



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF HEALTH PROJECTS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN NYERI COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at studying the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project performance by focusing on two objectives, stakeholder analysis and stakeholder conflict management. The study was guided by two theories; stakeholder Theory and contingency theory. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was the public hospitals in Nyeri County. The unit of analysis was public hospitals health projects in Nyeri county while the unit of observation was hospital management team, project implementers, and representative's agencies from government since they are involved in the implementation of health projects in Nyeri county. The study adopted census hence no sampling was done. Data was collected using semi- structured questionnaires. After the data collected, it was subjected to editing, handling blank responses, coding categorizing and keyed into statistical package for social science computer software for analysis version 24. The study adopted descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The data was presented using tables. Findings show that; there is a moderate significant relationship between stakeholder analysis and performance of health projects, Kenya ($r = 0.370$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$) and a strong significant relationship between stakeholder conflict management and performance of health projects, Kenya ($r= 0.526$, $p\text{-value}= 0.040$). The study recommends that; project managers should identify and document all the stakeholders in order to keep record and assess new stakeholders and project managers must seek to understand the differences of opinions among the project team and stakeholders and makes them transparent.

Key Words: Stakeholder engagement, project performance, stakeholder analysis, stakeholder conflict management

Background of the Study

Healthcare projects aim to improve access to healthcare, strengthening human resources, and empowering vulnerable groups. The health of a nation significantly enhances its economic development (Suhonen & Paasivaara, 2015). There are different types of projects in health care they include; internal, small-scale projects without any resources of their own, as well as large-scale projects with external funding, involving several organizations. Large-scale projects are usually initiated externally, meaning that their objectives are set. People working in health care projects often do so in addition to their own day jobs, and the projects are intended to be carried out on meagre resources, or in many cases with no additional resources whatsoever (Suhonen & Paasivaara, 2015).

Healthcare projects attracts different stakeholders with varying expectations of the outcome of the project. The level of urgency and priorities by the stakeholders has a tendency to change during the lifecycle increasing the project management challenge (Califf et al., 2016). A stakeholder is any individual, group or organization that may be influenced, influence or feel influenced by a program. Stakeholders may include customers, project managers, developers, subcontractors, vendors, financing agencies, customers, owners, staff and local communities (Jason, 2016). Rahman and Alzubi (2015) pointed out that, ineffective stakeholder engagement significantly contributed to projects cost overruns which resulted into project failure. It was also clearly noted that stakeholder issues must be handled as emergencies to avoid projects cost overruns.

Stakeholder engagement is a vital aspect of any project, activity or program being executed successfully. Stakeholder engagement is an ongoing commitment and growth of stakeholder interactions to achieve a good project or program (Homthong & Moungnoi, 2016). According to Kivitis (2013) effective stakeholder engagement benefits project performance by eliminating conflicts and reducing costs through increased stakeholder participation in projects decision making. The findings concurred with the findings of Dacha and Juma (2018) who observed that, stakeholders need to be effectively engaged in health projects procurement processes in order to avoid cost overruns which may come in form of delays. Hence studying the influence of stakeholder engagement is key in unlocking project success.

Statement of the Problem

Health projects are aimed at bringing positive change that impact positively to the living standards of the people in the long run (Suhonen & Paasivaara, 2015). Despite the continued funding and other attention given to the healthcare projects the projects have remained a mere dream with minimal completion rates while others not meeting the expected goals (WHO, 2019). Statistics from Government of Kenya (GoK) reveal that 63% of the health projects fail after a short time after implementation, thereby being not sustainable (GoK, 2019).

According to Ali and Gitonga (2019), among the Key challenges facing healthcare projects include limited ability to translate policy to implementation and lack of clear implementation strategies, ineffective engagement, poor stakeholder inclusion, fragmentation of effort and poor coordination. Wario and Gakuu (2018) revealed that most of the government health projects in Kenya (66.7%) fail due to inadequate stakeholder engagement. Rugenyi (2016) reported that over the last few decades cost overruns especially in the health projects have remained common with some projects recording up to 60 % increase from the original contract sum.

