



Strategic Leadership in Action: Resource Allocation and Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs in Kanungu District, Uganda

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses an empirical gap in understanding how resource allocation influences the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in local Ugandan contexts, where prior research has largely focused on aggregate national-level analyses without considering the efficiency and governance dimensions at district levels. Anchored on the Resource-Based Theory, the study posits that effective utilisation of tangible and intangible resources is critical for achieving developmental outcomes. The study employed a correlational research design and a quantitative approach, targeting a population of 331 stakeholders involved in poverty eradication initiatives in Kanungu District, with a sample size of 181. Primary data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, and the study employed stratified random sampling, proportionate sampling, and simple random sampling techniques to ensure representativeness. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation. The results reveal that resource allocation has a statistically significant but negative effect on the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District ($B = -0.266$, $p = 0.026$), indicating that increased allocation does not automatically translate into improved outcomes, likely due to inefficiencies, mismanagement, or governance challenges. The study concludes that effective poverty eradication requires not only adequate resource provision but also strong institutional oversight, transparent management, and accountability mechanisms. The findings are significant for policymakers, highlighting the need to reform resource distribution processes, strengthen monitoring systems, and ensure that financial allocations are strategically aligned with programme objectives. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence from a district-level context in Uganda, demonstrating that resource allocation, if poorly managed, can impede rather than enhance developmental programme effectiveness.

Keywords: Strategic Leadership, Resource Allocation, Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs.

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1.0 introduction

The successful implementation of poverty eradication programmes largely depends on strategic leadership, particularly the effective allocation of resources [1]. Resource allocation as a leadership practice ensures that financial, human, and institutional resources are prioritised and deployed to areas of greatest need, addressing the underlying causes of poverty such as unemployment, inadequate education, and limited access to basic services [2], [3], [4]. By strategically distributing resources, leaders can enhance programme efficiency, improve accountability, and foster sustainable socio-economic development [5], [6]. This approach directly supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1, which seeks to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, by ensuring that interventions reach vulnerable populations and generate measurable improvements in living standards [7], [8]. Thus, resource allocation serves not only as an operational function but as a strategic mechanism through which leadership drives the effectiveness of poverty eradication initiatives [9].

Poverty eradication programmes are structured interventions aimed at reducing or eliminating poverty by improving access to income-generating opportunities, social services, and basic needs, thereby enhancing the well-being of vulnerable populations [10], [11]. Resource allocation, on the other hand, is the strategic process through which leaders distribute financial, human, and institutional resources to achieve specific objectives efficiently and effectively [12]. The interplay between these two concepts is critical, as the success of poverty eradication initiatives is heavily dependent on how resources are prioritised and utilised. Proper allocation ensures that scarce resources are directed to sectors or communities where they can generate the greatest impact, such as funding for education, healthcare, agricultural support, and social protection programmes. [13], [14], [15]. Conversely, poor resource allocation can lead to inefficiencies, inequitable distribution, and failure to achieve intended outcomes [16], [17].

Strategic leadership plays a pivotal role in this interplay by identifying priority needs, coordinating stakeholders, and deploying resources in ways that maximise social and economic returns [18]. By effectively aligning resource allocation with programme objectives, poverty eradication interventions can achieve sustainable outcomes, ultimately contributing to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 1, which seeks to end poverty in all its forms everywhere [10], [19]. This dynamic underscores that resource allocation is not merely a logistical task but a strategic leadership function essential for the effectiveness and sustainability of poverty reduction efforts.

Despite substantial resources and institutional capacity, the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in advanced economies continues to face persistent challenges. For example, in the United States, anti-poverty programmes such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) have been criticised for uneven accessibility and inadequate support for marginalized populations [20], [21], while in the United Kingdom, Universal Credit has faced delays and administrative barriers that limit timely benefit delivery to low-income households [22], [23]. These cases illustrate that even in resource-rich contexts, strategic leadership and effective resource allocation are critical for ensuring programme efficacy, yet empirical studies examining how leadership practices influence resource deployment and programme outcomes remain limited. This study addresses this gap by investigating how strategic leadership, particularly resource allocation, affects the implementation of poverty eradication programmes, providing empirical evidence that can inform both theory and practice in contexts where structural and administrative challenges impede poverty reduction efforts.

In developing economies, the implementation of poverty eradication programmes faces persistent challenges that undermine their effectiveness [24], [25]. Key obstacles include inadequate financial and human resources, weak institutional capacity, corruption, and limited infrastructure, which hinder timely and equitable programme delivery [26], [27]. Additionally, insufficient community participation, poor coordination among stakeholders, and low levels of accountability often result in misaligned interventions that fail to address local needs [28]. In Uganda, these challenges are compounded by high rural poverty rates, regional disparities, and dependence on donor funding, which can create uncertainty in resource availability and prioritization [29], [30]. Uganda's poverty reduction journey is the quintessence of this global paradox, where extreme poverty has persisted despite nearly four decades of comprehensive intervention programs. Since 1986, Uganda has systematically implemented diverse strategic interventions like the Rural Farmers Scheme, Entandikwa, NAADS, Operation Wealth Creation, and Emyooga programs [31], [32]. The multilateral programs reflect substantial government expenditure towards achieving international development frameworks through agricultural modernization, financial inclusion, and job creation.

