

Specificity Orientation and Implementation of Intra-national Economic Regionalism Policies in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Bloc

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14586625>

Published Date: 02-January-2025

Abstract: This study identified that the existing studies have not given much weight to how specificity orientation influences implementation of intra-national economic regionalisms policies in Kenya. To fill this gap, the study sought to empirically assess the extent to which specificity orientation influences implementation of intra-national economic regionalism policies, with a reference to Lake Region Economic Bloc in Kenya. The total population of the study comprised of 634 individuals, consisting of 13 members of the Council of Governors, 130 County Executive Committee Members, 440 Members of County Assembly, 27 Economic experts and 24 members of the Lake Basin Development Authority. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to obtain a sample of 245 individuals. The study utilized semi-structured physical and online questionnaires and interview schedules to collect quantitative as well as qualitative data. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used for the quantitative analysis. Qualitative analysis utilized themes, patterns and trends that emerged from the responses. The correlation result, $r(157)=0.659$, $p=000$ indicated that there is a significant positive correlation between specificity orientation and implementation of the intra-national economic regionalism policies. The regression results $\beta=0.648$, $p<0.05$ further indicated that specificity orientation significantly predicts implementation of the economic regionalism policies. Therefore, the study concluded that specificity orientation significantly influences implementation of intra-national economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. The findings provided robust empirical evidence on the emerging importance of specificity on implementation of intra-national economic regionalism policies. The study recommends a regular, systematic and comprehensive measurement and assessment of standards, targets, performance indicators and control systems as a crucial aspect of implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc.

Keywords: Specificity Orientation, Implementation of Economic Regionalism, Economic Bloc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Specificity of the policy design features increases the actors' knowledge of cause-effect, leading to legitimate interpretations of domains of economic policies for effective implementation (Mukherjee & Malhotra, 2005). According to Hill (2009) & Subroto (2012), design specificity identifies inconsistencies and allows the stakeholders to agree on how to best address the policy problems. By providing clear goals, priorities and boundaries, specificity is an essential element for ensuring resilient implementation of economic regionalism policies. That is, specificity orientation enhances a shared vision within the policy frameworks in order to minimize foggy consequences during the implementation process (Belcher & Palenberg, 2018; Olsson, Folke & Berkes, 2004).

International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social SciencesVol. 12, Issue 1, pp: (1-10), Month: January - February 2025, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

According to Stockdale-Otarola, (2017) and Hoek, Groeneveld & Kuipers, (2018) handling of specificity is necessary to ensure that a policy is directive, unambiguous and actionable. Therefore specificity regarding the relationship between concepts and options in the processes of economic regionalism can not only improve policy formulation but also put the policies into effect. The study by Rainey (2009) noted that specificity ensures open communication and reduces doubts regarding tasks and responsibilities. By allowing policy actors to understand how policy mandates are decided upon, specificity orientation presents a potential to the success of economic regionalism at different jurisdictional levels. Lynn & Kalay (2016) further indicated that when policy actors have no clear understanding of their responsibilities, tasks, policies, procedures and processes, tasks drop through cracks and hidden agenda flare up.

In Australia, Fairbrother & Barton (2022) found that economic regions often connect with the question of specificity regarding regional economic and social development in very uneven ways. The study noted that even where the economic units have formalized economic arrangements, lack of specificity negates inclusive engagements. Moreover, the study found that where specificity is disconnected and informal, the capacities of the organizations and resources within the economic region are likely to be unstable. In agreement, the study by Barbieri (2019) on the "regionalism, globalism and complexity" established that specificity of economic regionalism policies is related to the varieties that exist among the various regional economic units. According to the study, implementation of economic regionalism translates into taking up of the shared decision making procedures that require greater specificity of institutional and legal structures governing the implementation of the economic regionalism policies.

