

**CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS AND PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY
LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS,
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research proposal is entirely original with no submissions made in support of a degree or diploma application at another university. Without permission from the author and/or Kenyatta University, no portion of the proposal may be duplicated.

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As the assigned university supervisor, I hereby approve the evaluation of this research proposal.

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DEDICATION

In honor of my family, who put up with me while I completed my studies, I dedicate this proposal.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the success of this proposal. From the beginning of the course until its end, I am truly grateful to God for giving me peace of mind while I studied. I am deeply grateful Dr. Lucy Ngugi for her priceless aid and encouragement in helping to accomplish this proposal. Without her constant guidance and assistance, this study would not have been successfully completed. We humbly acknowledge that the success of this research was possible due to the hard work and cooperation of many people and wish to express our deepest gratitude.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

VUCCnet	Virtual University for Cancer Control Network
ToC	Theory of Change
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
PLS–SEM	Partial least squares structural equation modeling
PLC	Public Limited Company
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
MNP	Multinational Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
CSFs	Critical Success Factors
AVU	Africa Virtual University

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Monitoring and evaluation	This refers to the process of data collection and analysis and determining whether or not a program or intervention has achieved its goals. Monitoring and evaluation was measured in terms of accountability, control and transparency.
Project performance	Refers to a project that meets its goals within the allocated funds, the agreed upon schedule, and the needs of the client. The measures included cost, schedule and customer satisfaction.
Project planning	Refers to a step in the project management process where the necessary paperwork is made in order to guarantee the project's successful completion. It was measured in terms of objective setting, deliverables and scheduling.
Communication	Is used to describe a set of steps that help to guarantee that the right messages are sent to the right people and that they are received, read, and understood by them. It was measured in terms of awareness, feedback and channels.

Critical Success Factor

Refers to specific activities, procedures or areas that an organization's project managers carry out to make a project successful. It was measured in terms of stakeholder involvement, monitoring and evaluation, project planning and communication.

Stakeholder involvement

The process an organization uses to involve those who might be affected by the decisions it makes or who might have the power to influence how those decisions are carried out. It was measured in terms of decision making, information sharing and expertise.

ABSTRACT

Community-based projects have had a tremendously positive influence on development in many countries around the world. The efforts of community-based projects are having a positive impact on an estimated two million people in Kenya. However, it has been noted that the majority of community development initiatives in Kenya have failed to sustain themselves, become self-sufficient, and the communities have failed to continue running them. Therefore, the present research investigated how critical success factors influences the performance of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya. The independent variables included; stakeholder involvement, monitoring and evaluation, project planning and communication. The study was guided by contingency theory, stakeholder theory and theory of change. The research design for the study was descriptive. In Machakos County, Kenya, seven community livelihood projects that were finished between 2018 and 2022 were the study's target population. To ensure that every respondent is fairly represented, the study employed stratified sampling. A simple random sampling method was used to choose the respondents. 259 respondents make up the sample. The data for this study were gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire's validity was assessed in this study using criteria validity, construct validity, and content validity. This study was evaluated for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient test. Thematic analysis analyzed qualitative data and narrative presentation of results followed. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages). Inferential statistics (regression analysis, correlation analysis) were used to determine the extent to which one variable affects another. Tables and figures were used to display the quantitative results. The study carried out diagnostic tests that included; linearity tests, normality tests, homoscedasticity test and multicollinearity tests. The study's conclusions would benefit other stakeholders, the government, and policy makers by shedding light on how crucial success factors impact project performance. These stakeholders included the management of the organization that implements these projects. The study found that stakeholder participation, project planning, monitoring and evaluation and communication had a positive significant influence on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. The study concludes that stakeholders are the key component of any project and organization. Project planning entails thinking through the goals of the project, establishing what a successful project might entail, evaluating the timeline, and organizing the tasks. M&E provides a detailed blueprint of everything that went right and everything that went wrong during a project. The project management requires effective communication in order for work to proceed smoothly and on schedule. The study recommends that for a project to be successful all the stakeholders need to have a clear understanding of the objectives and processes. The project managers should start by identifying stakeholders by focusing on identifying everyone who will affect or be affected by the project and things are likely to be much smoother during their planning process. The project managers should carry out a needs analysis to help to identify the underlying causes of problems or challenges faced by the target population and to identify potential solutions that can be used to address these issues. The project managers should establish the purpose of their work by understanding why they are working on the project and how each step will advance the project. The research highlights the need for further studies on other key success factors to address the 35.5% gap identified in the regression analysis. Additionally, it suggests exploring community development project performance in counties beyond Machakos County, Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Study

The performance of a project can be evaluated through various dimensions, including its objectives, outcomes, stakeholder satisfaction, and overall impact and therefore, understanding these aspects is crucial for assessing whether the project has achieved its intended goals and how it contributes to the broader context in which it operates (Dai & Wells, 2018). Meng (2019) asserts that in order to develop strategies for enhancing project performance, it is necessary to recognize significant related performance factors and comprehend their interrelationships. This is because improving project performance depends on both people and project management procedures. If a project fulfills those requirements and contributes to a strategic business goal, that is the true test of its success.

Munns and Bjeirmi (2016) observe that the success on a project denotes that specific goals for a particular stakeholder were achieved and one of the best ways to enhance project delivery efficiency is usually seen as reviewing project success and critical success factors (CSFs), but each stakeholder's expectations may vary. According to Jha and Iyer (2020) an organizational project's management and control are essential to its success, and utilizing essential project management techniques, as well as industry standards and best practices, will be required to successfully complete the project. Therefore, the decision-making support provided by the CSFs is more beneficial, and this has a big impact on how well projects perform.

The utilization of critical success factors (CSFs) in projects by international organizations engaged in community livelihood initiatives is a strategic approach aimed at enhancing project performance and ensuring sustainable outcomes (Jitpaiboon,

Smith & Gu, 2019). In countries like Bangladesh, for example, Mannan, Ahmed and Uddin (2023) observe that the integration of local knowledge and active participation of community members in project planning and execution has been recognized as a critical success factor. This approach not only fosters a sense of ownership among the beneficiaries but also ensures that the initiatives are culturally relevant and tailored to the specific challenges faced by the community. As a result, projects have seen increased adoption rates and long-term sustainability.

Similarly, in sub-Saharan Africa, international organizations have found that establishing strong partnerships with local governments and NGOs is essential for the success of livelihood initiatives (Awuzie & Isa, 2017). Ofori, Giesen and Odai (2022) the integration of CSFs in Nigeria such as stakeholder engagement and effective communication has proven vital in the execution of health and education projects. Organizations that prioritize collaboration with local leaders and community members have seen higher levels of trust and participation, resulting in more effective health interventions and educational programs. This collaborative approach ensures that the initiatives are culturally relevant and tailored to the specific challenges faced by the communities, thereby increasing their overall impact.

In Ghana, Fummey (2020) observe that the emphasis on sustainability and monitoring and evaluation as critical success factors has led to more resilient community development projects. According to Owusu-Manu, Addy, Agyekum and Aidoo (2022), the focus on continuous improvement not only enhances project performance but also fosters a culture of accountability and transparency, which is crucial for building long-term relationships with community stakeholders. Therefore, by establishing clear metrics for success and regularly assessing project outcomes, organizations can make

informed adjustments to their strategies, ensuring that the initiatives remain effective over time.

In Kenya, various NGOs have made significant progress in agricultural programs focused on local engagement, skill development, and market accessibility. These organizations involve communities in decision-making and program design, ensuring initiatives address specific regional needs (Ngacho & Das, 2019). Chileshe, Njau, Kibichii, Macharia and Kavishe (2022) observe that NGOs enhance the sustainability of projects and build trust within communities, promoting collaboration among farmers to share knowledge and resources by fostering local ownership. Additionally, these initiatives improve market access for local farmers by connecting them with markets, forming cooperatives, and providing logistical support. This helps smallholder farmers sell their products at fair prices, increasing their income and contributing to community economic stability. Therefore, the work of NGOs in Kenya exemplifies a holistic approach to agricultural development that emphasizes local engagement, skill enhancement, and market integration.

1.1.1 Performance of Community Livelihood Projects

When a project is finished on schedule, on budget, and meets all of the design requirements, it is said to be performing (Takim & Akintoye, 2018). On the other hand, Eriksson and Westerberg (2020) argue that when a project meets its objectives and schedule, it is said to operate within budget and at a certain level of performance by efficient and effective use of allocated resources. Therefore, it can be said that the promotion of residents' livelihood projects has reached a certain level. whereby the projects are delivered on the set time schedule, are able to build sustainable livelihoods for the poor and meets the needs of the intended disadvantaged communities.

From one nation to the next, community livelihood projects perform differently. Projects aimed at creating sustainable livelihoods must have open management. According to Kebebe and Shibru (2017), better performing livelihoods projects put people at the center of development, focusing on poverty reduction interventions and empowering people with disabilities, while promoting access to assets and creating institutional and policy environments. According to Ellis and Freeman (2020), local population involvement can be very helpful in tracking how program funds are being used and how services are being provided. Therefore, efficient measurement and evaluation of field operations improves project performance by highlighting areas for improvement in project implementation, it provides the necessary adjustments responding to changes in the work environment and making the project run better.

Project performance is the act of carrying out tasks and achieving objectives within a project, and its success relies on team members consistently delivering strong performance and possessing valuable abilities to execute project tasks (Ledbetter, 2018). According to Leung, Chan and Olomolaiye (2019) the emphasis placed on continuous improvement through a variety of project types demonstrates the significance of project management performance. The principal objective of task execution is to work on the venture's outcomes, which calls for the creation of a framework for defining project success. As a result, efforts to evaluate project performance they need to be clearly defined and accurately measured in order for project operations to be properly understood and monitored.

According to Chandy, Keenan, Petheram, and Shepherd (2019), commitment, coordination, and competence were the most vital elements in guaranteeing the powerful execution of local area work projects in India. According to the project's current level of performance ratings, the extent to which various success or failure

factors contribute varies. According to Kaushal and Kala (2020), community projects in many areas of India's agricultural sector, it mainly consists of few important success factors. If these elements are properly configured and managed, a project can be successful. However, if the priorities are not specified correctly, the whole project can fail.

Hilson and Banchirigah (2019) indicate that quite a large number of projects in Ghana are implemented alongside routine operating tasks in functional organizations with limited project management capacity. For example, the implementation of community projects in Ghana is hampered by several factors such as inflation, project complexity, incorrect material estimates, funding, change orders, design changes, delays in drawing submissions, non-compliance with specifications, incorrect site information and poor contract management. Similarly, Alutu and Udhawuve (2019) noted that the incidence of corruption, war, drought and government political priorities affects projects in those nations.

According to Kariithi and Mbugua (2018), community livelihood projects have significantly increased in Kenya and are now directly or indirectly supporting the economic development of rural areas. Since the majority of project teams in rural areas are made up primarily of low-income individuals, managing their projects presents them with enormous difficulties, which prevents them from fulfilling their service delivery goals. The main goal of community livelihood projects, according to Nthiga and Lamers (2019), is to enhance the economic development of men and women and create a supportive environment for their social transformation.

It is important to guarantee the last exhibition of the task inside the assigned financial plan, time and extension and to satisfy the essential specialized guidelines of value, activity, usefulness, security and ecological assurance (Flanagan and Norman, 2019).

Mohammed (2020) points out that the performance of the project is guaranteed, thereby increasing the profitability of the company while minimizing the effects of risks and unforeseen circumstances when it comes to achieving the project's goals. Project management is also widely acknowledged to include the fundamental components and criteria of cost, time, scope, and quality for assessing project performance. Project performance will be evaluated in this study based on cost, budget, and service quality.

Project cost is one of the main marks of undertaking a positive outcome and assumes a significant part in accomplishing project goals (Borade and Halkar, 2018). Powerful undertaking cost administration and control is important to guarantee projects are finished on time and inside spending plan. According to Angelis and Stamelos (2020), project costs that are not effectively monitored or controlled often increase construction costs, erode investor confidence, and negatively impact overall project performance. A solid expense the board framework should be set up to guarantee that the task meets its targets.

