



**STAKEHOLDERS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF  
KENYA RURAL ROADS AUTHORITY ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN  
EMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** The study aimed to examine the influence of Stakeholders Management Practices on the Performance of Rural Roads in Embu County, Kenya. The study focused on stakeholder governance and stakeholder communication as the independent variables while performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County was the dependent variable.

**Methodology:** The study was guided by the control theory and the Communication Accommodation Theory. This study adopted a descriptive research design and was conducted in Embu County, targeting the various rural roads projects across the county including the 5 sub-counties where there are a total of 20 projects between 2021-2023. The unit of observation was a total of 142 respondents was the unit of observation, while 20 rural roads projects between 2021-2023 undertaken by KeRRA in Embu County. A census was adopted where whole population was studied.

**Findings:** In the regression analysis Stakeholders Governance ( $\beta = .416$  sig = .000), Stakeholder Communication ( $\beta = .394$  sig = .000) significantly influenced Performance of Kenya rural roads projects in Embu County. Stakeholders Governance (Beta = .592 or 59.2%) had the highest influence on Performance of Kenya rural roads projects in Embu County followed by Stakeholders Communication (Beta = .510 or 51%).

**Conclusions:** This study therefore concludes that stakeholders' governance as stakeholder management practices influences the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County. This study also concludes that stakeholders' communication as stakeholder management practices influences the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County.

**Recommendations:** The study recommends that KeRRA develop a Stakeholder Engagement Policy outlining roles, responsibilities, and decision-making protocols to ensure structured participation. The study also recommends that project leaders should encourage dialogue and feedback in projects. KeRRA should also develop a KeRRA Communication Policy outlining stakeholder engagement procedures, information dissemination, and feedback mechanisms. KeRRA should also publish quarterly performance reports detailing project milestones, financial expenditures, and upcoming activities.

**Keywords:** Stakeholder governance, stakeholder communication, stakeholder management practices, Performance of Kenya rural roads projects in Embu County

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

In construction projects, the project stakeholders include the design team, subcontractor, customers, community, suppliers, donors and sponsors, project team members, and the government (Mwanza, Namusonge, & Makokha, 2020). In majority of the construction projects there are a lot of stakeholders and the diversity of the demands and nature ensures there are conflicts in the projects. Since in any construction project the checklist for the stakeholders shows there are numerous including, designers, engineers, the general public, donors, supplies, and others, each single stakeholder may have influence often though the majority will influence at a given time in the project. Stakeholder management is the process of identification, engagement, control, and management of the various stakeholders (Dagli, 2018). It involves balancing the competing interests of the various stakeholders in the project for the success of the project through the identification and prioritization of their claims. It manages the challenges in regard to the relationship between the multiple stakeholders and the project (Sarpong & Ayarkwa, 2021). According to Pirozzi (2018), stakeholder relations are important and core of project value since they are fundamental to the existence of the project, they generate value that is incorporated in the project, and allow value exchange through project results delivery.

In Poland, Agata and Joanna (2021) opined that in the construction project to effectively manage the multiple stakeholders in the project, it is important for the project managers to clearly understand the risks and opportunities that are posed by those stakeholders, their obligations, the shared objectives, and the tactics to be implemented to ensure their satisfaction. In Nigeria, a study on the stakeholder management perspective in public-private partnerships (PPP) projects in the context of developing countries identified 5 key enablers of stakeholder management. They include: knowledge of PPP, the relationship between internal and external stakeholders, transparency of the stakeholders especially the internal ones, the choice of project locations, and the timing of stakeholder engagement. The five enablers can be implemented by policymakers and construction industry professionals to manage the various stakeholders in PPP projects (Amadi, Carrillo, & Tuuli, 2018). Orre, Ramadhani, and Yusuf (2019) in their study of the role of stakeholders in the project performance of Kenya Power and Lighting Company's last mile project in Embu County, found that risk management, project leadership, project planning, and project monitoring & control have a significant influence on the performance of projects. Stakeholder management to a great extent influences performance as well as the success of projects

Embu county has about 2,2138 km of road network where 167.1 km is bitumen and 2046 km of earth surface roads. The road network is maintained by various road agencies such as the County government, KeRRA, Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA), and Kenya National Highway Authority (KeNHA). The majority of the roads are inaccessible and impassable during the rainy seasons (The County Governement of Embu, 2018). One of the major challenges in Embu County has been the road network which has been under construction for a long time. The major roads connecting the two towns are being tarmacked while the small figure roads are graded and fitted with murrum.

### Statement of the Problem

The involvement of stakeholders in projects greatly motivates them to achieve the project objectives. Lack of stakeholder participation has led to project failure, despite its critical role in project delivery. For example, several issues affecting project planning, such as budgeting, resource planning, project scheduling, and project scoping, have been identified in both the global and Kenyan contexts, implying that stakeholder participation during the project planning phase should be increased (Osman & Kimutai, 2019). KeRRA formulated the LVSR program

to construct 10,000km of new roads and by 2022 approximately 8,654km equivalent to 217 roads projects had been awarded and ongoing with a cost of Ksh 400 billion. Only 61 projects with a scope of 2,596 km have been completed while 156 projects with a scope of 6,058 km are still ongoing. The challenges faced include inadequate budgetary allocation, lack of experienced contractor capacity, demand of payments from county government for construction materials, delay in relocation of utility services, depletion of natural resources of construction materials leading to environmental concerns, and high cost of land acquisition for road construction (KeRRA, 2022). The county government also accused non-performing contractors, of delays in implementation due to contractor's payment issues, and even difficulties in getting contractors for projects. The engineers also accused Kenya Power of posing a hurdle in the timely completion of projects due to issues with power lines. Finally, local contractors were also faulted for frustrating the implementation of the roads projects as the county government had opted for 'buy Kenya, build Kenya' though the foreign contractors were the ones who were performing (Muchui, 2021). All of the aforementioned challenges relate to stakeholder management issues.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study was to examine the influence of Stakeholders Management Practices on the Performance of Kenya Rural Roads Authority construction projects in Embu County, Kenya.

