



STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF HEALTH CARE PROJECTS IN MIGORI COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study's main objective was to examine stakeholder management practices and performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to examine the role of stakeholders' identification and to evaluate the role of stakeholder analysis on Performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya.

Methodology: This employed a cross-sectional survey research design to gather, summarize, present, and interpret information across the various strata for purposes of clarification. The study targeted public hospitals and dispensaries within Migori County where the health-care projects are implemented. The unit of analysis was the five headline healthcare projects implemented by Migori County government, and the study unit of observation was relevant county health workers, project team members, and community development officers totaling four hundred and eighteen (418). A sample of 134 was used for this study.

Findings: The study found Stakeholder identification has a direct ($\beta = .198$, sig = 0.002) relationship with performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. Stakeholder identification significantly influences performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. Stakeholder analysis has a direct ($\beta = 1.017$, sig = 0.000) relationship with performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. Stakeholder analysis significantly influences performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya.

Recommendations: The study recommends conducting regular consultations, prioritizing key stakeholders, allocating resources effectively, developing clear communication frameworks to ensure accountability in resource distribution, and prioritizing stakeholders based on their influence and interests. The study recommends projects to, enhance influence assessment, prioritize stakeholders, strengthen relationship management, encourage resource contributions, increase executive leadership, use technology for better engagement, and monitor and evaluate the impact of stakeholder engagement.

Keywords: Stakeholder management practices, stakeholder identification, stakeholders' analysis, performance of healthcare projects in Migori County.

Background of the study

Stakeholder management has gained considerable popularity, hence becoming a key area of project management (Eskerod et al, 2019). Adek (2019) posited that stakeholder management is a crucial factor to the success of every project in various organisations, and different stakeholders have different interests in projects; therefore, project stakeholder management encompasses managing competing interests in every phase of the project life cycle (Migwi, 2018). Wandabwa and Yusuf (2018) stated that stakeholders in healthcare projects may be within or outside the organisation and may vary during the entire life cycle of the project in terms of the number, power, interest and influence (Ochunga & Awiti, 2019). The perception, interest and motivation of stakeholders in healthcare projects can never be ignored. Stakeholder identification, analysis, review and risk management should be conducted throughout the development stages of healthcare projects.

Project managers are thus required to develop a sufficient understanding of changing variables among the various stakeholders in a project environment (Tampio, et al, 2022). The performance of projects entails the process of putting project plans into action in order to produce deliverables for clients and other stakeholders (Kerzner, 2022). During the Performance phase, project managers coordinate and direct project resources in meeting project objectives arising from the project plan. As projects are undertaken, the project manager's job is to direct and manage each activity at every step and it is the foundational basis of what happens in the phase of project Performance to handle any problems that come up (Wideman, 2022).

According to Kariega (2020), the performance process of any healthcare project is judged by the satisfaction of stakeholders' needs and is measured by the extent of meeting standards laid down at the start of the project. This is regarding the delivery of healthcare projects by contractors within budget, time, quality, environment, safety and performance. Projects are considered successful when delivered within the scheduled duration, allocated budget, and specified quality. According to Migwi (2018), County governments in Kenya have partnered with the Health Policy Project to strengthen the country's health systems during the transition to the devolved system of government and decentralisation of health infrastructure.

Statement of the Problem

Globally stakeholder participation has been recognized as a key factor in ensuring that healthcare projects are not only effective but also sustainable in the long term. The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership's 2023 report highlights that while 70% of healthcare projects globally have mechanisms for community feedback, only 40% involve communities in decision-making processes (Akinawale, 2023). A 2023 study by the Kenya Red Cross highlighted that in densely populated areas like Kibera, community-driven health initiatives were more successful when they included local youth groups in planning and implementation. The 2022 Kenya National Policy on Disaster Management, for example, highlights the role of local communities in disaster preparedness and response. However, the implementation of these policies often falls short, with many projects failing to fully integrate community perspectives into planning and decision-making processes.

According to Muchene and Safari (2021) found that 70% of e-health innovations were developed as projects but a negligible number went to full scale due to poor stakeholder management. In Migori County, community participation in healthcare projects has shown mixed results. A 2023 report by the Migori County Government indicates that approximately 50% of healthcare projects in the county involved community participation to some extent. However, only 30% of these projects actively included community members in project planning and decision-making. The report highlights that projects with higher levels of community engagement have a 35% higher success rate in terms of long-term sustainability compared to

those with minimal involvement (Migori County Government,2023). Hospitals are faced with the task of leveraging stakeholder management during project Performance in order to allow for trade-offs with multiple departments to get projects completed on time and within budget, and as such developing means of enhancing project stakeholder management to support project managers in implementing health care projects effectively (Olwande, 2021).

