

MONITORING & EVALUATION PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF COUNTY FUNDED HEALTH PROJECTS IN MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

In so far as they promote equitable economic growth and sustainable development, county-funded health programs have a positive impact on the county's economic and social development. The monitoring and evaluation of health projects, particularly in the County governments are not completed on time despite significant resources allocated to their implementation and despite the fact that these projects significantly improve the lives of community members, necessitating an intervention. According to the literature currently available on County Integrated Development Plans, Mombasa County has a high number of health initiatives that have been started since 2014 and an equivalent number of these projects that have stalled or failed completely. The main cause of this stalling or failure has been posited as the absence of a system for monitoring and providing feedback on the projects' implementation and development. A monitoring and evaluation system can offer an intervention. Therefore, the goal of this study is to ascertain how monitoring and evaluation procedures affect the effectiveness of county-funded health projects in Mombasa County. The study's specific objective is to ascertain how the effectiveness of county-funded health projects in Mombasa County is affected by stakeholder participation. Cross-sectional research design was used for the study. The target population, and hence the unit of analysis of the study were 32 county-health projects in Mombasa County. Through stratified random sampling technique, a sample of 102 respondents was selected. The sample respondents comprised mainly key members of project implementation

committee. The study was anchored on stakeholder theory and program theory respectively. Primary data for the study were collected using semi-structured questionnaires and applied pick-and-drop procedure. Cronbach's alpha testing was applied to test for reliability of the data collection instrument. Further, both descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis were carried out. For descriptive statistical analysis, findings were presented using tables and graphs as appropriate. Ordinary Least Squares Diagnostic tests, were carried out before the multiple regression modelling. Cronbach alpha coefficient above the threshold of 0.7 was obtained for all the explanatory variables of the study. This implied reliability of the data collection instrument. Results from the multiple regression model showed that resource allocation was statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance. More specifically, stakeholder involvement was found to have a predictive power on County -health projects stakeholder involvement ($\beta = 0.438$, $t = 2.201$, $\alpha = 0.035$). Drawing from the study findings, it is concluded that stakeholder involvement posited predictor variable for county-health projects' performance is statistically significant and sufficient for such project management decision making. Further, and arising from the findings, the study recommends that emphasis and efforts be made on robust stakeholder involvement for better performance of such projects.

Keywords: Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures, Stakeholder Participation, Resource Allocation, Project Management Expertise, Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Due to their reliance on high-tech components and the level of precision they must maintain, projects in the healthcare industry are among the most challenging in contemporary practice (Iskandar, Hanna, & Lotfallah, 2019). The majority of the global health initiatives in 2018 encountered schedule and budget overruns and underperformance, while a small minority of them were successful (CityScape Intelligence, 2018). Ex-post assessments are required since ex-ante evaluations are no longer sufficient in light of the high likelihood of project failure in general (PMI, 2017). By prohibiting people from using services or subjecting them to harmful treatment, ineffective public health initiatives reduce health outcomes by limiting access to adequate care and resulting in the wrong care being provided.

To assess the effectiveness of development projects, organizational procedures should create reliable project evaluations and reporting systems. A strong M&E strategy must be in place for projects in the healthcare industry to guarantee accountability. Timely and trustworthy M&E planning enables accurate, evidence-based reporting that supports management decisions and project implementation. Project performance is improved as a result (Muhammad, 2016). Monitoring is viewed as a procedure that provides information and ensures that management makes use of that information to assess the influence and unintended as well as intended project repercussions (Gyorkos, 2018). It checks to verify if the planned objectives have been accomplished. Monitoring uses a collection of important indicators and targets to deliver fast and reliable information for decision-making, progress and performance evaluations, and procedures (Montao, Arce, & Louman, 2016). Monitoring is the systematic data collection that uses preset indicators to evaluate the results of a project or health intervention. Monitoring data are used in evaluation, but analysis goes much beyond. In order to analyze the trends in the impacts and impact of the project, evaluation makes use of the data and information produced by the monitoring system (Ochieng 2020).