Magassouba et al., (2019) conducted a study on influence of stakeholder engagement on development project performance in Guinea and established that stakeholders engagement through identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and control contribute in a very great extent to project success (Wanjiru, 2016) conducted a study on the influence of stakeholder engagement but limited it to the performance of street children rehabilitation programs further

restricting it to Nairobi county Kenya. Existing research in has failed to link poor project performance to stakeholder engagement. Hence this study aimed at bridging the existing gaps by examining the influence stakeholder engagement on performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya.

Objectives

The general objective this study was to establish the influence of stakeholder engagement on performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya

Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the influence of Stakeholder identification on performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya.
- ii. To determine the influence of stakeholder conflict management on performance health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Stakeholder Theory

The proponent of the theory is Freeman (2010) argues that managers have a moral obligation to consider and appropriately balance the interests of all stakeholders. According to (Donaldson & Preston, 1995) stakeholder approach is a powerful means of understanding the project environment. The Stakeholder theory identifies the groups which are stakeholders of a project, and both recommends and describes methods by which the interests of those groups can be given due regard to by management (Freeman & Dmytriyev, 2017). Project stakeholders influence the quality of project and performance. Freeman (1984) faulted the traditional models because they depicted the world of managers as dealing with employees, suppliers, and customers only and they also claimed that the firm existed to make profit and serve the interest of one group only.

The stakeholder theory holds that organizational management should identify persons of interest or groups that are affected by an organization or project, understand their needs, and stipulate measures necessary to cater for the needs of the interest groups and persons (Bonnafeus-Boucher, 2016). Project stakeholders can either be internal or external the organization. Whether an individual or a group of individuals is external or internal to a project is determined by the point of view of the observer. The stakeholders of a project perceive that they have a stake in the project or the task and as a result of the perceived stake in the project they have certain expectations and hence they adopt a certain type of behavior which is sometimes constructive or destructive. It is important to identify stakeholder early to understand they needs and expectation and needs hence the stakeholder theory was used to link the relationship between stakeholder identification and project performance.

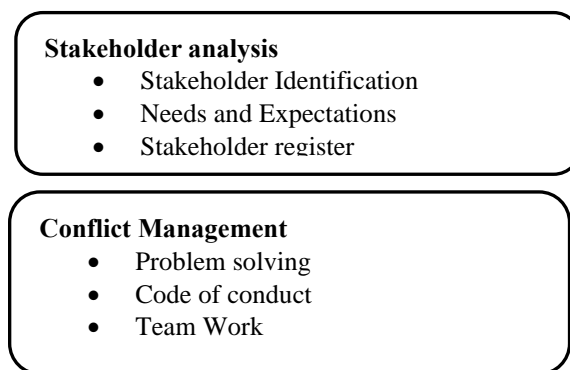
Contingency Theory

The contingency theory of leadership was suggested by Fred E Fiedler in 1964. It underlined the significance of the manager's personality and the situation they find themselves in within the work environment (Fiedler 1964). The conflict management model of the contingency theory was brought about by Derr Brooklyn in 1975. He said that this theory is a theoretical tool that can be used in the management of organizational conflicts. He talked about three strategies of conflict management from which leaders can use to devise suitable methods of resolving a disagreement, these include collaboration, bargaining, and power play (Derr 1975). His approach to this conflict management paradigm further indicated that collaboration involves allowing differences to materialize between conflicting parties than working on the problems until a commonly acceptable solution is attained. Collaboration has a basic assumption that at any time of conflict the parties

involved will have the motivation to spend time and energy at problem-solving together. Bargaining has a different assumption that there cannot be a situation where neither party would come out satisfied from the situation causing conflict, but they can find a middle ground. This can be related to the compromise strategy which is most used when an individual's goals are moderately important (White 2016), but where there is equal power between the parties then there is a way to find mutual goals leading to compromise. The applicability of this theory to this study is that to influence project performance positively the management should scrutinize a situation to find what are the variables that are causing conflict and then choose a specific strategy for conflict management. Conflict management is about people and thus depends heavily on attitudes, awareness, and opinions held by the parties in conflict. Furthermore, as this theory recommends, the management can find best practices through going through a range of conflict management strategies while making sure to consider the positive outcomes that will lead to the achievement of the overall objectives of the organization, which of course would lead to improved performance. This theory was linked to the objective of stakeholder conflict management on project performance.