The project schedule is a thorough process that lists the project phases, tasks within each stage, and dependencies. In addition, it takes into account the abilities and quantity of resources needed for each task, as well as the milestones, dependencies, and timeline (Li and Willis, 2018). According to Vanhoucke and Demeulemeester (2021), when the entire team, stakeholders and managers are aligned, conflict within the team is reduced and managers can easily find the right resources for the right tasks thanks to detailed descriptions of each task and required skills.

The degree to which a project deliverable complies with the quality requirements and standards set forth at the project's outset is known as project quality performance. By comparing the actual results with the anticipated results and noting any discrepancies or gaps, quality performance can be evaluated (Ledbetter, 2017). According to Stevens

(2019), project quality can be assessed using measures such as the success of project objectives or benefits, keeping up with execution over the long run, and deciding the extent of assets dispensed to great exercises.

1.1.2 Critical Success Factors

According to Frefer et al. (2018), completing a project on time requires many components that must all work in harmony. According to Milosevic and Patanakul (2019), critical success factors (CSFs) are qualities, conditions or factors that can essentially affect project achievement if appropriately kept up with, upheld or made due. Furthermore, Milosevic and Patanakul (2019) point out that KVPs can be divided into five main categories: Project procedures, project management activities, people elements, project elements and the external environment are some of these elements. This study adopted both the human-related factors and project-related factors that will include; stakeholder involvement, monitoring and evaluation, project planning and communication.

Engaging stakeholders allows project teams to gather insights into the needs, expectations, and concerns of those affected by the project. This understanding helps in aligning project objectives with stakeholder interests, leading to higher satisfaction and support (Achterkamp & Vos, 2018). Atkins and Skitmore (2020) note that effective stakeholder engagement fosters open lines of communication. Regular updates and feedback mechanisms ensure that stakeholders are informed about project progress, challenges, and changes. This transparency builds trust and reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings or conflicts. Therefore, by considering the long-term impacts on stakeholders and the community, projects can create lasting benefits and foster ongoing relationships that extend beyond project completion.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) serve as essential components for the successful performance of a project by providing a structured framework for assessing progress, measuring outcomes, and ensuring accountability (Crawford & Bryce, 2019). According to Tache and Ipsoiu (2021), M&E processes foster accountability among project teams and stakeholders which builds trust among stakeholders, including funders, beneficiaries, and community members, as they can see how resources are being utilized and the outcomes being achieved. Therefore, by establishing clear metrics and reporting mechanisms, M&E ensures that all parties are aware of their responsibilities and the project's progress.

Project planning is a critical phase in the project management lifecycle that lays the groundwork for successful project execution and delivery. It encompasses defining project objectives, identifying resources, establishing timelines, and outlining the necessary steps to achieve desired outcomes (Zwikael & Globerson, 2017). According to Thomas, Jacques and Adams (2019), a well-structured project plan identifies the resources required for successful project execution, including human resources, materials, and technology. By assessing resource availability and allocating them efficiently, project managers can optimize productivity and minimize waste. This proactive approach helps to avoid bottlenecks and ensures that the project stays on track.

Effective communication is a cornerstone of successful project management and serves as a vital determinant of project performance and encompasses the exchange of information, ideas, and feedback among team members, stakeholders, and clients (Ramsing, 2016). Ziek and Anderson (2018) observe that clear communication channels also ensure that all team members are aware of the risks and the strategies in place to manage them, leading to a more resilient project. Therefore, by fostering an

environment where team members feel comfortable discussing potential issues, project managers can proactively address risks before they escalate.

1.1.3 Community Livelihood Projects in Machakos County

Machakos County is situated in the Eastern Region of Kenya and is one of the 47 counties in the country. 1,098,584 inhabitants live in the area. The county is divided into 22 districts, 71 locations, 233 sub-districts, 8 constituencies and 8 counties. The constituencies include Machakos, Masinga, Yata, Cangondo, Onion, Katiani, Mavoko and Mwala towns. Water, sewerage and educational institutions and other infrastructure. Some of these projects are still ongoing, such as the Ngongeta Power Project in the Community Development Initiative, which is implemented by several development professionals and is widespread in Machakos County, resolving issues connected with the climate. Through CDF's initiative, the government took the lead and was able to construct and/or rehabilitate Mungala boreholes in Mutituni and Mumbuni. Completed CDF projects in Mwara Constituency include Ikrata Pharmacy in Ikrata.

In Machakos County, NGOs collaborate with the local community through the Community Development Programme (CDP). In 2001, the Kenya Red Cross partnered with community members and authorities to provide training on forecasting, coping with, and recovering from the effects of recurring droughts. This was in response to the country being hit by famine in 2000, with the Eastern region being the worst affected. The United States Agency for International Development (USAIDAPHIA)'s PLUS KAMILI program supports health initiatives like the Machakos HIV Community Project, which centers around individuals residing with HIV and gives them admittance to locally situated care as well as monetary strengthening. Another CDP run by Dorcas Aid International (D.A.I.) that primarily offers academic sponsorship programs to the underprivileged is the Machakos Child Sponsorship Program.

One of the biggest non-governmental organizations in Machakos County, INADES Formation Kenya (IFK) focuses on rural microfinance, agriculture, and the environment. The Kenyan NGO Coordinating Council has accredited it as an NGO. Although the company is now only operating in the counties of Machakos, Makueni, and Kitui, it is authorized to operate anywhere in the nation. In Talakanisi district, IFK collaborates with other development partners to carry out its operations and increased support for semi-arid agriculture and livestock in Kenya are just a few of the projects that IFK works on. These projects address various facets and needs of society.

Community livelihood initiatives in Machakos County, Kenya, aim to improve the economic status and quality of life for residents, focusing on agriculture, microfinance, vocational training, and sustainable resource management. A 2023 county survey shows that households involved in these projects see income growth of 20-40% compared to non-participants, attributed to better agricultural practices, market access, and diversified income. Agricultural initiatives have created over 500 direct jobs and increased crop yields by 30-50% through innovative methods. Additionally, over 70% of microfinance participants have launched or expanded businesses, enhancing financial independence. Furthermore, 90% of participants feel more connected to their community and engaged in local governance, with women in these initiatives experiencing a 50% increase in decision-making authority at home.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The performance of community development projects is evaluated taking into account the achievement of project goals within time, cost and quality constraints (Amadi, 2019). According to Datta (2020), performance indicators provide the project team with up-to-date information on the status of the project as the project approaches its final goals and/or objectives during the project. Community livelihood projects in Machakos

County are implemented by several implementers, including religious institutions, NGOs, and the county government. However, the implementation of community development programs remains a problem for the county. Projects are completed late, on target and/or over budget.

Machakos County in eastern Kenya has launched various community livelihood initiatives aimed at improving residents' economic conditions, focusing on agriculture, small businesses, vocational training, and financial services. However, many programs face challenges that hinder their effectiveness. A 2022 survey found that only 35% of eligible households participated, suggesting barriers like lack of awareness or accessibility issues. Additionally, only 20% of initiatives reported achieving their goals, highlighting a significant gap between program implementation and actual community benefits. Local government reports show that households involved in livelihood initiatives experienced only a 10% income increase over three years, compared to 25% for those not participating. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of these programs. A longitudinal study found that 60% of community projects failed to sustain themselves after initial funding, often collapsing without external support. Additionally, only 40% of participants had adequate access to essential resources like land and financial services, undermining the initiatives' effectiveness. A review of vocational training programs revealed that 70% of participants felt the training lacked essential skills for their trades, leading to high dropout rates and poor employment outcomes.

According to a study by Yalegama, Chileshe, and Ma (2016), participation in community project management, measurable project management outcomes of village organizations, and a supportive community environment all have a substantial impact on project performance. These factors are considered critical success factors for

community-led development projects. Nevertheless, there are contextual gaps because the study was carried out from the viewpoint of Sri Lankan society. In his investigation into the variables affecting community development project performance, Mutua (2017) finds a positive correlation between project performance and the planning phase, management guidelines, resource accessibility, and community involvement. Nonetheless, there is a contextual gap because the study only looked at the years 2013 through 2017. In their 2020 study, Hassan, Osore, and Ong'ayo examined the factors that influence sustainability in community-based water projects. They discovered that stakeholder involvement, technical proficiency, project leadership, and communication all had an impact on how well community-based projects performed. There is a contextual gap, though, because the study was conducted in the context of the Hazina ya Maendeleo ya Pwani case in coastal Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the influence of critical success factors on the performance of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya.
- ii. To determine the influence of monitoring and evaluation on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya.
- iii. To assess the influence of project planning on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya.

- iv. To evaluate the influence of communication on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

- v. What effect does stakeholder involvement have on the way community livelihood projects in Kenya's Machakos County perform?
- vi. How do community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to monitoring and evaluation?
- vii. In what ways do the community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, gain advantages from the planning of the project?
- viii. What influence does communication have on community livelihood projects in Kenya's Machakos County?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this research would contribute to the management of the community income project implementation in Machakos County, Kenya by revealing how the adopted critical success factors affect project performance. Kenyan county governments, religious organizations, and non-governmental organizations would find the results useful in better understanding how important project management success factors impact their operations. Since this study would teach governments and policy makers how to correctly implement the project's critical success criteria, it would also greatly benefit them and improve the project performance. In addition, the study would enrich the knowledge of project management and stimulate further research in the field by suggesting further relevant research.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The critical success factors adopted for the study will be stakeholder involvement, monitoring and evaluation, project planning and communication. Cost, schedule, and

customer satisfaction were the metrics used to measure project performance. Questionnaires were used in the collection of data. The project was conducted between the October 2022 and November 2023. The performance of the community livelihood projects during the previous five years was the main focus of the study (2017 – 2021).

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Participant fear could hinder a study by causing them to withhold information or provide misleading answers. To mitigate this, the research created a secure and welcoming environment that encourages open expression. Building trust through transparent communication and ensuring confidentiality further reduced apprehensions and promote honest feedback. Ethical considerations are crucial, guiding the study with informed consent, confidentiality, and a focus on ensuring benefits outweigh risks. While the research design adopted could limit in-depth exploration, combining qualitative and quantitative methods and using larger sample sizes enhanced understanding and generalizability of the findings. The busy schedules of respondents could also affect data collection process. To solve this, the questionnaires were emailed to the respondents and requested to email back to the researcher's email once they were through.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The first chapter of the study delves into the background, problem, objectives, value, scope, and limitations of the research. Chapter two presents theories guiding each variable, literature of previous studies done by various scholars concerning the variables to be studied, the summary and identified gap and a diagram explaining how variables are related. Chapter three highlights the study's methodological approach. The fourth chapter presents the research findings and discussions. Chapter five presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter present theories guiding the study, a review of previous studies in connection to study variables, a summarized findings and gaps and the diagram showing how variables are connected to one another.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Theories that direct the investigation is covered in this section. These include; resource based view theory, Institutional theory, contingency theory, stakeholder theory and theory of change.

2.2.1 Resource Based View Theory

The resource-based view (RBV) theory was proposed by Penrose (1959) who expressed that a business is an assortment of actual assets, HR and hierarchical assets. The way to asset the board is that assets and assets can shift among organizations and that this distinction can be steady. The hypothesis centers around the restoration of the organization's item esteem as the premise of financial recuperation and a way to accomplish ideal execution and upper hand. Penrose (1959) argued that sustainable project management derives from valuable, rare, not fully imitable and non-substitutable resources.

Wei, Liu and Tsai (2016) observe that project resources are essential components that are needed to plan and allocate before the start of the project, Otherwise, it is impossible to deliver projects on time and achieve quality results. Therefore, this hypothesis is applicable to this research, as it shows that region districts deal with their projects as indicated by their assets and capacities. Moreover, the assets of the area ought to be

huge, extraordinary, not totally imitable and substitutable to be a focal point for additional fostering the errand execution.