Similarly, Kanaev & Korolev (2020) investigated specificity and the cooperation prospects within the Association of Southeast Asia Nations and Eurasian Economic Union. The study noted that failure of using a comprehensive vision on where the economic cooperation can be most productive has negatively impacted the potential of the economic blocs. The study revealed the importance of specificity on the areas of trade balance, intuitional frameworks and procedures, and interaction in business expansion between economic units. According to the study, embracing all-connectivity between economic units is necessary for economic regionalism and cooperation. Another study by Korolev & Fomina (2020) on "specificity and the challenges of economic regionalism" found that lack of specificity in addressing the challenges of socio-economic inequality, decision making model, non-traditional security threats, territorial disputes, institutional constraints and political regimes distracts the attention given to the dynamics of economic integration and development. Moreover, the study by Ravenhill (2010) found that due to lack of specificity regarding policy requirements, most economic regionalism agreements remain shadowy in their provisions and often fail to specify trade liberalization for economic regionalism.

The other fields of study have also revealed the importance of ensuring specificity in policy implementation processes. For instance, in a cross-sectional study of 332 public employees in Switzerland by Mozgovoy (2022), the regression results showed that specificity orientation facilitates both episodic and continuous implementation of policies by the employees. The study noted that clearer expectations with task norms that are predictable results in a stronger climate for the implementation of policies. In a study of 663 employees in Indian organizations by Kundu, Kumar & Lata (2020), the correlation and regression findings established that role specificity has positive relationship with job involvement, intrinsic motivation and innovative behaviour towards interpretation of policy domains for effective implementation. In a study of 56 Saudi Arabian universities, Alghamdi (2018) found that specificity regarding the roles, regulatory structure, administrative hierarchy, authorities, timeframe, levels of management, nature of communication (both vertical and horizontal) and other administrative principles facilitate achievement and implementation of policies.

According to Kundu, Kumar & Lata (2020), lack of specificity is a common barrier to harnessing the shared agenda which limits the efforts to move the policies from formulation to implementation. Richard, Williams & Eckardt (2012) and Stockdale-Otarola (2017) assert that the problems of specificity in the policy processes may seem insignificant, but later lead to bigger implementation problems. Therefore, focusing on specificity orientation improves the distributed capacities and minimizes the divergent goals that reflect the divergent interests and pathways influencing the policy outcomes.

The study by Samie, Riahi & Tabibi (2015) on the other hand, established that policies have the attributes of a complex system, which require clarity on what to be actualized and the right types of policy instruments and tools to pursue the intended outcome. For this reason, the design of economic regionalism policies must create processes for allowing simplicity and self-reliant systems with capacity to organize interconnected social, economic and political tasks. According to Hill (2009), specificity orientation not only provides foundation for effective guidance, consistency and efficiency, but also expanded opportunity to allow broader traction for policy implementation. Moreover, a regular, systematic and

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Vol. 12, Issue 1, pp: (1-10), Month: January - February 2025, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

comprehensive measurement and assessment of standards, targets, performance indicators and control systems is a crucial aspect of policy implementation. Brynard’s (2009) study asserted that it is vital that the policy participants be concerned with the specificity of objectives and standards, the specificity of their communication with implementers, and the specificity with which they are communicated by the various sources of information. When specificity lacks in what is required to be implemented, it is more difficult for the policy actors to respond appropriately to the policy problems. The study by (Van & Van, 1975) further established that policies designed without clear consideration for specificity might be counter-productive to the policy goals, hence failing to meet the expected outcomes.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Previous studies have revealed that there is a significant relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies. Despite this recognition, there is still lack of empirical literature focusing on the role of specificity orientation on implementation of economic regionalism within the intra-national economic blocs in Kenya. To fill this gap, the study sought to empirically assess the extent to which specificity orientation influences implementation of intra-national economic regionalism policies, with a reference to Lake Region Economic Bloc in Kenya.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive research design. Means and standard deviations were used for descriptive analysis while correlation and regression were used for inferential analysis to establish the relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. Qualitative analysis utilized themes, patterns and trends that emerged from the responses. A sample of 245 respondents was obtained using Yamane’s formula (1967). The respondents consisted of the individuals who are involved in formulation and implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc, Kenya.

