

Community-based Projects in Kenya: Analytical review of Application of Stakeholder Analysis as a Project Design Tool for Enhancing Performance

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to establish how the application of stakeholder analysis influences the performance of community-based projects in Kenya. The study employed descriptive research design. The study sought information from a sample of 128 people in a target population of 192 participants chosen through stratified random sampling procedure among the different community-based organizations. Data was collected by using a questionnaire and an interview guide. Qualitative data was analysed through checking data, developing codes, identifying themes and patterns. The analysed data was summarized quantitatively and qualitatively where both descriptive and inferential statistics were generated and linked to hypotheses and objectives. Descriptive results were presented as frequency tables, percentages, arithmetic means and standard deviation. Inferential statistics were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation (r) from simple regression and multiple regression analysis. F-test was used to test the hypotheses. Tests of statistical assumptions were carried out before analysis. In this study; $r=0.332$, $R^2=0.110$, $F 4.095$ at $p=0.004<0.05$; therefore, H_0 was rejected and it was concluded that application of stakeholder analysis has a statistically significant influence on the performance of

community-based projects. In conclusion, this study has revealed that the application of stakeholder analysis has an influence on the performance of community-based projects. Since community stakeholders are important in the success of community-based projects, there is need to ensure that among the team members of the projects there are community members.

Keywords: Stakeholder Analysis, Project Design Tools, Performance of Community-based Projects

1. Introduction

In a complex and large project, the design process often involves the collaboration of multiple persons or groups that share design information, negotiate and make decisions, coordinate and manage design tasks and activities (SAD, 2008). Therefore, the effectiveness of a collaborative design process becomes critical for design project management. At the same time, the need to improve the effectiveness of a collaborative project design in order to improve performance is a challenging issue in the field of collaborative design (Kalsaas, 2012).

Reports by Kerzner (2009) and Brandon (2006) on the need to improve project designs highlighted the need to improve the design and project process and suggested that improvement could be achieved by reducing the number of variations and resistance to adopt a shared learning programme. They focused on the issues of product development and project implementation which can be achieved through the adaption of a generic product on a specific site. As such, innovation and shared learning can be achieved and enable sustained improvement. Many frameworks have been developed in the interim and have coexisted with different approaches, resulting in a dilemma of choice between number and variation of available frameworks. These frameworks were developed for specific projects that were not designed as repetitive projects, especially among developed countries.

The failure of community-based projects in Kenya can be attributed to problems relating to project design, techniques and tools that the projects use. The project as a whole has its own objectives, measurable criteria and a defined cost and time. Due to the limited time frame for a project, the scope and resources available are also limited. The time required to complete a project also becomes important. The more time the project takes to complete, the more complex it becomes, raising the risk of failure (Snyder, 2014). There is a vast increase in the application of project design tools in organizations in Africa (Fortune, White, Jugdev & Walker, 2011). The importance of project design tools as one of the main activities in projects was identified much before the 2000s as vital to improvement on project performance (Shrnhur, Levy & Dvir, 1997).

Effective use of project design tools is considered one of the key aspects of project performance among organizations in developed and developing countries. Project management is a challenging task with many complex responsibilities and the relevant project design tools and techniques. Fortunately, there are many tools available to assist with accomplishing the tasks and executing the responsibilities. Some require a

computer with supporting software, while others can be used manually. Project managers should choose a project management tool that best suits their management style. No one tool addresses all project management needs (Silverman, 2008).