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study was to examine stakeholder management practices and performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To examine the role of stakeholder identification on performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya.
- ii. To evaluate the role of stakeholder analysis on performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Freeman first fronted stakeholder theory in 1984, who described groups and individuals who are affected by or who affect an organisation's activities as the organisation's stakeholders. Bagaya and Song (2019) emphasised the financial benefits that accrue to organisations which embrace stakeholder theory by putting together strong relationships with stakeholders. Zewdu and Aregaw (2019) noted that competitive advantage could be realised through strengthened stakeholder relationships that are derived from trust, reputation and innovation, hence transforming to effective Performance of projects. All projects always have stakeholders who have the potential to influence the Performance process of projects, and such stakeholders should, as a matter of essence, be recognised and evaluated for their potential support or threat to the project goals (Mitchell, 2022). Different stakeholders will have varied powers and interests around the project organization and therefore project teams ought to do stakeholder identification to ascertain and understand the different attributes of various stakeholders in terms of who they are, where they come from and what interest they have in the Performance process of projects (Ingram et al, 2020).

When stakeholder theory is well applied, it can facilitate stakeholder identification so that the project team can be able to group and categorize the various stakeholders according to the power, influence and interest that they wield in the organisation. This is done purposely to manage the stakeholders to contribute positively to the organisation. Mendelow (1991), as cited by Pereno and Eriksson (2020), developed a two-by-two matrix with four quadrants where each stakeholder could be grouped in the matrix to determine their potential influence and interest in the project organisation. Stakeholder theory, therefore, succinctly explains stakeholder identification as it enables project managers and their teams to easily identify stakeholders and to have a clear understanding of their contribution to the project organisation.

Systems theory was originally developed in 1972 by Hungarian biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, who noted that from a biological viewpoint, creatures are seen as an integrated system of functions and interdependent structures; while from a sociological perspective, systems theory views organisations from a trans-disciplinary approach. A sociological system is made up of four main components, including objects, attributes, interrelationships and the environment (Adek, 2019). Mutune, Mang'uriu and Diang'a (2019) referred to objects as parts, variables or elements that subsisted in a system; attributes being features of qualities of a system and its objects; interrelationships being between the organisations' internal relations that exist among its various objects, and the environment being the obtaining ecosystem.

Healthcare projects are regarded as open systems subsisting in both internal and external environments, and in project setups, project managers deal with complex systems that are defined by much non-linearity, multiple interdependencies and feedback systems (Daniel & Daniel, 2023). The success of effective Performance of projects significantly depends on the interaction between various project teams, project leaders and other stakeholders as well as between departments; and it integrates and connects the link amongst the system networks and information flow, with energy and material being elements of processing and communication systems (Sang, Yu, Lin, Zhang & Jin, 2021).

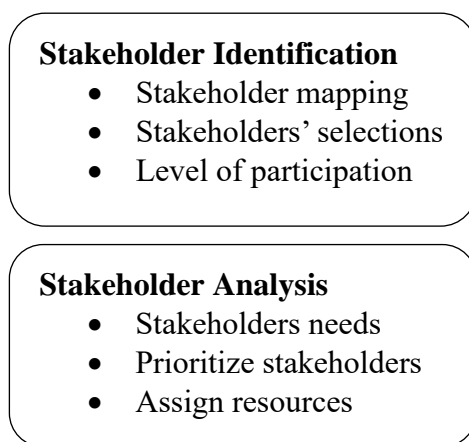
Systems theory provides a framework for stakeholder analysis and stakeholder monitoring as variables in this study since effective Performance of healthcare projects is dependent on the notion that projects are open systems and that they frequently interact with a project external environment that includes customers, suppliers, government agencies, contractors and other stakeholders (Okuta, 2019). The involvement of all identified stakeholders including community members ensures that effective and efficient Performance and management of project resources ensures maximum outputs and also results in buy-in which leads to acceptance and support for projects, which subsequently leads to the sustainability in the performance of projects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

In this study the independent variables included stakeholders' identification and stakeholder analysis. The dependent variable is performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