In the US, Mackay's (2017) study concentrated on government projects in the Washington, D.C., area and discovered that monitoring and evaluation planning was crucial for enhancing project success. A PASSIA (2018) evaluation found that in central China, the M&E techniques employed by contractors and government agencies had an impact on the success of sanitation projects.

In Africa, delays in the execution of government-funded projects are a common occurrence. Aibinu and Jagboro's 2019 study found that in Nigeria, construction project delays are becoming the norm. The National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) was founded in Ghana by the government as a regulatory tool to encompass the fundamental ideas behind M&E activities. NDPC used the Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System (RBMES) and Results-Based Budgeting (RBB) to enhance its M&E procedure. Cost effectiveness was ensured, institutional capacity was built, good governance, accountability, and trust in partners and the government were all promoted. In their 2018 study in Libya, Ayarkwa, Ayirebi, and Amoah focused on studying the external factors that influence the success of M&E on projects in the context of educational institutions. It was

shown that factors including stakeholder participation, support, and M&E perspectives had a big impact. To enhance project operations, the M&E team needs adequate training (Aaltonen, 2018). Devolved governments were established in Kenya in 2010 following the ratification of a new constitution. The county governments get funds from the national government for development initiatives, which is equivalent to at least 35% of the national budget. According to the Ministry of Devolution (2013), counties have begun important development initiatives. Hospitals, sports facilities, roads, and water supply projects are a few examples of them. Nevertheless, as of 2015, the majority of counties had project implementation failure rates that, in some cases, reached as high as 60%, as in the counties of Kisumu and Bomet, while in the counties of Kitui, Kwale, Mombasa, Kilifi, Garrisa, TaitaTaveta, Kisii, and Makueni, nearly 52% of development projects had failed (CIDP Report, 2018). As a whole, the counties' development projects only achieved 55% of their intended goals (Republic of Kenya, 2018).

The same is true for attempts to improve public health, which regularly run into challenges like ineffective institutional systems, a lack of leadership, and information opacity. The bulk of public health projects also lack skilled M&E professionals who are familiar with M&E systems and have the ability to develop appropriate tools, which contributes to the projects' dismal performance (Ombati, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has become an increasingly important tool within the global efforts in achieving environmental, economic and social sustainability. The success of a project is crucial because it guarantees that it will continue to be lucrative both technically and strategically, which will lead to organizational growth. M&E stimulates innovation to provide better results and helps projects scale up by enhancing learning. Since the establishment of county governments in 2013 (National Treasury Report, 2014), both the county and national governments have expressed interest in funding health initiatives in counties. The Mombasa County government has launched several health projects in each of the six sub-counties. For instance, four projects were started in the Kisauni sub-county during the fiscal year 2018/2019, including the construction and furnishing of the 30-bed Vikwatani level 4 hospital as well as the Marimani Hospital. The projects received a total of 54 million Kenyan Shillings (Mombasa ADP report, 2022). The Mvita sub-county and the other four sub-counties began similar measures in 2018, including the outfitting of 5 level-4 hospitals. A total budget of roughly 240 million Kenyan Shillings was allocated to the projects (CIDP 2022). Only 24% of the county government-sponsored health projects during this time were documented as finished, while (32) 76% of them are still in progress and others have reached various stages of inactivity.

Various local studies have been done on M&E practices and its impact on performance of projects. For instance, a study by Moraa (2019) demonstrated that projects with poor or nonexistent monitoring and evaluation processes typically perform poorly when scope, timing and resource usage are considered. The optimal practice, according to Mbiti and Kiruja (2015), mandates project monitoring. The reviewed studies present methodological gaps as well as contextual gaps as very few were focused on health projects funded by county governments. In Mombasa County, little is

known about the effects that stakeholder involvement may have on project performance, hence the purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of Monitoring and evaluation practices on performance of county funded health projects in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Objective of the Study

