



PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA

¹ Mutinda Scholarstica Kavuli, ² Dr. Gatobu Purity -Phd

¹ Master of Degree in Project Management, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

² Lecturer, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

ABSTRACT

The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of project management practices on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives; to establish the influence of project planning on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya and to find out the influence of project communication on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya. The study used the descriptive research design. The total estimated population of stakeholders directly involved in HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County is around 1,230 individuals. This population included program managers, healthcare providers, community health workers, beneficiaries, local government officials, and representatives from NGOs and CBOs. The study's sample size of 293 was reached at using Krejcie and Morgan formula and were selected using simple random sampling technique. This research used a questionnaire to collect primary data. The study collected both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and presented in prose form. Quantitative data collected was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 software using descriptive statistics and also conducted inferential statistics through correlation and regression analysis. The findings were presented in tables and figures. The study examined the influence of project management practices—project planning, and project communication—on the performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya. The study revealed that all variables significantly impact program performance: project planning ($B = 0.268$, $p = 0.001$), and project communication ($B = 0.289$, $p = 0.000$). The findings conclude that effective project management practices are crucial for enhancing program success, with communication having the most substantial impact. The study recommends strengthening communication strategies and enhancing project planning processes to improve the performance and sustainability of HIV prevention programs.

Key Words: Project Management Practices, Project Planning, Project Communication, Performance, HIV prevention programs

Background of the Study

Globally, HIV/AIDS remains a significant public health challenge, with millions of people affected worldwide. According to the UNAIDS Global AIDS Update 2022, approximately 38 million people are living with HIV globally, and about 1.5 million new infections occur each year (WHO, 2019). To combat this epidemic, various HIV prevention programs have been implemented across the globe, utilizing different strategies such as awareness campaigns, distribution of preventive tools (e.g., condoms), antiretroviral therapy (ART), and education on safe practices (National AIDS Control Council, 2021).

Effective project management practices are critical to the success of these programs. The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines project management as the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements (Adan, 2019). Key project management practices include project planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation, risk management, and stakeholder engagement. These practices are essential for ensuring that HIV prevention programs are implemented efficiently, effectively, and sustainably (Acho, & Kithinji, 2021).

Project management is the process of laying out a plan and implementing project actions so as to accomplish the set aims and goals. According to Abdi (2019), “the success of a project in accomplishing its goals is backed up by the interaction of varied factors that if poorly scrutinized and supervised can smash the project apart and obstruct the project from attaining the set purposes throughout the instigation making the project a non-performing one”. Project management practices refer to the methods, processes, and techniques employed by project managers and their teams to effectively plan, execute, monitor, control, and close projects. These practices are designed to ensure that projects are completed on time, within budget, and according to specified quality standards (Ali, Ogolla, & Nzioki, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

HIV/AIDS remains a major public health concern in Kenya, with approximately 1.5 million people living with the virus as of 2020. Despite concerted efforts to curb the epidemic, the country still records about 42,000 new infections annually, indicating persistent gaps in prevention strategies (WHO, 2022). In Kajiado County, the situation is particularly challenging due to the region's unique socio-cultural dynamics and logistical issues. The county's HIV prevalence rate stands at 4.7%, higher than the national average, with certain areas experiencing even higher rates. These figures underscore the critical need for effective HIV prevention programs tailored to the specific needs of Kajiado County (Kajiado County Government, 2021).

Effective project management practices are essential for the success of HIV prevention programs. These practices include thorough planning, efficient resource allocation, robust monitoring and evaluation, and strong stakeholder engagement. However, evidence suggests that the implementation of these practices within HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County is inconsistent and often suboptimal. A report by the National AIDS Control Council (NACC) highlights that many HIV prevention initiatives in Kenya, including those in Kajiado County, suffer from inadequate project management. Issues such as poor coordination, lack of timely data, and insufficient community involvement frequently undermine the performance of these programs.

According to the Kenya HIV Estimates Report 2020, many prevention programs fail to systematically track and evaluate their progress, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for improvement. For instance, only 30% of HIV prevention projects in Kajiado County regularly collect and analyze data on key performance indicators (KNBS, 2020). This lack of rigorous monitoring hampers the ability to identify successful strategies and address shortcomings effectively. The Kajiado County HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2021-2025

reveals that funding for HIV prevention programs is often insufficient and poorly managed (NACC, 2021). Approximately 45% of these programs report experiencing significant delays in funding disbursements, which disrupts their planned activities and reduces their overall impact. Furthermore, there is often a mismatch between resource allocation and the specific needs of different communities within the county, leading to inequitable access to prevention services (Kajiado County Government, 2021).

