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Political – Administrative Relations in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania: A case of Tanga City Council

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Abstract: Local governments in Tanzania are working under elected and appointed officials through council and its performance is largely dependent their reciprocal and positive relationship. The purpose of the paper was to provide a critical analysis of the political-administrative relations in Local Government's Authorities (LGAs). The study adopted a case study research design and Tanga City Council was purposeful selected. A total of fifty (50) respondents were selected purposefully based on their knowledge and experience in working with the elected officials. The methods of data collection used include, survey method, interview, observation, Focus Group Discussion and Key Focus Interview (KFIs). Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis and quantitative data were analysed using SPSS whereby descriptive statistics were computed. The study revealed that the relationship between the elected and the appointed officials were characterized by conflict, distrust and interference that negatively affect employee's performance in local government. Further, the study revealed that poor relations is highly associated with conflict of interests, distrust, task interdependence, political interference, lack of education on the side of politicians, poor communication and partisan politics. The study recommends that the government should have a regular monitoring of the relations between the two and encourage cooperation. Also the elected officials need to be trained on how to perform their roles in their areas of jurisdiction. The study recommends for elected and the appointed officials to perform their duties based on public interests, trust each other and do away with partisan politics.

Key Words: *Political-Administrative Relations, Employee Performance, Local Governments*

INTRODUCTION

Local Governments Authorities (LGAs) through Local Government Act, 1982 (Urban and Rural) broadly mandated to establish and maintain social services in their areas of jurisdiction. Social services provided by local governments include health, education, clean and safe water, infrastructures among others (Boris, 2015; Chaligha, 2004; Boex *et al*., 2015). Therefore, LGAs are the key instruments responsible for the provision of social services in areas of their jurisdictions. The government through Capital Development Grants (CDG) established various public development projects to improve public service delivery. Natalini (2010) argue that LGAs have been given a "developmental role" as institutions that are close to the local people and respond to the local needs. Therefore, Local Government Authorities (LGAs) are the potential instruments in improving social service delivery.

The elected and appointed officials have to work in cooperation in performing local government functions (Landa, 2015, URT, 2004). The elected officials, who are known as "politicians" are democratically elected by the people after every five (5) years in local government elections and general elections to represent their electorates in the council (Landa, 2012; Njunwa, 2017).

The elected officials include Hamlet chairperson, Village/ street chairperson, Councillors, Members of Parliament (MPs). The appointed officials who are known as administrative officials are recruited and hired by government based on their professional's qualifications. These appointed officials include City Executive Directors (CED), Heads of Department, Ward Executive Officers (WEO), Teachers, and Village Executive Officer (VEO).

The concept of political-administrative relations focuses on the existing relationship between the elected and appointed officials in performing government functions. There is an ongoing debate among scholars in public administration and management fields on the model of relations which is appropriate for a smooth relationship between elected and appointed officials (Svara, 2001; Jacobsen, 1996). Siggen *et al.*, (2009) look at political administrative relations as an area of study which has attracted and continue to attract the attention of many researchers and development practitioners. Regardless of whether it is the central government or local governments, political–administration relations are important to ensure effective social service delivery to the public. As Svara (2008) suggests, the relationship between the elected officials and the appointed officials may be considered as one of the most critical intellectual issues in public administration.

As Kasper and Ejerbo (2002) argues, the relationship between elected and appointed officials is still continuing to generate discussion. It is not possible to talk about the political process without talking about the administration or vice versa. In showing the importance of political-administrative relations, Khair *et al.* (2012) observe that a bureaucratic responsibility in a democracy largely depends on the existing politic-administration relationship. On the same aspect, Adarkwa *et al.* (2015) were on opinions that politics and administration are two separate, analytical components, but are, to a very high extent, integrated into the same political process.

