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SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT FUNDED
PROJECTS IN WAJIR COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The study aim was to establish the effect of public participation in monitoring and evaluation on successful implementation of county government funded projects in Wajir County, Kenya. The study targeted 781,263 respondents. The sample size was determined by use of Yamane. The sample size for the study was a total of 400 respondents. The study used questionnaires as the research tool. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to present the main characteristics of the sample and involved the use of mean, measures of dispersion and percentages. Data was presented in tables and figures. Inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses of the study. Correlation analysis was used to investigate relationships between public participation and successful implementation of county government funded projects. Multiple regressions were done to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study revealed that public participation in project initiation is significant to project implementation. The study revealed that public participation in project M&E is significant to project implementation. The study recommends that Wajir County should develop more strategies that support the public participation in M&E. This would enhance the implementation of the County projects.

Key Words: monitoring and evaluation public participation, successful implementation, county government funded projects,

INTRODUCTION

Development projects should not be imposed on the public; its members should be allowed to participate right from planning and execution of projects (Blanc, 2020). With scarce resources and the over increasing needs of the rural population where the majority of the people still live in Africa, it is important to consider the input of the public (Rahnema, 2017). Public based development initiatives improve the match between what the public needs and what it obtains from development projects. Recently, the World Bank evaluation of projects indicated that those projects that involve the public have succeeded and are rated satisfactory and sustainable (Olukotun, 2017). It is better to mobilize the society rather than leading it, because once the self-confidence in the people grows, it will not take a long time for the flowers of development to blossom (Chirenje, Giliba & Musamba, 2019).

According to Chandan (2018) public participation in projects is about ordinary citizens assessing needs and participating in project planning and budgeting, implementation and monitoring. This improves public resource management and reduces corruption. Public participation is also the interaction between government and civil society through different mechanisms to design, evaluate, and implement development policies, projects, and programs. Participation could be either direct, or indirect through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives; it needs to be informed and organized. This means freedom of association and expression on the one hand, and an organized civil society on the other hand. Public participation is a key component of good governance (Erkul, Yitmen & Çelik, 2016)

An evaluation by Ndegwa, Mavole and Muhingi (2017) on public participation on successful implementation of public health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya revealed that public participation influences project identification, project planning, project design, and project monitoring and evaluation for successful implementation of public funded projects. Papa (2018) explained that Busia County leadership demonstrates weak decision process involving public participation; identified individuals, resources, organizations, and contractors needed to conduct various facets of public participation. Moreover, there are inadequate democratic social networks and gender inclusion techniques in designing public participation program(s).

Oduwo (2018) notes that public participation is a continuous process of negotiation and decisions making that occur at various stages with all stakeholders and influence the sharing and control of prioritization, resource allocation and access, and policy formulation and implementation of secondary school projects. Projects are expected to be more transparent when more people are involved and this can enhance better performance of the projects in institutions. Oyuga (2018) argues that public participation empowers stakeholders (board of management, teachers, parents) so that they can continue to direct and support future changes and still empower them to demand services, develop a sense of owning the project and the sense of belonging to the projects and so it provides a good theoretical frame work and foundation on which this study can be based because it supports and argues for institutional strengthening and capacity building of stakeholders, Public accountability and transparency, understanding and negotiating stakeholders perspectives and lastly , early planning and management of projects which allows participants to gain a better understanding of any out coming problems and get immediate action.

Statement of Problem

In Kenya there are very many funded projects countrywide. These projects are facing many challenges which affect their completion. Chicati (2019), recognized that over the past decade most of the projects have failed drastically both in Africa continent and the world in general. It is estimated that about 60% of the County funded projects in Kenya show poor performance in terms of completion in time, within budget, within scope and client satisfaction (Muchungu, 2019).

The key obstacle to effective public participation was over-concentration of power at the centre, rendering any attempts at public participation tokenistic and inconsequential in the ultimate decision-making process (Zena, 2019). The Constitution of Kenya 2010 sought to reverse the situation by devolving both power and resources to county governments. It also provides for public participation both as a national value and as a mandatory requirement. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 places great emphasis on public participation in the national development process as a means to ensure relevance in public investments (GoK, 2010). Although both levels of government have embraced public participation in governance and made efforts towards facilitating public participation, effective public participation in governance has not been achieved at either level of government due to various factors and constraints. The constraints include cost of public participation, lack of time, accessibility, lack of trust, diversity, lack of national policy or legislation, political competition and lack of adequate civic education. Further a national framework setting out the norms and standards for public participation county governments has not been developed (Njoroge, Muathe & Bula, 2016).