Any individuals, groups of people, institutions or firms that may have a significant interest in the success or failure of a project (either as implementers, facilitators, beneficiaries or adversaries) are defined as stakeholders (Kumar, 2002). Kelly (2001) argues that a basic premise behind stakeholder analysis is that different groups have different concerns, capacities and interests, and that these need to be explicitly understood and recognized in the process of problem identification, objective setting and strategy selection. Every society sees differences in the roles and responsibilities of women and men, in their access and control of resources and in their participation in decision making processes. Stakeholder analysis must systematically identify all of the gender differences as well as special interests, problems and the potential of both women and men among the stakeholders. Ideally, the project/programme should be defined in a workshop for participative planning which involves representatives of the principal stakeholders, ensuring balanced representation of the interests of both women and men. Each time the logical framework is reconsidered during the life of the project, it is necessary to go back to the original stakeholder analysis (Dongier et al., 2003).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Over the last 10 to 15 years, countries have seen a range of initiatives in reforming project design processes as they seek to improve on the performance of community-based projects. According to Mkutu (2011) there have been considerable changes in project designs resulting from frequent and lengthy delays that have caused underachievement in project performance among projects in Kenya. Stakeholder analysis as a project design tool is considered one of the key aspects of project performance among community-based projects. Despite the fact that there are many tools available to assist with accomplishing the tasks and executing the responsibilities, project managers face a problem of choosing the best project design tool that suits their management style and addresses all project management needs (Silverman, 2008). Research has shown that CBPs' full potential has yet to be tapped due to the existence of a number of constraints such as lack of planning, improper financing and poor management (Longenecker et al., 2006). It is not an easy task to sustain radical improvement in a diverse environment such as in the project industry. This requires the identification and implementation of suitable improvement programmes subjected to the project business cycle. With this in mind the current study sought to establish the influence of applying stakeholder analysis as a project design tool on the performance of community-based projects in Kenya, since no research study has given any conclusive evidence to show the link between the application of stakeholder analysis as a project design tool and the performance of community-based projects.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objective:

To establish how application of stakeholder analysis influences the performance of community-based projects in Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses guiding this study included the following:

H₀₁: Application of stakeholder analysis has a significant influence on the performance of community-based projects in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

By creating a sense of community ownership, participation leads to effectiveness and better decisions in projects (Kelly & Van Vlaenderen, 1995). Price and Mylius (1991) also saw that in order to ensure sustainability in projects, it is important to cultivate local ownership which is achieved through participation. Kelly (2001) stated that participation leads to learning, which is a requirement for behavioural changes and practices. Stakeholders interact with the project on two fronts: cultural and political, as stated in Newcombe (2003). These two fronts combine to impose invaluable barriers on stakeholders' engagement process. Barriers can emanate from the lack of awareness within the external stakeholders' community in respect of available package, thereby resulting in the exclusion of citizens.

Effective stakeholder engagement benefits the project by eliminating conflicts and increasing cooperation between the firm and the stakeholders; while ineffective stakeholder engagement may result in unexpected problems that may be more prominent than a high-profile construction mishap (Loosemore, 2000). There are also other widespread implications: financial, political, cultural and social effects (Loosemore, 2000). This protest, if not well managed could result in a serious lengthy, costly and acrimonious dispute between the sponsoring contractor and the community (Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010). Due to imminent problems encountered in stakeholder engagement, McCabe (2006) and Keast et al. (2011) examined the enablers of effective stakeholder engagement namely: significant focus on communication; promoting partnership; promoting trust and readiness of various actors to cooperate. The general concord among researchers, however, champions the participation of all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making processes. This is embedded in the practicality of ensuring that stakeholders' views are inculcated in the decision-making framework and implemented; and not in mere invitation to participate. There are also different levels of engagement.

Stakeholder participation contributes to inclusion and effectiveness in projects through community ownership of the process. Kolavalli and Kerr (2002) suggested that stakeholder participation increased project ownership by the beneficiaries and that it ensured project sustainability through inclusion. The authors further stated that community participation plays a role in conveying information, in particular local knowledge, that fosters better action plans, leading to performance and inclusion. A study by Dongier et al. (2003), on what contributes to successful development initiatives, concluded that when communities contribute cash or in kind, it helps in inclusion and the ability to utilize local resources. This

reduces dependence on outside resources; creates a sense of community ownership; ensures that outside influences do not alter or dictate choices; and there is correct ascertainment of the real needs of beneficiaries.

A study was carried out by Blood (2013) on the imminent problems inducing ineffective stakeholder engagement in mining projects using a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument among fifty mining projects. The study identified compartmentalization; stakeholders' lack of capability; lack of baseline data; cumulative effect of incremental development; stakeholder fatigue; gap between public expectation and regulatory requirements, as imminent problems inducing ineffective stakeholder engagement in mining projects. From these broad themes, the study identifies organizational, project environment, communication, contractual, and regulatory issues as affecting stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder participation is key in ensuring capability and sustainability of development initiatives as it leads to community capacity building and empowerment (Botchway, 2001).