IV. RESULTS

A. Response Rate

Table 1: Response Rate

Questionnaires	Number	Response Rate
Total delivered to respondents	245	64.08%
Returned and used for analysis	157	

The response rate was found to be 64.08%. This response rate was adequate for data analysis since it was above the minimum recommended rate of 50% (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

B. Respondents’ Characteristics

Table 2: Respondents’ Characteristics

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender: Male	137	87.3
Female	20	12.7
Age: 50 years and above	23	14.6
45-to-49 years	38	24.2
35-to-44 years	67	42.7
34 and below years	29	18.5
Education level: PhD	5	3.2
Master's degree	19	12.1
Bachelor's degree	102	64.9
Diploma	28	17.8
Certificate	3	1.9
Experience: Over 10 years	20	12.7
6-to-10 years	62	39.5
1-to-5 years	70	44.6
Below 1 year	5	3.2

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The demographic results indicated that 87.3% (n=137) of the respondents were males while 12.7% (n=20) were females. This shows that most of the job positions within the Lake Region Economic Bloc are dominated by males. In terms of age, 14.6% (n=23) of the respondents were found to be 50 years and above. Those with ages between 45-to-49 years were 24.2% (n=38). The respondents who indicated that they were of the ages between 35-to-44 years were 42.7% (n=67). 18.5% (n=29) of the respondents noted that they were 34 years and below. Out of the 157 respondents, 3.2% (n=5) indicated that they have doctoral qualifications while 12.1% (n=19) had master’s degree. Majority of the respondents, 64.9% (n=102) noted that they have a bachelor’s degree. The respondents who had diploma qualification were 17.8% (n=28). Only 1.9% (n=3) of the respondents indicated that they have certificate qualification. A 10 years work experience was reported by 12.7% (n=20) of the respondents. 39.5% (n=62) indicated that they had worked for 6-to-10 years. A significant number of 44.4% (n=70) indicated that they had worked for 1-to-5 years while 3.2% (n=5) noted that they had worked for less than a year. Generally, each of the respondents had worked for a period that offered them adequate experience to respond to the questions regarding specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc.

C. Descriptive analysis of Specificity Orientation

The descriptive analysis of the quantitative data of specificity orientation was conducted using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations while the illustrative quotes were utilized for the qualitative data. The results were presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Results for Specificity Orientation

Item	Statement	M	SD	N
Item1	Economic regionalism policies have clear goals for implementation of economic regionalism.	3.203	1.136	157
Item2	Economic regionalism policies provide definite roles of actors for their effective implementation.	2.681	1.080	157
Item3	Economic regionalism policies have explicit priorities that allow their effective implementation.	3.789	1.409	157
Item4	Economic regionalism policies have tasks and tools that are clear to follow and use.	2.605	1.147	157
Item5	Economic regionalism policies have expectations that are clearly defined.	3.687	1.510	157
Item6	Economic regionalism policies are generally easy to understand, hence facilitating their implementation	3.242	1.128	157
Item7	Economic regionalism policies provide procedures that are easy to follow for economic regionalism.	2.758	1.034	157
Item8	Economic regionalism policies clearly indicate how resources are to be utilized at given times.	3.471	1.141	157
Item9	Economic regionalism policies provide specific measurement standards that are easy to understand.	4.051	1.102	157
Item10	Economic regionalism policies have designs that facilitate easy understanding of the policy contents.	3.904	1.048	157
Item11	Economic regionalism policies have comprehensive and specific implementation timeframes.	3.280	1.030	157
Grand Mean		3.586		

