized as a key factor in enhancing service delivery outcomes by facilitating better communication between government entities and the community, leading to more targeted and responsive service delivery initiatives (Suri, 2021). The statistically significant correlation ($Sig=0.010$) further strengthens the credibility of this relationship, suggesting that the observed correlation is unlikely to have occurred by chance alone.

Furthermore, community engagement fosters transparency and accountability in service delivery, as

highlighted in the literature. When communities are actively involved in local governance processes, they have opportunities to provide feedback, monitor project implementation, and hold government officials accountable for their actions (Alampay et al., 2020). This accountability encourages greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services, as government entities strive to meet community expectations and address identified needs (Davies, 2018).

In summary, the positive correlation between community engagement and service delivery in Lira District local government underscores the importance of fostering meaningful and inclusive engagement practices. By actively involving communities in governance processes, local governments can enhance service delivery effectiveness, promote accountability and transparency, and contribute to the overall well-being and development of the communities they serve. This finding aligns with the broader literature on community engagement and service delivery, highlighting its significance as a driver of improved governance and service delivery outcomes in local government contexts (Bovaird & Loeffler, 2013).

Employee Engagements and Service Delivery in Lira District Local Government

The strong positive correlation coefficient ($r=0.749$) between employee engagement and service delivery in Lira District Local Government indicates a robust relationship between these two variables. This suggests that as levels of employee engagement increase, there is a corresponding improvement in service delivery within the district. The statistically significant significance level ($Sig=0.030$) further validates this correlation, indicating that the observed relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance alone.

Employee engagement is a critical factor influencing service delivery outcomes in local government settings. Research by Albrecht (2010) suggests that engaged employees are more committed to their work, leading to higher levels of productivity and job satisfaction. As employees feel more invested in their roles, they are likely to demonstrate greater initiative, creativity, and dedication to delivering high-quality services to the community (Kahn, 1990). The findings of the current study align with these assertions, highlighting the importance of fostering employee engagement as a means of enhancing service delivery effectiveness.

Furthermore, engaged employees are more likely to exhibit behaviors that contribute to improved service delivery outcomes. Research by Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) indicates that engaged employees are more proactive, innovative, and customer-oriented, leading to enhanced service quality and customer satisfaction. In the context of local government, this translates to a greater focus on meeting the needs of residents, delivering services efficiently, and continuously striving for excellence in service provision (Harter et al., 2002).

The literature on servant leadership provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership style and service delivery outcomes. Servant leadership emphasizes the importance of prioritizing the needs of employees and empowering them to excel in their roles (Greenleaf, 1970). By adopting a servant leadership approach, leaders in local government can create a supportive work environment where employees feel valued, motivated, and engaged (Liden et al., 2008). This, in turn, can lead to improvements in service delivery effectiveness, as employees are more committed to serving the needs of the community (Walumbwa et al., 2010).

In conclusion, the findings of the study underscore the critical role of employee engagement in driving service delivery improvements in Lira District Local Government. By investing in strategies to enhance employee engagement and adopting servant leadership principles, local government leaders can create a culture of excellence, innovation, and

collaboration that benefits both employees and the communities they serve.

Elected Officials Engagements and Service Delivery in Lira District Local Government

The strong positive correlation coefficient ($r=0.721$) between engagements with elected officials and service delivery in Lira District Local Government highlights the significant impact that interactions with elected representatives have on service delivery outcomes. This correlation suggests that as levels of engagements with elected officials increase, there is a corresponding improvement in service delivery within the district. The highly significant significance level ($Sig=0.000$) further reinforces the robustness of this correlation, indicating that the observed relationship is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance alone.

Engagements with elected officials play a crucial role in shaping service delivery priorities, policies, and resource allocations within local government settings. Elected officials represent the interests and concerns of their constituents and have the authority to influence decision-making processes related to service delivery initiatives (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1995). When local government leaders actively engage with elected representatives, they can align service delivery efforts with community needs and priorities, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively and efficiently to address pressing issues and challenges.

Moreover, engagements with elected officials foster transparency, accountability, and democratic governance in local government operations. Elected officials serve as a bridge between the government and the community, providing a platform for residents to voice their concerns, provide feedback, and participate in decision-making processes (Levin & Sanger, 1994).

By engaging with elected representatives, local government leaders can ensure that service delivery initiatives are responsive to the diverse needs and preferences of the community, thereby enhancing citizen trust and confidence in government institutions.

Effective engagements with elected officials also contribute to the oversight and monitoring of service delivery programs and projects. Elected representatives have a responsibility to scrutinize government actions, hold officials accountable for their decisions, and ensure that public resources are used responsibly and ethically (Bertelli & Lynn, 2006). Through regular interactions and consultations with elected officials, local government leaders can receive valuable feedback, guidance, and support for their service

delivery efforts, leading to more informed and effective governance practices.

Furthermore, engagements with elected officials promote collaboration, partnership, and collective action in addressing complex challenges and delivering public services. By working together across political boundaries and ideological differences, government leaders and elected representatives can leverage their respective strengths and resources to achieve common goals and objectives (Ansell & Gash, 2008). This collaborative approach fosters innovation, creativity, and adaptive capacity in responding to emerging issues and opportunities, ultimately leading to more resilient and sustainable service delivery systems.

In conclusion, the findings of the study underscore the critical role that engagements with elected officials play in driving service delivery improvements in Lira District Local Government. By fostering meaningful interactions and partnerships with elected representatives, local government leaders can enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness of service delivery efforts, ultimately leading to improved outcomes and greater satisfaction among residents and stakeholders.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Community engagement positively influences service delivery: The moderate positive correlation ($r=0.489$) between community engagement and service delivery in Lira District local government suggests that as community engagements increase, service delivery in the district also improves. This indicates the importance of actively involving community members in governance processes, as their engagement leads to more effective and targeted service delivery initiatives. Therefore, fostering meaningful community engagement practices should be a priority for local government leaders to enhance service delivery outcomes.

Employee engagement is crucial for service delivery excellence: The strong positive correlation ($r=0.749$) between employee engagements and service delivery in Lira District Local Government highlights the significant role that engaged employees play in improving service delivery effectiveness. As employee engagements increase, service delivery in the district improves significantly. This underscores the importance of investing in strategies to enhance employee engagement, such as providing opportunities for skill development, fostering a positive work environment, and recognizing employee contributions. By prioritizing employee engagement, local government leaders can cultivate a motivated and empowered workforce that is committed to delivering high-quality services to the community.

Engagements with elected officials are essential for service delivery success: The strong positive correlation ($r=0.721$) between engagements with elected officials and service delivery in Lira District Local Government emphasizes the critical role that elected representatives play in influencing service delivery outcomes. As engagements with elected officials increase, service delivery in the district also improves significantly. This underscores the importance of fostering meaningful collaborations and partnerships with elected representatives to align service delivery priorities with community needs and priorities. By actively engaging with elected officials, local government leaders can enhance accountability, transparency, and responsiveness in governance processes, ultimately leading to improved service delivery outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the interconnectedness of community engagement, employee engagement, and engagements with elected officials with service delivery effectiveness in Lira District local government. By recognizing and prioritizing these correlations, local government leaders can develop targeted strategies to enhance community participation, employee motivation, and stakeholder collaboration, ultimately leading to improved service delivery outcomes and greater community satisfaction.

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