Independent Variables



Dependent Variable

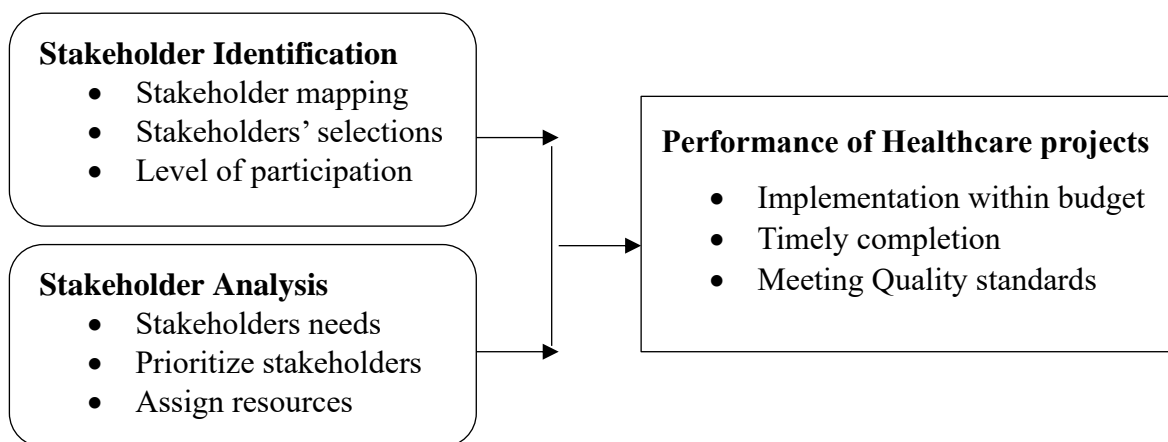


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Stakeholders Identification

Stakeholder identification is an initial phase in project management that typically entails defining individuals, groups, and organizations who can affect or be affected by a project (Kerzner, 2022). They can be categorized as primary, secondary, internal, external, junior or senior; and they often influence projects with their expectations and needs there can be many stakeholders depending on the type, scope, and complexity of the project. In order to realize successful project management, key project stakeholders ought to be identified and managed in order to satisfy their requirements (Portny & Portny, 2022).

During the stakeholder identification process, the information regarding each stakeholder provides a guideline for developing a strategy to interact with each of them; and all the collected information during the stakeholder identification process is used to develop a strategy that manages stakeholders and a system is established to understand who needs what information

and when they need it (Kaur & Lodhia, 2018). Stakeholders' participation, expectations and degree of involvement is not the same within a project, and therefore support of key stakeholders becomes crucial project managers need to identify and classify stakeholders and deal with them according to their effect on the project (Chen, et al, 2022).

It is critical to identify stakeholders in the early phases of a project and manage them throughout the entire project's life cycle because typically, at the beginning of a project, many complications abound and it is difficult to understand who is affected by the project (Ford & Lyneis, 2020). Stakeholder identification is a perpetual process given that as the project progresses, new stakeholders arise and some of them may even disappear. Project documents usually provide valuable information for identifying stakeholders thus review of contract documents, project charter, organizational process assets, and documents of past projects can be helpful. Brainstorming sessions with project teams also help in identifying the stakeholders and provide a different point of view whereby identification of stakeholder representatives and communication with them may provide a great deal of stakeholder information (Dani, Gandhi & Sharma, 2023).

Stakeholder Analysis

Schmitt and Horner (2021) noted that once stakeholders have been identified and a list is created detailing the same, the project team is required to analyze and evaluate them in order to carry out the identification process, which essentially means categorization of identified stakeholders. A well-known and widely practiced method of identifying stakeholders is through the power-interest grid, which is a technique that helps in the classification of stakeholders based on their level of interest and level of influence on the project as well as determining how best to involve and communicate each of these stakeholder groups throughout the project cycle (Noto & Noto, 2019).

Kotwani and Joshi (2021) indicated that stakeholders can be categorized based on the power-interest grid such that high-power and high-interest stakeholders are the key stakeholders who have a high influence and interest on the project and require full attention and include sponsors, investors and business leaders; high-power and low-interest stakeholders are secondary stakeholders who have a high influence on the outcome of the project, however, they have no direct interest; low-power and high-interest stakeholders have high interest, however, lack the power to create an impact, and only mentor and support but are not directly involved in the projects; lastly, there are low-power and low-interest stakeholders who barely have any influence or interest in the project, such as people working in project organizations but not directly impacted by the project.

Having an understanding of the category in which each stakeholder belongs gives a glimpse of how much resources would be required to be assigned, how much budget would be required, and what tactics and methods may be chosen to improve the process of stakeholder management (Xu & Zou, 2020). Additionally, categorizing stakeholders in relevant strata allows the project manager and the project team to determine which stakeholders require immediate attention in terms of engagement time and effort for purposes of deciding what needs to be communicated to them and at what frequency the same should be done in the course of Performance of projects (Goel, Ganesh & Kaur, 2020).

Performance of Health Care Projects

In Kenya, Karanja and Ruguru (2023) found that most of the implemented health programs focus primarily on supporting existing medical clinics and increasing access to vital care in otherwise disadvantaged communities. Health programmes also include the running of successful medical camps and medical elective programmes in Kenya. Health programs in Kenya span the country, from the Kibera slums of Nairobi to the remote Siaya district in Western Kenya. As such, the issues faced by our communities are quite diverse. Some face

poor health due to the congested slums, others struggle with the effects of the HIV/AIDS virus. For all, lack of healthcare has been a massive issue impeding their development both socially and economically.

