



**PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS AND PERFORMANCE OF NON-
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION FUNDED PROJECTS IN KITUI COUNTY,
KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Despite the significant funding and resources allocated to NGOs in Kitui County, many projects still fail to achieve their intended outcomes. This underperformance is often attributed to inadequate project management practices, which hinder the effective and efficient implementation of projects. The general objective of this study is to assess the influence of project management tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to assess the influence of project planning tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya, to establish the influence of project team building tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. This study was anchored on Resource Dependency Theory, and Social Identity Theory. This study used a descriptive research design. The study targeted NGO projects in Kitui County, Kenya. According to the NGO Coordination Board as of 31st December 2022, there were 36 NGOs Projects in Kitui County (NGO Board, 2022). The study targeted management employees working with these NGOs. The total population was therefore 216 respondents. The Yamane formula was adopted to calculate the study sample size. The study used simple random sampling in selecting the sample from study population. Primary data was used in this study. The study's primary data was obtained using semi-structured questionnaires. The study conducted a pilot study on 10% of the sample hence 14 respondents. This study used both construct validity and content validity. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used to measure the consistency of variables. Primary data was analyzed using both descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean) and inferential statistics that included Pearson correlation and regression. The study concludes that project planning tools have a positive and significant effect on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. In addition, the study concludes that project team building tools has a positive and significant effect on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. Based on the findings, the study recommends that the management of NGOs should adopt an integrated project management tool like Microsoft Project. These tools offer comprehensive features for planning and, scheduling which are crucial for ensuring timely and efficient project execution.

Key Words: Project Management Tools, Project Planning Tools, Project Team Building Tools, Performance of NGOs Funded Projects

Background of the Study

Non-governmental organizations have in the past been involved in relief, emergency or longer-term development work or a mixture of all three. It has been asserted that often times NGOs fail to achieve the target objectives of their projects or even leave before task completion despite the role that they play. There have been cases of NGOs terminating their contracts while others are reluctant to renew their contracts. In Kenya, Jhuthi (2019) indicates that more than half of all projects carried out by non-governmental organizations are not sustainable and collapse in less than one year after the exit of the donors. For example, the NGOs coordination board (2021) closed about 956 nongovernmental organizations due to project malpractices

Project management tools are software or platforms that help individuals and teams plan, execute, monitor, and control projects effectively. These tools are designed to streamline project workflows, improve collaboration, and ensure that projects are completed on time and within budget. Köhler *et al.* (2020) define project management techniques as the science of planning, developing, and managing activities to assist the project team in overcoming problems across the project lifecycle processes. According to Barriere (2019), project management methods have evolved into a management tool for achieving optimum project implementation performance. Organizations have adopted it to overcome a variety of difficulties posed by globalization and developments in business operations (Fewings & Henjewe, 2019).

Projects provide a significant contribution to economic and social development (Bond-Barnard, Fletcher, & Steyn, 2019). The major objective of project management is to effectively complete a project on schedule, on budget, and on quality while managing the unique project environment (Florice, Michela, & Piperca, 2019). Project management methods, according to Kebeya (2021), have become a universal instrument for maximum performance for every firm seeking professionalism. Project management techniques, according to Tinoco, Sato, and Hasan (2019), are the skills and science of planning, creating, and managing activities across the project lifecycle processes.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the significant funding and resources allocated to NGOs in Kitui County, many projects still fail to achieve their intended outcomes. This underperformance is often attributed to inadequate project management practices, which hinder the effective and efficient implementation of projects (Musili, & Nyang'au, 2022). The lack of appropriate project management tools has been identified as a key factor contributing to these challenges, leading to delays, budget overruns, and suboptimal project outcomes. According to a report by the NGO Coordination Board (2023), approximately 45% of NGO-funded projects in Kenya do not meet their objectives within the stipulated time and budget. In Kitui County specifically, the situation is even more dire, with about 60% of projects experiencing significant delays and cost escalations (Kitui County Development Report, 2022). These inefficiencies not only waste valuable resources but also undermine the trust and confidence of donors, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders in the ability of NGOs to deliver meaningful impact (Muluka, , Mukanzi, & Paul, 2021).

