SURNAME: RWAGITARE
OTHER NAMES: CLAUDE
REG.NO: 08/M/KAB/MADS/106/W
GENDER: MALE
TITLE OF THESIS: THE IMPACT OF DECENTRALIZATION POLICY ON THE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN RWANDA; A CASE STUDY OF RULINDO DISTRICT
SUPERVISOR: MR. EDWIN BABIMPA
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ABSTRACT

The study intended to assess the impact of decentralization on the effective delivery of health care services in Rwanda. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the impact of the health sector policy on the provision of quality health care services to the population. Challenges encountered were also documented while providing recommendations for effective utilization of health care services under decentralized entities. To meet the stated objectives, the study purposely sampled 30 respondents at health centres who included health centre staff, district leadership including regulatory body and a number of patients that were found in health centres to represent the entire beneficiary population in the district. The findings of the study show that decentralization of health services has proved to be an effective and efficient system of delivering services to the population at grassroots levels. The population has benefited through the insurance scheme popularly known as Mutuelle de sante’ at the rate of 85% which has enabled equal access to health care by all categories of people in the country without discrimination. Accountability has also been a key feature under decentralization in Rwanda. Despite the progress, a number of problems were identified; and these include limited availability of health workers at health centres and yet there are many patients who are in dire need of the services. The insurance scheme ‘mutuelle de sante’ is not accepted across all the major hospitals in the country apart from the health centres at lower levels yet most crucial health services are at the higher levels like the King Faisal International hospital. Some people still find it difficult to pay for their health insurance yet they need health services. Rulindo Districts also needs to do more on coordination as major weaknesses in this regard were observed during this study. It is highly recommended that the vulnerable citizens like the elderly be allowed free access to health care. The insurance scheme should be devised in such a way that it is widely accepted across all the hospitals. The donor community needs to keep strengthening the decentralization system in Rwanda paying attention to capacity building through training more health workers to meet the ever increasing number of patient