Health projects in Kenya focus on working with the communities and local authorities to ensure that they are addressing the needs as they see fit. They strive always to empower local people to take control of their development (Wabwile & Ruguru, 2023). Another important factor of health projects in Migori County is the focus on the well-being of mothers and children as the cornerstone of a strong family and a strong society. The county government of Migori believes in supporting women and children from the prenatal stage through childhood and beyond. The County of Nairobi helped construct a maternity ward at the Ushirika Clinic in Kibera, Nairobi. The county of Siaya built a paediatric ward for young mothers and mother-to-be run the risk of health complications that could lead to serious long-term issues or even death if untreated (Maalim & Kisimbii, 2019).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Stakeholder Identification and Performance of Health Care Projects

Squires et al (2022) examined stakeholder perspectives of attributes and features of context relevant to knowledge translation in health settings: a multi-country analysis. The research came up with a methodology consisting of four phases including aligning the framework with the decision-making process, identifying relevant stakeholders, understanding ensuing problems and developing and justifying model structures. Additionally, it was found that stakeholder needs are transformed into a formal set of stakeholder requirements, which are captured as models and documented as textual requirements in output typically called a stakeholder requirement specification.

Muendo et al (2023) analyzed the influence of stakeholder management on the sustainability of water projects in Makueni County, Kenya. Descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages were used in this study whereas in relation to inferential statistics, the study used correlation analysis, principally used to establish the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The study found that stakeholder communication had a positive and significant effect on the sustainability of water projects in Makueni County, Kenya. In addition, the study found that stakeholder needs identification had a positive and significant effect on the sustainability of water projects in Makueni County, Kenya.

Stakeholder Analysis and Performance of Health Care Projects

Sarhadi et al (2021) studied stakeholder analysis in the feasibility process of projects focusing on the structural evaluation of the power-oriented relationship. An inductive qualitative approach was adopted using the grounded theory method to provide a theoretical elucidation of stakeholders' behaviours. Under the insight of structuration theory, the findings showed that the challenges are derived from various interrelated factors, leading to the emergence of improper participation as a macro-structural phenomenon with multilateral interaction with a power-oriented relationship as a micro behaviour in the feasibility process at the agency level.

Kaginalkar et al (2023) examined stakeholder analysis for designing an urban air quality data governance ecosystem in smart cities. The study conducted interdisciplinary participative stakeholder analysis to understand the data, and sectorial challenges, to outline the technological opportunities to facilitate clean air programs in Indian smart cities. The research highlighted gaps arising due to siloed stakeholder operations, lack of data calibration, non-alignment of smart city and air quality management services, non-availability of health exposure data, and difficulty in translating scientific data into implementable actions. Further,

unlike the traditional project stakeholder analysis methods that are linear, the proposed model is strongly nonlinear.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a cross-sectional survey research design to gather, summarize, present, and interpret information across the various strata for purposes of clarification. The study population was purposively generated based on the roles and direct involvement of various stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the five headline healthcare projects (telemedicine; electronic health records; information for citizens; mobile technologies in health and e-learning or distance education for health professionals) undertaken by the Migori County government. The study unit of observation was relevant county health workers, project team members, and community development officers totaling four hundred and eighteen (418). They include County health workers (260), project team members (58), and community development officers (100). A sample of 134 was used. Their inclusion provided a community-level perspective on the effectiveness and responsiveness of the healthcare projects. In order to come up with an appropriate study sample, this study employed a proportionate stratified random sampling technique since the population is clustered into strata representing several designations and cadres of staff who work on the healthcare projects in public hospitals within Migori County. The study used closed-ended questionnaires to collect quantitative data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis. Descriptive and inferential analysis were conducted.

RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

The study distributed 134 questionnaires to respondents in Migori County. A total of 110 questionnaires were fully filled and returned giving a response rate of 82%. Figure 2 below shows the response rate.