Several studies have been conducted on project management practices and project performance. For instance, Otunga (2021) conducted a study on factors affecting the performance of fast-moving consumer goods firms listed on Nairobi securities Exchange. Achola and Were (2018) conducted a study on the influence of project planning practices on performance of fast-moving consumer goods companies in Nairobi County, Kenya. Oballah, Waiganjo and Wachiuri (2019) researched on the effect of project leadership practices on organizational performance in public health institutions in Kenya. Nevertheless, none of these studies showed the influence of project management practices on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya. To fill the highlighted gaps, the current study sought to establish the influence of project management practices on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of project management practices on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya. study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i. To establish the influence of project planning on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya.
- ii. To find out the influence of project communication on performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

General Systems Theory

General systems theory (GST), outlined by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1968, posits that complex systems across various domains share organizing principles that can be discovered and modeled mathematically. This theoretical framework aims to explain the interrelatedness and interdependence of components within any given system, regardless of the field of study. GST emphasizes that systems are composed of interacting parts that create a complex whole, and understanding these interactions is crucial for comprehending the system's behavior and outcomes.

According to Boulding (2019), general systems theory serves as a foundational body of science that links and relates different disciplines in a coherent manner. It suggests that entities within a system can be described by their organizational structure and the ways in which these structures interact and share information, thereby minimizing ambiguity and enhancing understanding (Weick, 2020). The theory underscores the importance of routine patterns and relationships among entities within a system, which collectively express the nature and function of the entire organization (Katz, 2021).

One of the core tenets of GST is its holistic approach, which views systems not merely as a collection of parts but as integrated wholes whose properties cannot be fully understood by examining individual components in isolation. This perspective encourages a comprehensive analysis of how different elements within a system interact and influence each other, thereby providing insights into the overall functioning and effectiveness of the system. Critiques of GST highlight its abstract nature, which can sometimes make it challenging to apply practically

to specific fields or problems. The theory's broad and inclusive approach may lead to overly general conclusions that lack actionable insights (Checkland, 1999). Additionally, the complexity and interconnectedness emphasized by GST can make it difficult to isolate and address specific issues within a system, potentially complicating problem-solving efforts.

In the present study, GST was used to support the variable of project planning. Project planning in HIV prevention programs involves multiple components, including resource allocation, timeline management, stakeholder coordination, and risk assessment. By applying GST, this study aimed to understand how these components interrelate and collectively impact the performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County. This theoretical framework enabled the study to provide actionable insights into optimizing project planning practices to improve the success of HIV prevention initiatives in the region.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structure or system of concepts that provides a foundation for understanding, analyzing, and interpreting a specific subject or phenomenon. It is a set of interconnected ideas, principles, and theories that form a coherent and comprehensive perspective on a particular topic (Svinicki, 2019). It is a diagram that explains the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

