

# ASSESSMENT OF WAYS IN WHICH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE INFLUENCES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

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**Abstract:** Public participation is an essential component in the management of public projects like pre-school centers. However, there seems to be limited information with regard to how organisational structures in public pre-schools engage the public in M&E. This study investigated the influence of organization structure on public participation in M&E of preschool projects in Migori County, Kenya. Specifically, it assessed the level of public; the organizational structure adopted; and the relationship between organizational structure and public participation in M&E. Target population was 884 preschool project committee members and 7 sub county ECE officers. A sample size of 399 was derived using Yamane's (1967) formula. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlations and regressions were used for data analysis. It was found that the organizational structure in place does not support public participation in M&E of preschool projects. Organizational structure was however found to correlate positively (.508\*\* <p=0.03, 2 tailed) with public participation, with a beta of 0.164 and R<sup>2</sup> of 0.545. This suggests that the more favourable organizational structure is, the higher public participation in M&E of preschool projects would be, and that organizational structure accounts for 54.5% of public participation in M&E of the projects. For the enhancement of public participation, the study recommends that adequate organizational structures should be put in place by the county governments. It is recommended that further studies be done on the influence of other institutional factors like leadership style on public participation in M&E of preschool projects.

**Keywords:** Public participation, Organizational structure: Migori County Government, Preschool projects, Monitoring, Evaluation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Project management practitioners as well as scholars believe in no any other means of conveying individual and the society's personal interests and concerns with regard to development plans other than through public participation, given that these planning activities would consequently affect the public generally and certain groups specifically. According to Beierle (1998, p. ii cited in Marzuki, 2015), public participation exists in the form of '...traditional participatory (for example) public hearings, notice and comment procedures [as well as] advisory committees. In addition, public participation includes regulatory negotiations, mediations and citizen juries'. Cavric (2011) asserts that public participation stimulates information exchange between all the development stakeholders which will further enhance

mutual understanding and relations between them, resulting into unreserved support for the specific project in question. Despite of this, little information is available with regard to the role played by organizational structure in enhancing public participation in specific projects. Moreover, the influence of organizational structure on public participation in monitoring and evaluation of projects remain unfocused upon by most researchers globally.

Organizational structure has been characterised as a technique in which the organizations are differentiated and integrated themselves by the allocation of work roles and activities (Tran and Tian, 2013). It can be defined as a mechanism which links and co-ordinates individuals within the framework of their roles, authority and power (O'Neill, Beauvais & Scholl (2001). According to Tran and Tian, 2013), organizational structure represents a useful tool that directs individuals' behaviors through shared values, norms, and goals. Kanten, Kanten and Gurlek (2014) assert that researchers in recent times have suggested that organizational structures should be responsive to a variety of individual needs of the business. Scholars have categorised organizational structures as mechanistic, organic (Burns and Stalker, 1961), and learning organizations (Dahanayake and Gamlath, 2013). Mechanistic organization is characterized by highly formalized, standardized and centralized functions. Individuals in mechanistic organizations have a clear understanding about their job responsibilities and it is expected of them to follow certain guidelines specified by policies, practices, and procedures (Kanten, et al, 2014). On the other hand, O'Neill et al (2001) explain that organic organizations are more flat, flexible and adaptable to environmental conditions, so individuals' behaviors are guided by shared values and goals. Additionally, Maniam (2013) observes that learning organizations focuses on "learning" as a crucial component in its values, visions and goals, as well as all of its functions. It has been characterized by a type of organization which continuously and proactively emphasizes to facilitate learning activities and to develop strategies to encourage learning (Kanten, et al, 2014). There is, however, little research – based information regarding the type of organizational structure which propels public participation in monitoring and evaluation of projects, particularly the projects initiated by devolved systems like county governments.

A project, being a specific activity to be carried out using resources and with a beginning and an end, has four main resources which need to be managed in order to ensure that the projects is successful (Wachamba, 2013). These are people, time, money and scope (Wachamba, 2013: 9). It is largely accepted by both researchers and practitioners of project management that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is an essential tool that provides management of projects with information to make decisions in regard to the project. It (M&E) helps in identifying project areas that are on target and those that need to be adjusted or replaced (Shapiro, 2011). Monitoring focuses on tracking if you are doing what you intended: it helps you to know how you are progressing compared with the plan, what is being produced, and what evaluative questions to ask (Wachamba, 2013). On the other hand, Hunter (2009) describes evaluation as a scientific based appraisal of the strengths and weakness of the project. It is a means of checking efficiency, effectiveness and impact of a project based upon comparison between the actual and the planed. It is therefore interesting to establish how organizational structures of projects influence public participation in M&E of preschool projects in Migori County, owing to the fact that county governments are new dispensations in Kenya.