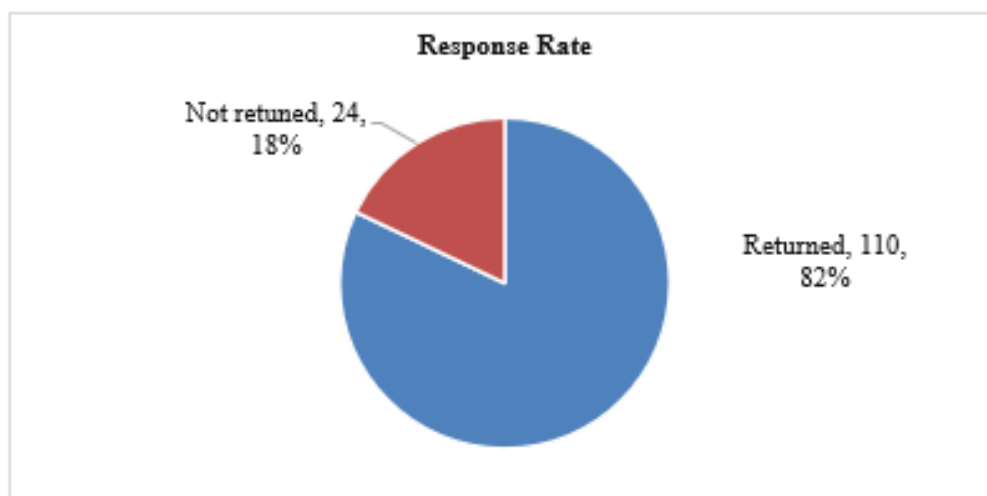


Figure 1: Response Rate

Descriptive Statistics

The study investigated the influence of stakeholder management on performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. It analysed variables such as stakeholder identification and stakeholder analysis using a five-point Likert scale. The study used the mean and standard deviation to analyse the statistics. Thematic analysis was used in analysing the responses to the open-ended questions. The descriptives are as follows, based on the study variables.

Stakeholders Identification

The first objective of the study was to examine the role of stakeholder identification on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. The objective was measured by stakeholder mapping, selection, and the level of participation in healthcare projects in Migori County. In summary, the study found that organisations effectively identify key and secondary stakeholders, ensuring project success. However, engagement in later stages is moderate. Stakeholder recommendations are incorporated, but engagement across all phases is lower. Some organisations excel in stakeholder analysis and involvement due to higher standard deviations.

Most respondents agreed that key stakeholders are identified at the initial stages of the project ($M = 4.04$, $Std\ Dev = 0.753$), and the standard deviation suggests no high dispersion of responses. The respondents also agreed that secondary stakeholders are identified to enhance project success in terms of time, cost, and quality ($M = 4.05$, $Std\ Dev = 0.689$). On analysis of stakeholders, respondents agreed with minimal variations in responses ($M = 3.81$, $Std\ Dev = 0.963$). The statistics also established that organisations actively engage with primary stakeholders to ensure project completion, with moderate response variation ($M = 3.95$, $Std\ Dev = 0.811$). The study also found a positive perception of incorporating stakeholder recommendations during implementation, with some level of divergence in responses, with a mean of 3.84 and a standard deviation of 0.914. The study also found that stakeholder involvement in all project stages, including planning, performance, and closure, is not as robust as other aspects of engagement. ($M = 3.45$, $Std\ Dev = 1.019$). Lastly, respondents agreed that organisations generally seek stakeholder buy-in, with a mean of 3.88 and a standard deviation of 0.787, suggesting moderate consistency in responses.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Identification

Statement	N	Mean	Std Dev
There is identification of the key stakeholders at the initiation stage of the project.	110	4.04	.753
Secondary stakeholders are always identified to enhance the completion of the project in time, cost, and quality.	110	4.05	.689
My organisation has an adequate analysis of the relationships of the stakeholders in the project.	110	3.81	.963
My organization works with the primary stakeholders to ensure that the project is completed within time, cost, and budget.	110	3.95	.811
My organization's stakeholders' recommendations are usually incorporated during project implementation.	110	3.84	.914
There is involvement of the stakeholders during project planning, Performance, and closure of the project.	110	3.45	1.019
My organization always seeks to have buy-in from stakeholders on all undertaken projects.	110	3.88	.787
Valid N (listwise)	110		

In your opinion what is the role of stakeholder identification in stakeholder management of the health care projects in Migori county?

The respondents mentioned several roles of stakeholder identification for the healthcare projects in Migori County. Firstly, they mentioned enhancing project relevance and acceptability. In healthcare initiatives, identifying stakeholders guarantees that all pertinent parties including patients, healthcare professionals, government organisations, and community leaders are acknowledged and included. Accurately identifying stakeholders guarantees that project interventions are pertinent to the particular requirements of the community in Migori

County, where healthcare issues vary from poor facilities to restricted access to high-quality treatment. Early engagement of key actors makes healthcare efforts more acceptable and successful because it allows them to reflect the interests and concerns of people who will be directly impacted. A study by Kagwiria and Mukhongo (2024) on donor-funded healthcare projects in Nairobi City County emphasized that identifying stakeholders and understanding their roles and interests are crucial first steps in stakeholder management, leading to more effective project implementation.

Secondly, the respondents agreed that stakeholder identification facilitates resource mobilization and sustainability in healthcare projects in Migori County. Stakeholder identification facilitates effective resource mobilisation, guaranteeing financial, technical, and human resource support for healthcare initiatives in Migori County. Important players that provide money, medical supplies, and experience include county health authorities, local NGOs, and foreign donors. Since stakeholders may participate in maintenance and capacity-building initiatives after the project's initial implementation phase, proper identification also promotes long-term sustainability. Projects are in danger of inefficiency and early termination if it is unclear who owns crucial resources. The sentiments are also echoed by Okumu *et al* (2024) who found that stakeholder management significantly affected the performance of donor-funded health projects in Kenya emphasizing the necessity of engaging stakeholders for resource support and long-term sustainability.