When applied to community livelihood initiatives in Machakos County, Kenya, the RBV theory can provide valuable insights into how local resources can be leveraged to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives. The RBV encourages communities to identify and utilize these resources effectively to support agricultural initiatives, sustainable tourism, and other livelihood activities. The RBV emphasizes the importance of developing capabilities. Community livelihood initiatives can focus on training and capacity-building programs that enhance the skills of local residents, enabling them to manage resources more effectively and innovate in their approaches. The theory explains project performance.

2.2.2 Institutional Theory

Meyer and Rowan's (1977) institutional theory shows that the survival of an organization is viewed from the perspective of its relationship with the external environment, which supports the theory first proposed by Meyer and Rowan (1977). Organizations often reflect myths, conventions, and rules created over time and validated by the expertise of various professionals. These guidelines direct organizational operations in response to shifting customer demands. Often institutional forces, asset conditions, legitimate issues, authoritative practices and shows are affected by rules, shows and fantasies, which thus impact hierarchical execution. The at present accessible writing on essential administration shows how institutional hypothesis shapes the way of behaving of associations to be socially dependable to society and different partners (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Powel, 2007).

Zucker (2015) argues that institutional theory provides a rich and complex perspective on the organization. He also pointed out that in most cases these organizations

influenced by policies from internal or external sources, such as government policies or policies of other organizations. In addition, these policies are under pressure from county governments to manage legal factors such as standard operating procedures, procurement regulations, liquidation and compensation procedures, and government regulations that often affect the use of public services.

Theory is important for research because it highlights the importance of local cultural, social, and economic contexts in shaping community initiatives. In Machakos County, understanding the local customs, traditions, and social networks is crucial for designing effective livelihood programs. Initiatives that align with local values and practices are more likely to gain community support and participation, leading to better outcomes. According to institutional theory, the legitimacy of an initiative is crucial for its acceptance and sustainability. In Machakos County, community members are more likely to engage with livelihood initiatives that are perceived as legitimate and trustworthy. This can be fostered through transparency, community involvement in decision-making, and the demonstration of tangible benefits. The theory explains monitoring and evaluation variable.

2.2.3 Contingency Theory

Burns and Stulker (1961) introduced the concept of contingency theory and emphasized the importance of examining how situations or contingencies affect an organization's behavior. According to the theory, depending on the level of environmental uncertainty, organizations need to be integrated and differentiated to the greatest possible extent. The best practices are dependent on the situation's circumstances, according to the theory of contingency, which makes it useful for analyzing real-world situations and identifying the factors that affect project performance.

According to Donaldson (2006), contingency theory according to the idea that the duty of the manager is to find the perfect harmony between organizations, the environment, and the subsystems. While many management theories may apply to specific situations, no single strategy works in all situations. Instead, internal and external circumstances will determine the best course of action. Tarter and Hoy (2018) note that contingency theory is the concept of open systems, i.e. systems with external interaction. Open systems can start from different starting points and follow different paths to the same goal.

The theory is relevant to the study because it emphasizes the importance of understanding these contextual factors when designing and implementing livelihood initiatives. Also, stakeholders can tailor their approaches to align with the specific needs and circumstances of the community. One of the core tenets of contingency theory is the need for flexibility in management practices. In the context of community livelihood initiatives, this means that programs must be able to adapt to changing circumstances, such as shifts in market conditions, environmental challenges, or community needs. In Machakos County, where climate change and economic fluctuations can impact livelihoods, initiatives that incorporate adaptive management practices such as regular assessments and feedback mechanisms are likely to be more resilient and effective. The theory explains the project planning variable.

2.2.4 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory was first published in Edward Freeman's book "Good Governance: The Stakeholder Approach" in 1984. The idea of treating all parties as equal stakeholders was created from the shareholders' perspective, stating that the company's sole interest and responsibility is to maximize shareholder value. Freeman's book identifies and models stakeholder groups in a company, describes and suggests ways to

protect their interests, and who is really important from a company's point of view. Increased stakeholder value will improve all aspects of business. Stakeholder theory includes the business practices, management ethics, and values of stakeholders involved in a project or organization. The goal is to improve relationships with stakeholders, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the entire project or organization (Datta, 2020).

According to stakeholder theory, the organization's workers, clients, providers, lenders, neighborhood networks, government offices, ideological groups, exchange affiliations, associations and even contenders ought to be viewed as partners since they influence the organization (Freeman and Dmitriev, 2017). A major criticism of stakeholder theory (2019) is that there is simply no balancing the needs and interests of different stakeholders in justice. However, Phillips (2007) observes that communication is the single most important factor in effective stakeholder management. This guarantees that all parties involved are kept up to date. As a result, centralized project management in one unified platform, your team and stakeholders can collaborate more effectively to achieve business goals because everyone is always on the same page.

The theory is relevant because in Machakos County, Kenya, where community livelihood initiatives aim to enhance economic resilience and improve living standards, stakeholder theory provides a framework for understanding the dynamics of collaboration and the factors that contribute to the success or failure of these initiatives. By applying stakeholder theory, community livelihood initiatives can better identify and engage these diverse groups, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are considered in the decision-making process. This inclusive approach fosters a sense of ownership among stakeholders, which is critical for the sustainability of initiatives. Therefore, this theory explains stakeholder participation.

2.2.5 Theory of Change

Theory of change by Weiss (1995) is an explicit process of considering and articulating the conditions necessary for success, the reasons why a program or intervention will work, the people it will benefit, and how it will work. Theory of Change (ToC) outlines the causal relationships between a project short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term outcomes to explain the organization's intended path to impact. In addition, Jones and Rosenberg (2018) note that theories of change are often, but not always, generated during the program development phase and are based on facts, beliefs, and assumptions.

McLaughlin and Mitra (2019) observe that theory of change clarifies any assumptions made about achieving success and offers a program rationale based on the best available research and practice evidence. This can aid in more efficient project delivery, evaluation of a particular project's merits and ability to produce desired results, and also aids in justification of project spending and communication of intentions to the necessary stakeholders. Therefore, this theory is important because it shows the steps from the current situation to the desired situation. Use graphical representations of variables to explain and test relationships between objectives. Theory also influences content that does not accommodate all changes that would clarify the purpose of the project.

The theory is crucial for understanding community livelihood initiatives, as it defines success and aligns stakeholder efforts towards common goals. In Machakos County, a clear Theory of Change (ToC) is vital for tailoring initiatives to local needs like poverty reduction and food security. Insights into local agriculture and community dynamics can inform effective strategies. The ToC framework maps pathways to change, outlining steps to achieve desired outcomes. This is especially important in Machakos, where various stakeholders, including local governments and NGOs, must coordinate

their efforts to ensure all actions contribute to shared objectives. The theory explains the communication variable.

2.3 Empirical Review

A review of the literature based on prior research related to the study objectives is presented in this section.

2.3.1 Stakeholder Involvement and Project Performance

Njogu (2016) conducted a study to look into how stakeholder engagement affected performance. Descriptive analysis was used in this study. Target audiences include automakers, refineries, environmental management agencies, the Department of Energy and NEMA. Using stratified sampling methods, 125 respondents made up the sample size. Both secondary data from organizational reports and primary data from questionnaires were used in the study. Study found that the implementation of vehicle emission control project projects is significantly influenced by the involvement of interested parties in project identification. However, there is a context gap in the study as it is limited to NEMA's vehicle emission control program.

Stakeholder engagement's effect on project performance is examined by Githinji, Ogolla, and Kitheka (2020). This investigation employed a descriptive research design. A sample of 70 respondents was drawn from 231 stakeholders from ferry service partners in Kenya who constituted the target group. After the pilot study, Data were collected through surveys and analyzed by taking only horizontal lines. The results demonstrate the importance and relationship between stakeholder participation in project analysis and project performance. However, the study has contextual differences as it was conducted in Kenyan ferry services.

An investigation into the effect of stakeholder engagement on the performance of arts production in the Lusaka District was conducted by Mambwe, Mwanaumo, Nsefu, and Sakala (2020). The study methodology employed was descriptive. Semi-structured survey questions were used to gather primary data. The findings demonstrate the beneficial relationship between design and specification and stakeholder involvement. The study also found that stakeholder involvement in projects is closely but negatively related to project costs. However, there are methodological flaws as the respondents were purposively selected. A census methodology will be used to ensure that all respondents participate in the survey.

The impact of stakeholder involvement on the success of projects undertaken by the Polish government is examined in a study conducted by Demirkesen and Reinhardt (2021). This study used a descriptive research design. Thirteen government programs were included in the target group. The project manager and other support staff act as an observation unit in the project. The research instrument is a questionnaire. The results show that an important factor affecting project performance is stakeholder engagement. However, the study examined government projects in Poland which may not be a true reflection in Kenya.

2.3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation and Project Performance

An African virtual university in Kenya was the subject of a study conducted in 2015 by Phiri that examined the effects of monitoring and assessment on performance. The Multinational Project (MNP) and the Virtual University Cancer Control Network (VUCCnet), two successful AVU projects, were analyzed using a mixed post-hoc and exploratory research design to find possible connections between M&E and cancer control networks. The databases, end-of-project reports, inception reports, project appraisal reports, and all other related documents for the two projects were examined.

Primary data from surveys of two funding agencies, AVU as the implementing agency and 15 recipient agencies, were analyzed. Use quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze this data. Results demonstrate that project performance is affected by monitoring and evaluation as a management function.

A research study conducted in 2019 by Kissi, Egyekum, Baiden, Tannor, Asamoah, and Andam examined the impact of monitoring and assessment practices on the successful completion of construction projects in Ghana. The views of professionals employed by Ghana's construction industry were gathered through a qualitative questionnaire. Combining fieldwork interviews with a review of pertinent literature on the subject, these questions were developed. The study employed PLS-SEM, or seminal least squares structural modeling. The outcomes highlight how crucial it is that MEP practices and a smooth drawing process are related. In addition, a strong and significant relationship was found between MEPs' practices and health and safety performance and project scope. However, the study focused on construction project in Ghana.

Wambua (2019) study that looked at its performance and monitoring. The study methodology employed was descriptive. 31 schools in the Makueni District provided funding for the study's subjects. In order to choose the sample for the data collection project, stratified random sampling was used. Semi-structured survey questions were used to gather primary data. Thematic analysis methods were applied to the qualitative data collected from open-ended questions. To characterize the data, use statistical measures like mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage. Research shows that stakeholder engagement and M&E training are often statistically significantly correlated with project outcomes. In addition, M&E practices are also closely and significantly related to health and safety performance and project scope. However, study focused on education projects.

The effect of monitoring and evaluation activities on the execution of development in Yemen was investigated in a study conducted by Jahaf (2021). By design, the study used a mixed research methodology. Nine important employees were interviewed to gather qualitative data. 136 employees completed a closed survey to provide quantitative data on planning, monitoring, and analysis. It was demonstrated hiring supervisory staff members who are adept at overseeing and assessing work, scheduling audits and data analysis on time, getting management support, and considering gender equity in their work will all contribute to the successful execution of development plans. However, study used a cross-sectional study design and had methodological weaknesses.

2.3.3 Project Planning and Project Performance

Lemma (2017) looked on how project planning affected project performance in Ethiopia. Information from 43 organizations was provided to achieve these objectives. Project managers, supervisors, and other relevant respondents were the participants in a questionnaire survey that was conducted to gather data. Regression analysis and correlation were used in the study. The thesis' findings indicate that organizational, technical, managerial, and human factors are the essential arranging input components that impact how well arranging processes work. However, the research used a simple sampling method to select respondents.

A study by Mwanza, Namusonge, and Makokham (2020) examined the impact of strategic planning practices on the development of infrastructure in Kenya. Multiple techniques were employed in this investigation, including correlational, demographic, and descriptive analyses. The population is 1,761 participants and the sample size is 313 participants. Empirical studies indicate that partner commitment and project arranging altogether affect the improvement of undertaking. Studies have also found

that planning reduces errors and provides direction on how to complete tasks as planned.

Project planning and performance in Ghana's construction industry were assessed in a study conducted in 2021 by PokuaaAddo-Parker, Arthur, AnsaDarko, and AsuoAfram. Descriptive design and quantitative methodology were used in this study. Glenshire Hills Estate and Incept Architectural Consultancy management were the main subjects of the inquiry. 134 volunteers were chosen for this study using the stratified sampling approach. A crucial tool for gathering data is the survey. Using descriptive statistics, the data were examined. The study found that project planning efforts affect project success positively. However, the study used explanatory design thus presenting a methodological gap.

