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**CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper investigated the critical success factors in the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County, Kenya. Implementation of most development projects in the county is taking too long and consuming more resources in addition diminishing impact of these projects upon completion. This study specifically focused on the effect of resources allocation, management support, stakeholder involvement, monitoring and evaluation and staff competence on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County. The study, which adopted a descriptive research design, used stratified random sampling technique to obtain a sample of 78 development projects. Data was collected by a semi- structured questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. The study revealed that at 5% significance level, there was a positive and significant relationship between; resource allocation, staff competence, managerial support, stakeholder participation and monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of development projects in Laikipia county. The study recommended that the County Government of Laikipia should; provide for sufficient resources at the right time, absorb adequate proficient skilled staff, provide adequate managerial support always, ensure full stakeholder participation, and enforce an effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation function.*

**Keywords:** *Project implementation, management support, monitoring and evaluation, resource allocation, staff competence, stakeholder involvement*

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## INTRODUCTION

Community-based projects incorporate societal functions such as; cultural values and citizen's social economic goals. These projects, whose outcomes benefit a desired group of people, are mainly in the form of infrastructure such as; roads, railway or development such as business ventures (Kaliba, Muya & Mumba, 2009). Definitely, these projects have complete life cycles aimed at achieving desired goals and objectives. However, there are concerns of low levels of implementation of projects due capacity weakness in government ministries and in the county development authorities. Particularly, implementation of development projects by devolved governments in Kenya still falls short of the intended goal. Notably, the governments of Kenya, both devolved and national, implement projects to correct market failure which arises when socially desirable services are not adequately offered by the private sector and also the more prominent reason being to pursue social goals (Clifford, 2013). Furthermore, governments are responsible for reducing poverty, ensuring fairness in labour markets and provision of merit goods and services. These goals can only be achieved through distribution of resources from a group of people for the benefit of another at a minimum cost to society, hence the importance of efficiency in project implementation. Project implementation success is much more necessary as resources are scarce as compared to the social welfare needs of the citizens. According to Clifford, 2013, when project implementation fails to meet its goal, it results to wastage of public resources and social goods and services are not offered at minimum cost welfare which further dis-advantages the deserving citizen. Poor project implementation or worse, discontinuation of projects at the counties continues to have a negative impact on the efforts of poverty eradication in the counties in Kenya. Projects are taking too long to implement and some are falling apart during this stage, deriving citizens their human right to quality services (World Bank, 2015).

Consequently, projects are less responsive to the needs of the citizens living below the poverty level. Prevalent factors of corruption, planning and poor communication during implementation have been analyzed and recommendations given to devolved governments. However, implementation of projects at counties in Kenya is still experiencing hitches that threaten to derail the development purpose. It is time to evaluate other factors and bring to light their relationship to the success of project implementation at the counties. This study found its ground of argument based on the need to seek further knowledge on project implementation by the counties in Kenya so as to seek more comprehensive and effective solutions to this problem.

### Statement of the Problem

Although devolution intends to accelerate service delivery and growth at the counties through close public participation in the project planning, implementation and control decisions, implementation projects initiated by the county management have grown into dissatisfaction with public service delivery. The cause of this dissatisfaction is due to the delay in implementation hence diminishing value delivery to the citizens. For instance, projects in Laikipia County especially in health and education sectors had not met the intended standards and value. They were characterized by misuse of development funds through engaging in expensive projects that did not fully improve the lives of the people of Laikipia and occasioned by under-funding of development projects by the county featuring and manifesting into failure of most prominent projects and overstretching of the implementation period (Nderitu, 2017). At worst, these projects had stalled denying the citizens of much needed services and value. A good example of stalled projects was the Ksh. 97 million electric fence that was to be erected around Rumuruti and Marmanet Forests to bring to an end the human-wildlife conflict. The project stalled barely

two months after launching with the county administration citing political interference and management wrangles.