Thirdly, respondents opined that stakeholder identification is crucial in strengthening collaboration and conflict resolution. Identifying stakeholders is essential for promoting cooperation amongst various organisations, lowering opposition, and resolving possible disputes. Multiple parties with varying interests, including legislators, traditional healers, and private healthcare professionals, are frequently involved in healthcare initiatives. Recognising all pertinent stakeholders helps reduce resistance, align expectations, and foster synergies between contemporary and traditional health practices in Migori County, where cultural and socioeconomic issues impact healthcare decisions. A simpler implementation and less opposition from marginalised groups are guaranteed by effective stakeholder management, which is based on accurate identification. The opinion was also supported by Thomas and Iloka (2024) who found that recognizing stakeholders as part of project management practices greatly impacted project outcomes, emphasizing the role of stakeholder identification in minimizing resistance and enhancing collaboration on healthcare projects in Machakos County.

Lastly, the respondents felt that monitoring and evaluation are improved by a well-organised stakeholder identification procedure, which guarantees that healthcare initiatives in Migori County get the desired results. Projects can create transparent accountability. The opinion supports the conclusion made by Onyango and Ruguru (2022) that stakeholder identification has a positive and significant effect on project implementation, leading to continuous learning and improvement in healthcare interventions for the universal healthcare project in Kisumu County. In summary, stakeholder identification is a foundational component of effective stakeholder management in healthcare projects. By ensuring that all relevant parties are recognized and engaged, projects in Migori County can become more relevant, resource-efficient, collaborative, and accountable, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes for the community.

Stakeholder Analysis

The second objective of the study was to evaluate the role of stakeholder analysis on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. The objective was measured by stakeholder needs, assigning resources, and stakeholder prioritization in healthcare projects in Migori County. In summary, the study found that organizations effectively establish stakeholder interests and prioritize them based on contributions. However, there is a lack of

emphasis on assessing stakeholder influence and managing relationships for smooth project execution. Top executives maintain stakeholder engagement moderately.

The study found that most respondents agreed that their project organizations evaluate stakeholders across all projects, with a minimal variation in responses indicated by a standard deviation of 0.763 (M = 3.93). Respondents also agreed that the organizations effectively establish stakeholder interests, with a low standard deviation indicating high agreement (M = 3.95). It was also found in the study that stakeholder influence is assessed, though not strongly emphasized, as indicated by the Mean (3.68) and the low standard deviation (0.957), affirming the responses didn't vary to a large extent. On Prioritisation of stakeholders, respondents agreed that the organisations prioritise stakeholders based on their contribution to projects. This is also affirmed by the Mean (3.92) and low standard deviation (0.836). However, though agreed by most respondents (M =3.58) managing stakeholder relations is a weak area. There is a significant difference in approaches on how to deal with stakeholders for smooth project execution in healthcare projects in Migori County. The study also revealed that the project sponsors ensure stakeholders contribute their share of resources (M =3.68, Std Dev = 0.823). Lastly, respondents agreed that top executives generally maintain cordial stakeholder relations to ensure sustainability (M = 3.89, Std Dev = 0.782).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Analysis

Statement	N	Mean	Std Dev
My project organisation endeavours to evaluate all stakeholders in all projects.	110	3.93	.763
The interest of all stakeholders in my organization's projects is well established.	110	3.95	.759
My organization seeks to ascertain the influence of individual stakeholders on all projects.	110	3.68	.957
In my organization, stakeholders are prioritized based on their overall contribution to projects.	110	3.92	.836
My organization determines how to deal with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth running of projects.	110	3.58	.952
In my organization, project sponsors ensure that stakeholders contribute their fair share of resources for projects.	110	3.68	.823
The top executives in my organization ensure that cordial engagements with stakeholders are established and well-maintained for sustainability.	110	3.89	.782
Valid N (listwise)	110		

In your opinion how can stakeholder analysis process of the health care projects in Migori county enhance the performance of the projects?

Respondents had varied opinions on this matter. A majority agreed that aligning project objectives with community needs can enhance the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. They believe that a comprehensive stakeholder analysis guarantees that healthcare initiatives are customised to the community's unique needs and objectives. Project planners can create culturally relevant interventions that tackle the most urgent health issues by including patients, healthcare professionals, local leaders, and other pertinent stakeholders. The findings are supported by Kibathi and Nyang'u (2023) who highlighted that effective stakeholder analysis leads to better alignment of project goals with community expectations, thereby enhancing project relevance and acceptance in health projects in public hospitals in Nyeri County.

