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RESEARCH ARTICLE

HOLISTIC POLICY MAKING AND GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AS A DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR POVERTY ERADICATION SUCCESS IN UGANDA 1986 - 2020

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Abstract

The degree of poverty eradication outcomes of any poverty eradication policy intervention depends on the nature of the poverty eradication policy formulated and on the governance environment within which the policy is formulated and implemented. The more holistic a poverty eradication policy is, the more likely it is to produce positive and sustainable poverty reduction outcomes and vice versa but also conditional to the extent of good governance so accorded in the policy making environment. The study was conducted in Uganda covering the governance period 1986– 2020 and it employed a multiple case study design as well as a combination of quantitative and qualitative research designs.

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Introduction:-

This research article discusses the role of holistic policy making approach that is anchored on good governance atmospheres in facilitating faster and more realistic poverty eradication results in a country setting. In this research context, reference was made to the interplay between holistic poverty eradication policy making approaches and governance in ensuring tangible and sustainable poverty reduction in both the short and long runs. The article thus includes detailed theoretical illustrations of the concepts of holistic policy making approaches and governance as they relate to poverty eradication outcomes in Uganda. The purpose of these illustrations was to obtain a deeper understanding of why researchers have focused on these concepts as very crucial in poverty eradication in different country contexts and to assess whether Uganda's poverty eradication policies have been integrating this phenomenon.

Research Methodology:-

To demonstrate the relevancy of designing holistic poverty eradication policies and the intervening role of good governance in facilitating better performance of poverty eradication policies in Uganda, the study employed the case study methodology. The case study methodology is drawn from process studies that place importance on establishing causes of certain outcomes. The case study design is thus employed when one is interested in answering the why and how questions in research (Yin, 1994; Saunders et al, 1997). However, as Bryman (1989) asserts, such questions are better answered if the study picks one or a few cases to represent the whole study population. The study used a multiple case study design because three districts in different parts of Uganda plus the capital city were studied out of more than 80 districts in the country at the time.

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In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the multiple case study methodology employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative research designs for gathering information. This was in keeping with the principle of triangulation in which different methods of data collection and data types are used in a single study. Triangulation refers to the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Bogdan&Biklen, 2006).

In most cases, research activities are constrained by time and other resources at one's disposal (Stake, 1995). That is why it is important to consider this phenomenon when a researcher is selecting a study area. Field and Graham (2003) contend that ease in gaining access to both the research area and data should be given due consideration. To overcome these obstacles, the country was divided into three categories according to district performance in poverty reduction. The first category was of the districts that had performed fairly well in poverty reduction over time; the second category was of districts that had performed moderately while the third category was for districts that had performed poorly. The researcher obtained information on district poverty reduction policy performance from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS).

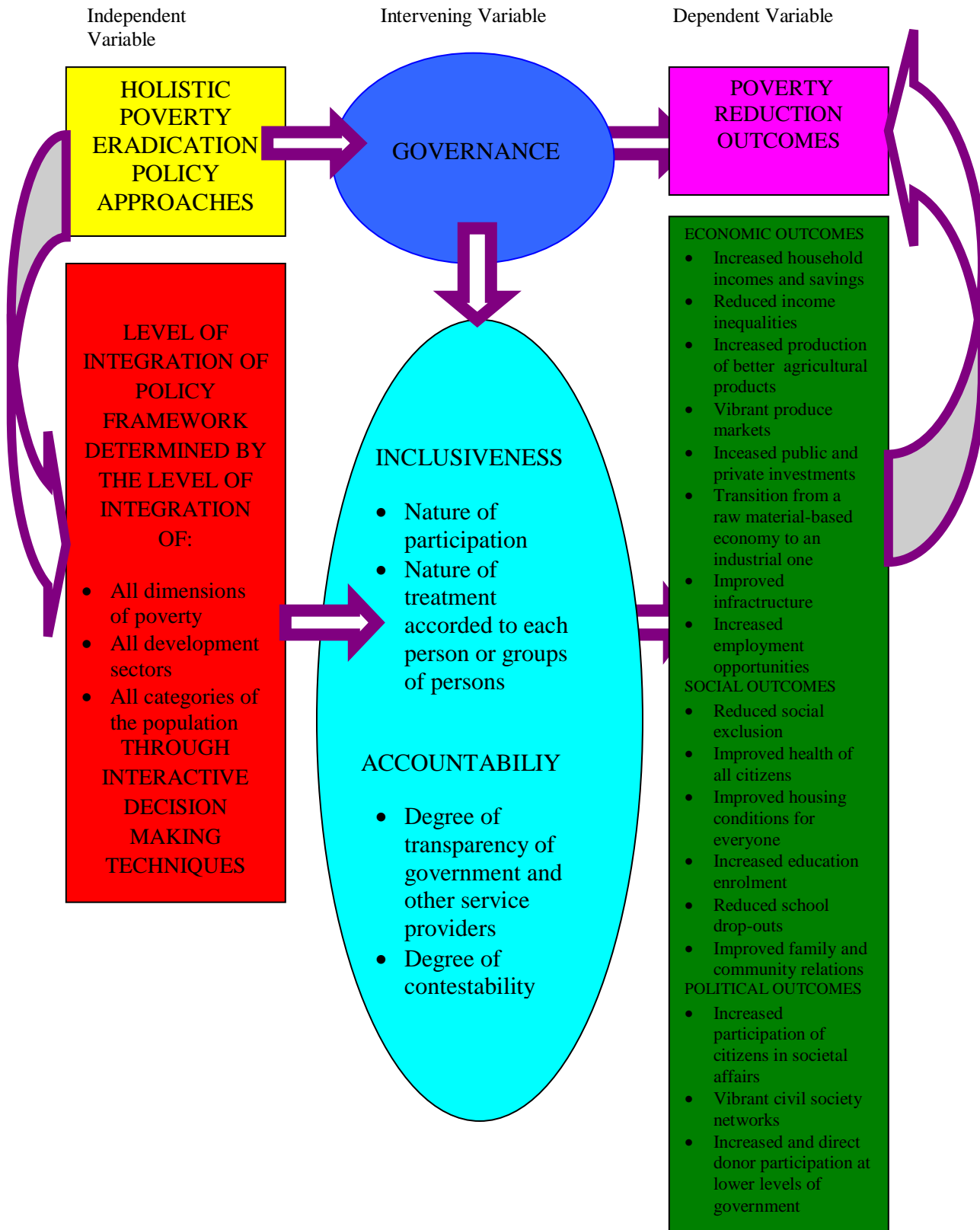
The study was conducted in Uganda in the districts of Bushenyi, Kamuli and Arua as representative of the whole country. To get data from central government agencies, national non-government organizations and international bodies, the study was also conducted in Kampala City since the headquarters of these organizations are housed therein. In choosing the districts to represent the three categories, I used stratified random sampling techniques based on two types of strata: the performance in poverty reduction already referred to and the four regions of the country. As such Bushenyi district represented the first poverty reduction category as well as Western region, Kamuli represented the second category in addition to representing Eastern and Central regions and Arua represented both the third category and Northern region respectively. Kampala City was chosen because it is the seat of the national government and national NGOs and international organisations that were part of the study population.

Primary and secondary data sources were both sought through adoption of appropriate data collection methods. Primary data was obtained directly from organisations by use of appropriate methods that included surveys, interviews and focused group discussions (FGDs). Respondents of primary data included personnel in senior management of districts, central government agencies (UBOS, Uganda Local Government Association, Uganda Local Government Finance Commission, NAADs Secretariat, Ministry of Finance, and Parliament), International Donor Agencies, International and National NGOs. Secondary data was obtained from government documents, organisations' reports and other written sources for example books, journals, newspapers and internet articles written by various researchers.

The Research Conceptual Framework

This research proposed an analytical conceptual framework that shows linkages between holistic poverty eradication policy making approaches on the one hand and poverty reduction outcomes on the other, the two sets of variables being mediated by governance.

Figure 1.1:- Holistic Poverty Eradication Policy Making and Governance Model.