Ndegwa, Mavole and Muhingi, (2017) studied the influence of public participation on successful implementation of public health projects in Nyeri South Sub-County, Nyeri County, Kenya. Ronoh (2020) researched on strategies for improving public participation for

sustainable development in selected counties in Kenya. Nyatichi, R. (2017) studied the influence of community participation on sustainability of community water projects: The case of PCEA water project in Kitengela Division Kajiado County. There have been many cases of unsuccessful implementation of projects in Wajir County. This study sought to find out whether public participation can ensure success in project implementation. Hence, it established the effect of public participation on successful implementation of county government funded projects in Wajir County, Kenya.

Specific Objective

- i. To determine the effect of public participation in monitoring and evaluation on successful implementation of county government funded projects in Wajir County, Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

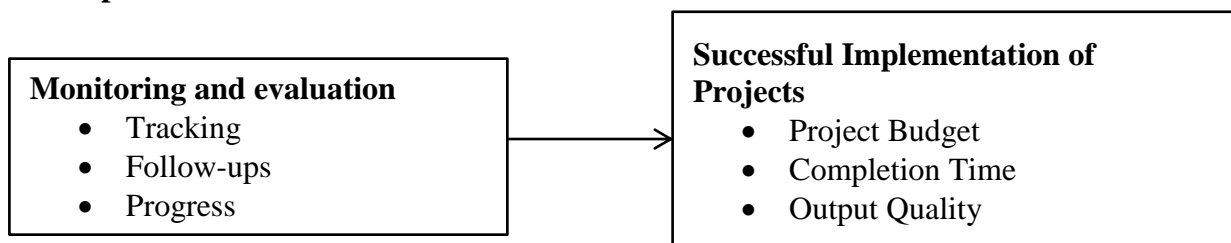
Theoretical Review

Evaluation Theory

This theory was advanced by Donaldson (2001). The evaluation theory plays several important roles in evaluation practice. Evaluation Theory gives effective strategies for dealing with the problems of concern regarding the evaluation process. Lessons are learned about what does not work which may save program designers and evaluator's time and resources (Donaldson, 2001). Evaluation theory assesses project effectiveness in achieving its goals and in determining the relevance and sustainability of an ongoing project. According to McCoy, (2005) evaluation theory compares the project impact with what was set to be achieved in the project plan.

Shapiro (2004) indicated that evaluations are mainly of two types depending on when they take place. These are formative and summative evaluations. Formative Evaluation is concerned more with efficient use of resources to produce outputs and focuses on strengths, weakness, and challenges of the project and whether the continued project plan will be able to deliver the project objectives or it needs redesigning, Passia (2004). Formative evaluations are sometimes called interim or midterm evaluations. A summative evaluation are carried out at the end of the project and aims at determining how the project progressed, what went right and wrong and capture any lessons learned. This theory is used to explain the effect of public participation in monitoring and evaluation on successful implementation of county government funded projects.

Conceptual Framework



Public Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is the process whose purpose is to ensure improvement the current and the management of outputs, outcomes and impact in future (Ward, 2018). The main purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to assess projects performance. It is from M&E that the link between the past, the present and the future actions in a project circle is well

established (Naidoo, 2019). Through such approach, a prediction based on the management of a process like planning can be used in the determination of the success or the failure of the next phase in a project like in implementation.

The management of monitoring and evaluation process can be done by the project financier, a government unit in an event of a public project, the implementing team or by outsourcing the service from private firms. This process is communicated through tools like progressive reports, and its credibility and objectivity highly depends on the independence of the evaluator and their expertise (Naidoo, 2019). The essence of monitoring and evaluation process is to inform the project implementers and primary stakeholders and to give the necessary recommendations based on the findings. This in essence can be said to be the best process for determining if resources in a project are being channeled to the right direction to ensure the intended objective is attained (Pasteur & Turrall, 2016).

Successful Implementation of Projects

Successful implementation of projects is the level of conformance between the predetermined aims and anticipations of the project with the actual project outcome, or simply, a project is successful when all the planned and expected results are achieved (Moradi & Zanjirchi, 2015). According to Kerzner (2014) a project is successfully implemented if it satisfies all three legs of the triple constraint, namely, performance (specification), cost and time. Morton and Ross (2018) contend that successful implementation of projects is measured by comparing the project outcomes to the overall objectives of the project; whereas project management success tends to be measured against the traditional measures of performance, namely, cost, time and quality. However, Milosevic and Srivannaboon (2016) indicated that successful implementation of projects is no longer viewed within the confines of meeting the project constraints of scope, time, and cost; rather, it is a strategic link that connects the final product to the end-user's satisfaction targeted at achieving overall project goal.