The respondents also mentioned that it is easier to mobilise and allocate resources more effectively when different stakeholders' responsibilities and interests are understood via analysis. Project managers may make use of a variety of resources, such as funds, experience, and local knowledge, by identifying important stakeholders, such as governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations, and community organisations. Effective stakeholder management, beginning with thorough analysis, has a major influence on project success by ensuring resources are effectively targeted and used, according to research on donor-funded health programs in Kenya (Okumu et al , 2024).

Further, the respondents opined that stakeholder analysis aids in locating possible points of contention as well as chances for cooperation amongst the various stakeholders in healthcare initiatives. Project managers may create plans to promote collaboration and proactively handle issues by knowing the interests and sway of each stakeholder. According to research on stakeholder management techniques in Machakos County, Kenya, identifying and successfully including stakeholders improves collaboration and reduces opposition, which improves project outcomes (Thomas and Iloka, 2024). In summary, implementing a robust stakeholder analysis process in healthcare projects within Migori County can lead to more relevant project designs, efficient resource use, enhanced collaboration, and improved accountability. These factors collectively contribute to the successful performance and sustainability of healthcare initiatives in the region.

Performance of Healthcare Projects

The general objective of the study was to examine stakeholder management and the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. The main objective was measured by looking at implementation within budget, timely completion of projects, and meeting the quality standards. Kerzner (2022) supports the findings that timely delivery is a key factor in healthcare project success. Effective scheduling and progress monitoring reduce delays, improving overall project outcomes (Zwikael & Smyrk, 2019). However, budget management remains a common challenge in healthcare projects, as financial constraints and unforeseen expenses often impact implementation. Quality compliance is essential, with studies emphasising that strict adherence to healthcare standards improves patient outcomes and stakeholder trust (Jiang et al., 2019). Stakeholder satisfaction is critical (Freeman et al., 2010), and its moderate rating in the data suggests that while projects are generally well received, better engagement strategies could enhance trust and collaboration.

The descriptive statistics indicate a generally positive perception of healthcare project performance within the organisation. Respondents agreed on timely project delivery (Mean = 4.13, SD = 0.731) and received the highest rating, suggesting that project schedules are well-managed with relatively low variability in responses. Similarly, respondents also agreed on the delivery of projects within scope (Mean = 4.02, SD = 0.801) reflecting effective project planning. However, though respondents agreed on the budget adherence (Mean = 3.71, SD = 0.892) it is comparatively lower, indicating occasional financial overruns. Respondents also agreed on quality compliance (Mean = 3.87, SD = 0.847) and stakeholder satisfaction (Mean = 3.94, SD = 0.745) suggesting that while projects meet expected standards, there may be room for improvement in fully aligning with stakeholder expectations. Lastly, respondents also agreed on resource utilization (Mean = 3.83, SD = 0.866) and objective attainment (Mean = 3.85, SD = 0.960) indicating moderate agreement.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Performance of Healthcare Projects

Statement	N	Mean	Std Dev
In my organization, healthcare projects are always delivered within the prescribed budgets.	110	3.71	.892
Healthcare projects are delivered on time in my organization.	110	4.13	.731
My project manager ensures that healthcare projects are delivered according to the desired scope.	110	4.02	.801
My organization ensures that healthcare projects are delivered in compliance with the requisite standards of quality.	110	3.87	.847
My project organization ensures that all healthcare projects are delivered to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.	110	3.94	.745
In my organization, there is proper utilization of resources for health care project resources to ensure smooth implementation.	110	3.83	.866
In my organization, the team ensures that all envisaged objectives are met during project implementation.	110	3.85	.960
<i>Valid N (listwise)</i>	<i>110</i>		

Correlation Analysis

The study employed Pearson correlation to assess the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The relationship was considered significant at a p-value of <0.05 . Stakeholder Identification has a significant strong positive correlation ($r = .786$, $\text{sig} = .000$) with the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The findings demonstrate a direct relationship between the variables. This suggests that an increase in stakeholder identification may lead to an increase in the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. Stakeholder Analysis has a significant, strong positive correlation ($r = .544$, $\text{sig} = .000$) with the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The findings demonstrate a direct relationship between the variables. This suggests that an increase in stakeholder analysis may lead to an increase in the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The findings are supported by Kabithi and Nyang'au (2023), who found stakeholder analysis had a significant positive but weak correlation with the performance of health projects in Nyeri County. Table 4 below shows the findings.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients

		Stakeholders Identification	Stakeholders Analysis
Performance of Healthcare Projects	Pearson Correlation	.786**	.544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	110	110