Numerous empirical studies associated project implementation with various factors such as allocation of resources, management support, staff competence, stakeholder involvement and monitoring and evaluation (Kagendo, 2013; Bartlett, Kanowski, Kerkhoff & Byron, 2017, Wamalwa & James (2018) and Wachira & James 2018.). However, there was limited empirical research focusing on development projects that were fully funded and implemented by the County Governments. More so, there was failure of existing mechanisms to ensure effective implementation of projects and public accountability to resolve development challenges. This study filled these gaps by establishing the critical success factors in the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

Accordingly, this study investigated the critical success factors in the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County guided by the following specific research objectives;

- To examine the influence of resources allocation on the implementation of development projects in the county government of Laikipia.
- To establish the effect of staff competence in the implementation of development projects by the county government of Laikipia
- To assess the influence of management support on the implementation of development projects in the county government of Laikipia
- To examine the influence of stakeholder involvement on the implementation of development projects in the county government of Laikipia
- To establish the influence of monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of development projects in the county government of Laikipia

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on three theories: the change management iceberg theory, the critical success factors model and the stakeholder's theory.

The change management iceberg theory relates the process of implementing change to the building of an iceberg where the iceberg has a tip above water which is easily visible but at the same time it has a huge piece below the water, hidden from the eye. Kruger (1996), suggests that whatever lies below the surface of the water involves more influential barriers which equally affect change implementation and management. The theory acknowledges need for better management for achievement of such success, arguing that such attributes lead to management focused on realizing positive change. Thus, according to the theory, Laikipia County would be able to achieve successful implementation of development projects through dealing with issues affect change. This theory is related to the study as it focuses on management and competence on implementation of project.

The Critical Success Factors (CSFs) model explains the impact of establishing and allocating organization resources in an effective manner to aid production output or quality of service (Helfat, 2013). These include inputs to production, and their allocation influence the quality of the result. The opportunities of an organization are dependent not only on the resources possessed but also on how they are deployed for maximum use and avoidance of wastage (Locket & Wild, 2014). According to Johnson et al. (2011), resources allocation needs to be aligned to the competence aspect which are the skills that are fundamental to apply the resources effectively to implement the goal and acquire the intended quality of output and require to be sustained and enhanced (Singh & Oberoi. 2013). Esteves (2004), links the concept to project implementation when he

describes CSFs as characteristics in an organization which, if well identified and applied, improve project implementation chances.

The stakeholders' theory suggests that when handling a project, the implementing team should consider the stakeholders' importance, knowledge, preferences and decisions (Freeman, 2010). The implementers need to establish the particular interests of the stakeholders in the project and importantly define their stakeholders as well as their roles in the project, which is achieved effectively through stakeholder analysis.(Robinson, 2010). At the implementation level of county projects, the four main stakeholders are; the county government, the county citizens, the project sponsor or financier and the project implementation team. In consideration of the stakeholder theory and its fundamentals, the project implementers should observe how the project outcome might be affected or influenced by the lack of stakeholder involvement (Robinson, 2010). The stakeholder's theory is thus linked to the study due to its support of the stakeholder involvement in project implementation.

### **Empirical Review**

While Perelstein (2011) proposes for use of a Decision Support Model (DSM) for resources allocation in projects, Job (2014) reveals that policy based strategies, objective based strategies and priority based strategies directly influence resource allocation by the devolved units and Sullivan (2017) show that the choice of allocation influenced the project duration and also the quality of the output. Importantly, Wachira & James (2018) established that resource allocation through effective budgeting ensured that an organization was properly managed and gave greater output while Densford, James and Ngugi (2018) conclude that there is significant effect of project resource mobilization on performance of road infrastructure projects undertaken by local firms.

The study by Odenyo and James (2018) found that acquiring adequate financial resources, skilled human resource, and physical resources had a positive significant influence on the sustainability of women group projects in the county. Similarly, Turner (2008) posits that the appropriate staff competencies is key in the project implementation process as Chen and Cian (2010) argue that one potential cause of problems in project implementation is that those responsible for executing the task lack essential skills (Dolfi & Andrews, 2013). As the study by Mutula (2014) established that staff technical and management expertise has a varying effect on organization performance and concluded that human resource factors affect performance, Waithera and Wanyoike (2015) pointed out that training is an essential instrument to implement innovations among other organizational transitions.