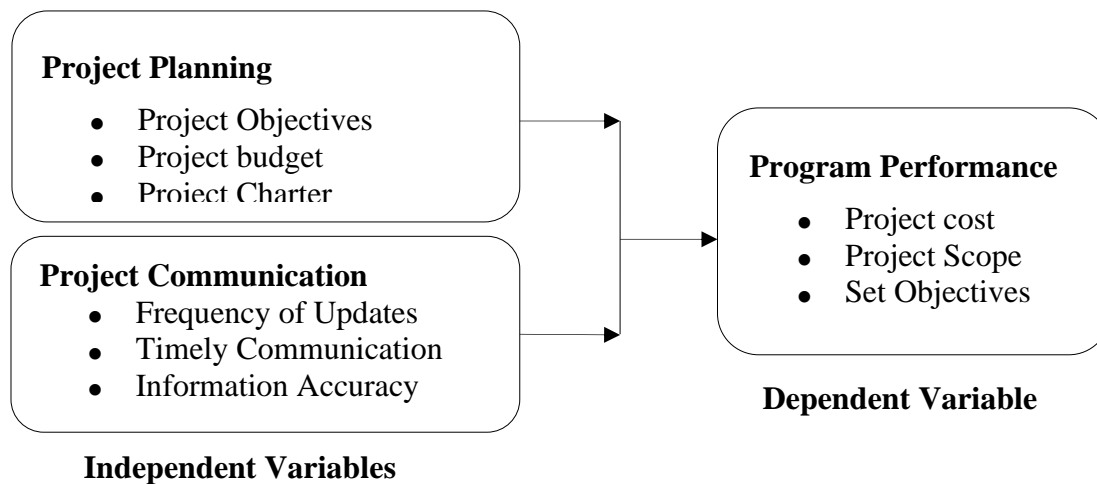


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

Project Communication

Project communication is the systematic dissemination and exchange of information throughout the project lifecycle. Effective communication ensures that all stakeholders are informed, engaged, and aligned with project goals. According to Davis (2018), poor communication is one of the leading causes of project failure, emphasizing the need for robust communication strategies. The study highlights that communication plans, regular updates, and the use of multiple communication channels are crucial for maintaining stakeholder engagement and project alignment.

Recent advancements in technology have introduced innovative communication tools such as collaborative platforms, instant messaging applications, and video conferencing systems, which have significantly improved project communication (Davis, 2018). These tools facilitate real-time information sharing, enhance collaboration, and enable remote participation, which is particularly important in the context of global projects. Moreover, the establishment of clear communication protocols and the use of standardized reporting templates contribute to the clarity and consistency of project information.

Key sub-variables in project communication include frequency of updates, timely communication, and information accuracy. Frequency of Updates refers to how often project

information is communicated to stakeholders. Regular updates help keep stakeholders informed about the project's progress and any changes that may occur. According to Davis (2018), maintaining a consistent communication schedule can prevent misunderstandings and keep stakeholders engaged. Timely Communication emphasizes the importance of delivering information at the right time. Delays in communication can lead to missed opportunities and increased risks. Müller, Geraldi, and Turner (2019) argue that timely communication is critical for making informed decisions and addressing issues promptly. Information Accuracy focuses on ensuring that the information shared with stakeholders is correct and reliable. Inaccurate information can lead to misinformed decisions and a loss of stakeholder trust. As per PMI (2017), accurate and transparent communication is a cornerstone of effective project management.

Müller, Geraldi, and Turner (2019) emphasize the importance of tailoring communication strategies to the needs of different stakeholders. They suggest that understanding the communication preferences and information requirements of various stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness of project communication. Additionally, the use of visual communication tools, such as dashboards and project status reports, can improve the accessibility and comprehensibility of project information.

Project Planning

Project planning involves defining project objectives, developing a project plan, and outlining the tasks, resources, and timelines required to achieve project goals. Effective project planning is critical for project success, as it provides a roadmap for project execution and control. According to Kerzner (2019), comprehensive project planning is associated with improved project performance, as it helps to align project activities with organizational objectives and stakeholder expectations.

Key sub-variables in project planning include project objectives, project budget, and project charter. Project Objectives are the specific goals that the project aims to achieve. Clearly defined objectives provide direction and purpose, ensuring that all project activities are aligned with the desired outcomes. According to Kerzner (2019), setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) objectives is essential for effective project planning. Project Budget outlines the financial resources required to complete the project. Accurate budgeting ensures that the project has sufficient funds to cover all necessary expenses. PMI (2017) highlights the importance of detailed budget planning to avoid cost overruns and ensure financial control. Project Charter is a formal document that authorizes the project and outlines its scope, objectives, and stakeholders. It serves as a reference point for project planning and execution. Kerzner (2019) notes that a well-defined project charter helps in securing stakeholder buy-in and provides a clear framework for project management.

Recent literature highlights the importance of integrating project planning with strategic planning to ensure alignment with organizational goals (Kerzner, 2019). The use of project management software tools, such as Gantt charts, critical path analysis, and project management information systems (PMIS), has been shown to enhance project planning effectiveness by providing project managers with the tools needed to develop detailed project plans, track progress, and manage resources efficiently. Additionally, the incorporation of stakeholder input into the project planning process helps to ensure that project plans are realistic and achievable.

Another significant aspect of project planning is contingency planning, as discussed by Hillson and Murray-Webster (2017). They emphasize that planning for potential risks and uncertainties can improve project resilience and ensure that projects can adapt to changing circumstances. This proactive approach to planning includes developing backup plans and identifying alternative strategies to address potential challenges.