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables



Dependent Variable

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis involves assessment and identification of individual, persons, organization/institution that may have a bearing on the existence of a project. It is an efficient way of gathering and examining of qualitative and quantitative information with the aim of establishing the interest of stakeholders throughout the project life cycle (Njogu, 2016).

Legitimate and valid stakeholders need to be identified and their power and influence understood to manage their potential impact on the projects (Njagi, 2020). It is important for a project team to get to know stakeholders in terms of their concerns, needs and expectations. These needs, concerns and expectations if not met and prioritized will turn out against the project performance. It is commonly known that when the project meets time, cost constraint as well as quality sometimes is not a guarantee that the stakeholders accept the project output or outcome. In many instances, stakeholders distanced themselves from project outputs or outcomes despite those activities being completed on time, within budget and with great quality because their expectations have not been met or satisfied (Wanjiru, 2016). Stakeholders are identified by performing a stakeholder analysis in which potential stakeholders and relevant information (interests, interdependencies, involvement, influence, and potential impact on project success) are gathered, documented and analysed (Penzenstadler et al., 2013).

Stakeholder Conflict Management

According to Osuizugbo and Okuntade, (2020) due to the diversity of stakeholders with different ideologies, cultures, and race, conflict is most likely to occur when undertaking a project. Conflict

causes project cost overrun, delays, low productivity and even damage relationships among project stakeholders (Ashraf & Rowlinson, 2015). Hence there is a need to look at the management approaches to conflict critically among project stakeholders. Conflict management is a process of communication for changing the negative emotions in conflict to a state of emotions that allow for working out a solution to the conflict (Muchemi, 2017). For conflict management approaches to really take place, and be successful, stakeholders need to have the sense that the conflict mechanism was fair and in their best interest (Sudhakar, 2015).

Performance of Health Projects

Project performance metrics focuses on the impact of the project at a point in time or over a fixed timeframe (Njogu, 2016). It is evaluated differently by various stakeholders of the health projects based on their expectations in relation to the actual quality, cost and time; it can be measured in terms of the qualitative value the project has to the implementing organization or quantitative in terms of the earned value systems for utility and large government projects (Kelbessa, 2016). A project is considered to be successfully implemented if it is carried on schedule; realizes the purpose the project was designed through achieving the goals and objectives identified; the project is completed within the budgets commonly known as the project Triangle (Maina & Kimutai, 2018). According to Zuofa, (2014) projects may be completed within their targeted time, cost and scope criteria but still be classified as failures. Therefore, it becomes necessary to consider failure beyond these criteria and include targets such as the aspiration of stakeholders, the benefits accruing to society or project organization among criteria for determining project failure.

Empirical Literature Review

Stakeholder Analysis

Ochieng and Onyango, (2019) conducted a study to assess the influence of stakeholder analysis on the performance of water and sanitation projects in Homabay County, Kenya. The study adopted the descriptive research design and targeted respondents from Homabay Water and Sanitation Company Limited, county water officers, NGO technical officers and commercial and domestic users. The sample size of 274 was determined from the formula proposed by Yamane. Data was collected using questionnaires. The study findings revealed that stakeholder analysis greatly influence the performance of water and sanitation projects in Homabay County, Kenya. The study further established that stakeholder identification on water and sanitation company projects reputes a good image to the company services, stakeholder interest builds and solidifies objectives of the water and sanitation projects while stakeholder identification significantly earns the company growth opportunities and stakeholder analysis enables the company realize its weakness and creates room to advice appropriately addressing the problems.

