INFLUENCE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUNDED PROJECTS: A SURVEY OF VIHIGA COUNTY

KAMAU EDWARD MWANGI

(Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology-Kenya)

Abstract: This study was geared towards analyzing the effect of project management tools on the performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County; the study was anchored on the Theory of change whose layout analysis of outcomes of a project deliverables which resembles the logical framework model. Descriptive survey design was used. The survey was conducted in Vihiga County, constituencies namely: Emuhaya, Luanda, Hamisi, Sabatia and Vihiga. A complete survey involving all 80 committee members from all the CDF projects was done. Data was collected using predesigned questionnaires. The study received responses from 80 respondents forming a response rate of 100%. Data obtained was cleaned, coded and analyzed using *spss* 21software. Multiple regressions model/analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. The results were presented using inferential statistics such as the Pierson correlation coefficients, comparative tables and percentages. Findings emanating from this study will be of great importance to all the direct and indirect stakeholders who play key roles in ensuring the ultimate accomplishment of the devolved fund-CDF and further realization of the Kenya Vision 2030 development blue print. The regression model showed that project management tools had a positive significant influence on the level of project completion and project performance. The influence of use of project tools was correlated with the performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County. It has Pearson Correlation index of 0.020. This means that the use of project tools have slight significance on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County. The interpretation of correlation co-efficient shows that use of project tools has a significant influence on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County because the P value was 0.023 or $P < 0.05$. From the findings it can be concluded that project management tools parameters influence the performance of Constituency development funded projects in Vihiga County.

Keywords: CDF projects, Constituency development funded projects, development blue print.

1. INTRODUCTION

Project management tools help in phase by phase monitoring and evaluation of a project deliverables. In a study on the causes of Ghana government projects failure was done to determine the most influential (important) factors from contractors, project management practitioners and general public. In view of the effort to ensure that projects succeed, factors such as limited resources and budgetary allocations for monitoring & evaluation, weak linkage between planning, budgeting and monitoring & evaluation, weak demand for and utilization of monitoring and evaluation results and poor data quality, data gaps and inconsistencies presented a challenge to project performance in Ghana (Ahadzie, 2007). Furthermore, as noted by GNDPC (2010), limited resources in terms of budgetary allocations for project performance, monitoring and evaluation posed a barrier to projects performance.

In another study to identify challenges facing projects performance at local government level in South Africa, Lawal & Onohaebi (2010) argued that for any project in the local government to be considered successful, criteria such as time, efficiency, effectiveness and quality delivery should be satisfied. This was essential and beneficial for the relevant bodies to monitor projects, because doing so improves insight concerning project performance status. They noted that The Mfolozi municipality had far mostly focused on developing community halls, small playgrounds. As a result, other kinds of social facilities and basic needs had been excluded from plans, for example, clinics, ICT centers, the provision of clean water, and roads indicating poor project selection criteria which is a key parameter to ensuring beneficiaries benefit from the community projects.

The legal provision of the CDF Act suggests that the fund is essentially a model for decentralization of development planning and performance. Since the introduction of CDF projects in Kenya in 2003, Kenyans have complained that the outcome of such development projects is not fruitful, in most cases the performances of such projects take longer than planned. The end user gets a dubious outcome or the funds are not adequately utilized. As cited out by Kimenyi (2005), other CDF projects are abandoned in the process of performance. CDF progress for the past three years is seen to be consistently performing poorly in some constituencies and there have been persisting questions of whether the fund has met its objective. This shows that the degree to which CDF has met its objectives remains an imperative research topic. Vital components of project management tools and techniques have been omitted and thus affect all projects in different stages such as performance assessment, project identification, monitoring and evaluation and thus most of the projects end up being terminated at early stages of performance.