The study Zwikael (2008) postulates that top management support is an important asset in project management rendering it among the key critical success factors as the study conducted by Moses (2013) to establish the determinants of performance of development projects. According to a study done by Mahianyu (2016) conducted in Kiambu County concludes that top management in terms of communication, motivation, assignment of duties and responsibilities, giving directions, has impact on project implementation.

When discussing stakeholder participation, Chen and Cian, (2010) indicated the use of reward system in project implementations as being a key success factor of project implementation while Diba (2011) conducted a study which revealed there was a clear gap in the understanding of who the stakeholders of the project were in regard to the role they played in project implementation. The study by Kirsi (2013) suggests that project managers are required to have awareness on the manner in which they respond towards claims by the stakeholders and the manner in which their response might eventually impact on

the real operations stage of the project (Mok et. al., 2015). The study by Wamalwa and James (2018) concludes that local community participation in any project is very critical for guaranteeing successful implementation. The study by Salat and James (2019) found that the community should be involved in determining goals to enhance sustainability of community-based health projects.

Khatiala (2013) study concluded by suggesting further studies on impact of M & E in other sectors beside the social set up while Mushori (2015), through a study found out that M & E had a significant influence on the success of the projects. Maendo et al (2018) conducted a study which revealed a significant effect of project monitoring and evaluation on the performance of road infrastructure projects. The study findings indicate that monitoring and evaluation activities are crucial in the performance of road infrastructure projects. Accordingly, Kenyan governments (national and county) should consider developing a monitoring and evaluation policy and regulatory framework. This will ensure that local projects are monitored and evaluated on regular basis. The study focused on the effect of resource mobilization on project performance but little did it reveal on the relationship between resource mobilization implementation of development projects in Laikipia County, a gap locked by this study.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 97 development projects in Laikipia County where a sample size of 78 development projects was determined using Yamane formula and obtained using stratified random sampling. The study collected data from primary sources using questionnaire.

The collected data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods, Descriptive statistics in form of mean (M), standard deviation (SD), frequencies, percentages was used

while for inferential statistics correlation and regression analysis were conducted. The following multiple regression model was used:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (i)$$

Where Y= Project Implementation

X<sub>1</sub> – Resource Allocation

X<sub>2</sub>– Staff Competence

X<sub>3</sub>– Managerial Support

X<sub>4</sub>–Stakeholder Involvement

X<sub>5</sub>–Monitoring & Evaluation

B<sub>0</sub> - intercept coefficient

ε<sub>i</sub>- error term

β<sub>1</sub> – β<sub>5</sub> =regression coefficients

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Descriptive Statistics

The study assessed its objectives in an effort to analyse the critical success factors and their effect on the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County. The study used the independent variables (IVs) and the dependent variable (DV) to assess its objective. For each variable, the study obtained a mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of each indicator of that variable and using mean it further obtained a M for that variable as well as a SD for that variable.

### Resource Allocation and Project Implementation

The study found that there was timeliness in providing project resources; with 61% of the respondents indicating that project resources were provided in time among the development projects in Laikipia County and thus there was minimization of delays in availing the project resources. On assessing the influence of resources allocation on the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County, the results on the extent to which resource allocation influenced implementation of development projects in Laikipia County showed a majority of 89% of the respondents indicated that it was to a great extent confirming the findings by Densford, James and Ngugi (2018), Odenyo and

James (2018), Wachira & James (2018), Sullivan (2017) and Job (2014) in that there is significant effect of project resource mobilization on performance of road infrastructure projects

undertaken by local firms. The results on resource allocation and project implementation were captured in Table 1.

