

FACTORS INFLUENCING COMPLETION OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROJECTS IN TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY

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Abstract: This study sought to establish factors that influence successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya. The study objectives were: To determine the effect of funds allocation on successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County, to establish how the monitoring and evaluation skills among personnel affect successful completion of county funded projects, to explore the effect of political intervention on successful completion of county funded projects, and to examine how project identification influence completion of projects in County government funded projects. The study was modelled along the Stakeholder Theory, Resource Based View Theory, Agency Theory and Acquired Needs Theory. Descriptive research design was used to survey a target population of 74 respondents where the census method was used since it was less than a hundred which is the maximum number below which census is used. The source of the required data was through the questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out by both the regression tools and ANOVA using output from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The findings revealed a statistically significant regression effect and indicated a prediction of the dependent variable through the F calculated ($F = 179.96$). A value greater than 5% level of significance showed a significant model where the independent variables explained 92% ($R^2 = 0.916$) of successful completion of county funded projects. However, Funds Allocation was the most significant determinant of successful completion of county funded projects at 58% with (Standardized $\beta = 0.359$). The findings of the study will enable the county governments to come up with better approaches in handling challenges in project implementation and completion.

Keywords: Government Funded Projects, Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

I. INTRODUCTION

Most countries in the world have realized the importance of decentralization in order to bring about development at the local level. Decentralization as a means of transforming the society aims at mobilization of resources for Nation building. Baskin (2010) notes that CDFs are akin to the venerable United States (US) congressional allocations generally referred to as “pork barrel”, “earmarks” or “member items” in national and state-level policy making. Operations of CDFs are said to have sometimes been controversial since they raise fundamental questions about the efficacy of government service delivery, the extent to which such service delivery can be made accountable, the role of legislators in selecting development priorities, and how public participation in policy making can be made more meaningful. Baskin further notes that a better understanding of this evolving policy tool should be developed alongside formulation of guidelines for the transparent and ethical use of such funds in a manner that is free of corruption. It is not clear whether or not the system of earmarks and pork barrel distribution that is practiced in the US national and state government is of a single type with CDFs. The long history of distributive allocations in the US permits a unique opportunity to explore the evolution of systems of politically determined resource allocation for local development. It is further posited that, on the other hand, there may be fundamental difference between US earmarks which are often informal mechanisms that are employed on a case-by-case basis and the institutionalization of distributive mechanisms. Uganda for instance started decentralization on political front since 1986 in order to meet the needs and interests of its citizens. According to Odhiambo (2006) through

decentralization effort the Ugandan Government was able to achieve transfer of power to lower levels of Government, improving resource accountability and responsibility by linking taxes to service delivery and improving capacity at local level to plan finance, manage and implement projects and programs Various scholars have highlighted crucial information over the subject of time and cost overruns and impact (Waihenya, 2011). Despite numerous legislations, dissemination and policy papers on the subject, we still find Government projects suffering from overruns.

In Kenya, the County Development Fund (CDF) was launched in year 2013 after the general election as depicted in the new constitution. Initially the only existing devolved kitty was the Constituency development fund as outlined under the CDF Act 2003, Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 107 (Act No. 11) whose main objective was to iron out regional imbalances brought about by patronage politics Nyaguthii and Oyugi, (2013). CDF provides funds to constituencies through the respective members of the National Assembly. Awiti (2008) adds that the aim of the CDF is to combat poverty at the grassroots level through implementing community-based projects and to relieve the members of the National Assembly the burden of fundraising for development projects in their respective constituencies. With the new constitution, counties have been allocated funds under the guidance of the Commission for Revenue Allocation. Article 216 mandates the Commission to make recommendations on the equitable basis for revenue sharing among county governments. The aggregate County Governments budget comprises of a split between recurrent expenditure and annual development. It is a requirement that at least 30 per cent of budget be allocated to development activities. These funds are disbursed to the counties for utilization as budgeted. The development allocation is supposed to be channelled to development projects which vary among counties.

