INFLUENCE OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE OF COUNTY FUNDED PROJECTS: A CASE OF COUNTY AFFORESTATION PROJECTS IN MERU COUNTY KENYA

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A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Degree of Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management, Of the University of Nairobi

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented to any other university for award of degree

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my beloved husband for his financial and moral support during the time of the study, more so for his continuous prayer his steadfast love and encouragement. Also my two daughters for always giving mum a conducive environment for studying. My loving parents' brothers and sisters for always being there for me during the time of the study

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ALGA	Australian Local Government Association
CBPR	Community-Based Participatory Research
CDF	Constituency Development Funds
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GFRA	Global Forest Resources Assessment
KFS	Kenya Forest Service
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTA	National Taxpayers Association
UDN	United Daily News
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nation Environmental Program
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

Successful implementation of county funded projects in parts of the world is critical since it is the only way the citizenry can enjoy services provided by those projects. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the influence of project implementation on performance of county funded projects. The study specifically sought to assess the influence of stakeholder participation, planning, leadership and financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The reviewed theories included public participation theory, stakeholder theory and Resource Based View theory. Descriptive survey design was employed in this study. The target population for this study was composed of the County representatives, Kenya Forest Service officials and Stakeholders in Meru County Government. The sample size was determined using Morgan and Krejcie (1970) model, and the study sought to use a sample size of 292 respondents. Stratified sampling methods were used for the selection of the study respondents. Data collection for this research was done using questionnaires. The data collected was first grouped and then edited before being coded using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25.0). Data was analyzed by use of both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis comprises of measures of distribution (frequencies and percentages), measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of variability (standard deviation). Thematic analysis entailed the creation of themes related to the study variables. This was performed on the qualitative data provided by the open-ended parts in the questionnaire. Inferential statistics was done using multiple regression analysis. The analyzed data was presented in form of tables. The study established that tracking activities for the end county project; facilitating or overseeing some activities of the county project; mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities; and deciding the timelines and targeted beneficiaries influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also found that change control procedures; and use of the project baseline influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. Also, the rate of projects supervision by managers of allocation of resources influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. The source of funds was found to influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a low extent. The study concluded that financial capacity had the greatest influence on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, followed by stakeholder participation, then leadership while schedule management had the least influence on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The study recommends that stakeholder's participation should be improved in project management to promote the implementation of project management since there will be little resistance from stakeholders. The study recommends that the project managers should provide the necessary resources and facilities for project management without under budgeting. The study recommends that the sustainability must be a key consideration when designing afforestation projects. The study recommends that the project management office or committee should continuously assess stakeholder interests; this will help to promote their buy-in and eliminate intergroup conflicts thereby improving project performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The course of a project is defined at the implementation phase. This initial phase involves the creation of the concrete project outcome. It is during this phase that the specific roles and tasks are defined to facilitate the efficiency of a project. Programmers are concerned with encoding, designers are occupied with developing graphics, contractors are involved in building, at this phase, and the actual organization of the project takes it shape (Ika, Diallo & Thuillier, 2014). The project becomes clearly visible to outsiders during this phase. The implementation phase should begin steadily and the momentum maintained throughout the implementation phase. Once the implementation phase is completed, results are evaluated with reference to the list of requirements outlined at the definition phase (Njoroge, 2018). Evaluation is also assessed as per the designs provided at the beginning. The implementation phase is only said to be complete when all requirements outlined are met and the result corresponds to the selected design (Gregg & Ana, 2016).

Tree planting is critical in arresting the global warming phenomenon which has given challenges to many countries around the world including Kenya. Prolonged dry seasons, water shortage and low food production are vexing problems facing communities' due to reduced tree cover across the world (Abdi & Gakuu, 2018). According to the Nyamongo (2017) on Global Forest Resources Assessment, (GFRA) an estimated 13 million hectares or 0.7 % of world tree cover are lost each year thereby aggravating the world environmental problem. In recognition of the need to increase forest cover and reduction of environmental degradation, Governments initiate tree planting programmes.

Feasibility study has to done before commencement of any project. Chua, Kog and Loh (2013) pointed out that community should be engaged when projects are undertaken in an area to give their ideas, increase features of projects and affirm community of the benefits deducible. Arguably, every community has its special concerns it needs to be addressed with urgency and in a particular way. Incorporation of the ideas and engagement of the community reduces the probability of resistance after its completion.

Successful implementation of county funded projects in parts of the world is critical since it is the only way the citizenry can enjoy services provided by those projects. Governments gain credibility based on the number of successful projects they sponsored. Politicians are not left behind since they validate their stay in public office if they support projects by formulating favorable policies. Contractors and consultants find easy time to move their equipment and service to new project sites and in effect make more profits by completing projects on schedule (Leach, 2014).

In Malaysia, a policy was formulated that stipulated houses to be built faster at cheap cost. The sell and build system strategy opened entrance for low-income investor who relied on sales of completed projects to raise capital for building another structure (Abdi & Mbugua, 2019). The inability of low income investors to continue building houses when sales failed to go through in order to finance new project would lead to its abandonment. In Las Vegas Valley in USA many projects were started in 1998 and abandoned after the bust. Many projects including hotels, condominiums and retails complexes are partially built structures exposing foundations and steel beams. It is urged that many investors lack finance or see the project unviable as it cannot recover due to current economic status hitherto (Wideman, 2011).

Dibrell, Craig and Neubaum (2014) noted that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is critical in project management. It is a document that is compiled to evaluate the consequences a project may cause to the environmentally, economically and socially. Construction is sustainable when it contributes to improved environment and advanced society. Better practices should ensure the construction company has competitive advantages and economic benefits. Policies, laws and regulations should balance between economic, social and environmental consequences through awards and punishments to stakeholders (Shen et al., 2010).

The Philippines has lost nearly 70% of its natural mangrove cover since the early 1900s. As a result, large investments have been made to restore mangrove forests and the many ecosystem services that they provide. Most of these restoration efforts have been throughout planting of Rhizophora sp. seedlings, many of which have failed because the proper hydrological and ecological conditions were not properly assessed. Other afforestation projects involved planting seedlings in inappropriate places that resulted in replacing one valuable ecosystem with another (Sharma & Nadaoka, 2016).

World forest area stands at 39,000,000 km2 or 26.19 % of land masses. Africa has a forest area of 6,500,000 km2 or just about 21.80 % while Kenya forest area stands at 13,200 km2 according to Transportation Department of Edmonton (2016). Thus to encourage increased tree cover in different parts of the world, the World Bank has been encouraging institutions and communities to manage tree resources sustainably according to a World Bank (WB) (2012).

In the Ghanaian times, Achieng (2016) noted that Nyanyano development projects which were to bring relief and improvement among resident were abandoned for a while. There projects include multi-purposed hospital, police station, community communication and information centre and barracks. After 10 years, the project had turned to defecating sites since they could not meet needs of increasing population. Moreover, change of governance has been one the factors towards bringing to a standstill of the projects. Projects undergo various stages before its completion. The first stage is very essential since it establishes the viability and builds a business case. A clear comprehension on study must be done at first stage to avoid erroneous execution of work. The consequences are not favorable hence may out rightly leading to abandonment of the project (Adeyemi, 2013).

Bura project at the downstream of Kiambere dam was anticipated to irrigate 35,000 acres of land to grow maize and cotton at estimated cost of $98million. Later, the cost rose to $108million with only 6,000 acres being irrigated. The project area resembles a ghost town as staff quarters built was abandoned and dilapidated. Huge water towers have become a scrubby landscape while water canal overgrown with thorny shrubs. According to Ochieng (2016), there were defects in appraising infrastructural projects and failure to put in place policies and guidelines for strict EIA at the onset.

Forest cover in East Africa had dropped by 9.3 percent from 2001-2009. Looking at 12 countries in the region, forests were particularly hard hit near protected areas. Large areas of evergreen forests have been lost from East Africa during the 20th century resulting in carbon emissions, reduced habitat for forest dependent biodiversity, and reduced availability of essential ecosystem services (Pfeifer et al., 2012). Kenya has been classified among countries with lowest forest cover and requires 4.5m ha of tree cover to achieve the 10 % threshold of forest cover. The country needs ksh.7.6 billion to reach the 10 % forest cover by year 2030 according to Kenya Forest Service (2012). Towards mitigating this challenge, the Government initiated the tree nursery programmes

in schools, projects aimed at promoting tree planting in communities around the schools in a sustainable manner.

In October 2018, during the World Environmental Day, Meru was able to plant up to 219,642 trees in the state forest, one million trees in universities, polytechnics, primary schools and 45,000 trees were planted along the highways. WeForest Project Kenya in Meru also facilitates planting along riverbanks and water sources to promote access to clean water. The planting activities are carried out by local people themselves, who are engaged in forest policing and, in the long-term, caring for the seedlings and reporting on any illegal activities like firewood collection, charcoal burning, logging and illegal cultivation. The Nanyuki-Meru Highway Beautification Program commissioned by the Meru government advocates for the greening and beautification of the town and highways. This has shown a great commitment towards increasing forest cover as a key objective by the national Government that has led to opening up of ecotourism sites and mountain tourism in Mt. Kenya and Nyambene forests as positive move aimed at encouraging exploitation of tourism potential of the County ecosystems while encouraging conservation. Further, the Meru County Water Executives also lead the Upper Thangatha Water Resource Users in a tree planting exercise that saw over 1000 environmental friendly trees planted to protect the zone's water catchments (KFS, 2012).