2.3.4 Communication and Project Performance

The study conducted by Katerega and Sebunya (2017) investigated how communication affected student performance in a few different higher education institutions. A cross-sectional examination configuration was utilized in this review to look at the connection between the factors intently. Questionnaires are designed using a correlational design to find relationships between different variables to achieve objectives. Project performance and communication appear to be significantly positively correlated, based on the quantitative data collected and analyzed. This implies that project performance will increase as communication does.

Asrat (2018) conducted a case study of Modcon Engineering PLC to examine the function of management communication in the advancement of construction projects. The study used a descriptive design of inquiry. A purpose guides the selection of results. Members' semi-organized meetings and center gatherings gave the information, which were then checked by both quantitative and subjective investigation. According to

research, the project has a careful comprehension of the worth of correspondence in business. Project communication has been proven to strongly influence the performance of construction industry professionals. However, the study focused on construction projects.

The Ghana Land Administration Project Phase II (LAPII) was the subject of an evaluation of project communications management by Akpilaanya (2019). The primary data used in this research were primarily collected from 65 respondents who completed questionnaires. The Land Administration Project's target population consisted of about 200 stakeholders. The study discovered that choosing the best communication channel and using the right tools for communication are essential components in project communication management. However, the study used non-probability method of sampling that could lead to sampling error.

A study by Majeed (2020) examined the impact of on-the-job communication on job satisfaction, trust mediation, and the role of supervisory leadership. Data on the construction industry in sister cities of Pakistan was collected through survey. Of the 350 surveys that were sent out, 245 were returned. It was indicated that successful projects are related to effective communication, and that trust is a key component of both. The outcomes also demonstrate how authentic leadership has a positive impact on the connection between trust and communication. However, the study focused on construction projects.

2.4 Summary of Literature Reviewed and Research Gaps

The research on stakeholder involvement, monitoring and evaluation, project planning, and communication on project performance is the main emphasis of the empirical review. There were a number of methodological and contextual gaps in the reviewed studies as summarized in as follows.

Table 2.1: Literature Reviewed and Research Gaps

Name	Research title	Results	Gap	Present focus
Phiri (2015)	M&E and project performance	Project performance is affected by monitoring and evaluation as a management function	The methodology gap presented with the aid of the mixed format of ex post facto and survey.	descriptive research design
Njogu (2016)	Stakeholder's involvement and project performance	Project implementation of vehicle emission control programs is significantly influenced by stakeholder involvement in project identification	However, there is a context gap in the study as it is limited to NEMA's vehicle emission control project	Community livelihood projects in Machakos County
Lemma (2017)	Project planning and project performance in Ethiopia	Human, managerial, technical and organizational factors are the main planning inputs that affect the planning process	The research used a simple sampling method to select respondents	The study used a census method
Katerega and Sebunya (2017)	Communication and project performance in selected public university.	A significant positive correlation was found between project communication and project performance	Because a cross-section survey design was used for the study, there is a methodological gap.	A census method
Asrat (2018)	Communication management and improvement of the performance of building construction projects	There is no question about the meaning of task correspondence and its effect on the business.	The study focused on construction projects	Community livelihood project

Muute and James (2019)	Project planning practices and project performance	Most companies believe that human resource management is essential, and most companies train their project teams	Projects in the construction sector	Community livelihood project
Mambwe et al. (2020)	Stakeholder engagement and project performance	Stakeholder involvement was also positively (but negatively) linked to project costs.	Choosing the best communication channel is important part of project communication management	The study used a census method
Githinji, Ogolla and Kitheka (2020)	Stakeholder involvement on performance of projects	The involvement of stakeholders in the definition and execution of the project was found to be strongly correlated.	However, there is a gap in the study as it was carried out in Kenya Ferry Services.	Community livelihood projects in Machakos County
Demirkesen and Reinhardt (2021)	Stakeholder involvement and project	Stakeholder engagement is a major determinant of the success of projects.	The study looked at government projects in the country of Poland, which may not reflect the situation in Kenya.	Community livelihood projects in Machakos County
PokuuaaAddo-Parker <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Project planning and project performance	Project planning effort positively affect performance of projects	The study used an explanatory design, so there is a gap in methodology	The study used descriptive research design

Source: Researcher (2022)

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A textual or visual representation of the expected relationships between variables is what Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define as a conceptual framework. It outlines the expectations of the researcher for the study, identifies the pertinent variables, and illustrates how they relate to one another.

Independent Variables

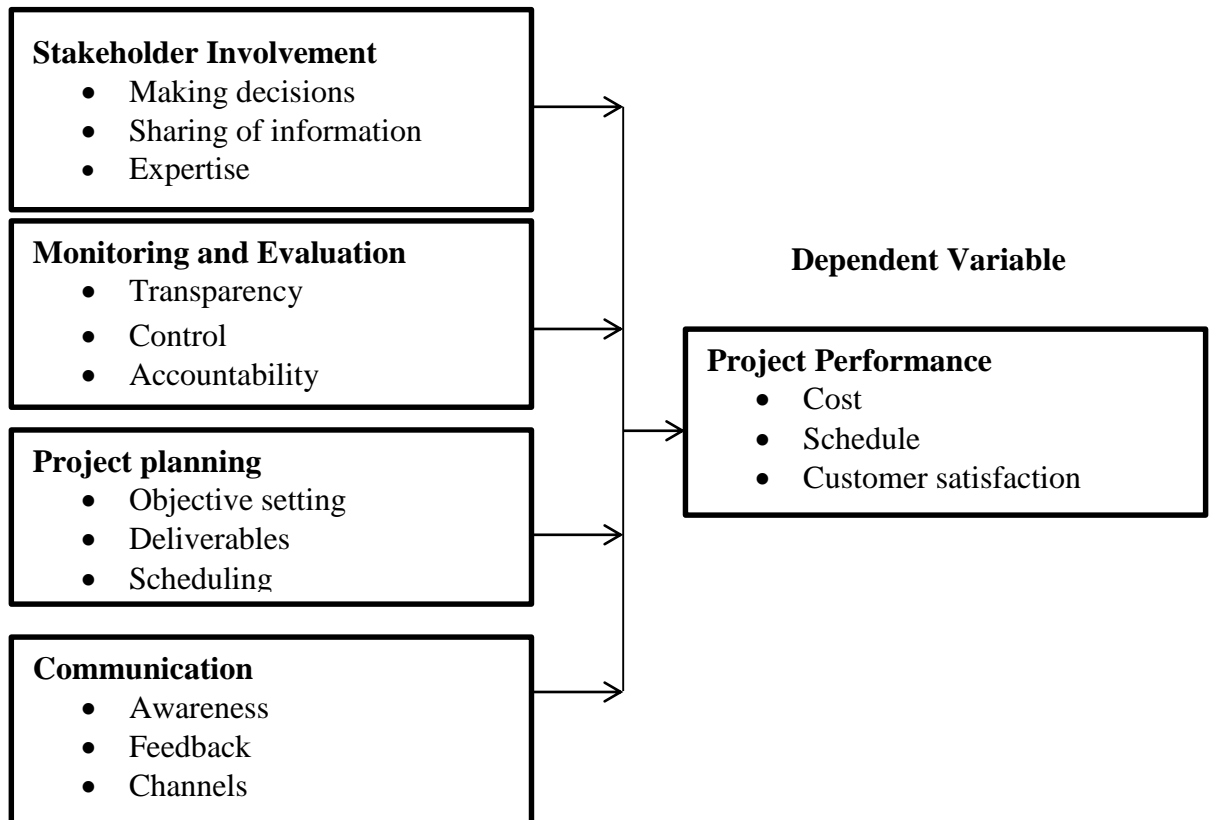


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Stakeholder involvement, monitoring and assessment, project planning, and communication are the independent factors, while project performance is the dependent variable, as shown in Figure 2.1. Compelling accomplice coordinated effort is basic to project achievement since it helps support the endlessly project supervisors to ensure their own projects are successful when other projects fail. Monitoring and evaluation collect and analyze data and determine whether the project is achieving its goals. Project planning guarantees projects are finished on time, on financial plan and to

required guidelines. And also promotes effective communication between all project team members. Communication helps assess the competence of team members, as well as the plans and workflows developed by project managers and senior management.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises of the research design, target population, sampling design and sample size, data collection instruments, pilot study, data collection techniques, data analysis and ethical issues.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. According to Glass and Hopkins (2016) it is necessary to collect information about events for descriptive research before organizing, tabulating, displaying, and describing the information. Graphs and charts are frequently used in the design to help the reader understand how the data is distributed. This design is one of the most common nonexperimental research methods for collecting quantitative research data from people in the target population who make up a representative sample. There is fieldwork involved in descriptive research, observing subjects' natural environment without manipulating the environment. Therefore, in order to gather data from the respondents and analyze it from their point of view, this study employed a descriptive research approach.

3.3 Population

The units for which the study results are intended to be generalized are defined by the target population. (Zhao, Tian, Cai, Claggett and Wei, 2013). Therefore, the study target population was 7 community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya that were completed between the year 2018 to 2022 (see appendix V). The study had a total of 732 respondents as shown Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Target Population

Category	Population
Establishment of Kangonde community hospital	95
Establishment of Ekalakala community hospital	65
Establishment of Katulani community hospital	120
Machakos world cup championship (football & volleyball)	71
Matungulu Water Supply Project	48
Mwala Cluster Water Supply & Sanitation Project	123
Youth businesses and entrepreneurship	210
Total	732

Source: Machakos County Government Report (2022)

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Bhardwaj (2019) observed that sampling can save money by helping researchers get the same information from the sample as from the population. This study used stratified sampling to ensure equal representation of respondents. Respondents were selected using simple random sampling. Taro Yamane formula was used to calculate the sample size which was established in 1967 and assumes an error margin of 0.05.

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2) = 732 / (1 + 732(0.05)^2) = 259$$

Therefore, the study had a sample size of 259 respondents which is a 35.4% of the target population (732) which was used to determine sampling in respective stratum.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Category	Population	%	Sample Size
Establishment of Kangonde community hospital	95	35.4%	34
Establishment of Ekalakala community hospital	65	35.4%	23
Establishment of Katulani community hospital	120	35.4%	42
Machakos world cup championship (football & volleyball)	71	35.4%	25
Matungulu Water Supply Project	48	35.4%	17
Mwala Cluster Water Supply & Sanitation Project	123	35.4%	44
Youth businesses and entrepreneurship	210	35.4%	74
Total	732	35.4%	259

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

A semi-structured questionnaire was used. Therefore, the questionnaire was designed using both open-ended and closed-ended questions for each variable. It was divided into 6 parts, Part 1 collected data on respondents' biometric data, Part 2 collected data on stakeholder involvement, Part 3 collected data on monitoring and evaluation, and Part 4 collected data on data about the project planning, Section 5 collected data on communication and part 6 was collected on project performance.

3.5 Piloting

Piloting involves small study which is carried out to determine whether the larger study that is proposed was feasible by identifying design issues and assessing the feasibility, resources, time, and cost of a study before conducting the main research (Vanteijlingen & Hundley, 2018). As suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), in a descriptive study, with 10% of the sample, a pilot study can be statistically justified. Therefore, the questionnaire survey were piloted in Kitui County with 8 respondents.

3.5.1 Validity of Research Instrument

Validity is how much outcomes precisely mirror the factors they guarantee to, and it is determined by comparing the findings to other studies using the same concept

(Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2018). Therefore, validity of the questionnaire in this study was assessed using content validity, construct validity and criterion validity. The measurement of content validity gauged how thoroughly the concept being measured is covered. Construct validity examined a measure's adherence to accepted theory and familiarity with the concept being measured and the criterion validity checked for the degree to which an instruments result corresponds to other reliable measures of the same concept. Validity was also enhanced through seeking opinion from the expert which is this case was the supervisor.