The completion of projects in a timely manner is often a critical factor and measure of project success. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the use of projects as building blocks in the strategic management of organizations (Weiss & Potts, 2012). The success of any project is highly dependent on its completion time from start to delivery of results. This has a direct bearing on management decisions such as budgets, targets and standards (Seddon, 2008). There is available evidence from literature on how to use projects for the management of organizational process to prepare the organization for its competitive future and survival (e.g. Cleland & Ireland, 2007). Today, project management techniques are used as the principal means by which operational and strategic issues are managed in both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Several projects were implemented by the county government of Trans-Nzoia as shown in table 1.1 below

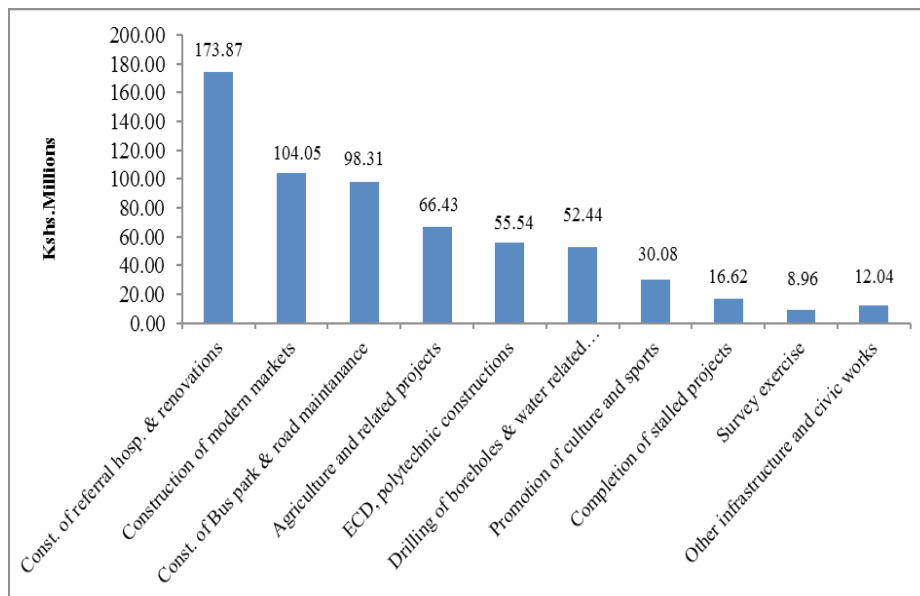


Figure 1: Projects implemented by Trans-Nzoia county government in the financial year 2015/2016

This study sought to provide a policy framework for public participation and completion of County Government funded projects in Kenya. It builds on the commitment of the democratic government to deepen democracy which is rooted in the constitution, and above all in the in the concept of communities as a composite of devolution in the County Governments.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In 2010, Kenyans enacted a new constitution, which established a system of devolved government with 47 lower level county governments. The operation of the county governments started soon after the March 2013 elections, which

included the election of county governors, deputy governors and county ward representatives. These 47 new county governments are now in charge of overseeing some functions— such as the provision of health care, pre-primary education, and maintenance of local roads— which were previously the responsibility of Kenya’s national government. In turn, these county governments receive a share of national revenue. The county governments are also expected to mobilize revenue from other sources within their counties, such as taxes on property and entertainment.

Kenya’s Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) recommends to the National Assembly the basis for equitable sharing of revenue raised nationally. Specifically, it decides how much revenue is divided between the national government and the county governments. To facilitate service delivery by the devolved functions, the national government transfers the required funds as provided under Article 203(2) of the Kenya Constitution. This was to ensure equality and equity in development. Hassebet *al.*, (2011) noted that a project’s success depends on meeting objectives within time and budget limits.

Local studies have not focused on factors affecting CDF (constituency Development Funds) Projects delivery in Kenya. Musa (2012) did a study on effects of total quality management on performance of Companies in Kenya a case study of Inter build Company Limited. He found that human resource management and resource management affects performance of the building company to a great extent. Bundi (2011) did a survey on challenges in the management of procurement services within Kenya Urban Roads Authority. She found that political interferences and inadequate allocations of funds hinder completion of KURA activities even though the authority fully implements procurement policies. Nyamwaro (2011) did a study on factors affecting completion of constituency Development Fund projects in Nyandarua Constituency. Several studies have been done on the Constituency Kitty. Since inauguration of devolved governments, several projects have been implemented with little focus on their performance. Despite previous studies focusing on project completion, none has focused on the factors influencing the successful completion of county Government Funded Projects Completion in Trans-Nzoia County. This study was motivated by the need to fill knowledge gap by evaluating factors influencing successful completion of county government Funded projects in Kenya with focus on Trans-Nzoia County. To determine how funds allocation, project identification, political interference and how monitoring and evaluation skills among personnel affect successful completion of projects funded by the county government