The underperformance of NGO projects in Kitui County has far-reaching implications for the community. For instance, projects aimed at improving healthcare, education, and infrastructure are critical for the socio-economic development of the region. When these projects fail, the intended benefits are not realized, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. It is therefore imperative to identify and implement effective project management tools that can enhance the performance of NGO-funded projects in Kitui County (Macharia, & Bowa, 2020).

This study aimed to assess the influence of project management tools on the performance of NGO-funded projects in Kitui County. By doing so, it sought to provide actionable insights and recommendations that can help NGOs optimize their project management practices, thereby improving the success rate of their projects and ultimately contributing to the socio-economic development of the region.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to assess the influence of project management tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i To assess the influence of project planning on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya
- ii To establish the influence of project team building on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Resource Dependency Theory

Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) developed by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) is a framework in organizational theory that explores how organizations depend on external resources to survive, grow, and achieve their goals. It posits that organizations are not self-sufficient entities but rather interdependent with their environment, including other organizations, suppliers, customers, regulators, and societal influences. RDT suggests that managing these dependencies strategically is crucial for organizational effectiveness and survival. Central to Resource Dependency Theory is the concept of resource control. Organizations seek to control critical resources that are essential for their operations and success. These resources can include financial capital, technology, information, human expertise, raw materials, and access to markets. The theory emphasizes that organizations must actively manage these dependencies to reduce uncertainty and ensure continuity of operations. For example, an NGO relying on external funding for its projects must effectively manage relationships with donors to secure ongoing financial support. Another key concept of Resource Dependency Theory is strategic alliances and partnerships. Organizations often form alliances with other entities to access resources they cannot obtain independently. These alliances can be formal (such as partnerships with other NGOs or government agencies) or informal (networks of collaborators sharing knowledge and resources). By forming strategic alliances, organizations can diversify their resource base, reduce vulnerability to external shocks, and gain access to expertise or infrastructure they lack internally. Moreover, Resource (Ozigi & Onuoha, 2023)

Dependency Theory underscores the importance of environmental scanning and adaptation. Organizations continuously monitor their external environment to anticipate changes in resource availability, regulatory frameworks, market trends, and competitive dynamics. This proactive scanning allows organizations to adapt their strategies, structures, and operations in response to external shifts, thereby enhancing their resilience and competitive advantage. For instance, an NGO operating in a volatile funding environment might diversify its funding sources or adjust its programs based on changing donor priorities. Additionally, Resource Dependency Theory highlights power dynamics in organizational relationships. Organizations with control over critical resources have leverage and power over those who depend on them. Conversely, organizations that are overly dependent on a single resource or stakeholder may be vulnerable to exploitation or manipulation. Understanding these power dynamics helps

organizations negotiate more equitable partnerships and manage dependencies more effectively (Umulisa & Dushimimana, 2023).

One assumption of Resource Dependency Theory is that organizations strive to minimize uncertainty by securing and controlling critical resources from their external environment. This assumption implies that organizations are rational actors that strategically seek to reduce their vulnerability to external influences and disruptions. By controlling key resources such as funding, technology, or market access, organizations can enhance their stability and operational capacity. Critics of Resource Dependency Theory argue that it may oversimplify the complexities of organizational behavior and decision-making. The theory's focus on resource control and dependency management may neglect other important factors influencing organizational behavior, such as internal dynamics, leadership, organizational culture, and individual agency. Organizations are not purely reactive entities driven solely by external dependencies but also influenced by internal factors and strategic choices (Wabwile & Ruguru, 2023).