3.5.2 Reliability of Research Instrument

A phenomenon's reliability is determined by how consistently and steadily its measurements yield results over a long period of testing. According to Mohammed, Sulaiman, Sern, and Salleh (2015), reliability testing is crucial because it gauges the degree of correlation between the instrument's parts. Using a Likert scale, Davis (2015) discovered that the most appropriate reliability measure was the Cronbach alpha coefficient, a commonly used consistency measure. Davis (2015) also lists four additional reliability categories: medium (0.50-0.70), low (0.50 and above), high (0.70-0.90), and good (above 0.90). Due to the research instrument's Likert scale design, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient test was used in this study to assess reliability. The study sought for high reliability ranging from 0.70 to 0.90 correlation coefficient value. The results of reliability tests are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Reliability Test Results

Variable	Alpha Value	Conclusion
Stakeholder participation	0.811	Reliable
Project planning	0.815	Reliable
Monitoring and evaluation	0.805	Reliable
Communication	0.751	Reliable
Project performance	0.779	Reliable
Aggregate score	0.792	Reliable

Source: Pilot Study (2024)

The result from as provided in Table 3.3 shows that the alpha value for the variables ranged from 0.751 to 0.815 which was way above 0.7. In addition, the study achieved an aggregate reliability score of 0.792. The average alpha coefficient for every individual variable was way above 0.788 which satisfies the recommendation made by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) that an alpha coefficient score of above 0.7 shows that the instruments are highly reliable.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Before entering the research field, researchers received a university research approval letter and permission from NACOSTI. The researcher was required to brief the management on the purpose of the research study prior to data collection. The questionnaires were distributed via a drop-and-pick method by the researcher. The researcher was given time to successfully write all the questions in order to verify all answers. It is important to note that two weeks was sufficient time for participants to participate in the survey.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

The analysis of qualitative data will factor thematic analysis techniques that facilitate discovery, analysis, and interpretation of patterns in qualitative data. The results of qualitative data were presented in a narrative form. Statistical techniques were used to analyze quantitative data because it contains numbers that can be used to calculate

datapoints (Bryman & Cramer, 2015). Data from the study was quantitatively obtained and analyzed using descriptive statistical analyses, including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Results were presented in tabular and graphical form using SPSS. Subsequent research used inferential statistics, conducting multiple linear regression analysis and correlation analysis, these methods are used to determine the extent to which independent variables impact dependent variables.

The regression analysis to be used is as follows:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Y= Project performance

X₁= Stakeholder involvement

X₂= Monitoring and evaluation

X₃= Project planning

X₄ = Communication

B₁, β₂, β₃ and β₄ are coefficients of determination

ε = error term

3.8 Diagnostic Tests

The study carried out diagnostic tests that included; linearity tests, normality tests, homoscedasticity test and multicollinearity tests.

3.8.1 Linearity Tests

The linearity test seeks to define the relationships between independent and dependent variables, in order to determine a linear relationship. In order to find out the extent of relationships and their direction, a linearity test using Correlation coefficients as suggested by Field, 2013 was carried out. To compare the pvalue of independent variables, criteria ranging from -1 to 1 were used. If there is an increase of another

factor, a positive correlation means that this influence could be alleviated. In such a case, there would be a p-value < 0.001 . That is to say, the correlation coefficient's better value leads to stronger relationships. By contrast, negative correlation would indicate a different relationship in which the rise of one factor leads to an adverse change in the other.

3.8.2 Normality Tests

A data set's ability to fit into a normal distribution can be ascertained using normality tests, and to see whether arbitrary variables based on the data set are easily distributed (Jarque & Bera, 2014). The Shapiro-Wilk method is widely recommended for testing normality. It is predicated on how well the data and matching typical indications correlate. The principle of normality is violated when the test statistic has a tiny value. The high value of the test statistic is consistent utilizing the null hypothesis. The R value can be utilized to ascertain the p value of the test. It is determined that the null hypothesis is false when the p-value is small enough.

3.8.3 Homoscedasticity Test

According to Jarque and Bera (1980), homoscedasticity refers to the situation where all data in a regression analysis share the same variance of the dependent variable. Homoscedasticity is advantageous for analysis because most methods are based on the assumption of equal variance. In this study, homoscedasticity was assessed using Levene's test, which is used to ensure that all samples have equal variance when the data are drawn from a non-normal distribution. One useful test of equal variances is Levene's test which is used to test whether a set of data meets the assumption of equal variances before performing a t-test or analysis of variance (ANOVA). The null hypothesis formulated in Levene's test is that the compared groups have equal variances.

3.8.4 Multicollinearity Tests

In a multiple regression model, the state in which two or more explanatory variables exhibit correlation is known as multicollinearity. For instance, when the correlation between two independent variables is either 1 or -1, perfect multicollinearity is present (Alin, 2010). The relationship between independent variables and their relative frequencies is described by the variance inflation factor (VIF). Compute the VIF of the independent variables using statistical methods. VIF has no upper bound and begins at 1. A worth of 1 means that there is no relationship by any stretch of the imagination between the variables, according to Farrar and Glauber (2017). A VIF of 1 to 5 indicates a weak relationship but there is no need to correct for it. A VIF greater than 5 indicates a significant level of correlation when the coefficients are incorrect and the p value is uncertain.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Research ethics were ensured by seeking informed consent from all participating researchers. Those who do not wish to participate in research do not have to. Due to confidentiality reasons, the names of the interviewees did not show up anywhere in the information assortment apparatus and for the reasons of this research study, the data gathered was used. The study consulted with and obtained permission from the relevant research institutions. There were citations for materials and sources attached.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the results of the study which are organized in sub-sections based on the study objectives. These sections include; the response rate, demographic information of the respondents, descriptive analysis results and inferential statistics results.

4.2 Response Rate

The response rate was based on total number of 259 questionnaires administered to the respondents who were drawn from 7 community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya. The following is the presentation of the response rate in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Questionnaires returned	245	98.4
Questionnaires not returned	4	1.6
Total	249	100

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results as presented in Table 4.1 shows that the study achieved a response rate of 98.4% because from a total number of 259 questionnaires, 245 questionnaires were returned completely filled. The non-response rate was at 1.6% accounting 4 questionnaires that were not returned. Analysis can be justified with a response rate of at least 70%, claim Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2011). Therefore, this study continued with data analysis in order to draw findings and proceeded based on that recommendation.

4.3 Demographic Data

The demographic data of the respondents included gender, age, highest level of education, and the number of years worked with the projects. The results are displayed in Tables and Figures as presented below.

4.3.1 Respondents' Gender

The findings on the gender of respondents was analyzed and presented in Figure 4.1.

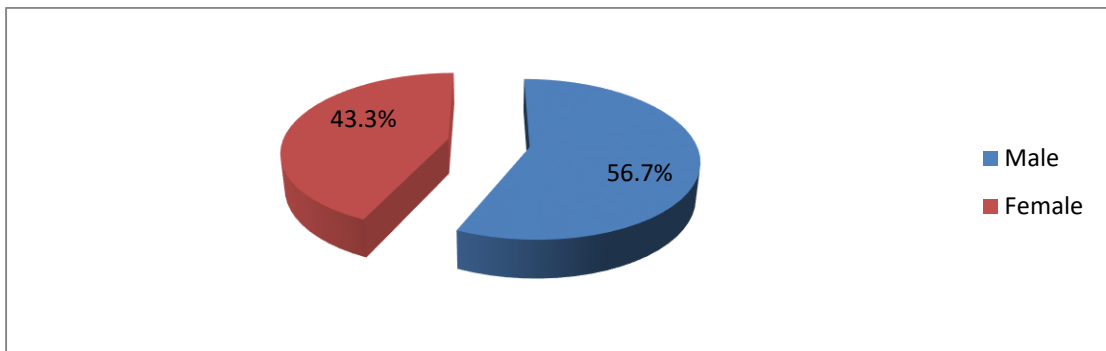


Figure 4.1: Respondents' Gender

Source: Research Data (2024)

Regarding gender of the respondents, the results shown in Figure 4.1 reveal that male respondents were represented by 56.7% in the study while 43.3% were female, and therefore a fair gender representation in the sample selected for the study. This allowed for a more comprehensive analysis of any potential gender-related differences or similarities in the study's findings.

4.3.2 Respondents' Age Bracket

The findings on the age of the respondents was analyzed and presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Respondents' Age Bracket

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 25	46	18.8
25 to 29	102	41.6
30 to 39	81	33.1
40 and above	16	6.5
Total	245	100

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results as presented in Table 4.2 show that majority (41.6%) of the respondents were aged between 25 to 29 years old, 33.1% between 30 to 39 years, 18.8% less than 25 years and 6.5% above 40 and above years. This shows that the study engaged respondents from different age gaps based on young and elderly employees. The determination of respondents into different age groups was to explore potential variations across different generations. This segmentation could enable the study to identify any age-related patterns or trends that may have influenced the study's outcomes.

4.3.3 Respondents' Highest Level of Education

The findings on the highest level of education of respondents was analysed and presented in Figure 4.2.

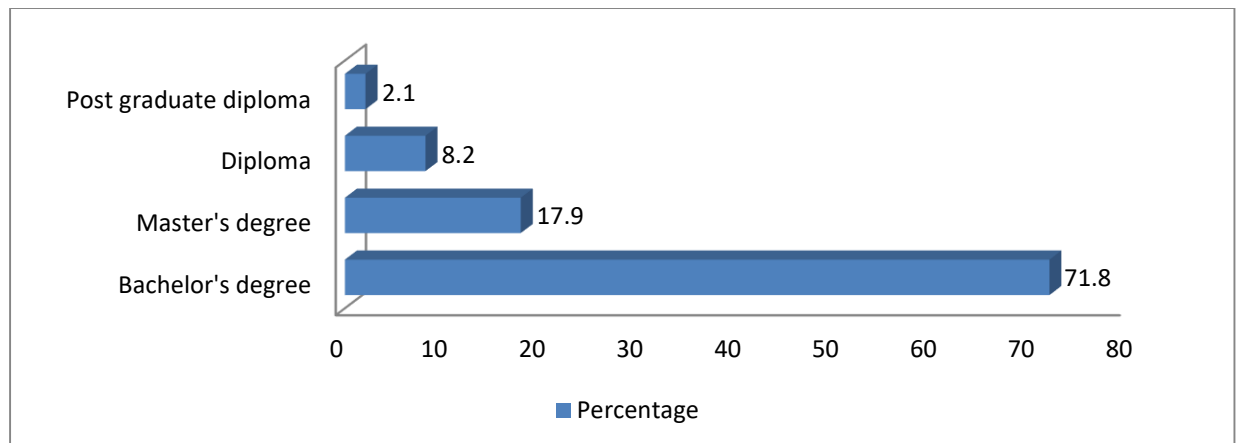


Figure 4.2: Respondents' Highest Level of Education
Source: Research Data (2024)

The results as presented in Figure 4.2 show that majority (71.8%) of the respondents had a degree level of education, 17.9% master's degree level, 8.2% diploma level and 2.1% post graduate diploma level. This shows that majority of the respondents who participated in the study had acquired a higher level of education. This shows that the educational background of the respondents was carefully considered. Therefore, the

study could be able to assess the potential impact of education on the study's results and draw conclusions accordingly.

4.3.4 Respondents' Number of Years Working with the Project

The findings on the respondents number of years worked with the community projects was analyzed and presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Respondents' Number of Years Worked with the Projects

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5	43	17.6
5 to 8	67	27.3
9 to 12	102	41.6
13 and above	33	13.5
Total	245	100

Source: Research Data (2024)

Results on Table 4.3 reveal that 41.6% of the respondents had worked with the community projects for a period of 9 to 12 years followed by 27.3% who had worked for a period of 5 to 8 years, 17.6% whose duration of working in the community projects was less than 5 years and 13.5% of the respondents had worked with the community projects for more than 13 years. This shows that the participants' professional experience was taken into account. Therefore, the study could explore any potential correlations between professional experience and the study's outcomes, providing valuable insights into the influence of work experience on the project performance.