Empirical Review

Sifunjo (2019) researched on participatory monitoring and evaluation and successful implementation of maternal health projects within Kajiado north constituency, a case of Kajiado County. The research sought to investigate the influence of participatory monitoring and evaluation on maternal health projects in Kajiado county, Kajiado North constituency. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population for this study was 2572 maternal health stakeholders within Kajiado constituency. Self-administered questionnaire were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 22.0 and results presented using, frequency tables and percentages. The study established that participatory project identification led to sustainability of maternal health projects, the study further established that stakeholder's participation in vision, mission, and objectives setting positively affects the performance of the maternal health projects. The study also established that stakeholder identification and involvement positively affected, the study concluded that maternal health projects needs participatory need identification, project identification, indicator performance evaluation.

Kathongo (2018) researched on influence of participatory monitoring and evaluation on performance of public secondary schools projects in Mutomo Sub-County, Kenya. The purpose of the study was to establish influence of participatory monitoring and evaluation on performance of public schools projects in Mutomo Sub-County, Kenya. The population involved 33 public secondary schools which forms the target population of the study. The study collected data by use of questionnaires then descriptive analysis and inferential analysis

was used for quantitative data. The study established that stakeholders are not involved in the process of management of school projects. Moreover, established that institutional strengthening can be improved by open forums, meetings and seminars which should involve stakeholders air their views and negotiate their perspectives.

Soransora (2018) researched on the influence of community participatory monitoring and evaluation on performance of development project at Ewaso Ngi'ro North Development Authority, Isiolo County. This study sought to establish influence of community participatory monitoring and evaluation on performance development project a case of ENNDA, Isiolo County. This study employed descriptive survey research design. The target population for this study was eighty representatives from the management team of ENNDA projects and community. The data was collected using questionnaires and interviews guide. The questionnaire return rate, demographic information of the respondents, data presentation and interpretation. Attaining sustainable development projects requires a united effort and the participation of the people concerned. Community participation contributes to the development of appropriate policy, legislation and regulations while at the same time promoting democracy. Community participation increases understanding between stakeholders, it also establishes trust and cooperation.

Otieno (2016) researched on perceived effect of participatory monitoring and evaluation on the local authority service delivery action planning (LASDAP) process in Bondo Sub-County, Kenya. The study intended to investigate the perceived effects of participatory monitoring and evaluation on the LASDAP project implementation in the former Bondo County Council now named Bondo Sub County in the new structure of county government in Kenya. Ex-post facto design was used in the study to examine the effects of participatory monitoring and evaluation since it was introduced in 2008. The target population of the study was the beneficiaries of the LASDAP projects whereas the accessible population was 1260 LASDAP project committee members within the Bondo sub-county. The study found that PM&E in general improved the LASDAP process and especially stakeholder relationships. However, there were mixed reactions regarding cost efficiency in project implementation. These findings led to the recommendation that the county government adopt monitoring structures used by the defunct local authorities in current and future projects.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research design. This study was conducted in Wajir County. The target population was the accessible population who are 20 years and above in Wajir County. In the 2019 census Wajir had a population of 781,263 people. Therefore, the study targeted 781,263 respondents. The sample size was determined by use of Yamane (1967) formula for calculating sample size. The sample size for the study was a total of 400 respondents. The study used questionnaires as the research tool because it is economical than other data generation methods.

The study employed both quantitative methods of data analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to present the main characteristics of the sample and involved the use of mean, measures of dispersion and percentages. Data was presented in tables and figures. Inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses of the study. Correlation analysis was used to investigate relationships between public participation and successful implementation of county government funded projects. Multiple regressions were done to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Out of the questionnaires, 362 were filled and returned. This formed a response rate of 91%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) asserted by a response rate of 50% and above is adequate for analysis, 60% and above is good while that of 70% and above is excellent. Therefore, the study sample size was excellent.

Descriptive Statistics

Public Participation in Project Monitoring and Evaluation

The respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement on the following statements about Public Participation in Project M&E. Using the scale 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-moderate, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree. The results were as shown in Table 1.

The respondents agreed that the public is involved in the project follow-ups as shown by a mean of 4.11, public participation in project monitoring and evaluation helps to determine the resources are properly utilized as shown by a mean of 4.10, public participation in project monitoring and evaluation ensures that the resources of the project is not depleted as shown by a mean of 4.05, the public is involved in checking the project progress, as shown by a mean of 4.03, public participation in project monitoring and evaluation ensures early identification of problems as shown by a mean of 4.02 and the public is involved in project monitoring and evaluation as shown by a mean of 4.01. Kathongo (2018) found that stakeholders are not involved in the process of management of school projects. Moreover, established that institutional strengthening can be improved by open forums, meetings and seminars which should involve stakeholders air their views and negotiate their perspectives.

