

**DEMYSTIFYING DEVOLUTION
UNDER KENYA'S NEW
CONSTITUTION: THE NEED TO
AVOID PITFALLS**

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Historical background

- Devolution politics are as old as the Kenyan State
- Kenya African National Union(KANU) and Kenya African Democratic Union(KADU) were distinct by their ideologies in the early 1960's

Distinction

- KANU preferred a unitary system while KADU advocated for a Federal system of government
- KADU was a minority party (comprised 'small' communities) feared that KANU a majority (comprised of 'large' communities) would dominate them

Elite's Theory

- The Elite's theory holds that a representative democracy is not really based on the will of the people, but that there is a relatively small, cohesive elite class that makes almost all the important decisions of the nation.

Continuation..

- Despite the fact that voters are entitled to choose their leaders in democratic systems, the theory argues that voters choose among competing elites.

Cont'

Problem Statement

- While there are a lot of prospects in the success of devolution, especially in promoting innovation, there is equal measure of threats to this success. There are therefore things that can go wrong if devolution is not properly undertaken (Griffin, 1981)

The wrong concept of devolution by the citizens and the political leaders is a hindrance to the success of decentralization. Historically, the executive has been accused of suffocating devolution and calls for a new constitution in the early 1990's was largely informed by the need to reduce the powers of the presidency.

The current pull and push by the executive and the county governments cast some doubt on the prospects of devolution in Kenya.

Wrong assumptions of Devolution

- With devolution, central coordination is no longer needed
- Devolution will result in additional resources and services at the local level.
- Devolution will immediately address entrenched inequity across and within counties.

Continuation..

- Devolution will automatically result in increased accountability.
- Devolution means job creation(employment opportunities)

Recommendations & Conclusion

- The need for a united people and leaders is paramount in ensuring that the fruits of devolution are realized. While devolution is provided for by the constitution, the power plays by the political class exist and would always try to maneuver in order to continue wielding power whether in the county or national level.

Continuation..

- More energies should be channeled towards wealth creation innovation and not wealth distribution.
- Devolution should be seen as an agent of active involvement of people in developing talent, creativity, decision making and oversight as opposed to being seen as a political tool to gain power.

END!

- Thank you for listening