Musyoki (2018) noted that like many other countries, Kenya reformed its system of County Government with the aim of strengthening the capacity of county authorities to effectively fulfill their responsibilities particularly in regard to urban planning, management and service delivery and improving urban governances. The reasons for project delays, cost overruns and not meeting specifications in public or government projects have not yet been adequately investigated in local authorities or have not been published in the literature..

Project performance relates to the accomplishment of goals in fulfilling the technical requirements, customer satisfaction. Effective project management contribute towards the 3 performance of the company performance in the long run, attaining competitive advantages; enhancing the status of the company; increasing market share; along with attaining specified revenues as well as profits (Kerzner, 2017). Performance of projects is quantified and appraised using many performance metrics that could be linked to several aspects to include time, client endorsement and changes, the performance of the firm, cost, health and safety, along with quality (Zheng, Xu & Wu, 2017).

Afforestation projects aim to encourage people to plant trees in locations where they live and work, apply good practices in planting and management of trees (Murray, 2011). Tree planting in agricultural landscape should be regarded as a valuable resource since their replacement price is close to 6 $ billion at current tree prices, they provide direct financial benefits for farmers, and they contribute to ecological sustainability by improving catchment health and biodiversity conservation, hence the need to tree nursery and planting programmes sustainably (Kibet, 2017).

According to Karlsen, Graee and Massaoud (2018), trees contribute to their environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate amelioration, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. During the process of photosynthesis, trees take in carbon dioxide and produce the oxygen we breathe. One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. Further trees can reduce bothersome noise by up to 50% and mask unwanted noises with pleasant, natural sounds. UNEP recognizes the universal importance of tree planting as both a practical means to conserving the environment and as an effective awareness raiding activity, thus it is engages in spear-heading a number of tree planting activities around the world through community participation in order to address the global diminishing forest cover (UNEP, 2012).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Afforestation projects aim to encourage people to plant trees in locations where they live and work, apply good practices in planting and management of trees (Murray, 2011). According to Affare (2012), 80-85% of the project work is done in this phase only. It is therefore imperative that in most cases this is where the project success is evident. In Meru county, the performance of most afforestation projects is amalgamated with normal operational undertaking in functional organizations that have low project management capacity (Khaemba & Sang, 2019). Further, corruption has become a challenge complicating proper planning in the county (Said & Gakuu, 2020). As Kyai (2019) summarized, poor support infrastructures, low level of technology, low capacity of implementing institutions, unreliable communication, poor and protracted documentation, low level or absence of accountability and transparency, and long and tedious formal decision-making procedures are typical conditions in Meru county which are brought about clashes between stakeholders and the project management hence failure or lack of completion of most of Meru's Afforestation projects.

Project failure rates in Kenya are high and the costs involved in starting and running them are equally high. Meru's Afforestation projects have been performing poorly in implementation stage. For instance community reforestation project based in the foothills of Mount Kenya have not been able to be fully implemented and have stalled (Omolo, 2015). This is attributed to ineffective stakeholder participation, poor planning, poor management and inadequate funds allocations (Wangui & Mbugua, 2018). In addition, Forestry projects often involve a strong social and participatory component where displacement of pre-project land uses and in some cases also land users. Restriction of access and rights might not be effective and leads to conflicts and this have slowed the implementation of these projects (Sikudi, 2017).

Various studies have been conducted in relation to performance of county funded projects. For instance, Wambua (2019) examined monitoring and evaluation practices and perfomance of county funded education projects in Makueni County, Kenya, Mwangi (2018) examined the factors influencing the performance of county government projects based on a case of Gatundu modern market, Kiambu county, Kenya and Safari (2020) examined the Influence of Monitoring and Evaluation on the performance of county government funded projects based on a case of Kwale County. However, none of these studies focused on performance of afforestation projects. This study sought to bridge this gap by establishing the influence of project implementation on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of project implementation on performance of county funded projects based on a case of afforestation projects in Meru County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study sought to achieve the following objectives;

i. To determine the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya.
ii. To assess the influence of project management on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya.
iii. To examine the influence of leadership on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya.

iv. To evaluate the influence of financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions;

i. To what extent does stakeholder participation influence the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya?
ii. What is the influence of project management on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya?
iii. How does leadership influence the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya?
iv. To what extent does financial capacity influence the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study was significant to project managers since it would equip them with necessary information to alleviate delays and successfully deliver projects on planned time and cost. This would promote efficiency and facilitate implementation of projects.

The study was significant to the county project contractors as it would enable them determine the influence of feasibility studies on implementation of projects in the County and thus determine all variables that would be outlined to ensure projects are implemented in the County.

The study would assist government to identify and remove blockades in policy and create favorable environment for successful project implementation. This would in turn give government value for money and improved service delivery.

The findings of the study would be important for the development of the nation in planning and provision of manpower requirements to ensure that the county funded projects are efficiently managed and meet the set objectives. The findings would also ensure positive attitudes to meet the needs of economic development of the nation. This would support a visionary by the strategists to industrialize Kenya by the year 2030. This study would also be beneficial to researchers and

scholars since it would add to their knowledge and enable them to be more informed in future research areas as concerning County funded project implementation.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This research sought to determine the influence of project implementation on performance of county funded projects. The study focused on afforestation projects in Meru County. The study specifically sought to assess the influence of stakeholder participation, schedule management, leadership and financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study targeted the County representatives, Kenya Forest Service officials and Stakeholders in Meru County Government. The study took 8 months.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher faced challenges in gaining access to the respondents in the county government as they had rules and regulations in their time schedule. The researcher countered this limitation by creating time during the weekends, evenings, at times travelling during lunch breaks to link with the respondents during the research period.

The respondents working with the county government did not give information freely especially when the people involved in projects that had failed were their seniors. However, this was overcome by treating the information with high confidentiality.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that factors like stakeholder participation, schedule management, leadership and financial capacity had a great influence in implementation of county funded projects in Meru County. The study also assumed that the respondents would sincerely fill the questionnaires without being subjective.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms Used in the Study

Financial capacity: this is an important instrumental activity of daily life that comprises those abilities needed for a project to independently manage financial affairs in a manner consistent with personal self-interest and values.

Leadership: is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal.

Project management: These are the processes required to ensure timely completion of the project.

Project Implementation: is the phase where visions and plans become reality. This is the logical conclusion, after evaluating, deciding, visioning, planning, applying for funds and finding the financial resources of a project.

Stakeholder participation: the process by which an organization involves people who may be affected by the decisions it makes or can influence the implementation of its decisions

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one discusses the background of the study in which the contextual and conceptual issues are explored. The chapter gives course for the study commencing with objectives, the significance of the study, its delimitation and limitations.

In chapter two, the study entails empirical and theoretical literature on investigating factors influencing performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya. The chapter provides a foundation upon which the findings of the study are discussed and conclusions drawn. The chapter finally identifies the knowledge gap from the literature studied.

Chapter three covers research design and methodology that were used in the study. It depicts research design used, target population, sampling procedure, description of research instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, methods of data collection, procedures for data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter four entails data analysis, data presentation and interpretation of study findings. Lastly, chapter five summarizes the findings of the study, discussion on the research findings, draw conclusions and recommendations and suggested areas of further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter emphasizes on the previous studies carried out in the subject area. Review of empirical literature, theoretical review, summary and gaps as well as conceptual framework. The section gives light to the study from previous researchers and the main studies on the factors influencing implementation of county funded projects in Meru County.

2.2 Performance of Afforestation Projects

Project performance relates to the accomplishment of goals in fulfilling the technical requirements, customer satisfaction. Effective project management contribute towards the 3 performance of the company performance in the long run, attaining competitive advantages; enhancing the status of the company; increasing market share; along with attaining specified revenues as well as profits (Kerzner, 2017). Performance of projects is quantified and appraised using many performance metrics that could be linked to several aspects to include time, client endorsement and changes, the performance of the firm, cost, health and safety, along with quality (Zheng, Xu & Wu, 2017).

The benchmarks for measuring project performance are determined at the initiation stage of a project, to provide a guide to the project activities for all people to focus on the same direction. The first dimension is the time efficiency, cost and quality, production efficiency, among others. Organization should be restraint so as to avoid limiting the performance measurement through using the measures of efficiency as these are measuring project performance in successful execution and does not signify the overall project performance. The other element is the effect on the client (Kapsali, Roehrich & Akhtar, 2019).

Afforestation projects aim to encourage people to plant trees in locations where they live and work, apply good practices in planting and management of trees (Murray, 2011). Tree planting in agricultural landscape should be regarded as a valuable resource since their replacement price is close to 6 $ billion at current tree prices, they provide direct financial benefits for farmers, and they contribute to ecological sustainability by improving catchment health and biodiversity conservation, hence the need to tree nursery and planting programmes sustainably (Kibet, 2017).

