



DRIVERS OF SUSTAINABILITY OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS IN TAITA TAVETA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to examine the drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The study would benefit the youths, the government agencies implementing youth funding and other stakeholders who also provide funds to the youth. The study targeted Taita Taveta County because of the low sustainability of the youth funded projects for example in terms of the rate of loan repayments as funded by the Youth Enterprise Fund in the year 2014/2015 financial year in comparison with the other counties in the country. There were 162 youth empowerment projects which had been established in the county for the last 10 years and majority of them have collapsed. The study used a structured self-administered questionnaire to collect data from the project managers. On the other hand; secondary data was obtained from published documents such as journals, periodicals, magazines and reports to supplement the primary data. A pilot study was conducted to pretest the validity and reliability of instruments for data collection. The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods by the use of SPSS. The study further adopted regression analysis to determine the relationship among the variables at 5% level of significance. The regression model of sustainability of youth empowerment projects coefficient of determination R Square was 0.640 and R was 0.800. The coefficient of determination R Square indicated that 64%.00% of the variation sustainability of youth empowerment projects could be explained by the set of independent variables. The remaining 36.00% of variation in sustainability of youth empowerment projects could be explained by other variables not included in this model. This indicated that project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation are important factors that need to be enhanced to boost sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area. The current study should therefore be expanded further as there is need to undertake similar research in other counties in Kenya in order to establish whether the explored factors can be generalized.

Key Terms: Project Planning, Project Management, Project Funding, Monitoring and Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Project sustainability is one of the most critical challenges for all grassroots, national and international development agencies. Globally, billions of shillings have been spent in communities to enhance the living situation of the youths (Adhiambo, 2012). The youth are very important to national development since various empowerment projects directed at them by the Government at various times give credence. It followed that the preparation of any nation for productive life depends on the policies and projects designed for youths. In Kenya, unemployment stands at around 23%, but it is highest among youth. Nearly 73% of the unemployed are between the ages of 15 and 30 nationally also, the labor force grows by 500,000 youth annually; about 25% are absorbed into jobs while the rest are unemployed or survive on casual labor. This created a very high dependency ratio and places a serious economic burden on families (KNHS, 2010).

What to sustain is a crucial decision to be made right at the planning stage. This will then help incorporating those elements that are relevant for 'sustainability'. However, in general project sustainability is defined as the percentage of project initiated goods and services that are still being delivered and maintained after five years of termination of implementation of the project; the continuation of local action stimulated by the project and generation of successor services and initiatives as a result of project built initiatives. This definition implied that sustainability concerns itself with level of continuation of delivery of project goods and services, changes stimulated / caused by the project, new initiatives caused by the project (Raymond, 2005). The World Bank (2011) defined sustainability as to be the ability of a project to maintain an acceptable level of benefit that flows through its economic life.

In many parts of the world, rural youth were involved in economic activities. In some countries they made up a significant part of the total population. This was especially true where formal education in rural areas is limited and youth became involved in production activities at an early age. Many rural youth projects actively promoted the application of technology to improve agricultural production on a sustainable basis, and the start-up of agricultural and rural-based non-agricultural income-generating activities. Any attempt to enhance the knowledge, skills and experiences of young people, and increase their access to resources through funded rural youth projects will have immediate positive impact on rural economies (UN Report 2014). In addition to helping youth acquire knowledge and skills related to sustainable agricultural development and income-generating activities, projects targeting rural youth also had the potential to help them become aware of, understand and value, people of differing ethnic and cultural backgrounds. There are too many cases in the world today where lack of appreciation of cultural diversity is tearing rural society as well as entire nations apart.

Africa is one of the regions highly affected by youth unemployment. Globally, the youth unemployment rate stood at 15.4% in 2010 with a total of 84.8 million young people unemployed. Developed economies had a youth unemployment rate of 17.7% in 2010 while developing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa had unemployment rates of 13.6 % and 25.3% respectively. There is a need to highlight challenges facing the management and sustainability of youth projects.