Recent empirical evidence by Owuor (2013) point out to arrays of challenges faced by CDF among them management, organization structure and Project identification criteria. This CDF projects lack clear management guidelines and frameworks at local levels. In addition, incorrect use of Project Management Tools and Techniques especially during planning and monitoring stages because stalling of CDF projects in the five constituencies namely: Luanda, Hamisi, Emuhaya, Sabatia and Vihiga. Failure to use Project Management Tools and Techniques has resulted in lack of data for use during phase by phase monitoring and evaluation of projects deliverables. This ultimately results in time and cost overruns in the short run and overall project failure in the long run.

The findings of the study will be important for the public who are generally the end users. They are the people who ensure projects sustainability through owning them and it will assist in understanding the problems that hinder the full performance of their projects. Similarly, it will help in development of the nation in planning and provision of manpower requirements to ensure that the CDF projects are efficiently managed and meet the set objectives. The findings will also ensure positive attitudes to meet the needs of economic development of the nation. This will support a cohesive development agenda as Kenya gears towards achieving the sustainable development goals.

The findings emanating from this study will instill the principles of project management in CDF projects identification and performance in order to ensure a desirable outcome to the common citizens who are the end user. The findings will be important to the relevant stakeholders' ensuring the right measures are taken during the performance phase of CDF projects including relevant monitoring and evaluation practices to ensure the set project objectives are achieved within the set timeframes.

This is because it will add to their knowledge and enable them to be more informed in future research areas as concerning CDF project performance. This is mainly so because the study aims at highlighting factors influencing effective performance of CDF projects. They will also be able to identify further gaps and areas of research.

2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS AND PROJECTS PERFORMANCE

A logical framework model is one of the project management tools which shows phase by phase project deliverables and is well supported by the theory of change model. It offers a non-linear map of a project or programme approach, which shows how different components are expected to interact, and the multiple pathways through which change is expected to happen (Craig et al., 2008). It terms these components as intermediate outcomes; the specific changes expected as a result of the project or programme being implemented. These are linked together by causal pathways, which determine the direction of the relationship between these changes and show how they lead to the long term outcomes and impact to which the project or programme intends to contribute. Between these intermediate outcomes, interventions (the concrete activities undertaken as part of the project or programme), rationale (the justification or existing evidence that suggests

that a specific approach is likely to work in this context), assumptions (the uncertainties to be tested through formative research or performance) and indicators (metrics of change linked to each intermediate outcome, determining whether and how much change has been achieved towards reaching this intermediate outcome) are plotted.

According to Craig et al (2008), once the analysis is complete, the ToC map should be revised to reflect the results of the evaluation – both describing how the project was actually implemented and also the pathways through which it achieved impact. This final map can be a powerful dissemination tool to accurately describe the intervention and its impact with a range of stakeholders including researchers, practitioners and/or policy makers who may wish to adapt and implement the intervention in other setting.
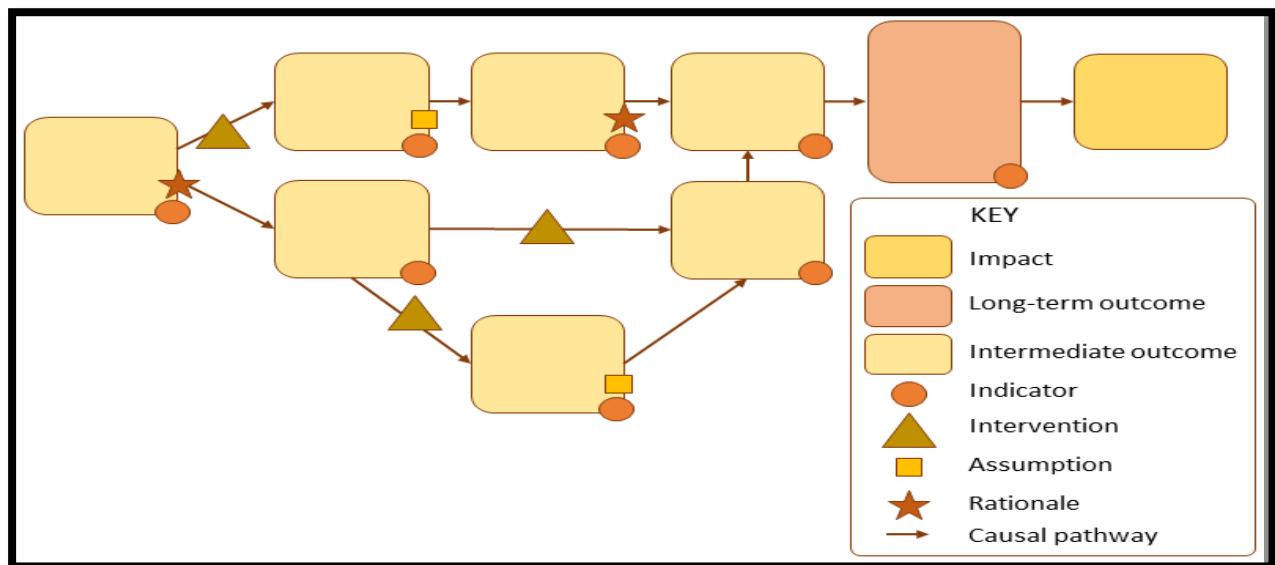