Another assumption critiqued in Resource Dependency Theory is its deterministic view of organizations as passive recipients of external resources and influences. Critics argue that the theory may underestimate the agency and proactive capabilities of organizations to shape their external environment, form strategic alliances, and innovate to create new resources or opportunities. Organizations often play an active role in influencing their external dependencies through negotiation, collaboration, and innovation rather than simply reacting to external pressures. Furthermore, Resource Dependency Theory has been criticized for its static view of resource dependencies and its limited consideration of how dependencies and resource needs evolve over time. Organizations operate in dynamic environments where resource dependencies can change rapidly due to technological advancements, market shifts, regulatory changes, or changes in stakeholder preferences. The theory's emphasis on stable and predictable resource dependencies may not adequately capture the complexities of managing dependencies in a rapidly changing world (Mwanza, Namusonge & Makokha, 2020). This theory is relevant in assessing the influence of project planning tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County

Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a psychological theory that explores how individuals' self-concept and identity are shaped by their membership in social groups. Developed by Henri Tajfel in the 1970s, SIT posits that people derive a significant part of their self-esteem and identity from the groups they belong to, whether these are based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, occupation, or other affiliations. Central to SIT is the idea that individuals strive for a positive social identity, which involves identifying with groups that have a positive social status and distinctiveness. At the core of Social Identity Theory is the concept of social categorization, where individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups based on perceived similarities and differences. This process helps individuals make sense of their social environment and establish a sense of belonging. For example, within an NGO setting, employees may identify strongly with their team, department, or the overarching mission of the organization, shaping how they perceive themselves and their roles within the organization (Iqbal, *et al*, 2020).

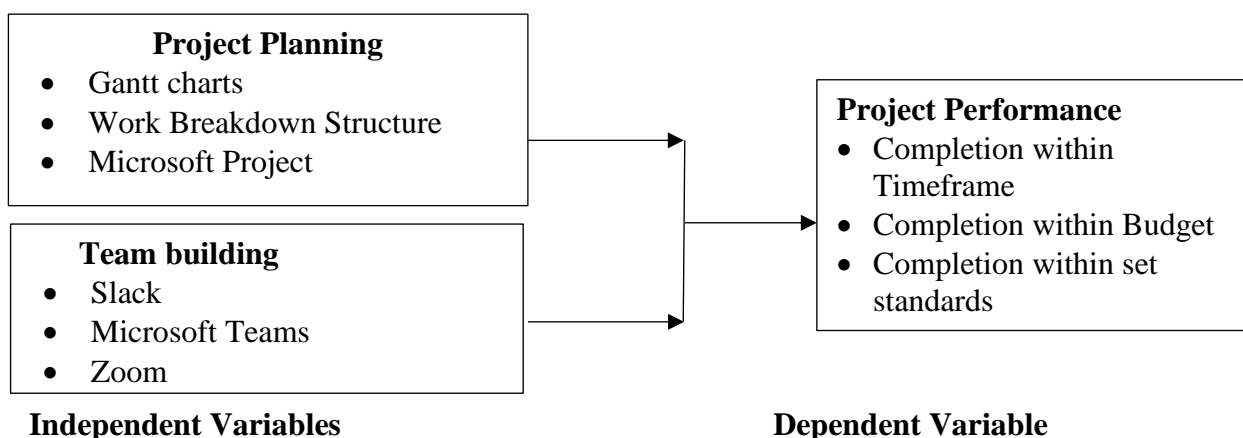
Another key concept of Social Identity Theory is social comparison, which involves evaluating the status and attributes of one's own group relative to other groups. Individuals tend to favor their in-group (the group they belong to) over out-groups (groups they do not belong to) in order to enhance their self-esteem and social identity. This in-group favoritism can influence behaviors, attitudes, and decision-making processes within organizations, affecting

collaboration, cohesion, and group dynamics. Furthermore, Social Identity Theory emphasizes identity salience, which refers to the importance individuals attach to their group identities in different contexts. Depending on situational factors, certain identities may become more salient and influential in shaping behavior and interactions. For instance, during times of organizational change or crisis, employees may prioritize their identity as members of a specific team or department, influencing their responses and actions. Critically, Social Identity Theory also highlights the consequences of identity threats. When individuals perceive a threat to their group, they may respond defensively or seek to assert their group's positive qualities. In organizational contexts, managing and fostering positive group identities can enhance employee motivation, commitment, and organizational cohesion (Musafiri & Dushimama, 2024).