Source: Formulated by Researcher basing on the World Bank Good Governance Model (2003)

As Figure 1.1 above illustrates, the degree of poverty eradication outcomes of any poverty eradication policy intervention depends on the nature of the poverty eradication policy formulated and on the governance environment within which the policy is formulated and implemented. The more holistic a poverty eradication policy is, the more likely it is to produce positive and sustainable poverty reduction outcomes and vice versa. A holistic poverty eradication policy is determined by the level of integration of all dimensions of poverty, all development sectors and all categories of the population while engendering interactive or participative and accountable decision-making techniques. On the other hand, positive and sustainable poverty eradication outcomes are those that reduce poverty and at the same time benefit all poor categories of the population irrespective of geographical location, rural-urban divide, nature of economic livelihood a person is engaged in and all other forms of population differences. However, the relationship between poverty eradication policies and poverty eradication outcomes is mediated by governance. The better the governance, the more likely poverty eradication policies are to produce positive and sustainable poverty reduction outcomes and vice versa. Whether governance is good or bad and the degree to which it is good or bad is determined by the degree of inclusiveness or active participation of all citizens and the level of accountability and contestability that characterize the mode of governance. These variables of the conceptual framework are explained in detail in the headings below.

The Rationale for Holistic Policy Making Approach in Uganda

According to the wordweb online dictionary¹, the holistic theory states that the parts of any whole cannot exist and cannot be understood except in their relation to the whole. Thus, “holistic” is used in this case to mean that poverty eradication policy undertaking or design should emphasize the organic or functional relation between the multidimensional parts of poverty as a whole. This idea is propelled by the fact that the causes of poverty are multiple and in most cases interrelated so much so that instituting policy interventions that target specific causes in isolation from each other might not entirely be able to address the obstacle to prosperity. The proposed holistic policy approach means an integrated multi-sectoral policy framework that tackles all causes of poverty simultaneously and progressively. Such a policy framework would be comprehensive in that it would link all stages of development: production, processing and marketing in agriculture, for example. In Uganda’s case, agriculture accounts for more than 70% of GDP. Further, as Sarel (1996) suggested, holistic poverty policies need to integrate all sectors of development in a country such as infrastructure, manpower development, land reforms, education, income equality, property rights and industry.

In a predominantly agriculture-based economy like that of Uganda, a holistic policy approach becomes even more imperative for agriculture-based households in which the biggest portion of poor people falls. Uganda is a predominantly rural country with over 86% of the population living in rural areas and 72% engaging in agriculture as their main source of livelihood (Waswaga, 2007). Therefore, a holistic policy approach would, among other macroeconomic reforms, integrate agriculture policies that increase returns to the products of poor people. This presupposes that the policy must not only focus at increasing agricultural production and productivity, but also at ensuring that value is added to the products and that markets are found for these products. As a consequence, establishing processing industries to increase the value and life span of agricultural products would have to be part of the poverty eradication policy agenda.

For example, the agricultural sector in South Africa, like that in Uganda, accommodates a big chunk of the poor people and as such agriculture was identified as a sector that could play a big role in helping people to overcome poverty. South Africa thus responded by designing a policy known as the Black Economic Empowerment in Agriculture (AgriBEE) (AgriNews, 2007). This instantly became a welcome poverty policy that tried to redress the economic inequalities created by past discriminatory policies of the apartheid regimes. The policy introduced land reforms, up-scaled new approaches to research, undertook farmers’ capacity-building and increased access to information and learning. In Uganda’s case, the government responded through the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) in 1997 and the National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) in 2001 in order to exploit the agricultural potential for poverty eradication.

Such good policies for poverty eradication need to be holistic in approach if they are to secure success for the intended beneficiaries. However, the problem in most poor countries is that good policies do not address the poverty issues holistically. In agriculture, most countries forget to think about processing and marketing and that is why they

¹<http://wordweb.info/free/>

continue to move in circles. AgriNews (2007) reported that the AgriBEE policy in South Africa had not yet addressed the problem of poor peoples' access to markets and this was long overdue. In Uganda, the PMA and NAADS did not benefit the poor as they should have done because access to markets plus other production and processing reforms were still not yet well addressed by 2006 and this episode had remained problematic by 2020 (Nyapendi et al, 2004, Odome et al ,2011, Fiala and Apell, 2017 and World Bank, 2018). In most cases, farmers were stuck with the produce thus incurring a lot of losses and in some cases failed to pay back their loans. There was also still the thorny issue of access to land by the poor especially women, which the Land Act 1997 and its subsequent amendments in 2004, 2010, 2012 and 2016 failed to address (Acidiri, 2014, Kindi, 2010 and UNECA, 2009). Other than agricultural production, processing, marketing and land ownership, there are many other factors that prevent agriculture from taking off in least developed countries. Such factors as social orientation of different social and population groups, climatic conditions, rural infrastructure, and technology also curtail agriculture from playing its rightful role in economic development, and they need to be addressed holistically in any agricultural policy for poverty eradication.

Another important element of the holistic policy approach, is the realization that as some people escape poverty, others fall back into it. Thus a holistic policy approach requires simultaneous actions that help people out of poverty and forestall them from backsliding into it. Since the causes of escaping poverty and those for falling back into it are different, a holistic (multifaceted) policy agenda will be the solution. Alongside this integration of development processes, the poverty eradication policy framework in a holistic sense would consider all cultural, economic and political causes of poverty in a comprehensive manner. In addition, a holistic policy approach would be successful if it embraced the principle of participative bottom-up decision-making at all stages of policy management. The intervention of good governance, which in this study is taken to mean inclusiveness and accountability, is to create an enabling ground for good policy management.

It needs to be understood that poverty reduction requires economic growth that is accompanied by sound macroeconomic management and good governance. Many writers have, however, overstressed the role on economic growth at the expense of good governance. Sachs (2005) and Oxfam (2000) are some of the proponents of the economic growth theory for poverty eradication in the least developed countries. Though they are partly right, economic growth may not necessarily translate into sustainable and socially inclusive development that benefits the poor sections of the population. Therefore, economic growth policies need to be part of a bigger holistic policy approach that embraces greater access of the poor to education and health services, employment, credit facilities and markets for produce. A holistic policy approach would also need to have strategies of reducing the vulnerability of the poor to economic shocks and natural disasters. As such, a holistic policy approach that is pro-poor would institute macroeconomic reforms as well as increasing investment in physical infrastructure that significantly contribute to the pursuit of socially inclusive development.

In the above instance, we can draw on ChamhuriSiwar (2005) who cited the experience of East Asian countries (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, China and Indonesia) that succeeded in reducing poverty through employment of holistic policy-making approaches that had pro-poor social, economic and political elements. The same sentiments were shared by the World Bank (1993), Brown & Tiffen (1992), and Sarel (1996). They argued that despite lack of natural resources and absence of large domestic markets, the East Asian countries performed well and this is largely due to the enactment of sensible and effective policies in spheres of infrastructure, manpower development, land reforms, education, income equality, property rights and industry. When this policy approach is followed while adhering to good governance and strengthening of institutional frameworks, the linkage between economic growth and poverty reduction becomes stronger in the long run.

Results of Holistic Poverty Eradication Policy Approach

In this section, I present issues pertaining to the research question concerning what explicit and implicit policy-making models the government of Uganda has used in poverty eradication. Uganda employed a combination of economic, political, and social policies in the fight against poverty since 1986 either directly or indirectly. The direct policies were mostly in the form of political targeting of the poor whereby government directly handed down resources to the poor or legislated for affirmative actions to increase participation in public affairs/services by specific categories of the population considered to be marginalised. The indirect anti-poverty policies were mostly in form of economic and social reforms from which trickle-down benefits to the poor were anticipated.

The economic anti-poverty policies since 1986 centred on the World Bank and IMF led economic reforms such as privatisation of public enterprises, liberalisation of the economy, public sector (institutional) restructuring and

institution of micro finance services. The most notable political policies included Poverty Alleviation Project 1989, the Decentralisation Programme from 1993, Entandikwa Credit Scheme 1995, Affirmative Action for the Youth, Women and the Disabled from 1996, Youth Enterprise Scheme – Business Skills Development (YES-BSDP) 1997, Presidential Initiative against Hunger and Poverty (PI) from 2000, the over-riding Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) from 1997, (NAADs) 2001, BonnaBagagawale (Prosperity for All) 2006, Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) 2010, Operation Wealth Creation 2013, Youth Livelihood Program (YLP) 2014, Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) 2015, Emyoga Programme 2019 and the count was still going up from 2020 onwards. Social anti-poverty policies were introduced in education and health sectors through Universal Primary Education (UPE) from 1997 and revitalization of health service delivery units in the country from the mid-1990s.