Figure 2.1: Theory of Change phase by phase indicators.

The Ministry of Planning and National Development commissioned work on the design of an appropriate framework for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in the National Development Program in 2005. This concept of project, project management and performance, project monitoring and project evaluation has been explored by different scholars. Project management has been defined as the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements (PMI, 2008). Hoboken and Wiley (2006), discussed project management in terms of producing project outcomes within the three objectives of cost, schedule, and specifications. This implies that project managers are expected to develop and execute a project plan that meets cost, schedule, and specification parameters. According to this view, project management is the application of everything a project manager does to meet these parameters. This approach to defining project management shares PMI's focus on the project outcomes in terms of requirements. Project performance in the context of this research is defined as the extent to which the project is been able to carry out its scope, meet its set schedule within budget and attain its set objectives (PMI, 2004). Good project performance entails that the project covers its scope within schedule and budget and attaining its set objectives.

McCoy et al. (2005) defines monitoring as the routine tracking of the key essentials of project performance (inputs, activities and outputs) through record-keeping, regular reporting and control. This is aimed at establishing whether the inputs, activities and outputs (immediate deliverables) are being executed according to plan. Inputs to be tracked include financial resources, human resources, equipment used on the project and any other input that goes into project performance. The financial resources are tracked with a budget and performance is analyzed by comparing planned expenditure against actual expenditure.

Uitto (2004) on the other hand defines monitoring as an incessant function which is aimed at providing the project team and all involved stakeholders with the relevant signals and indicators of project progress and success. It thus holds water to view monitoring as an uninterrupted task as highlighted in the background description of this research but it does not highlight what is tracked against what so as to be able to indicate performance.

Evaluation can be defined contextually in this research as the phase by phase (not continuous, usually midterm and at end of the project) appraisal of an ongoing or completed project to determine the actual impact against the planned goal, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency. Uitto (2004) continues to argue that evaluations are methodical and self-determining. This argument ties with PASSIA (2004) who stated that Monitoring and evaluation are discrete but harmonizing

Besner and Hobbs (2006) discussed use of different PM tools, techniques and methodologies and observed considerable differences in their use. To lead projects successfully project managers should be skilled to manage project activities relating to initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling and closing (PMI, 2008). The available literature sheds light on the use of specific tools and techniques, but unable to empirically substantiate the use of PMTT for project success (Patanakul et al., 2010). To address this issue Patanakul et al. (2010) investigated empirically the use of PMTT across the specific phases of a project life cycle, their impact on the success of a project. The results indicate that there are several PMTT being employed in a specific project phase but few of them contribute in the success of a project.