Specifically, the study sought;

- i) To establish the influence of stakeholder governance on the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County, Kenya.
- ii) To assess the influence of stakeholder communication on the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County, Kenya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

The study was underpinned by the Control theory and Communication Accommodation Theory. The theory of control was developed by Emerson in 1917 from the thermostat model (Ogunnaike & Harmon, 1994). Control theory is divided into two parts; performance reporting and overall change control. Performance corrections are agreed upon for the implementation processes, while change control changes are set for the planning processes. Project control considers performance reporting, based on the agreed performance baseline, and associated corrections to implementation (PMI, 2017) the theory ensures that there is a standard of project performance that is measured at the deliverable; the likely variance between the standard and the measured value is used for adjusting the project process so that the desired standard can be achieved (Koskela & Howell, 2002). This theory is a guidance theory in project control as it shows the capacity of the project to attend to specific cost problems that need to be reviewed within the project implementation. It further offers guidance on what areas need to be emphasized during the project cost-monitoring process (Donald & Preston, 1995). The use of this theory gives the advantage of offering cost information to the projects that could lead to additional explanations regarding the problem, the solutions, and the best course of action to be carried out to obtain the intended project cost results. In addition, the theory can be used to enhance project decision-making and increase conceptions of solutions to any project difficulties (McClintock, 1990).

The communication accommodation theory was developed by Howard Giles in 1971. The theory explains that when people communicate, they adjust their vocal patterns and speech to accommodate the needs of the recipient of the message (Giles & Smith, 1979). Managers are expected to learn how to accommodate their audience by adopting a method of communication

that suits them and effectively conveys the message. For instance, communication between managers of different projects differs from communication between the project manager and the project members. The latter also varies from the communication used with customers, stakeholders, and investors interested in the project. Communication in public participation depends on the ability of the communicating parties to understand the language and context of the exchange. Different communication techniques are employed with different parties based on the intended purpose of the communication. At times, informal communication may be necessary, while other circumstances may require formal communication theory was related to variable stakeholder communication.

### Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation that shows the relationship between dependent variable and independent variables, as shown below in Figure 1.

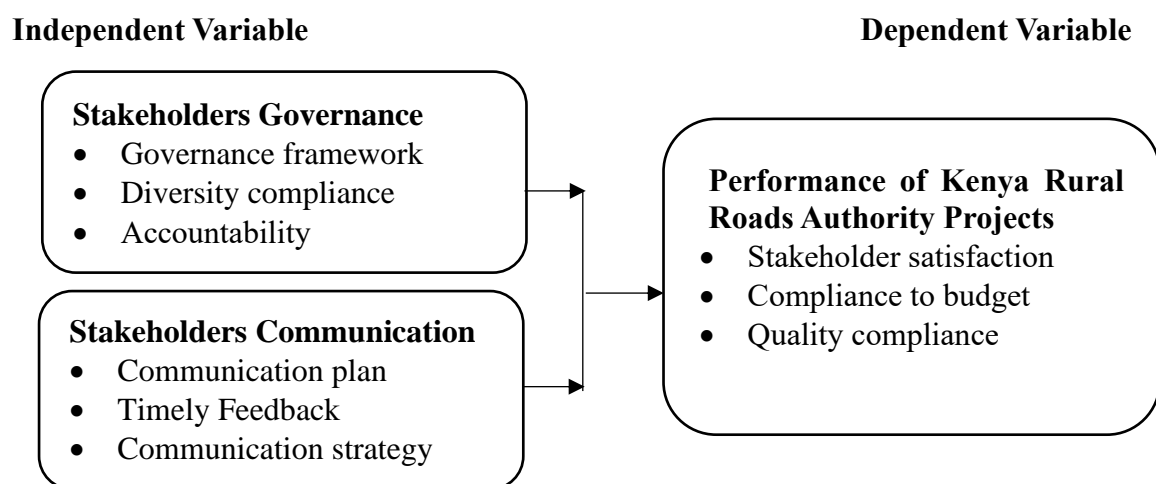


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### Stakeholders Governance

Governance is the organizational arrangements that are designed to determine and also influence the behaviour of the organization's members (PMI, 2017). It includes the roles, policies, structures as well as the oversight through which data and feedback are directed. This is the framework within which authority is exercised. Stakeholder governance refers to the process of managing and overseeing the relationships, interests, and interactions of stakeholders within an organization or project. It involves establishing structures, processes, and mechanisms to ensure that stakeholders are effectively represented, their interests are taken into account, and their voices are heard in decision-making processes. In stakeholder governance, key aspects include: stakeholder identification and prioritization, communication and engagement, stakeholder representation and participation, and conflict resolution (Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019).

Governance Frameworks include processes, systems, relationships, procedures, policies, norms, and rules. A governance framework needs to be tailored to suit the type of project, the project culture, and the needs of the organization to ensure its effectiveness (PMI, 2017). Stakeholder governance begins with the identification and prioritization of stakeholders where all relevant stakeholders that have an interest and impact on the project are identified and later prioritized based on their level of; importance, interest, and influence on the project goals and objectives. There should be continuous engagement and communication with stakeholders by providing them with information relevant to the project, soliciting feedback and input, as well as informing them on decisions made and other developments in the projects. Stakeholder

governance ensures there is stakeholders' representation and enables them to participate in decision-making processes. Formal mechanisms have to be established for stakeholder representation, such as forums and advisory committees as well as participation in engagement activities such as consultations, workshops, and others (Lasyte, 2019)

Stakeholder governance promotes accountability and transparency in decision-making processes. Stakeholders' roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined and also ensure the decisions must be transparent based on information relevance and criteria. The stakeholders should be provided with mechanisms for holding the organization or project team accountable for its actions as well as the outcomes. Throughout the project conflicts and disputes may arise, it is through governance conflict resolution techniques and mediation may be adopted to find an amicable solution to the conflicts. To enhance the legitimacy of the stakeholders in the project, active engagement, listening to concerns, and incorporation of stakeholders' opinions in the decision-making process should be highly encouraged. Effective stakeholder governance is essential for fostering collaboration, building trust, and achieving sustainable outcomes that meet the needs and expectations of all stakeholders (Ismail et al, 2019). Effective communication is the key to good governance. They should be open and honest in listening to the views of the key stakeholders. Stakeholders need to be consulted in key decisions and also able to speak convincingly and persuasively to articulate the logic behind the project team's decision-making before, during, and after it has been made (PMI, 2017).

### **Stakeholders Communication**

Stakeholder communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, and feedback between an organization and its stakeholders. Effective stakeholder communication is crucial for building trust, managing relationships, and achieving shared goals. Communicating effectively with stakeholders ensures that they understand the risks, the risk management process, and the actions that will be taken to mitigate the risks. This will help to build trust and ensure that stakeholders are on board with the risk management process (Tepeli, 2023). According to Rajhans (2018), problems related to the management of stakeholder relationships include: information delay, lack of trust, miscommunication, information distortion, and conflicts between stakeholders and the project team. Thus, the management of stakeholder relationships is tied to communication since it involves balancing the expectations and needs of the stakeholders.