According to Karlsen, Graee and Massaoud (2018), trees contribute to their environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate amelioration, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. During the process of photosynthesis, trees take in carbon dioxide and produce the oxygen we breathe. One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. Further trees can reduce bothersome noise by up to 50% and mask unwanted noises with pleasant, natural sounds.

2.3 Stakeholder Participation and Performance of Afforestation Projects

Karlsen, Graee and Massaoud (2018) assent that stakeholder participation is increasingly becoming part of project practice in order to deliver excellent project outcomes. A well-managed stakeholder engagement process helps the project stakeholder to work together to increase comfort and quality of life, while decreasing negative environmental impacts and increasing the economic sustainability of the project. Stakeholder engagement should therefore be taken as a core element of any sustainable development plan (Bal, Bryde, Fearon & Ochieng, 2013).

UNDP (2012) report emphasizes that stakeholder participation should be gender sensitive and includes even the women and should be throughout the project cycle. Women should be a special target group who has a critical contribution to economic development. Also having stakeholders set vision and prioritize results will make them have the best ideas during planning in the best way how the results would continue to remain relevant to them (Bourne, 2016). They must therefore be involved in identifying the information that is needed during implementation. Inadequate stakeholder involvement hinders beneficiaries' participation and weakens their capacity to influence project outcomes hence poor performance (Xu, Jiang, Wall & Wang, 2019).

Moreno, Noguchi and Harder (2017) on the same note observed that community participation in project initiation was important because it strengthened community capacity and subsequently improved the overall wellbeing of the community. Their study on community-based participatory research (CBPR) on environmental issues showed that the recognition of community participation in health and environmental issues was increasing. In particular, he reported that it was important to involve community members during the initiation stages of a project because it improved the community's capacity to identify problems, participate in decision-making, and translate problems into solutions or action (Ika, Diallo & Thuillier, 2014).

A training manual by Transportation Department of Edmonton (2016) indicated that stakeholder participation was very important in the implementation phase of the project. This is because this phase involves a number of people working to fulfill the project. The involvement diverse stakeholders increase the conflict of interests between stakeholders in the implementation phase. To reduce this conflict, the author suggested that the project supervisor ensure that the community participated in monitoring the project schedule and implementation.

Adan (2012) study investigated the Influence of stakeholders' role on performance of constituency development fund projects a case of Isiolo North Constituency, Kenya. Descriptive research design was utilized. The study targeted those who represented 155 CDF projects in Isiolo North Constituency. Semi structured questionnaire and interview schedules were used to collect data. Descriptive and inferential analysis was applied. This study found that the role of project implementation by project managers and government officials' role led to better performance of projects.

2.4 project Management and Performance of Afforestation Projects

Schedule management includes the processes required to ensure timely completion of the project. But before a project schedule is created, a project manager should typically have a work breakdown structure (WBS), an effort estimate for each task, and a resource list with availability for each resource. A Schedule is created using a consensus-driven estimation method; the reason for this is that a schedule itself is an estimate: each date in the schedule is estimated, and if those dates do not have the buy-in of the people who are going to do the work, the schedule will be inaccurate.

Setting overall completion dates must be done by the project team and key stakeholders. The project manager assists by assimilating information about scope, budget, resources, and estimating times for completion of project tasks. Once an overall schedule is set, the project manager is responsible for monitoring the progress of the project and revising the schedule if needed. This must be done in consultation with project team members who are doing the work. There will typically be give-and-take as a project proceeds among budget, features, and schedule. It is essential for the project manager to keep all participants informed as to current schedule status

Managing the Project Schedule includes all the steps required to ensure the timely completion of the project. It involves determining the delivery dates and milestones whilst taking all of the known

constraints into account (Newton, 2005). Project schedule development uses the outputs from the processes to define activities, sequence activities, estimate activity resources, and estimate activity durations in combination with the scheduling tool to produce the schedule model (PMI, 2013). The Project Time Management processes and their associated tools and techniques are documented in the schedule management plan. The finalized and approved schedule is the baseline that will be used in the Control Schedule process during the project implementation.

Gregg and Ana (2016) verify that the implementation stage of project management entails conversion of the plan into an actual project. While the implementation process appears more concrete and visible to the public and impacts directly on an organizations structure, failures in implementation point straight back to a faulty planning process. How the planning is executed determines the failure or eventual success of a project. It is at this stage that two determinations are reached (Kerzner, 2017). Planning aids in assessing whether proceeding to develop a project is truly worthwhile before implementation can begin. Planning also gives the project team a platform to explore and discuss various viable alternatives on what will be the best options in carrying out a feasibility study for a project. Measurements of the success of a project are also determined at this stage (Giezen, 2012).

Highly centralized types of government have a strong vertical hierarchical structure that may facilitate excessive bureaucracy and slow down decision making processes because time is spent reviewing and making back and forth decisions across several management layers (Said & Gakuu, 2020). This is the most pronounced situation currently in government managed projects in Kenya. The county funded project organizational structure ought to align such that managers are empowered to act on their own in their functions of responsibility within laws that will cub misuse of authority. Boon, Bawole and Ahenkan (2013) urge government to commit itself to a hastened rate of implementation of county projects on the ground level through creation of good governance policies. A healthy policy environment will see to it that the project kitty thrives and empowers many people at the constituency level

2.5 Leadership and Performance of Afforestation Projects

The need for the right people for the right job is very crucial in project management and as such the need for right people with appropriate skills to correctly execute projects is very crucial. Research on project failure points out that the failure of many projects can be partly attributable to

lack of skills. For example, a study conducted by Njoroge (2018) into the Bygga Villa project indicates that the project leader lacked broker skills and this was causing conflicts among project partners, which thereby caused the project to fail. In order for the project to be successful, management had to replace the project manager with a more appropriate one. This is further echoed in the work of Hwang and Ng (2013), which argues that a competent project manager is vital to project success. Thus, in order to manage projects professionally and successfully, the project manager has to possess the required knowledge and skills.

Perkins (2016) attributes the root cause of project failure to Knowledge: either project managers do not have the requisite knowledge, or they do have it but fail to apply it appropriately. This theory employs The Project Failure Cause-Effect Diagram to give further explanation. According to this theory, there are a number of issues that may cause projects/programmes to fail, but all these causes can be traced to a root or fundamental cause, and that is knowledge (Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead & Boschee, 2018). In other words, if a project fails because of any particular reason, that reason can also boil down to the fact that project managers or senior management might not have the right skills or technical know- how to execute such a project, or they do have the right knowledge but have failed to use it appropriately (Reichenpfader, Carlfjord & Nilsen, 2015). For instance, if a project has failed because of failure to manage risks during project implementation, this failure can be due to either the project manager not having the right skills or experience to deal with risk management, or s/he did have the skills but failed to apply the knowledge s/he has of risk management appropriately (Leach, 2014).

Serra and Kuncb (2015) place the top management team as essential in the overall management and implementation of the project. According to Ikonya (2019), top management directly promote project success as customer and highest organizational authority. Project managers have the responsibility of the planning, execution and closing of any project. They provide the organizational environment for the successful completion of the project. They also assert that, the considerably high impact of top management on project success can also be interpreted from a more critical point of view, as it could indicate an overly strong involvement of top management in the process of the project itself. Research has identified that management drives project success more than technical issues do (Abdi & Gakuu, 2018).

Top management are accountable for accomplishment of a stated project by creating clear and attainable project objectives. The project must receive approval and support from top management especially the management boards in the cases of government run projects; be it national governments or county governments (Nyamongo, 2017). Top management needs to brand the project requirement and be able to manage the three triple constraints: Cost, time and scope. This can be done by the senior management being committed with their own involvement and willingness to allocate valuable resources to the implementation effort. This involves providing not only an appropriate amount of time and resources to get the job done, but also the necessary personnel for the implementation of projects (Awiti, 2010).

The attitude of the top management to the project determines the amount of resources allocated to the implementation of project. Top management commitment results in organizational commitment, which is a key factor influencing project implementation success (Abdi & Mbugua, 2019). Anguelov and Ivanova (2018) put forward that project managers must prepare a political game plan for managing important sponsors, stakeholders and constituents to mitigate project derailment. When difficulties arise, top management is in the best position to help the project team deal with them effectively (Apolot, Alinaitwe & Tindiwensi, 2010). Top management support is normally in the form of providing sufficient resources for the success of the project, sharing responsibilities with project team, communicating with project team authorities and responsibilities and supporting the project team in times of crisis or at unexpected situations.

Ashaye (2010) proposed that many project managers of successful projects stressed the importance of investigating the underlying processes, apart from proper and detailed planning and allocating appropriate human and financial resources. ALGA (2010) empirically proved that strong and committed leadership at the top management level is essential to the success of project implementation. The successful project manager should have the following skills and competences, flexibility and adaptability, preference for significant initiative and leadership confidence pursue, verbal thereby, forcefulness, effectiveness able to balance technical solutions with time, cost, and human factors poise, enthusiasm, imagination, well organized and disciplined and willing devote most of his or her time.