All the above-mentioned anti-poverty interventions in Uganda produced some results in terms of poverty reduction but the anticipated successes in terms of quantitative and qualitative poverty eradication remained a contested debate up to 2020. However, since 2000, all attention had been put at the MDG of halving the number of people living in poverty by 2015 and as such this research inter alia arose from the need to analyse the extent to which the anti-poverty policies in Uganda after 1986 were holistic in terms of embracing all multidimensional domains of poverty, integrating all development sectors in the economy, catering for all population categories and the level of engendering stakeholder participation in policy making. This was necessary so as to evaluate whether these policy trajectories can be relied upon for the future of poverty eradication campaign in Uganda as we move closer to the end of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2030. Otherwise there is a danger of continuing to recycle the already failed interventions in future which would be a travesty of political, economic and social justice to the Ugandan tax payers.

The assessment of the extent to which poverty eradication policies were holistic, necessitated inclusion of quantitative and qualitative research methods and tools. The results of the quantitative statistical analysis presented in Table 1.1 below generally show that the anti-poverty policies in Uganda from 1986 – 2020 were not to a big extent holistic in approach, yet this is a big condition for success as illustrated earlier in the theoretical framework.

Table 1.1:- The extent to which poverty eradication policies in Uganda were holistic (multidimensional, integrated, inclusive and interactive).

	Percentage Response					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agreement
To what extent do you agree that the poverty eradication policy design in Uganda from 1986 to 2020 was based on the following holistic poverty eradication policy-making perspectives?						
The poor as responsible for being poor – Personal Deficiency Model	5	15	13	42	25	20
Poverty as existing due to lack of understanding of the poor by the none poor	10	43	18	21	8	53
Poverty as a result of accidents – Individual Accident Model	13	37	14	27	9	50
Poverty as a result of the way society is socially organized	9	41	18	26	6	50
Poverty as a result of the way the country as economically organized	22	44	9	17	8	66
Poverty as a result of economic crisis or sudden socio-economic changes – Cyclic Model	11	48	12	23	5	59
Poverty as a result of the way society is politically organized	19	44	12	19	5	63
Poverty as a result of environmental conditions inherited	8	45	16	23	8	50
Poverty eradication policy in Uganda (1986-2020) integrated all the above aspects of poverty – Holistic Policy Making Model	13	46	13	20	8	59

From the table above, almost half of the respondents perceive poverty eradication policies as less holistic in terms of embracing all multidimensional domains of poverty, integrating all development sectors in the economy, catering for all population categories and engendering stakeholder participation in policy-making. The data by district did not indicate significant deviations as can be seen on Table 1.2 below. Therefore all people irrespective of their categorical and location differences perceive the anti-poverty policy design in Uganda in the same way.

Table 1.2:- Data by district on the making of integrated poverty eradication policies.

To what extent do you agree that the poverty eradication policy design in Uganda from 1986 to 2020 was based on the holistic poverty eradication policy-making perspectives?						
District/City	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Bushenyi	8 14.55 42.11	28 50.91 40.58	7 12.73 33.33	11 20.00 37.93	1 1.82 8.33	55 100.00 36.67
Kamuli	6 17.14 31.58	13 37.14 18.84	6 17.14 28.57	5 14.29 17.24	5 14.29 41.67	35 100.00 23.33
Arua	2 7.41 10.53	11 40.74 15.94	3 11.11 14.29	7 25.93 24.14	4 14.81 33.33	27 100.00 18.00
Kampala	3 9.09 15.79	17 51.52 24.64	5 15.15 23.81	6 18.18 20.69	2 6.06 16.67	33 100.00 22.00
Total	19 12.67 100.00	69 46.00 100.00	21 14.00 100.00	29 19.33 100.00	12 8.00 100.00	150 100.00 100.00

The qualitative data also showed that poverty eradication policy-making in Uganda is not consistent with the requirements of holistic policy-making approach. The majority of respondents reported that poverty eradication measures especially from 1995 were more of political machinations than concrete proposals for addressing poverty issues entirely. In other words, their view was that poverty eradication policies were usually made for political expediencies. They cited the example of the Entandikwa Credit Scheme (ECS), which was announced before the 1996 presidential and parliamentary elections and implemented immediately after the elections without much sensitisation, stakeholder participation and empirical study of peoples' requirements for poverty eradication, a situation that made it impossible to run effectively.

In the above matter, most qualitative data respondents were pessimistic about the subsequent anti-poverty programmes such as the Wealth for All Program (BonnaBagagawale), which was announced towards the eve of the 2006 presidential and parliamentary elections and then haphazardly kicked off after the elections without any appropriate legal instrument and institutional arrangements in place that remained so for many years to the detriment of the programme. Only the decentralisation policy 1997 and PEAP 1997 were considered by many respondents as having had some qualities of holistic policy-making mechanisms of integration, inclusiveness and interactive decision-making. In the quantitative survey, 83% and 91% agreed that decentralisation and PEAP respectively embraced holistic policy-making mechanisms. However, the qualitative data revealed that despite having tendencies of holistic policy-making approach in theory, the practical rigours were limited on the ground. Below are some of the statements collected from the respondents regarding the extent of holistic policy-making criteria that was exhibited in poverty eradication policies/programmes in Uganda from 1986 to 2020.

A Member of Parliament responded:

Uganda is not practicing mature politics. Many government anti-poverty programmes are too politicised to the extent of not allowing participation of people considered opponents of the government. The minister in charge of microfinance cancelled a visit to launch a poverty eradication programme in Lubaga North constituency simply because the patron of the group members was a member of the opposition party in parliament.

A top official of an international development (donor) organisation interjected:

PEAP represented a departure from previous approaches in the sense that it was a direct approach to poverty unlike previous ones which were indirect and relied on the so-called trickle-down processes of economic growth. It represented an effort to target the poor, but through one principal source of livelihood i.e. agriculture. It did not pay serious attention to widening of people's livelihoods since it concentrated on only one principal source of livelihood: agriculture. It talked of decent incomes without paying attention to

the determinants of levels of incomes i.e. agriculture product prices (or generally) returns in agriculture, markets and determinants of competitiveness.

A top finance ministry official stated:

Despite macro-economic and political stability, structural transformation remains a key challenge for the economy. Major challenges facing foreign investors are inadequate physical and institutional infrastructure, insufficiently skilled workforce, political interference, a non-transparent regulatory system, and corruption.

A respondent from a research institution observed:

Though Uganda achieved tremendous economic growth rates from the 1990s, it is obvious from the national data on poverty that this growth has been driven disproportionately by non-agricultural sectors. This meant that it benefited little to the poor farming households, which account for over 70% of the population.

A respondent from a civil society budget advocacy group answered:

The government recognizes the role of agriculture in growth and poverty reduction, but still pays it lip service. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), a programme of the African Union proposes that for poverty to be reduced in African countries including Uganda, its agriculture sector must grow 6% per year. That would require an investment of at least 10% of the total national budget in the sector in such areas as production, processing, marketing and infrastructural development. However, Uganda has been allocating between 1.7 - 5% of the total national budget in recent years which represents gross under investment that has made it difficult to reduce poverty. To make matters worse, this little investment focused only at increasing production, which did not help to transform the agriculture sector entirely because the problem of this sector go beyond production.

The above statements signify the mismatches prevalent in Uganda's past anti-poverty policy-making endeavours. As such, gains in some sectors are curtailed by omissions in others, a situation that negatively affected the rate of poverty reduction. This scenario contrasts sharply with the case of the East Asian countries that approached poverty eradication through holistic policy-making approaches and succeeded in achieving faster poverty reductions (Brown and Tiffen 1992, World Bank 1993, Sarel 1996, ChamhuriSiwar 2005). Perhaps the same development path can energize poverty eradication policy-making in Uganda and hasten poverty reduction.

To establish the relationship between embracing holistic policy-making approaches and the performance of poverty eradication policies in Uganda from 1986 to 2020, I carried out statistical data correlations to further gauge peoples' level of perception regarding the hypothesis of whether the application of holistic policy-making approaches improves policy performance. The correlation coefficient of 0.761 obtained indicates that people believe that a strong positive relationship between holistic poverty eradication policies and performance exists. Since the Pearson's assumption significance of 0.000 is less than 0.01, this relationship is significant at 1% level of significance. Using this approach would therefore to a great extent have improved the performance of the poverty eradication policies in Uganda. However, the policy-making frameworks have not been holistic as required in the sense of integrating all poverty dimensions and development sectors, catering for all population categories that are mostly afflicted by poverty and embracing participation of all stakeholders.

It is envisaged that a holistic poverty eradication policy framework that adheres to the principles of good governance would significantly produce important tangible and sustainable economic, social and political poverty reduction outcomes.

Economically, this would lead to improved household incomes and savings, reduced income inequalities among all sections of the population, improved infrastructure such as roads, bridges and electricity, increased production of better agricultural products, improved marketing channels, vibrant local, regional and national products' markets, increased attraction of private investment by local and foreign companies, increased government investments in social services, transition from a raw material-based economy to an industrial one, and increased employment opportunities for all population categories especially of the marginalized groups.