The descriptive findings in Table 3 showed that goal clarity facilitates implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (M=3.203, SD=1.136). This was confirmed by 26.8% (n=42) and 14.0% (n=22) of the respondents who indicated that the goals of economic regionalism policies are clear to a large extent and very large extent respectively. 32.5% (n=51) of the respondents pointed out that economic regionalism policies have clear goals for the implementation of economic regionalism to a moderate extent. Similarly, the qualitative findings revealed the need to align the policy goals to allow clarity of expectations, standards, priorities and the procedures within the Lake Region Economic Bloc. The respondent R99, opined that

“.....the goals of economic regionalism are clear only to a smaller extent. This is due to the lack of specificity on what is to be implemented by who, when implementation is to be done and how it should be done. I think we need to clarify more on these issues. Otherwise implementation of the policies will remain unsuccessful. When the policies are made clearer, it will be easier for the individuals and institutions within the Lake Region Economic Bloc to implement them.....”

As regards improvement of the specificity orientation strategies, the results revealed that 89.2%($n=140$) against 10.8%($n=17$), reported that specificity orientation strategies need more improvement in order to further facilitate economic regionalism in Lake Region Economic Bloc. Specifically, 15.3%($n=24$) indicated that policy content needs improvement, 47.1%($n=74$) reported that role specification needs to be improved, 15.3%($n=24$) noted that resource specification needs improvement, 13.4%($n=21$) highlighted that task specification needs improvement while 8.9%($n=14$) indicated that goal content requires improvement to further facilitate economic regionalism. Previous studies have also indicated that clarity of goals reduces uncertainties in direction, roles and assigned tasks that may emerge during policy implementation. Barbieri (2019) noted that goal clarity increases certainty and leads to positive implementation outcomes.

The mean of role of the actors ($M=2.681$, $SD=1.080$) indicated that the economic regionalism policies have not yet clearly specified the roles of the various actors for implementation of economic regionalism in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. 31.2%($n=49$) noted that the specification of the roles are definite to a small extent while 14.6%($n=23$) indicated that the roles of the actors are not specified. Specificity of roles is necessary to provide a collective sense in the implementation of economic regionalism.

The respondents further provided their views on the explicitness of the priorities of the economic regionalism policies. The mean ($M=3.789$, $SD=1.409$) revealed that the economic regionalism policies provide explicit priorities, hence facilitating their implementation. Majority of the respondents, 19.1%($n=30$) and 46.5%($n=73$) noted that the priorities of the economic regionalism policies are explicit to large and very large extent respectively. The key respondents, however, revealed the need to make the priorities more clear within the LREB. For example, the respondent *R26*, reported that

“...Lake Region Economic Bloc is an economic bloc that is keen on improving its operations. But one of the main challenges that the block faces at the moment is lack of clarity regarding some of its goals and objectives. This means that many counties within the bloc are not aware of what they specifically need to regarding implementation of the policies. However, the Bloc is moving on the right track and we are hoping that more goals will be formulated that will allow and motivate all the partners within the bloc to implement the objectives of the bloc...”

The finding on explicitness of priorities is useful because without knowing the roles of each of the counties in the economic bloc, confusion can arise leading to the collapse of the bloc. The response is supported by Belcher & Palenberg (2018) who found that explicitness enhances a shared vision, which is a prerequisite for effective policy implementation. Aligning priorities is important in reducing conflicting expectations, allowing the actors to implement the policies within the specified timeframe.

The study also found that specificity of tools and tasks facilitates implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc, as indicated by a mean and standard deviation of ($M=2.605$, $SD=1.147$). The result, was confirmed by 33.1%($n=52$) of the respondents who indicated that economic regionalism policies have tasks and tools that are clear to follow to a small extent and 26.1%($n=41$) who noted that economic regionalism policies have tasks and tools that are clear to follow to a moderate extent. On the other hand, the mean for the policy expectations ($M=3.687$, $SD=1.510$) revealed that the expectations of the economic regionalism policies are clear, facilitating economic regionalism in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. According to 12.7%($n=20$) and 48.4%($n=76$) of the respondents, economic regionalism policies have expectations that are defined to a large and very large extent respectively. Moreover, 13.4%($n=21$) indicated that the expectations of the economic regionalism policies are clear to a moderate extent. Ravenhill (2010) similarly found that specificity regarding policy expectations facilitates trade liberalization for increased economic regionalism.