The County Government of Migori has initiated 68 preschool projects since 2014 as is stipulated by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. These projects are meant to ensure that children aged between 3 and 7 years are provided with quality education to enable successful enrollment in primary education with minimum difficulties (ECDE Policy, 2009). The management of the projects is required to be carried out through involvement of all stakeholders: parents, teacher, and the County Government. Yet to be established are the types of organizational structures employed by these projects as well as the extent of public participation in M&E of these preschool projects. Moreover, the relationship between the type of organizational structure of the preschool projects and public participation in M&E of these projects has not been empirically established.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem:

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) bestowed the responsibility of managing early childhood education (ECE) to county governments in the country. Children aged between 3 and 7 years, the intended beneficiaries of preschool projects, are expected to be admitted and provided by quality education for onward transition to class one. Thus, the county governments are expected to recruit qualified ECE teachers, provide teaching and learning resources, and to put in place adequate infrastructure to enhance success of these projects. However, there is little evidence that these activities are carried out based on M&E reports. This is because each project is provided with one ECE lead teacher to cater for the 3

stages in the preschool program by the County Government. Moreover, classrooms and facilities like toilets are inadequate in most of the preschools. It is therefore necessary to establish how organizational structure in each preschool influence M&E (and consequent reports informing provision of resources) of the project. Additionally, there is need to highlight the extent to which organizational structure of preschool projects stimulates information exchange between stakeholders and project activities. This study was therefore set to establish the influence of organizational structure on public participation in M&E of preschool projects in Migori County.

### 1.2 Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of organizational structure on public participation in M&E of preschool projects in Migori County. The specific objectives were to:

- i. Establish the level of public participation in M&E of preschool projects since 2014 in Migori County, Kenya
- ii. Assess the types of organizational structures adopted in preschool projects since 2014 in Migori County, Kenya.
- iii. Establish the relationship between organizational structure and public participation since 2014 in M&E of preschool projects in Migori County, Kenya.

### 1.3 Scope of the Study:

This study focused on organizational structure and how it influence public participation in M&E of preschool projects. It targeted committee members in each preschool project, since the responsibility of managing these projects rests with the committee. Data was collected using questionnaires administered on committee members and interviews with sub county officers in December 2016.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational structure has been study by several authors and proved through research to have positive relationship with performance of specific assignments, although its influence on M&E of preschool projects has not been focused much. In the Czech Republic, Kanten, et al (2014) investigated the effects of organizational structures and learning organization on job embeddedness and individual adaptive performance. Data was collected from 216 employees of hotel establishments by the survey method analyzed using the structural equation modelling technique. The results of the study indicate that organic organization structure has no direct effect on job embeddedness and individual adaptive performance. In addition to this, mechanistic organization structure affects job embeddedness positively, while it has no direct effect on individual adaptive performance. However, learning organization was found to affects both job embeddedness and individual adaptive performance positively.

Stare (2011) sought to identify the level of project organisational culture in Slovenian enterprises and its impact on project execution. The research was focused on the top and line management's attitudes and some other factors connected with managers' attitudes. The research showed a high level of project organisational culture and a high impact level of measured culture factors on project performance. An increasing level of project manager authority in different organisation types positively impacts on several cultural dimensions and also has a direct impact on the project's performance.

Similarly, Manar (2014) examined the impact of organizational structure on organizational commitment in public and private sectors firms in Jordan. Three main structural dimensions are included in this research: formalization, centralization (in the form of hierarchy of authority and participation), and standardization. 412 surveys were administrated to 23 public and private firms in Amman and a sample of 239 valid questionnaires were obtained. Results reveal that all structure dimensions are related to organizational commitment in both sectors, except the hierarchy of authority. Among the structure dimensions, formalization exhibits the largest correlation with organizational commitment in public firms, whereas participation has the largest correlation with organizational commitment in private firms.