Ironically, there are inescapable implementation deficiencies based on empirical data. Uganda is still among the world's poorest nations, leading East Africa with a poverty rate of 1.46 [33]. The figures as they appear indicate 30.1% of Uganda's population (12.3 million citizens) living on less than \$1.77 a day according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2021. Poor expressions remain extreme including lack of occasional cash income, lack of access to medical attention, and lack food security, reflecting core disconnects between program design and results of implementation [29], [35].

Kanungu District exemplifies this crisis, recording Uganda's Western region's highest poverty necessitated by lack of financial inclusion [35]. Despite receiving multiple interventions between 2018-2024, Kanungu maintained its position among Uganda's most impoverished districts, with low household incomes, low access to improved water, and low primary completion rates against the national average [36], [37], [38]. This study addresses the gap by examining how strategic resource allocation, influences the effective implementation of poverty eradication programmes, providing insights into how local leadership can overcome systemic constraints to improve programme outcomes. The purpose of this study was to examine how resource allocation influences the implementation of poverty eradication programmes, addressing the challenges, identifying gaps, and providing policy recommendations to enhance programme effectiveness. The specific objectives for this study included:

- i. To determine the influence of resource allocation on the implementation of poverty eradication programmes.
- ii. To examine the challenges affecting the effective allocation and utilisation of resources in poverty eradication programmes.
- iii. To assess the role of financial, human, and institutional resources in achieving programme implementation outcomes.
- iv. To provide policy recommendations aimed at improving resource allocation and enhancing programme effectiveness.
- v. To identify research gaps in the relationship between resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes for future studies.

2.0 Theoretical framework

This study was anchored on Resource-Based Theory, proposed by Barney in 1991, which posits that the effectiveness and competitive advantage of an organisation depend on its ability to acquire, develop, and strategically utilise resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable [39], [40]. The theory emphasises that resources alone do not guarantee success; rather, it is the way in which they are allocated, managed, and leveraged that determines performance and sustainability.

In the context of this study, Resource-Based Theory provided a robust framework for examining the relationship between resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes. It guided the conceptualisation of financial, human, and institutional resources as strategic assets whose optimal distribution can enhance programme efficiency, address structural challenges, and improve outcomes for vulnerable populations. By applying this theoretical lens, the study was able to assess how the strategic deployment of resources influences programme implementation, offering insights into mechanisms for overcoming resource constraints, improving utilisation, and ultimately contributing to the sustainability and effectiveness of poverty eradication initiatives [41]

2.1 Empirical review

Resource allocation and implementation of poverty eradication programs

[42] Examined the feasibility of developing countries achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1, which is the eradication of extreme poverty, using only domestic resources, taking into account both fiscal capacity and political constraints. The study introduced two metrics: the Poverty Eradication Capacity Index, which assesses whether a country's tax base is sufficient to finance poverty reduction through monetary redistribution,

and the Political Influence Concentration Index, which evaluates the degree of political power concentration among the wealthy and its impact on policy implementation. Using data from over 120 developing countries, the study found that many countries lack an affluent enough tax base to independently eradicate poverty, that countries with similar fiscal capacity differ significantly in political feasibility, and that higher poverty eradication capacity combined with lower political concentration correlates with higher tax revenue as a share of GDP. The study concluded that countries facing arithmetic or political constraints may need short-term foreign aid, but such support should be structured to reduce these constraints over time, enabling sustainable poverty reduction through improved domestic resource mobilisation and governance.

[43] Conducted a study to explore resource allocation as a strategy for poverty alleviation, using the counties of Igara and Sheema in Bushenyi District as a case study. The study targeted 382 residents, 52 officials, 40 development partners including non-governmental organizations, and 12 district sector heads, employing a research design to collect and analyse data. The findings indicated that resource allocation in the study area was guided by policies such as the Local Government Act of 1997, Universal Primary Education, Primary Health Care, National Agricultural Advisory Services, the National Budget, and the Operations and Maintenance Policy. The study concluded that resource allocation exists and is linked to poverty alleviation, but noted that the conduct of some officials involved in resource distribution was unprofessional, undermining effectiveness. To improve outcomes, the study recommended conducting extensive studies to understand the nature of poverty, consulting local communities in policy decisions, and identifying and disciplining corrupt officials to deter malpractice and promote accountability in resource allocation.

[44] Highlights that extreme poverty remains a critical challenge in many developing countries due to its severe effects on human wellbeing, including inadequate food and nutrition, lack of adequate shelter, limited access to safe drinking water, low literacy rates, high infant and maternal mortality, widespread unemployment, and a pervasive sense of vulnerability and disempowerment. The study emphasizes that poverty reduction requires a multifaceted approach, including stimulating economic growth to increase incomes and expand employment opportunities, implementing economic and institutional reforms to enhance efficiency and resource utilisation, and prioritizing the basic needs of the poor in national development policies. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of promoting microfinance programs to support innovation, entrepreneurship, and small-scale businesses, improving marketing systems to boost production, providing incentives to the private sector, and implementing affirmative actions such as targeted cash transfers to ensure that social and economic benefits effectively reach marginalized populations.

[45] Examined the influence of resource allocation on the implementation of health care projects by the Busia County Government in Kenya. The study focused on six health projects aimed at improving health-care infrastructure across the county, noting that while the number of health facilities increased, many projects faced implementation challenges due to time inefficiency, financial constraints, and lack of political will. Using a descriptive research approach, the study involved a census of 95 respondents, including project managers and team members, and employed questionnaires to collect data.