In terms of specificity of the procedures, the mean ($M=2.758$, $SD=1.034$) revealed a moderate respondents' view of the ease to which the procedures for economic regionalism are easy to follow in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. The mean was confirmed by 33.8%($n=53$) respondents who noted that economic regionalism policies provide procedures that are easy to follow for economic regionalism to a moderate extent and 21.0%($n=33$) who noted that the economic regionalism policies provide procedures that are easy to follow to a large extent. The finding confirmed the potential of procedural specificity in

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broadening traction for the implementation of the economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. Barbieri (2019) found that specificity translates into taking up of the shared procedures supported by greater institutional structures governing implementation of the economic regionalism policies.

The qualitative results on specificity of procedures further indicated that the review of the procedures is an important component of specificity orientation that should be embraced by the counties within the LREB. According to Bradley (2018) reviewing strategies help in keeping with the current policy practices. Reviewing of the economic regionalism policy procedures is necessary to keep them in touch with the changes that regularly evolve in the course of regionalism process. The respondent, *R66*, noted that

“...there are multiple strategies that the Lake Region Economic Bloc can employ to ensure specificity of the economic regionalism policies. For instance, coming up with clear policy designs that clearly outline the policy objectives to be achieved. Another is indicating clearly the economic investments that are to be undertaken by the county governments within Lake Region Economic Bloc. Strategies are like frequently reviewing the goals to ensure that they match and don't deviate from the expectations of the Lake Region Economic Bloc ...”

The study found a moderate clarity about utilization of resources for implementation of economic regionalism policies, as revealed by a mean of ($M=3.471$, $SD=1.141$). According to 30.6% ($n=48$) and 21.0% ($n=33$) of the respondents, the economic regionalism policies spell out the utilization of resources to a large and very large extent respectively. Fairbrother & Barton (2022) noted that specificity of resources within the regional blocs facilitate implementation of the economic policies. On the measurement standards, it was found that economic regionalism policies provide specific measurement standards that are easy to understand ($M=4.051$, $SD=1.102$). The finding was supported by 17.8% ($n=28$) and 44.6% ($n=70$) of respondents who noted that the measurement standards are easy to understand to a large extent and very large extent respectively. The study by Brynard (2009) similarly noted that when the implementation standards are clear, policies turn productive to the predetermined goals, hence moving towards the direction of the expected policy implementation outcomes.

The results on the policy contents, ($M=3.904$, $SD=1.048$), showed that the economic regionalism policies have designs that facilitate easy understanding of the policy contents. 40.8% ($n=64$) and 31.8% ($n=50$) of the respondents agreed that economic regionalism policies have designs that facilitate understanding of the policy contents to a large and very large extent. Similarly, 17.8% ($n=28$) of the respondents noted that economic regionalism policies have designs that facilitate understanding of the policy contents to a moderate extent. Kundu, Kumar & Lata (2020) found that understanding such policy contents increases the intrinsic motivation of the implementing agencies.

On the implementation timelines, the mean ($M=3.280$, $SD=1.030$) showed that the economic regionalism policies provide specific implementation timeframes for economic regionalism in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. This was reported by majority of the respondents, 38.2% ($n=60$) and 26.8% ($n=42$), who noted that implementation timeframes are comprehensive and specific to a moderate and a large extent respectively. Only 3.8% ($n=6$) affirmed that the timeframes are neither specific nor comprehensive. According to extant literature, such as by Brynard (2009), it is vital for policy actors to know the timelines in order to effectively implement the policies. Moreover, adoption of too many strategies could hamper the implementation of the economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc.