Program Performance

Program performance refers to the extent to which a program achieves its intended outcomes and objectives. It is measured using various performance indicators, such as efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. It is measured using various performance indicators, such as efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. Key sub-variables in program performance include project cost, project scope, and set objectives.

Project Cost measures the financial efficiency of the project, comparing actual spending to the budgeted amount. Effective cost management ensures that the project remains within budget, which is critical for its overall success. According to Veld, Schakel, Pouwels, and Vaart (2018), regular cost monitoring and control are essential for maintaining financial discipline. Project Scope defines the boundaries of the project, including the deliverables, tasks, and activities required to achieve the project objectives. Managing the project scope effectively prevents scope creep, which can lead to delays and cost overruns. Kaplan and Norton (2020) argue that clear scope definition and control are vital for project success. Set Objectives refer to the specific targets that the project aims to achieve. These objectives guide project activities and provide a basis for measuring performance. Veld et al. (2018) emphasize that aligning project objectives with strategic goals ensures that the project delivers value to stakeholders.

According to Veld, Schakel, Pouwels, and Vaart (2018), effective program performance management is associated with improved program outcomes and stakeholder satisfaction. The study highlights the importance of establishing clear performance metrics, conducting regular performance evaluations, and using performance data to inform decision-making. The use of performance management frameworks, such as the Balanced Scorecard and Results-Based Management (RBM), has been shown to enhance program performance by providing a structured approach to measuring and managing performance (Veld et al., 2018). These frameworks help program managers to align program activities with strategic objectives, monitor progress, and identify areas for improvement. Additionally, the integration of performance data into continuous improvement processes helps to ensure that programs remain relevant and effective in achieving their goals.

Recent studies by Kaplan and Norton (2020) support the idea that linking performance metrics to strategic objectives can provide a comprehensive view of program success. They argue that performance metrics should not only focus on short-term outputs but also consider long-term impacts and sustainability. This holistic approach ensures that programs deliver meaningful and lasting benefits to stakeholders.

Empirical Literature Review

Project Communication

Davis (2018) conducted an empirical investigation into the role of project communication in stakeholder perception of project success, focusing on IT projects in the US. The study aimed to explore how different communication strategies influence stakeholder satisfaction and project outcomes. Stratified sampling was used to select a sample of 150 IT projects. Data were collected through structured surveys targeting project managers and stakeholders, and the analysis was performed using ANOVA. The findings indicated that effective communication was a key determinant of perceived project success, with a statistical significance of $F(3, 146) = 4.89, p = 0.003$. The study highlighted the importance of regular updates, clarity of information, and the use of multiple communication channels.

Müller, Geraldi, and Turner (2019) examined the relationship between leadership communication and project success in international projects. The objective was to understand how leadership communication practices influence the success of complex projects. The study used convenience sampling to select 200 international projects. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with project leaders and analyzed using correlation analysis. The

results showed a strong positive correlation between leadership communication and project success ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$). The study emphasized the role of clear, consistent, and transparent communication from project leaders in achieving project goals.

Karlsen (2018) assessed the impact of communication on project success among project managers in Europe. The study aimed to identify the communication factors that contribute to successful project outcomes. Random sampling was used to select 120 project managers across various industries. Data were collected through comprehensive surveys and analyzed using regression analysis. The findings revealed that effective communication significantly contributed to project success, with an R^2 of 0.57, $p < 0.05$. The study highlighted the importance of tailoring communication strategies to meet the needs of different stakeholders and ensuring timely and accurate information dissemination.

Zwikael and Smyrk (2019) identified best practices in project communication through a study involving IT and construction projects. The objective was to determine the communication practices that most effectively contribute to project success. Purposive sampling was used to select 80 projects for the study. Data were collected through detailed case studies and analyzed using thematic analysis. The study found that regular updates and timely communication were essential for project success. Key best practices identified included the use of collaborative platforms, standardized reporting templates, and frequent stakeholder meetings.

Achieng (2020) evaluated the effectiveness of communication strategies in enhancing project performance in NGOs in Kenya. The study aimed to determine how different communication approaches impact the performance of NGO projects. The target population was NGOs in Nairobi, with random sampling used to select 60 NGOs for the study. Data were collected through structured surveys and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings indicated that timely and accurate communication strategies significantly enhanced project performance. The study emphasized the importance of establishing clear communication protocols and ensuring that all stakeholders are kept informed throughout the project lifecycle.