In project management, an effective way of ensuring the project teams and stakeholders is aligned is through a communication plan. A communication plan describes the strategy for providing the right information, to the right people, in a useful format, with the proper frequency (Waida, 2022). The knowledge gained about stakeholders during the Stakeholder Identification and Stakeholder Response Development informs the communication strategy for each person or group. The mere act of consciously planning communication can transform stakeholder management from reactive to proactive. During the planning stage communication helps create awareness in the project organizations on the importance of management of stakeholder relationships and the communication is used for the long-term stakeholder relationship management. A culture of targeted communication needs to be developed at all levels of management as well as the project implementors (Rajhans, 2018). The preparation of a communication plan and communication matrix to manage stakeholder expectations and stakeholder engagements is an important step. The communication plan should be prepared in a way that it would identify all important stakeholders, and prepare a strategy for managing expectations and perceptions of the stakeholders through positive communication. Stakeholder engagement and involvement through the right information to the right people at the right time should also be planned. Communication tools should be integrated with the project planning stage and they include clear documentation that is well drafted, planned stakeholders' meetings,

the flow of information to both internal and external stakeholders, and the reporting format (Cartens, 2023).

The flow of timely and correct information that is well-structured makes the project team to be efficient and this ensures positive project outcomes. Stakeholder communication management is therefore essential for the initiation and progress of a project. This is because communication simultaneously addresses relations and also the project team's motivation. Communication among stakeholders, which also includes the project team, is a continuous activity that should be maintained throughout the entire lifecycle of the project and should be handled with due care and responsibility (Rajhans, 2018). The project manager should encourage dialogue and feedback by creating opportunities for two-way communication with stakeholders. This includes actively listening to the concerns, suggestions, questions, suggestions, and responses promptly and respectfully. Engagement of stakeholders in a dialogue helps build trust, foster collaboration, and strengthen relationships. The stakeholders should also be stakeholders informed about relevant developments, progress, and decisions related to the organization or project through newsletters, meetings, reports, or other communication channels. This helps ensure that they are kept in the loop and feel involved belongingness in the process. It is also important for the project manager to solicit feedback from stakeholders to assess whether communication objectives are being met and identify areas for improvement (PMI, 2017).

Projects need to be maximized transparency by communicating relevant project information to the project stakeholders through various means or channels. Communication channels that are appropriate for reaching the target stakeholders should be selected (Rajhans, 2018). This may include face-to-face meetings, email, newsletters, social media, websites, public forums, or community events. While choosing the communication channels it is important to consider the preferences and accessibility of these stakeholders. Planning and research are required to ensure that the message reaches the key stakeholders with optimum impact and frequency. It is known that the communication plan and activities must be targeted to the proposed requirements of behavioral and social change (Yarbrough, 2021).

### **Performance of Projects**

Project performance is a comprehensive collection of: attainment of project objectives; flexible and easy management of projects in terms of planning, controlling, scheduling and communication; timeliness; cost alignment to the estimated budget; integration of stakeholders and implementation of all activities in harmony; and high yields of anticipated benefits. Project performance refers to how well a project is meeting its objectives, adhering to its schedule and budget, and delivering the expected results. It is typically assessed based on several key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure various aspects of the project's progress and success. Some common KPIs used to evaluate project performance include: schedule, cost, quality, scope, resource utilization, and stakeholder satisfaction (Kerzner, 2017).

According to PMI (2017) on the success rates, about 30% of respondents in the survey identified poor communication is the major cause of scope creep and project failure. Since failure is costly, the it is important to have a communication plan during project initiation (Waida, 2022). Gupta and Miller (2024) opine that based on reports on the internet, about 37% of projects fail due to undefined milestones and project objectives, and this is due to a lack of effective communication. Delays are common in almost all projects and their effect is felt by everyone involved in the projects. As for the business owners, delay in project startup will increase the financial cost and impend obtaining the expected revenue from the project. Further, there are other commitments related to delivery dates as established in the contracts. A prolonged project execution results in contractual issues due to cost overruns. There are extra expenses on the management and personnel, paying of contractual penalties, an additional cost of materials. As

for contractors who fail to deliver their reputation is always damaged and this affects their future work (Association for Project Management, 2018).

## EMPIRICAL REVIEW

### Stakeholders Governance and Performance of Projects

Jostlin and Muller (2018) investigated the relationship between project governance and project success. The study adopted an exploratory research design to analyze the nature of the relationship between governance and project success. The study used a questionnaire to collect data from 246 respondents across 41 countries where 38% were from North America, Europe 24%, Australia 22%, and 16% from the rest of the world. The study used organizational benefits, project efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, future potential, and project impact as the dimensions of project success. The study applied empirical tests on the correlation between project governance and project success. The study found that the governance orientation between stakeholders was positively and significantly related to the five dimensions of project success where the future potential had the strongest correlation. The study concluded that stakeholder-oriented governance of projects positively correlates with project success. Thus, it is important to understand the governance orientation of organizations in projects as well as the potential enabling influence of stakeholder orientation in project governance to ensure project success (Joslin & Müller, 2018).

Derakhshan et al (2019) conducted a literature review of project governance and stakeholders. The study aimed to draw attention to the context within which stakeholders are involved in project governance based on their roles and relationships. The research found from thematic analysis three contexts of approaches used by organizations towards stakeholders which include: ethics, megaprojects, and success. A total of 87 articles were reviewed. The study found that though project governance was essential in modifying the stakeholders' approach in organizations, the tool is only used by internal stakeholders in projects. The study also found that failure to address the needs of external stakeholders may be deleterious to the project outcomes. Thus, it is recommended that for public or megaprojects, the influence of external stakeholders should be acknowledged and ensured they are involved in the decision-making process. Additionally, they should be aware of what they create for the project. Project organizations should also develop governance capabilities at both the organization and individual levels to enhance communication, involvement, and understanding of how to manage external stakeholders. This will help in capturing the values created by the external stakeholders at the project level (Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019).

### Stakeholders Communication and Performance of Projects

Murwanashyaka and Shukla (2017) studied the 'effects of stakeholders management practices on performance of construction projects in Rwanda'. The study focused on stakeholder contract management, stakeholder communication management, and stakeholder conflict management and performance of the Kigali-Gatuna Road rehabilitation project. A descriptive research design was adopted where 143 project members and stakeholders were involved. A census survey was also used. The study found a positive significant correlation between stakeholder communication management and the performance of road rehabilitation projects in Rwanda. The study also found a positive significant influence between communication management ( $\beta = .259$ , sig = .000) and the performance of road rehabilitation projects in Rwanda. Rajhans (2018) explored the 'use of effective communication in stakeholder relationship management in project-based organizations. The study aimed to find a methodological framework as a tool for effectively managing stakeholders' relationships at the different levels of project-based organizations. The study used a survey design where questionnaires and structured interviews to collect data. The study found that communication was applied in the management of multiple

functions of stakeholder management. The study also suggested a framework for effective communication to be used by practitioners in project-based organizations to ensure there is successful stakeholder relationship management (Rajhans, 2018).