Much work has been done relating to PM over the past two decades and researchers and practitioners strived to investigate reasons of project failures and factors responsible for success (Karen et al., 2010). There are five main processes take place in projects management comprising a) initiation; b) planning; c) execution; d) monitoring and control process and e) closing process. This couple with Chin and Spowage (2010) who stated that methodology should be adaptable to scale of the project. PMM is employed in all project phases such as planning, coordination, conceptualization and closing in order to meet the stakeholder's requirements to complete the project within budget and on time. A range of project management tools and techniques (PMTT) are used in projects to plan and control scope of work involved delivering a product up to satisfactory level. Just like other professions, project managers use certain PMTT for making their PM activities easier (Andongndou et al., 2009). As noted by Project Management Institute (2008), to lead a project successfully, a project manager has to become proficient at initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling and closing .To do so, project managers typically use several tools and techniques to help them coordinate activities along a project life cycle. This seems to be the correct approach since several studies have suggested that the proper use of project management tools and techniques impacts the success of a project (Inman et al., 2001). On the contrary, the inappropriate use of tools and techniques can also be counterproductive to project management outcomes (Kerzner, 2000).

According to PricewaterhouseCoopers report, (2007), on the second global survey on the current state of project management maturity in organizations across the world, it notes that when it comes to project performance, organizations use a variety of factors to determine whether a project has achieved a successful outcome. The survey results showed that 20percent determine project success based on the satisfaction of their stakeholders which results from a practical analysis and stakeholder's engagement plan, 19percent on-time or schedule delivery and 18percent on project budget. Leading-practice companies determine whether a project is successful based on whether it achieves benefits that are in line with strategic objectives, and establish mechanisms to track progress along the way. While many projects reach successful outcomes, it is also a reality that some projects fail to do so. It was found during the survey that 60percent of project failures are linked to internal project issues (e.g., missed deadlines, insufficient resources). In fact, the top three reasons for project failure — bad estimates/missed deadlines, scope changes and insufficient resources — are internal project factors. It is notable that these three categories alone comprise 50percent of the reasons for project failure. This the study noted that it could be controlled using the right tools and techniques of project management such as adherence to the project schedule, budget and a proper plan on stakeholder engagement.

In spite of the foregoing, the influence of M&E tools on performance of the projects has not been accorded significance in CDF projects. In the current set up of county and national governments, there lacks an institutional framework to enhance utilization of project tools and techniques as well as monitor and evaluate their influence in project performance at every constituency level. This creates alarming test in both project execution institutions and in the community at large hence the gap that requires to be investigated.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey design. Namusonge (2010) observes that this method is best suited for gathering descriptive information where the researcher investigates people or attitudes concerning one or more variables through direct query. The population of study comprised of all 80 CDF committee members in all the constituencies of Vihiga

County namely Emuhaya, Hamisi, Sabatia, Vihiga and Luanda. In this research, a sampling frame of 80 CDF committee members from the 5 constituencies was used. In this study, total census was done on CDF committee members since the total target population was small (**80**). A census study occurs if the entire population of respondents is very small or it is reasonable to include the entire population (Henry, G. T., 1990). Census sampling procedure was used. All the 80 CDF committee members from the 5 constituencies of Vihiga County were used during the study. Each project is managed by a committee of 16 members-as per the reviewed CDF act of 2013. Primary data of both quantitative and qualitative type was collected by the researcher by using questionnaires. Secondary data was sourced through documents analysis. Amongst documents to be analyzed comprised of CDF Act (2013), projects strategic plans, government policy documents and budget plans among others. Criterion validity is used to ensure that the measured parameter is actually what is intended to measure and no other variables. To test reliability, of the instrument, the questionnaire was piloted using ikolomani constituency which does not fall within the study area. The data was then analyzed and the results correlated to determine their reliability coefficients. Best & khan (1989) suggest that the Pierson product moment correlation(r) is most often used because of its precision. Analysis of the data was done using spss 21 software. Comparative tables, percentages and pie charts were also used for data analysis and presentation. Inferential statistics were also used-Pierson correlation. Multiple regressions model/analysis was further generated to determine the relationship between independent (project management tools) and dependent variable (projects performance). The model enables the researcher to predict value of the outcome binary variable given values of the explanatory variables.

4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of project management tools on the performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County.