Project Planning

Kerzner (2019) conducted a study on project planning practices and their impact on project success across various industries globally. The primary objective was to explore the relationship between detailed project planning and project outcomes. This literature review included 150 studies, employing systematic review and content analysis methodologies. The findings indicated that detailed project planning was linked to better project outcomes. The study highlighted the importance of defining clear project objectives, developing comprehensive project plans, and ensuring adequate resource allocation.

Fleming and Koppelman (2018) investigated the use of earned value management (EVM) in project planning within the construction sector in the US. The objective was to assess how EVM contributes to project performance. Random sampling was used to select a sample of 100 construction projects. Data were collected through surveys and analyzed using regression analysis. The study found that projects utilizing EVM showed significant improvements in performance, with an R^2 of 0.70, $p < 0.01$. The findings emphasized the importance of integrating EVM into project planning to monitor progress and control costs effectively.

Chua, Kog, and Loh (2019) identified critical success factors in project planning for IT projects in Singapore. The study aimed to determine the key planning factors that contribute to successful IT projects. Purposive sampling was employed to select a sample of 80 IT projects. Data were collected through structured surveys and analyzed using factor analysis. The findings revealed that clear project objectives, detailed budgeting, and comprehensive project charters were critical for project success. The study emphasized the need for thorough planning and continuous monitoring to achieve project goals.

Dvir, Raz, and Shenhar (2020) examined the relationship between project planning and success across various industries in Israel. The objective was to understand how comprehensive planning impacts project outcomes. Random sampling was used to select a sample of 120 projects. Data were collected through surveys and analyzed using regression analysis. The study found that comprehensive planning was positively correlated with project success, with a β of 0.65, $p < 0.01$. The findings highlighted the importance of involving stakeholders in the planning process and ensuring that project plans are realistic and achievable.

Kamau (2021) evaluated the impact of project planning on the performance of government-funded projects in Kenya. The study aimed to determine how effective planning practices influence the success of government projects. The target population was government-funded projects, with stratified sampling used to select a sample of 60 projects. Data were collected through structured surveys and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results indicated that effective project planning significantly enhanced project performance. The study emphasized the importance of clear project objectives, detailed budgeting, and comprehensive project charters in achieving project success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive research design. The total estimated population of stakeholders directly involved in HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County was around 1,230 individuals. This population included program managers, healthcare providers, community health workers, beneficiaries, local government officials, and representatives from NGOs and CBOs (Kajiado County Report, 2023). The study's sample size was reached at using Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination formula (Russell, 2019). Therefore, using the formula, the sample size for the study was 293 respondents. The respondents were chosen with the help of simple random sampling technique. This research used a questionnaire to collect primary data. This study adopted the self-administered questionnaire approach. According to Lancaster, Dodd, and Williamson (2019), the sample size for high precision pilot studies should be between 1% and 10%. Therefore, the study was piloted on 29 respondents which represent 10% of study sample size. Quantitative data collected was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 software. The research used descriptive analysis. This study conducted inferential statistics through correlation analysis. A multiple regression model was used.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study targeted a total of 293 respondents, including program managers, healthcare providers, community health workers, local government officials, and representatives from NGOs and CBOs involved in HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County. A total of 250 questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 85.3%. This high response rate indicates strong engagement from the participants and enhances the reliability of the study findings. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), a response rate above 70% is considered excellent, reflecting a high level of data reliability.

Descriptive Analysis

Project Planning

The first objective of the study was to establish the influence of project planning on the performance of HIV prevention programs. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Project Planning

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
Project objectives are clearly defined at the beginning.	3.842	0.687
Project budgets are adequately planned and allocated.	4.012	0.701
Project schedules are realistic and achievable.	3.956	0.726
Resource planning is effective in our projects.	3.889	0.743
Project plans are regularly reviewed and updated.	3.865	0.758
Stakeholder input is considered during project planning.	4.045	0.679
Effective project planning leads to successful outcomes.	4.133	0.664
Aggregate Score	3.963	0.708

The findings in Table 1 show that respondents generally agreed that effective project planning positively impacts the performance of HIV prevention programs. Specifically, there was consensus that project budgets are adequately planned and allocated ($M = 4.012$, $SD = 0.701$) and that stakeholder input is considered during project planning ($M = 4.045$, $SD = 0.679$), reflecting the importance of financial management and stakeholder involvement in the planning process. Respondents also agreed that project schedules are realistic and achievable ($M = 3.956$, $SD = 0.726$) and that resource planning is effective ($M = 3.889$, $SD = 0.743$), highlighting the role of practical time and resource management. Regular reviews and updates of project plans ($M = 3.865$, $SD = 0.758$) further ensure that projects remain aligned with their goals. The overall agreement that effective project planning leads to successful outcomes ($M = 4.133$, $SD = 0.664$) underscores the critical role of planning in achieving project success.