One assumption of Social Identity Theory is that individuals derive a significant part of their self-concept and self-esteem from their membership in social groups. This assumption suggests that people categorize themselves and others into groups based on shared characteristics and affiliations, such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, or organizational membership. These group memberships provide individuals with a sense of belonging, identity, and social status, influencing their attitudes, behaviors, and interactions within these groups. Critics of Social Identity Theory argue that it may oversimplify the complexities of individual identity and behavior. The theory's focus on group identities and in-group favoritism may overlook the diversity of identities and affiliations individuals hold simultaneously. People often belong to multiple social groups, each with its own norms, values, and expectations, which can lead to complex interactions and identity dynamics that are not fully captured by SIT's emphasis on singular group identities (Musili & Nyang'au, 2022).

Furthermore, Social Identity Theory has been criticized for its potential to perpetuate intergroup biases and conflicts. The theory suggests that individuals tend to favor their in-group over out-groups, which can contribute to social divisions, prejudice, and discrimination. In organizational contexts, in-group favoritism may lead to cliques, polarization, and challenges in fostering inclusive work environments where diversity is valued and leveraged for organizational success. Moreover, critics argue that Social Identity Theory may not adequately account for individual agency and personal identity development. While group memberships can shape identity formation and behavior, individuals also have agency in how they perceive themselves, navigate different social contexts, and develop identities that may transcend or challenge traditional group boundaries. This aspect highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of identity that considers both group affiliations and individual autonomy (Wanjau, Namusonge & Lango, 2024). This theory is relevant in establishing the influence of project team building tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County.

Conceptual Framework



Project Planning Tools

Project planning tools refer to a set of software applications, techniques, methodologies, and frameworks used by project managers and teams to plan, organize, schedule, allocate resources, track progress, and manage the execution of projects effectively (Kabiti & Kikwatha, 2022). These tools are designed to streamline the project management process, enhance collaboration among team members, and ensure that projects are completed within scope, budget, and schedule constraints (Ozigi & Onuoha, 2023).

Gantt charts are visual project management tools that provide a timeline view of project activities, tasks, and milestones. Developed by Henry Gantt in the early 20th century, these charts are widely used for their simplicity and effectiveness in depicting project schedules. Gantt charts display tasks as bars along a horizontal timeline, with each bar representing the start and end dates of a specific task. They also illustrate task dependencies, showing which tasks are sequential or concurrent. This visual representation helps project managers and team members understand the project's timeline, identify critical path activities (those that directly impact project duration), and track progress against planned schedules. Gantt charts are valuable for communication and planning, enabling stakeholders to visualize project phases, allocate resources, and manage deadlines effectively (Umulisa & Dushimimana, 2023).

The Work Breakdown Structure is a hierarchical decomposition of the project scope into smaller, manageable components called work packages. Each work package represents a specific deliverable, task, or activity required to complete the project. The WBS starts with the project's major deliverables and breaks them down into smaller, more manageable tasks, which are further subdivided until they reach a level where they can be scheduled, executed, and controlled. The WBS serves several purposes in project management: it helps clarify project scope and objectives, facilitates resource allocation and assignment, aids in estimating costs and timelines, and supports monitoring and controlling project progress. By organizing project work into logical and manageable units, the WBS enhances clarity, accountability, and coordination among project team members (Wabwile & Ruguru, 2023).

Microsoft Project is a comprehensive project management software developed by Microsoft that allows project managers to plan, track progress, allocate resources, manage budgets, and analyze workloads for projects of various sizes and complexities. It offers a range of features and functionalities, including Gantt charts, task scheduling, resource management, budget tracking, and collaboration tools. Microsoft Project enables users to create detailed project plans, define task dependencies, set milestones, and generate reports to monitor project progress and performance. It supports integration with other Microsoft Office applications and provides cloud-based options for remote access and collaboration. As a robust project management tool, Microsoft Project is widely used across industries to streamline project workflows, enhance team productivity, and ensure projects are delivered on time and within budget. Its versatility and scalability make it suitable for both small teams and large organizations managing multiple projects simultaneously, providing valuable insights and control over project execution from initiation to closure (Mwanza, Namusonge & Makokha, 2020).