To investigate the influence of monitoring & evaluation practices on performance of county funded health projects in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Specific Objective

To establish the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of county funded health projects in Mombasa County, Kenya.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Stakeholder Theory Theory

One supporter of the stakeholder concept is Edward Freeman. In depth discussions of corporate ethics and organizational management stakeholder theory were first presented by him in 1984. The literature included ethics and values in organizational management. In his work, Edward Freeman outlines and advises management on how to best take the interests of the stakeholders into account. The groups that make up the stakeholders of the corporation are named and modeled by him. In order to understand the nature of stakeholder relationships based on processes and outcomes, it is important to understand the underlying assumptions of stakeholder theory, which include the notion that there is legitimacy in stakeholders' interests that have intrinsic value and that there is no superior interest dominating others (Kirsi, 2010).

The theory contends that by balancing their interests with those of their member groups, organizations can use the diversity of their constituent groups to further their goals (Kirsi, 2010). An organization that adopts a stakeholder involvement strategy will perform better economically and experience fewer friction with stakeholders, claim Hassan and Kamil (2010). According to Lynda (2016), the collaboration of legitimate stakeholders is necessary for a project to be completed successfully. This illustrates that in order to ensure the project's long-term profitability, project managers should effectively manage the project's procedures for the benefit of the project's stockholders. For every project to be successful, stakeholders must be included.

A web of vested interests that are protected by politicians sabotages numerous county government-funded initiatives by preventing meaningful stakeholder participation in project creation and execution. The notion is pertinent to the current study since stakeholders are crucial to the success of health projects. If stakeholders are not included, the project will not be implemented successfully. The theory supports stakeholder involvement variable.

Program Theory

Huey Chen, Peter Rossi, Michael Quinn Patton, and Carol Weiss created the program theory (1195). This theory focuses on who is in charge of the change and how it can be implemented. The general logic employed in an intervention is demonstrated by the logical models that are frequently used to represent the program theory. The theory belongs to the field of applied development evaluation and theory of change. Because it satisfies the need for conducting assessments to supplement the findings and offers a decisive process to resolve problems, program theory is a useful tool in monitoring and evaluation. It also provides ways to affect the regions that have a say in evaluation (Sethi and Philippines, 2017).

According to Lipsey (2016), it is a proposition on the transformation of input into output. Comparing the expected and actual results to assess the transformation. It serves as an example of the processes in the programming process that are supposed to have an impact on the results. A program theory, according to Rossi (2017), involves an organizational strategy for allocating resources and planning program activities in order to guarantee that the planned service system is established and kept current. The theory supports resource consumption plans that look at how the target population gets the required help. The interconnectedness of the service delivery systems enables this. The idea provides thorough justifications for how the targeted actions for a specific target demographic represent the anticipated societal benefits. Uitto (2018) gives an illustration of the benefits of using theory-based monitoring and evaluation frameworks, such as the ability to link specific projects or activities to specific project outcomes and the capacity to recognize intended and unintended program implications. The evaluator can understand how and why the program works thanks to theory-based evaluations (Rossi, 2017). The M&E systems variable is supported by the program theory.

Empirical literature Review

Stakeholder Involvement and Projects Performance

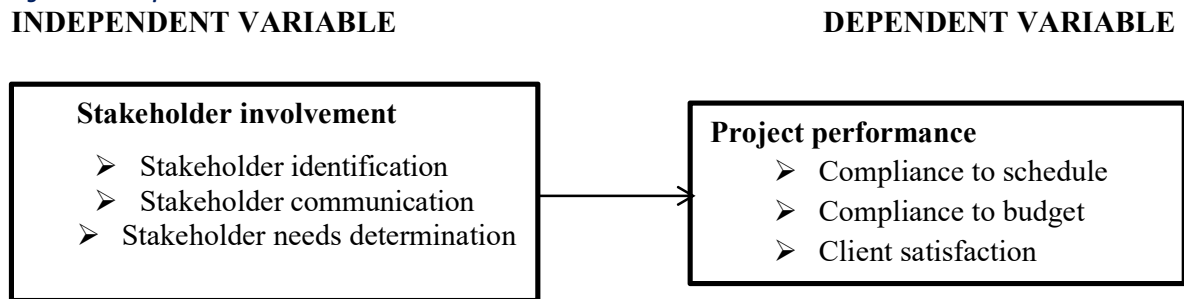
Wachira and James (2018), for example, examined significant factors that affected the way community-based projects were implemented in Kiambu County. He found via his research that engagement of individuals or the community had a substantial impact on the implementation and effectiveness of community-based projects. The study also found that M&E contributes to the project team's capacity to successfully carry out projects.