Ngetich and Gakuu, (2019) conducted a study to assess the influence of stakeholder analysis on project performance. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 1660 people and it included all stakeholders living in Kamere, RALP settlement, Lemayan, key employees and Kenya Wildlife personnel. Data was collected through administration of semi-structured questionnaire. The study findings revealed that there was a weak positive relationship between stakeholder analysis and project performance. The study concluded that a good understanding of the stakeholders will go a long way in positively influencing the project performance, the study recommended that a proper assessment and analysis of the stakeholders both internal and external should be held as key factor by project managers.

Stakeholder Conflict Management

According to Anono and Ogollah, (2018) who conducted a study on effects of conflict management strategies on organizational performance: a case of the national empowerment

network of people living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya .Effective implementation of conflict management strategies leads to high productivity and improved staff morale and satisfaction in the organization. The study additionally established that a majority of the respondents said that selecting relevant conflict management strategies to specific conflict situations greatly influences effectiveness and efficiency in the overall organizational performance with 73.2% agreeing with the statement.

Maina and Kimutai, (2018) conducted a study to investigate the role of conflict management on project performance of Open-air Market projects in Nyeri County, Kenya. The research adopted both descriptive and exploratory research design. The target population was all the Open-air upgrading projects in Nyeri County. Data was collected using questionnaires. The study results established that there was a positive and significant relationship between conflict management and project performance and conflicts if not solved amicably affects performance of the project. The study concluded that to ensure that the performance of the projects is not affected; the project management should focus on the needs and expectation of each category of stakeholders then adopt an appropriate conflict management strategy to avoid destructive effect of negative conflict and disagreement.

Omondi and Kimutai, (2018) found that the factors affecting stakeholder conflict in projects include the gap between stakeholders' expectations and the expectations of the regulatory regimes. Other vital factors imposing stakeholders' conflicts on projects were found to be lack of full information disclosure by parties and effects of cumulative developments effects in a location such as levels of poverty, inclusivity and location of projects. Gitau, (2016) Conducted a study on effects of conflicts on project performance in government institutions Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design, the target population was top managers, middle level managers, lower management, and employees and data was collected using questionnaire. The study findings indicated that conflict among the employees affects project performance.

Performance of Health Projects

Olwande, (2021) conducted on study on Stakeholder Engagement And Performance Of The Antiretroviral Therapy Supply Chain Project By National Aids And Sexually Transmitted Infections Control Program In Health Facilities, Kenya. The study adopted both descriptive and explanatory research design, the target population was pharmaceutical technologists across Kenya and data was collected using electronic questionnaire. The study findings established that stakeholder capacity building, human resource management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication management all had a positive and significant effect on project performance. The study therefore concluded that stakeholder's engagement had a significant effect on performance of the antiretroviral supply chain project by National Aids and Sexually Transmitted Infections Control Program in health facilities in Kenya.

According to Wandabwa and Yusuf, (2018) who conducted a study on effect of stakeholders management on health project performance for national hospital insurance fund Kenya. The study conducted a descriptive survey research design was adopted, the target population of 324 stakeholders who are involved in NHIF outpatient medical scheme with accredited facilities under contract B and consisted of five strata. Stratified random sampling and simple random sampling were used to select the sample population. The study findings revealed that there was a positive linear relationship between project performance and the way at which stakeholders communicate between project performance and stakeholder's engagement and between project performance and monitoring evaluation.