1.3 OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective was to establish factors that influence completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To determine how funds allocation influence successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County
- ii. To establish how the monitoring and evaluation skills among personnel influence successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County
- iii. To find out how political intervention influence successful project completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County.
- iv. To examine how project identification process influence successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses in the study were;

1. Funds allocation has no significant influence on successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County
2. Monitoring and Evaluation skills among personnel have no influence on successful completion of County Government funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County
3. Political intervention has no significant influence on successful completion of county funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County
4. Project identification process has no significant relationship to successful completion of County Government funded projects in Trans-Nzoia County.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of related literature on factors that influence completion of county funded projects. This section covers the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study, critique of relevant studies and the summary of the literature review.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by four theories: Stakeholder Theory, Resource Based View Theory, agency theory and acquired needs theory.

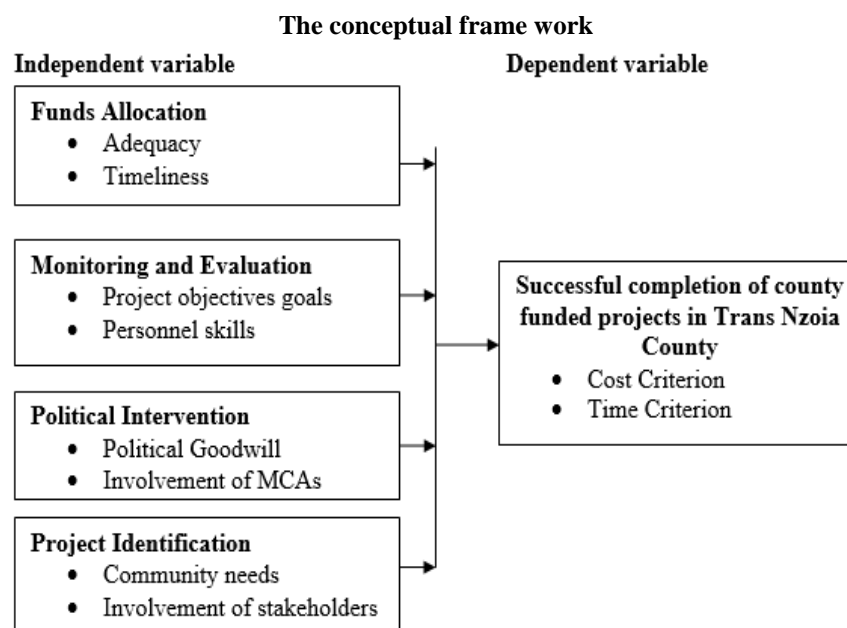
2.2.1 Resource Based View Theory

The core premise of the resource-based view is that organizational resources and capabilities can vary significantly across firms, and that these differences can be stable (Hijzen, Görg& Hine, 2005). If resources and capabilities of a firm are mixed and deployed in a proper way they can create competitive advantage for the firm. Firms with higher competitive advantage tend to create a sense of confidence in stakeholders that their support, whether financial or otherwise, will be valued and put into action. The resource-based view in outsourcing builds from a proposition that an organization that lacks important, uncommon, unique and organized resources and capabilities, shall seek for an external provider in order to overcome that weakness (Müller & Jugdev, 2012). Stakeholders will want to be involved in projects that have the resources available well managed. Outsourced resources tend to facilitate the reduction of costs of the entire project. Thus, stakeholders can be convinced that the project managers are working towards the achievement of the project at minimum costs for maximum utility and benefit.