Participation of the beneficiaries in projects ensures capability is enhanced, making beneficiaries better placed in identifying, implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects. Zacharia et al.'s (2008) qualitative study found that participation of the communities and their capability in the study programmes takes on different forms in different stages of the project cycle. Despite the time difference between the old and new programme, the nature and extent of participation for the majority of local communities is generally limited to information giving, consultation and contribution, which is not enough in relation to capability. Local communities are generally not actively involved in decision-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes because they lack capability.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded on stakeholder theory by Freeman (1984) which is a theory of organizational management and business ethics that addresses morals and values in managing an organization. It identifies and models the groups which are stakeholders of a project, and both describes and recommends methods by which management can give due regard to the interests of those groups. In short, it attempts to address the "Principle of Who or What Really Counts". The stakeholder view of strategy is an instrumental theory of the projects, integrating the resource-based view as well as the market-based view, and adding a sociopolitical level. This view of the firm is used to define the specific stakeholders of a CBP and examine the conditions under which these parties should be treated as stakeholders. Applying a stakeholder conception of projects as opposed to the more traditional input-output perspective implies adhering to a belief where all actors are involved with CBP in order to obtain benefits. This theory emphasizes that the community members also benefit from their participation. CBPs need to ensure the community members also participate in the decision making, their staff are trained on handling the community members and the community members' interests are considered. The gaps in this theory were that it diverts attention from creating business success to concentrating on who share its fruits; and, the purposes of a company may be frustrated, or at least confused, by management's adoption of multi-fiduciary policies. This theory therefore,

assisted in the better understanding of the importance of stakeholder analysis in regard to community participation in the success of community projects' performance and the extent to which its application influences performance of community-based projects. This theory also emphasizes the significance of the relationship between the top management staff or project managers and the stakeholders. Specifically, managers should understand that the success of the projects can be influenced greatly by the participation of various stakeholders. These stakeholders will participate depending on the relationship they foster with the top management and not junior workers acting on their behalf.

2.2 Performance of Community-based Projects

Performance of the project is considered as a source of concern to both public and private sector clients. Kumaraswamy (2002) remarked that project performance measurement includes time, budget, safety, quality and overall client satisfaction aided by project design tools. Thomas (2002) defined performance measurement as monitoring and controlling of projects on a regular basis. Kuprenas (2003) stated that project performance measurement means improvement of cost, schedule, and quality for design and construction stages. Long et al. (2004) stated that project performance measurement is related to many indicators such as time, budget, quality, specifications and stakeholder satisfaction.

Improving project performance in the community poses several challenges for stakeholders. Additionally, it is not an easy task to sustain radical improvement in a diverse environment (Egan, 1998). It requires the identification and implementation of suitable improvement programmes subjected to the community business cycle (Tang & Ogunlana, 2003). This is important since the integration of improvement programmes in a community may incur high cost and yet the benefit can only be realized in the long term (Takim, 2005). However, there is a need for new improvement programmes and initiatives at various stages of a project's life-cycle in order to enhance community project performance and target changing trends of private and public sector project organizations (Tang & Ogunlana, 2003; Atkinson, 2003). Project performance can be affected by a range of things; one of which is the organizational structure of the business (Paul, 2010). As mentioned, it has been observed that the most successful way of exploiting a strategic opportunity or implementing a change in a company is through a temporary process or structure; for example, a project team focused on the project task and objectives in order to solve a problem or implement a new strategy (Partington, 2000).

Performance of CBPs in Kenya remains wanting due to limitations such as finance, constraints of the environment and lack of management and technical expertise (Odindo, 2009). Moreover, constant pressures of fundraising, weak management skills and difficulties in scaling-up operations can limit CSPs' effectiveness and accountability. Silverman (2008) indicated that aspects such as local networks of CBPs, leadership, client characteristics, staff and strategy can have an influence on the success of their programmes. The development and exploitation of managers' social networking relationships with external entities affects the performance of those organizations. Such social networks create social capital for

organizations by establishing avenues for the exchange of valuable information, resources, and knowledge (Adler & Kwon, 2002).

3. Methodology

The research design for this study was descriptive survey design. The study targeted 15 community-based projects meeting study criteria from a total of 96 community-based projects. The sample size for the study was 128 respondents chosen randomly from a total of 192 employees. The research instruments that were used included a structured questionnaire and an interview guide. The study analysed data qualitatively and quantitatively using Statistical Packages for Social Scientists (SPSS Version 21.0). Qualitative data was analysed based on the content matter of the responses, while descriptive statistics involved the use of absolute and relative (percentage) frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion (mean and standard deviation respectively). Quantitative data was presented in tables and graphs and explanation was presented in prose. The study used Spearman correlation to establish the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

4. Results and Discussions

The study sought to assess the extent to which the application of stakeholder analysis influences the performance of community-based projects in Kenya.