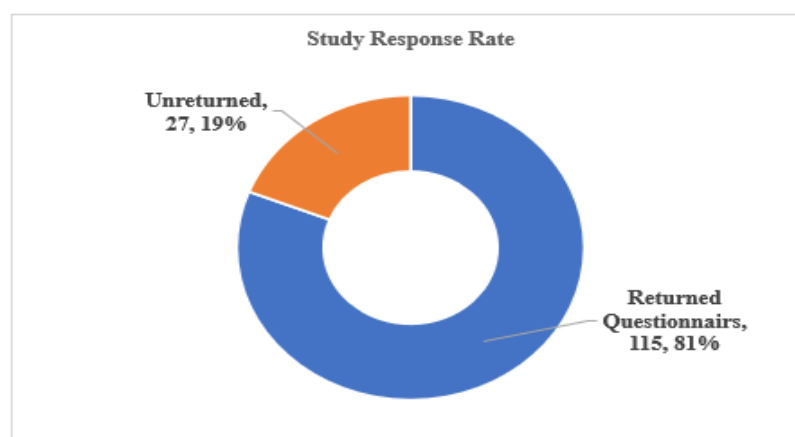
Israa (2018) examined the ‘effects of stakeholder’s engagement and communication management on project success.’ The study proposed that the establishment of appreciative and timely communication to meet the stakeholders’ requirements will help ensure there is a suitable environment and a catalyst for project success. This should be done through the provision of required data to decision-makers and also receiving of feedback to ensure there is alignment of project objectives and stakeholders’ expectations (Israa, 2018). Olwande (2021) examined ‘stakeholder management and performance of antiretroviral therapy supply chain project by national aids and sexually transmitted infections control program in health facilities, Kenya’. The study used both descriptive and explanatory research designs where 541 pharmacists were targeted and a sample of 229 was drawn. The study found stakeholder communication management significantly influence the performance of projects. The study recommended the strengthening of communication management in antiretroviral therapy facilities to improve performance in Kenya (Olwande, 2021).

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design as this enabled the researcher to describe the situation under research study, the study provided insights into the causal relationship between the variables (Susanna & Susan, 2017). The study was conducted in Embu County, targeting the various rural roads projects across the county including the 5 sub-counties where there are a total of 20 projects between 2021-2023. The target population for this study comprised 20 rural roads projects. The unit of observation included 20 project managers, 10 representatives from Embu county dealing with rural roads construction, 40 consultants and contractors, and 22 engineers related to Embu region with the technical mandate on Rural Roads in Embu County as described in KeRRA Projects Database (KeRRA, 2022) as well as 50 local representatives from the 5 sub-counties. Thus, a total of 142 respondents was the unit of observation, while 20 rural roads projects between 2021-2023 undertaken by KeRRA in Embu County formed the unit of analysis. Since the population was finite and also possible to measure a census was adopted. Questionnaire was the main tool for data collection. Descriptive and inferential statistics was adopted for the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted for the study.

### RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire was administered to the sample size of 142 KeRRA project staff in Meru County. A total of 115 questionnaires were duly signed and returned. Thus, a response rate of 81% was obtained which is recommended as excellent by Mugenda and Mugenda (2018).



**Figure 2: Response Rate**



## Descriptive statistics

The study computed the descriptive statistics in order to ascertain the whether the objectives are met. Measure of central tendency was used to compute the statistics. The study questionnaire was presented in 5-point Likert scale where 5 (SA) = Strongly Agree, 4(A) = Agree, 3(N) = Neutral, 2 (D) = Disagree, and 1(SD) = Strongly Disagree. Both mean and standard deviation were used to interpret the significance of the statistics.

## Stakeholders Governance

The first specific objective of the study was to establish the influence of stakeholders' governance on the performance of rural roads in Embu County, Kenya. The mean (3.36) shows moderate agreement among respondents that stakeholders' governance influences rural road performance in Embu County, indicating varied opinions on its impact. However, a moderate standard deviation (SD = 0.947) suggests differing perspectives on the significant impact of governance. While stakeholders' governance significantly influences rural road project performance, its effectiveness and engagement may be limited. To improve governance, stronger accountability mechanisms, transparency, and stakeholder collaboration should be prioritized. Concerning stakeholder governance providing a framework for stakeholder management, the findings show that 60.9% of respondents agree, while 19.1% disagree, and 20% remain neutral. This suggests that while a majority acknowledge the importance of stakeholder governance, a significant minority either do not see its relevance or feel its implementation is weak. The mean (3.63) suggests that respondents generally agree that stakeholder governance provides a framework for stakeholder management in rural road projects. While moderate standard deviation of 1.072, suggests some respondents may have reservations or see inconsistencies in the application of governance structures, despite the overall consensus on its importance in rural road projects. Thus, while stakeholder governance is crucial for rural road projects, its effectiveness may be questionable due to inconsistent application and lack of clear frameworks, well-defined roles, and transparent decision-making.

On stakeholder governance in overseeing relationships, the statistics also reveal that 44.4% of respondents agree, while 26.1% disagree, and 29.6% remain neutral. This suggests mixed perceptions about the role of stakeholder governance, with a significant proportion of respondents either unsure or skeptical about its effectiveness. The mean score of 3.30 further indicates that stakeholders' governance helps oversee relationships in rural road projects, but its effectiveness and consistency may be questioned. The moderate standard deviation (1.230) suggests variability in perception and implementation in different projects. Stakeholder governance is crucial in rural road projects, but its effectiveness is not widely agreed upon. To improve governance, clearer frameworks should be established, inclusive engagement encouraged, and training programs provided to stakeholders. This will enhance trust and transparency, ultimately improving the performance of rural road projects.