Table 1: Public Participation in Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. dev
The public is involved in project monitoring and evaluation	11	17	28	208	98	4.01	1.00
The public is involved in checking the project progress	13	14	36	184	115	4.03	0.94
The public is involved in the project follow-ups	9	15	31	180	127	4.11	0.97
Public participation in project monitoring and evaluation helps to determine the resources are properly utilized	14	19	29	156	144	4.10	0.95
Public participation in project monitoring and evaluation ensures early identification of problems	10	14	35	203	100	4.02	0.97
Public participation in project monitoring and evaluation ensures that the resources of the project is not depleted	8	16	35	194	109	4.05	0.96

Successful Completion of Projects

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent they agree with the following statements about successful implementation of county government funded projects. The respondents agreed that the complete projects are of good quality as shown by a mean of 4.07, the project meet the public needs as shown by a mean of 4.07, projects are completed at the set budget as shown by a mean of 4.02 and projects are completed at the set time as shown by a mean of 4.02.

Table 2: Successful Completion of Projects

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev
Projects are completed at the set time	14	13	29	201	105	4.02	0.98
Projects are completed at the set budget	10	17	32	198	105	4.02	0.97
The complete projects are of good quality	7	12	30	214	99	4.07	1.03
The project meet the public needs	9	15	28	200	110	4.07	0.99

Correlational Analysis

This study used Pearson Moment Correlation in determining the relationship between public participation and implementation of county funded projects in Wajir County . The results were as shown in Table 3. Form the findings, public participation in project monitoring and evaluation had a strong positive correlation with implementation of county funded projects (r=0.827, p=0.001)

Table 3: Correlations Coefficient

		Implementation	Participation in project M&E
Implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	362	
Participation in project M&E	Pearson Correlation	0.827	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	362	362

Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Changes in response variable as a result of changes in predictor variables were determined using the model summary. The results were as presented in Table 4. From the findings, R² was 0.654 which suggests that there existed 65.4% variations in implementation of county funded projects in Wajir County due to changes in public participation in project initiation, participation in planning, participation in decision making and participation in M&E. The remaining 35.0% suggest that there exist other factors that affect implementation of county funded projects in Wajir County that were not covered in this study.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.809 ^a	0.654	.646	0.2473

Analysis of Variance

In order to determine whether the data that was used in the study was significant, ANOVA was performed. The findings from ANOVA analysis showed that the population parameters had a p-value of 0.001. This suggests that the data was suitable for making conclusion on the population under investigation because the p-value was less than 0.05. The F critical was less than F calculated (2.397<116.836). This shows that data used in the study was significant.

Table 5: Analysis of variance

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.	F
1	Regression	31.311	4	7.828	116.836	.001 ^b
	Residual	23.827	357	0.067		
	Total	54.138	361			

Beta Coefficients of the Study Variables

The regression equation was

$$Y = 1.131 + 0.401X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The regression equation revealed that holding public participation in project initiation, participation in planning, participation in decision making and participation in M&E variables to a constant zero, will significantly influence implementation of county funded projects in Wajir County as shown by constant =1.131 as shown in Table 6.

Public participation in M&E had a statistically significant effect on implementation of county funded projects (B = 0.402, p=0.006). This suggests that public participation in M&E had a significant positive relationship with implementation of county funded projects. It also implies that a unit increase in public participation in M&E would lead to an increase in the implementation of county funded projects by 0.401 units.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.131	0.133		8.504	0.000
Public Participation in Monitoring And Evaluation	0.402	0.111		3.622	0.004

Conclusions

Public participation in M&E had a statistically significant effect on implementation of county funded projects. This suggests that public participation in M&E had a significant positive relationship with implementation of county funded projects. It participation in decision making is positively related to implementation of county funded also implies that a unit increase in public participation in M&E would lead to an increase in the implementation of county funded projects. The study concludes that public participation in M&E is positively related to implementation of county funded projects.

Recommendations

The study revealed that public participation in project M&E is significant to project implementation. The study recommends that Wajir County should develop more strategies that support the public participation in M&E. This will enhance the implementation of the County projects.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study aim was to establish the effect of public participation on successful implementation of county government funded projects in Wajir County, Kenya. The study recommends that future studies should focus on project management factors and project implementation on

county government. Other researcher should also consider other variable other than the ones in this study.

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