4.1 Constituencies' Representation

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Constituency		
Emuhaya	16	20
Luanda	16	20
Hamisi	16	20
Vihiga	16	20
Sabatia	16	20
Total	80	100

From the research, all the five electoral constituencies in Vihiga County were adequately represented without bias. Each constituency contributed an averaged 20percent to the total respondents.

4.2 Selected project tools influence on project performance
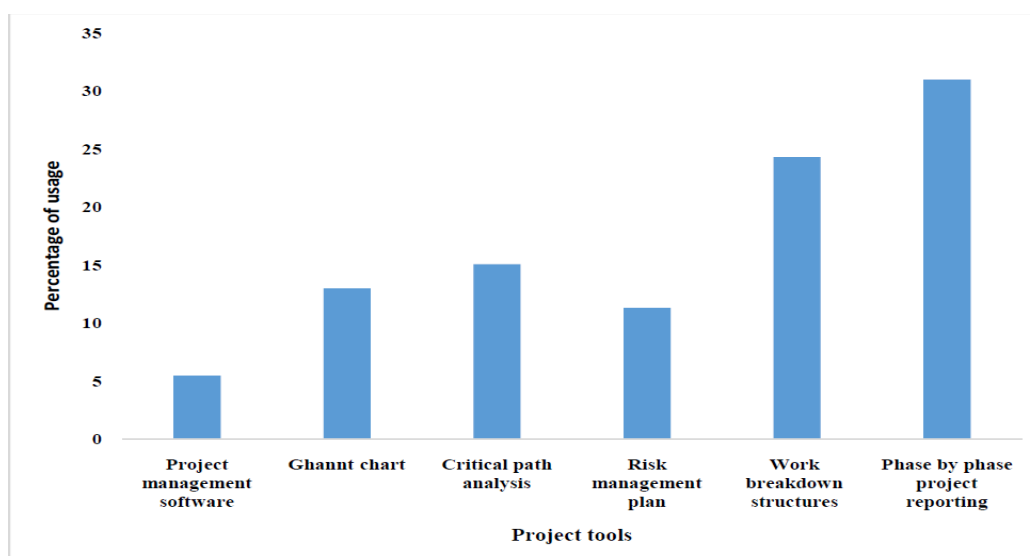
The respondents were given a table comprising 6 project tools and they were supposed to tick the tools commonly used during the performance of the projects in Vihiga County. The study aimed at establishing how various tools are used in projects performance in Vihiga County. The tools selected included the project management software, ghannt chart, critical path analysis, risk management plan, work breakdown structures and also phase by phase reports. From the analysis, it was noted that the most used project monitoring and evaluation tool was phase by phase project reports (32percent), while followed closely by use of work breakdown structures at 25percent. The least utilized tool was the project management software at only 5percent, while ghannt charts, critical path analysis and risk management plan accounted for 13percent, 15percent and 10percent utilization respectively. The use of project management tools enhances successful performance of projects.

4.3 Extent of agreement on how the project tools influence project performance

Variable	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	agree	Strongly agree	TOTAL
Project Tools Parameter						
Use of project management software	26.3	25.0	13.8	15.4	19.5	100
Use of Ghannt chart in project control	11.3	12.5	6.3	46.3	23.6	100
Use of critical path analysis in project control	11.3	13.8	21.1	18.8	35.0	100
Application of risk management plan in project uncertainty forecasting	15.0	12.5	7.5	31.2	33.8	100
Application of work breakdown structures in project tasks allocation	12.5	11.3	10.0	26.4	39.8	100
Phase by phase project reporting during project performance	3.8	5.3	7.5	36.3	47.2	100