Mbijiwe et al., (2019) sought to determine the influence of human resource management practices on the performance of health projects. The study adopted pragmatism research paradigm and used descriptive survey research design and mixed method. The study focused on the health projects

funded by the county government of Meru for the period 2013 to 2017 in all the Sub-counties. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedule. The study findings revealed that there was a positive significant linear relationship between recruitment, training and pay determination and performance of health projects.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive research survey design. The goal of descriptive research is to offer the study a profile or describe relevant aspects of the phenomena of interest from the individual, organization, industry, or another perspective (Kothari & Garg, 2019). The target population was the public hospitals in Nyeri County. There are only five public hospitals in Nyeri county, with all others being either dispensaries or health centres. According to the Directorate of Health Services under the county government of Nyeri. The focus on the five public hospitals is justified by the fact that the problem of poor performance of health projects in public hospitals is more pronounced than private hospitals. The study was limited to level 4 and level 5 hospitals in Nyeri County where majority of projects take place. The unit of analysis was the afore-mentioned hospitals' Project Management Committees, County Coordination Committees, and hospital management team since they are involved in the implementation of health projects in the county. The target population was 250 personnel who are involved in the health projects, the study adopted census hence no sampling was done.

The sampling frame for this research included hospital management team, project implementers and Representatives from government agencies and non-governmental organizations of the health projects in public hospitals in Nyeri County who are 250 in number. The study adopted a census approach. This therefore rules out application of a sampling technique. The study used census since the population of 250 is small. The primary data was collected using a questionnaire with both open ended and closed-ended questions. Questionnaires were used for both project managers and project team members.

Mugenda (2013) recommends that a pilot sample between 1% and 10% is recommended and therefore this study issued 25 questionnaires to project managers who were excluded from the main study. In this study, the data was analyzed using quantitative analysis. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statics such as frequency and percentages were used to summarize the data and make initial inferences while inferential statistic such as correlation and regression analysis were used to establish relationships between variables.

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

The study sample 250 respondents. 25 respondents were used for pilot test and were hence excluded from the actual study. Questionnaires were administered to 225 respondents and 160 successfully answered them. This presents a 71.1% response rate which was considered adequate for analysis as recommended by Fincham (2008) that a response rate of 60% should be the target of every social science researcher.

5 Stakeholder Analysis

The first objective aimed at examine the influence of stakeholder analysis on performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya. Respondents were asked to tick on the extent to which they agreed with listed statements related to stakeholder analysis. Findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Influence of Stakeholder Analysis

Key; 1- strongly disagree (SD), 2-disagree (D), 3-Neutral (N), 4-agree (A), 5-strongly agree (SA)

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Stakeholder analysis is always done to identify extend of decision making before selecting a stakeholder	7	4.4	8	5.0	32	20.0	61	38.1	52	32.5	3.69
Concerns of stakeholders during project/stakeholder identification process are always taken care of	18	11.3	25	15.6	14	8.8	75	46.9	28	17.5	3.31
Stakeholder interest builds and solidifies objectives of the health projects.	1	0.6	21	13.1	2	1.3	98	61.3	38	23.8	3.44
After all the stakeholders are identified a stakeholder register is kept	2	1.3	10	6.3	3	1.9	81	50.6	64	40.0	4.22
Problem analysis before selection of a stakeholder is always undertaken to understand the extent of stakeholder contribution into the project.	8	5.0	28	17.5	14	8.7	54	33.8	56	35.0	3.36
Project stakeholder are selected at a point that they have the greatest impact	7	4.4	14	8.7	26	16.2	72	45.0	41	25.6	3.86

Findings show that; the respondents strongly agreed that after all the stakeholders are identified a stakeholder register is kept (m=4.22). Respondents also strongly agreed that; project stakeholders are selected at a point that they have the greatest impact (m=3.86), stakeholder analysis is always done to identify extend of decision making before selecting a stakeholder (m=3.69), stakeholder interest builds and solidifies objectives of the health projects (m=3.44), problem analysis before selection of a stakeholder is always undertaken to understand the extent of stakeholder contribution into the project (m=3.36), and concerns of stakeholders during project/stakeholder identification process are always taken care of (m=3.31).