The aggregate score for project planning was 3.963, indicating that respondents generally agreed that effective planning positively impacts the performance of HIV prevention programs. This highlights the crucial role that comprehensive and well-structured planning plays in enhancing project outcomes. The emphasis on clear project objectives and stakeholder involvement aligns with the work of Kerzner (2019), who argued that detailed project planning is a key driver of project success across various industries. Kerzner noted that projects with well-defined objectives, realistic schedules, and adequate resource planning are more likely to meet their intended outcomes. Furthermore, Chua et al. (2019) identified stakeholder involvement as a critical success factor in project planning, emphasizing that early and active participation of stakeholders helps to align project goals with stakeholder needs, reduces risks, and fosters a sense of shared ownership. This finding is directly reflected in the responses from Kajiado County, where respondents noted the positive impact of considering stakeholder input during planning phases. Together, these insights underscore that robust planning practices are fundamental to the success of HIV prevention programs, ensuring that projects are well-prepared, adequately resourced, and aligned with the needs of all involved parties.

Project Communication

The second objective was to assess the influence of project communication on the performance of HIV prevention programs. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Project Communication

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
Project updates are communicated frequently.	4.101	0.672
Communication channels used in projects are effective.	3.987	0.689
Project information is communicated in a timely manner.	3.922	0.711
Communication tools used enhance collaboration.	3.979	0.698
Project meetings are conducted regularly and effectively.	3.856	0.732
Feedback from stakeholders is encouraged and valued.	4.012	0.676
Effective communication contributes to the success of projects.	4.145	0.664
Aggregate Score	4.000	0.706

The findings in Table 2 reveal that respondents generally agreed that effective project communication is critical to the success of HIV prevention programs. The highest agreement was seen in statements that effective communication contributes to project success ($M = 4.145$, $SD = 0.664$) and that project updates are communicated frequently ($M = 4.101$, $SD = 0.672$). These findings underscore the importance of regular and clear communication in keeping all stakeholders informed and engaged. Respondents also agreed that feedback from stakeholders is encouraged and valued ($M = 4.012$, $SD = 0.676$), highlighting the role of two-way communication in improving project outcomes.

The overall aggregate mean of 4.000 suggests that communication strategies, including the use of effective channels and regular updates, play a significant role in fostering project success. These findings are supported by the study of Davis (2018), who found that effective communication strategies significantly influence stakeholder satisfaction and project outcomes, particularly in IT projects. Davis emphasized the role of regular updates, clarity of information, and the use of collaborative communication tools in enhancing project success. Furthermore, Karlsen (2018) assessed the impact of communication on project success and found that tailored communication strategies that meet the needs of different stakeholders are critical for achieving positive project outcomes. The feedback from respondents in Kajiado County highlights similar themes, with suggestions for improving communication practices to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed and actively engaged. The findings underscore the critical role of effective communication in fostering transparency, collaboration, and alignment among project stakeholders, ultimately contributing to the successful performance of HIV prevention programs.

Program Performance

The main objective of the study was to assess the impact of project management practices on the performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics for program performance are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Program Performance

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
Projects are completed within the allocated budget.	3.912	0.718
Projects meet the defined scope and objectives.	4.078	0.682
Project timelines are adhered to.	3.854	0.746
Stakeholder satisfaction is high in completed projects.	3.981	0.721
Project outcomes align with organizational goals.	4.015	0.704
Project performance is regularly monitored and evaluated.	3.865	0.733
Lessons learned are documented and applied to future projects.	3.940	0.689
Aggregate Score	3.949	0.713