Socially, a holistic poverty eradication framework would lead to improved health of all members of the population, improved housing conditions, reduced social exclusion, increased education enrolment, reduced school dropouts at all

education levels, improved family and community relations, reduction in thefts of farm products especially in rural areas and reduced famine prevalence among the population.

Politically, it would result into increased participation of everyone in societal affairs, increased and direct donor participation at lower levels of government, and vibrant civil society networks.

The above are possibly the best indicators of poverty reduction since poverty manifests itself in different ways. Therefore, a policy undertaking that targets only one or a few of these outcomes might not achieve tangible or sustainable poverty reduction, as many, if not all of the above indicators feed on each other in a cyclical and symbiotic manner. To achieve this cycle and symbiosis, it is therefore advisable to employ a holistic policy approach that addresses all of them at a go while adhering to good governance tenets of inclusiveness and accountability. This is perhaps the missing link that explains why the positive economic growth statistics posted by Uganda between 1986 and 2020 did not translate into significant poverty reduction at the grassroots.

The importance of a holistic policy approach in anti-poverty policies assumed centre stage, especially after the slow progress in poverty eradication during the policy period of the 1980s and 1990s that emphasized structural adjustment policies as a precursor to poverty reduction and eventual eradication. The realization that the WB and IMF-led structural adjustment programs in Africa and other poor regions of the world were not producing the desired outcomes in poverty eradication led to a shift in emphasis in many studies to a holistic policy approach to poverty eradication. Blank (2005) for instance emphasized that poverty eradication policies need to tackle holistically particular local country characteristics in order to succeed. She identified five local attributes or characteristics that shape the nature of poverty: “natural environment, economic structure, public and community institutions, existing social norms and cultural environment, and demographic characteristics of the population”. She argued that these characteristics contribute to the causes of poverty and in turn also affect the poverty eradication policy interventions.

The role of the natural environment, according to Blank (2005), is underscored by an area’s geography in terms of location, climate and natural resources. Location in terms of physical distance, barriers and infrastructure can positively or negatively affect an area’s access to specific markets; climate on its part affects an area’s economic activities while abundance or lack of natural resources influences its path to economic development.

Blank (2005) further notes that the role of the economic structure can be viewed in terms of types of economic activities, types of industries, the extent of industrial specialization, labour skills, employment opportunities, incomes among the population and business fluctuations, and the extent to which all these are integrated. This serves to avoid generalizations and adoption of “one size fits all principle” in policy-making. In this regard, it would be instructive to examine the role of Uganda’s disjointed economic structures, characterized by high unemployment, gender-induced economic disparities, and regional and rural-urban imbalances in poverty-eradication policy-making in the country.

The role of public and community institutions is measured by the capacity of those organizations operating within a community in ensuring effective functioning of the community (Blank, 2005). Such organizations can include local council committees, local police, churches, cooperative societies, community-based non-government organizations, women committees, youth committees, and all other organizations working for particular interest groups within a community. Blank argues that public and community institutions create and enforce a framework of rules and appropriate individual behaviour, enforcing property rights and civil conduct codes as well as reinforcing social norms. These grease the wheels which run economic, political and social activities for the well-being of the people in the community. Depending on how effectively public institutions function, they can create a network of associations and connections that determine economic and social relationships among residents that can play a big role in fighting or deepening poverty in an area.

The role of social norms and the cultural environment is viewed from the commonly observed behaviour that has existed in a particular community or social group over a long period of time (Blank, 2005). Social norms develop from common past experiences such as learned economic activities and common history that have always been enforced by informal social sanctions. Social norms and culture thus act as driving forces of actions and inactions among particular groups of people and, as such, they influence performance of public policies and programs.

Blank (2005) further notes that demographic characteristics of the population also determine the level of political and economic diligence of the people. Demographic characteristics can be seen in terms of age, ethnicity, education level,

and economic power groupings within the population, and they also reveal the intrinsic assets and liabilities of the poor, especially in the form of attitudes, beliefs, taboos and norms. In many cases therefore, demographic characteristics are closely linked to social norms, and they often signal differences in behaviour traits or in economic or social expectations. These characteristics influence present and future possibilities. Demographic characteristics are important in development policy, especially poverty eradication policy, because they help in identifying the real poor among the community or regions. This in turn helps policy makers to target the real problems with appropriate policy interventions.

From the arguments provided by Blank (2005), it is imperative to note the requirement of embracing a holistic and place-specific poverty eradication policy matrix. The causes of poverty differ from one region or community to another due to inherent local characteristics and as such policy makers need to desist from generalized policy interventions. Rather, policy makers need to undertake careful research to determine specific characteristics of the community or region and target each with tailor-made policies. In the words of Blank (2005), this conclusion is vital:

The history and structure of a place is closely intertwined with the needs of its residents. More attention to the role of place on poverty and anti-poverty policies is long overdue.

As far as Uganda is concerned, the African Millennium Villages Initiative², which was located in Ruhira, Mbarara District is a good starting point for testing the role of holistic poverty eradication policy-making approaches and good governance in poverty eradication policy management. In this UN-funded project, a combination of interventions were simultaneously undertaken to lift an entire village out of poverty. These included provision of safe water, mosquito nets for every household, improved seeds and fertilizers, a school feeding programme, proper sanitation and internet connectivity. According to Sachs, a UN adviser who visited the pilot project, such a holistic and place-specific approach to fighting poverty showed great potential for poverty reduction (Daily Monitor, 2007). This approach took into consideration, the multidimensionality of poverty as well as consideration of distinct local conditions, unlike the previous projects which were based on generalized information. In addition, the project emphasized good governance mechanisms in all project undertakings, which ensured that the targeted beneficiaries of the project got real value in all cases. The bottom-up approach that was used within this Millennium Villages Project to plan, implement and evaluate progress was reflective of the rural-bias, which was appropriate in addressing the problem of poverty (Cabral, Farrington and Ludi, 2006). This ensured that the voices of the poor were heard, which in turn made them active participants in the project that in turn led to positive results.

In a nutshell, a holistic policy approach is paramount, especially in tackling the problem of poverty which is multifaceted. Poverty is caused by many instances of political, economic, social and environmental nature which feed on each other. As such, any policy approach to solve the problem of poverty needs to be multifaceted so as to provide solutions to each cause of poverty and prevent it from being a stumbling block to alleviating other causes.

Good governance and Poverty Eradication: A Contextual Framework

A lot of criteria for describing good governance exist in the current literature as a result of the immense attention that this subject attracted in the late years of the 20th century (Tanzi, 1999, Doornbos, 2006, Grindle, 2007 and Meisel&OuldAoudia, 2007). Many writers have since that time made proposals regarding the domains of good governance. All proponents of good governance agreed that it is a crucial ingredient of development; but they did not emphasize that good governance must permeate all levels of policy operations if genuine and sustainable development is to be achieved. However, it is important to note that all levels of policy operations need to institute measures to achieve good governance for development to materialize. As such both government officials and their development counterparts at supranational, national and local government levels are required to institute measures to achieve good governance.

Though various viewpoints of good governance have been expressed, similarities can be discerned in them. In totality, they aver that good governance is achieved if the following fundamentals are in place: a conducive political environment anchored on democratic principles, equality before the law, equity in sharing public resources,

² The Millennium Villages Project (MVP) is an initiative of the Earth Institute in collaboration with the UNDP, and in Uganda it was launched in 2006, but it became operational in 2007. The MVP is regarded as a bottom-up approach to lifting developing country villages out of poverty. It is one way by which the UNDP hopes to achieve the MGDs in developing countries. It operates under the premise that it is only when basic needs are satisfied, that economic development can truly take-off.

involvement of all stakeholders in decision making and all processes of governance, entrenchment of responsible financial management procedures, adherence to transparency and accountability mechanisms, establishment of a strong ethical culture for citizens and public officers, and enactment of capacity-building programmes for citizens to improve their knowledge and resource bases.

Governance is used in the conceptual framework (Figure 1.1) to demonstrate that public policies, such as those targeting poverty eradication, require catalyzing in order to produce adequate effects. Governance as a policy performance catalyst signifies that a policy cycle needs to follow a certain path or mode of decision-making in order to arrive at expected results. Such a path or mode of governance in the policy cycle requires instituting an all-embracing leadership system where all stakeholders in a particular policy issue are allowed to participate. This governance requirement in policy management is referred to as good governance. According to the World Conference on Governance (1998), good governance is taken to mean a system of leadership that is transparent, accountable, just, fair, democratic, participatory and responsive to peoples' needs. The World Bank (2003) regards inclusiveness and accountability as the kingpins of good governance.