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, while inferential statistics, such as correlation and regression analysis, were used to determine the relationship between resource allocation and project implementation. The study found that resource allocation had a positive and significant influence on project implementation, indicating that proper allocation ensures the availability of appropriate staff, equipment, and finances, and allows project managers to identify problems, avoid over-allocation, and adapt to change. The study concluded that effective resource allocation is critical for successful project implementation and recommended that project managers maintain the right number of team members, avoiding both overstaffing and understaffing to optimise efficiency.

[46] Investigated the challenges of attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria, analysed the enabling conditions for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and examined strategies for achieving the SDG poverty eradication target. The study employed the Cocoon Prototype research design and a descriptive analytical technique to address its objectives. Data were collected using a Likert-type structured questionnaire from 300 randomly selected respondents. The findings revealed that government prioritisation of SDG enabling conditions is crucial for attaining the poverty eradication goal in Nigeria. The study concluded that the reformation of failed programmes and abandoned projects significantly contributes to achieving the SDGs. Accordingly, it is recommended that to achieve the SDG poverty eradication goal by 2030, the government should ensure the provision of robust enabling conditions and restructure abandoned projects within its resource allocation and policy implementation frameworks.

[47] Examined how local governments strategically allocate diverse resources in the context of China's 'Targeted Poverty Alleviation' programme. The study addressed a gap in understanding the interplay between central and local government influences on resource allocation, using stakeholder theory as a framework. Evidence was collected from a panel dataset covering 2014–2020 and 30 semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that stakeholders exert heterogeneous influences: the central government primarily shapes fiscal resource allocation, while local governments retain significant autonomy in allocating both fiscal and human resources, resulting in notable regional variation. These results challenge the conventional view of central-local government relations, showing that local governments do not merely act as agents executing central directives but actively make allocation decisions. The study contributes to public management theory by demonstrating the diverse roles stakeholders play in shaping resource allocation, offering insights for more effective and context-sensitive poverty alleviation strategies.

Research gaps

Based on the empirical review and the context of the study on resource allocation and implementation of poverty eradication programs in Kanungu District, Uganda, several research gaps emerge that this study addressed. First, while previous studies (Bolch et al., 2022; Ojo, 2020) focused on national-level fiscal capacity, political constraints, or enabling conditions, there is limited empirical evidence on how local-level resource allocation directly affects the implementation of poverty eradication programmes, particularly in Ugandan districts with high poverty prevalence.

Second, studies such as Mugisha (2019) and Makokha and Ngugi (2022) highlighted the existence of resource allocation and its general influence on programme outcomes, but they did not quantitatively examine the strength and direction of the relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation using rigorous statistical methods. Third, while Wang and Chen (2025) emphasised stakeholder influence on resource allocation, there remains a gap in understanding how data-driven, performance-oriented, and transparent resource allocation mechanisms at the local government level contribute to implementation effectiveness in poverty reduction programs. Fourth, previous studies largely overlooked the systematic assessment of financial targeting criteria, prioritisation mechanisms, and efficiency monitoring in resource distribution, which are critical for ensuring that limited resources reach the most vulnerable populations. By adopting a quantitative approach and correlational research design, this study directly addressed these gaps, providing empirical evidence on the relationship between structured resource allocation practices and the effective implementation of poverty eradication programs, while also offering insights into transparency, performance monitoring, and data-driven prioritisation at the district level.

3.0 Materials and Methods

Research design

A correlational research design was used in this study because it is appropriate for examining the relationship between resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. This design allows the researcher to determine whether variations in resource allocation are associated with differences in programme implementation without manipulating the variables under study [48], [49].

The study adopted a quantitative research approach because it enabled the researcher to systematically measure and analyse the relationship between resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. This approach is appropriate when the objective is to test hypotheses, establish patterns, and generate statistical evidence that can be generalised to a larger population. By using numerical data, the researcher could quantify the extent to which resource allocation influences programme implementation, ensuring objectivity and reliability in the findings [50].

Target population

In this study, the target population comprised 331 leaders in Kanungu District, as presented in Table 1. The population included district heads of departments, sub-county chiefs, parish chairpersons, and village chairpersons. These categories were selected because they hold direct responsibilities in planning, resource allocation, and implementation of poverty eradication programmes within their administrative jurisdictions. Their inclusion provided a comprehensive perspective across different levels of local governance, making them key informants for understanding how resources are allocated and how programmes are implemented at both the grassroots and district levels.

The inclusion criteria for this study considered leaders who were actively serving in their official positions within Kanungu District at the time of data collection. Respondents needed to have at least one year of experience in an office to ensure they possessed adequate knowledge and familiarity with poverty

eradication programmes and resource allocation processes. Leaders directly involved in decision-making, planning, or monitoring of poverty-related interventions were prioritised, as their insights were crucial for generating reliable findings.

The exclusion criteria ruled out individuals who were newly appointed and had served for less than one year, as their limited experience might not provide sufficient understanding of programme implementation and resource allocation. Retired or former leaders were also excluded since their perspectives may not reflect the current state of resource distribution and programme execution. Leaders who were absent or unavailable during the data collection period were not considered, to maintain consistency and accuracy in the data collected.

From the target population of 331, the sample size of this study was 181. The number of units was determined by Yamane (1967) as shown in Table 1.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N = Total population

n = required sample size

e = Margin of error 0.05

$$n = \frac{331}{1 + 331(0.05)^2}$$

$$n=181$$

Table 1: Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sample Size
District Head of Departments	11	6
Sub- County Chiefs	18	10
Village Chairpersons	200	109
Parish Chairpersons	102	56
Total	331	181

Source: Researcher Computation, 2025

The study employed stratified random sampling, proportionate sampling, and simple random sampling to ensure that respondents were selected in a systematic and representative manner. Stratified random sampling was used to divide the target population of 331 leaders in Kanungu District into relevant sub-groups or strata, namely district heads of departments, sub-county chiefs, parish chairpersons, and village chairpersons. This approach ensured that each category of leadership was adequately represented in the study, reflecting the different administrative levels that contribute to resource allocation and programme implementation [51].

