

INFLUENCE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL CAMP PROJECTS IN HOSPITALS IN KENYA: A CASE OF EMBU NORTH SUB COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

The study was guided by the following objectives: To determine the influence of skills of monitoring and evaluation team on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals; to establish the influence of stakeholder involvement on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals; to determine the influence of resource allocation on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals and finally to examine the influence of adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals. The study targeted a total population of 1,225 participants, the participants are categorized into two that's is population 1,005 patient and 220 Key stake holders whom they include project directors, coordinators, project field officer's sponsors, patients and partners who are involved in sponsoring and partnering with hospitals and medical centre in providing free medical checkup in Embu County. The researcher used a sample size of 167 respondents, from that sample size 159 filled in and submitted the questionnaires making a response rate of 95% while 8 respondents never filled the questionnaires making a response rate of 5%. The 159 respondents consisted of 61 key stakeholders and 98 patients. The study finding were patients highly rated the services provided by medical camps in Embu as of very high quality this implies that the performance of medical camp is good since its satisfies its target group. Based on the first variable which was skills of monitoring and evaluation 55(90%) stated that skills of M&E team influenced performance at a very great extent. Based on

the second variable which was stakeholder involvement 42(69%) stated that stakeholder involvement influenced performance at a very great extent, Based on the third variable which was resource allocation Conformity to project budget example bill of quantity inclusion of monitoring and evaluation budget influenced very high 61(100%) and Adequacy of budget funds 61(100%). This implies resource allocation is very key in monitoring of Evaluation of any project and it influences performance of medical camps 100% .Based on the fourth variable which was adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems 37(61%) respondents stated monitoring and evaluation systems was very effective on performance of medical camp while 15(25%) stated it was effective. This implies that monitoring and evaluation systems influenced performance of medical camps. It was observed that training of monitoring and evaluation in equipping them with the right skills should be properly formulated and adhered. It was preferred that stakeholders should fully participate in decision making and planning and designing medical camp projects to ensure effective performance. It was also observed to consider the interest of; the community and relevant institution. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that: Training programmes for monitoring and evaluation Team should be reviewed during and after its completion to ensure the monitoring team have the right skills. The project team must also pay proper attention to the identification and impact assessment of projects decisions made by stakeholders outside their influence authority.

Key Words: *monitoring and evaluation strategies, skills of monitoring, stakeholder involvement, resource allocation and adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems*

INTRODUCTION

Globally, Monitoring and evaluation have been in existence since the ancient times Kusek (2004). Monitoring and Evaluation of projects is the process of tracking, reviewing, and regulating the progress to meet the performance objectives defined in the project management plan. Monitoring comprises status reporting, progress measurement, and forecasting while Evaluation is systematic and independent. In relation to M&E, performance offers information on the project's performance about scope, schedule, cost, resources, quality, and risk, which can be used as inputs to other processes (PMBOK, 2001).

M&E plays a very significant role in helping those involved with projects to assess if progress is being achieved in line with expectations. M &E functions of a project are carried out by the M&E department of a government agency responsible for M&E in several projects using national guidelines. This agency has much experience and can commence project M&E activities at an early stage. However, the agency doesn't not have direct access to the project's M&E resources and have limited funds. An efficacious project is an important role in achieving organization growth and development. Most project managers appreciate that monitoring and evaluation of projects is important if the project objectives and success is to be achieved. Project monitoring and evaluation exercise adds value to the overall efficiency of project planning, management and implementation by offering corrective action to the variances from the expected standard (Kahilu, 2010).