The findings in Table 3 reveal that respondents generally agreed that the HIV prevention programs performed well, with an aggregate score of 3.949. There was strong agreement that projects meet the defined scope and objectives ($M = 4.078$, $SD = 0.682$) and that project outcomes align with organizational goals ($M = 4.015$, $SD = 0.704$), indicating that the programs are effectively fulfilling their intended purposes. Stakeholder satisfaction in completed projects also received high ratings ($M = 3.981$, $SD = 0.721$), reflecting the positive impact of these programs on the communities they serve. The respondents agreed that projects are completed within the allocated budget ($M = 3.912$, $SD = 0.718$) and timelines are generally adhered to ($M = 3.854$, $SD = 0.746$), suggesting effective financial and time management practices. The regular monitoring and evaluation of project performance ($M = 3.865$, $SD = 0.733$) and the documentation of lessons learned for future projects ($M = 3.940$, $SD = 0.689$) highlight the commitment to continuous improvement and accountability.

The findings align with Osipova and Eriksson (2020), who emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluation in enhancing project performance, and Veld et al. (2018), who highlighted that alignment of project outcomes with organizational goals is critical for program success. These results indicate that effective management practices are crucial in ensuring the performance and sustainability of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Project Planning

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for improving project planning in their organizations. The responses highlighted the importance of involving all stakeholders in the planning phase, improving resource allocation, and conducting regular reviews of project plans. A recurring theme was the need for a more inclusive planning process that considers inputs from various stakeholders, including healthcare providers, community health workers, and local leaders. One respondent noted, "*Effective planning should involve everyone, not just the top management. This way, the needs at the grassroots are addressed right from the start.*"

Another key theme was the emphasis on detailed budgeting and resource planning to avoid delays and financial constraints during project implementation. Respondents suggested that better forecasting and regular monitoring of resources could enhance project outcomes. One respondent mentioned, "*We often face budget constraints halfway through the project; better planning and monitoring could help avoid this.*"

The findings suggest that enhancing project planning practices, particularly through stakeholder inclusion and better resource management, can lead to improved program performance. These insights align with the literature by Kerzner (2019), who emphasized that thorough project planning, including clear objectives and adequate resource allocation, is critical for project success. Additionally, Kamau (2021) found that effective planning significantly enhances project performance, highlighting the importance of involving stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Project Communication

Regarding project communication, respondents emphasized the need for more frequent and clear communication channels to keep all stakeholders informed. Many highlighted the challenge of inadequate communication, which often leads to misunderstandings and delays. One respondent shared, "*Sometimes we only hear about changes after they have happened. We need timely updates so we can adjust our plans accordingly.*"

Respondents also suggested utilizing multiple communication platforms, including digital tools, to enhance information dissemination and stakeholder engagement. There was a call for more structured communication protocols to ensure consistency and accuracy of information shared with stakeholders. A participant remarked, "*Using different channels, like emails, meetings, and WhatsApp groups, could keep everyone updated and involved.*"

The qualitative insights underscore the critical role of effective communication in project success, particularly in keeping stakeholders engaged and informed. This aligns with Davis (2018), who found that effective communication strategies are key determinants of perceived project success. Moreover, Müller et al. (2019) highlighted that leadership communication plays a significant role in the success of complex projects, reinforcing the importance of clear and consistent communication practices.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the independent variables (project planning, and project communication) and the dependent variable (performance of HIV prevention programs). If the correlation values are $r = \pm 0.1$ to ± 0.29 then

the relationship between the two variables is small, if it is $r = \pm 0.3$ to ± 0.49 the relationship is medium, and when $r = \pm 0.5$ and above there is a strong relationship between the two variables under consideration. Significance was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Table 4 presents the findings obtained.

Table 4: Correlation Results

Variables		Program Performance	Project Planning	Project Communication
Program Performance	Pearson Correlation	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	250		
Project Planning	Pearson Correlation	0.692**	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		
	N	250	250	
Project Communication	Pearson Correlation	0.741**	0.615	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.109	
	N	250	250	250

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

The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between project planning and program performance, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.692$, $p < 0.05$. This indicates that better project planning is significantly associated with improved performance of HIV prevention programs. The findings suggest that well-defined objectives, effective resource allocation, and regular updates to project plans enhance the ability of these programs to meet their goals. This positive relationship aligns with the literature by Dvir et al. (2020), who emphasized that comprehensive planning is crucial for project success across various industries, including public health interventions. The result also supports the findings of Fleming and Koppelman (2018), who reported that detailed planning, including the use of earned value management, contributes to project performance by allowing for better monitoring and control of project progress.