Within each stratum, proportionate sampling was applied to determine the number of respondents to be selected from each category based on its size relative to the overall target population. This method allowed the study to maintain balance and fairness, preventing over-representation or under-representation of any subgroup. For example, village chairpersons, who formed the largest proportion of the population, contributed a higher number of respondents compared to district heads of departments, who were fewer in number. This proportionality improved the generalisability of the findings across the different leadership levels [52].

Finally, simple random sampling was employed within each stratum to select the actual respondents. This technique gave each leader an equal chance of being chosen, reducing bias and enhancing the credibility of the study results [53]. The combination of these three sampling methods strengthened the research design by ensuring representativeness, fairness, and accuracy, which are essential for drawing valid conclusions about resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District.

Data collection tool

The study collected primary data using self-administered questionnaires, which were designed to gather quantitative information from the target respondents in Kanungu District. This method was appropriate because it allowed leaders to respond at their convenience, reducing interviewer bias and ensuring confidentiality. Self-administered questionnaires are also cost-effective and efficient for collecting data from a large sample within a relatively short period of time [54].

The questionnaires were framed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scaling technique was chosen because it is widely used in social science research to measure attitudes, perceptions, and opinions quantitatively. The Likert scale enabled the researcher to capture the degree of agreement or disagreement on statements related to resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes. The responses generated numerical data that could be easily analysed statistically to test relationships between variables [55].

Piloting

The study conducted a pilot study in Bushenyi District using 10% of the sample size, 18 respondents. Conducting the pilot in a neighbouring district with similar socio-economic characteristics to Kanungu was appropriate because it provided a comparable environment without influencing the actual study population. The purpose of the pilot was to improve the questionnaire by identifying potential flaws in its design, such as ambiguous wording, unclear instructions, or response options that might confuse respondents [56].

Content validity was conducted to ensure that the research instrument adequately captured all relevant aspects of the study variables, namely resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. Experts in research methodology and local governance were consulted to review the questionnaire items for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. Their feedback guided revisions to eliminate ambiguous items and strengthen the representation of key constructs.

The Content Validity Index (CVI) was then calculated, and the instrument attained a CVI of 0.883, which exceeds the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70. This result indicated that the questionnaire had a high level of content validity, meaning that the items included were considered both relevant and representative of the concepts being studied. A CVI above 0.70 is generally regarded as acceptable in social science research, demonstrating that the instrument can be confidently used to collect valid data [57]. Ensuring validity at this stage increased the likelihood of producing accurate and credible results for the study [58].

The study also conducted a reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.781, which exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70. This result demonstrates that the questionnaire items were reliably measuring the constructs of resource allocation and implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. A reliability index above 0.70 is generally considered satisfactory in social science research, providing confidence that the data collected would produce stable and consistent results [59].

Data analysis

The study employed both descriptive and linear regression analyses to examine the relationship between resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. Descriptive analysis was first conducted to summarise and organise the data, providing an overview of respondents' characteristics and the distribution of responses on key variables. Measures such as means, standard deviations, and frequencies were used to present patterns and trends in the data, allowing the researcher to understand the general perceptions and experiences of leaders regarding resource allocation and programme implementation [60].

Linear regression analysis was then applied to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes. This technique enabled the researcher to determine the extent to which variations in resource allocation could predict changes in programme implementation outcomes. The use of regression analysis is justified because it provides a quantitative basis for evaluating causal relationships and helps policymakers identify the most influential factors affecting programme success.

Combining both descriptive and regression analyses, the study not only described the data but also tested hypotheses regarding the influence of resource allocation on programme implementation. This was done at 5% significance level.

Ethical consideration

The study observed ethical considerations to ensure that the research was conducted responsibly and in accordance with accepted standards for human subjects. Key ethical principles such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw were strictly adhered to. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and how the collected data would be used. Consent was obtained before administering the questionnaires, ensuring that participants were willing and fully aware of their involvement [61].

Confidentiality was maintained by anonymising respondents' identities and securely storing data to prevent unauthorised access. This measure protected participants from potential social or professional repercussions arising from their responses. Additionally, the study ensured that no harm, whether physical, psychological, or social, was inflicted on participants, aligning with the ethical principle of beneficence. Ethical approval and clearance were sought from relevant authorities, including local administrative bodies in Kanungu District, to legitimise the research process and demonstrate compliance with regulatory and institutional guidelines.

Adhering to these ethical considerations enhanced the credibility, reliability, and acceptability of the study findings, ensuring that data collection and analysis respected participants' rights while producing robust and valid evidence for policy and practice in poverty eradication programmes [62].

4.0 findings

Response rate

Out of the 181 questionnaires issued, 159 were completed and deemed valid for analysis, resulting in a response rate of 87.8 percent. This high response rate indicates strong participation from the targeted respondents and enhances the reliability and credibility of the study findings. A response rate of this level is generally considered very good in social science research, as it reflects the representativeness of the data collected and reduces

the likelihood of non-response bias [63].