Both Public and Private hospitals are major players in all health care systems, because they consume a large portion of the health care budget. In western European countries, this share is close to 50 percent of total health care budget, whereas in the former Soviet Union this figure is about 70 percent (McKee and Healy, 2002). At least 50 percent of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa spend 45 percent or more of public sector budget on hospitals (Peters et al., 2000). In Ecuador, Guatemala, Djibouti, Tunisia, and Yemen, about half of health care dollars go to medical camp projects. Expenditure on hospital care is said to be cost-ineffective, because it focuses more on curative and rehabilitative care and its impact on a poor country's burden of disease is limited. However, hospitals have political visibility, and the large budgets they consume are a symptom of their importance in the political process (Nandakumar, 2003). Even though many countries still carry the label of "developing county", the private sector especially private institution like hospitals is growing and the ambitions for private hospitals are high.

In Africa, most different countries have adopted monitoring and evaluation tools, for instance Ghana as a country came up with a commission the National Development Planning

Commission (NDPC) as a regulatory policy to assimilate the principle of M&E operations. NDPC adapted the Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation System (RBMES) and Results Based Budgeting (RBB) in the M&E process. This was purposely to ensure cost effectiveness, institutional capacity strengthening, promotion of good governance and accountability as well as credibility to the partners and government. In order to add value to the project operations the M&E team needs adequate training (Aaltonen, 2011).

There is need for effective M&E of projects in both public and private sectors especially in hospital as this is increasingly recognized as an indispensable tool of both project and portfolio management. This acknowledged need to improve the performance of development assistance calls for close attention to the provision of management information, both to support the implementation of projects and programs and to feed back into the design of new initiatives, (WBG 2003). Poor performances of medical camps lead to inaccessibility of care and inappropriate care, which thus contribute to reduced health outcomes as people are not using services or are mistreated due to harmful practices. Poor performance results from too few staff, or from staff not providing care according to standards and not being responsive to the needs of the community and patients, (Hughes et al., 2002). These causes are rooted in a failing health system, low salaries, difficult working and living conditions and inappropriate training.

Better-quality performance in medical camp projects does not result from the number of HR practices alone, but also from effective implementation, which requires management skills of Monitoring and Evaluation team (Caulkin, 2001). A Research on HRM in the health sector in Canada and the United States of America, mainly the private health sector, demonstrated the importance of Skills of Monitoring and Evaluation Team especially the leadership skills and management skills for successful performance (Buchan, 2004). The Research showed that management recognition contributes to job satisfaction (Lu et al., 2005). Managers of health facilities therefore need leadership and management skills to ensure that their staff perform according to recognized standards and are motivated to work. However, in LICs, management positions in the health sector are often occupied by untrained managers, particularly at lower levels (Wiskow, 2006). In addition, where management training programmes were initiated, they often did not appear to be very successful (Homedes & Ugalde, 2005).

The more a team is strengthened, the better the performance and value addition to the organization. This also applies to the monitoring and evaluation teams in project management (USAID, 2012). Technical training, social science knowledge, data analysis skills as well as communication skills are indicators of project team skills. Stakeholder participation on implementation of projects have varied levels of interests and involvement in project development. Involving the stakeholders enhances decision making and project acceptability. Promoting stakeholder involvement and properly managing them enhances the chances of project success (Bryceson, 2002). Stakeholders' involvement in decision making, information collection and project design are indicators of stakeholders' involvement.

The stakeholder's project team role, the project planning activities in which he participates and his level of involvement in or responsibility for a particular activity, depends on the project's mission and his reporting relationship to the project management office, or PMO, which, in particular, leads to his classification as an internal or external stakeholder. For example, an IT project's internal stakeholders reporting directly to the PMO include a project manager and developer. In turn, external stakeholders may include customers and the personnel and training departments. Activities assigned to both internal and external stakeholders during the project planning phase may be the same.

One way to help satisfy stakeholder concerns and promote transparency is to involve project-affected stakeholders in monitoring the implementation of mitigation measures or other environmental and social programs. Such participation, and the flow of information generated through this process, can also encourage local stakeholders to take a greater degree of responsibility for their environment and welfare in relation to the project, and to feel empowered that they can do something practical to address issues that affect their lives. Participatory monitoring also tends to strengthen relationships between the project and its stakeholders (Akrich, 2002).