Despite the efforts of the government to improve capacities of local government to deliver quality social services, most local governments are still underperforming (Warioba, 2008; Muro, 2015: Njunwa, 2006). Residents in local governments are complaining and expressing their dissatisfaction with poor local governments' underperformances on social service delivery. Scholars of public administration and development have been exploring as to why local governments fail to deliver better social service to their communities (Mollel *et al*., 2014; 2010, Njunwa, 2017; Kisimbe *et al.*, 2014). These scholars identify various factors include; financial constraints, poor citizen's participation, poor employees motivation, governance factors and lack of political will (Yilmaz *et al.*, 2010; Devas, 2005; Irvin *et al.*, 2004). However, little is known on the contribution of political-administration relations in improving employee's performance in local governments' and improving social service delivery. Therefore, this paper seeks to fill the knowledge gap by assessing on how the relationship between the elected and appointed influencing employee's performance in local governments.

Theoretical framework of this study lies on complementary model/partnership model of political administrative relations. The complimentary model focuses on the interconnectedness between politics and administration, holds that administrators can have a great impact on policy making and that the elected officials can have a great impact on implementation of the policies, and separating the two will result in poor performance (Khair *et al.*, 2012; Azunu 2013; Siggen *et al*., 2009). Therefore, this requires sacrificing the independence of both politicians and

administrators. Delmar and Legge (2002) support the partnership model by emphasizing on complementarities of politics and administration. Svara stresses on interdependency, reciprocal influence, and extensive interaction between the elected and the appointed officials. In another study, Mafuru *et al*. (2015) argue that, under this model, which is termed as *village model,* administrators are engaged in the discussions about political issues and strategies and at the same time politicians provide their opinion on the implementation of political decisions. Therefore, the study investigated on how Tanga City Council adhere to application of complimentary model in managing relationship between elected and appointed officials and the way influence employee's performance.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Tanga City Council which is found in Tanga Region. Tanga City Council (TCC) is one of the councils of the Tanga Region which covers 536 square kilometres (207 sq. m). The council consists of twenty one (21) Wards and 181 streets "mitaas" (Tanga City Council, 2013, URT, 2000). The Council was purposively selected from local governments in Tanga Region with the majority of elected officials who are coming from the oppositional political parties (CUF).

The study adopted a case study design in which provides tools for researchers to study a complex phenomenon within their context (Bryman, 2008; Zainal, 2007; Creswell, 2002). Five (5) wards were randomly selected, including Ngamiani Kati, Ngamiani Kaksazini, Majengo, Central and Masiwani. The study employed a sample size of fifty (50) employees randomly selected from different cadres such as management, middle and lower levels. Both simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used to select the respondents. Under simple random, each unit of the population has an equal probability of being included in the sample (Bryman, 2008; Kothari, 2005). The used Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to get in-depth information on how political-administrative relations influence employee's performance. A total of 22 key informant interview were conducted include the City Director (CED), 2 Heads of Department (HoDs), 3 Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), 3 Head Teachers and 3 Mtaa Executive Officers (MEOs), Deputy Mayor, 3 Ward Councillors, 3 Mtaa Executive Officers (MEOs) and 3 street chairpersons.

Two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted comprised of 24 participants ranged from six to twelve participants in each focus group discussion. The participants included both elected officials, appointed officials and ordinary local people. Conventional content analysis was used to analyze data obtained from key informants and focus group discussions. Descriptive statistics through SPPS was used to analyse quantitative data include frequencies and percentages.

3. 0 Discussion and Findings

This part presents the findings of this study on the following thematic areas: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, the basis of relationship between the elected and appointed officials, the Level of interaction between the elected and appointed officials, and employees perception towards political-administration relations, sources of ineffective relations between elected and appointed officials, adherence to governance and influence of political-administration relations in employees performance.

3.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

As shown in Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents indicated that more than half of the respondents interviewed were females while about a third were males (60 percent females and 40 percent males). In terms of education levels, 46% of the respondents had a degree, 40% had a diploma 12% had completed secondary education and 2% had completed primary education. In marital status 72% of the respondents were married while 28% were single. Above all, 100% of the respondents were employed by Tanga City Council and this implies that all the respondents were interacting with the elected and appointed officials in performing their duties and aware on their relation with elected officials.