**Table 1: Resource Allocation and Project Implementation**

<b>Resource Allocation and Project Implementation</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Sources of funds influence the implementation of the projects	3.56	0.83
Resources (funds) required for project implementation are deployed to projects without delays	3.02	0.85
Skilled personnel are available for implementation of the projects	2.89	0.70
Push for involvement of locals in project implementation affects decisions on the staff to be used in the implementation of the projects	3.51	0.89
The locals offer resistance in the event that they are not offered employment opportunities in such projects	3.45	0.79
There is evidence of late payments of contractors	4.57	0.82
<b>Overall Resource Allocation and Project Implementation</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.81</b>

*Source: Field data (2019)*

The results showed resource allocation highly affected project implementation in Laikipia County (M = 3.50; SD = 0.81) as found by Odenyo and James (2018) that study concluded that resource mobilization has a significant influence on sustainability of projects. Although the sources of funds highly influence the implementation of the projects (M = 3.56; SD = 0.83) there was a moderate extent that resources/funds required for project implementation were deployed to projects without delays (M = 3.02; SD = 0.85) skilled personnel were not always available for implementation of the projects (M = 2.89; SD = 0.70), and that the locals offer resistance in the event that they are not offered employment opportunities in such projects (M = 3.45; SD = 0.79). This indicates that the development projects were sufficiently allocated resources in time ranging from skilled personnel, stakeholders and funds. The push for involvement of locals in project implementation affected decisions on the staff to be

used in the implementation of the projects (M = 3.51; SD = 0.89) and there was evidence of late payments of contractors (M = 4.57; SD = 0.82). The present study found that resources and especially funds required for project implementation were sometimes deployed to projects without delays and other times were delayed.

**Staff Competence on Project Implementation**

A majority of 65% of the respondents indicated that staff competence influenced implementation of development projects in Laikipia County to a very great extent, implying that staff competence and capacity influenced project implementation in the county. This agreed to paper by Mutula (2014) which revealed that staff technical and management expertise has a significant effect on the organization's projects performance. Thus, staff competence significantly affects implementation of development projects in Laikipia County as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Staff Competence and Project Implementation**

<b>Staff Competence on Project Implementation</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
The staff involved in the implementation of projects have background training on their tasks	3.26	0.77
We further train staff involved in the implementation of project	2.67	0.81
Majority of the staff involved in project implementation have relevant knowledge and skills.	3.14	0.82
<b>Overall Staff Competence on Project Implementation</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>0.80</b>

Source: Field data, 2019

According to the results in table 2, the actual status of Laikipia County was that staff competence moderately affected implementation of development project (M = 3.02; SD = 0.80) owing to the staff involved in the implementation of projects being provided with moderate background training on their tasks (M = 3.26; SD = 0.77) and at the same time they sometimes trained staff not always involved in the implementation of project (M = 2.67; SD = 0.81) and majority of the staff moderately involved in project implementation had relevant knowledge and skills. (M = 3.14; SD = 0.82). Thus, the project faced challenges in getting adequate experienced staff with relevant training. Staff competence determines the human resource capacity of the project. Poor or incompetence of staff had a direct effect on poor project implementation. Lack of solid human resource management practices at the county government compromised the kind of staffs who join the county government projects hence affecting project implementation. Meanwhile the

study by Wamalwa and James (2018) which found that staff training is critical success factors in project implementation while Waitthera and Wanyoike (2015) pointed out that training is an essential instrument to project implementation.

### **Management Support and Project Implementation**

Zwikael (2008) identified top management support among the key Critical Success Factors for project management while in this study while Mahianyu (2016) showed that top management largely influenced project implementation. In this study it was found that a majority of 51% of the respondents indicated that the respondents agreed to a great extent that management support influences implementation of development projects by the County Government of Laikipia. On examine the influence of management support on the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County the study obtained findings tabulated in Table 3.