Descriptive Statistics on Resource Allocation and Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

The study sought to determine the influence of resource allocation and implementation of poverty eradication programs as shown in Table 3. The Likert scale ranged 1 and 5.

Strong Disagree=1; Disagree= 2; Not Sure=3; Agree= 4; Strongly Agree= 5

Table 3: Resource Allocation and Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs Resource allocation

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
We regularly review our financial allocations based on performance data and changing needs.	159	2	5	4.10	.576
There is transparency in how financial resources are distributed across different departments or projects.	159	1	5	3.70	.784
Our organization has mechanisms in place to ensure efficient use of allocated financial resources.	159	2	5	3.50	.947
We use data-driven approaches to identify areas or groups most in need of resources.	159	2	5	3.21	.962
Our organization has clear criteria for prioritizing resource allocation to specific projects or initiatives.	159	2	5	3.11	.997
We regularly assess the effectiveness of our resource targeting methods and adjust them as needed.	159	2	5	3.40	.887
Valid N (listwise)	159			3.5	0.859

Source: Field data, 2025

The study conducted in Kanungu District revealed that the regular review and adjustment of financial allocations scored highly (mean=4.10, SD=0.576), indicating that leaders consistently monitor and revise resource distribution based on performance and changing needs. The transparency of resource distribution also scored above average (mean=3.70, SD=0.784), suggesting that stakeholders generally perceive financial processes as open and accountable.

Mechanisms for ensuring efficient use of resources scored moderately (mean=3.50, SD=0.947), reflecting the presence of systems to promote responsible resource utilisation, though some variability exists across departments. The adoption of data-driven approaches scored 3.21 (SD=0.962), indicating a gradual integration of evidence-based decision-making in resource allocation. Clear criteria for prioritising resources scored the lowest (mean=3.11, SD=0.997), highlighting challenges in establishing well-defined frameworks for targeting resources effectively.

The regular assessment of targeting methods (mean=3.40, SD=0.887) corresponds with findings from [64] longitudinal study in Development and Change, which documented similar levels of assessment practices. However, this falls short of the standards identified [65] meta-analysis, which suggested effective programs typically score above 4.0 on assessment measures.

The study conducted in Kanungu District found that the overall mean score of 3.5 indicates a moderate level of effectiveness in resource allocation practices among local leaders.

This suggests that while basic mechanisms for distributing resources, reviewing allocations, and assessing programme needs are in place, there is still room for improvement, particularly in establishing clear allocation criteria and strengthening data-driven targeting. High mean scores, such as 4.10 for regular financial reviews, reflect areas of relative strength, whereas lower scores, such as 3.11 for clear prioritisation criteria, highlight uneven practices across departments.

The standard deviation of 0.859 shows moderate variability in responses, indicating that most leaders provided similar assessments of resource allocation, but some differences exist. Smaller SDs, like 0.576 for financial review processes, suggest strong consensus, while larger SDs, such as 0.997 for prioritisation criteria, reflect inconsistent implementation.

These findings imply that, although foundational resource allocation mechanisms exist in Kanungu District, there is a need to standardise procedures, improve transparency, and adopt more sophisticated, data-driven strategies. Addressing these areas could enhance the effectiveness of poverty eradication programmes and ensure that resources are more efficiently targeted to priority needs across the district.

Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

The study sought to examine perceptions on the implementation of poverty eradication programs as shown in Table 4. The Likert scale ranged from 1 and 5.

Strong Disagree=1; Disagree= 2; Not Sure=3; Agree= 4; Strongly Agree= 5

Table 4: Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
I have consistent access to healthcare services when needed.	159	1.00	5.00	3.3648	1.166
Clean water is readily available in my community.	159	1.00	5.00	3.7233	.8260
My home has adequate sanitation facilities.	159	1.00	5.00	3.4403	1.040
I have completed a high level of formal education.	159	1.00	5.00	2.9748	1.061
All school-age children in my household are currently enrolled in formal education.	159	2.00	5.00	3.2704	1.004
I can easily read and understand written information in my primary language	159	2.00	5.00	3.4843	.8631
Valid N (listwise)	159			3.3763	0.993

Source: Field data, 2025

The study in Kanungu District examined perceptions of the implementation of poverty eradication programs across several developmental dimensions. The overall mean score of 3.38 indicates moderate effectiveness in program implementation, suggesting that foundational services are in place but improvements are still needed.

Healthcare service accessibility scored a mean of 3.36 with a relatively high standard deviation of 1.166, indicating moderate performance but considerable variation among respondents. This suggests that while some community members consistently access healthcare, others face challenges due to uneven service distribution. Access to clean water scored the highest (mean=3.72, SD=0.826), reflecting a relatively strong performance and more consistent provision across the district. Sanitation facilities had a moderate mean score of 3.44 with a standard deviation of 1.040, indicating both adequate provision in some areas and disparities in others.

Education-related indicators showed weaker outcomes. Formal education completion scored the lowest (mean=2.97, SD=1.061), highlighting significant gaps in educational attainment. Current school enrollment performed slightly better (mean=3.27, SD=1.004), but variability suggests inconsistent access among households. Literacy and comprehension capabilities had a mean of 3.48 with lower variability (SD=0.863), indicating relatively consistent access to basic literacy initiatives across the district.

The aggregate mean of 3.38 (SD=0.993) demonstrates a moderate level of success in implementing poverty eradication programs across these key developmental areas. This finding aligns with [66] meta-analysis in world development, which found similar patterns in program implementation effectiveness across multiple poverty reduction initiatives. The consistent standard deviations across measures suggest systematic variations in program delivery and outcomes. These results indicate that while poverty eradication programs have achieved some success, there remain significant opportunities for improving program delivery mechanisms and outcome consistency across all measured dimensions.