On governance frameworks influencing stakeholder objectives of rural roads construction, the study also found that 58.2% of respondents agree, while 30.4% disagree, and 11.3% remain neutral. The high percentage of disagreement (28.7%) suggests that a notable portion of stakeholders do not see governance frameworks as effectively shaping project objectives, possibly due to weak implementation or lack of enforcement. The mean (3.54) suggests that governance frameworks influence stakeholders' objectives in rural roads projects, with a moderate mean value. However, the moderate mean value suggests governance may not always be a strong or consistent influence, and the high standard deviation suggests variation. The effectiveness of governance frameworks in rural roads projects is uncertain due to high disagreement and standard deviation. To improve governance, enforcement, stakeholder involvement, and training should be strengthened, ensuring guidelines are followed, policies are relevant, and stakeholders understand their importance. On the governance framework

determining the assessment and monitoring of risks, it was established that 47.8% of respondents agree, while 31.3% disagree, and 20.9% remain neutral. This indicates that while nearly half of the respondents recognize governance frameworks as important for risk and performance management, a significant proportion either do not see their impact or believe they are not effectively implemented. The mean score of 3.25 indicates mixed perceptions of governance frameworks in rural road projects, with a high standard deviation indicating significant variation in responses, suggesting possible inconsistencies in governance function across different projects. The study indicates that governance frameworks in rural road projects are effective in risk assessment and performance optimization, but their effectiveness may vary due to inconsistent application and trust among stakeholders. To improve governance effectiveness, it is suggested to strengthen risk assessment, improve stakeholder awareness, and enhance transparency.

On stakeholder governance in defining roles and responsibilities, the statistics show that 48.7% of respondents agree, while 22.6% disagree, and 28.7% remain neutral. The high neutral percentage suggests that some stakeholders may not have a clear understanding of governance structures, or they do not see them being effectively enforced in practice. The mean (3.59) suggests while stakeholders generally agree that stakeholder governance helps define accountability roles in rural road projects, there is a moderate-to-high standard deviation suggesting some remain skeptical or experience inconsistencies in its application. The study findings suggest that stakeholder governance can help define accountability roles, but its effectiveness varies. To improve governance, it's suggested to enhance communication, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and increase stakeholder participation in defining governance roles. This will enhance transparency and trust in rural road construction projects. On stakeholder governance in facilitating conflict resolution and mediation, the study found that 42.6% of respondents agree, while 36.5% disagree, and 20.9% remain neutral. The high percentage of strong disagreement (26.1%) suggests that a significant portion of stakeholders do not see governance as effective in conflict resolution, possibly due to weak enforcement, political interference, or lack of structured mediation mechanisms. The study shows a neutral mean of 2.99, suggesting respondents are divided on the effectiveness of stakeholder governance in conflict resolution and mediation in rural road projects, possibly due to differences in governance effectiveness. The study indicates that stakeholder governance in rural road projects is ineffective in conflict resolution and mediation, with low mean and high disagreement. To improve governance, clear frameworks, training programs, and impartial mediation should be developed, promoting better stakeholder collaboration and smoother project implementation.

Lastly, on the project team being open and honest in listening to the views of stakeholders, the data shows that 50.4% of respondents agree, while 29.6% disagree, and 20% remain neutral. This suggests that while a majority believe in stakeholder openness, a considerable percentage either disagree or remain uncertain, indicating potential gaps in communication and transparency. The mean (3.23) further suggests that the project team's openness and honesty in listening to stakeholders' views is slightly agreed upon, but there are mixed perceptions and possible inconsistencies in their practices, with a high standard deviation indicating significant variation. The study suggests that while stakeholder governance in rural road projects is effective, it is not consistently applied due to high disagreement and neutrality. To improve engagement, it suggests implementing structured feedback mechanisms, increasing transparency, and encouraging inclusive participation to foster trust and collaboration.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholders Governance**

Stakeholders Governance	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Stdv
Stakeholder governance in rural roads projects provides a framework within which stakeholder management is exercised.	1.7	17.4	20	38.3	22.6	3.63	1.072
Stakeholders' governance in rural roads projects helps oversee the relationships, interests, and interactions of stakeholders within an organization or project.	8.7	17.4	29.6	23.5	20.9	3.30	1.230
In the rural roads' projects, there are governance frameworks that influence how stakeholders determine how the objectives are set and achieved.	1.7	28.7	11.3	30.4	27.8	3.54	1.223
The governance framework in rural road projects also determines the assessment and monitoring of risks as well as performance optimization.	10.4	20.9	20.9	28.7	19.1	3.25	1.276
Through stakeholder governance, the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for accountability.	2.6	20	28.7	13	35.7	3.59	1.235
In rural roads construction projects, stakeholder governance helps in the adoption of appropriate conflict resolution and mediation techniques to deal with conflicts amicably.	26.1	10.4	20.9	23.5	19.1	2.99	1.472
To ensure good stakeholder governance, the project team is open and honest in listening to the views of the key stakeholders.	18.3	11.3	20	30.4	20	3.23	1.383
<b>Average Stakeholders Governance</b>						<b>3.36</b>	<b>.947</b>

***How is the stakeholder governance in the rural roads projects in Embu County?***

The respondents mentioned that Embu County's County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) guide project identification, implementation, and evaluation, promoting stakeholder involvement in infrastructure projects, including rural roads, to enhance citizen well-being. Respondents also mentioned that despite existing frameworks for stakeholder involvement, challenges persist in effective engagement and communication. Issues like delays, budget overruns, and quality concerns are often due to inadequate involvement, suggesting the need for enhanced communication. This was also affirmed by Tabitha and Sang (2024) on resource capabilities and performance of road construction projects in Embu County. Respondents also mentioned the need for effective M&E. Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are crucial for stakeholder governance, and in Embu County, integrating M&E into project contracts influences project completion. Strengthening M&E practices, including regular oversight, can lead to successful outcomes. The respondents also opined that there is coordination among stakeholders of the rural roads projects. They explained that Embu County Government's Department of Roads, Transport, and Public Works is responsible for constructing, maintaining, and managing county road networks, emphasizing the importance of effective coordination among various stakeholders for successful project implementation. In summary, while Embu County has established a foundational policy framework for stakeholder governance in rural road projects, more stakeholder engagement, improved communication, robust monitoring and

evaluation practices, capacity building, and better stakeholder coordination are required to ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of these projects.

***In what areas of stakeholder governance need to be improved to ensure the stakeholders positively influence performance?***

According to the respondents, to improve the performance of rural road projects in Embu County, improvements in stakeholder governance are needed. These include strengthening stakeholder coordination and engagement, improving inter-governmental coordination, ensuring more inclusive participation, enhancing transparency and accountability mechanisms, improving monitoring and evaluation systems, investing in capacity building and resource allocation, strengthening institutional support, and enforcing compliance with standards and policies. Clearer roles for stakeholders, better inter-governmental collaboration, and more inclusive participation from marginalized groups can prevent conflicts and duplication of efforts. Public disclosure of project details, independent oversight bodies, and improved grievance redress mechanisms can also enhance trust and project effectiveness. Capacity building and resource allocation, such as training for local contractors and project managers, can improve project execution quality. Strengthening governance institutions responsible for infrastructure development can enhance overall efficiency. Ensuring compliance with sustainability and community impact guidelines can enhance long-term benefits. By addressing these governance gaps, stakeholders in Embu County can positively influence rural road project performance, leading to timely, cost-effective, and high-quality infrastructure development.