This research focused on the governance model of the World Bank (2003) to explain in detail the parameters of good governance. This model is a convergence of all the various viewpoints expressed about good governance. The model contends that inclusiveness and accountability are the values that underpin good governance as illustrated in Figure 1.2 below:

Figure 1.2:- World Bank Governance Model.



Source: World Bank, MENA Development Report, 2003, pp. 3

Inclusiveness

According to the World Bank, inclusiveness encompasses equal participation and equal treatment. The World Bank (2003: 3) defines inclusiveness as the ability of all those who have a stake in the governance process, and want to participate in it, to do so on an equal basis, whether by voting, by being consulted, or by overseeing local public service agencies. Inclusiveness also implies that governments under the good governance model need to treat everyone equally by protecting the rights of everyone with equal vigour, ensuring that exclusion and discrimination are absent in the provision of public services by governments, and according everyone equal access to resources and remedy if there is discrimination by public officials. This criterion is in line with the argument of this thesis which avers that for good governance to prevail, governments must endeavour to include all stakeholders in decision-making at all policy levels. Such stakeholders include, but are not limited to, citizens directly or through their

representatives, civic organisations, interest groups, opposition political parties, private sector organisations, such as for-profit business enterprises and not-for-profit non-government organisations.

To reach the bottom of inclusiveness as a governance requirement, it is proposed that efforts should be expended to recognise and integrate all the social strata of society: women, children, youth, disabled, elderly and all other marginalised groups, in policy management at all levels, irrespective of their social, economic or political status. Moreover, these are the main groups of the population that suffer the brunt of poverty. Involvement of such groups would lead to more accurate needs identification and better public policies that ensure access by these poor echelons of society to social services, especially education, health, water and sanitation as well as credit services and production-enhancing technologies.

This inclusiveness is supposed to be practical and not merely a smokescreen as is often witnessed in developing countries, where people's participation in government affairs stops at electing officials or where, in some cases, voters are bribed due to their poverty, to vote for certain candidates (Rakner, L. & Svåsand, 2002, Gloppen et al, 2006, Tangri & Mwenda, 2008, Ngora, 2009). As far as poverty eradication policy management is concerned, excluding these categories of stakeholders normally suffocates the policies since they will be oblivious of the reality on the ground. Thus, if this inclusiveness measure of good governance is to be attained, it is pertinent that government shuns nepotism, tribalism, and patronage in determining who participates in policy and who gets public services, and who does not. Krishna et al (2006) make a compelling case for inclusiveness. In their opinion,

“People in poverty do not usually sit idly, waiting for economic growth or programme benefits to come their way. Instead they adopt numerous strategies to combat poverty in their midst. What they fight to overcome, however, is not poverty as is defined and measured by professional analysts (in global terms, such as dollars per day or calories per day). Rather, their household strategies are targeting poverty as it is understood and defined locally. In order to understand household strategies, it is therefore important to start with the people's own understanding of poverty. Without knowing what it means for someone to be poor within a certain societal context, it is hard to understand what poor people do to cope; and without understanding what poor people are doing themselves, it is hard to provide any meaningful assistance”.

Nayaran et al (2000) and Sen (1999) too support the inclusion of the poor people in policy networks for poverty eradication. They contend that “the poor know why they are poor and as such they can contribute adequately to the policy package that can take them out of poverty”. This inclusion becomes even more important because “it has been established that involvement of concerned stakeholders builds consensus which is crucial in successful implementation of any policy decision” (Canagarajah & Diesen 2006: 651). Pope (2000: 247) aptly sums up the importance of citizen participation in public policy:

“An informed citizenry, aware of its rights and asserting them confidently, is a vital underpinning to a national integrity system. An apathetic public, ignorant of its rights and acquiescent in the face of administrative abuse, provides an ideal breeding ground for complacency and corruption. An awareness campaign, both of the damage that ineffective governance is doing to the community and families within it, and of the need for individual citizens to take appropriate actions when they encounter it, is of utmost importance. Public opinion and attitudinal surveys are primary tools in giving the public both a voice and the realisation that their opinions are valued and taken seriously by others”.

Implicitly, the above authors underscore the futility of basing poverty eradication policy options on generalised information, such as generalised national data, because such information tends to obscure critical regional and other differences due to their distinct local characteristics. Important to note also is the fact that people keep moving in and out of poverty and, as such, information would be captured for better policy packaging if poor people are integrated in the policy-making framework. For policy success, Krishna et al (2006) further observe that the “hole in the bucket must be plugged before the bucket can be filled”. They further contend that “stopping or at least controlling descents is essential to reducing overall poverty”. Otherwise, it would be a waste of time to re-invent or recycle a policy without understanding its full impact on the targeted community. A number of reasons may have prevented a policy from achieving its objectives and, as such, consequent policies would benefit from this information and come up with better policy responses. There is no better way of filling these gaps than by listening to the stories of people who have been involved in the past policy interludes and the poor themselves.

Other than the poor themselves being useful in policy making, the wider civil society plays a big role in helping government to repackage its policies (Mafunisa, 2004). Such wider civil society is not limited to big non-government organisations, but should spread as widely as possible to assemble a real community representative group that can articulate adequately particular local poverty situations. In this case, all private sector organisations (PSOs), community based organisations (CBOs), professional bodies and even members of opposition political groups would have a lot to say on areas in which they are operating. Civil society includes those organisations that are separate from the legislative, administrative and judicial power of the state and these include labour unions, religious groups, cultural and educational associations, sports clubs, student groups, political parties and ethnic groups adhering to their own rules of conduct and distinctive customs. In some cases, these voluntary organisations are referred to as NGOs.

However, it needs to be stressed that good governance demands that the government creates a political atmosphere conducive for participation in policy-making by all. Such a political atmosphere is one that allows free expression of ideas, and respects divergent views. Unfortunately, this is lacking in many Sub-Saharan African countries where democracy is at its lowest level. Mafunisa (2004) emphasises the importance of promoting active civil society participation for successful poverty eradication policies when he states:

“Ineffective governance and lack of effective service delivery feature prominently as crises of governance in Africa. Democratic political and governmental institutions could play a role in reducing such social factors as high rate of literacy and poverty. This, however, is only possible if the rule of law prevails and if civil society is allowed to participate in a political, social and economic sense”.

Thus, observing democratic governance is an effective means of fighting poverty. Democratic governance is well recognised as one of the keys to development because it facilitates political processes, regulations and institutions to play major roles in economic growth and human development. Fighting poverty thus need not be regarded as simply a social, economic and technical objective, but also a political one. Democracy is very much linked to the concept of good governance. This linkage relates to the efficiency of governance and public management systems in a country. Democratic governance goes beyond the principle of elections and stretches to such limits as requiring government which represents the people, to institute an independent judiciary and parliament, to uphold the rule of law in a non-discriminatory manner for all citizens, and to maintain independent and unbiased government officers that act in the interests of the common good. Democratic governance as a cornerstone of a positive political atmosphere further requires government to promote an active civil society that is able to question the public authorities and suggest different methods of political, social and economic participation.

To achieve better participation, it is imperative that government undertakes continuous capacity-building for everyone engaged in policy management: managers, technical persons, community leaders and the general population. The intensification of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) would facilitate and improve participation and decision-making by all. In this case, it is imperative for government to take a leading role in opening up information technology infrastructure that links remote rural areas to the wider communication networks. For an underdeveloped country, such as Uganda, a lot depends on government to extend ICT facilities to rural areas because the private sector would not find this business profitable at the beginning. ICT plays a major role for the poor rural households to access information about prices, markets and other services needed for their productive capacities with ease. Coupled with the opening up of ICT facilities in rural areas, it is imperative also for government to take the lead role in educating and sensitising the rural public about these technologies, and encouraging them to embrace the technologies for developmental purposes.

Other than encouraging the development and use of ICT, the government has a big duty to educate the masses, through civic education, using a number of media techniques, such as public assembly lectures, radios and television programmes, and newspaper bulletins. Through civic education programmes, the population, especially the poor that usually remain out reach of mainstream education and awareness programmes, would be informed of their political, economic and social rights and also about all government policies for poverty eradication and what is expected of them.