In the context of the current study, the County Government - funded projects, in line with project management, undergo transformation. In this case, the projects' inputs are in form of funds they get from the County Government Ministry of Finance and Planning. The funds are supposed to be implemented in order for the projects to be successfully completed. The outputs as illustrated by the project management theory are exemplified by the completed County Government projects. The performance in the case of the aforementioned projects is measured by how successfully the projects are completed. Crawford, (2010) study found out that project managers "do not necessarily have the required competence or perform the full activities required to promote and implement the changes that they are leading as part of their projects.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

It was self-conceptualized in line with the Objectives and gaps identified from literature review. A conceptual framework is a detailed mental formulation of ideas that give direction to a study. It enables the interaction between dependent and independent variables



2.3.1 Funds Allocation

The county government plays a fundamental function in county development projects' funding, initiation, implementation and management. It provides the enabling policy and legal environment for the regulation of funds and the procurement of goods, works and services. The government may create the need to participate in information sharing platforms to discuss development progression in their counties. Their members of county assemblies keep watch on the performance of county development programs. Ideally county assemblies need to demand for county governments' accountability (Busiinge, 2010).

Most donors including the national government attach various restrictions to their funding including, among others, sound financial management systems in place, good leadership with integrity, educated staff with experience and the strategic plans of the county governments. County governments lacking these ingredients have difficulties attracting donor and national government funding in some projects. Some donors will first assess the capacity of the organization's systems and structures to handle funds before funding can be approved. They also consider if the potential recipient has experience and knowledge to meet deliverables (Ali, 2012).

As per COB report(2016), the aggregate County Governments Budget for FY 205/16 amounted to Ksh.365.51 Billion and comprised of Kshs. 202.16 billion (53.3 percent) for recurrent expenditure and 163.35 billion (44.7 percent for development expenditure. The split between annual development and recurrent expenditure budget conforms to the public finance requirement that at least 30 percent of budget be allocated to development activities.

In order to finance budget, county Governments expect to receive Ksh.259.77 billion as equitable share of revenue raised nationally,ksh.3.60billion as conditional allocations fo,Ksh.4.50billion as conditional allocation for leasing Medical Equipment, Kshs. 3.30 billion as conditional allocation from Road maintenance fuel levy Fund,844.71 Million from Government of Denmark through The Danish International development agency(DANIDA).

According to report by COB (2016), during the first 9 months 2015/2016, the county governments received ksh.158.88 billion as equitable share of revenue reviewed from National government. All allocations received were not as the expected amounts. It is noted that the community is minimally involved in the allocation of the county funds to selected projects, and that existing structural weaknesses could possibly help to explain the existence of otherwise of transparency in allocation and utilization of the county fund specifically those allocated to development activities.

With the case of CDF which operate under similar structures, several weakness constituted were identified .The weaknesses appear to revolve around issues of the CDF allocation, project identification, distribution, management, community participation in project design, prioritization, and monitoring and evaluation. A study by NTA92012) on citizen's CDF report card for Kibwezi constituency, Kenya established that Kshs. 19.7 Million Of taxpayers' money has been wasted on badly implemented projects. That is 315 of the total CDF funds allocated to the monitored projects in the FY 2009/10 which were poorly implemented. Moreover 4% of the total CDF funds allocated to the monitored projects in the same FY were on abandoned projects. On the other hand, 8% of the allocated funds in the same year were unaccounted for. Funds allocation is key in all projects hence should be given ultimate importance.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the structure or approach of the research and also a kind of glue that holds the entire required element in the research together and gives a concrete report to the researcher (Kombo& Tromp, 2011). It is the adhesive that holds and builds the study in a systematic and coherent way that is acceptable and self-actualizing. This study adopted a mixed research design that utilized a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive research seeks to richly describe an aspect of social life. According to Burns and Grove (2001), descriptive research is designated to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens, justify current practice and make judgment and also develop theories. In this research a picture was given of how successful completion of CGF projects in Trans-Nzoia County was carried out thereby exposing factors that brought about such status as it was.

3.2 Target Population

The study targeted the county personnel of Trans-Nzoia County in the identification and implementation of projects department and other related county officers. The study covered seventy four (74) county personnel that occupy positions

relevant to the study which included; the chief officers, County Executive Committee members, County Assembly committee on project implementation, county secretary, departmental Finance officers, project managers, ward administrators and sub county administrators.