Table 1: Demographic and Social economic characteristics of the respondent interviewed (n=50)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Sex	Male	20	40
	Female	30	60
Education level	Primary	1	2
	Secondary	6	12
	Diploma	20	40
	Degree	23	46
Marital status	Single	14	28
	Married	36	72

3.2 The basis of relationship between the elected and appointed officials

The study findings revealed that there were three (3) factors that shaped the relationship between the elected and appointed officials in the Local Government, namely the *nature of employment, the roles and responsibilities, and the organizational structure*. In relation to the nature of employment, the elected officials are recruited through democratic process *"elections"* and based on political legitimacy. The appointed officials, on the other hand, are permanent public officials that are employed by the Central Government and recruited based on their skills and professional backgrounds (URT, 2009). During key informants' interview with Street Chairperson had this to say;

"We are very disappointed with poor performance of local government staff in our wards/villages, they claimed that they are not hired by us and we cannot do anything on their employment" (KIIs at Ngamiani Kati Ward, 26 July, 2017).

The findings were supported by focus group discussion whereby the participants were in consensus that the appointed officials were not accountable to the needs of the local people. The appointed officials believe that they are responsible to government through the office of City Director.

In relations to roles and responsibilities, the study found out that the elected officials were responsible for policies and decision making process through councils. At the council level, full council is the supreme organ for decision making and designing local government plans. At ward level there is Ward Executive Committee (WDCs). The responsibilities of the elected officials are to make policies and mobilize local people into participating in development projects and

providing policies guidelines to the appointed staff. One of Ward Executive Officer (WEO) stated that:

"....the elected officials are the one formulate policies and give guidelines for implementation of local government functions, only we have to do is to comply with their directives and implement their decisions." (KIIs at Nguvumali Ward, 24 July, 2017)

On the other hand, the appointed officials in the Local Governments are responsible for policies and project implementation (Mafuru, 2016; Njunwa, 2017). The appointed officials have adequate technical and professional skills for implementing local government functions (Landa, 2012; Makinde, 2015). This implies that, the interaction between the elected officials and the administrators is to a large extent depend much on their principal-agent model, which means that the elected official as a principal "policy makers" and administrators as "policy implementers."

Further, the study findings reveal that organizational structure plays a vital role in determining the relationship between the appointed and the elected officials. According to Robbins (2010), organization structure provides for the ways in which people within an organization interact and perform their functions. The local government structure allows more power among the elected officials over the appointed officials. This implies that, the appointed officials have to comply with directives from the elected officials. This finding was supported by key informant interview by one of the Ward Executive (Wes) who said that:

"In most cases, we have to comply with elected officials even if we are aware that their decisions are wrong simply because we are accountable to them. The councillors have a power to reject you to work in his ward and sometime may cause problems to you." (Ngamiani Kati, 26/July/2017)

3.3. Level of interaction between the elected and appointed officials

In respect with the level of interactions between elected and appointed officials in their day to day functions 44 (88%) of the respondents agreed that they highly interacted with the elected officials in performing their duties. This implies that in order to fulfil their functions successfully, the local government system required the appointed officials to cooperate with elected officials, who are elected and represent local people. Therefore, it is imperative for appointed officials to work with elected officials through council.

The level of interaction between elected officials and appointed officials varies depending on the nature of the job and the positions of the involved appointed officials. The study revealed that Mtaa Executives and Ward Executives interact more with elected officials in comparison with other employees at the Council. The more the appointed official work with the local communities the more it is likely for them to work with the elected officials (Njunwa, 2017). This finding is in line with the finding of a study conducted by Mafuru *et al.* (2015) that revealed that, the appointed officials at wards and village levels at Mvomero District and Kinondoni Municipal Council highly interacted with the elected officials in the course of performing their duties. This implies that it is not possible for the appointed staff to perform their duties without involving the elected officials. It should be noted that, elected officials play a big role in

mobilizing local people to participate in public development projects which are implemented by local governments.