Accountability

The accountability element in the World Bank (2003) good governance model as illustrated in Figure 1.2 is based on the idea that people have a right to hold their government answerable for the way it uses the authority of the state

and the resources of the people. The model further calls for transparency or full access to information by all stakeholders so that they know about the functioning of the government in order to be able to hold it answerable. The model continues to state that accountability as a prerequisite for good governance also includes the need for contestability in the sense that people within a certain political entity are free to choose their own economic and political systems on the basis of their understanding of the benefits to be derived from these systems. This presupposes that for governments to practice good governance, they need to respect people's freedoms and to accept people's verdicts if such freedoms are violated. In case a public officer fails a public test, the option of resignation should be the next step.

However, in Africa, and Uganda particularly, this is a rare ethical consideration. Many projects have been run down in the past by government ministers, but they continued in the offices as if nothing wrong had happened. The case of the Global Fund to fight Malaria, HIV Aids and Tuberculosis in Uganda is still fresh in mind³. The political leaders, who were accused of running down this internationally supported project, leading to withholding of funding by donors, remained adamant for a long time and government was forced to replace them in June 2006 only after the donors and civil society organisations piled pressure on the government (Biryetega, 2006). To date, the accused are yet to be judged in courts of law.

Accountability assumes so much weight in governance that the question of what accountability really means is asked every now and then by people in every part of the world. The international donor community especially has zeroed on accountability as a condition for its working relations with recipient countries. Thus, despite an excellent characterization of accountability by the World Bank good governance model in the above paragraph, it is still important that we define clearly what the public expects from the government. Identifying this public interest would enable policy managers to pass the test of accountability as a measure of good governance. Premchand (1999: 147) explained that accountability should be viewed as a channel for ascertaining the use of power by an individual or an organisation that has been entrusted with the task of performing prescribed tasks.

From Premchand's assertion, we can accordingly deduce that the practice of accountability needs to evolve from the old conventional public administration practices whereby government officers were only responsible and answerable to their masters in their work behaviour and output. Under this traditional public administration system, leaders practiced the "spoils system of public administration"⁴ whereby appointments were made basing on political support that one received from individuals or groups other than competency for the job. As such, the administrators so appointed were only answerable to the appointing authority and they did only what pleased that authority and not what the entire society expected from them. Subsequently, as public administration and democracy evolved further, the concept of accountability, under the good governance model, involved orientation to results that are beneficial to the public at large. This was a forward leap in public policy and administration.

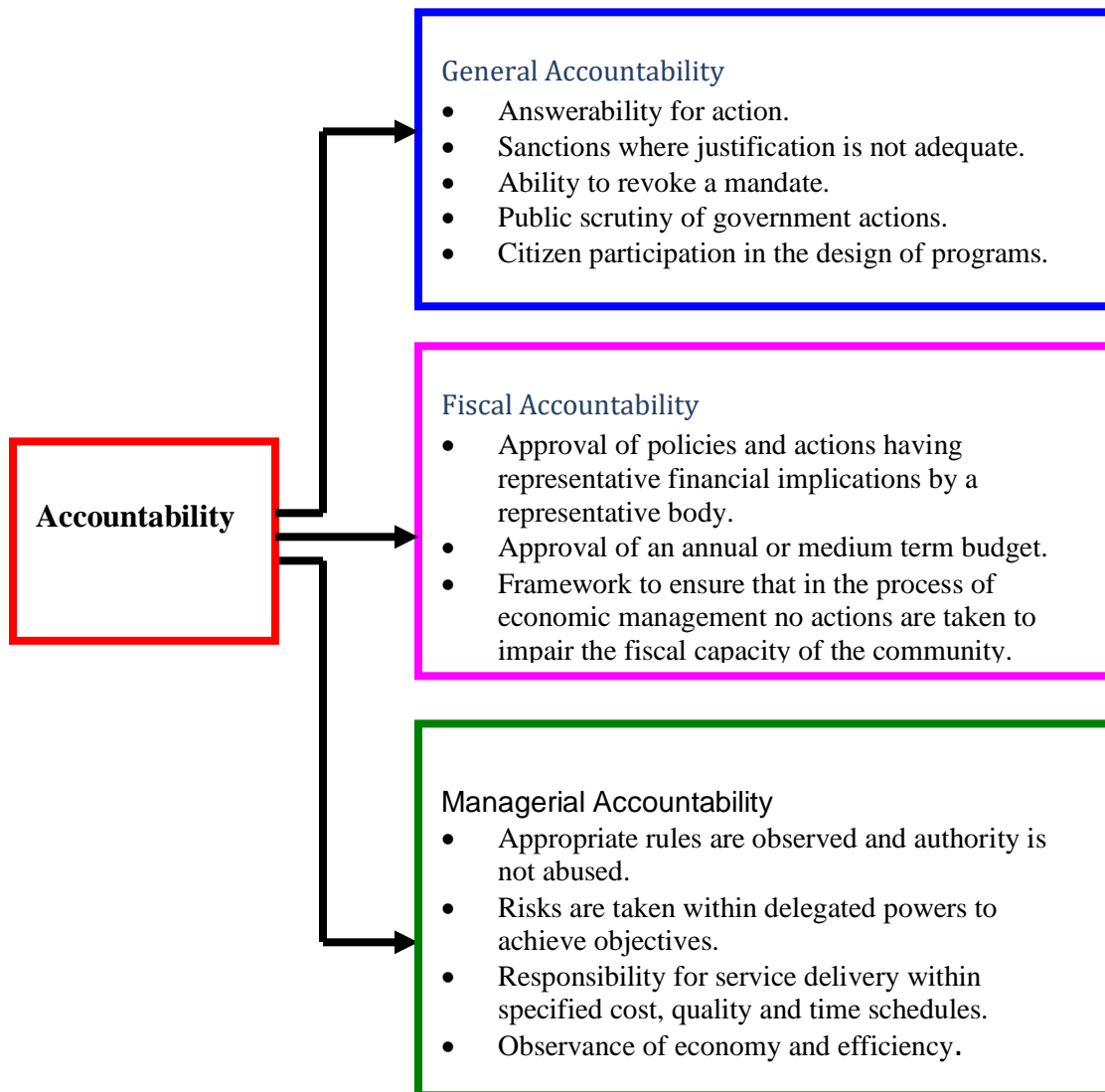
³ The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was created in 2001 under the auspices of the UN to dramatically increase resources to fight three of the world's most devastating diseases, and to direct those resources to areas of greatest need. Uganda as one of the beneficiaries of the fund had its grants suspended from the 24th August 2005 – 10th November 2005 due serious mismanagement by the Project Management Unit in the Ministry of Health together the Political Heads of the Ministry. The suspensions of all its five grants to Uganda were lifted following the signing of an Aide Memoire setting out action points for restructured management of the grants. The agreement was signed in Kampala by the Global Fund's Chief of Operations, the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) and Ministry of Finance of Uganda. Under the terms of the Aide Memoire, measures to consolidate grant management under the Ministry of Finance as Principal Recipient (PR) to strengthen oversight and governance of Global Fund grants to Uganda were prescribed in order to ensure effective, accountable and transparent implementation of funded programs.

[http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/pressreleases/?pr=pr_051110]

⁴According to Hoogenboom (1961), the "spoils system" refers to the post election practice of rewarding loyal supporters of the winning candidates and party with appointive public offices. This practice of distributing government jobs as a reward for political services takes its name from an 1832 speech by the Democratic senator William L. Marcy of New York. Defending President Andrew Jackson's partisan dismissals from office, Marcy avowed that he and his fellows saw "nothing wrong in the rule, that to the victor belong the spoils of the enemy".

The elements of accountability, according to Premchand (1999: 154); are illustrated in Figure 2.3 below:

Figure 1.3:- Elements of Accountability.



Source: Premchand, A. 1999, Public Finance Accountability, in Salvatore Schiavo-Campo (ed), Governance, Corruption and Financial Management, pp. 145 - 192, Asian Development Bank, November 1999.

Accountability mechanisms should thus move beyond financial process controls to include overall policy management, including delivery of services both by government and non-government agencies. This means that a good accountability mechanism should go as far as naming and shaming of individuals, organisations and institutions whose actions have not met policy expectations. Penalties would then need to be administered. All this means that public officials should not spend on their facilitation more than the society is able to afford or, simply put, expenditure on public administration should be within the realities of the economic conditions prevailing in that society. It is thus preposterous for public officials to enjoy luxurious lifestyles at the public expense when the community is not provided with even the basic needs of life. Creating value for money such that allowances paid to project implementers, and monetary and material facilitation to executive officers should not attain outlandish levels in an impoverished country. Otherwise, the much hyped poverty-eradication programmes that government bureaucrats always pronounce, will not help the people get out of poverty if the governments continue to skin the

poor taxpayers in order to accord ministers, members of parliament and other high government officials, luxurious lifestyles at the expense the poor population.