Project Team Building Tools

Project team building tools refer to methodologies, activities, and strategies employed by organizations to enhance collaboration, communication, cohesion, and productivity among team members working on a specific project (Njue & Chandi, 2020). These tools are designed to foster a positive team culture, build trust, clarify roles and responsibilities, and improve overall team effectiveness (Iqbal, *et al*, 2020).

Slack is a widely used communication platform designed for teams and organizations to collaborate effectively in real-time. It offers features such as instant messaging, file sharing, and integration with other tools and services. Slack allows teams to create channels for specific projects, topics, or departments, facilitating organized discussions and information sharing. Its user-friendly interface and extensive customization options make it popular among remote teams and distributed workforces. Slack also supports voice and video calls, making it a versatile tool for both synchronous and asynchronous communication. With integrations for project management, file storage, and productivity tools, Slack enhances team productivity by centralizing communication and reducing the reliance on email, fostering quicker decision-making and seamless collaboration (Musafiri & Dushimama, 2024).

Microsoft Teams is a collaboration platform integrated within the Microsoft 365 suite, providing a unified workspace for chat, meetings, file sharing, and collaboration on documents and projects. It combines workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration, all within a single interface. Teams allows users to create channels for different projects or topics, facilitating organized conversations and information sharing. It also integrates seamlessly with other Microsoft Office apps (like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) and third-party applications, enhancing productivity and workflow efficiency. Teams' robust security and compliance features make it suitable for organizations of all sizes, including those with stringent data protection requirements. With its ability to support remote work and virtual collaboration, Microsoft Teams has become essential for modern workplaces aiming to enhance communication, collaboration, and productivity across teams and departments (Musili & Nyang'au, 2022).

Zoom is a cloud-based video conferencing platform known for its reliability, ease of use, and scalability. It allows users to host virtual meetings, webinars, and online training sessions with participants joining from various locations globally. Zoom offers features such as HD video and audio, screen sharing, chat, and recording capabilities, making it suitable for both small team meetings and large-scale events. Its intuitive interface and mobile-friendly apps enable seamless communication and collaboration among team members, clients, and stakeholders. Zoom's breakout rooms feature allows hosts to create smaller groups within a larger meeting, fostering interactive discussions and collaboration. With integrations for scheduling and calendar management, Zoom enhances productivity by streamlining meeting coordination and reducing logistical challenges associated with virtual meetings (Wanjau, Namusonge & Lango, 2024).

Empirical Review

Project Planning Tools and Project Performance

Ozigi and Onuoha (2023) investigated on project planning tools and project performance of construction firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The cross-sectional survey design was utilized and a total population of 280 supervisors and managers from eight construction firms in Rivers State were covered. A sample size of 162 managers and supervisors were drawn as the sample size of the study. The study found that project planning tools have a significant positive relationship with project quality and project timeliness. The study concluded that project planning tools improve the project performance of construction firms.

Umulisa and Dushimimana (2023) conducted a study on the effect of project planning tools on performance of improve capacity for supply of quality in reproductive health services project in Nyamasheke District, Rwanda. This research adopted both qualitative and quantitative research design. In this study target population composed of 87 of improve capacity for supply of quality in reproductive health services project, SFH managerial staff, Health Centre

representatives, District Health and Environmental nit Staff. The study found that project planning tools are statistically significant in enhancing the performance of the Improve Capacity for Supply of Quality in Reproductive Health Services Project. The study concluded that the project's performance is significantly influenced by project planning tools.

Wabwile and Ruguru (2023) researched on project planning tools and implementation of low cost housing projects in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design, targeting the 152 project managers. The study found that project planning tools have a significant effect on the implementation of low cost housing projects in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study concluded that project planning tools have a positive and significant effect on the implementation of low cost housing projects in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Mwanza, Namusonge and Makokha (2020) examined on the influence of project planning tools on performance of construction projects in Kenya. The study adopted a mixed research design which included descriptive survey, census and correlation. The target population was 1761 respondents with a sample size of 313 respondents comprised of 160 managers of Early Childhood Development Education, 11 managers of county polytechnics, 133 stall managers and 9 managers of county modern markets. The study found that there is a positive relationship between project planning tools and performance of construction projects. The study concluded that project planning tools influenced the performance of construction projects.