High performing project teams require adequate resource allocation. Resource allocation involves balancing competing needs and priorities and determining the most effective course of action in order to maximize the effective use of limited resources and gain the best return on investment. Resource allocation arises as an issue because the resources of a project are always limited in supply and because any given resource can have many alternative uses. Based on experience and specifics of each M&E system, it is possible to determine the amount of necessary resources regarding each M&E step. The most effective M&E systems are the ones that match the system's purpose and design with the project's ability to implement it in terms of its capacity. A part of this capacity is the resources allowed for use in M&E (Cristina, 2012).

To achieve project success, adequate resource allocating is necessary to allow the project team to play to their strengths. Sufficient human resources that ensure persons possess the skills to carry out their project tasks. Sufficient allocation of financial resources to ensure remuneration of project staff and acquisition of equipment influences project success. Resource allocation is the process of assigning and managing assets in a manner that supports an organization's strategic goals. Resource allocation includes managing tangible assets such as hardware to make the best use of softer assets such as human capital. Adoption of M&E systems as a strategy in monitoring and evaluation of projects is widespread in project works. It typically involves data collection and analysis to gain useful information to guide the project staff (Hartman, 2002). The use of information and communication technologies is imperative nowadays in all the processes including sourcing equipment and planning for resource utilization.

M&E systems vary with type, sector and country of application, (Koffi-Tessio, 2002 and Fitzgerald et al., 2009). A successful M&E system therefore should be modified to specific

setting with allowance for flexibility and imagination (Jha et al., 2010). When establishing an M&E system, organizations should also consider experiences from other organizations (Briceno, 2010). There is therefore need to realize the role and use of M&E systems as well as involvement of stakeholders since M&E has many audiences, who include managers, donor, field staff, partners, policy makers and program participants (CARE, 2012), thus the need for it to effectively communicate. A well prepared and executed M&E will contribute to both project outcomes and international standards of doing things (Jha et al., 2010). M&E plays a major role in this international development by helping organization like non-profits and NGO ensure that their programs are effective. It can be used to weigh donations and funding against various factors to assess their success, so funding can be adjusted as necessary and the strategies can be improved upon. The results of continuous monitoring and evaluation can help prove to donors and funders that their money is being used and allocated correctly (Alderman, 2011).

Frequently the medical camps projects provide a wide range of services mostly screening, treating, educating and referring patients were necessary, but some may be very specific on the kind and nature of conditions targeted during the camps. Mostly in Kenya free medical camp target malaria control, malnutrition, reproductive health issues, diabetes. Recently some parasitic helminths and entomological infections like jiggers are becoming a popular inclusion in such activities. As a result medical camps despite being sporadic are becoming an important component of the national health system and are readily acceptable by the communities especially those located in financially and personnel starved areas. It is our observation that these free medical camps not only provide immense opportunities to serve the community but they also provide avenues to collect important data that can be used for policy development, and as such they should be utilized more for applied community-based beneficial research activities. Despite creation of awareness for most patients to attend free medical checkup, the influence of M&E strategies on implementation of free medical projects is not accorded important in medical projects.

In Embu County the main objective of medical camps is to bring affordable healthcare and free health information to the community and identify the common healthy problems of the community in order to devise ways of addressing them, in partnership with District Medical Authorities. Specifically, the medical camp sought to : Provide VCT services to the community; provide both preventive and curative treatment for common conditions in the community; refer those who require specialized treatment to the relevant centers; create awareness and provide counselling on HIV/AIDS, Diabetes, breast cancer and other ailments; create awareness on the need for personal hygiene in prevention of serious disabling diseases such as eye and dental, which are prevalent in the area due to dust and lack of adequate water.