The respondent *R43*, noted that

“.....The ambition of this economic bloc has created too many strategies to be implemented. Some of the strategies do not have specific boundaries in relation to their implementation processes. If the strategies are made more specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound, they are likely to be implemented. They must be specific in order to increase the productivity of the Lake Region Economic Bloc. Creating specific roadmaps will help in guiding setting of the goals in the Lake Region Economic Bloc.....”

The aggregate mean for specificity orientation was ($M=3.586$, $SD=1.160$). While the standard deviation shows high variation in the responses, the mean generally shows that specificity orientation influences implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region economic Bloc. The descriptive findings are in agreement with several past studies. For instance, Kanaev & Korolev (2020) investigated specificity as well as the cooperation prospects within the Eurasian Economic Union and Association of Southeast Asia Nations. The study revealed the importance of specificity on areas such as trade balance, intuitional frameworks and procedures, and interaction in business expansion between economic units.

Barbieri (2019) while focusing on "regionalism, globalism and complexity" asserted that specificity of economic regionalism is related to the variety and differentiations that exist among the various economic units. According to the study, specificity translates into the adoption of the consensual and shared decision making processes. This requires a greater specificity of institutional and the legal structures governing implementation of the economic regionalism policies.

D. Bivariate Interaction between Specificity Orientation and Economic Regionalism

Before the analysis of the bivariate relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc, diagnostic tests were conducted to determine normality, homogeneity and linearity of the data obtained for the specificity orientation. The normality result was shown in Table 4 below. The statistic of skewness indicated a value of -0.311 while that of kurtosis indicated value of -0.604. The skewness and kurtosis statistics confirmed that the distribution of the data for specificity orientation was not too skewed or too kurtotic and could be used for analyses of the interaction between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc.

Table 4: Normality Test for Specificity Orientation

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Specificity Orientation	157	-.311	.194	-.604	.385
Valid N (listwise)	157				

Homogeneity of specificity orientation and economic regionalism was tested using the Levene’s test of Equality of Error Variances as shown in Table 5. The result indicated a statistically non-significant F-statistic, $F(21,126)= 1.382, \rho>0.05$. The p-value being more than 0.05, the variances were not significantly different, and the assumption of homogeneity was met as recommended by Hayes & Cai (2007).

Table 5: Homogeneity Test for Specificity Orientation and Economic Regionalism

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.382	21	126	.140

Linearity between specificity orientation and economic regionalism was tested using ANOVA. The significant value of deviation from linearity was $F(29,126)= 0.808, \rho>0.05$, indicating a linear relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies. According to Tabachnick & Fidell (2001) the assumption of linearity is met when the significant value is $(\rho>0.05)$.

Table 6: Linearity between Specificity Orientation and Economic Regionalism

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Economic Regionalism * Specificity Orientation	Between Groups	53.134	30	1.771	4.609	.000
	Linearity	44.135	1	44.135	114.848	.000
	Deviation from Linearity	9.000	29	.310	.808	.743
	Within Groups	48.420	126	.384		
Total		101.555	156			

The bivariate correlation coefficient, $r(157)=0.659, \rho<0.05$, showed a significant moderate positive linear relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies. The correlation finding was found to be similar to the results of the study by Barbieri (2019) which revealed that specificity translates into adoption of the generally-shared and consensual decision making procedures. According to Stockdale-Otarola, (2017), specificity ensures that policies are devoid of the distracting materials to reduce implementation complexities. Rainey (2009) further noted that specificity ensures open communication, reduces doubts and promotes clear interactions between interventions in the course of implementation of policies.