The International Budget Partnership (2010) notes that, up to 45% of infrastructural projects fail annually in the devolved units in various countries due to the fact that the management in these

units have no good will in projects implementation but have only the dream of embezzling funds, limiting spending so that they can pocket something at the end of the day and at times fasten the rates of completion of projects so that they can spend less, and this finally affects the quality and success of projects. Kyai (2019) notes that in Africa, managers are never loyal to their electorate and therefore do less in implementing development projects. In Mombasa County for example, some project managers like those operating the Kongowea-Kisauni road recarpeting have failed to be complete since the year 2010 just because the project managers are not ready to spend despite the fact that they were allocated the finances by both the county and national government (Republic of Kenya, 2014). Due to this insurgency of issues in the management of projects, the research intends to investigate the extent to which the management plays a role in projects implementation in Mombasa county. According to the Republic of Kenya (2014), managers perform four major activities that influence projects in any given decentralized situation. This includes; Resource allocation, making decision, attendance of project meetings, projects supervision etc.

2.6 Financial Capacity and Performance of Afforestation Projects

County funded programs are said to allow for policy decisions to be made by individual legislators. The legislature approves the overall budget and may set parameters for its expenditure, yet, within these broad constraints it is alleged that individual legislators or their committees have a free hand from a constitutional perspective, it is asserted that county projects are the wrong answer to the very real problems of underfunding in areas that are in need of development, the national government's failure to address the needs on the ground, and the practice of withholding funds from areas controlled by opposition parties (Ikonya, 2019). The solution to this problem is not to give individual MPs money to spend in guise of county projects; rather, it is to devise more effective ways of devolving resources to local areas and involving communities directly in decision s about how to spend these resources (Murray, 2011).

The amount allocated to the county projects was found to be insufficient according to the UDN study. In Kenya, the current allocation of county projects is 2.5% of the national budget which is felt by many people to be rather small and may need to be enhanced to at least 5%. In a survey by Ochanda (2010) it was noted that it is still clear that the cumulated amount of funds that go through the district treasuries are much higher than the overall county projects allocation. At the constituency level, the entire amount allocated to each constituency is to be spent based on

functional criteria set in the law. One criterion emphasizes that not less than 73% of the county projects allocation should be spent on development projects. According to the statutes, for projects to qualify for county projects funding, they must satisfy three major criteria. First, they must be development-oriented and not recurrent; for instance, funds may be disbursed to build school classrooms but not payment of teachers (Barmasai & Mbugua, 2020). Second, projects must be community-based so as to spread the benefits to many constituents. Lastly, the funds can only be disbursed to a defined, auditable phase, unit or element of a given project. It is further noted that once funds are allocated to a given project, they cannot be reallocated or diverted to another project in the same year (Achieng, 2016).

According to a report by Gordon (2013), the county government allocates some money for emergencies without specifying what constitutes an emergency. Furthermore, by setting aside money as county projects office running costs, the Act not only allows for taking away the needed development funds for higher priority projects but also makes the county projects office to be treated as development project itself. This reduces the amount of funds needed to be allocated to more deserving developmental projects. The report recommends that the current county projects kitty be doubled. In the light of some constituencies having more development needs than others and given that county projects allocations are almost equal in all constituencies, more funds are required to go into the county projects kitty. This is observed to not only avail more resources for local level development but also increase equity and/or inclusivity (Das & Ngacho, 2017).

It is noted that the community is minimally involved in the allocation of county projects to selected projects; and that county projects structural weaknesses could possibly help to explain the existence or otherwise of transparency in allocation and utilization of county projects as well as accountability of committee members (Sperling, 2017). Several weaknesses of the projects as currently constituted were identified. The weaknesses appear to revolve around issues of allocation, project identification, distribution, management, community participation in project design, prioritization, and monitoring and evaluation. A study by the NTA (2012) on Citizen's County Projects report card for Kibwezi constituency, Kenya established that Kshs 19.7 million of taxpayers' money has been wasted on badly implemented projects. That is, 31% of the total projects funds allocated to the monitored projects in the financial year 2009/10 were alleged to be on badly implemented projects. Moreover, Kshs 2.4 million of taxpayers" money which is

equivalent to 4% of the total project funds allocated to the monitored projects in the same financial year were on abandoned projects. On the other hand, 8% (Kshs 5.15 million) of the allocated funds in the same year was unaccounted for (Adeyemi, 2013).

The World Bank (2012) report indicates that finances and capital resources forms the epicenter of success or failure of any project in the world; be it infrastructural, educational, and religious or charity project. The finances give rise to projects quality through accessing qualified personnel, relevant technology, proper materials and winning the community support. However, devolved units like county governments have comparatively limited resources and greater difficulty in accessing to funding sources, they are also more dependent on support from the central government, have low income sources from the taxes they lay at county level, have limited innovation in sourcing for more funds, have less adequate budget control system, employ less or non-experienced personnel and lack economies of scale in their operations (Nwachukwu & Emoh, 2011). This in turn has limited their operations, quality of delivery and effectiveness in projects delivered. Owing to the fact of limited financial resources, the study considered the relevance of financial resources in relation to hiring expertise, financial viability of projects and financial management skills.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study was adopted the Resource based view theory to explain the relationship between the variables under study. This study was guided by Resource Based View theory as proposed by Barney (1991). 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. The theory focuses on the idea of costly-to-copy attributes of the firm as sources of business returns and the means to achieve superior performance and competitive advantage. 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 (Kiprono & Daniel, 2016).

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 sought 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.

The theory assumes that skills, capabilities and other resources that organizations possess differ from one company to another. If organizations would have the same amount and mix of resources, they could not employ different strategies to outcompete each other. The other assumption of RBV is that resources are not mobile and do not move from company to company, at least in short-run. Due to this immobility, companies cannot replicate rivals' resources and implement the same strategies. Intangible resources, such as brand equity, processes, knowledge or intellectual property are usually immobile (Kaufman, 2015). A number of criticisms of RBV have been widely cited, and are as follows: The RBV is tautological. Different resource configurations can generate the same value for firms and thus would not be competitive advantage (Ismail, Mokhtar, Ali & Rahman, 2014).

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 & Nahmias, 2010).

According to RBV theory, implementation of any projects needs adequate resources to ensure stakeholder participation, planning and management of the projects. Financial resources ensure that the costs of implementing the projects are taken care of. The study therefore used this theory to explain various factors influencing performance of afforestation projects in Kenya.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework outlines the dependent, independent and intervening variables as discussed in the literature review and elaborated in the Figure 1 below. It helps one to understand the relationship between the variables of the study.

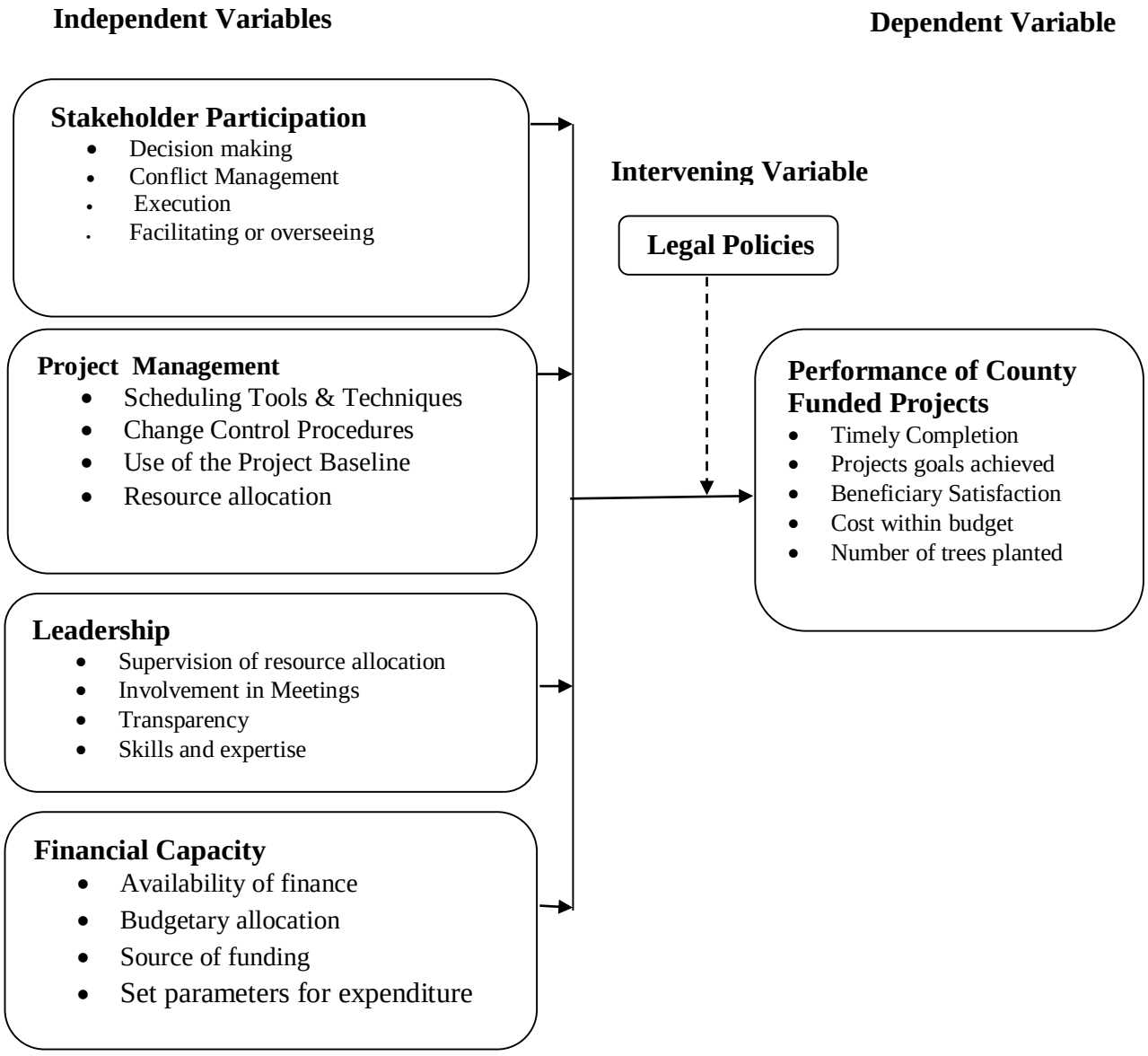

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

This research sought to determine the factors influencing performance of afforestation projects in Kenya. The study specifically sought to assess the influence of stakeholder participation, planning, leadership and financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya. On stakeholder participation, the influence of decision making, conflict management, planning workshop, execution, facilitating or overseeing and tracking activities on the performance