Njogu (2016) carried the research on the Nema Automobile Emmission Control Project in Nairobi County, Kenya to determine the effects of stakeholder involvement on project success. A descriptive survey was employed as the research design for this investigation. The survey included 181 managers, project managers, operation managers, and quality control officers. Stratified sampling was employed. A questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. According to the study, stakeholder participation in project monitoring has a favorable and significant impact on project performance for car emission reduction programs.

Nyabera (2018) investigated the impact of stakeholder involvement on the execution of projects in Kenya using the example of initiatives supported by Compassion International in the Mwingi Sub-County. Both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used in this study. The target audience for the four projects financed by compassion was 391 stakeholders. The study found that stakeholder involvement in project initiation had a substantial impact on project execution in projects with stakeholders included in the project governance structure. Unlike programs backed by the local government, the study focused on projects supported by donors with effective M&E procedures. As a result, it is impossible to apply the study's conclusions to the success of health initiatives.

Nyandika and Ngugi (2014) investigated the relationship between the implementation of infrastructure projects and the involvement of stakeholders. A descriptive research methodology was used to analyze the data. The study discovered a strong, direct connection between the success of road development and the involvement of stakeholders. Since the study focused on stakeholder involvement, it is pertinent. However, because it didn't focus on programs backed by the Mombasa County administration, the study had a context gap.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Research Design

The study adopted descriptive research design. In this case, cross-sectional design which is a sub-type of descriptive research design was appropriate for the study. The advantage of this design over other descriptive designs is that data can be gathered quickly and cheaply (Kothari, 2014). The project management literature has employed this research design with success (Laban & Deya, 2019)

Target Population

According to the County Development Board report from 2021, 32 health projects have started but have not been finished.

The 32 county-funded health projects in Mombasa County served as the study's unit of analysis. As the unit of observation, project managers, community leaders, county revenue officials, the health technical team, and M&E officers were among the responders that are considered.

Sampling Design

A stratified random sampling technique was utilized to choose study participants from the target population. This strategy worked well to ensure that all sub-county groupings are included in the study.

The stratified random sampling technique considers population small groupings of people to guarantee that the complete population is accurately represented (Creswell, 2014). This is achieved by classifying the target population into strata based on traits that are prevalent throughout the population. Thus the study sample was 102 respondents.

Data Collection Instruments.

In this inquiry, the fundamental data collection methods will be applied. Primary data is preferred because it is the most informative information source. The primary data was acquired via a self-administered structured questionnaire. Three components made up the questionnaire: a general information section, a section asking about the study's independent variables, and a section asking about the study's dependent variables. As a result, secondary data from the project performance reports was gathered.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher first sought approval to gather data from Kenyatta University, NACOSTI, and the Mombasa County Government. Likert scale-inspired questionnaires was utilized to collect main data. The surveys were structured and feature closed-ended questions to facilitate data processing. The questionnaires were distributed using the drop-and-pick approach. The questionnaire had three components. Section 1 contained general data from study participants, Section 2 contained the study's independent variables, and Section 3 contained the study's dependent variable.