The free medical camp also aims at encouraging use of available nutritious food products in the area; and discouraging drug/substance abuse among the community members. Also, the medical camp provided opportunities to both medical and non-medical personnel to give back to the community by way of volunteering their time, energy and expertise. Over 250 men and women

set aside their personal engagements and spent the whole day serving the needy in various capacities and it is because of the input of everybody who come out to help that the medical camp is a success. Through the support of various partners, the success of the medical camp is attributed to the high-quality services and medicines provided together with the collaboration of staff and the staff of the constituency office in Embu and Nairobi (Beringer, 2015).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In developing countries for example Kenya, medical camps projects are faced with several challenges like poor leadership, lack of institutional systems, and where it is done the information is not made public to the stakeholders. In addition to that, most medical camp projects do not have skilled M&E professionals who understand M&E systems and are able to develop appropriate tools; hence they end up with substandard performance of the projects. In Kenya, free medical camps provided to local communities, organized by both local health personnel, hospitals and in partnership with their collaborators, are increasingly becoming a very important for most Kenyans. Despite no proper record and statistics of the number of medical camps organized in Kenya but an online wide-web search of the number organized just in the year 2014 seem to suggest that most of them are being organized by some parastatals for example hospital, Universities, nongovernmental organizations such as Medical Assistance Program (MAP. Despite the huge amount of resources provided to implement medical camp projects and even though these projects play big role in improving the lives of the people in the community, Monitoring and evaluation of medical project especially in Embu North Sub County faces challenges and therefore there is need for the intervention. This study established the influence of monitoring and evaluation strategies on performance of medical camp project in private hospitals in Kenya

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The main purpose of this study was to investigate influence of monitoring and evaluation strategies on performance of medical camp projects in Embu County, Kenya.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the influence of skills of monitoring and evaluation team on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals.
2. To establish the influence stakeholder involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Team on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals.
3. To determine the influence of resource allocation in monitoring and Evaluation on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals.
4. To examine the influence of adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of Effective Project Implementation according to Nutt, (2006) puts a series of steps taken by responsible organizational agents to plan change process to elicit compliance needed to install changes. Managers use implementation to make planned changes in organizations by creating environments in which changes can survive and be rooted (Nutt, 2006). Implementation is a procedure directed by a manager to install planned changes in an organization. There is widespread agreement that managers are the key process actors and that the intent of implementation is to install planned changes, whether they be novel or routine. However, procedural steps in implementation have been difficult to specify because implementation is ubiquitous (Nutt, 2006).

A study by Edward Njenga (2013), On Factors Influencing performance of Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects (A Case Study Of Machakos District), found that monitoring and evaluation budget, stakeholders' participation, M & E plan, source of funding (donor) and training in M&E had a positive relation with the probability of implementing M & E which was significant at 95% confidence level. However, M&E guidelines were found to have no effect on implementation of M & E. Based on the results the study concluded that performance of Monitoring and Evaluation is important in providing the feedback mechanism of economic development interventions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study used a cross-sectional descriptive study design in the description of the affairs of the status of the variables in the study. This type of research design is appropriate for this study because it involves fact finding and enquiries. cross-sectional Descriptive design generates quantitative data through self-administered questionnaires (Creswell,2003).

Target Population

The study targeted a total population of 1,225 participants, the participants are categorized into two that's is population 1, 005 patient and 220 Key stake holders whom they include project directors, coordinators, project field officer's sponsors, patients and partners who are involved in sponsoring and partnering with hospitals and medical centre in providing free medical checkup in Embu County.Embu North sub County has total eight hospitals and medical centres.(Embu County census factsheet 2017)

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The respondents were selected using stratified proportionate random sampling technique. The goal of using stratified random sampling is to achieve the desired representation from various sub-groups in the population. The participants were selected in each stratum in such a way that

the existing sub-groups in the population are more or less represented in the sample. According to Kothari (2014), a sample of about 10% to 30% of a population can often give a reliable data. Since the respondents are of high homogeneity, there researcher gave selected 10% of 1,005 of the target population of patient through stratified sampling, which is equivalent to a sample size of 101 and then select 30% of 220 of the target population of Key stakeholder through stratified sampling to get a sample size of 66 key stakeholders. Therefore, the total sample size of the participants was 167.

Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interview guides for collecting data. The questionnaires were used because they are easy to administer and at the same time they generate a large layout of needed data. An interview guide was also used to elicit information. The questionnaire was reviewed by a group of experts in the field of the study. They were requested to identify the internal validity and to what extent it is suitable to be used as an instrument to realize the goals and aims of this research. The panel ensured that the items adequately represent concepts that cover all relevant issues under investigation. Orodho (2004) describes reliability as the degree to which empirical indicators are consistent in two or more trials in an attempt to measure the theoretical concept. The Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability of the research instrument. A construct composite reliability co-efficient (Cronbach alpha) of 0.8 was achieved. According to Seifer (2012) the acceptable reliability coefficient of 0.7 and above is accepted.

Data Collection Procedure

A research permit was obtained from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and introductory letter from the school of post Graduate of University of Nairobi and Authorization to go to the field for data collection. Those two letters enabled the researcher to secure an authorization letter from the county commission and county director of Education, Embu. This letter introduced the researcher to the respondents to administer questionnaires. The respondents were assured that strict confidentiality were maintained when dealing with the responses. The respondents were given verbal instructions on how to fill them. After completion of the test, the researcher collected the questionnaires to maximize the return rate of the instrument.

Data Analysis

The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data will be coded and entered into Statistical Packages for Social Scientists (SPSS Version 21.0) and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed based on the content of the responses. Responses with common themes or patterns was grouped together into coherent categories. Descriptive statistics was involved the use of absolute and relative (percentages) frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion (mean and standard deviation respectively). Quantitative data was presented in tables and explanation was presented in prose.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Skill of Monitoring and Evaluation and Performance of Medical Camps

The first objective, the study sought to determine the influence of skills of monitoring and evaluation team on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals. The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that a they had undergone training in monitoring and evaluation while the remaining 2(3%) said that they had not undergone any training. These findings implied that the stakeholders had undergone through training on monitoring and evaluation. According to Musomba et al (2013) an organization without the right people with the right training is as good as dead. Organizations that ignore the training aspect in M & E find themselves faced with many challenges

The participants were asked to rate the extent to which Skill of Monitoring and Evaluation Team influence performance if medical performance. demonstrate that 55(90%) stated that skills of M&E team influenced performance at a very great extent, 6(10%) stated skills of M&E team involvement influenced at great extent. This implies that the skills of monitoring and evaluation team influenced performance of medical camps at 90%. The success of team training programs depends on conducting a thorough team training analysis, starting with a skills inventory to identify the competencies that are needed (Salas, 2002). Because they are self-managed, project teams can also benefit from collaborative problem-solving skills (Stevens, 1994). In addition, project team members are often expert specialists and it is therefore essential for all team members to work together closely to produce the team's outputs. The project manager is responsible for meeting project objectives, for schedules, budgets, and assessing alternatives, for assessing risks and deciding how to accept, avoid, remove, or mitigate them, and for leading the initiative to successful completion (Baca, 2007).

Stakeholder Involvement and Performance of Medical Camps

The second objective of the study was to establish the influence stakeholder involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Team on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals. Based on the findings 31(51%) and 30(49%) participants strongly agreed that Stakeholder are adequately involved in M&E design phase.42(68%) participants Stakeholder are involved in preparation of M&E time tables and work plans. On issue whether Stakeholders feedback is sought during all stages of M&E 59(97%) strongly agreed while 2(3%) agreed. On the statement whether Stakeholder are involved in M&E data collection process 46(75%) strongly agreed while 13(15%) are agreed. The participants were asked to rate the extent to which Stakeholder involvement influence performance if medical performance 42(69%) stated that stakeholder involvement influenced performance at a very great extent, 13(21%) stated stakeholder involvement influenced at great extent while 6(10%) respondents stated stakeholder involvement influenced at low extent. This implies that stakeholder involvement influenced performance of medical camps at 69%. This goes in line with INTRAC, (2008) who stated increased number of

stakeholders will mean more influence, so substantial alignment is needed. Lack of space for key project stakeholders to be involved in the adoption of the Monitoring and evaluation systems leaves outcomes and impacts to be measured by experts who have no vested interest in the success of the project other than for reporting to senior managers or even donors.