**Table 3: Management Support and Project Performance**

<b>Management Support and Project Implementation</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
The management offer direction on implementation of projects hence speeding up the implementation process	3.35	0.85
The management has been devoting more time on the projects hence keeps the implementation process under control.	3.43	0.60
The management has been motivating and directing the project team enabling them to work towards the attainment of project goals	3.01	0.62
There is continued communication between the project management and all the stakeholders during implementation of the project	3.33	0.82
<b>Overall effect of Management Support on Project Implementation</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>0.72</b>

Source: Field data (2019)



These results showed that at the time of the study, management support had a moderate effect on project implementation (M = 3.28; SD = 0.72). The moderate effect was attributed to the management partially being involved offering direction on implementation of projects hence speeding up the implementation process (M = 3.35; SD = 0.85). Although the management devoted more time on the projects hence kept the implementation process under control (M = 3.43; SD = 0.60), it was partly providing motivation and direction to the project team for enabling them to work towards the attainment of project goals (M = 3.01; SD = 0.62). Furthermore, there was no continued communication between the project management and all the stakeholders during implementation of the project (M = 3.33; SD = 0.82). The findings that management support had moderate effect on project implementation confirmed the Nicholas (2004) who indicated that that a project fails due to unsupportive top management. Thus, there were high chance of project implementation failure considering that the effect of management support on project implementation was not effectively felt.

### Stakeholder Relationship and Project Implementation

As Wachira and James (2018) showing that stakeholder participation positively influences the implementation of community-based projects in Kiambu County. Salat and James (2019) study findings showed that the community should be involved in determining goals to enhance sustainability of community-based health projects. In this study it was found that majority, 79% of the respondents indicated that to a great extent stakeholder involvement influences project implementation. However, stakeholder involvement was a challenge especially political interference which derailed project implementation. Most of the respondents, who formed 45.71% of the total response, indicated that the stakeholders were highly involved in in implementation of projects in the county to a great extent. The results on the influence of stakeholder involvement on the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County at the time of the study were presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Stakeholder Involvement and Project Implementation**

<b>Stakeholder Relationship on Project Implementation</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
There is exchange of information among stakeholders	3.12	0.81
Views and feedback from stakeholders are put into consideration during implementation of the projects	3.29	0.82
stakeholder are involved in every stage of project implementation	2.87	1.50
Involvement of the stakeholders has been vital in promoting implementation of the projects	3.07	1.43
Project stakeholders' understanding of the projects importance, eases project implementation and reduces implementation time	2.97	0.72
<b>Overall effect of Stakeholder Relationship on Project Implementation</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>1.06</b>

Source: Field data (2019)

Based on the results in Table 4, stakeholder relationship had a moderate effect on project implementation was neutral (M = 3.06; SD = 1.06) due to partial exchange of information among stakeholders (M = 3.12; SD = 0.81). partially putting into consideration the views and feedback from

stakeholders were during implementation of the projects (M = 3.29; SD = 0.82), partial involvement of stakeholders in every stage of project implementation (M = 2.87; SD = 1.50), they were also neutral on the assertion that involvement of the stakeholders had been vital in promoting

implementation of the projects ( $M = 3.07$ ;  $SD = 1.43$ ), project stakeholders not always understanding the projects' importance, ease of project implementation and on how to reduce implementation time ( $M = 2.97$ ;  $SD = 0.72$ ). These findings are extension of the findings in the study by Kirsi (2013) that it is vital for the top management to identify about the influence of the stakeholders since the greatest challenges is on diversity of stakeholders (Mok *et. al.*, 2015). Wamalwa and James (2018) found that local community involvement are critical success factors in project implementation.