Project outcomes were measured by providing respondents with statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Neither Agree Nor Disagree (NAD); Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA) from which to choose. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Project Outcomes and Performance of Community-based Projects

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	NAD F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SDV	Total F (%)
Project outcomes are achieved on time	3 (2.9)	4 (3.9)	4 (3.9)	14 (13.6)	78 (75.7)	4.5534	0.95720	103 (100)
Funding influences project outcomes	2 (1.9)	2 (1.9)	3 (2.9)	16 (15.5)	80 (77.7)	4.6505	0.80084	103 (100)
Stakeholders slow down decision making	5 (4.9)	8 (7.8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	90 (87.4)	4.5728	1.14277	103 (100)
There are many stakeholder initiated variations in the project	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)	6 (5.8)	10 (9.7)	82 (79.6)	4.6117	0.91000	103 (100)

Stakeholders influence project success	1 (1.0)	3 (2.9)	4 (3.9)	11 (10.7)	84 (81.6)	4.6893	0.76734	103 (100)
Composite for Project Outcomes						4.61554	0.91563	

The research findings show that respondents strongly agreed ($M=4.55$, $SDV=0.96$) that project outcomes are achieved on time. They also agreed ($M=4.65$, $SD=0.80$) that funding influences project outcomes. Respondents strongly agreed ($M=4.57$, $SDV=1.14$) that stakeholders slow down decision-making. The participants strongly agreed ($M=4.61$, $SDV=0.91$) that there are many stakeholder-initiated variations in the project; and they strongly agreed ($M=4.69$, $SDV=0.77$) that stakeholders influence project success. Overall, the surveyed employees agreed ($M=4.62$, $SDV=0.92$) that the performance of community-based projects is dependent on the outcomes that stakeholders seek to achieve from the projects started at the community level. The results imply that project outcomes -- particularly number of project outcomes -- are very critical in the performance of community-based projects.

Stakeholder inclusion was measured by providing respondents with statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from: Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Neither Agree Nor Disagree (NAD); Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA), from which to choose. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Stakeholder Inclusion and Performance of Community-based Projects

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	NAD F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SDV	Total F (%)
Various stakeholders included in the project	4 (3.9)	2 (1.9)	3 (2.9)	7 (6.8)	87 (84.5)	4.6602	0.93466	103 (100)
Local culture events are held	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)	8 (7.8)	87 (84.5)	4.6796	0.88798	103 (100)
Our organization utilizes stakeholder expertise	4 (3.9)	3 (2.9)	1 (1.0)	4 (3.9)	91 (88.3)	4.6990	0.93761	103 (100)
Stakeholders provide project feedback	2 (1.9)	4 (3.9)	5 (4.9)	5 (4.9)	87 (84.5)	4.6602	0.89172	103 (100)
Stakeholders grant project acceptance	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)	5 (4.9)	12 (11.7)	81 (78.6)	4.6117	0.89916	103 (100)
Composite for Project Inclusion						4.66214	0.910226	

The research findings show that respondents strongly agreed ($M=4.66$, $SDV=0.93$) that various stakeholders were included in the project. They also agreed ($M=4.68$, $SD=0.89$) that local culture events are held. Respondents strongly agreed ($M=4.70$, $SDV=0.94$) that their organization utilizes stakeholder expertise. The participants strongly agreed ($M=4.66$, $SDV=0.89$) that stakeholders provide project

feedback; and they strongly agreed ($M=4.61$, $SDV=0.90$) that stakeholders grant project acceptance. Overall, the surveyed employees agreed ($M=4.66$, $SDV=0.91$) that stakeholder inclusion is necessary for community-based projects. The results imply that stakeholder inclusion is important in the performance of community-based projects so as to avoid cost overruns occasioned by misunderstandings of stakeholders. Stakeholder capability was measured by providing respondents with statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Neither Agree Nor Disagree (NAD); Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA) from which to choose. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Stakeholder Capability and Performance of Community-based Projects