In another study focusing on M&E, Karani, Bichanga, Kamau (2014) assessed how effectively the HIV/AIDS projects implemented by NGOs in Kenya are monitored and evaluated as laid down by the current National HIV/AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework found in the Kenya National AIDS Strategic Plan 2009/10-2012/13 (KNASP III). The study established that project managers in local NGOs running HIV/AIDS projects in Kenya do not effectively use the monitoring and evaluation system as laid down in the M&E framework of the current KNASP III.

Ochieng, Chepkuto, Tubey & Kuto (2012) assessed the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation process on CDF projects in Ainamoi constituency, Kenya. A case study research design methodology is used where the target population comprises of CDFC members, selected constituents, Project Management Committee (PMC), and District Development Officer (DDO). The results of the study show that PMC, CDFC and external assessors are involved in monitoring and evaluation of projects with minimal participation of constituents. It was also evident that most of the recommendations from M and E were utilised with the responsibility of utilisation of M and E result being under the CDF office.

There are also studies that have linked project failure with lack of M&E. Ndou (2012) investigated the reasons for failure of community-based projects at Folovhodwe area of Limpopo (Zimbabwe). The study revealed that lack of funds, poor project management, poor management of funds, lack of commitment and motivation, low level of education of project members, lack of youth involvement in community-based projects, lack of monitoring and evaluation by government officials and community leaders, lack of training and unavailability of workshops for project members and lack of government involvement in addressing project challenges were identified as the reasons for failure of community-based projects

Additionally, Wachamba (2013) assessed the determinants influencing the effectiveness of M&E systems in NGO's within Nairobi County, Kenya. The primary data was collected from the project managers or the M&E staff from each NGO. The findings indicated that there were difficulties in the application of the M&E systems, which was mainly attributed to the tools and techniques used. The role of management in the operations of the M&E system, although termed as adequate and prompt, also affects the effectiveness of the M&E system.

Kwena (2013) examined the factors affecting community participation in the management of development projects through LASDAP in Narok County; Kilgoris Constituency. A qualitative research approach was followed in which data was gathered through document analysis and field interviews. Key findings of the study indicated contrasting views between community and the Local Authority officials with regard to citizen participation in LASDAP development projects. The study also established very low community participation in LASDAP process, limited awareness coming out strongly as one of the reasons for poor local involvement in the development projects.

It is evident from the reviewed works that research on factors influencing public participation in M&E of preschool projects, specifically organizational structure, has received minimum attention. Noting that preschool projects, being managed through new dispensations (county governments), are not adequately provided with essential resources, establishing whether evaluation reports are generated through public participation was vital.

### 3. RESEARCH DESIGN, INSTRUMENTS AND ANALYSIS

The study was conducted in Migori County, Kenya. This is one of the forty seven (47) counties in the country. Migori County currently has 68 active preschool projects which are provided with lead teachers, teaching and learning materials, as well as infrastructure. Being managed by committee members and at least one trained preschool teacher, 13 members of each preschool alongside one sub county director of ECDE were targeted. The target population was therefore 884 committee members and 7 officers, totaling to 891. This study adopted Yamane (1967; cited in Israel, 2013) formula to calculate the sample size of committee members from whom data was collected using questionnaire as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{884}{1+884(0.05)^2} = 399$$

Where  $n$  is the sample size,  $N$  is the population size, and  $e$  is the level of precision (0.05).

To ensure equal representation of each sub county in the study, stratified random sampling which involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample of  $f = n/N \times \text{sample size}$  in each subgroup will be used (Patton, 2002). Where  $f$  is the sample size of the sub group;  $n$  is the population of the sub group; and  $N$  is the target population. Questionnaire and interview guide were used for data collection. Reliability of the instruments was checked through test retest, where alpha coefficient of 0.7 was obtained.

The study was able to collect data from 272 respondents, signifying 68.17% questionnaire return rate. Equally, all the 7 sub County directors of ECDE were interviewed by the researcher. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse levels of public participation and types of organization structure adopted by preschool projects. Correlations and regressions were used to establish the relationship between organizational structure and public participation in M&E of preschool projects.