4.4 Descriptive Analysis Results

This section presents descriptive statistics on each variable under the specific study objectives. The responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (SA-strongly Agree), A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree and SD-Strongly Disagree) and also accompanied by respective Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD). The findings are presented as follows;

4.4.1 Stakeholder Involvement

The respondents were given a list of statements describing the impact of stakeholder participation on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya to indicate their level of agreement. The results are presented as follows;

Table 4.4: Stakeholder Involvement

Statements	SD (%)	D(%)	N(%)	A(%)	SA(%)	M	SD
Stakeholder engagement creates an environment of trust by enabling stakeholders to be heard and their concerns to be addressed.	5.7	4.2	1.5	39.7	48.9	3.85	1.146
Stakeholder engagement makes projects accountable to stakeholders	4.6	9.9	0.0	43.9	41.6	4.11	0.889
Information sharing has led to efficient collaboration among the project stakeholders	0.1	5.7	0.0	62.2	31.3	4.56	0.439
Stakeholder involvement increases the transparency of project activities and ensures that projects are accountable for their actions.	4.6	15.6	1.9	37.8	40.1	3.99	1.010
Stakeholder engagement ensures that project plans reflect actual needs and priorities	1.5	7.3	3.8	48.5	42.4	3.67	1.329
Stakeholder engagement increases opportunities for sustainable development after project completion.	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.7	55.3	4.61	0.399
Aggregate score						4.15	0.89

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.4 indicate that the statement that stakeholder engagement creates an environment of trust by enabling stakeholders to be heard and their concerns to be

addressed was agreed by most (88.6%) of the respondents, 9.9% disagreed and 1.5% indicated neutral on the same statement. The study revealed that most (85.5%) of the respondents agreed that stakeholder engagement makes projects accountable to stakeholders while 14.5% of the respondents disagreed. Majority (93.5%) of the respondents agreed that information sharing has led to efficient collaboration among the project stakeholders with 5.8% of the respondents disagreeing on the statement. The study found that 77.9% of the respondents agreed that stakeholder involvement increases the transparency of project activities and ensures that projects are accountable for their actions, 8.8% disagreed and 3.8% neutral. 90.9% of the respondents agreed that stakeholder engagement ensures that project plans reflect actual needs and priorities, 8.8% disagreed and 3.8% neutral. The statement that stakeholder engagement increases opportunities for sustainable development after project completion was agreed by the respondents.

These assertions align with stakeholder involvement in community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya, as supported by a mean score of 4.15 on a 5-point Likert scale, indicating strong agreement on the effectiveness of participation. A standard deviation of 0.89 suggests some variability in individual responses, reflecting differing perspectives among stakeholders. Overall, the data underscores the importance of stakeholder engagement for the success of these projects, with high scores indicating that stakeholders view their involvement as beneficial, potentially enhancing project implementation and sustainability.

This finding agrees with Achterkamp and Vos (2018) who observe that project stakeholders are individuals, groups, or organizations that are involved in a project's implementation, completion, or outcomes. They can also influence project goals and outcomes. The finding also agrees with Atkins and Skitmore (2020) who note that

stakeholders benefit greatly from appropriate open communication channels that allow for the recognition and management of stakeholder expectations and ensure that stakeholders understand and support the project. This is why it is important to identify legitimate and valid stakeholders and understand their authority, influence and proximity to the project in order to deal with their potential influence.

4.4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

The respondents were given a list of statements describing how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to monitoring and evaluation to indicate their level of agreement. The results are presented as follows;

Table 4.5: Monitoring and Evaluation

Statements	SD (%)	D(%)	N(%)	A(%)	SA(%)	M	SD
Accountability has prompted the minimization of the gamble of mistaken assumptions about where responsibilities lie for different parts of the project.	1.8	3.8	0.0	38.5	55.9	4.51	0.490
Project team accountability has fostered a culture of continuous improvement	0.0	0.0	0.7	39.2	60.1	4.66	0.339
Project control diminishes project costs through the capacity to settle on opportune choices utilizing key execution pointers	0.9	2.2	0.0	49.1	48.8	4.47	0.528
Project control increases financial visibility as projects progress	0.0	7.9	1.5	45.6	39.4	3.67	1.328
Project task status transparency permits project chiefs and colleagues to effortlessly recognize and report any issues that might influence project progress.	2.6	0.0	0.0	41.9	56.5	4.09	1.909
Transparency helps project managers and team members understand all team functions and the relationships between individual tasks	0.0	0.0	0.9	48.3	50.8	3.97	1.029
Aggregate score						4.22	0.93

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.5 indicate that the statement most (94.4%) of the respondents agreed that accountability has prompted the minimization of the gamble of mistaken assumptions about where responsibilities lie for different parts of the project and 5.6% disagreed. The statement that project team accountability has fostered a culture of continuous improvement was agreed by 99.3% of the respondents and only 0.7% of the respondents indicated neutral. Most (97.9%) of the respondents agreed that project control diminishes project costs through the capacity to settle on opportune choices utilizing key execution pointers while 3.1% disagreed. The statement that project control increases financial visibility as projects progress was agreed by majority (85.0%) of the respondents, 7.9% disagreed and 1.5% neutral. Majority (98.4%) of the respondents agreed that project task status transparency permits project chiefs and colleagues to effortlessly recognize and report any issues that might influence project progress with 2.6% disagreeing. The statement that transparency helps project managers and team members understand all team functions and the relationships between individual tasks was agreed by majority (99.1%) of the respondents and only 0.9% indicated neutral.

These assertions align with the impact of monitoring and evaluation on community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya, supported by a mean score of 4.22 on a 5-point Likert scale. This indicates a positive perception among stakeholders regarding the role of these practices in enhancing project outcomes, with a low standard deviation of 0.93 suggesting consensus among participants. The findings emphasize the importance of systematic monitoring and evaluation in community initiatives, providing a framework for assessing progress and facilitating informed decision-making. The high mean score reflects a shared belief in the significant contribution of

effective monitoring and evaluation to project success, ensuring objectives are met and benefits delivered to the community.

The finding concur with Crawford and Bryce (2019) who observe that monitoring records outcomes, processes and experiences and uses them as a basis for decision-making, learning and evaluation processes and evaluation evaluate data and information to support strategic decision-making and improve future projects or programs. The finding also concur with according to Tache and Ipsoiu (2021) who observe that program monitoring and evaluation can help measure program effectiveness, track progress towards desired objectives, and demonstrate systems in place to support organizations in learning from experience and practicing adaptive management. Therefore, cautious execution of checking and assessment all through the task cycle can uphold project plan and execution, and fortify associations with project partner.

4.4.3 Project Planning

The respondents were given a list of statements describing how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to project planning to indicate their level of agreement. The results are presented as follows;

Table 4.6: Project Planning

Statements	SD (%)	D(%)	N(%)	A(%)	SA(%)	M	SD
Defining objectives permits project colleagues to zero in more on project errands	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.8	48.6	4.55	0.448
Objective setting has enabled the project managers to create proper direction and guidance	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.5	58.5	4.51	0.487
Deliverables have helped in establishing the expectations of the stakeholders	0.0	0.0	2.1	34.5	55.6	3.78	1.219
Deliverables have enabled in the identification of improvement opportunities that optimize the qualities of the task achievement	2.9	1.8	0.0	45.8	48.6	4.57	0.428
Project scheduling has worked on the ID of undertaking task connections	0.0	3.7	0.0	36.7	52.7	4.08	0.899
Scheduling has allowed project managers to track and monitor project progress	0.0	4.2	0.0	37.4	58.9	4.49	0.507
Aggregate score						4.51	0.489

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.6 indicate that the respondents agreed that defining objectives permits project colleagues to zero in more on project errands and that Objective setting has enabled the project managers to create proper direction and guidance. The study revealed that majority (90.1%) of the respondents agreed that deliverables have helped in establishing the expectations of the stakeholders with 2.1% of the respondents indicating neutral. Majority (94.4%) agreed that deliverables have enabled in the identification of improvement opportunities that optimize the qualities of the task achievement with 4.7% disagreeing. The statements that project scheduling has worked

on the ID of undertaking task connections and scheduling has allowed project managers to track and monitor project progress were agreed by 89.4% and 96.3% of the respondents respectively with 3.7 and 4.2% disagreeing respectively.

There was strong consensus among respondents on the impact of project planning on community development initiatives in Machakos County, Kenya, with an overall mean score of 4.51 indicating agreement on its positive influence. A standard deviation of 0.489 shows that responses were closely aligned, reflecting uniformity in opinion. This data, derived from a 5-point Likert scale, emphasizes the importance of strategic planning in enhancing project performance and outcomes, highlighting stakeholders' recognition of its critical role in achieving sustainable development.

The finding is in line with Zwikael and Globerson (2017) who observe that project planning is essential to guide the team, sponsors, stakeholders and project managers through the remaining phases of the project. The finding also agree with Thomas, Jacques and Adams (2019) who observe that project planning entails dividing a larger project into tasks, putting together a project team, and establishing a timeline for the work to be finished. Smaller project goals are created during this phase, and it is ensured that each is feasible within the allotted time. Therefore, a good project plan is crucial for a project team because it outlines the project's scope, the delivery processes and procedures, and the desired results.

4.4.4 Communication

The respondents were given a list of statements describing how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to communication to indicate their level of agreement. The results are presented as follows;

Table 4.7: Communication

Statements	SD (%)	D(%)	N(%)	A(%)	SA(%)	M	SD
Creating project awareness has enabled the project managers to align with project driven processes	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.2	52.7	4.49	0.509
Project awareness has enabled the project team members to bring more innovative ideas	0.0	0.0	9.1	33.4	51.6	3.58	1.418
Project feedback has acted as a decision points as to whether to continue with the project or not	0.0	10.5	0.0	35.8	42.6	4.32	0.678
Regular project feedback has kept project stakeholders to develop a clearer understanding of the areas in which they can improve.	0.0	5.7	0.0	46.8	43.1	4.28	0.719
The project managers uses various channels of communication when communicating project progress to the project team members	0.0	1.8	0.0	38.4	40.8	4.07	0.899
Communication channels used are dependent on cultural differences or language barriers of those involved in the project	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	55.0	4.62	0.378
Aggregate score						4.41	0.757

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.7 indicate that the respondents agreed that creating project awareness has enabled the project managers to align with project driven processes. Most (85.0%) of the respondents agreed that project awareness has enabled the project team members to bring more innovative ideas with 9.1% indicating neutral. The statements that project feedback has acted as a decision points as to whether to continue with the project or not, regular project feedback has kept project stakeholders to develop

a clearer understanding of the areas in which they can improve and that the project managers uses various channels of communication when communicating project progress to the project team members was agreed by 78.4%, 89.9% and 79.2% of the respondents with 10.5%, 5.7% and 1.8% disagreeing respectively. The statement that communication channels used are dependent on cultural differences or language barriers of those involved in the project was agreed by the respondents.

There was strong consensus among respondents in Machakos County, Kenya, regarding the impact of communication on community development projects, reflected in a mean score of 4.41. This indicates a high level of agreement on the importance of communication, with a low standard deviation of 0.757 suggesting similar views among participants. The 5-point Likert scale used allowed for clear expression of agreement, reinforcing the critical role of effective communication in fostering collaboration and stakeholder engagement. These findings emphasize the need for community development practitioners and policymakers to prioritize communication strategies that promote open dialogue among all stakeholders to enhance project effectiveness and better address community needs.

The finding is consistent with Ramsing (2016) who observe that communication in project the executives is the trading of thoughts and suppositions between experts performing related or consecutive assignments. It likewise guarantees that all experts dealing with a task grasp the undertaking's objectives and assumptions, permitting them to habitually work all the more proficiently and work on the nature of their work more. The finding is also consistent with Ziek and Anderson (2018) who observe that good communication is an important part of project management to ensure team members are clear about project goals and what is expected of them, and to help build trust so everyone can work together better from start to finish.