According to the Government of South Africa (2012) the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), (2011) outlined its mandate which include; advancing youth development through guidance and support to initiatives across sectors of society and spheres of government, embarking on

initiatives that seek to advance the economic development of young people and developing and coordinating the implementation of the Integrated Youth Development Plan and Youth empowerment project sustainability is a major challenge not only in Kenya, but also in many developing countries. Most projects implemented at huge amounts often tend to experience difficulties with sustainability. Donors such as the World Bank, DFID, USAID and other bilateral aid agencies have been expressing concerns on project sustainability, while the trend with implementation of projects is showing significant improvement, post-implementation sustainability is rather disappointing with very few projects being sustained(RoK,2012).

In Kenya, the YEDF loan targeted all forms of youth empowerment projects whether individual, companies, groups, cooperatives or otherwise and the loan is accessible to any youth owned enterprise operating within the district. The Divisional Youth Enterprise Development Fund Committees (Divisional YEDFC) were formed to effectively identify and recommend viable youth group enterprises for loans. The group can only be legible for funding if members of the group are aged 18 to 35 years, in case of mixed group, at least 70% of the members are aged 18 to 35 years and 100% of group leaders are within the preferred age bracket, the group is registered with the Department of Social Services or the registrar of societies at least three (3) months before applying for the loan (Ouma, Osano & Mullumba, 2002; Oduol, et.al., 2013).

In Taita Taveta County, there are different sets of factors which have led to unemployment of different youth groups which include socioeconomic factors, gender and past discriminatory development policies. The level of unemployment is high among rural youth and marginalized youth due to inherent inequalities they face such as lack of equal education and

training opportunities, society's beliefs on girl child education, poverty and level of parents' education among other issues. The Kenya National Human Development Report (2016) indicated that unemployment in the county stands at 43%, while among those considered employed and another significant portion is underemployed. If these are the factors contributing to unemployment and under employment among the youth, could they be the same factors influencing the sustainability of youth empowerment projects for sustainable income generation in the county.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of the legal, policy and institutional reforms undertaken so far in the devolved and national governments, in Kenya, the implemented youth empowerment projects still find it hard to be sustainable. Muthoni (2013) indicated that over 70 percent of key youth developments projects in Kenya are do not live beyond the fifth year of establishment. This implied that only 30% of the youth projects go the sixth year in this country. In 2013-14, further statistics show that of the 30 percent youth development projects established were sustainable, less than a third of the total projects while two-thirds went dormant (RoK, 2014).

In Taita Taveta statistics indicated that 40% of youth know about the youth development fund and it has 23% loan approval for the development of income generating projects (GoK, 2014). The youth groups have been funded to carry out different projects in their respective areas by the constituency youth enterprise development fund, development partners, non-governmental organizations and county government. Out of the total 275 projects funded only 45% of them are fully operational and are yielding returns to the youths in the county while 20% of them have stalled and 35% were never

implemented according to DYO progress report (2014). According to Ombati (2013) 70 percent of youth soliciting for Youth Enterprise Development Funds have the conviction that their model will work. The challenge seems to be that youths are coming up with projects without considering deeply about their sustainability (Mputhia 2014). It is for this reason Kamau (2014) adds that youth's empowerment project initiatives have been questioned on sustainability. There is need to carry out a study to establish why some of the youth projects have started and why other have never started and why other have stalled up to now. The inability of the youth empowerment projects to be sustainable in the country is a serious problem given that youth projects are the engine of economic growth and development needed to move the country to a middle level economy as envisaged in the development blue print of Vision 2030 (ACEPD, 2013). This presented a gap for research to establish the reasons behind such a lacklustre sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Kenya, specifically in Taita Taveta county.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were:-

- To establish how project planning influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.
- To establish how project management skills influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.
- To examine how project funding influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

- To find out how Monitoring and Evaluation influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Planning Theory

This theory will guide the study in establishing the relationship between project planning and sustainability of youth empowerment projects. Hume is generally attributed with drawing attention to the ought distinction: what is does not necessarily lead to what should be (Wenz, 2013). Although what is may place restrictions on what can be, our human capacity to reflect on possibilities and make choices means that what is and what should be are connected by values. This connection exists whether it is recognized or not. Where applications of values are not made explicit, they are implicit in underlying cultural conditioning. The fundamental need for a position and a meaning for our lives and for our species dominates whatever system of thought we espouse. We cannot exist conceptually without such cosmologies, yet many people are unaware of the values upon which they have founded their structure of meaning (Palmer, 2012).