Linear regression analysis on Resource Allocation and Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

The study sought to determine the extent to which resource allocation influences the implementation of poverty eradication programs in Kanungu district, Uganda.

Table 6: ANOVA on Resource Allocation on Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.927	1	2.927	5.060	.026 ^b
	Residual	90.838	157	.579		
	Total	93.766	158			
a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Resource Allocation						

Source: Field Data, 2025

Table 6 demonstrates that resource allocation significantly influences the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. The F-statistic of 5.060 with a significance value of 0.026, which is below the 0.05 threshold, confirms that the regression model is statistically significant. This indicates that resource allocation is a meaningful predictor of programme implementation and that the null hypothesis of no effect is rejected.

The regression sum of squares (2.927) compared with the residual sum of squares (90.838) shows that only a small proportion of the total variation (93.766) in programme implementation is explained by resource allocation, while the majority remains unexplained. The mean square for regression (2.927) being higher than the residual mean square (0.579) further supports the statistical relevance of the predictor.

The implication is that although the effect size is modest, resource allocation does play a statistically significant role in influencing poverty eradication outcomes in Kanungu District. This suggests that improvements in how resources are allocated and managed could contribute to better implementation, though other contextual and structural factors must also be addressed to achieve substantial progress.

Table 7: Coefficients for Resource Allocation on Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	3.844	.419		9.167	.000
	Resource Allocation	-.266	.118	-.177	-2.249	.026
a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs						

Source: Field Data, 2025

Table 7 reveals that resource allocation has a statistically significant but negative effect on the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. The unstandardized coefficient (B = -0.266, p = 0.026) indicates that for every unit increase in resource allocation, the implementation score decreases by 0.266 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta = -0.177) further confirms the strength and direction of this inverse relationship. The t-value of -2.249, which is significant at the 0.05 level, strengthens the evidence that this relationship is not due to chance. The constant value of 3.844 suggests that in the absence of changes in resource allocation, the baseline implementation level remains moderately high.

The implication is that increased resource allocation, under current conditions, appears to undermine rather than enhance programme implementation. This unexpected outcome may stem from inefficiencies such as misallocation of funds, corruption, poor monitoring, or lack of alignment between allocated resources and programme priorities. The finding underscores the need for policymakers to not only focus on the volume of resources allocated but also to strengthen accountability mechanisms, ensure

Table 5: Model Summary Resource Allocation on Implementation of Poverty Eradication Programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.177 ^a	.031	.025	.76065
a. Predictors: (Constant), Resource Allocation				

Source: Field Data, 2025

Table 5 indicates that resource allocation has a weak but positive relationship with the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. The correlation coefficient (R = 0.177) shows only a slight positive association between the two variables. The R Square value of 0.031 means that resource allocation accounts for just 3.1% of the variation in programme implementation, leaving 96.9% explained by other factors not captured in the model. The Adjusted R Square of 0.025 confirms that the explanatory power remains minimal, even after adjusting for the sample size. The standard error of the estimate (0.76065) points to a high level of unexplained variability, suggesting that while resource allocation matters, it alone is insufficient to drive significant improvements in poverty eradication outcomes.

The implication is that policymakers in Kanungu District should not rely solely on resource allocation but must strengthen complementary factors such as governance, community participation, and programme monitoring to enhance implementation effectiveness

effective targeting, and build institutional capacity to translate allocations into tangible improvements in poverty eradication outcomes.

Discussion of the findings

Relating the findings of [41] to the results of this study on resource allocation and the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District reveals both convergence and divergence in insights.

The regression and ANOVA results from this study showed that resource allocation has a statistically significant relationship with programme implementation, consistent with [41]'s emphasis on the importance of fiscal capacity in supporting poverty reduction efforts. Both point to the fact that financial resources matter for achieving progress towards poverty eradication. However, the current study also revealed a negative relationship, where increased resource allocation was linked to reduced programme implementation effectiveness. This unexpected outcome mirrors [41]'s argument that fiscal capacity alone does not guarantee success, as political and governance constraints can undermine the effective use of available resources.

The inefficiencies highlighted in this study, such as possible misallocation, corruption, or weak institutional mechanisms, align with [41]'s observation that political power concentration among elites can block or distort poverty reduction policies. Just as [41] demonstrated that countries with sufficient fiscal capacity may still fail to eradicate poverty due to political barriers, the findings in Kanungu District suggest that resources may be available but are not being translated into effective action due to governance and implementation challenges.

The implication is that both studies converge on the idea that poverty eradication requires more than just financial resources. Effective governance, accountability mechanisms, and inclusive political structures are equally essential. In the case of Kanungu District, the negative relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation underscores the need for reforms that address inefficiencies, align allocations with priorities, and strengthen transparency. This resonates with [41]'s conclusion that external support, where necessary, should be structured to reduce these constraints and enable sustainable domestic resource mobilisation and governance improvements over time.

Relating the findings of [43] to the results of this study highlights important similarities and reinforces the interpretation of the regression outcomes for Kanungu District.

Both studies establish that resource allocation is present and formally linked to poverty alleviation programmes. In [43], allocation was guided by national and local policies such as the Local Government Act of 1997, Universal Primary Education, Primary Health Care, and the National Agricultural Advisory Services framework. This policy-driven approach resonates with the current study's finding that resource allocation plays a significant role in the implementation of poverty eradication programmes, as shown by the ANOVA results.