Project communication showed the strongest positive correlation with program performance among the studied variables, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.741$, $p < 0.05$. This indicates that effective communication practices are highly influential in driving the success of HIV prevention programs. The significant relationship suggests that regular updates, timely dissemination of information, and clear communication channels ensure that stakeholders are well-informed, engaged, and aligned with project goals. This result aligns with the findings of Davis (2018), who demonstrated that communication strategies directly influence stakeholder satisfaction and perceived project success. It also corroborates the research by Müller et al. (2019), who found a strong link between leadership communication and project success, emphasizing the need for clear, consistent, and transparent communication practices, especially in complex and multi-stakeholder environments.

Regression Coefficients

The regression coefficients table provides detailed insights into the contribution of each independent variable to program performance, highlighting which factors have the most substantial impact. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized	Standardized		t	Sig.
	Coefficients	Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.257	0.396		3.173	0.002
Project Planning	0.268	0.075	0.279	3.574	0.001
Project Communication	0.289	0.073	0.297	3.959	0.000

The coefficient for project planning is $B = 0.268$ ($p = 0.001$), indicating that for every unit increase in project planning efforts, the performance of HIV prevention programs improves by 0.268 units. This positive relationship emphasizes the critical role of structured planning, including setting clear objectives, realistic scheduling, and resource allocation, in driving successful project outcomes. The significant impact of project planning on performance aligns with Fleming and Koppelman (2018), who highlighted that integrating detailed project planning, such as earned value management, helps monitor progress and control costs effectively. This finding also supports Chua et al. (2019), who identified that clear project objectives, detailed budgeting, and comprehensive project charters are critical for successful project implementation.

The coefficient for project communication is $B = 0.289$ ($p = 0.000$), indicating that effective communication has the most substantial impact on program performance among the studied variables. This suggests that clear, consistent, and timely communication is pivotal in ensuring stakeholder alignment, engagement, and overall project success. The significant impact of communication aligns with Karlsen (2018), who identified that tailored communication strategies are critical for successful project outcomes, emphasizing that communication should be tailored to meet the needs of different stakeholders. Zwikael and Smyrk (2019) also highlighted that best practices in project communication, such as using collaborative platforms and standardized reporting templates, are essential for maintaining stakeholder engagement and enhancing project performance.

Regression Equation:

$$\text{Performance of HIV Prevention Programs} = 1.257 + 0.268 (\text{Project Planning}) + 0.289 (\text{Project Communication})$$

Conclusions

The study concludes that effective project planning significantly enhances the performance of HIV prevention programs in Kajiado County. The findings underscore the need for clear project objectives, realistic scheduling, and adequate resource allocation to ensure successful project outcomes. Comprehensive planning practices that incorporate stakeholder input and regular plan updates are critical for driving program success.

The study concludes that effective project communication is the most critical factor influencing the performance of HIV prevention programs. Clear, consistent, and timely communication ensures that all stakeholders are informed, engaged, and aligned with project objectives. The findings emphasize that robust communication strategies, including regular updates and feedback mechanisms, are essential for fostering transparency and collaboration, ultimately enhancing project success.

Recommendations

To enhance the performance of HIV prevention programs, it is recommended that project managers prioritize comprehensive planning practices that involve all stakeholders from the outset. This includes setting clear and measurable objectives, developing realistic schedules, and ensuring adequate resource allocation. Regular reviews and updates of project plans should

be conducted to adapt to changing circumstances and maintain alignment with project goals. Additionally, integrating stakeholder feedback into planning processes will help address diverse needs and improve overall project outcomes.

Effective communication should be prioritized as a key component of project management. It is recommended that project managers establish structured communication protocols that ensure timely and clear dissemination of information to all stakeholders. Utilizing multiple communication platforms, including digital tools, can enhance information sharing and stakeholder engagement. Regular project updates, stakeholder feedback sessions, and transparent reporting practices should be implemented to foster a collaborative environment. Training project teams on communication skills will further improve the quality and effectiveness of project interactions.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future studies could investigate other factors such as organizational culture, leadership styles, and technological adoption that may influence program performance. Additionally, longitudinal studies that examine the long-term impact of project management practices on program outcomes would provide valuable insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of HIV prevention efforts.

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