Data Analysis and presentation

The data was coded and analyzed using the SPSS version 26 application, which stands for Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The study generated both descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean and standard deviation, which was utilized as measures of central tendency and dispersion, respectively, was found through a descriptive analysis of the major data that has been acquired. In order to develop a model that defines the dependent variable as a function of the predictor variables based on the analytical model, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis was used in the study. The examined data was presented in frequency distribution tables to make it easy to describe and evaluate the research findings. The gathered data was subjected to diagnostic tests. The following linear regression model was used to ascertain whether the study's predictor variables have any statistically significant impact on the dependent variable;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y= Project performance

β_0 = intercept coefficient

β_1 - are the Regression model parameter

X₁= Composite variable for Stakeholder involvement

ϵ = Error term

X1, is composite indicex

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Stakeholder Involvement Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. deviation
The project stakeholders are identified prior to project implementation	4.17	.231
The needs of project stakeholders are determined through a survey	4.23	.536
Capacity building is done to stakeholders to enable them participate in project process	4.02	.444
There is a mechanism to solve stakeholder disputes towards the project	4.26	.703
Stakeholder engagement is key in project implementation		

Source: Field Study (2024)

The results in Table 1 have shown that respondents agreed that the project stakeholders are identified prior to project implementation and that the needs of project stakeholders are determined through a survey as indicated by a mean of 4.17 and mean of 4.23 respectively. Respondents also agreed that the capacity building is done to stakeholders to enable them participate in project process (mean=4.02) and that there is a mechanism to solve stakeholder disputes towards the project (mean=4.26). Stakeholder engagement is key in project implementation.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regressing analysis was computed to derive the relationship between the variables.

Model Summary

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.726 ^a	.527	.496s	1.9620

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder involvement, Resource allocation, Project management expertise, M&E systems

Source: Field Study (2024)

The regression results in Table 2, showed a moderate regression between the study variables. In the model summary, the R² is 0.527 indicating that predictors explain 52.7 per cent change in project performance.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The ANOVA test was done and the results shown in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2569.158	4	642.289	25.932	.000 ^b
	Residual	2303.425	93	24.768		
	Total	4872.583	97			

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder involvement, Resource allocation, Project management expertise, M&E systems

Source: Field Study (2024)

From the ANOVA results in Table 3, it was established that the significance value in testing the reliability of the model was obtained as 0.000 which is less than 0.05, the critical value at 95% significance level. Therefore, the model is statistically significant in predicting the relationship between the study variables.

Regression Coefficients

The regression output was done and represented in Table 4.

Table 4: Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	11.519	4.061		2.836	.000
Stakeholder involvement	.438	.199	.175	2.201	.035

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

Source: Field Study (2024)

$$PP = 11.519 + .438X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

PP = Project performance

X₁ = Stakeholder involvement

The regression results showed that independent variables had significant value less than 0.05 implying that they are all significant. From the results, it showed that holding all factors constant at zero, the change in project performance would be 11.519. Further, the regression results showed that a unit change in stakeholder involvement would lead to 0.438 unit change in project performance.

The first objective of the study was to investigate the stakeholder involvement and project performance. The regression results for stakeholder involvement was $\beta_1=0.438$, $t=2.201$, and $p<0.05$ showing that there was a positive and significant relationship between stakeholder involvement and project performance. It is therefore concluded that a unit change in stakeholder involvement would lead to 0.438 unit change in project performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Drawing from the study findings, it is concluded that stakeholder involvement is statistically significant and sufficient in explaining performance of county funded health projects in Mombasa County, Kenya. Further, it is concluded that the health projects stakeholders are identified before the projects are implemented. This also involves determination of the needs of project stakeholders through a survey. The project initiators also carry out capacity building on the identified project stakeholders to enable them participate in project process. The study concludes that stakeholder disputes resolution mechanisms are put in place before the project commences.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the county government health project teams should identify health projects stakeholders prior to project implementation. This would provide the team with clear project stakeholders which makes it possible to determine their needs through a survey and reconcile their varied interests. The health project team should seek to capacity build the identified health project stakeholders to bolster their participation in the health projects. Also the study recommends that the disputes resolution mechanisms should be established prior to health project implementation.

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