### Monitoring & Evaluation and Project Implementation

The study found that 81% of the respondents indicated that the county government conducted project monitoring and evaluation on its project while another 81% of the respondents indicated that to a great extent monitoring and evaluation influenced implementation of development projects by the county government. Thus, confirming the findings in the study by Khatiala (2013) which showed that monitoring and evaluation tools enhance project completion and success. The study then assessed the influence of monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County to obtain results presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Monitoring and Evaluation and Project Implementation**

<b>Monitoring and Evaluation on Project Implementation</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Regular Monitoring of the project is carried out frequently	2.77	0.82
Results and feedback from M&E are released on timely manner	2.56	0.90
Corrective action on deviations is clearly shown in the M&E feedback	3.25	0.83
The monitoring and evaluation system in place offer conclusive information for utilized towards better project implementation	3.44	0.86
We have staff skilled in monitoring and evaluation on ground to purposes of monitoring the progress of the project	3.20	0.80
There exists structured M&E Policies for projects implementation in the county.	2.97	0.76
<b>Overall Monitoring &amp; Evaluation on Project Implementation</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>0.83</b>

Source: Field data, 2019

At the time of the study, effect of monitoring & evaluation on project implementation was moderate ( $M = 3.03$ ;  $SD = 0.83$ ) due to moderate frequency of the regular monitoring of the project ( $M = 2.77$ ;  $SD = 0.82$ ) and failing to release results and feedback from M&E on a timely manner ( $M = 2.56$ ;  $SD = 0.90$ ). More so, there were partial clarity in the M&E feedback as regards corrective action on deviations ( $M = 3.25$ ;  $SD = 0.83$ ). Although the monitoring and evaluation system in place offered conclusive information for utilized towards better project implementation ( $M = 3.44$ ;  $SD = 0.86$ ), they had moderate skilled staff in monitoring and evaluation on ground for purpose of

monitoring the progress of the project ( $M = 3.20$ ;  $SD = 0.80$ ) as there existed partial structured M&E policies for projects implementation in the county ( $M = 2.97$ ;  $SD = 0.76$ ). The study by Wachira and James (2018) established that project monitoring and evaluation is necessary and sufficient for the effective implementation of community-based projects.

### Inferential Statistics

The study used regression analysis to establish whether the critical success factors were predictors of implementation of development projects in Laikipia County, Kenya. This analysis helped to establish a model that would explain the implementation of

development projects in Laikipia County (DV) in terms of; resource allocation, staff competence, managerial support, stakeholder participation, and monitoring and evaluation (IVs).

### Correlation Analysis

The study carried out correlation analysis to using Pearson's Product Moment to establish the relationship between the independent variables and the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County to yield the results in Table 6.

**Table 6: Pearson correlation Results**

		Correlations					
		Y	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	X <sub>4</sub>	X <sub>5</sub>
Y	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (1-tailed)						
	N	70					
X <sub>1</sub>	Pearson Correlation	.329**	1				
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.003					
	N	70	70				
X <sub>2</sub>	Pearson Correlation	.214*	-.168	1			
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.037	.083				
	N	70	70	70			
X <sub>3</sub>	Pearson Correlation	.355**	.106	.123	1		
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.001	.191	.155			
	N	70	70	70	70		
X <sub>4</sub>	Pearson Correlation	.270*	.063	-.105	.093	1	
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.012	.303	.193	.223		
	N	70	70	70	70	70	
X <sub>5</sub>	Pearson Correlation	.451**	.303**	-.024	.242*	.150	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.005	.420	.022	.108	
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Key; Y= implementation of development projects in Laikipia County; X<sub>1</sub> – Resource Allocation; X<sub>2</sub>– Staff Competence; X<sub>3</sub>– Managerial Support; X<sub>4</sub>– Stakeholder Involvement; X<sub>5</sub>–Monitoring & Evaluation

The correlation results in Table 6 showed that the Pearson's correlation coefficient for resource allocation was 0.329 and its probability value (p-value) was 0.003 while the staff competence had a Pearson's correlation coefficient was 0.214 and a p-value of 0.037. Managerial support had Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.355 and a p-value of 0.001 while stakeholder involvement had a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.270 and p-value of 0.012,

the Pearson's correlation coefficient of monitoring & evaluation was .451 and its p-value was 0.000. The results showed that resource allocation; staff competence; managerial support; stakeholder involvement; monitoring & evaluation have a positive relationship with implementation of development projects in Laikipia County. This meant that an increase in resource allocation; staff competence; managerial support; stakeholder involvement; monitoring & evaluation leads to enhanced implementation of development projects in Laikipia County and vice versa. These findings concurred with the findings in the studies by Odenyo and James (2018), Salat and James (2019) and Wamalwa and