**Stakeholders Communication**

The second specific objective of the study was to assess the influence of stakeholders' communication on performance of rural roads in Embu County, Kenya. The study found that the mean (3.31) indicates while respondents generally agree that stakeholder communication influences the performance of rural road projects in Embu County, there is room for improvement in its effectiveness. The low standard deviation (0.861) indicates that most stakeholders share similar perceptions about the role of communication in project performance. The study suggests that stakeholder communication is crucial for rural road project performance, but its effectiveness could be improved. To improve communication, clear channels should be established, active two-way participation encouraged, and multiple communication methods should be used. This will strengthen project coordination and stakeholder trust, ultimately leading to better rural road project outcomes.

Concerning effective stakeholder communication in rural roads projects, the study shows that 47.8% of respondents agree, while 30.5% disagree, and 21.7% remain neutral. This suggests that while a majority recognize the importance of effective communication, a significant portion either disagree or are unsure, highlighting possible gaps in stakeholder engagement and transparency. The moderate mean of 3.18 suggest that while some respondents agree that stakeholder communication is effective in rural road projects, others feel it is insufficient or inconsistent. The standard deviation (1.167) indicates some variation in responses. The findings show that stakeholder communication exists in rural road projects but is not totally successful. The moderate mean (3.18) and significant disagreement (30.5%) indicate that some stakeholders have poor communication, which might lead to trust concerns or misalignment in project expectations. Improving communication in rural road projects by enhancing clarity, increasing stakeholder engagement, and adopting multiple channels for inclusivity and accessibility, fosters better collaboration and trust.

On the presence of communication plan describing the strategy for providing information, the statistics show that 50.4% of respondents agree, while 37.4% disagree, and 12.2% remain neutral. This indicates polarized opinions, where a significant portion of stakeholders feel the

communication plan is ineffective or lacks proper execution. The study's mean of 3.06 indicates neutrality in respondents' perception of the effectiveness of communication plans in rural road construction projects, suggesting potential ineffectiveness in reaching all stakeholders and wide variation in responses. The findings indicate that, while a communication plan exists in rural road construction, it is not always adequately implemented. The high disagreement rate (37.4%) and substantial standard deviation (1.518) suggest that certain stakeholders feel excluded or are not receiving accurate information at the appropriate time. It is recommended to improve the communication strategy, address stakeholder concerns, use diverse channels, and incorporate feedback loops to enhance stakeholder involvement, trust, and project efficiency, ultimately leading to better decision-making.

On whether the communication plan helps create awareness on stakeholder relationship, the findings indicate that 62.6% of respondents agree, while only 14.8% disagree, and 22.6% remain neutral. This suggests that most stakeholders recognize the role of the communication plan in fostering stakeholder relationships during the planning stage. The mean (3.80) suggests that respondents generally agree that communication planning during planning stages helps create awareness and emphasizes stakeholder relationship management, with a moderate standard deviation (1.125) suggesting some variability in responses. The study highlights the importance of a well-structured communication plan in rural road projects, but suggests gaps in execution or inclusivity. Recommendations include using interactive platforms, encouraging two-way communication, and ensuring accessibility for all stakeholders to improve engagement and success. Concerning whether the project leadership embraces dialogue and feedback the data shows that 53.9% of respondents agree, while 29.6% disagree, and 16.5% remain neutral. This indicates mixed opinions—while many stakeholders acknowledge that project managers facilitate two-way communication, a notable proportion (nearly 30%) feel that engagement could be improved. The study indicates moderate agreement among respondents ( $M = 3.36$ ) that project managers in rural road construction projects encourage dialogue and feedback, but suggests room for improvement in stakeholder communication and engagement. The study indicates that project managers are promoting dialogue and feedback in rural road projects, but their efforts may not be uniformly effective. Recommendations include involving stakeholders in decision-making, using structured feedback mechanisms, training project managers, and addressing dissatisfied stakeholders' concerns. This could enhance stakeholder trust and project success.

Concerning feedback, the statistics show that 47.8% of respondents agree, while 33.9% disagree, and 18.3% remain neutral. This suggests that while many stakeholders feel that feedback is solicited, a significant portion either disagrees or is unsure. The mean (3.27) indicates that stakeholders have a moderate perception of project managers seeking feedback to improve communication effectiveness, with the standard deviation (1.353) indicating significant variation in responses. The study indicates that while some project managers actively seek stakeholder feedback, the practice is not consistently applied across all projects. The high disagreement rate suggests that many stakeholders feel their input is not adequately sought or utilized. Recommendations include structured feedback mechanisms, regular review, multiple communication channels, and increased transparency. On maximizing transparency in communication, study found that 53.1% of respondents agree, while 23.5% disagree, and 23.5% remain neutral. This suggests that while a majority of stakeholders acknowledge the use of communication channels for transparency, a significant portion either disagrees or is uncertain. The mean (3.43) suggests that stakeholders moderately agree that project information is communicated effectively, but there's room for improvement. The moderate standard deviation (1.207) suggests variation in responses, suggesting some stakeholders may not consistently receive or feel inadequate project information. The study found that while transparency efforts exist, they are not uniformly effective. Some stakeholders may not receive information through accessible channels or at the right time. Recommendations for improvement include

diversifying communication channels, simplifying technical information, increasing updates, and encouraging stakeholder feedback. This can improve stakeholder trust, engagement, and project success.

On the use of participatory communication tools, the study found that 49.6% of respondents agree, while 40% disagree, and 10.4% remain neutral. This suggests that while some stakeholders recognize the use of participatory communication tools, a significant portion does not perceive them as effective or adequately applied. The mean (3.10) suggests a neutral agreement on the use of participatory and interpersonal communication tools for community-based communication, but indicated wide variation in responses, with some stakeholders recognizing their effectiveness while others may find them inadequate or not well-implemented. The study suggests that participatory communication tools in rural road construction projects may not be consistently effective due to high disagreements among stakeholders. Recommendations include increasing awareness, enhancing stakeholder engagement, regularly assessing effectiveness, and considering diverse community members when planning strategies. These improvements can enhance community engagement, transparency, and project success.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholders Communication**