Table 3.1: Sampling frame

Department	Respondents
County assembly committee	12
County Executive Committee Members	9
County Secretary	1
Chief officers	9
Ward administrators	25
Sub County administrators	5
Departmental Finance officers	9
Project Managers	4
TOTAL	74

3.3 Sampling Techniques and Procedures

A sample in a research study is that part of a population (group) from which information is obtained while sampling refers to the process of selecting individuals who will take part in a research study (Mora & Kloet, 2010). Sampling is used for research purposes where the target population is more than a hundred respondents. This study used census method because the target population was less than the minimum a hundred respondents for sampling method to be adopted.

3.4 Data Analysis and Reporting

The collected data was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23) software. The raw data was edited and coded into the software before being analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings were presented in form of tables of frequencies, percentage, and inferential statistics. Multiple linear regression model was used to assess the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The general model of the study was of the form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon_i$$

Where:-

Y County funded projects

X₁ Funds allocation

X₂ Monitoring and evaluation

X₃ Political intervention

X₄ Project identification

β₀ Constant term

β_j Beta coefficients for $j = 1, 2, 3, 4$ which indicate per unit change in the dependent as the independent variable changes by one unit.

ε_i Error term for $i = 1, 2, 3, 4, \dots, n$

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESPONSE RATE:

The questionnaires were distributed to seventy four (74) respondents being personnel employed or working for the Trans Nzoia county government, from which seventy one (71) respondents responded and the questionnaires collected while three (3) were not returned. This represented a 96% response rate which was considered good for this research.

4.1.1 RESPONDENTS PROFILE:

The findings regarding the respondents’ age and level of education were tabulated where majority of the respondents were aged between 26 years and 35 years representing more than half the population. The respondents between 18-25 years were 4%, 26-30 years 31%, 31-35 years 27%, 36-40 years 6%, 41-45 years 14%, 46-50 years 14%, with the 4% being above 50 years of age. In the field of study, 90% of the respondents had at least acquired college education. Secondary education represented 6% of the respondents with 4% failing to respond on their academic levels. This led to a conclusion that the departmental personnel met the basic educational requirements to enable them execute their responsibilities.

4.12 INFLUENCE OF FUNDS ALLOCATION ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF COUNTY FUNDED PROJECTS:

The study sought to establish the influence of funds allocation on successful completion of county funded projects in Trans Nzoia County. The results indicated that 70% of the respondents strongly agreed that the project funds are delayed, thereby affecting the implementation of projects, 57% of the respondents agreed with 42% strongly agreeing that project funds are misappropriated leading to incompleteness of the projects. 70% of the respondents strongly disagreed when asked whether the county government adequately funded the projects. However, over 90% agreed that the county projects are budgeted for although their project times vary over time.

4.2 Relationship between Variables:

The researcher used a regression equation to find out the relationship, if any, existed between sets of data (independent variables and the dependent variable). Regression is useful as it allows you to make predictions about data.

Table 4.1 ANOVA

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	115.985	4	28.996	179.96	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.634	66	0.161		
	Total	126.62	70			

a. Dependent Variable: Successful implementation of county funded projects

b. Predictors: (Constant), Funds allocation, M&E Skills, Political Interference, and project identification process.

The regression model was used to establish the effect of the funds allocation, M & E skills, political interference and project identification process on the successful implementation of county funded projects. The regression model established the extent to which the independent variables explained successful implementation of county funded projects (dependent variable). The study regressed successful implementation of county funded projects (Y) and the predictor variables and the results were as shown in table 4.1 above.

The results above, with the significance value is 0.000, being less than 0.05, indicated statistically significant model that was used to analyze how the independent variables predicted the successful implementation of county funded projects. The F calculated (F =179.96) which is greater than the 5% level of significance showed that the model used was significant to the study.