Statements	SD	D	NAD	A	SA	Mean	SDV	Total
	F	F	F	F	F			F
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)			(%)
Stakeholder are identified based on individual performance capabilities	2 (1.9)	3 (2.9)	14 (13.6)	9 (8.7)	75 (72.8)	4.4757	0.96857	103 (100)
We review project requirements with stakeholders	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)	5 (4.9)	89 (86.4)	4.6893	0.89694	103 (100)
Stakeholders play a role in uncovering project risks	5 (4.9)	2 (1.9)	2 (1.9)	7 (6.8)	87 (84.5)	4.6408	0.98870	103 (100)
Stakeholders provide input on project goals from external perspectives	6 (5.8)	1 (1.0)	2 (1.9)	11 (10.7)	83 (80.6)	4.5922	1.02361	103 (100)
Stakeholders provide oversight role in the project	7 (6.8)	0 (0)	2 (1.9)	2 (1.9)	92 (89.3)	4.6699	1.04214	103 (100)
Composite for Stakeholder Capability						4.61358	0.983992	

The research findings show that respondents strongly agreed ($M=4.48$, $SDV=0.97$) that stakeholders are identified based on individual performance capabilities. They also agreed ($M=4.69$, $SD=0.90$) that they review project requirements with stakeholders. Respondents strongly agreed ($M=4.64$, $SDV=0.99$) that stakeholders play a role in uncovering project risks. The participants strongly agreed ($M=4.59$, $SDV=1.02$) that stakeholders provide input on project goals from external perspectives; and they strongly agreed ($M=4.67$, $SDV=1.04$) that budget is done to achieve objectives. Overall, the surveyed employees agreed ($M=4.61$, $SDV=0.98$) that stakeholder capability influences community-based projects' performance. The results imply that stakeholder capability is very important in the performance of community-based projects since capability goes a long way in ensuring project performance.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix for Stakeholder Analysis and Performance of Community-based Projects

		Correlations			
		Performance	Project outcomes	Stakeholder inclusion	Stakeholder capabilities
Performance	Pearson	1	.117	-.310**	-.166
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.241	.001	.094
	N	103	103	103	103
Project outcomes	Pearson	.117	1	-.084	.041
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.241		.401	.680
	N	103	103	103	103
Stakeholder inclusion	Pearson	-.310**	-.084	1	.321**
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.401		.001
	N	103	103	103	103
Stakeholder capabilities	Pearson	-.166	.041	.321**	1
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.094	.680	.001	
	N	103	103	103	103

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

The correlation results in Table 4 indicate that the indicators, namely, project outcome and stakeholder capability did not have a significant relationship with performance of community-based projects ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). However, stakeholder inclusion had a significant relationship with performance of community-based projects ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Table 5: Regression Results for Influence of Stakeholder Analysis on Performance of Community-based Projects

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	1.362	0.174			7.831	0
Project outcomes	0.024	0.023	0.097		1.015	0.312
Stakeholder inclusion	-0.07	0.025	-0.276		-2.744	0.007
Stakeholder capabilities	-0.02	0.024	-0.081		-0.808	0.421

R = .332

R Square = .110

F(4.095) = at level of significance $p=0.004<0.05$

The study findings in Table 5 show that the Beta (β) coefficients for the indicators are as follows: project outcome is 0.097; stakeholder inclusion is -0.276; while stakeholder capability is -0.081. The β values imply that one unit change in the performance of community-based projects is associated with 9.7% change in project outcomes, 27.6% change in stakeholder inclusion and 8.1% change in stakeholder capability. The results indicate that project outcomes had no statistically significant influence on the performance of community-based projects ($\beta=0.097$, $t=1.015$, $p=0.312>0.05$). Stakeholder inclusion had a statistically significant influence on the performance of community-based projects ($\beta=-0.276$, $t=-2.744$, $p=0.007<0.05$). Stakeholder capability had no statistically significant influence on the performance of community-based projects ($\beta=-0.081$, $t=-0.808$, $p=0.421>0.05$). Based on the research findings, we reject the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between application of stakeholder analysis and performance of community-based projects, and concludes that application of stakeholder analysis has a statistically significant influence on the performance of community-based projects.

5. Conclusion

The influence of stakeholder analysis on the project can be immense and, if not managed correctly, could lead to project delays, resource drain, political intervention or project termination. The most dominant indicator in stakeholder analysis was stakeholder inclusion, followed by project outcomes and stakeholder capability. Stakeholder participation increased project ownership by the beneficiaries and that it ensured project sustainability through inclusion.

6. Recommendations

The application of stakeholder analysis has a significant influence on the performance of community-based projects. This study has revealed that the application of stakeholder analysis has an influence on the performance of community-based projects. Since community stakeholders are important in the success of community-based projects, there is need to ensure that among the team members of the projects there are community members.

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