Stakeholders Communication	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Stdv
In rural road construction projects, there is effective stakeholder communication that is crucial for building trust, managing relationships, and achieving shared goals.	9.6	20.9	21.7	37.4	10.4	3.18	1.167
In rural road construction projects, the communication plan describes the strategy for providing the right information, to the right people, in a useful format, with the proper frequency	27	10.4	12.2	30.4	20	3.06	1.518
During planning stage in rural road construction projects, communication plan helps create awareness and the importance of management of stakeholder relationship.	2.6	12.2	22.6	27.8	34.8	3.80	1.125
The project manager in rural road construction projects encourages dialogue and feedback by creating opportunities for two-way communication with stakeholders.	12.2	17.4	16.5	30.4	23.5	3.36	1.339
The project manager in rural road construction projects to solicits feedback from stakeholders to assess whether communication objectives are being met and identify areas for improvement	11.3	22.6	18.3	23.5	24.3	3.27	1.353
In rural road construction projects to maximize transparency, there is communication of the relevant project information to the project stakeholders through various means or channels that are appropriate for reaching the target stakeholders.	7.8	15.7	23.5	32.2	20.9	3.43	1.207
Participatory and interpersonal communication tools such as community media, festivals are use as community-based communication and for its success active involvement is required	20	20	10.4	29.6	20	3.10	1.451
<b>Average Stakeholders Communication</b>						<b>3.31</b>	<b>.861</b>

### ***How is stakeholder communication in the rural roads projects in Embu County?***

For the rural roads projects in Embu County, the respondents opined that there are challenges in achieving optimal communication in rural roads projects. The mentioned issues poor information dissemination, a lack of organised feedback channels, and insufficient engagement of all relevant parties. These problems can cause project delays, financial overruns, and poor quality. Studies have demonstrated that clear and regular communication among stakeholders, such as government agencies, contractors, and local people, leads to better project performance and sustainability. For example, research shows that stakeholder involvement, enabled by efficient communication, improves the success of road construction projects in the county (Mutuku, 2023). Embu County should implement a comprehensive Stakeholder Communication Strategy to address challenges, ensure proper consultation, and promote stakeholder participation in project design, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the project's success.

### ***In what areas in stakeholder communication need to be improved to ensure they stakeholders positively influence performance?***

On the areas that need improvement in stakeholder communication to positively influence project performance of rural road projects in Kiambu County, the respondents provided numerous suggestions. These include establishing clear communication channels, enhancing transparency and information sharing, strengthening feedback and grievance mechanisms, training local leaders and contractors on effective communication strategies, and promoting inclusive decision-making. Regular consultation meetings and digital platforms can help in real-time information sharing, especially in remote areas. Public access to project information and clear documentation on project goals and outcomes can also help. Community feedback systems and independent monitoring committees can ensure timely responses to stakeholder concerns. Training for stakeholders on effective engagement strategies and the use of local languages can also help avoid misunderstandings. Finally, enhancing multi-stakeholder collaboration through inclusive decision-making and cross-sector partnerships can lead to better project execution, enhanced trust, and sustainable infrastructure development. In summary, while efforts are being made to engage stakeholders in rural road projects in Embu County, increasing inclusivity, establishing strong communication channels, involving stakeholders throughout all project phases, and addressing existing challenges are critical steps towards improving project performance and sustainability.

### **Performance of Rural Roads in Embu County**

The general objective of this study was to examine the influence of stakeholders' management practices on the performance of rural roads in Embu County, Kenya. The findings indicate that stakeholder management practices are perceived as having a moderately good impact on rural road performance in Embu County. The mean (3.56) implies general agreement, and the low standard deviation (0.665) suggests response consistency. This means that most stakeholders have similar perspectives, emphasizing the importance of competent stakeholder management in improving road project performance.

**Table 3: Total item statistics for Project Performance**

<b>Rural Roads Project Performance</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Stdv</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>		
Stakeholder management practices have helped ensure rural road construction projects are completed within their timelines.	0	20	30.4	39.1	10.4	3.40	.925
The involvement of stakeholders in road construction projects has ensured that road projects are implemented according to their plans.	0	0	20.9	39.1	40	4.19	.760
The rural road construction projects have complied with the budgetary requirements.	20	9.6	10.4	29.6	30.4	3.41	1.504
Stakeholders are satisfied with how the rural road construction projects are being implemented.	0	20	30.4	39.1	10.4	3.40	.925
The stakeholders are satisfied with how they are involved in the implementation of the rural road construction projects.	0	10.4	19.1	40.9	29.6	3.90	.949
The stakeholders feel the rural road construction projects are successfully implemented	9.6	30.4	20.9	20	19.1	3.09	1.288
The rural road construction projects are of high quality and standards.	9.6	20	10.4	30.4	29.6	3.50	1.353
There is good coordination between the project stakeholders and the project team on the project status and performance of rural road projects in Embu County.	9.6	30.4	20	30.4	9.6	3.00	1.177
<b>Average Project Performance</b>						<b>3.56</b>	<b>.665</b>

The findings suggest that stakeholder management practices have a moderate positive impact on the timely completion of rural road construction projects, however, the opinions vary to some extent indicating there is a somewhat consistent perception among stakeholders. ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 0.925$ ). The statistics also suggest that stakeholders' involvement in road construction projects is perceived as effective in ensuring project implementation aligns with plans. The relatively high mean (4.19) shows strong agreement, while the moderate standard deviation (0.760) indicates that most respondents share this view, with only a few deviations. On stakeholder satisfaction, the study established that stakeholder satisfaction with rural road construction projects is moderate but not strong ( $M = 3.40$ ). While there is a slight tendency toward satisfaction, a notable portion of stakeholders have differing views ( $SD = 0.925$ ). This may indicate that while some projects are well-implemented, others may have issues that lead to dissatisfaction. However, stakeholders are fairly satisfied with their level of involvement in rural road construction projects. The relatively high mean (3.90) shows a generally positive perception, while the moderate standard deviation (0.949) indicates that some stakeholders may have differing experiences.