of afforestation projects. Further, project objectives and strategies communication, resource allocation, risk planning and budget development and time estimation; were used to explain the influence of planning on the performance of afforestation projects. The study also looked at the influence of supervision of resource allocation, involvement in meetings, transparency and skills and expertise as aspects of leadership on the performance of afforestation projects. Further, the financial capacity was expounded on by the availability of finance, budgetary allocation, source of funding and set parameters for expenditure. To understand performance of afforestation projects, the study sought to know whether the projects are completed in time, sustainable, have value for money, the level of community satisfaction, if its cost within budget and it finishes within the project scope.

2.9 Research Gaps

To fulfill the needs for successful project implementation in county government, certain important factors need to be taken into consideration. From the reviewed literature, projects implementation is the key point to satisfying citizens of any country. It has further shown that population increase has demanded for county funded projects so as to reach all the citizens of the country.

Most of the studies reviewed such as Omolo (2015) examined the factors influencing implementation of project management in public-funded projects in Kenya–the case of Kenya Pipeline company, Nairobi County; Wangui and Mbugua (2018) surveyed the factors influencing implementation of county development funded projects in Kenya: a case of Kiambu County; and Sikudi (2017) did a study on factors influencing implementation of county funded development projects by county governments, in Kenya (A Case Of Kilifi County Government), did not focus on the factors influencing the performance of afforestation projects. This therefore created a knowledge gap that this study sought to fill.

Table 2. 1: Summary of Empirical Literature Review and Research Gap

Author/Year	Focus of study	Research Design	Findings	Research Gaps	Focus of current study
Nyandika and Ngugi (2014)	stakeholders' participation on performance of road projects	Descriptive research design	performance of roads projects is determined by project communication, feasibility study, holding seminars and conferences	The study focused on Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) context	This study determined the influence of stakeholders' participation on performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya Kenya
Yang et al. (2011)	Project manager's leadership style, teamwork and project success.	Descriptive survey design was adopted	The study found out that Better project management leadership leads to better project team members' relationships.	The study used only qualitative data	This study used both qualitative and quantitative data

Umulisa et al. (2015)	Project resource planning practices on project performance	Descriptive research design	Financial resource planning practices were found to influence the project performance	The study focused on the performance aspect	This study focused on performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya Kenya
Njiru (2018)	Project Management Practices And Implementation Of Projects In Manufacturing Companies In Nairobi City County, Kenya	Descriptive research design	The study found that positive and significant relationship between stakeholder participation, leadership support, communication and resource allocation and project implementation.	The study focused on Manufacturing Companies In Nairobi City County	This study dealt with county funded projects
Sikudi (2017)	Factors Influencing Implementation Of County Funded Development	Mixed research design	The study found that the size of the project determines the rate of	It did not reveal the factors influencing performance of afforestation	This study focused on reveal the factors influencing performance of

	Projects By County Governments In Kenya (A Case Of Kilifi County Government)		implementation of development projects to a great extent. Allocation of funds also affects the rate of implementation of development projects to a great extent.	projects in Kilifi County, Kenya Kenya	afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya Kenya

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology, which was adopted in carrying out the study. Further, it describes the research design used in the study , the target population and sampling techniques which was adopted in selecting the sample size. It also describes how data was collected and analyzed.

3.2 Research Design

Descriptive survey design was employed in this study. Descriptive research majorly dealt with affiliations which exist, events which occur, ongoing processes, attitudes which were held or developing trends. The design facilitated the collection of data on the factors influencing performance of afforestation projects in the Meru County.

3.3 Target Population

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), a population is the total collection of elements about which we wish to make inferences. The target population for this study was composed of the County representatives, Kenya Forest Service officials and Stakeholders in Meru County Government as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1: Target Population

	Frequency	**Percentage**
County representatives	92	25.3
Kenya Forest Service officials	79	21.7
Stakeholders	193	53.0
Total	**364**	**100.0**

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

This section describes the sample size and sampling procedures to be used in this study.

3.4.1 Sample Size

Sampling is the choosing of a number of participants who provided the needed data which was used to draw conclusions about the study. The sample is a representation of a larger group. The

sample makes up a subset of the target population that is used as a representation of the whole population (Kumar, 2019). The sample size was determined using Morgan and Krejcie (1970) model, and the study sought to use a sample size of 292 respondents. According to Krejcie Model:

$$n = \frac{X^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where: n = Desired sample size

N = Target population **(364)**

P = Population proportion **(0.5)**

d = Degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion **(0.05)**

X^2 = 3.841 at 95% confidence level

Therefore **n =** $\frac{3.841 \times 364 \times 0.5(0.5)}{0.05^2 (363) + 3.841 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}$

n = 292

3.4.2 Sampling Procedures

Stratified simple random sampling method was used for the selection of the study respondents. This is a sampling technique that is not biased and it involves grouping of heterogeneous group of the population into homogenous subsets and then choosing the sample from the individual allowing for representativeness. The technique sought to get a desired representation from the different sub-groups in the study population. Using this technique, the sampling is done such that the existing sub-groups are less or more represented in the chosen sample (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). For each of the strata, simple random sampling was used. To get the sample size per stratum, the following formula was used. Table 3.2 shows the sampling frame.

$$N_s = \frac{P_S \times S}{N}$$

Where: N=Study population

N_s=Sample from each stratum

S=Total sample size

P_s=Population in each stratum.

Table 3. 2: Sampling Frame

Respondents	Frequency	Sampling Ratio	Sample Size
County representatives	92	0.803	74
Kenya Forest Service officials	79	0.803	63
Stakeholders	193	0.803	155
Total	**364**		**292**

3.5 Research Instruments

Data collection for this research was done using questionnaires. The questionnaires had open and close-ended questions. The open-ended questions allowed the participants to provide detailed responses that have detailed information. The closed ended were easier to analyze as they have questions with limited choices that the respondents selected. Saunders (2011) points out that, the close ended questions are easier to analyze while the open-ended questions allow for the provision of detailed responses. Questionnaires were preferred as a research tool because they were a less expensive data collection method that yield relatively straight forward responses since it was structured in nature and allowed the convenience of independence in giving responses which may save time

3.5.1Pilot Testing

Prior to the main study, a pilot study constituting 10% of the targeted respondents was carried out. As such, therefore, 29 respondents took part in the pilot study. The respondents participating in this study were excluded from the main study. The aim of undertaking a pilot test was to establish any potential weaknesses of the research instrument by testing both the reliability and validity of the instrument.

3.5.2. Validity of Research Instruments

According to Bajpai (2011), validity is the extent to which findings extracted from review of the data really represents the phenomenon under investigation. Pre-testing was a good way to improve the likelihood of face validity. On the other hand, content validity, which also known as logical validity, refers to the extent to which a measure represents all facets of a given social construct.

The content validity of this study was enhanced by seeking opinions of experts in the field of study especially the supervisors.

3.5.3 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability is a weigh of the extent to which a research instruments yields constant findings or data after repeated trials (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2012). Reliability enabled the researcher to estimate error and make the necessary corrections if any. This was because the larger the reliability the smaller the error and conversely, the larger the error, the smaller the reliability. Reliability in this study was enhanced by pre-testing the questionnaire with a selected sample which was excluded in the main study.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher also obtained a letter from the University acknowledging their academic research requirement. A pilot study was initiated to verify the viability of the research tool before proceeding to actual data collection. This was beneficial in ensuring face and validity of the content and eliminates errors that might be caused for having a poorly structured data collection tool (Flick, 2015). Having verified the validity of the research tool, the researcher sought the assistance of research assistants who were coached to assist in the data collection. The research assistants were sought locally in Kilifi to minimize on costs.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected was first grouped and then edited before being coded using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25.0). Data was analyzed by use of both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis comprised of measures of distribution (frequencies and percentages), measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of variability (standard deviation). Thematic analysis entailed the creation of themes related to the study variables. This was performed on the qualitative data provided by the open-ended parts in the questionnaire. The analyzed data was presented in form of tables.