Kabiti and Kikwatha (2022) assessed on the influence of project planning tools on performance of KeRRA road construction projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study employed descriptive research design and target 203 road construction officials in Meru County. A sample size of 133 respondents was used through proportionate simple random sampling. The study found that there is a significant effect of project planning tools on the performance of KeRRA road construction projects in Meru County. The study concluded that there is a substantial effect of project planning tools on the performance of KeRRA road construction projects in Meru County.

Project Team Building Tools and Project Performance

Iqbal, *et al* (2020) conducted a study on the impact of project team building tools on project success in Pakistan. The study used the quantitative approach and employed survey research method. Project managers were requested through e-mail to complete questionnaires. The study found that project team building tools has positive and direct relationship with project success. The study concluded that project team building tools have a positive and significant relationship with project success.

Musafiri and Dushimama (2024) investigated on the effect of project team building tools on project performance: a case of the national union of disabilities' organizations of Rwanda project implemented in Rubavu district, Rwanda by university of Rwanda -college of agriculture, animal sciences and veterinary medicine. By employing a mixed-methods approach, the research incorporated quantitative data derived from questionnaires and qualitative. The study found strong positive correlations between project team building tools and project performance. The study concluded that there is a significant influence of project team building tools on the NUDOR project performance in Rubavu district.

Musili and Nyang'au (2022) examined on project team building tools and performance of rural electrification projects in north eastern, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design and the target population will be the rural electrification projects in Northern Eastern. The study adopted stratified sampling technique of the 239 rural electrification projects to get a sample size of 150. The study found that project team building tools had a positive and significant

influence on performance of rural electrification projects. The study concluded that project team building tools significantly and positively influenced the performance of the rural electrification projects.

Wanjau, Namusonge and Lango (2024) researched on project team building tools and performance of housing projects in Kenya. The study applied mixed methods research design. The study target population was 675 strategic registered contractors in the housing projects in Nairobi metropolitan, Kenya. Based on Yamane Formula adopted the sample size for this study was 251 respondents. The study found that project team building tools had a significant and positive influence on the performance of housing projects in Kenya. The study concluded that project team building tools positively enhances the project performance.

Njue and Chandi (2020) assessed on the influence of project team building tools on performance of community-based projects in Embu County, Kenya. Descriptive-correlational survey design was used to implement the research inquiry. The target population was 34 community-based projects in being implemented in Embu County. A sample of 32 projects was arrived at using Krejcie and Morgan table of sample determination. The study found that there exists strong positive correlation between project team building tools and performance community-based projects. The study concluded that project team building tools contributes to the project performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive research design. The study targeted NGO projects in Kitui County, Kenya. According to the NGO Coordination Board as of 31st December 2022, there were 36 NGOs Projects in Kitui County (NGO Board, 2022). The study targeted management employees working with these NGOs. The total population was therefore 216 respondents. The Yamane formula was adopted to calculate the study sample size. Therefore, the study sample size was 140 respondents. The study used simple random sampling in selecting the sample from study population. The advantage of random sampling is that it ensures that the sampling error is minimal which increases precision of techniques of estimation in use (Cooper & Schindler, 2021). Primary data was used in this study. was obtained using semi-structured questionnaires.

Quantitative and qualitative data were generated from the closed-ended and open-ended questions, respectively. Qualitative data was analyzed on thematic basis and the findings provided in a narrative form. Before the data was analyzed, the researcher ensured the data was checked for completeness, followed by data editing, data coding, data entry, and data cleaning. Inferential and descriptive statistics were employed for analysis of quantitative data with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25). To summarize the respondent's responses in relation to their views on the various aspects of the variables, and the respondents' demographic information analysis was undertaken using descriptive statistics (Bhattacharjee, 2019).

Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean (measure of dispersion), standard deviation, and percentages will be used. Descriptive statistics therefore enables researchers to present the data in a more meaningful way, which allows simpler and easier interpretation (Singpurwalla, 2019). Inferential data analysis was conducted by use of Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis. Inferential statistic is used to make judgments about the probability that an observation is dependable or one that happened by chance in the study. The relationship between the study variables was tested using multivariate regression models.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The sample size for the study comprised of 140 respondents. The researcher sampled 140 respondents who were each administered with the questionnaires. From the 140 questionnaires 120 were completely filled and returned hence a response rate of 85.7%. The response rate was considered as suitable for making inferences from the data collected.

Descriptive Statistics

Project Planning Tools and Project Performance

The first specific objective of the study was to assess the influence of project planning tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements relating to project planning tools and performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. The results were as presented in Table 1.

From the results, the respondents agreed that Gantt charts visually organize project tasks and timelines, enhancing project planning clarity (M=3.904, SD= 0.976). In addition, the respondents agreed that Gantt charts helps track task dependencies and critical paths, improving project scheduling accuracy (M=3.847, SD= 0.612). Further, the respondents agreed that WBS breaks down project scope into manageable tasks, clarifying project objectives and responsibilities (M=3.699, SD=0.822). The respondents also agreed that WBS aids in resource allocation by detailing task assignments and milestones for effective project management (M=3.601, SD= 0.505). The respondents also agreed that Microsoft project facilitates task management, resource allocation, and timeline tracking, enhancing project efficiency (M=3.541, SD= 0.708). In addition, the respondents agreed that Microsoft project centralizes project data, supports real-time updates, and generates comprehensive reports for stakeholders (M=3.539, SD=0.725).

Table 1: Project Planning Tools and Project Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gantt charts visually organize project tasks and timelines, enhancing project planning clarity.	3.904	0.976
Gantt charts helps track task dependencies and critical paths, improving project scheduling accuracy	3.847	0.612
WBS breaks down project scope into manageable tasks, clarifying project objectives and responsibilities.	3.699	0.822
WBS aids in resource allocation by detailing task assignments and milestones for effective project management	3.601	0.505
Microsoft Project facilitates task management, resource allocation, and timeline tracking, enhancing project efficiency.	3.541	0.708
Microsoft Project centralizes project data, supports real-time updates, and generates comprehensive reports for stakeholders.	3.539	0.725
Aggregate	3.689	0.725

Project Team Building Tools and Project Performance

The second specific objective of the study was to establish the influence of project team building tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements relating to project team building tools and performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. The results were as presented in Table 2.

From the results, the respondents agreed that slack enhances team communication and collaboration with real-time messaging and file sharing (M=3.957, SD= 0.756). In addition, the respondents agreed that slack improves team connectivity and productivity through organized channels and integrations (M=3.819, SD= 0.872). Further, the respondents agreed that Microsoft Teams streamlines teamwork with chat, video meetings, and document collaboration in one platform (M=3.701, SD= 0.795). The respondents also agreed that Teams boosts team coordination and project efficiency by centralizing communication and shared resources (M=3.699, SD= 0.928). In addition, the respondents agreed that Zoom facilitates virtual meetings and collaboration with video conferencing, screen sharing, and breakout rooms (M=3.687, SD=0.838). Further, the respondents agreed that Zoom enhances team engagement and decision-making through interactive discussions and presentations (M=3.672, SD=0.685).

Table 2: Project Team Building Tools and Project Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Slack enhances team communication and collaboration with real-time messaging and file sharing.	3.957	0.756
Slack improves team connectivity and productivity through organized channels and integrations.	3.819	0.872
Microsoft Teams streamlines teamwork with chat, video meetings, and document collaboration in one platform.	3.701	0.795
Teams boosts team coordination and project efficiency by centralizing communication and shared resources	3.699	0.928
Zoom facilitates virtual meetings and collaboration with video conferencing, screen sharing, and breakout rooms.	3.687	0.838
Zoom enhances team engagement and decision-making through interactive discussions and presentations.	3.672	0.685
Aggregate	3.756	0.812

Performance of NGOs Funded Projects

The respondents were requested to rate various statements relating to performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. The results were as presented in Table 3.