Recognizing this evaluative connection is crucial for planning. Due to its future orientation, planning influences what will/can be. In a just society, it must consequently raise the question of what should be by acknowledging the role of values. What is corresponds to knowledge that is held - what ought to be corresponds to actions prior to their taking place. In consequence, planning relates to the linkage: value. It therefore has a normative aspect. This normative consideration must be integrated into planning on both theoretical and practical levels. In addition, recognizing planning as an "intervening variable" suggests a need to recognize

the importance of multiple values. In consequence it is necessary to consider how these values can be determined and how they can be acted upon. In a sense, then, planning is paradoxical: it is concerned with understanding the activity and process itself, and is therefore descriptive. Yet simultaneously, it is concerned, in a pro-active way, with the formation of future states, and is therefore prescriptive (Wachs, 2013).

Competency Theory

The work of McClelland & McBer in the 1980s established the competence theory. The authors defined competency as the underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation. Since then a number of competency frameworks have been developed by different project management institutes. Crawford (as cited in Boyatzis, 1982 & Spencer, 1993), puts a model of competence that integrates knowledge, skills, demonstrable performance, and core personality characteristics, noting the last, personality characteristics, as challenging to develop and assess through training. She argues that two of the most influential project management standards, the PMBOK, address only the knowledge aspect of competence while a third, Australia's National Competency Standards, draws from knowledge but focuses only on demonstrable performance. Crawford, (2010) study found out that project managers "do not necessarily have the required competence or perform the full activities required to promote and implement the changes that they are leading as part of their projects.

Interest in project management competence stems from the very reasonable and widely held assumption that if people who manage and work on projects are competent, they will perform effectively and that this will lead to successful projects and successful organizations (Beer, 1990;

Smith, 1976). Competence is generally accepted, however, as encompassing knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that are causally related to superior job performance. Crawford (as cited in Boyatzis, 1982 & Spencer, 1993), stated that professional competence in project management is attained by combination of knowledge acquired from training and its subsequent application and other skills developed in the course of work. Previous management studies have investigated the impact of competency on performance. Dainty (2004) argued for a competency based performance model for construction project managers where managerial behavior input is appraised and nine performance indicators for PM competency are developed to comprise team building, leadership, decision-making, mutuality and approachability, honesty and integrity, communication, learning, understanding and application, self-efficacy, and maintenance of external relations. In the context of construction project management; it is assumed that if the project manager and the project team have all the required competence (project management skills) for the sustainability of the project.

Financial Distress Theory

The financial distress theory seeks to look at the different factors that lead to a decline in a firm's performance (Brigham & Ehrhardt 2013). Beaver, Correia, & McNichols (2011), describe financial distress as the inability of an organization to pay its financial obligations as they mature. It is important to assess the probability of organizations financial distress because it will determine the pay out distribution associated with an investment. An organizations investment decision and financing are separable and independent. However, not most organizations recognize this hence holding their balance sheets on debts and equity claims as one which then reduces their leverage on costs (Finnerty, 2013). The financial distress theory hence

shows the relationship between an organizations financial cash flow and the ability to finance its investment opportunities or projects. Each organization aiming at undertaking a projects should ensure that its financial capability has been well planned for as well as project funding opportunities well planned, communicated and prepared for before making a decision on whether to carry out a project or not. Projects should also consider the length of time required to release funds needed for a project or investment during the project preplanning stage before determining or agreeing on project start dates to ensure on time project funding release so as to prevent delays associated with late funds disbursements that may be influenced by several factors relating to the late release of fund. Organizations with high cost projects are supposed to be able to be able to finance these projects and when this is not possible, then projects are delayed. This theory is therefore important when addressing the financial factors influencing project sustainability. Project delivering organizations experience financial constraints either due to late funding, poor financial estimations and late release of project funds.