On the other hand, inferential statistics was done using multiple regression analysis. The relationship between the independent and dependent variable was obtained using multiple regression analysis model. The multiple regression model took up the below equation;

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

Where: - Y= Performance of afforestation projects in Meru County

β_0=constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = regression coefficients

X_1= Stakeholder participation

X_2= Schedule management

X_3= Leadership

X_4= Financial capacity

ε=Error Term

3.8 Ethical Considerations

All government and County authorities were informed prior to the study to avoid suspicions and resistance from the county project managers. Consent was also sought from the respondents whose participation in this study was voluntary. The information they provided was treated with utmost confidentiality. Privacy and dignity of the respondents were considered during the research. Names of the respondents were not exposed and codes were used instead.

3.9 Operationalization of Variables

The operational definition was drawn to ensure consistent data collection that eliminates ambiguity. To operationalize the questionnaire on factors influencing performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya, each critical variable was expounded as indicated in Table 3.3.

Table 3. 3: Operationalization of Variables

Objectives	**Type of Variable**	**Indicator**	**Measuring of Indicators**	**Tools of analysis**	**Type of analysis**
To determine the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya	Independent	Stakeholder participation	Planning workshop Decision Making Mobilizing project beneficiaries	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis

			Execution Facilitating or overseeing Tracking activities		
To assess the influence of planning on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya	Independent	Schedule management	Scheduling Tools & Techniques Change Control Procedures Use of the Project Baseline Resource allocation	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis
To examine the influence of leadership on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya	Independent	Leadership	Mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis
To evaluate the influence of financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya	Independent	Financial capacity	Execution of some of the activities of the county project	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis
	Dependent	Performance	Timely Completion	Mean score	Descriptiv

		of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya	Projects goals achieved Beneficiary Satisfaction Cost within budget Number of trees planted		e statistics Regression analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The outcomes from the study tool are presented in this study. The chapter starts by giving the responses rate and reliability analysis. The background data for the respondents is presented and thereafter the findings for the influence of project implementation on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. Finally, regression analysis is also conducted. The findings were presented in tables.

4.1.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

The questionnaires that the researcher administered were 292 out of which only 228 fully filled questionnaires were returned. This gave a response rate of 78.2% which was within what Sekaran and Bougie (2010) prescribed as a significant response rate for statistical analysis and established at a minimal value of 50%.

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

	Frequency	**Response Rate**
Response	228	78.2
Non-response	64	21.8
Total	**292**	**100.0**

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

The questionnaires were pilot-studied to assess their accuracy. Subsequently, a reliability study was carried out with Cronbach's Alpha that tests internal consistency by deciding whether some objects measure the same structure in similar scale as contained in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2: Reliability Analysis

	Reliability Cronbach's Alpha
Stakeholder participation	.781
Schedule management	.759
Leadership	.808
Financial capacity	.811
Performance of afforestation projects	.743

For every objective forming a scale, Cronbach Alpha was created. Financial capacity was most reliable with 0.811, leadership had 0.808, stakeholder participation had 0.781, schedule

management had 0.759 and performance of afforestation projects had a least alpha value of 0.743. It shows that all five of the variables surpassed the 0.7 limit (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2012). This therefore demonstrates that the research tool was correct and no adjustments were needed.

4.2 Background Information

The section required respondents to provide their information relating to gender, highest level of education and how long they had been involved in county funded projects. The information is provided in form of tables.

4.2.1 Respondents' Gender

The study sought to know the gender of respondents and results are in Table 4.3.

Table 4. 3: Respondents' Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	134	58.8
Female	94	41.2
Total	**228**	**100.0**

The findings show that (134) 58.8% of the respondents were male while (94) 41.2% were female. This shows that the researcher was not gender biased in collection of data since all the respondents were considered irrespective of their gender. This also implies that the people involved with afforestation projects in Meru County comprised of more males because of the nature of work.

4.2.2 Respondents' Highest Level of Education

The respondent's level of education was required to be established so as to gauge the reliability of the information that they will give. Therefore the researcher asked the respondents to indicate their highest level of education. Their responses were presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. 4: Respondents' Highest Level of Education

	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	34	14.9
Diploma	47	20.6
Degree	97	42.5
Masters	31	13.6
PHD	19	8.3
Total	**228**	**100.0**

From the findings, (97) 42.5% of the respondents had attained a Degree, (47) 20.6% had attained a Diploma, (34) 14.9% had attained a Certificate, (31) 13.6% had attained a Masters while (19) 8.3% had attained a PhD. This shows that most of the respondents had a bachelor's degree and also that this represents a pool of learnt respondents who could comprehend and give reliable information about the subject under study.

4.2.3 Duration Having Worked With County Funded Projects in Meru County

In a bid to establish the respondents level of experience they were also requested to indicate how long they have been working with county funded projects in Meru County. Their responses were as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5: Duration Working With the County Funded Projects

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	57	25.0
Between 2 and 4 years	52	22.8
Between 5 and 7 years	55	24.1
More than 7 years	64	28.1
Total	**228**	**100.0**

From the study findings, (64) 28.1% of the respondents had worked with the county funded projects in Meru County for more than 7 years, (57) 25.0% for less than 1 year, (55) 24.1% for between 5 and 7 years while (52) 22.8%for between 2 and 4 years. This implies that since most of the respondents had been working at the county funded projects in Meru County for a long period, they were aware of the influence of project implementation on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County over time and hence they were better placed in giving out reliable information on the same.

4.3 Factors Influencing Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County, Kenya

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of project implementation on performance of county funded projects based on a case of afforestation projects in Meru County. This section presents the various factors including stakeholder participation, schedule management, leadership and financial capacity. The results were presented in tables.

4.3.1 Stakeholder Participation

The study sought to determine the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The researcher required to know the extent to which stakeholder participation influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The outcomes were provided in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Influence of Stakeholder Participation on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Frequency	Percent
No extent	36	15.8
Little extent	33	14.5
Moderate extent	24	10.5
Great extent	64	28.1
Very great extent	71	31.1
Total	**228**	**100.0**

From the outcomes, (71) 31.1% of the respondents indicated that stakeholder participation influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a very great extent, (64) 28.1% indicated to a great extent, (36) 15.8% indicated to no extent, (33) 14.5% indicated to a little extent while (24) 10.5% indicated to a moderate extent. This implies that stakeholder participation influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a very great extent.

The respondents were further required to indicate the extent to which the aspects of stakeholder participation influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county. The results were reported in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Influence of Stakeholder Participation Aspects on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Planning workshop for the activities to be implemented	3.171	0.996
Deciding the timelines and targeted beneficiaries	3.566	0.963
Mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities	3.807	0.980
Execution of some of the activities of the county project	3.443	0.964
Facilitating or overseeing some activities of the county project	3.829	0.970
Tracking activities for the end county project	4.382	0.716

The results revealed that the respondents indicated that tracking activities for the end county project as shown by a mean of 4.382; facilitating or overseeing some activities of the county project as shown by a mean of 3.829; mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities as shown by a mean of 3.807; and deciding the timelines and targeted beneficiaries as shown by a mean of 3.566 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a great extent. Further, they indicated that execution of some of the activities of the county project as shown by a mean of 3.443 and planning workshop for the activities to be implemented as shown by a mean of 3.171 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent.

The respondents were also asked to indicate the ways that stakeholder participation influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents indicated that through stakeholder analysis, frequent stakeholder meetings and involvement in policy decisions, the projects will perform well.

4.3.2 Project Management

The research aimed to assess the influence of schedule management on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents were requested to include the extent to which schedule management influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The results are provided in Table 4.9.

Table 4.8: Influence of Schedule Management on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Frequency	Percent
No extent	34	14.9
Little extent	33	14.5
Moderate extent	38	16.7
Great extent	64	28.1
Very great extent	59	25.9
Total	**228**	**100.0**

The results show that (64) 28.1% of the respondents specified that schedule management influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a great extent, (59) 25.9% indicated to a very great extent, (38) 16.7% indicated to a moderate extent, (34) 14.9% indicated to no extent while (33) 14.5% indicated to a little extent. This implied that schedule management influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent.

The researcher also required the respondents to indicate the extent to which the aspects of schedule management influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. These findings were provided in Table 4.10.

Table 4.9: Influence of project Management Aspects on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Scheduling Tools & Techniques	3.912	0.523
Change Control Procedures	3.368	0.900
Use of the Project Baseline	3.079	0.903
Resource allocation	4.548	0.627

From the responses, it was revealed that the participants indicated that resource allocation as demonstrated by an average score of 4.548; and scheduling tools & techniques as demonstrated by an average score of 3.912 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The findings also reveal that change control procedures as demonstrated by an

average score of 3.368; and use of the project baseline as demonstrated by an average score of 3.079 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent.

The respondents were required to give the ways that schedule management influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The respondents indicated that through breaking down work structure, having an annual plan/strategic plan and proper resource allocation, there will be better performance of afforestation projects in Meru County.