From the results, the respondents agreed that projects consistently meet scheduled completion dates, ensuring timely delivery of milestones (M=3.844, SD= 0.822). In addition, the respondents agreed that timely project completion supports organizational timelines and goals, minimizing delays (M=3.777, SD= 0.610). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization prioritizes staying within allocated budgets to manage project costs effectively (M=3.719, SD= 0.815). In addition, the respondents agreed that adherence to budget constraints ensures efficient resource allocation and financial accountability (M=3.716, SD= 0.765).

From the results, the respondents agreed that projects are monitored to maintain specified quality standards, ensuring deliverables meet expectations (M=3.705, SD=0.753). In addition, the respondents agreed that high-quality standards in project deliverables enhance stakeholder satisfaction and organizational reputation (M=3.698, SD=0.764).

Table 3: Performance of NGOs Funded Projects

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Projects consistently meet scheduled completion dates, ensuring timely delivery of milestones.	3.844	0.822
Timely project completion supports organizational timelines and goals, minimizing delays.	3.777	0.610
Our organization prioritizes staying within allocated budgets to manage project costs effectively.	3.719	0.815
Adherence to budget constraints ensures efficient resource allocation and financial accountability	3.716	0.765
Projects are monitored to maintain specified quality standards, ensuring deliverables meet expectations.	3.705	0.753
High-quality standards in project deliverables enhance stakeholder satisfaction and organizational reputation	3.698	0.764
Aggregate	3.743	0.755

Correlation Analysis

This research adopted Pearson correlation analysis to determine how the dependent variable (performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya) relates with the independent variables (project planning tools, project team building

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients

		Project Performance	Project Planning	Project Team Building Tools
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	120		
Project Planning Tools	Pearson Correlation	.805**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		
	N	120	120	
Project Team Building Tools	Pearson Correlation	.815**	.297	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.060	
	N	120	120	120

From the results, there was a very strong relationship between project planning tools and performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya ($r = 0.805$, p value =0.003). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.003 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Ozigi and Onuoha (2023) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between project planning tools and project performance.

Moreover, there was a very strong relationship between project team building tools and performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya ($r = 0.815$, p value =0.000). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.000 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Iqbal, *et al* (2020) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between project team building tools and project performance.

Regression Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between independent variables (project planning tools, project team building tools) and the dependent variable (performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya).

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	0.335	0.085		3.941	0.000
Project Planning Tools	0.345	0.088	0.344	3.920	0.001
Project Team Building Tools	0.361	0.092	0.362	3.924	0.000

The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = 0.335 + 0.345X_1 + 0.361X_2$$

According to the results, project planning tools has a significant effect on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya ($\beta_1=0.345$, p value= 0.001). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.001 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Ozigi and Onuoha (2023) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between project planning tools and project performance.

The results also revealed that project team building tools has a significant effect on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya, ($\beta_1=0.361$, p value= 0.000). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.000 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Iqbal, *et al* (2020) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between project team building tools and project performance.

Conclusions

The study concludes that project planning tools have a positive and significant effect on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. Findings revealed that Gantt charts, Work Breakdown Structure and Microsoft Project influence performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya.

In addition, the study concludes that project team building tools has a positive and significant effect on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya. Findings revealed that Slack, Microsoft Teams and Zoom influence performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the management of NGOs should adopt an integrated project management tool like Microsoft Project or Asana. These tools offer comprehensive features for planning, scheduling, and monitoring project activities, which are crucial for ensuring timely and efficient project execution.

Further, the study recommends that the management of NGOs should implement team-building tools like Slack or Microsoft Teams. These tools facilitate better communication and collaboration among project team members, enabling seamless sharing of information, quick resolution of issues, and enhanced coordination.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study was limited to the influence of project management tools on performance of NGOs Funded Projects in Kitui County, Kenya hence the study findings cannot be generalized to project performance in other projects in Kenya. The study therefore suggests further studies on the influence of project management tools on project performance at other projects in Kenya.

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