James (2018) which established that from different geographical areas, these factors has positive relationship to project implementation. The correlation results in the study by Odenyo and James (2018) showed acquisition of financial resources, acquisition of physical resources (resource mobilization), human resource mapping, and community participation as having positive correlation on sustainability of projects. The correlation results in the study by Salat and James (2019) showed a positive correlation between resource mobilization and utilization. Community participation, capacity building (staff competence), and leadership styles (management support) and with sustainability of CBHP. The results of correlation analysis in the study by Wamalwa and James (2018) which indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between local community involvement,

financing, and staff training and implementation of projects. Meanwhile the study by Wachira and James (2018) showed the relationship between community participation, Management of funds, and monitoring and evaluation and Institutional capacity and implementation of community-based projects in Kiambu County as being positive. To a large extent, the findings in this study support those in the empirical studies by these authors.

### Regression Analysis

Multiple regression was carried out to obtain an empirical model that for predicting implementation of development projects in Laikipia County, Kenya in terms of; resource allocation, staff competence, managerial support, stakeholder participation, and monitoring and evaluation. The results of the model summary are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Model summary**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.636 <sup>a</sup>	.4039	.3574	.61185

a. Predictors: (Constant), Monitoring & Evaluation, Staff Competence, Stakeholder Relationship, Management Support, Resource Allocation

b. Dependent Variable: Implementation of development projects in Laikipia County

Source: Field data, 2019)

The regression analysis results showed that the value of adjusted R<sup>2</sup> obtained was 0.3574. Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> was the coefficient of determination, which implied that 35.74% of variation in implementation of development projects in Laikipia County was explained by resource allocation, staff competence,

managerial support, stakeholder participation, and monitoring and evaluation.

The goodness of fit of the model was tested using Analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 5% level of significance and the results obtained were as shown in Table 8.

**Table 8: ANOVA (Goodness of fit)**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
Regression		16.236	5	3.247	8.674	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual		23.959	64	.374		
Total		40.194	69			

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of development projects in the County government of Laikipia

b. Predictors: (Constant), Monitoring & Evaluation, Staff Competence, Stakeholder Relationship, Management Support, Resource Allocation

Source: Field data, 2019

The results on ANOVA in Table 8 showed that the model was statistically significant at p-value of 0.000 and Students-F statistics of 8.674; hence goodness of fit of the model. This implied that the explanatory variables; resource allocation, staff competence, managerial support, stakeholder participation, or/and

monitoring and evaluation are useful estimators of implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

The results on multiple regression coefficients were captured in Table 9.

**Table 9: Regression Coefficient**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-0.874	0.636		-1.375	0.174
Resource Allocation	0.301	0.125	0.247	2.398	0.019
Staff Competence	0.195	0.074	0.261	2.621	0.011
Management Support	0.214	0.106	0.204	2.024	0.047
Stakeholder Relationship	0.217	0.098	0.219	2.221	0.030
Monitoring & Evaluation	0.258	0.090	0.300	2.869	0.006

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of development projects in the County government of Laikipia

Source: Field data (2019)

Based on these results; there was a statistically significant positive relationship between; resource allocation (p-value = 0.019), staff competence (p-value = 0.011), managerial support (p-value = 0.047), stakeholder participation (p-value = 0.030) and monitoring and evaluation (p-value = 0.006) and implementation of development projects in Laikipia County at 5% significance level.