From the analyzed data, only 26.3 percent strongly disagreed that the use of project management software has an effect on project performance. Similarly, close to the same percent as well disagreed (25 percent) while 13.5 percent were not sure whether the use of the project management software has any influence on project performance. However as 15.4 agreed, a bigger percent of 19.5 percent strongly agreed. A massive 46.3 percent agreed that the use of Ghannt charts in project control influences project performance, 23.6 percent strongly agreed on the same while only 11.3 percent and 12.5 percent strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. However, a small proportion of the respondents were not sure whether the use of Ghannt charts in project control influences project performance. The study also investigated whether the use of the critical path analysis has any influence on the performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County. 35.0 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, and 18.8 percent agreed to the same. However 11.3 percent strongly disagreed while 13.8 percent disagreed that the use of critical path analysis in project control influence projects performance or their performance. 21.1 percent were not sure. Those who strongly affirmed that application of risk management plan in project uncertainty forecasting influence projects performance or their performance were 33.8 percent while the percentage of respondents who strongly disagreed was 15.0 percent. As 15 percent strongly disagreed that risk management plan has an influence on project performance, 12.5 percent disagreed while 7.5 percent were not sure. The highest proportion of the respondents (39.8 percent) strongly agreed that the aapplication of work breakdown structures in project tasks allocation influences project performance while 12.5 percent strongly disagreed. Although 10.0 percent were not sure, 26.4 percent agreed while 11.3 percent disagreed that use of work breakdown structures in project tasks allocation influences project performance respectively. A massive 47.2 percent strongly agreed that phase by phase project reporting for project control influences project performance, 36.3percent agreed on the same. Even though a small percentage of the respondents (3.8 percent and 5.3 percent) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, another proportion of 7.5 percent were not sure whether the phase by phase reporting influences the performance of a project.

Project management tools helps in monitoring and evaluation of projects to ensure they achieve the set objectives. This is in line with findings documented by PricewaterhouseCoopers report, (2007), on the second global survey on the current state of project management maturity in organizations across the world. The report notes that when it comes to project performance, it is notable that 50 percent of the reasons for project failure could easily be controlled using the right tools and techniques of project management such as adherence to the project schedule, budget and a proper plan on stakeholder engagement.

4.4 PEARSON CORRELATION

A Pearson correlation was carried out to determine the relationship between the independent variables (usage of project management tools) and the dependent variable (i.e. project performance.)

		Level of project performance
Usage of project tools	Pearson Correlation	.020
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.023
	N	80
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Correlation of influence of project management tools and performance of CDF projects

The influence of use of project tools was correlated with the performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County. It has Pearson Correlation index of 0.020. This means that the use of project tools have slight significance on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County. The interpretation of correlation co-efficient shows that use of project tools has a significant influence on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County because the P value was 0.023 or $P < 0.05$.

4.5 REGRESSION COEFFICIENT

Variables in the Equation									
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95percent C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
	Usage of project tools	.777	.676	1.322	1	.025	.460	.122	1.729
	Constant	5.878	3.493	2.832	1	.092	356.965		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: project tools.

Predictor: project tools(X_4)

Dependent variable: Level of project performance(Y)

The equation derived thus was **$Y= 5.878 + 0.777X_4 + X_e$**

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at evaluating how the use of project management tools influences performance of CDF projects. Data analyzed from this study revealed that use of project tools has a significant influence on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County because the P value was 0.023 or $P < 0.05$ indicating a slight positive correlation. This means that the Null hypothesis (H_{O4}): Project management tools do not have a significant influence on project performance is not true and thus rejected.

5.1 Recommendations

There is need to release the findings of this study for further scholarly research by other researchers in other fields of projects implementation apart from constituency development funded projects. From the findings of this study, it's noble to recommend that CDF project implementation committees should comprise of members well versed in the principles and knowledge of project management tools to match the recommended project output. With them in the team they will be able to provide professional guidance on how to effectively initiate and manage projects up to the performance or closing phase.

5.2 Areas for Further Research

Similar study on role of project management tools and techniques in other counties and government ministries can be undertaken to rubber stamp or contradict the results of this study. This will help in ascertaining the validity of the findings obtained in this research. Similarly, different models apart from Pierson moment of correlation need to be applied to

further in-depth understanding of the relationships between the variables being studied. It's of great significance as well to study the linearity and Collinearity of several combined factors that influence projects performance not only those supported by constituency development funds but also those managed by other parastatals and private agencies.

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