4.4.5 Project Performance

The respondents were given a list of statements describing performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya to indicate their level of agreement. The results are presented as follows;

Table 4.8: Project Performance

Statements	SD (%)	D(%)	N(%)	A(%)	SA(%)	M	SD
The project is delivered at the specified cost	41.6	52.4	0.0	0.6	5.0	2.56	1.439
The project was delivered on time	39.4	53.7	0.0	6.9	0.0	3.36	1.639
Delivered projects meet customer needs	47.6	48.3	2.1	0.0	21.0	1.78	1.218
Projects delivered reflects the needs of the targeted population	43.2	44.7	0.0	2.8	0.0	3.07	1.329
Projects delivered have improved service delivery effectiveness	47.2	52.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.55	1.449
Aggregate score						2.22	1.179

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.8 indicate that the respondents disagree that most (94.0%) of the respondents agreed that the project is delivered at the specified cost and 6.0% of the respondents disagreed. The study revealed that majority (93.1%) of the respondents disagreed that the project was delivered on time with 6.9% of the respondents agreeing. The statement that delivered projects meet customer needs was disagreed by majority (95.9%) of the respondents with 2.1% indicating neutral. Most (87.9%) of the respondents disagreed that projects delivered reflects the needs of the targeted population and finally, the respondents agreed that projects delivered have improved service delivery effectiveness.

Participants in the study showed a neutral stance on the project's performance in Machakos County, Kenya, with a mean score of 2.22, indicating responses centered

around the midpoint of the rating scale. This score reflects neither strong agreement nor disagreement, suggesting a balanced perspective. The standard deviation of 1.179 indicates moderate variability in responses, with most participants clustering around the neutral point. This combination of a low mean score and moderate standard deviation suggests a lack of consensus on the project's effectiveness, highlighting a need for further investigation into the factors influencing their views. Overall, participants' perceptions were mixed, warranting closer examination.

The finding contradict with Kebebe and Shibru (2017) who observe that better performing livelihoods projects put people at the center of development, focusing on poverty reduction interventions and empowering people with disabilities, while promoting access to assets and creating institutional and policy environments. The finding also agreed with Ellis and Freeman (2020), local population involvement can be very helpful in tracking how program funds are being used and how services are being provided.

4.5 Diagnostic Test Results

This section presents the results of the following diagnostic tests: linearity test, normality tests, homoscedasticity test and multicollinearity test. The results are presented as follows;

4.5.1 Linearity Test

The study conducted a linearity test using correlation coefficients as suggested by Field, (2013), to reveal the extent and direction of relationships. The results of linearity test are given in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Linearity Test

		Project Performance
Stakeholder involvement	Pearson Correlation	.845
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Project planning	Pearson Correlation	.708
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Monitoring and evaluation	Pearson Correlation	.811
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Communication	Pearson Correlation	.779
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

Source: Research Data (2024)

Table 4.9 shows a strong correlation among key factors critical to the success of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, specifically stakeholder involvement, project planning, monitoring and evaluation, and communication. The Pearson correlation coefficients are: stakeholder involvement (0.845), project planning (0.708), monitoring and evaluation (0.811), and communication (0.779), indicating that as one variable increases, the others tend to as well. For example, a high correlation of 0.845 suggests that greater stakeholder engagement enhances project planning, monitoring, and communication. All correlations are statistically significant, with p-values below 0.05, indicating that these relationships are reliable and not due to chance. This highlights the interconnectedness of effective stakeholder involvement, thorough planning, diligent monitoring and evaluation, and clear communication as essential for the success and sustainability of community livelihood projects. Thus a linear relationship observed.

4.5.2 Normality Test

The normality of the data was confirmed by using the Shapiro-Wilk one sample test.

The results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Normality Test

Variable	Statistic	Shapiro Sig.
Stakeholder involvement	0.764	0.225
Project planning	0.804	0.309
Monitoring and evaluation	0.834	0.451
Communication	0.712	0.119
Project performance	0.794	0.121

Source: Research Data (2024)

Table 4.10 summarizes the statistical characteristics of the variables studied, showing correlation values between 0.712 and 0.834, indicating moderate relationships. However, significance values ranged from 0.121 to 0.451, all exceeding the 0.05 threshold, suggesting that these relationships are not statistically significant and may be due to chance. The data appears to follow a normal distribution, characterized by a symmetrical bell curve with most points clustering around the mean. The moderate correlations and lack of significant relationships imply that further investigation into causal links is not warranted. These findings are important for understanding data patterns and guiding future research. According to Razali and Wah (2011), the Shapiro-Wilk test yields a normal distribution when the statistics are more than 0.05 and fall within the range of -0.1 to +1.0 for the statistic

4.5.4 Homoscedasticity Test

The homoscedasticity test was done to find out whether the variance around the regression line was equal for all values of the predictor variable. To achieve this, a Lavene test was computed using the one-way ANOVA procedure as recommended by Levene (1960). The results are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Homoscedasticity Test

Variable	Levene Statistic	Sig.
Stakeholder involvement	0.689	0.542
Project planning	0.715	0.124
Monitoring and evaluation	0.770	0.354
Communication	0.855	0.411
Project performance	0.809	0.367

Source: Research Data (2024)

As observed in Table 4.11, The research findings provided key insights into the Levene Statistic values related to project management aspects, including stakeholder participation, project planning, monitoring and evaluation, communication, and project performance. The Levene Statistic assesses the equality of variances across groups, which is vital for reliable statistical analysis. The values recorded were: stakeholder participation at 0.689, project planning at 0.715, monitoring and evaluation at 0.770, communication at 0.855, and project performance at 0.809. While communication showed the highest variance, all values indicated a degree of homogeneity among the groups. Significance levels ranged from 0.354 to 0.542, indicating that the differences in variances were not statistically significant, as they exceeded the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that the variances in the studied areas are relatively equal, reinforcing the reliability of the findings. Therefore, the study accepted the null hypothesis and concluded that the assumptions of the homogeneity of variance are met, and there was no homoscedasticity guided by Miles and Shevins (2010).

4.5.5 Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity was determined by using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), as illustrated below. The results are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Collinearity Tests	
	Tolerance	VIF
Stakeholder involvement	0.779	2.451
Project planning	0.824	3.542
Monitoring and evaluation	0.707	1.275
Communication	0.833	3.336

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results as presented in Table 4.12 show that the research found tolerance values for key project management aspects—stakeholder participation, monitoring and evaluation, project planning, and communication—ranging from 0.707 to 0.83. Lower tolerance values indicate a higher potential for multicollinearity, which can compromise result reliability. Additionally, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.275 to 3.542. A VIF above 1 suggests correlation with other variables, while values above 5 or 10 are concerning. The VIF values in this study indicate some correlation but remain within an acceptable range, suggesting multicollinearity is not a significant issue. According to Field (2009), multicollinearity is present when the variance inflation factor (VIF) is more than 10. The researcher based Hair et al.'s (2010) suggestion that a tolerance value of 0.10 or lower, or a VIF value of 10 or higher, suggests strong multicollinearity, to make their diagnosis. Therefore, the study concluded that none of the independent variable could suffer from multicollinearity test since every individual variable had a VIF value below 10.

4.6 Results of Multiple Linear Regressions

The influence of one variable on the other was determined using multiple linear regression analysis. The results of the joint regression analysis are displayed in Tables 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14 as follows;

Table 4.12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.809	.654	.645	1.341

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.12 show that the value of adjusted R square was 0.645(64.5%) which shows that the extent to which stakeholder involvement, project planning, monitoring and evaluation and communication had influenced the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya. Therefore, the remaining percentage (35.5%) account for other variables not studied.

Table 4.13: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	210.124	4	52.531	181.413	.000
	Residual	70.654	244	.289		
	Total	280.778	248			

Source: Research Data (2024)

The findings presented in Table 4.13 show that the significance value is less than 0.05 at 0.000. In addition, the statistical F value is 181.413 which is greater than the statistical mean value of 52.531. Therefore, this confirms the model was significant.

Table 4.14: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	0.687	0.115		5.974	.000
	Stakeholder involvement	0.814	0.314	0.263	2.592	.001
	Project planning	0.776	0.257	0.645	3.019	.001
	Monitoring and evaluation	0.792	0.334	0.684	2.371	.000
	Communication	0.703	0.294	0.960	2.391	.002

Source: Research Data (2024)

The findings in Table 4.14 revealed that the constant value (0.687) represents the amount by which the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya would be

when stakeholder involvement, project planning, monitoring and evaluation and communication are at constant.

$$\text{Project performance} = 0.687 + 0.814(\text{stakeholder involvement}) + 0.776(\text{project planning}) + 0.792(\text{monitoring and evaluation}) + 0.703(\text{communication})$$

4.6.1 Stakeholder Involvement and Project Performance

The measures of stakeholder involvement were; making decisions, sharing of information and expertise. The study found that revealed that an improvement in stakeholder involvement would improve the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya by 0.814. In addition, stakeholder involvement had a positive significant influence on the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya ($\beta=0.263$, $p=0.001$). This finding agree with an investigation into the effect of stakeholder engagement on the performance of arts production in the Lusaka District was conducted by Mambwe, Mwanaumo, Nsefu, and Sakala (2020) which found a significant relationship between design and specification and stakeholder involvement. The study also found that stakeholder involvement in projects is closely but negatively related to project costs.

4.6.2 Project Planning and Project Performance

Project planning was measured in terms of objective setting, deliverables and scheduling. The study examined found that an improvement in project planning would improve the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya by 0.776. The study established that project planning had a positive significant influence on the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya ($\beta=0.645$, $p=0.001$). The finding agree with a study by Mwanza, Namusonge, and Makokham (2020) which examined the impact of strategic planning practices on the development of infrastructure in Kenya. The results indicate that partner commitment and project performance altogether affect the

improvement of the project. The study also found that planning reduces errors and provides direction on how to complete tasks as planned.

4.6.3 Monitoring and Evaluation on Project Performance

The monitoring and evaluation indicators included transparency, control and accountability. The study established that an improvement in monitoring and evaluation would improve the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya by 0.792. The study revealed that monitoring and evaluation had a positive significant influence on the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya ($\beta=0.684$, $p=0.000$). The findings concur with Wambua (2019) study that looked at its performance and monitoring. The study methodology employed was descriptive. The study revealed that M&E practices are also closely and significantly related to health and safety performance and project scope.

4.6.4 Communication and Project Performance

Communication indicators were; awareness, feedback and channels. The study revealed that communication would improve the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya by 0.703. The study revealed that communication had a positive significant influence on the performance of project in Machakos County, Kenya ($\beta=0.960$, $p=0.002$). The finding agrees with the study conducted by Katerega and Sebunya (2017) investigated how communication affected student performance in a few different higher education institutions. Project performance and communication appear to be significantly positively correlated, based on the quantitative data collected and analyzed.

4.7 Results of Qualitative Data Analysis

The respondents were asked to indicate how stakeholder participation influences the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. They

indicated that communication is the sharing of knowledge, concepts, and recommendations that lead to successful and productive projects. It is a means of communicating to project participants the expectations of their superiors and the organization, as well as the desired outcomes. Assessing a team member's ability as well as the planning and workflow that project managers and senior designers have created is made easier with effective communication. Project planning is the first step towards effective communication, which concludes with appropriate planning and communication.

The respondents were asked to indicate how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to monitoring and evaluation. They indicated that an effective monitoring and evaluation system makes sure that nobody is in the dark. Better accountability results from this transparency. Organizations must maintain transparency in the face of such readily available information. An effective M&E plan aids in the project's performance and on-track tracking. A project's scope can be defined with the aid of M&E plans, which also help to establish interventions in case something goes wrong and provide insight into how those interventions impact the project as a whole. The data gathered from monitoring indicates any holes or problems that need to be fixed with resources.

The respondents were asked to indicate how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to project planning. They indicated that project planning is crucial because it forms the foundation for the actions required to carry out a project successfully. Teams can keep a project on schedule by avoiding potential issues and obstacles with the aid of planning. Gaining an understanding of project planning will improve your ability to manage and lead projects. It is an area of study that focuses on developing a productive framework for working on big group

projects. Project managers guide their team through the development process by using project planning techniques frequently. Project planning can assist a company in defining clear goals and in assisting team members in concentrating on their work.