Table 2: Level of interactions between politicians and administrators

Description	Responses			
	Frequency (n) Yes	Percent (% Yes)	Frequency (n) No	Percent (% No)
Whether respondent interact with elected official "politicians"	44	88	6	12
Whether respondents are happy working with politicians	21	42	29	58

In respect as to whether the appointed officials were happy to work with the elected officials, the findings indicates that 29 (58%) of the respondents were not happy to work with the elected officials while 12 (42%) of the respondents were satisfied and happy to work with the politicians. The reasons for administrators' staff's unhappiness to work with the elected official were caused by a number of factors. The study found out that appointed officials accused elected officials for not complying with rules and regulations in performing their duties, highly motivated by political interests, and high level of illiterate amongst the elected officials. These findings are in line with the findings in a study conducted by (Lyatonga *et al.*, 2012) which revealed that the elected officials at Mvomero District Council ignored technical advices of appointed officials and frequently interfere with their daily activities of the administrators.

3.4. Employee's perceptions towards political - administration relations

Attitudinal statements were used to measure the perception of respondents towards political–administrative relations between the elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council. The attitude was determined using a Likert Scale as indicated in Table 3, which comprised a total of 5 statements. Of all the respondents interviewed 39 (78%) had unfavourable attitude; 5(10%) had indifferent attitude and 6(12%) had favourable attitude towards the relationship between the elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council. The result implies that the respondents had an overall unfavourable attitude towards the relationship between the elected and the appointed officials. The responses to the individual statements of the Likert scale are presented in Table 4 which 70 percent of the respondents showed that there is a regular conflicts between elected and appointed officials. These research finding implies that there is poor relationship between the elected and the appointed officials in performing council duties.

Table 3: Overall respondents perception towards relationship between appointed and elected officials in Tanga City Council (n=50)

Overall perception	Frequency	Percent
Favourable	6	12
Neutral	5	10
Unfavourable	39	78
Total	50	100

This finding was supported by Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) whereby participants were in consensus that the elected official's interference appointed officials in day to day functions. The

political interference by the elected officials to the appointed officials creates antagonistic relationship between the elected and the appointed officials. During KIIs, the appointed officials reported further that it was very difficult to work with the elected officials from opposition political parties than working with the elected from the ruling party (CCM). In most cases, the elected officials from the opposition political parties were reported to have been reluctant to comply with City Director directives as opposed to elected officials from Chama Cha Mapinduzi. This finding is in line with the finding reported in a study by Iravo *et al*., (2013) who revealed that Moshi District Council was characterized by frequent regular conflicts between the elected and the appointed officials. The study findings indicated further that, the tensions were more severe in the wards that elected officials are from the opposition political party (CHADEMA).

Table 4: Attitudinal statements of respondents perception towards relationship between appointed and elected officials in Tanga City Council (n=50)

Attitudinal statements	Responses					
	Disagree		Undecided		Agree	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
There are regular conflicts between the elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council	10	20	5	10	35	70
Poor cooperation between the elected and the appointed officials leads to poor performance of employees	10	20	9	18	31	62
The elected and the appointed officials work as partner in their activities	24	48	13	26	13	26
It is difficult to define the relationship between the elected and the appointed officials	17	34	10	20	23	46
Clear separation of power between elected and appointed officials is important	18	36	13	26	19	38

3.5 Sources of poor relations between elected and appointed officials

The study examined the sources of poor relations between elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council. Table 5 illustrates the major sources of misunderstanding between the elected and the appointed officials whereby 38(76%) of the respondents were of the view that conflict of interests was the main cause of poor relations between politicians and administrators. This finding is supported by key informants' interview whereby participants complained that politicians were always after political interests and pursued issues that would benefit them politically. As one of the Ward Executives during key informant interview said that:

"In most cases Councillors for their political interests protect their electorates to be punished for not paying financial contribution as agreed for development projects implementations. They

argued that punish the voters threaten their position to be re-elected." (KIIs at Mabawa, 26/July/2017)