Findings show that the health projects' managers involve stakeholders in identifying the health projects to initiate. They are therefore able to group the stakeholders according to their levels of participation, interest, and their influence in the projects. The project managers are also able to allocate stakeholders various roles to play during project implementation. The project manager is also able to know which stakeholder to consult based on the issue at hand and the stakeholders' skills and experience on the issue which enhances project performance. Findings concurs with Ngetich and Gakuu, (2019) that a good understanding of the stakeholders will go a long way in positively influencing the project performance.

Stakeholder Conflict Management

The second objective focused on influence of stakeholder conflict management on performance health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya. Respondents were requested to rank their agreement level on statement related to stakeholder conflict management. Findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Stakeholder Conflict Management

Key; 1- strongly disagree (SD), 2-disagree (D), 3-Neutral (N), 4-agree (A), 5-strongly agree (SA)

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Conflicts at the work place affect successful realization of the project objectives.	2	1.3	6	3.8	21	13.1	102	63.8	29	18.1	3.89
Effective stakeholder conflict resolution promotes good relations between individuals and groups	4	2.5	5	3.1	7	4.4	84	52.5	60	37.5	4.02
There always a method of resolving conflict once it occurs	8	5.0	17	10.6	39	24.4	66	41.3	30	18.7	3.23
There's open and fair manner of dealing with conflict among the project stakeholder	45	28.1	90	56.2	12	7.5	8	5.0	5	3.1	1.82

N=160

Findings show that the respondents agreed that; effective stakeholder conflict resolution promotes good relations between individuals and groups (m=4.02), conflicts at the work place affect successful realization of the project objectives (m=3.89), and there always a method of resolving conflict once it occurs (m=3.23). Respondents however disagreed that there is open and fair manner of dealing with conflict among the project stakeholder (m=1.82). Findings imply that the project managers have good conflict management skills which enable them to solve conflicts among the stakeholders. The project managers have a method to resolve conflicts which promotes collaborative project management. Conflict resolution enables everyone involved in the project to work harmoniously with one objective of achieving project goals. However, some respondents felt that there is favoritism in solving project conflicts among the stakeholders. Findings are in agreement with Maina and Kimutai (2018) that adoption of an appropriate conflict management strategy helps to avoid destructive effect of negative conflict and disagreement during project implementation.

Performance Health Projects

The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements relating to implementation of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya. The results were as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Performance Health Projects

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
The project meet quality standards	9	5.6	19	11.9	14	8.8	73	45.6	45	28.1	3.69
Project beneficiaries are satisfied	2	1.3	21	13.1	24	15.0	41	25.6	72	45.0	3.57
Projects are completed within planned time	22	13.8	85	53.1	26	16.3	19	11.9	8	5.0	2.28
Projects are completed within set budget	56	35.0	81	50.6	10	6.3	11	6.9	2	1.3	1.76

Findings show that the respondents agreed that the project meet quality standards ($m=3.69$), and project beneficiaries are satisfied ($m=3.57$). Findings further disagreed that projects are completed within planned time ($m=2.28$) and strongly disagreed that projects are completed within set budget ($m=1.76$). Findings imply that even though the projects meet expected quality and beneficiaries are satisfied, the health projects experience cost and budget overruns. The projects were hence delayed and delivered at a later date than scheduled and extra costs were also incurred. Findings agree with Rugenyi (2016) that cost overruns in the health projects have remained common with some projects recording up to 60 % increase from the original contract sum.

Correlation Analysis

The study used Pearson Correlation in order to measure the strength and the relationship between the stakeholder engagement and performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya. A correlation value of ± 0.5 shows a strong correlation, ± 0.30 to ± 0.49 moderate correlation while ± 0.29 is a weak correlation. Significance is less than $\alpha=0.05$. Correlation findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients

Variables		Performance	Analysis	Conflict management
Project performance	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Analysis	Pearson Correlation	.370**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
Conflict management	Pearson Correlation	.526**	.202	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040	.011	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

According to the findings in Table 4, there is a moderate significant relationship between stakeholder analysis and performance of health projects, Kenya ($r = 0.370$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$) and a strong significant relationship between stakeholder conflict management and performance of health projects, Kenya ($r = 0.526$, $p\text{-value}=0.040$). This implies that stakeholder analysis and stakeholder conflict management significantly influence performance of health projects. Findings concurs with; Ngetich and Gakuu, (2019) that there was positive relationship between stakeholder analysis and project performance and Maina and Kimutai, (2018) that there was a positive and significant relationship between conflict management and project performance.