Regression Analysis

This study applied a multiple regression model to identify the relationship between: Stakeholders identification and stakeholder analysis and their influence on performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. The study checked for the direction of the relation, significance of the relationship and the extent of influence.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.435	.351		-1.239	.218
Stakeholder Identification	.198	.062	.136	3.202	.002
Stakeholder Analysis	1.017	.160	.698	6.365	.000

From the results in Table 5, the beta coefficients of the independent variables operationalizing stakeholder management practices show their level of prediction of the dependent variable, which is the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. All the beta values were positive, indicating a direct relationship between the independent variables and the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. Stakeholder Identification ($\beta_1 = .198$), Stakeholder analysis ($\beta_2 = 1.017$). The constant for the model is $-.435$. The t-critical was ± 1.982 . The model was fitted using the following regression model equation;

$$\gamma = -.435 + .198X_1 + 1.017X_2 \dots \dots \dots (i)$$

Findings for the first research objective indicated that the beta coefficient (β_1) of the independent variable, Stakeholder identification, was $X_1 = .198$, p-value = $.002$. This implies that stakeholder management practices through stakeholder identification positively and significantly influence on performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. With a 0.198 unit increase in stakeholder identification, which was statistically significant, the performance of healthcare projects in Kenya improved by 1 unit. Stakeholder identification had the least influence on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. Stakeholder identification significantly influences performance by $.136$. stakeholder mapping, selection, and the level of participation ensured stakeholder identification practice was significant in this study.

Serna et al (2022) found that stakeholder identification and prioritisation accuracy improved when driven by the nature of the managerial issue, especially succession over market expansion and the analysis of the organization's levels of dependency on key individual stakeholders. Similarly, Muendo et al (2023) found stakeholder needs identification had a positive and significant effect on the sustainability of water projects in Makueni County, Kenya. Ford and Lyneiss (2020) argued that it is critical to identify stakeholders in the early phases of a project and manage them throughout the entire project's life cycle because typically, at the beginning of a project, many complications abound and it is difficult to understand who is affected by the project.

The second objective was to evaluate the role stakeholder analysis's influence on healthcare projects' performance in Migori County, Kenya. The study indicated that the beta coefficient (β_2) of the independent variable Stakeholder analysis was $X_2 = 1.107$, p-value = $.000$. This implies that stakeholder management practices through stakeholder analysis positively and significantly influence on performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. With a 1.107 unit increase in stakeholder analysis, which was statistically significant, the performance of healthcare projects in Kenya improved by 1 unit. Stakeholder analysis had the highest influence on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. Stakeholder analysis significantly influences performance by $.698$. Stakeholders' needs, prioritisation, and resource assigning ensured stakeholder analysis practice was significant in this study.

The findings are supported by Ochieng and Onyango (2019), who found that there was a statistically significant influence of stakeholder analysis on the performance of water and

sanitation projects in Homabay County, Kenya. Tampio et al (2021) also found that stakeholder analysis is crucial for identifying and understanding stakeholders' interests and potential impact on a project, enabling the alignment of project objectives with stakeholder expectations, and preventing conflicts and delays, as highlighted by a study on hospital project elements and implications for the value chain in Finland. In another study but different projects, Joos et al (2020) highlighted that Stakeholder analysis helps identify potential risks related to stakeholder interests and influences, enabling project managers to develop proactive mitigation strategies and reduce project failure likelihood. Early identification and engagement are crucial for effective risk management in projects.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The first objective was to determine the influence of stakeholder identification on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. The study found that stakeholder identification had a positive significant correlation with the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The study also found stakeholder identification had a positive significant association with project performance though it had the least influence. The study therefore concludes that stakeholder identification significantly influences the performance of projects.

The second objective was to analyze stakeholder analysis's influence on healthcare projects' performance in Migori County, Kenya. The study found that stakeholder analysis had a positive significant correlation with the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The study also found stakeholder analysis had a positive significant association with project performance though it had the least influence. The study therefore concludes that stakeholder analysis significantly influences the performance of projects.

RECOMMENDATION

The first objective was to determine the influence of stakeholder identification on the Performance of healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya. The findings revealed that stakeholder identification has a positive, significant influence on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The study recommends conducting regular consultations, prioritizing key stakeholders, allocating resources effectively, developing clear communication frameworks to ensure accountability in resource distribution, and prioritizing stakeholders based on their influence and interests. The second objective was to analyze stakeholder analysis's influence on healthcare projects' performance in Migori County, Kenya. The findings revealed that stakeholder identification has a positive significant influence on the performance of healthcare projects in Migori County. The study recommends projects to, enhance influence assessment, prioritize stakeholders, strengthen relationship management, encourage resource contributions, increase executive leadership, use technology for better engagement, and monitor and evaluate the impact of stakeholder engagement. Implement structured mapping, surveys, interviews, and data analytics tools to assess stakeholder influence and expectations.

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