The study findings revealed that, 35 (70%) of the respondents agreed that distrust was the source of misunderstanding between the elected and the appointed officials. In most cases, distrust between the elected and appointed was related to financial matters. The study found out that there is no transparency in revenue and expenditure of funds between the elected and appointed officials. The findings also revealed lack of accountability as another problem that affected their relationship (70%), and this resulted from power struggle and status issues between the elected and the appointed officials. This implies clearly that, conflict of interests prevented appointed officials from trusting elected officials likewise elected official do not trust appointed officials. The study findings are in line with the findings in a study by Lyatonga *et al*. (2012) which indicated that administrators showed a deep distrust against the motives of the elected officials and were threatened by the latter's individual political interests and personal gains. In another study, Chakupewa (2015) revealed that administrators accused elected officials for misusing financial resources which were contributed by local people and government for personal interests. Partisan politics was cited by 23 (46%) of the respondents as a source of misunderstandings. During key informant interview one of the WEs said:

"The elected officials will only support the projects or decision that will favour the chance of being re-elected and not otherwise or the projects that will only benefit them politically an financially." (KIIs at Nguvumali Ward, 27/July/2017).

Table 5: Sources of misunderstanding between appointed and elected officials in Tanga City Council (n=50)

Statements	Frequency (n) Yes	Percent (%) Yes
Whether absence of distrust is the sources of conflict between the elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council	35	70
Whether status problem is the sources of conflict between elected and appointed officials in Tanga City Council	35	70
Whether fighting for financial resources is the sources of conflict between elected and appointed officials in Tanga City Council	28	56
Whether partisan politics is the source of conflict between elected and appointed officials in Tanga City Council	23	46
Whether jurisdictional ambiguity is the sources of conflict between the elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council	28	56
Whether conflict of interest is the sources of conflict between the elected and the appointed officials in Tanga City Council	38	76

3.6. Governance aspects in relation to political-administration relations

In relations to governance aspects the study findings (Table 6), revealed that 34 (68%) the appointed officials in the local governments were politically accountable to the elected officials. The relationships between elected and appointed officials are guide by the principal-agent relationship model whereby elected officials act as the "Principal" and the elected officials act as the "Agents". At Ward and Street levels, Ward Executives (WEs) and Mtaa Executives (MEs) had to work as Secretaries while Ward Councillors and Street Chairperson as Chairpersons to Ward Development Committees (WDCs). These findings are confirmed by a key informant

during an interview, One of Mtaa Executives (MEs) who said: *"Street Chairperson is my boss and if I want to perform my duties successful I must comply with his/her directives and sometime fulfil their political interests."*(KIIs at Ngamiani Kati, 24/July/2017).

In relation to the rule of law and good governance whereby 30 (60%) of the appointed officials indicated their disappointment with the elected officials. The appointed officials claimed that elected officials were always after political interests and were less concerned with the compliance of rule of laws. The elected officials considered the rule of law as bureaucracy and hindering local government performance. This implies that it is difficult for the appointed officials to work with the elected officials because professionalism requires them to comply with rule of law. These study findings are in line with those in studies by Muro *et al.,* (2015) and Matunga, (2015) who indicated that the elected officials were engaged in corruption and financial mismanagement of the development project funds and failed to adhere to the rules and regulations.

In relation to participation, 40 (80%) of the respondents agreed that the elected officials involved appointed on issues that directly needed their professional interventions. The study findings revealed that appointed officials were always invited to attend meetings organized by elected officials and provide technical advices. This implies that the level of participation of the appointed officials is high because of their skills and knowledge they possess. Further the study revealed that appointed officials participation was low in ward/streets which were governed by elected officials from the opposition political parties. The elected officials from the opposition parties always regarded the appointed officials as puppets of the ruling party.