However, [43] also identified a major challenge: unprofessional conduct and corruption among officials, which undermined the effectiveness of resource distribution. This directly aligns with the present study's finding of a negative relationship between increased resource allocation and implementation outcomes. While resources were made available, the inefficiencies in allocation, possible mismanagement, and lack of accountability resulted in weaker programme effectiveness.

Both sets of findings suggest that the issue is not simply the amount of resources allocated but how these resources are managed and translated into practical interventions.

The recommendations from [43] also reinforce the implications of this study. By calling for greater community consultation, more in-depth poverty assessments, and strict accountability measures against corrupt officials, [43] echoes the need for governance and oversight reforms. Similarly, the negative coefficient in this study signals that without addressing inefficiencies in management and governance, increasing financial allocations may not improve and may even hinder poverty eradication efforts.

Together, these findings emphasise that effective resource allocation for poverty alleviation depends on both sound policy frameworks and strong institutional accountability, ensuring that resources reach their intended purposes and genuinely improve the welfare of vulnerable populations.

The findings of [44] complement and extend the results of this study on resource allocation and poverty eradication in Kanungu District. While this study demonstrated a statistically significant yet negative relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation, [44] highlights why such outcomes may occur and how they can be addressed through a multifaceted strategy.

The persistence of extreme poverty, as described by [44], with effects ranging from malnutrition and poor shelter to unemployment and social vulnerability, points to the complex nature of poverty that cannot be solved through resource allocation alone. This aligns with the current study's evidence that financial allocations in Kanungu have not automatically translated into effective poverty eradication outcomes. Inefficiencies, weak institutional frameworks, and mismanagement can dilute the intended impact of resource flows, leading to the counterintuitive negative relationship observed.

By advocating for economic growth stimulation, institutional reforms, and prioritisation of the poor in development policies, [44] reinforces the implication that resource allocation must be accompanied by structural changes to ensure efficiency and inclusivity. This supports the conclusion in the present study that governance issues and accountability mechanisms must be strengthened to make resource use more impactful.

The emphasis in [44] on microfinance, entrepreneurship, marketing systems, and private sector incentives also complements the findings of this study by suggesting practical pathways to enhance the effectiveness of allocated resources. In the case of Kanungu, simply channelling funds into programmes may not suffice; rather, aligning resources with initiatives that stimulate local economic activity and directly benefit marginalised groups could reverse the negative implementation trend. Targeted cash transfers and affirmative actions mentioned in [44] directly address the gap identified in this study—that increased allocations, without proper targeting and oversight, may fail to improve poverty outcomes.

Together, [44] and the current study point to the same conclusion: poverty eradication demands not only adequate resource allocation but also integrated economic, institutional, and social strategies to ensure that resources are transformed into tangible improvements in the lives of the poor.

The findings of [45] offer an interesting contrast to the results of this study on poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District. While this study revealed a statistically significant but negative relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation, [45]

found a positive and significant influence of resource allocation on the implementation of health-care projects in Busia County, Kenya. This difference underscores how the context, efficiency, and governance of resource use shape the eventual outcomes of development initiatives.

According to [45], proper resource allocation in health projects ensured the availability of staff, equipment, and finances, which directly enhanced implementation outcomes. This contrasts with the negative coefficient found in the Kanungu case, where inefficiencies, mismanagement, or corruption may have diluted the effectiveness of allocations. The positive relationship identified in [45] illustrates what can be achieved when allocations are efficiently managed, strategically targeted, and supported by strong project management practices. It reinforces the idea that resources alone are not inherently beneficial; their impact depends on how well they are planned, distributed, and monitored.

Both studies converge on the principle that resource allocation is critical to implementation, but they differ in the direction of impact. While [45] highlights successful outcomes when allocation is effective, this study highlights adverse effects when allocation is poorly managed. The contrast suggests that the negative relationship in Kanungu is not an inevitable outcome but a symptom of systemic weaknesses in governance, planning, and accountability.

The implications are that policymakers in Kanungu can learn from contexts like Busia County, where proper allocation practices enabled project success. Ensuring optimal staffing levels, avoiding financial inefficiencies, and addressing political barriers, as recommended by [45], could help reverse the negative impact observed in this study. In this way, the findings complement each other by showing both the risks of mismanagement and the benefits of effective resource allocation in driving development outcomes.

The findings of [46] strongly resonate with the results of this study on resource allocation and poverty eradication in Kanungu District, particularly regarding the challenges of translating allocations into effective programme outcomes. While this study found a significant but negative relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation, [46] explains why such inefficiencies often occur by highlighting the importance of enabling conditions and the need to reform failed or abandoned projects.

The emphasis in [46] on government prioritisation of enabling conditions reflects the reality observed in Kanungu, where resource allocations alone did not improve programme effectiveness. Without strong institutional frameworks, effective monitoring systems, and political commitment, resources may be wasted or poorly channelled, resulting in reduced impact. This aligns with the negative coefficient in this study, which suggests that current allocations may be undermined by inefficiencies or mismanagement.

[46] also stresses the reformation of failed programmes and abandoned projects as a pathway to achieving poverty eradication under the SDGs. This complements the implications of this study, where ineffective use of allocated resources likely stems from weaknesses in project design, poor accountability, or incomplete initiatives. Both studies converge on the point that unless existing systemic weaknesses are addressed, increased allocations may continue to generate little or no improvement in poverty outcomes.