The respondents were asked to indicate how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to communication. The respondents indicated that communication is the keystone upon which every project is propped up, enabling teams to collaborate, align their efforts, and achieve their goals. Communication is the most important aspect in project management, because what project managers do a majority of the time is communicate to coordinate efforts. With a sufficient project communication plan, it is possible to keep all responsible parties up-to-date on the changing status of the project. There is a transparency which eventually leads to efficient, productive decisions that will enable the aims of the project in question.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies as follows.

5.2 Summary of Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of critical success factors on the performance of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the influence of stakeholder participation, project planning, monitoring and evaluation and communication on project performance. The study data was collected using semi-structured questionnaire. Analysis of data was done using descriptive analysis and inferential statistics. The following is the summary of findings;

The first research objective sought to examine the impact of stakeholder participation on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. The study found that stakeholder participation had a positive significant influence on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. Stakeholder engagement increases opportunities for sustainable development after project completion, stakeholder engagement makes projects accountable to stakeholders and information sharing has led to efficient collaboration among the project stakeholders.

The second research objective sought to determine how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to monitoring and evaluation. The study revealed that monitoring and evaluation had a positive significant influence on

the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. Project team accountability has fostered a culture of continuous improvement. Project control diminishes project costs through the capacity to settle on opportune choices utilizing key execution pointers. Project task status transparency permits project chiefs and colleagues to effortlessly recognize and report any issues that might influence project progress.

The third research objective sought to assess how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to project planning. The study established that monitoring and evaluation had a positive significant influence on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. Deliverables have enabled in the identification of improvement opportunities that optimize the qualities of the task achievement. Defining objectives permits project colleagues to zero in more on project errands and objective setting has enabled the project managers to create proper direction and guidance.

The fourth research objective sought to evaluate how community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya, perform in relation to communication. The study determined that communication had a positive significant influence on the performance of community development projects in Machakos County, Kenya. Communication channels used are dependent on cultural differences or language barriers of those involved in the project. Creating project awareness has enabled the project managers to align with project driven processes, project feedback has acted as a decision points as to whether to continue with the project or not and regular project feedback has kept project stakeholders to develop a clearer understanding of the areas in which they can improve.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

The study concluded that allowing stakeholders to voice their opinions and have their concerns addressed is essential for building strong relationships and ensuring collaborative efforts. Involving stakeholders in the project process not only holds the project team accountable but also ensures that stakeholders are kept informed and involved in decision-making. Stakeholders value transparency and see it as a critical component of successful project management. Effective engagement with stakeholders translates the needs and requirements of the business into goals and ensures every one related and relevant to the project is on board. Each stakeholder has a unique perspective on how the project and organizational success can be achieved. Shared understanding and consensus are vital for building positive momentum and vision for the project

The study concludes that clear accountability structures is important in ensuring that all team members understand their roles and responsibilities, thereby enhancing overall project efficiency. The ability to make informed decisions based on real-time data is essential for managing project budgets effectively. The necessity of open communication and visibility in project management practices is vital. Project planning entails thinking through the goals of the project, establishing what a successful project might entail, evaluating the timeline, and organizing the tasks. Several disciplines, such as human resources, risk management, accounting, and leadership, can be involved in project planning. Plans take into account specifics like the type and goal of the work, time and financial constraints, and the makeup of the project team. It can be simpler to organize a work schedule and divide a project into smaller tasks when it has a clear goal and end in sight. Effective communication and teamwork are possible when management and the project team are aware of the project's goals and scope.

The study concludes that M&E provides data that helps stakeholders understand community needs and preferences, leading to better project design that is more aligned with local priorities. M&E fosters a culture of accountability among project implementers, beneficiaries, and funders. Regular reporting and feedback mechanisms ensure that all parties are informed about progress and challenges. M&E generates valuable data that can inform local government policies and strategies, ensuring that community development efforts are based on empirical evidence rather than assumptions. Successful projects identified through M&E can be scaled up or replicated in other areas, maximizing the impact of community development efforts across Machakos County.

The study concludes that the effective communication fosters an environment where all community members, including marginalized groups, can voice their opinions and contribute to the development process. This inclusivity ensures that initiatives are more representative of the community's needs. Clear communication channels ensure that community members receive timely and relevant information about development projects, resources, and opportunities. This knowledge empowers them to make informed decisions and participate actively. When communication is effective, community members are more likely to engage in planning and implementation processes. This active participation fosters a sense of ownership over the initiatives, leading to greater commitment and sustainability.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that the organizations should conduct a thorough analysis to identify all relevant stakeholders, including local government officials, community leaders, NGOs, business owners, and residents. Understand the interests, needs, and influence of each stakeholder group to tailor engagement strategies effectively.

Implement training programs for stakeholders to enhance their skills in project management, financial literacy, and advocacy. This empowers them to contribute meaningfully to initiatives. Provide stakeholders with regular updates on project progress, challenges, and successes through newsletters, social media, and community meetings. Foster partnerships between government, NGOs, private sector, and community groups to leverage resources and expertise.

The study recommends that the organization should engage community members in the planning and implementation of M&E processes. Their insights can provide valuable context and improve project relevance. Conduct training sessions for local stakeholders, including community leaders and project staff, on M&E principles, tools, and techniques to build local capacity. Conduct thorough baseline assessments to gather data on community conditions before project implementation, which will serve as a reference point for future evaluations. Leverage mobile applications and online platforms for real-time data collection and reporting, making it easier to track progress and gather feedback.

The study recommends that the organization should involve community members in the planning process through workshops, focus groups, and surveys to gather insights on their needs and priorities. Conduct comprehensive needs assessments to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the socio-economic conditions of the community. Provide training for local leaders and community members in project management, financial literacy, and technical skills relevant to the initiatives. Develop integrated planning frameworks that consider social, economic, and environmental factors to create comprehensive development strategies. Foster collaboration between different sectors (e.g., health, education, agriculture) to address interconnected challenges and leverage resources.

The study recommends that the organization should organize regular workshops that bring together community members, local leaders, and stakeholders to discuss ongoing initiatives. Leverage local radio stations, newspapers, and community bulletin boards to disseminate information about development initiatives. Use social media platforms to share updates, success stories, and challenges related to community development initiatives. Develop infographics, videos, and photo stories that visually represent the impact of community development projects. Establish formal channels for community members to provide feedback on initiatives, such as suggestion boxes, surveys, or community forums.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study suggests that further studies should be done that focus on other critical success factors that have not been studied so as to address that gap of 35.5% that was found in the regression results to account for other variables not studied. The study further suggests that a different study can be carried out that focus on performance of community development projects in other Counties apart from Machakos County, Kenya.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Cover letter

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for Participation in Research Study

I am a student at Kenyatta University taking Master's Degree in Business Administration specializing in project management. Currently working on an academic research titled '**influence of critical success factors on the performance of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya**' the consequences of the review will frame a reason for planning approaches to upgrading the exhibition of the tasks.

We might want to guarantee you that the data you give in this overview will remain totally private and anonymous. Please read each question and mark or complete as suggested.

Signature

Date.....

Appendix II: Questionnaires

Section A: Demographic Data

Gender	Male	Female
Age	Less 25 30 – 39	25 to 29 40 and more
Academic	Diploma Degree	Post graduate diploma Post graduate degree
Years worked with community livelihood projects in Machakos County	Less 4 9 to 12	5 to 8 13 and above

Section B: Stakeholder Involvement

The following statements relate to stakeholder involvement in community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya.

Kindly use the following rate scale **Key:** 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly agree)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Stakeholder engagement creates an environment of trust by enabling stakeholders to be heard and their concerns to be addressed.					
Stakeholder engagement makes projects accountable to stakeholders					
Information sharing has led to efficient collaboration among the project stakeholders					
Stakeholder involvement increases the transparency of project activities and ensures that projects are accountable for their actions.					
Stakeholder engagement ensures that project plans reflect actual needs and priorities					
Stakeholder engagement increases opportunities for sustainable development after project completion.					

1. Based on your own opinion, kindly state the way in which stakeholder involvement influences the community livelihood projects' performance?

Section C: Monitoring and Evaluation

The following statement is related to community livelihood project monitoring and evaluation in Machakos County, Kenya.

	1	2	3	4	5
Accountability has prompted the minimization of the gamble of mistaken assumptions about where responsibilities lie for different parts of the project.					
Project team accountability has fostered a culture of continuous improvement					
Project control diminishes project costs through the capacity to settle on opportune choices utilizing key execution pointers					
Project control increases financial visibility as projects progress					
Project task status transparency permits project chiefs and colleagues to effortlessly recognize and report any issues that might influence project progress.					
Transparency helps project managers and team members understand all team functions and the relationships between individual tasks					

2. Based on your own opinion, kindly state the way in which monitoring and evaluation influences the community livelihood projects' performance?

Section D: Project Planning

The following statement relate to project planning of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Defining objectives permits project colleagues to zero in more on project errands					
Objective setting has enabled the project managers to create proper direction and guidance					
Deliverables have helped in establishing the expectations of the stakeholders					
Deliverables have enabled in the identification of improvement opportunities that optimize the qualities of the task achievement					
Project scheduling has worked on the ID of undertaking task connections					
Scheduling has allowed project managers to track and monitor project progress					

3. Based on your own opinion, kindly state the way in which project planning influences the community livelihood projects' performance?

.....

Section E: Communication

The following statement relate to communication of community livelihood projects in Machakos County, Kenya.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Creating project awareness has enabled the project managers to align with project driven processes					
Project awareness has enabled the project team members to bring more innovative ideas					
Project feedback has acted as a decision points as to whether to continue with the project or not					
Regular project feedback has kept project stakeholders to develop a clearer understanding of the areas in which they can improve.					
The project managers uses various channels of communication when communicating project progress to the project team members					
Communication channels used are dependent on cultural differences or language barriers of those involved in the project					

4. Based on your own opinion, kindly state the way in which communication influences the community livelihood projects' performance?

.....

Section F: Project Performance

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The project is delivered at the specified cost					
The project was delivered on time					
Delivered projects meet customer needs					
Projects delivered reflects the needs of the targeted population					
Projects delivered have improved service delivery effectiveness					

Appendix III: List of Selected Community Livelihood Projects

1. Establishment of Kangonde community hospital
2. Establishment of Ekalakala community hospital
3. Establishment of Katulani community hospital
4. Youth businesses and entrepreneurship
5. Machakos world cup championship (football & volleyball)
6. Matungulu Water Supply Project
7. Mwala Cluster Water Supply & Sanitation Project

Appendix IV: Research Approval Letter



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

3

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Internal Memo

FROM: Executive Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 30th January, 2024

TO: Emily Wangui Muchemi
C/o Management Science Dept.

REF: D53/OL/CTY/26830/2014

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board at its meeting of 17th January, 2024 approved your Research Project Proposal for the M.B.A Degree Entitled, "Critical Success Factors and Performance of Community Livelihood Projects in Machakos County, Kenya."

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, Subject to Clearance with Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the Progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Also, please ensure that you publish article(s) from your project before submitting it to Graduate School for examination as per the Commission for University Education and Kenyatta University guidelines.

Thank you.


ANNBELL MWANIKI
FOR: EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

c.c. Chairman, Management Science Department.

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Lucy Ngugi
C/o Department of Management Science
Kenyatta University

AM/mo

Appendix V: Research Authorization Letter



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

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E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

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P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: D53/OL/CTY/26830/2014

DATE: 30th January, 2024

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,


RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR EMILY WANGUI MUCHEMI - REG. NO. D53/OL/CTY/26830/2014

I write to introduce Emily Wangui Muchemi who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for M.BA degree programme in the Department of Management Science.

Emily intends to conduct research for a M.BA Project Proposal entitled, "Critical Success Factors and Performance of Community Livelihood Projects in Machakos County, Kenya."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,


PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

AM/mo

Appendix VI: NACOSTI Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 975105	Date of Issue: 14/February/2024
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms. EMILY WANGUI MUCHEMI of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Machakos on the topic: CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS AND PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 14/February/2025.	
Applicant Identification Number	License No: NACOSTI/P/24/33089
975105	
	Director General
	NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
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