According to the World Bank (2003) governance model, accountability is underpinned by transparency and contestability, which are explained in detail below.

Transparency

A discussion of accountability and its role in promoting good governance cannot be completed without considering transparency. This is because accountability and transparency are like twin sisters as illustrated by the World Bank governance model (2003) in Figure 1.2. Tanzi (1999: 1) contended that good governance is an essential part of a framework for economic and financial management, which also includes macroeconomic stability, commitment to social and economic equity and the promotion of efficient institutions through structural reforms such as trade liberalisation and domestic deregulation. Accordingly, he argues further that poor governance is often linked to corruption and rent-seeking. As a result, there is a negative correlation between corruption and the rate of growth such that more corrupt countries tend to be poorer and to grow slower if at all, than less corrupt ones. This assertion illustrates the important function that transparency plays in ensuring accountability and consequently good governance. Corruption is thus a symptom of lack of transparency in conducting public affairs and it is one of the characteristics of poor governance in a country.

Many studies have identified corruption as one of the major causes of, and a barrier to overcoming, poverty. The two scourges feed off each other, locking their population into a cycle of misery (Transparency International, 2005). While Uganda improved its corruption rating from the being 3rd most corrupt country in the world in 2001 to the 35th in 2005 and back to 26th in 2020 according to Transparency International, it was not likely to achieve faster poverty eradication if corruption among government officials and departments was not checked further. Moreover, this shift in corruption rating might not necessarily imply that Uganda had become less corrupt, but may rather be due the increase of corruption in other countries. Endemic corruption is a big barrier to overcoming poverty because it distorts policy-making and implementation. For example, due to corruption, a project may be designed and implemented in such a way that it suits a particular political or individual interest thereby ending up without serving the public interest that it was intended to serve.

Corruption can be defined in different ways, but the most common definition is that it is the abuse of public power to promote private interests or benefits (Tanzi, 1999: 4). Therefore, a public officer who abuses his or her public position to derive benefits for himself or herself or friends, relatives or political associates, commits an act of corruption. Similarly, an officer who seeks a bribe or any kind of inducement to perform an official task commits an act of corruption. Tanzi (1999) contended that cases of corruption in public administration are often entrenched by government spending decisions, politics, lack of institutional controls, lack of transparent rules and regulations, inadequacy of the penalty system, and the example provided by the leadership of the country. Corruption can affect policy management in different ways. It erodes transparency and effective controls in policy management. For example, certain programmes and projects become distorted both in size and content and at times they are carried out specifically to provide specific individuals or political groups with opportunities to receive commissions from project implementers or to benefit particular areas or individuals for political expediency at the expense of the public good. This is a common phenomenon as demonstrated by corruption ratings by Transparency International over the years with Sub-Saharan countries, Uganda inclusive, always among the worst performers during the period under the study.

The question that arises in the debate about corruption is why African countries Uganda inclusive, are always ranked the most corrupt in the world. The answer might lie in those public officers that occupy high echelons of government. Such people, the opinion leaders, and politicians at all levels, have kept using public resources for their personal benefits and interests while they are the ones supposed to be at the forefront of fighting corruption. Instead, they turn around and glorify or at worst they keep a blind eye because they benefit from the corrupt system. In Uganda's case, the majority of people operate within that system and individuals have no incentive to try to change it or to refrain from taking part in it, even if everybody would be better off if there was no corruption. In Uganda, it seems as if

everybody steals and the chances of being caught and punished are very low because the law keepers are not immune from the scourge (IGG, 2006, Ngora, 2009)⁵.

In an environment where the chances of being caught and punished for corruption are very low, the motivation to be corrupt is very high and vice versa. When corrupt people succeed and go unpunished, few people, especially the subordinates are prepared to swim against the tide. They thus turn a blind eye to the suffering that their corruption inflicts on other members of society, and justify their actions simply because they benefit from them. The more material and non-material benefits they amass, the greedier they become. For this reason, it can be argued that much as it does not necessarily depend on the governments alone to fight corruption, politicians and opinion leaders should first have the good will to fight corruption because, just like the popular proverb goes, “a fish starts rotting from the head”⁶.

Tanzi (1999: 13-15) states that government can circumnavigate the problem of corruption in public policy by instituting an ethics office, anti-corruption commissions, tighter controls on public officials, and higher penalties for those who are caught in acts of corruption. He further advises government to offer higher wages for public sector employees, establish clear legal and administrative frameworks for fiscal management, provide full information to the public concerning government project activities, and reduce the right to privacy of government employees and those who deal with them, by requiring employees to report on the value of their assets. These are good strategies that have worked to improve accountability and good governance in some countries, but their success depends on the political commitment of the top administrative hierarchy of a given government. Thus, it is imperative that governments start the struggle against corruption by establishing and inculcating an ethical culture among public officials and citizens, and endeavouring to live by it in all their governance activities. Most countries, Uganda inclusive, have attempted to practice ethical governance by establishing leadership codes, and there is no doubt that this is a step in the right direction, but top leadership commitment is of utmost importance for these measures to be effective in improving transparency and accountability in public services.

Contestability

Contestability, as part of accountability for good governance, is used by the World Bank governance model (2003) in Figure 1.2 to illustrate that citizens should be accorded the right to choose their leaders, policies and service agencies and that processes should exist to allow citizens either to choose among existing alternatives, among candidates for public office or among alternative service agencies or to lobby for different alternatives through public debate, or to have recourse to remedy if the citizens judge a policy to be a violation of their rights. The World Bank model further reiterates that contestability requires those who act with the authority of the state, be they political leaders or public service agencies, to compete for that privilege as a matter of necessity. It is through such contestable or competitive processes that citizens have the opportunity to exercise effectively their right to hold government officials and agencies accountable for acting in the public interest.

The contestability theory was developed in the early 1980s by the American economist, William Baumol, who recognized that monopoly providers do not need to be exposed to actual competition in order act competitively, but

⁵Monica Ngora has illustrated many instances of corruption in Uganda from 1986 to 2006 and highlighted the role of the media in curbing corruption. Her work brought to the fore the extent of corruption in Uganda’s public sector. [http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2009/wp72_2009.pdf, assessed on 15th September, 2022].

The Inspectorate of Government’s (IGG) report to Parliament, January – June 2006, also brought to the fore the level of corruption in Uganda. IGG Report on Corruption, Kampala – Uganda [<http://www.igg.go.ug/pdfs/IGG%20Report%20Jan-June%2006.pdf>, Assessed on 15th September, 2022].

⁶ Many tribes in Uganda use proverbs to pass information from the old generation to the young one to act as a learning process. The use of the proverb, “a fish starts rotting from the head”, is intended to inform the young generation to be good examples when they assume responsibility of family headship or other societal leadership positions lest they will fail to exert any authority on their family or subordinates.

only the threat of competition will make them to improve their products and services⁷. According to Baumol, contestability is not a synonym for competition, but rather refers to a situation where a provider faces a credible threat of competition. He stressed further that the concept is fundamentally different to 'market-testing', as it does not require every individual service to be competed for. Mulgan (1995) argued that though the theory was first used for purely business economic concerns, it later gained importance in running public affairs⁸.

From the above debate on contestability, it can thus be translated economically, politically and administratively. Economically, it acts as a discipline mechanism for public service providers to improve services due to the threat of alternative choices of providers. Politically, it encourages public officials to be responsive to their constituents. Administratively, it compels civil servants to pay more attention to service delivery due to merit-based recruitment and promotion. In turn, all the three components can have a positive effect on governance for better service delivery to the citizens.

In developing countries where civil society and citizen empowerment are not yet fully developed, the onus for promoting the principle of contestability rests on the shoulders of the state. As such, those in top positions of responsibility in public affairs, like the cabinet, parliament and the judiciary, have to take the lead by showing the example and then compelling others to follow suit. In most developing countries the problem of governance at all government levels is to a large extent blamed on the national government because, just as earlier expressed, "a fish starts rotting from the head". In developed societies, the citizens have the power in their hands to hold public officials accountable due to availability of highly developed democratic administrative systems, which is not the case in less developed societies like Uganda.