The recommendation in [46] that governments should restructure abandoned projects and strengthen policy implementation frameworks is highly relevant to Kanungu. The

evidence from this study suggests that improving accountability, governance, and the efficiency of allocation would be essential to reversing the current negative relationship. Together, the two studies highlight that resource allocation must be accompanied by strong enabling conditions, institutional reforms, and effective project management if poverty eradication targets are to be achieved.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of resource allocation on the implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District, Uganda. The findings revealed a statistically significant relationship between resource allocation and programme implementation; however, the relationship was unexpectedly negative, indicating that increased allocation of resources was associated with reduced effectiveness in programme outcomes. The weak positive correlation observed in the model summary, coupled with the low R Square value, suggests that while resource allocation plays a role, it explains only a small proportion of the variation in programme implementation. The ANOVA results confirmed the statistical significance of the relationship, highlighting that resource allocation is a meaningful predictor, yet the negative coefficient underscores inefficiencies and governance challenges in translating resources into tangible poverty reduction outcomes. The study's findings imply that financial resources alone are insufficient to ensure effective implementation of poverty eradication initiatives. Inefficiencies in resource management, administrative bottlenecks, and potential misallocation appear to undermine the impact of available resources. The results underscore the importance of complementing resource allocation with strong governance, accountability mechanisms, community engagement, and strategic planning to enhance programme effectiveness.

The study therefore concludes that achieving sustainable poverty eradication in Kanungu District requires a holistic approach that goes beyond mere resource provision. Strengthening institutional capacity, improving monitoring and evaluation systems, and addressing governance and political constraints are essential to ensure that allocated resources translate into meaningful improvements in the welfare of the target populations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several actions and strategies can be recommended for relevant stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of poverty eradication programmes in Kanungu District:

Policymakers and Government Agencies should prioritise strengthening governance and accountability mechanisms to ensure that allocated resources are used efficiently. This could involve implementing transparent budgeting systems, regular audits, and strict oversight to reduce mismanagement and corruption. Developing clear guidelines for resource allocation and monitoring their execution will help ensure that resources reach intended programmes.

Programme Managers and Implementing Agencies should adopt strategic planning and performance monitoring frameworks. This includes setting measurable targets, tracking progress, and addressing bottlenecks promptly. Training staff on effective project management and resource utilisation will help improve efficiency and reduce wastage.

Community Engagement and Participation should be intensified.

Involving local communities in decision-making processes, needs assessments, and monitoring of programme implementation ensures that resource allocation aligns with actual local needs, increases accountability, and enhances programme relevance and acceptance.

Development Partners and Non-Governmental Organisations should support capacity-building initiatives and provide technical assistance to improve planning, monitoring, and evaluation systems. Assistance should also focus on introducing best practices in resource management, promoting transparency, and fostering collaboration between the government and communities.

Institutional Reforms should target restructuring failed or underperforming programmes. Reviewing existing policies, discontinuing ineffective initiatives, and redirecting resources to high-impact interventions will enhance the effectiveness of poverty eradication efforts. Emphasis should be placed on creating enabling conditions for sustainable outcomes, including adequate infrastructure, financial systems, and human resources.

Lastly, Policy Integration and Strategic Resource Use should ensure that financial allocations are linked to evidence-based interventions. Prioritising programmes that stimulate local economic activity, support microfinance, entrepreneurship, and small-scale businesses can maximise the impact of limited resources and create sustainable pathways out of poverty.

Limitations of the study

The first limitation is the reliance on a single predictor variable, that is resource allocation, to explain the implementation of poverty eradication programmes. While the study identified a statistically significant relationship, the low R Square value (0.031) indicates that resource allocation accounts for only a small proportion of the variation in programme outcomes. Other important factors, such as governance quality, political influence, community participation, and institutional capacity, were not included in the model, which limits the comprehensiveness of the analysis and may have contributed to the counterintuitive negative relationship observed.

The second limitation is the potential influence of data quality and measurement challenges. The study relied on field data, which may be subject to reporting biases, inaccuracies, or inconsistencies, particularly in assessing programme implementation effectiveness and resource utilisation. Additionally, the study did not disaggregate resource allocation by type, source, or purpose, which could obscure the nuanced effects of different forms of resources on programme outcomes. These limitations restrict the generalisability of the findings and highlight the need for more detailed, multi-dimensional data in future research.

Suggestions for future research

Future studies should incorporate multiple predictor variables beyond resource allocation to provide a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing the implementation of poverty eradication programmes. Variables such as governance quality, political influence, community participation, institutional capacity, and programme monitoring mechanisms could be included to examine their combined and relative effects on programme outcomes.

Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the impact of resource allocation over time. Tracking programme implementation and resource use across multiple fiscal periods would provide insights into trends, causal relationships, and the

sustainability of interventions, addressing the limitation of cross-sectional data in the current study.

Future research could disaggregate resource allocation by type (financial, human, material), source (government, donors, NGOs), and intended purpose (health, education, infrastructure) to understand which forms of resources are most effective in improving programme implementation. This would clarify why increased allocations in certain contexts may fail to enhance outcomes.

Comparative studies across districts or regions could be conducted to identify best practices and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of resource allocation. Such studies would help generalise findings and provide policy-relevant insights for regions with similar socio-economic and institutional contexts.

Finally, qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus group discussions with programme managers, community leaders, and beneficiaries, could complement quantitative analyses. This would provide deeper insights into the barriers, inefficiencies, and social dynamics affecting resource utilisation and programme implementation.

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