4.3.3 Leadership

The study sought to examine the influence of leadership on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The researcher required the respondents to indicate the extent to which leadership influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The results were displayed on Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Influence of Leadership on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Frequency	Percent
No extent	36	15.8
Little extent	23	10.1
Moderate extent	38	16.7
Great extent	87	38.2
Very great extent	44	19.3
Total	**228**	**100.0**

The results reveal that (87) 38.2% of the respondents had indicated that leadership influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent, (44) 19.3% indicated to a very great extent, (38) 16.7% indicated to a moderate extent, (36) 15.8% indicated to no extent while (23) 10.1% indicated to a little extent. This implies that leadership influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent.

The researcher also requested the participants to provide data on the extent to which the aspects of leadership influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya. Table 4.11 shows the responses.

Table 4.11: Influence of Leadership Aspects on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Regular managements' involvement in meetings	3.983	0.902
Skills and expertise of managers	4.386	0.638
Rate of projects supervision by managers of allocation of resources	3.009	0.854
Transparency	4.009	0.867

As per the results, the respondents indicated that skills and expertise of managers as illustrated by a mean score of 4.386; transparency as illustrated by a mean score of 4.009; and regular managements' involvement in meetings as illustrated by a mean score of 3.983 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a great extent. Further, the respondents indicated that the rate of projects supervision by managers of allocation of resources as illustrated by a mean score of 3.009 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent.

The respondents gave their opinions on the ways that leadership influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents indicated that poor leadership skills reflected limited or no teamwork, inadequate communication, and an inability to resolve conflicts as well as other human related. Further, inefficiencies. lack of leadership, organizational culture, the lack of integration, and the lack of commitment by senior management influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County.

4.3.4 Financial Capacity

The research aimed at evaluating the influence of financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which financial capacity influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The results were provided in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Influence of Financial Capacity on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Frequency	Percent
No extent	29	12.7
Little extent	27	11.8
Moderate extent	20	8.8
Great extent	68	29.8
Very great extent	84	36.8
Total	**228**	**100.0**

From the findings, (84) 36.8% of the respondents specified that financial capacity influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a very great extent, (68) 29.8% indicated to a great extent, (29) 12.7% indicated to no extent, (27) 11.8% indicated to a little extent while (20) 8.8% indicated to a moderate extent. This implies that financial capacity influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a very great extent.

The respondents were also required to indicate the extent to which aspects of financial capacity influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The findings were as shown on Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Influence of Financial Capacity Aspects on the Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Amount allocated	3.741	0.969
Set parameters for expenditure	2.939	0.974
Availability of funds	4.118	0.908
Source of funds	2.075	0.926

Table 4.13 reveals that availability of funds as shown by a mean of 4.118; and amount allocated as shown by a mean of 3.741 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The findings also reveal that the respondents indicated that set parameters for expenditure as shown by a mean of 2.939 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru

County to a moderate extent while source of funds as shown by a mean of 2.075 influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a low extent.

The study further sought to know the ways that financial capacity influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The respondents indicated that funds allocated, committed contracts and the number of donors/partners influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County.

4.4 Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

The research aimed at determining the trend of aspects of performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya for the period of the last five years. The answers were given in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Trend of Aspects of Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Timely Completion	2.912	0.921
Sustainability	2.693	0.997
Value for money	4.132	0.899
Level Of Community Satisfaction	4.061	0.919
Cost within budget	2.754	0.915
Finish within the project scope	3.719	0.960

The results show that the respondents indicated that value for money as presented by an average of 4.132; level of community satisfaction as presented by an average of 4.061; and finish within the project scope as presented by an average of 3.719 had improved over the last five years. The respondents also indicated that timely completion as presented by an average of 2.912; cost within budget as presented by an average of 2.754; and sustainability as presented by an average of 2.693 had remained constant.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis helps determine the relationship existing between variables. It provides a models and methods to analyze variables and how they affect the relationship between the study variables. The regression results are as provided in Table 4.15, 4.16 and 4.17.

Table 4.15: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.843	0.711	0.706	1.298

The adjusted R^2 from the Table 4.17 was found to be 0.706 which was an indication that 70.6% of the variations in performance of afforestation projects in Meru County are explained by changes in schedule management, stakeholder participation, leadership and financial capacity. The remaining 29.4% accounted for the influence of project implementation on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County that are not covered in this study.

Table 4.16: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	937.417	4	234.354	137.292	5.77E-59
	Residual	380.657	223	1.707		
	Total	1318.074	227			

The outcome indicates that the regression model significantly predicted the impact of financial capacity, leadership, schedule management and stakeholder participation on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by a p-value (5.77E-59) <0.005 and F calculated at 5 percent level of significance (137.292)>F critical (value = 2.4121).

Table 4.17: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.127	0.512		2.201	0.029
Stakeholder participation	0.736	0.306	0.482	2.405	0.017
Schedule management	0.618	0.244	0.374	2.533	0.012
Leadership	0.724	0.349	0.495	2.074	0.039
Financial capacity	0.813	0.315	0.576	2.581	0.010

The established model for the study was:

$$\mathbf{Y = 1.127 + 0.736X_1 + 0.618X_2 + 0.724X_3 + 0.813X_4}$$

In line with the regression model, when all factors are constant performance of afforestation projects in Meru County will be 1.127. The results also show stakeholder participation positively

influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.736. This variable was significant since p=0.017 is less than 0.05.

The study further revealed that schedule management positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.618. This variable was significant since p=0.012 which is less than 0.05. Moreover, the study showed that leadership positively affects performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.724. This variable was significant since p=0.039 was less than 0.05. Finally, the study revealed that financial capacity positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.813. The variable had a significant value of p-value=0.010 which was lower than 0.05.

Overall, financial capacity had the greatest influence on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, followed by stakeholder participation, then leadership while schedule management had the least influence on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. Each of these variables was significant as they had a lower p-value than 0.05.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter summarizes the findings before discussing them as per the objectives of the study. Further, the chapter entails the conclusion, the recommendations and the suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study sought to determine the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study found that stakeholder participation influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a very great extent. Further, the study established that tracking activities for the end county project; facilitating or overseeing some activities of the county project; mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities; and deciding the timelines and targeted beneficiaries influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. Also, the execution of some of the activities of the county project and planning workshop for the activities to be implemented influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a moderate extent. The study also found that stakeholder participation positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.736 and was significant since p=0.017 was less than 0.05.

The research aimed to assess the influence of schedule management on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The research found that schedule management influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also found that resource allocation; and scheduling tools & techniques influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also found that change control procedures; and use of the project baseline influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. The study moreover found that schedule management positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.618. and was significant since p=0.012 was less than 0.05.

The study sought to examine the influence of leadership on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The research also found that leadership influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. Further, skills and expertise of managers; transparency; and regular managements' involvement in meetings influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. Also, the rate of projects supervision by managers of allocation of resources influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. The study established that leadership positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.724 and was significant since p=0.039 was less than 0.05.

The research aimed at evaluating the influence of financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study found that financial capacity influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a very great extent. The study also found that availability of funds; and amount allocated influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The research established that set parameters for expenditure influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent while source of funds influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a low extent. From the regression analysis, the study found that financial capacity positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County as shown by r=0.813 and that the variable had a significant value of p-value=0.010 which was lower than 0.05.

The research aimed at determining the trend of aspects of performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya for the period of the last five years. The study found that value for money; level of community satisfaction; and finish within the project scope had improved over the last five years. The study also found that timely completion; cost within budget; and sustainability had remained constant.

5.3 Discussion of the Findings

This section discusses the findings in relation to the literature review. The section discusses the influence of stakeholder participation, schedule management, leadership and financial capacity on the performance of afforestation projects in Meru County, Kenya.

5.3.1 Stakeholder Participation and Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

The study found that stakeholder participation influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a very great extent. Karlsen, Graee and Massaoud (2018) assent with the findings that stakeholder participation is increasingly becoming part of project practice in order to deliver excellent project outcomes. Further, the study established that tracking activities for the end county project; facilitating or overseeing some activities of the county project; mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities; and deciding the timelines and targeted beneficiaries influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. This conforms to A training manual by Transportation Department of Edmonton (2016) indicated that stakeholder participation was very important in the implementation phase of the project. This is because this phase involves a number of people working to fulfill the project. The involvement diverse stakeholders increase the conflict of interests between stakeholders in the implementation phase. To reduce this conflict, the author suggested that the project supervisor ensure that the community participated in monitoring the project schedule and implementation.

Also, the execution of some of the activities of the county project and planning workshop for the activities to be implemented influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county to a moderate extent. This is in line with Bourne (2016) who stated that having stakeholders set vision and prioritize results will make them have the best ideas during planning in the best way how the results would continue to remain relevant to them. They must therefore be involved in identifying the information that is needed during implementation. Inadequate stakeholder involvement hinders beneficiaries' participation and weakens their capacity to influence project outcomes hence poor performance.