The study model is  $Y = 0.301 + 0.195X_1 + 0.214X_2 + 0.217X_3 + 0.217X_4 + 0.258X_5 + \dots$  (ii)

Where

Y = implementation of development projects in Laikipia County

X<sub>1</sub> = Resource Allocation

X<sub>2</sub> = Staff Competence

X<sub>3</sub> = Management Support

X<sub>4</sub> = Stakeholder Relationship

X<sub>5</sub> = Monitoring & Evaluation

Resource allocation had significant positive influence on implementation of development projects in

Laikipia County having ( $\beta = 0.301$ ; p-value = 0.019). Findings are in agreement to those in the study by Odenyo and James (2018) which revealed a significant positive influence of resource mobilization on sustainability of women group projects. Densford *et al.* (2018) revealed a significant effect of resource mobilization on local firms' road infrastructure projects performance. These resources were found to include; financial, physical and technical resources.

Staff competence had a significant positive effect on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County ( $\beta = 0.194$ ; p-value = 0.011), confirms findings in the study by Wamalwa and James (2018) which established a positive and significant relationship between staff training and implementation of NGO projects.

Managerial support had a significant positive influence on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County ( $\beta = 0.214$ ; p-value = 0.047) while the regression results in the study by

Maendo et al (2018) found that group dynamics management has positive significant effect on performance of road infrastructure projects. In their study, Wachira and James (2018) established that the manager should establish proper policies and procedures for meeting the project objectives.

The regression results show that stakeholder participation had a significant positive influence on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County ( $\beta = 0.217$ ; p-value = 0.030). The regression results agree to those in the study by Salat and James (2019) found a significant positive relationship between community participation of community-based health projects in Mandera County.

Monitoring and evaluation had a significant positive impact on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County ( $\beta = 0.258$ ; p-value = 0.006), confirming the study by Wachira and James (2018) which revealed a positive influence of monitoring and evaluation of the projects on the implementation.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study investigated the critical success factors in the implementation of development projects in Laikipia County. This was informed by the fact that there was lack of insight in implementation of projects in Laikipia County where projects were not meeting their intended standards and value; there was engagement in expensive projects that did not fully improve the lives of the people of Laikipia, development projects failed and there was under-funding of development projects in the county.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that resource allocation has a statistically moderate positive significant effect on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

Another conclusion was that staff competence has a statistically moderate positive significant effect on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County. Thus, sufficient staff competence was a key

success factors to implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

Managerial support has statistically moderate positive significant effect on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

The study concluded that stakeholder participation has statistically moderate positive significant effect on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County. The role of stakeholder participation was vital in driving success of implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

It was also concluded that monitoring and evaluation has a statistically strong positive significant effect on implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

The study recommended that the County Government of Laikipia should, through an effective budgetary system, provide for sufficient resources in terms of funding, human resources, materials and equipment, and contingencies to support the development projects.

The project team should absorb adequate proficient skilled staff with competence in project implementation. The staff should be provided with sufficient background training on their tasks for the possession relevant knowledge and skills.

To ensure adequate managerial support, the top management should select project managers from amongst themselves to be both participants and leaders of the projects. They will be the backbone of communication during the project implementation for effective and continuous communication and especially with all stakeholders.

The County Government of Laikipia should provide for uncompromised stakeholder participation, substantially involving community members in project implementation as part of, the project team.

The County Government of Laikipia should enforce an effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation function to oversee the implementation of development projects; a function steered by professionals and specialists with adequate skills in all the areas of that project.

#### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

The study found that 35.74% of variation in implementation of development projects in Laikipia County was explained by resource allocation, staff competence, managerial support, stakeholder participation, and monitoring and evaluation. This meant that there are other factors accounting for the remaining 64.26%. The study therefore suggested that other studies be conducted to find out the

factors accounting for 64.26% change in implementation of development projects in Laikipia County.

The study relied on primary data collected using a questionnaire, which meant that data collected was merely people opinions. So other study should be conducted on critical success factors in implementation of development projects in Laikipia County using secondary data.

The main objective of the study was to establish the effect of critical success factors on the implementation of development projects in the county government of Laikipia, future scholars should carry out similar study in counties, other sectors or entities.

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