#### 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Table 1 presents a summary of demographic profile of the sampled heads of sections;

**Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents**

Profile	Measurement	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	201	73.9
	Female	71	26.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100</b>
Age	Less than 19	10	3.68
	20 - 29	19	6.99
	30 - 39	115	42.28
	40 - 49	102	38.24
	50 and above	26	9.56
	<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100</b>
Education Level	None	9	3.31
	Primary	59	21.7
	Secondary	116	42.65
	Certificate	66	24.26
	Diploma/Degree	22	8.09
	<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100</b>
Occupation of respondents	Non-skilled artisans	53	19.49
	Skilled artisans	109	40.07
	Professional career	110	40.44
	<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 illustrates that majority (73.9%) of the sampled committee members of preschool projects are males, while 26.1% were females. This demonstrates the male dominance in projects initiated by the County Government of Migori. However, the proportion is above 15% threshold stipulated by the 2010 constitution (Republic of Kenya, 2010). With regard to age distribution of study respondents, most (42.28%) of the committee members aged between 30 and 39 years; 38.24% aged between 40 and 49 years; 9.56% of aged 50 years and above; 6.99 were between 20 and 29 years of age, while the remaining 3.68% were below 20 years in age. The findings suggest that most of the committee members were mature adults who were developing in parenting duties, and were probably eager to ensure better education for their young ones.

Equally, Table 2 also illustrates that most (42.65%) of the committee members have secondary education; 24.26% certificate level of education; 21.7% primary level of education; 8.09% had diploma/degree level of education, and the remaining 3.31% had not attained any level of education. This implies that the sampled committee members were literate and were capable of participating in activities like M&E of the specific preschool. Additionally, with secondary level of education, the sampled respondents (mostly parents of preschool children) are able to understand the expected outcome of a preschool project on ECE learners.

Lastly, concerning occupations of the respondents, it is indicated in Table 2 that most (40.44%) of the sampled committee members are professionals in their careers; 40.07% were skilled artisans, while the remaining 19.49% were unskilled artisans. This implies that the committee members under study were able to appreciate work progress or project implementation progress as well as evaluation of project outcomes.

#### 4.1 Level of public participation:

The first objective assessed the levels of public participation in M&E of preschool projects in the study area. Descriptive statistics obtained from the analysed data is presented in Table 2

**Table 2: Distribution by level of public participation**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Involvement of members of the public in M&E of projects	272	4.32	0.736
Public satisfaction with their involvement in M&E of projects	272	2.36	1.003
Consultations with communities and stakeholders	272	2.43	1.132
County staff satisfaction with their involvement in M&E of projects	272	3.15	0.961
<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>0.958</b>

Table 2 indicates that the sampled respondents were generally undecided with regard to the existence of aspects of public participation presented in the study instrument. Mean score for the aspects of public participation in M&E is 3.88, and based on the study instrument, 3 denotes undecided. Equally, members agreed ( $M=4.32$ ;  $SD=0.736$ ) that there is involvement of members of the public in M&E of projects in the county. However, the sampled respondents disagreed ( $M=2.36$ ;  $SD=1.003$ ) that members of the public are satisfied with their involvement in M&E of pre-school projects in the area. Additionally, the sampled members of pre-school committees also disagreed ( $M=2.43$ ;  $SD=1.132$ ) that there is consultations with communities and stakeholders in M&E processes in the county. The respondents were nonetheless undecided ( $M=3.15$ ;  $SD=0.961$ ) as to whether or not the county staff are satisfied with their involvement in M&E of pre-school projects in the county.

#### 4.2 Types of organizational structure and public participation:

The second objective of the study sought to establish the types of organizational structure and how the same are employed to enhance public participation in M&E. The participants were asked to give responses to organizational structure from their choices of given indicators of organizational structure in implementation of county government projects in Migori County. Table 3 presents distribution by types of organizational structure and public participation in M&E of preschool project.

**Table 3: Distribution by Organization type and Public Participation**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Horizontal structure	272	4.65	0.998
Vertical structure	272	3.56	0.897
Mechanistic structure	272	3.54	0.945
Organic structure	272	4.45	1.005
<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>0.961</b>

Table 3 illustrates that the sampled committee members generally agreed ( $M=4.05$ ;  $SD=0.961$ ) that organizational structures of the pre-school projects are appropriate in the implementation of pre-school projects. Conversely, the respondents agreed ( $M=4.65$ ;  $SD=0.998$ ) that horizontal structure is appropriate for public participation in M&E of pre-school projects. On the other hand, the respondents were undecided ( $M=3.56$ ;  $SD=0.897$ ) whether or not vertical structure supports public participation in M&E of pre-school projects. In addition to this, the respondents were also undecided ( $M=3.54$ ;  $SD=0.945$ ) whether mechanistic structure supports public participation in M&E of the projects. However, they agreed ( $M=4.45$ ;  $SD=1.005$ ) that organic type of organization supports public participation in M&E of pre-school projects in the county.