4.2.1 Regression results from the Analysis:

Funds allocation explained 58%, M & E skills 42%, Political interference inversely at 40% and Project identification process explained 3% of the successful implementation of county funded projects in Trans Nzoia County. The following regression model was therefore formulated from the regression results;

$$Y = 31.395 + 0.575 X_1 + 0.416X_2 + 0.404X_3 + 0.027X_4 + \epsilon_i$$

4.3 Hypothesis Testing:

Hypothesis testing is the use of statistical approach to prove whether a given hypothesis is true. The regression results that were generated from the model were used in testing the hypotheses. The hypotheses sought to test for a significant influence of funds allocation, M&E skills, political interference and project identification process on successful

completion of county funded projects. the p value for the independent variables is statistically significant at ($p < 0.01$) which strongly supported the hypothesis H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} and H_{04} for funds allocation, M & E, political intervention and project identification process. The hypotheses tests were conducted on the basis of the regression results of successful completion of county funded projects as obtained from the regression output.

H_{01} : Funds allocation does not have a significant influence on successful completion of county funded projects.

This hypothesis, Funds allocation does not have a significant influence on successful completion of county funded projects, with its results as above, the coefficient of funds allocation ($\beta = 0.575$, $t = 5.562$) were positively related with the successful completion of county funded projects. It was therefore concluded that the statistical result ($P > 0.05$) from the regression output for the funds allocation had a significant relationship on successful completion of county funded projects; the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was therefore rejected.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The research study provided the following recommendations to the leadership of Trans Nzoia County as well as other researchers; since the research found out those funds are grossly delayed for the county funded projects and that the projects are actually budgeted for. It was imperative to recommend that the county has to the county budget for the county funded projects. On monitoring and evaluation, the researcher concluded that there is need for the county to develop project performance indicators to enable their funded projects to be implemented accordingly. On political intervention, it is recommended that MCA's ensure that their family members stop involving themselves in county affairs and leave the responsibility to the elected family members only. There is need for the county programs to be identified and implemented without giving priority to political affiliation since the entire county needs are to be met by the same county leadership. On project identification process, the county residents ought to be involved in the process.

Recommendations for further study:

There is need for further research on the other variables that affected the independent variable, Successful completion of county funded projects, that are contained in the 8% as depicted by the results of this research above (the difference to 100% from the $R^2 = 91.6\% \approx 92\%$). These variables may include role of technology in implementation of county government funded projects in order to solve the deficiencies in the project management sector. The challenges facing project implementation in counties should also be areas for further studies and the role of human resource and employee motivation in success of county funded projects. These areas if further researched may be paramount on the management of county funded projects in Trans Nzoia County.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that funds allocation to the county funded projects plays a vital role towards the assurance of successful completion of those projects. This is because the projects cannot be implemented without resources. The research found out that funds are grossly delayed for the county funded projects hence leading to delay or total non completion of the projects. The researcher also found out that the projects are actually budgeted for. It was imperative to conclude that the county should ensure that funds budgeted for the county funded projects are actually spent as per the budgets.

With the results on Monitoring and Evaluation being, 73% of the respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing when responding on whether all objectives of the projects implemented are met and none of the respondents either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. The researcher had no other option but to conclude that the overall objectives of the projects implemented were not met. 84% of the respondents either disagreed or strongly agreed that Project performance indicators were not developed and documented in the county with only 3% agreeing that project performance indicators were developed and documented in the county. This further reinforced the researchers' conclusion on this variable and led to the conclusion that there is need for the county to develop project performance indicators to enable their funded projects to be implemented accordingly.

On political intervention, the results indicated that over 80% of the respondents agreed and/or strongly agreed that MCAs' involvement lead to successful implementation of projects; they also agreed that political affiliation influenced the successful implementation of the county funded projects. The majority of respondents also agreed and/or strongly agreed that MCAs' family members are involved in project affairs. This led to the conclusion that MCA's intervention is vital for

the successful completion of county funded projects although this was only supported by the fact that their political affiliation to the county bosses was paramount. Their families should seize involving themselves in county development matters. On project identification process, 70% of the citizens didn't feel part of the project implementation process, on the stakeholders needs evaluation before implementation of the county funded projects, over 50% of the respondents felt otherwise. Over 70% of the respondents also returned an adverse response when asked whether project implementation decisions are made by stakeholders, with only 8% strongly agreeing that indeed project implementation decisions were made by stakeholders. The county leadership ought to ensure that the citizens of the county are involved in the county programs for inclusivity and allowing them to own the projects.

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