Statistics also revealed that stakeholders are divided on whether rural road construction projects are successfully implemented. The neutral mean (3.09) indicates no strong consensus, while the high standard deviation (1.288) reveals substantial differences in perception. This could imply that some projects are successful while others face challenges, or that stakeholder expectations and experiences vary significantly. Further, the study also established that rural road construction quality is moderately positive but inconsistent ( $M = 3.50$ ). While some



stakeholders believe the roads are of high quality, there is significant disagreement, as shown by the high standard deviation ( $SD = 1.353$ ). This could indicate variability in construction quality across different projects or differing stakeholder expectations. On budgetary requirements, the study suggests moderate agreement that rural road construction projects comply with budgetary requirements ( $M = 3.41$ ). However, the high variation in responses ( $1.504$  SD) indicates diverse opinions, indicating that some projects may have adhered to budgets while others faced financial challenges. Finally, the study established that stakeholder coordination with the project team is neither strongly positive nor negative, with perceptions varying significantly. The neutral mean ( $3.00$ ) and high standard deviation ( $1.177$ ) indicate inconsistencies in coordination effectiveness, where some projects may have strong collaboration while others experience communication gaps

In summary, the study underscores the importance of effective stakeholder management for rural road developments in Embu County. While stakeholder involvement increases project adherence to plans and satisfaction, issues such as budget compliance, coordination, and quality variances persist. Strengthening stakeholder involvement tactics, improving communication, and guaranteeing accountability can result in more efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality rural road projects. Larson and Larson (2020) emphasized that stakeholder engagement is regarded as a novel management strategy useful in addressing global sustainability concerns by incorporating broader competencies from stakeholders across the project management processes. Many studies have mentioned the importance of stakeholder management on project performance. In Kenya, Moulid et al (2021) found stakeholder management to positively influence project performance. In Rwanda, Nsengiyumva & Ogbe (2022) established that stakeholder engagement practices are positively related to project planning and project performance. Mashali et al (2023) also established that effective implementation of stakeholder management in construction projects that entail transparency has ensured improved project performance and cost-effective completion of projects.

### Correlation Analysis

The study used Pearson correlation analysis to examine the relationships between the dependent variable (performance of rural roads projects in Embu County) and the independent variables (stakeholder governance and stakeholder communication). Table IV below shows the findings from the correlation analysis.

**Table IV: Correlation Analysis**

		Performance of rural roads projects
Stakeholder Governance	Pearson Correlation	.471**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	168
Stakeholder Communication	Pearson Correlation	.683**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115

The study sought to establish an association between stakeholders' governance and performance of rural road projects in Embu County. The study found stakeholders governance had a moderately strong significant correlation of ( $r = .471$ ,  $sig = .000 < .05$ ) with performance of rural roads projects. This implies that stakeholders' governance has a significant positive correlation with the performance of rural roads projects. There is also a linear relationship

between stakeholders' governance and performance of rural roads projects. There is a probability that .471 units of stakeholders' governance may lead to a change in the performance of rural roads projects by a unit. The study also sought to establish the association between stakeholders' communication and the performance of rural road projects in Embu County. Stakeholders' communication had a strong significant correlation of ( $r = .683$ ,  $\text{sig} = .000 < .05$ ) with the performance of rural roads projects. This implies that stakeholders' communication has significant positive correlation with the performance of rural roads projects. There is also a linear relationship between stakeholders' communication and the performance of rural roads projects. There is a probability that .683 units of stakeholders' communication may lead to a change in the performance of rural roads project by a unit. The findings are also supported by Moulid et al (2021) who established a weak significant correlation between CDA project performance and stakeholders' communication.

### Regression Analysis

Findings from regression analysis indicate that all the beta coefficients for the independent variables were significant i.e. the p-values were less than the significant value 0.05. Thus, individual variables (stakeholder governance and stakeholder communication) were significant in explaining the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County. Stakeholder governance had the highest influence with a correlation .592 (52.2%) while stakeholder communication had a correlation of .510 (51%).

**Table VI: Regression Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.365	.184		1.985	.050
1 Stakeholders Governance	.416	.086	.592	4.828	.000
Stakeholders Communication	.394	.052	.510	7.529	.000

a. Dependent Variable: performance of rural roads projects in Embu County

The model can be fitted as follows

$$Y = .365 + .416X_1 + .394X_2 \dots \dots (i)$$

Where;  $X_1$  = Stakeholders Governance,  $X_2$  = Stakeholders Communication

Stakeholders' governance had a positive ( $\beta_3 = .416$ ), significant ( $\text{sig} = .000 < .05$ ), and direct relationship with the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County. The study significance of the stakeholders' governance in influencing the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County is further supported by the t-t-calculated ( $4.828 > t\text{-critical} (\pm 1.980)$ ). For a unit of performance of rural roads projects in Embu County, .416 units of stakeholders' governance is needed. Stakeholders' governance also influences the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County to an extent of .592 (59.2%). There is a significant relationship between stakeholders' communication and the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County. The use of an appropriate governance framework, accountability, and diversity of compliance helps ensure improved project performance. The Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) projects in Embu County require effective stakeholder participation for success. This involves regular updates, accessible communication, inclusive consultations, participatory decision-making, partnerships with local organizations, government agencies, and community

groups, and community involvement. These strategies ensure transparency, foster community support, and enhance project performance. Regular updates, inclusive consultations, and participation in decision-making can help build ownership and reduce resistance. Collaboration with local organizations and government agencies can also leverage resources and expertise. Encouraging community participation in project activities can lead to improved outcomes, increased satisfaction, and sustainable development.

Finally, stakeholders' communication had a positive ( $\beta_4 = .394$ ), insignificant ( $\text{sig} = .000 < .05$ ), and direct relationship with the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County. The study found stakeholders' communication to be significant in influencing the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County further supported by the  $t$ -t-calculated ( $7.529 > t$ -critical ( $\pm 1.980$ )). For a unit of performance of geothermal projects, .394 units of stakeholders' communication is needed. Stakeholders' communication also insignificantly influences the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County to an extent of .510 (51%). There is a significant relationship between stakeholders' communication and the performance of rural roads projects in Embu County. The findings are supported by Olwande (2021) who found stakeholders communication management significantly influenced performance of projects undertaken by National Aids and Sexually Transmitted Infections Program in Kenya. In another study in Nairobi County, Mwando (2021) also found that stakeholder communication significantly influenced on the performance of private construction projects.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study found stakeholders' governance had a positive significant, and direct relationship with the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County. There is a significant relationship between stakeholders' governance and the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County. This study therefore concludes that stakeholders' governance as stakeholder management practices influences the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County. The study found stakeholders' communication had a positive significant and direct relationship with the performance of performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County. There is a significant relationship between stakeholders' communication and the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County. This study therefore concludes that stakeholders' communication as stakeholder management practices influences the performance of KeRRA projects in Embu County.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that KeRRA develop a Stakeholder Engagement Policy outlining roles, responsibilities, and decision-making protocols to ensure structured participation. The study also recommends that KeRRA organize Quarterly Public Consultations where residents can review project status, raise concerns, and propose solutions. KeRRA should also create a Real-Time Project Monitoring Dashboard accessible to all stakeholders for tracking project milestones. The study also recommends that project leaders should encourage dialogue and feedback in projects. KeRRA should also develop a KeRRA Communication Policy outlining stakeholder engagement procedures, information dissemination, and feedback mechanisms. KeRRA should also publish quarterly performance reports detailing project milestones, financial expenditures, and upcoming activities.

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