5.3.2 ProjectManagement and Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

The research found that schedule management influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The results are in conformity to PMI (2013) who note that a schedule is created using a consensus-driven estimation method; the reason for this is that a schedule itself is an estimate: each date in the schedule is estimated, and if those dates do not have the buy-in of the people who are going to do the work, the schedule will be inaccurate. The study also found that resource allocation; and scheduling tools & techniques influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The findings relate to Gregg and Ana (2016) who verify that the implementation stage of project management entails conversion of the

plan into an actual project. While the implementation process appears more concrete and visible to the public and impacts directly on an organizations structure, failures in implementation point straight back to a faulty planning process.

The study also found that change control procedures; and use of the project baseline influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. The findings correlate to Newton (2005) who argues that managing the project schedule includes all the steps required to ensure the timely completion of the project. It involves determining the delivery dates and milestones whilst taking all of the known constraints into account.

5.3.3 Leadership and Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

The research also found that leadership influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The findings are in consonance with Njoroge (2018) who stated that the need for the right people for the right job is very crucial in project management and as such the need for right people with appropriate skills to correctly execute projects is very crucial. Further, skills and expertise of managers; transparency; and regular managements' involvement in meetings influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The findings concur with Hwang and Ng (2013) who argue that a competent project manager is vital to project success. Thus, in order to manage projects professionally and successfully, the project manager has to possess the required knowledge and skills.

Also, the rate of projects supervision by managers of allocation of resources influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. The findings are in line with Leach (2014) who assert that if a project has failed because of failure to manage risks during project implementation, this failure can be due to either the project manager not having the right skills or experience to deal with risk management, or s/he did have the skills but failed to apply the knowledge s/he has of risk management appropriately.

5.3.4 Financial Capacity and Performance of Afforestation Projects in Meru County

The study found that financial capacity influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a very great extent. The findings relate to the World Bank (2012) report that indicated that finances and capital resources forms the epicenter of success or failure of any project in the world; be it infrastructural, educational, and religious or charity project. The finances give rise to

projects quality through accessing qualified personnel, relevant technology, proper materials and winning the community support. The study also found that availability of funds; and amount allocated influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a great extent. The research established that set parameters for expenditure influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a moderate extent while source of funds influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru County to a low extent. This is accordance to Barmasai and Mbugua (2020) who stated that for projects to qualify for county projects funding, they must satisfy three major criteria. First, they must be development-oriented and not recurrent; for instance, funds may be disbursed to build school classrooms but not payment of teachers. Second, projects must be community-based so as to spread the benefits to many constituents. Lastly, the funds can only be disbursed to a defined, auditable phase, unit or element of a given project. It is further noted that once funds are allocated to a given project, they cannot be reallocated or diverted to another project in the same year (Achieng, 2016).

5.4 Conclusion

The study concluded that stakeholder participation positively and significantly influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The study also concluded that good and clear stakeholder's involvement programme is of great importance in ensuring smooth performance of afforestation projects in Meru County.

The study deduced that schedule management had a positive and significant influence on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The study concluded that good practice in scheduling afforestation projects demands well thought out, rigorous, realistic, objective oriented process that responds to the baseline of the groups most affected, and that are well integrated in the afforestation projects plan.

The research further concluded that leadership positively and significantly influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The study deduced that project leadership type and style influences project services and that existence of a team structure enhances the performance of afforestation projects.

The study also concluded that financial capacity positively influences performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. The research further deduced that many afforestation projects run out of

resources before completion thereby impacting achievement of intended objectives and not attaining the desired outcomes.

5.5 Recommendations

The study recommends that stakeholder's participation should be improved in project management. This will promote the implementation of project management since there will be little resistance from stakeholders.

The study recommends that the project managers should provide the necessary resources and facilities for project management without under budgeting. This will facilitate effective implementation of project management. The study finally recommends that participative leadership should be adopted to avoid poor project management

Fundraising leaders and resource mobilization teams should consider the financial resources needed to finish the project and match this with the project design and work plans. This will help eliminate the potential of discontinuing the afforestation projects for lack of resources. Project managers must build contingency monitoring so that interventions are preferably on or under budget and with a minimal number of problems along the way.

The study recommends that the sustainability must be a key consideration when designing afforestation projects. There are several forms of sustainability that should be taken in to account including financial, institutional and community so that with county aided projects coming to an end does not condemn the community back to the adverse effects that the intervention sought to address. Risk management should be incorporated in to the implementation with afforestation projects being implemented as per the proposal with simplified work breakdown and cost breakdown structures supporting the work plan.

The study recommends that the project management office or committee should continuously assess stakeholder interests; this will help to promote their buy-in and eliminate intergroup conflicts thereby improving project performance. The study also recommends that stakeholders should be included in all pre-implementation and inception meetings as well as their views being incorporated in planning and execution. This will increase the acceptability, and create a bridging social investment for the afforestation projects, well as enriching the project with more ideas.

As such proper mechanisms need to be laid out for stakeholder involvement such as having consultative forums, communication channels for information gatherings and feedback to ensure there is continued but controlled engagement throughout project implementation process. The study further recommends that the implementation team should ensure that all the activities in implementation phase are well within the planned schedule

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study sought to investigate the influence of project implementation on performance of afforestation projects in Meru County. Similar studies should be carried out in other counties and results compared with the aim of delivering better afforestation projects. Further, other project implementation factors should be considered other than the ones covered in this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Transmittal

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROJECT

I am a student of Masters of Arts in project planning and Management at University of Nairobi. I wish to conduct a research entitled **FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF AFFORESTATION PROJECTS IN KENYA. A CASE OF AFFORESTATION PROJECTS IN MERU COUNTY**. A questionnaire has been designed and will be used to gather relevant information to address the research objective of the study. The purpose of writing to you is to kindly request you to grant me permission to collect information on this important subject from your organization.

If you choose to participate in this research, please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may decline to participate at any time. In order to ensure that all the information will remain confidential, you do not have to include your name. The data collected will be for academic purposes only.

Your acceptance will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

PENINAH KANANU KOOME

Appendix II: Research Questionnaire

You are requested to fill out your personal information in the spaces below. Please tick only one response. The study soughts to establish *FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF AFFORESTATION PROJECTS IN KENYA. A CASE OF AFFORESTATION PROJECTS IN MERU COUNTY*

SECTION A: Background Information

1. What is your gender

   Male: [ ] Female: [ ]
2. State your highest level of education

   Certificate [ ] Diploma [ ] Degree [ ] Masters [ ] PHD [ ]
3. How long have you worked with county funded projects in Meru County?

   Less than 1 year [ ] Between 2 and 4 years [ ] Between 5 and 7 years [ ]

   More than 7 years [ ]

SECTION B: FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF AFFORESTATION PROJECTS IN MERU COUNTY, KENYA.

Stakeholder Participation

4. To what extent does stakeholder participation influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

   Very great extent [ ] Great extent [ ] Moderate extent [ ]

   Little extent [ ] No extent [ ]

5. Please indicate the extent that the following aspects of Stakeholder Participation influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya? Where:

   5- Very Great Extent; 4-Great Extent; 3-Moderate Extent; 2-Low Extent; 1- No Extent

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Planning workshop for the activities to be implemented					
Deciding the timelines and targeted beneficiaries					
Mobilizing project beneficiaries for some activities					
Execution of some of the activities of the county project					

Facilitating or overseeing some activities of the county project					
Tracking activities for the end county project					

6. In what ways does stakeholder participation influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

.....

.....

Schedule Management

7. To what extent does schedule management influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

   Very great extent [ ] Great extent [ ] Moderate extent [ ]

   Little extent [ ] No extent [ ]

8. Please indicate the extent that the following aspects of schedule management influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya? Where:

   5- Very Great Extent; 4-Great Extent; 3-Moderate Extent; 2-Low Extent; 1- No Extent

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Scheduling Tools & Techniques					
Change Control Procedures					
Use of the Project Baseline					
Resource allocation					

9. In what ways does planning influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

.....

.....

Leadership

10. To what extent does leadership influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

Very great extent [ ] Great extent [ ] Moderate extent [ ]

Little extent [ ] No extent [ ]

11. Please indicate the extent that the following aspects of leadership influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya? Where:
    5- Very Great Extent; 4-Great Extent; 3-Moderate Extent; 2-Low Extent; 1- No Extent

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Regular managements' involvement in meetings					
Skills and expertise of managers					
Rate of projects supervision by managers of allocation of resources					
Transparency					

12. In what ways does leadership influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

.....

.....

Financial Capacity

13. To what extent does financial capacity influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?
    Very great extent [ ] Great extent [ ] Moderate extent [ ]

    Little extent [ ] No extent [ ]

14. Please indicate the extent that the following aspects of financial capacity influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya? Where:
    5- Very Great Extent; 4-Great Extent; 3-Moderate Extent; 2-Low Extent; 1- No Extent

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Amount allocated					
Set parameters for expenditure					

Availability of funds					
Source of funds					

15. In what ways does financial capacity influence performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya?

.....

.....

SECTION C: Performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya

16. What has been the trend of aspects of performance of afforestation projects in Meru county, Kenya for the period of the last five years? Where, 5 = greatly improved, 4= improved, 3= constant, 2= decreased, 1 = greatly decreased

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Timely Completion					
Sustainability					
Value for money					
Level Of Community Satisfaction					
Cost within budget					
Finish within the project scope					

Thank you for Participation