Resource allocation and Performance of Medical Camps

The third objective of the study sought to determine the influence of resource allocation in monitoring and Evaluation on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals. Based on the findings on the extent to which Conformity of Budget to project influence performance of medical camp 61(100%) respondents rated the extent to be very high. On Extent to which adjustment of project budget influenced performance of medical camps 42(68%) respondents rated the extent to be very high, and 19(31%) rated high. Adherence to Budget during project implementation services influenced performance of medical camp at 59(97%) which was very high. Conformity to project budget example bill of quantity inclusion of monitoring and evaluation budget influenced very high 61(100%) and Adequacy of budget funds 61(100%). This implies resource allocation is very key in monitoring of Evaluation of any project and it influences performance of medical camps 100% . According to Ikeme, (2005) project managers must work in limited or even tight budgets thus M&E efforts have to be well prioritized

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems and Performance of Medical Camps

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the influence of adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems on performance of medical camp projects in hospitals 23(38%) respondents stated that monitoring and evaluations systems was achieved through M&E Designing,17(28%) stated it was achieved through M&E Modification and finally 21(34%) stated through planning of Planning of M&E, This implies that the most used management ways to influence monitoring and evaluation was designing and planning. The M&E framework outlines the objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project and the indicators that will be used to measure all these. It also outlines the assumptions that the M&E system will adopt. The M&E framework is essential as it links the objectives with the process and enables the M&E expert to know what to measure and how to measure it (Webler; 2002).

Also, respondents were required to state the Effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems on performance of medical camps 37(61%) respondents stated monitoring and evaluation systems was very effective on performance of medical camp while 15(25%) stated it was effective. This implies that monitoring and evaluation systems influenced performance of medical camps. An M&E system is made up of four interlinked sections, which are: setting up of the M&E systems, implementation of the M&E systems, involvement of the project stakeholders, and communication of the M&E results. According to Sharma, (2004) the adequate implementation of M&E at any level requires that there is a unit whose main purpose is to coordinate all the M&E functions at its level. While some entities prefer an internal organ to

oversee its M&E functions, others prefer to outsource such services. This component of M&E emphasizes the need for M&E unit within the organization, how elaborate its roles are defined, how adequately its roles are supported by the organizations hierarchy and how other units within the organization are aligned to support the M&E functions within the organization.

CONCLUSIONS

It was observed that training of monitoring and evaluation team by equipping them with the right skills should be properly formulated and adhered. It was preferred that stakeholders should fully participate in decision making and planning and designing medical camp projects to ensure effective performance. It was also observed to consider the interest of; the community and relevant institution. It was emphasized that in resource allocation budget should be realistic and address actual needs. It should reflect all the components of the expected outcomes. The study lastly concluded based on the fourth variables which was adoption of monitoring and evaluations systems that adequate implementation of M&E at any level requires that there is a unit whose main purpose is to coordinate all the M&E functions at its level. While some entities prefer an internal organ to oversee its M&E functions, others prefer to outsource such services. It was observed that skill of monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder involvement, resource allocation and adoption of monitoring and evaluations systems influenced performance of medical camps positively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Training programmes for monitoring and evaluation Team should be reviewed during and after its completion to ensure the monitoring team have the right skills.
2. The project team must also pay proper attention to the identification and impact assessment of projects decisions made by stakeholders outside their influence authority.
3. Resource allocation must be oriented to objectives achievement. Objectives should be clearly laid down with strategic priorities for resource allocation. The demands of stakeholders also affect resource allocation.
4. An effective M&E systems implementation requires must have adequate staff employed in the M&E unit, but also that the staff within this unit have the necessary M&E technical know-how and experience.

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