According to the Uganda Governance Monitoring Programme (2005), Uganda's performance on democracy and good governance was below the pass mark. The assessment used four major benchmarks of good governance: democratic process, human rights situation, transparency and accountability, and conflict resolution. The overall performance was put at 45% which was below the set pass mark of 50%. Perhaps it can be argued that lack of good governance has hampered a faster poverty-eradication campaign in Uganda. This research was therefore interested in examining the role that good governance could have played in fostering good policy formulation, implementation and evaluation, so as to achieve faster poverty-eradication in Uganda

More ideas on the role of good governance in promoting better poverty eradication policy outcomes can be seen from Quiroga Jorge (2005), a former President of Bolivia. He provided other criteria for good governance for successful poverty-reduction strategies. He argued that in order to be successful, "poverty reduction strategies have to follow the principles of decentralization driven through local governance, progressive assignment of resources and oversight by civil society organizations". He further contended that the poverty-reduction strategies will succeed only when governments undertake reforms to minimize institutional weaknesses. Accordingly, he suggested "a need to create permanent institutions that can govern with independent supervision and public declaration of assets". "A declaration of how much a public official has when he comes into office and how much when he leaves are important to guarantee transparency and management of resources". Uganda's decentralization policy that was formalized with the enactment of the 1995 Constitution and the Local Government Act of 1997 was a significant step in the campaign for good governance and poverty eradication in rural areas. However, for it to truly reflect and address the needs of the people, it is necessary to invest in supporting local level capacities to participate in all policy decisions right from formulation to evaluation. Otherwise, decentralization may just place power in the hands of the local elites and not the entire population thus distorting public policy management.

In Uganda's case, it has been argued that the enactment of the 1995 Constitution and the conducting of general elections in 1996 ushered in a new system of democracy and good governance that increased people's participation in decision-making. However, the country still struggled with major challenges in further deepening democratic processes, especially at local levels, to make them capable of addressing the lopsided nature of the country's

⁷Baumol, William J.; Panzar, J.C. &Willig, Robert D., 1982, Contestable Markets and the Theory of Industry Structure, The original text on contestability theory, **San Diego**, USA.

⁸ Application of the concept of contestability to the public sector by Mulgan who would later become Director of the Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office, UK.

economic, political and social reforms. This perhaps explains why poverty prevalence still remained high in rural areas from 1986 to 2020. Worse still, there were concerns of corruption, intimidation and bribery in Uganda's electoral process which hampered democratization and consequently poverty-eradication. The Uganda Supreme Court ruled thrice, in 2002, 2006 and 2016 that the presidential and parliamentary elections had widespread malpractices on all occasions, contrary to government insistence that the country was enjoying true democracy and good governance.

Perhaps the following words by the late Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme (1969 – 1976; 1982 – 1986) can demonstrate the true meaning of democracy, the democracy that Uganda and other least developed countries should aspire to attain in order to improve governance ratings and speed up poverty eradication policy processes:

For us democracy is a question of human dignity. And human dignity is political freedom, the right to freely express and form opinions. These rights, the rights of democracy, are not reserved for a select group within society; they are the rights of all the people.

On the above note, it is clear that entrenchment of democratic governance at all levels of government administration that allows people to freely express themselves even in instances where they disagree with government positions on policy issues, is a necessary requirement that spurs development by requiring those in power to act transparently in offering public goods and services.

Results of level of Governance and Poverty Eradication Policy Performance in Uganda

Table 1.3:- The extent to which Uganda generally followed good governance in its poverty eradication policies.

To what extent has the government of Uganda generally observed the following tenets/principles of good governance at all levels of public administration in its anti-poverty policy making processes (formulation, implementation and evaluation)?	Percentage response					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agreement
Establishment of a political environment anchored on democratic principles that was conducive for efficient and effective stakeholder participation in all anti-poverty policy making processes i.e. involvement of all stakeholders (citizens both rich and poor, civic organizations, donors, interest groups, opposition parties, private sector organizations and NGOs) in decision making and all processes of anti poverty policy management	17	38	11	26	8	55
Ensuring equality before the law for all stakeholders in poverty eradication policies	6	31	16	35	12	37
Ensuring that decisions are arrived at through consensus building among all stakeholders	9	37	12	32	10	46
Ensuring that anti-poverty policies provide equality in sharing public resources by all citizens (both poor and the rich)	11	27	9	38	15	38
Entrenchment of responsible/accountable financial management procedures that limits misuse of public resources	11	35	9	31	13	46
Adherence to transparency and accountability mechanisms	9	34	14	31	12	43
Establishment of a strong ethical culture for citizens and public officers alike, that ensures effective and efficient poverty eradication outcomes by eliminating all forms of corruption in public services	10	30	14	36	10	40
Ensuring that capacity-building was undertaken for citizens to improve their knowledge and resource bases for poverty eradication, irrespective of their social, economic and political positions in society and geographical location	11	40	19	21	9	51
Establishment of a political environment anchored on democratic principles that was conducive for efficient and effective stakeholder participation in all anti-poverty policy making processes i.e. involvement of all stakeholders (citizens both rich and poor, civic organizations, donors, interest groups, opposition parties, private sector organizations and NGOs) in decision making and all processes of anti poverty policy management	8	31	23	27	11	39
Uganda would have achieved greater poverty reduction if good governance practices were better (1986 - 2020)	33	52	8	6	1	85

Table 1.4:- The observance of good governance in Uganda's poverty eradication policy-making by district.

To what extent do you agree that it is true to blame lack of good governance other than lack of resources for the persisting poverty situation in Uganda?						
District	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Bushenyi/City	23	23	5	4	0	55
	41.82	41.82	9.09	7.27	0.00	100.00
	29.87	54.76	31.25	33.33	0.00	36.67
Kamuli	20	7	3	4	1	35
	57.14	20.00	8.57	11.33	2.86	100.00
	25.97	16.67	18.75	33.33	33.33	23.33
Arua	15	3	5	2	2	27
	55.56	11.11	18.52	7.41	7.41	100.00
	19.48	7.14	31.25	16.67	66.67	18.00
Kampala	19	9	3	2	0	33
	57.58	27.27	9.09	6.06	0.00	100.00
	24.68	21.43	18.75	16.67	0.00	22.00
Total	77	42	16	12	3	150
	51.33	28.00	10.67	8.00	2.00	100.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

All research areas reported that the observance of good governance in Uganda from 1986 onwards was poor. Arua district was the least with 68% of respondents blaming poor governance on the poverty situation in Uganda and Kampala district the highest with 86%. By generalizing all the quantitative and qualitative data, 22% of all respondents were of the opinion that the government of Uganda observed good governance in its poverty eradication policies compared to 77.6% that disagreed. Thus we conclude that the problem of poor governance reigns high on factors affecting poverty eradication progress in Uganda.

Many instances of maladministration were reported but most especially corruption in service delivery both at national and local government levels. To many people, Uganda is endowed with enough resources to lift its citizens out of poverty if such resources are well managed. When the question was put in another way to rank lack of good governance and lack of resources as responsible for the persistent poverty situation in Uganda, over 80% of the respondents, put the blame on lack of good governance as over 90% stated that Uganda is well endowed with resources which can lift its population out of poverty if well managed.

The following quotes from respondents sum up the feelings of Ugandans on good governance and poverty eradication. One government minister expressed as follows:

Various forms of corruption are taking their toll on the body politic of our nation. They are manifested in poor service delivery, deterring of potential investors, killing of initiative, and decimation of our national soul and identity. Yet these are the engine of any nation's revival, renaissance as well as development. The form of corruption that is very much in the news is stealing of public resources. It is estimated that 80% of public officials own properties which they have acquired by using public funds.

The New Vision, one of Uganda's leading daily newspapers and government owned described the spectre of poor governance and its impact on poverty reduction policies in its editorial of 15th January 2009 as follows:

Corruption holds back poverty eradication. In the global scheme of things, turning Uganda around does not take much money if the environment was right for investors, both local and foreign. That we continue to flounder like a blind man in the dark year after year content with single digit growth is a scandal. The government should fight poverty by turning its guns on corruption. Corruption frustrates investors thus slowing job creation and emphasizing income equalities as the dream of poverty eradication recedes into the distant future. A poor country is an unstable country, so if for nothing else, let us recognize that corruption heightens insecurity and give it the attention it deserves.

Conclusion:-

From all the views expressed in the sub-section on good governance, it can be surmised that good governance has eight major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and it follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account, and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

The good governance model developed and espoused in this thesis is not limited to government institutions, but it extends to all networks that work with government in poverty-eradication. All organizations working with government in poverty policy management need to observe good governance principles within their internal operating mechanisms if the whole concept of holistic policy and poverty eradication is to bear fruit. This is because if only government adheres to good governance practices and other stakeholders, like community groups and civil society organizations, do not, it is unlikely that the expected holistic policy objectives of poverty eradication can be realized.

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