#### 4.3 Relationship between organizational structure and public participation in M&E of projects:

Through Pearson Correlations, the relationship between organizational structure and public participation in M&E was also measured by the researcher. Table 4 presents the Pearson Correlations at 0.01 significant level (2-tailed).

**Table 4: Pearson Correlations**

		Public participation in M&E	Organizational structure
Public participation in M&E	Pearson Correlation	1	.508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	11	11
Organizational structure	Pearson Correlation	.508**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows the relationship between the dependent (public participation) and the independent (organizational structure) variables to be positively correlated. Significant and strong relationship is found with organizational structure (.508 \*\*,  $p < 0.01$ ; 2-tailed). This is suggestive of the fact that the more favourable organizational structure approaches are, the higher public participation in M&E of preschool projects would be in the County Government of Migori.

Further, regression analysis was also run. Table 5 illustrates the findings of linear regressions.

**Table 5: Model summary**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.023	.326		6.204	.000
	Organizational structure	.438	.108	.164	4.047	.003

Table 5 illustrates that there is a positive relationship between the coefficients of organizational structure and public participation of M&E of preschool projects. The coefficient for training is 0.803. This implies that for every unit improvement in training, we expect 0.803 unit increase in public participation in M&E of preschool projects in the County Government.

**Table 6: Regression Model**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.803 <sup>a</sup>	.645	.606	.32397	.545	16.377	1

With  $R^2 = 0.545$  in the model summary (Table 6), the coefficient of determination (predictor indicator) reveals that 1 unit change in organizational structure under this study results in 54.5% change in public participation in M&E of preschool projects. Thus, organizational structure accounts for 54.5% of public participation in M&E of preschool projects in the county government. The stability of this result is reflected by the minimum adjustment in the adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.606; only showing a decrease of 0.039. Hence, organizational structure only explain 54.5% of public participation in M&E of the projects under study, with a significant model fitting ( $F=16.377$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ). This implies that 45.5% of public participation in M&E of preschool projects is attributed to other factors outside this study.

**Table 7: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.719	1	1.719	16.377	.003 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	.945	9	.105		
	Total	2.663	10			
a. Dependent Variable: Public participation in M&E of projects						
b. Predictors: (Constant) Organizational structure						

Table 7 illustrates that model used in the study was capable of predicting the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable ( $F=16.377 > P=.003$ ).

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

Results obtained in this study indicate that organizational structure explains 54.5% of public participation in M&E of preschool projects in Migori County. This implies that organizational structure is not the only factors influencing public participation in M&E of projects. The type of organizational structure in the county is neither mechanistic nor learning organization, but has an element of organic and leizes fair. Perhaps owing to the fact that technical experts in M&E are not engaged to run M&E systems in the county, public participation in M&E is not utilised in totality. Similar finding was obtained by Wachamba (2013) in an assessment of the determinants influencing the effectiveness of M&E systems in NGO's within Nairobi County, Kenya. She found that among other factors ..... the technical expertise of the team determines the echelon of success of the M&E system, and that M&E training is the best approach to improve effectiveness in M&E system. Equally, organic organization structure found to have no direct effect on job embeddedness by Kanten, et al (2014), as opposed to mechanistic structure which found to affect job embeddedness positively. Nonetheless, findings obtained by Manar (2014) who examined the impact of organizational structure on organizational commitment in public and private sectors firms in Jordan tend to contradict these findings. It (Manar, 2014) found that hierarchy of authority exhibited in mechanistic organizational structures does not correlate with organizational commitment. It is thus emerging that the influence of organizational structure on public participation in M&E of projects is contextual, and other factors present within an organization could be moderators in this relationship.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the study findings, it is concluded that organizational structure has an influence on public participation, although there are other factors within the organization that either catalyses or minimizes this relationship. In Migori County, the type of organizational structure is not centralized and there seem to be poor coordination of preschool projects. Additionally, there is low expertise in M&E of preschool projects, and approximately 45% of public participation could be attributed to other factors other than organizational structures of these projects.

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