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Table 7: Correlation between Specificity Orientation and Economic Regionalism

		Economic Regionalism	Specificity Orientation
Specificity Orientation	Pearson Correlation	.659**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	157	157

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The bivariate regression model summary indicated the goodness of fit for the regression model of specificity orientation on implementation of economic regionalism, as shown in Table 8. The value of R square ($R^2=0.435$) indicated that 43.5% of the variation in implementation of economic regionalism policies is explained by specificity orientation. Therefore, 56.5% of the variation in economic regionalism is explained and accounted for by other factors, such as contextual connectivity, participatory scoping and distributed synchronization. The ANOVA results of $F(1,156)=119.138, \rho<0.05$, showed that specificity orientation significantly explains variation in implementation of economic regionalism policies. Geda & Kebret (2008) and Ravenhill (2010) similarly highlighted the significant relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of strategies for promoting economic regionalism at the sub-national levels. The beta coefficient, $\beta= 0.648, \rho<0.05$, showed that a positive unit change in specificity orientation leads to a 0.648 change in the implementation of economic regionalism policies. This result further confirmed that specificity orientation has a positive effect of implementation of economic regionalism policies.

Table 8: Bivariate Regression of Specificity Orientation and Economic Regionalism

Model Summary for Specificity Orientation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.659 ^a	.435	.431	.60865

ANOVA^a for Specificity Orientation

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	44.135	1	44.135	119.138	.000 ^b
	Residual	57.420	155	.370		
Total		101.555	156			

Regression Coefficients^a for Specificity Orientation

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	.689	.218		3.155	.002
	Specificity Orientation	.648	.059	.659	10.915	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Economic Regionalism

The bivariate regression model for direct relationship between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc was thus

$$EcoRe = 0.689 + 0.648SpOr + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

EconRe = Economic Regionalism; SpOr = Specificity Orientation

The regression finding was found to agree with the study by Kanaev & Korolev (2020) which revealed the importance of specificity on areas such as trade balance, intuitional frameworks and procedures, and interaction in business expansion between economic units. The study by Rainey (2009) noted that specificity ensures open communication and reduces doubts regarding tasks and responsibilities. The study by Lynn & Kalay (2016) further indicated that when policy actors have no clear understanding of their policies, tasks, procedures, responsibilities and processes, tasks drop through cracks and hidden agenda flare up. In Switzerland the study by Mozgovoy (2022) showed that specificity orientation facilitates both episodic

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and continuous implementation of policies by the employees. According to the study, clearer expectations with task norms that are consistently predictable results in a stronger climate for the implementation of policies. Furthermore Hill (2009) noted that specificity orientation not only provides foundation for effective guidance, consistency and efficiency, but also expanded opportunity to allow broader traction for policy implementation.

V. CONCLUSION

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of specificity orientation on the implementation of intra-national economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc, Kenya. The quantitative descriptive findings revealed that specificity orientation contributes to the implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. Specifically, specificity of goals, priorities, tasks, tools, measurement standards and implementation timeframes facilitate implementation of economic regionalism in the bloc. The qualitative descriptive results similarly revealed the importance of clarity of expectations, standards, priorities and procedures in facilitating implementation of economic regionalism in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. The findings of the correlation analysis revealed a positive significant association between specificity orientation and implementation of economic regionalism policies. Moreover, both the simple linear regression and multiple linear regression results showed that specificity orientation significantly predicts implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a significant effect of specificity orientation on the implementation of intra-national economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc, Kenya.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these results, the policy makers in the Lake Region Economic Bloc need to continue to improve consensus on the overarching goals that must be addressed for effective policy implementation for economic regionalism. Explicitness regarding the relationship between options and allowing policy actors to understand how policy mandates are decided upon, will ensure success of the actors' arrangements at different jurisdictional levels within the Lake Region Economic Bloc. The study recommends a clear understanding of tasks, processes, policies, procedures and responsibilities. The study also recommends a regular, systematic and comprehensive measurement and assessment of standards, targets, performance indicators and control systems as a crucial aspect of implementation of economic regionalism policies in the Lake Region Economic Bloc. The study further recommends that the policy design for economic regionalism must be structured well and be written in a clear and simple language. Clearly defining the focus areas such as the budgets, reporting systems, expectations, governance, mission, regulations, values and all other relevant policy aspects will enhance more policy implementation in the Lake Region Economic Bloc.

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International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences

 Vol. 12, Issue 1, pp: (1-10), Month: January - February 2025, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

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