Table 6: Whether appointed or elected officials in Tanga City Council observe principles of governance in performing their functions (n=50)

Description	Responses			
	Frequency (n)	Percent (% Yes)	Frequency (n)	Percent (% No)
Are the elected officials accountable to the appointed official?	14	28	34	68
Are the appointed official accountable to the politicians	33	66	15	30
Do the appointed and elected l officials observe the rule of law?	20	40	30	60
Do the appointed and elected officials observe transparency?	25	50	23	46
Do the elected and appointed officials adhere to the principle of participation and involvement	40	80	8	16

3.7 Influence of political administration relations on staff performance

The study examined whether the relationship between the elected and appointed officials affects negatively or positively employee's performance and the extent to which these relations could be regulated to improve performance of local government's employees. The study indicates that the relationship between elected and appointed officials has both negative and positive influence in employee's performance. Table 7, illustrates that 38 (76%) percent of the respondents indicated that the elected officials interfered with their professional duties and cohesively forcing them to

perform their duties in favour of their political interests. One of the Human Resource Officer (HRO) sadly complained that councillors interfered with their human resource functions such as recruitment and selections, promotion and transfer of staff as well as training process. In some other cases, the councillors influence recruitment and transfer of employees on the basis of personal and political interests. This situation negatively affects the employee's performance and employees morale for work as 26 (52) of respondents agreed that poor relations between the appointed and the elected officials reduce employees morale for work and discourage employees from discharging their duties [32 (64%)] (Table 7)

Table 7: Impacts of political-administrative relations to employees' performance

Description	Responses	
	Frequency (n) Yes	Percent (% Yes)
Whether political-administrative relations interfere with professionalism	38	76
Whether political-administrative relations leads to poor performance or low morale of workers	26	52
Whether political-administrative relations discourage employees from discharging their duties	32	64
Whether political-administrative relations by-pass administrators to council	2	4
Whether political-administrative relations increases accountability/adherence to rules and regulations	27	54
Whether political-administrative relations improves workers' performance (effective supervision and use of resources)	29	58
Whether political-administrative relations compromises workers autonomy	24	48

In order for employees to perform better some degree of autonomy and working independently are required. The study revealed that strict supervision and distrust of the elected officials over administrators affect negatively job performance of the latter. The study findings as indicate that, 24 (48%) of the respondents were discouraged with the habits of the elected officials to distrust and control the administrators. The finding was supported by key informant response during the interview, one of the WEs who said that: *"We are working in a very difficult environment and elected officials regarded as corrupt and misuse their development funds for our personal benefits, therefore, never give as autonomy to perform or duties as required"* (KIIs at Ngamiani Kati, 29/July/2017)

Despite the fact that majority of the respondents perceived the relations between elected and appointed officials as negatively affecting employees' performance. The study revealed in some cases, their relations improve positively on employee's performance. About 27 (54%) of the respondents agreed that political administrative relations increase accountability of the appointed officials in their performance. The elected officials played the role of an overseer over the administrator's performance and ensured that the latter are accountable to the needs of their electorates. The elected officials are worried that the appointed officials could mismanage funds for personal gains during the implementation of development projects. In most cases, the elected officials report misconduct of appointed officials to City Director for further actions and disciplinary measures.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

It is concluded that the relationship between the elected official and appointed officials in Tanga City Council are characterized by tension and regular misunderstandings, distrust and conflict of interests. It was concluded that elected officials are not adhere with good governance practices include transparency and accountability in performance of both elected and appointed officials. The employees in the Local Governments have negative perceptions toward the elected officials as they always considered as focuses much on their political interests than public interests. Finally, the study concluded that the relationship between the elected officials and the appointed officials has both negative and positive influence on employees' performances.

The study recommends that both elected and appointed officials to put aside their personal interests and focus on the needs and public interests. They are supposed to work together as a team and work as partners in performing local government functions.

The study recommends for complimentary model to regulate the relationship between the appointed and the elected officials in local governments as the model holds that appointed officials can have a great impact on policy making and that the elected officials can have a great impact on administration and separating the two will result in poor performance.

The study also recommends that the government should have regular monitoring of the relationship between elected and appointed officials as required by code of conduct and provide training to the elected officials on their roles and responsibilities to avoid unnecessary professional interference to the appointed officials.

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