Regression Analysis

A regression analysis was conducted to establish how a unit change in stakeholder engagement predict changes in performance of health projects in Nyeri County. Table 5-7 presents the regression output.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.651	0.564	0.267	.736

The results show that the value of R^2 is 0.564. This shows that stakeholder engagement practices studied accounts for 56.4% performance of health projects in Nyeri County. Therefore, other factors excluded from this study account for 43.6% changes in performance of health projects in Nyeri County.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.085	4	3.771	5.177	.001 ^b
	Residual	111.453	153	.728		
	Total	126.538	157			

a Predicators: (constant) stakeholder analysis, and stakeholder conflict management

b Dependent variable: performance of health projects

Findings show that the regression model was significant (p-value = 0.000) at 0.05 hence there was a linear relationship between stakeholder engagement and performance of health projects in Nyeri County. The F is 5.177 which shows that the model is suitable in testing the relationship between independent and dependent variable.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant/Y Intercept	4.490	1.545		2.906	.004
Analysis	.444	.149	.266	2.973	.003
Conflict management	.717	.225	.276	3.180	.002

Based on the results in Table 7, the equation

Performance of health projects = 4.490 + 0.444 (stakeholder analysis) + 0.717 (stakeholder conflict management).

Therefore, holding all variables at a constant zero, performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya would be at 4.490. A unit increase in stakeholder analysis would cause a 0.444 increase in performance of health projects. A unit increase in stakeholder conflict management would cause a 0.717 significant increase in performance of health projects. According to the T statistics, stakeholder conflict management had the strongest influence on performance of health projects (3.180), followed by stakeholder analysis (2.973)

In addition, stakeholder analysis, and stakeholder conflict management causes a significant change (p<0.05) on performance of health projects in Nyeri County, Kenya. Findings are in agreement with Olwande, (2021) that stakeholder engagement have a positive and significant effect on project performance.

Conclusion

Project managers conduct stakeholder analysis to identify various stakeholders interested in the project. Once the stakeholders are identified, they project managers reach out to them to analyze their interests in the projects and are hence able to designate various roles in the project. Stakeholder analysis further enables the project managers to identify the opportunities, potentials, and project risks early enough and find measures to utilize the opportunities and avert the risks.

Project conflict management influence project performance. Conflicts in projects are unavoidable as project team and stakeholders will always disagree on some issues. Constructive conflicts can force people to look for a better solution to issues raised. Lack of proper conflict management can hinder successful project performance. Prolonged project conflicts can lead to project delays since the energy and time is diverted to solving conflicts. Managing conflict is an important skill that

any project manager should possess considering the significance conflict has on the success of a project.

Recommendations

Project managers should give more emphasis on stakeholder analysis. This will help them to assess all the existing stakeholders who directly or indirectly influence project performance. This helps to profile and categorize the stakeholders in terms of their influence, interests or timing of engagement so that adequate planning is done for how to engage with them. Project managers should also identify and document all the stakeholders in order to keep record and assess new stakeholders who might have relevance to the project.

Project managers must seek to understand the differences of opinions among the project team and stakeholders and makes them transparent, carefully leading individuals and groups to find common ground. The stakeholders should be conversant with the various conflict management techniques at their disposal to maintain a coexistence attitude among themselves. To ensure that the performance of the projects is not affected, the project management should focus on the needs and expectation of each category of stakeholders then adopt an appropriate conflict management strategy to avoid destructive effect of negative conflict and disagreement.

Areas for Further Study

A similar study in another county in Kenya. A study incorporating project stakeholders to get their views on their engagement in health projects in project activities

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