Control Theory

Control theory, invented by Ouchi (1979) and Eisenhardt (1985) uses the notion of modes of control to describe all attempts to ensure that individuals in organizations act in a way that is consistent with organizational goals and objectives (Kirsch, 1997). The concept of control is based on the premise that the controller and the controlee have different interests. These different interests will be overcome by the controller's modes of control (Tiwana, 2009). Modes of control may distinguish between formal and informal mechanisms. Formal modes of control are defined as Behavior control and Outcome control. Behavior control consists of articulated roles and procedures and rewards based upon those rules. Outcome

control is mechanisms for assigning rewards based on articulated goals and outcomes. The informal modes of control are carried out by the control modes labelled as clan and self. Clan are the mechanisms of a group sharing common values, beliefs, problems, and these mechanisms work through activities as hiring & training of staff, socialization etc. The control mode of the self is about individually defined goals and can be carried through the mechanisms of individual empowerment, self-management, self-set goals, etc. (Kirsch, 2007).

In the context construction project management the project manager and the project teams have different interests. In order for the project manager to control cost and schedules during the project execution phase, he has to come up with different modes that ensure that teams are compliant. The control mechanisms and rules must also be aligned with the overall construction goals as well as the goals of individual teams.

Conceptual Framework

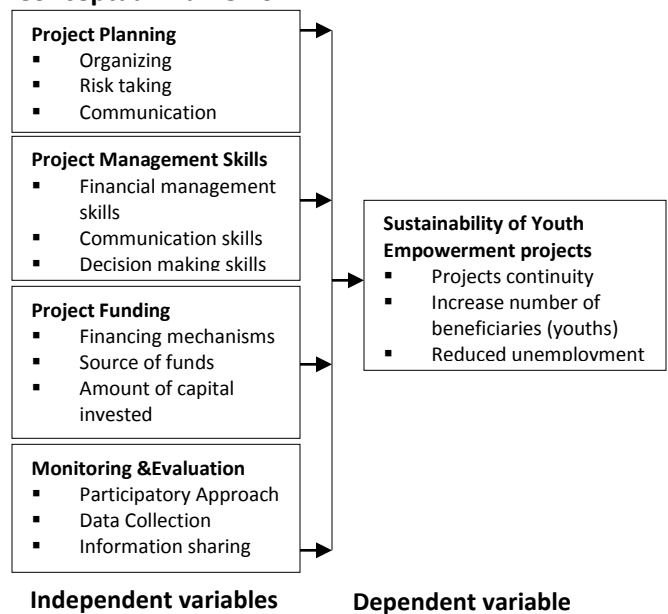


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Project Planning

Project planning is a major issue to be looked into when we deal with the project sustainability. Lester and Lester (2012), contends that the project plan is the road map that defines how to get to the end. Effective project planning requires particular skill far beyond writing a document with schedules and budget. Unlike small projects that involve few activities, complex projects that go beyond a certain threshold level of magnitude should proceed on the basis of a sound formal planning platform without which there may be chaos. Sound formal planning provides the basis for organizing the work on the project and allocating responsibilities to individuals. It is not only a means of communication and coordination between all those involved in the procurement project but also induces people to look ahead besides instilling a sense of urgency and time consciousness (Barasa, 2014).

During project planning sufficient attention for establishing goals and objectives lacks; yet these are vital elements of planning. A good project plan does not necessarily lead to a good project. However, a project plan built on a weak foundation can lead to a good idea resulting into a poor project (Andawei, 2014). Project planning involves collection of baseline data, needs assessment, developing an action plan, implementation and evaluation. Target groups need to be well understood before goals, activities and resources required are formulated. In this study, timely completion of a project involved formal closure and transfer of lessons learnt from the project to other projects. To enhance the understanding of project management process, the following tools are applied: project management work book and methodology, and project management guide. The study aimed to identify the best practices for planning and executing a project, and then employ it as a benchmark for improving project planning in other industries (Tonnquist, 2008). Physical planning includes the scheduling of

the project's tasks in terms of time while financial planning shows the required cash flow for each time period Alojairi (2011). Regular plan review should focus more on the role level rather than the activity level. This approach is said to increase the planning of a project which will lead to better completion results. The Gantt chart is the commonly used planning tool on projects.

Soham, & Rajiv (2013) states that the management needs to be involved in the up-front planning efforts and effectiveness of communication, control system, management system and organizational culture. Studying the significant factors that cause delay of construction projects in Malaysia, Alaghbari, Kadir, Salim and Ernawati (2007) three categories for analysis, namely contractor, consultant and owner. As far as causes related to contractor actions are concerned, 'financial problems', 'shortage of materials' and 'poor site management' were ranked among the top three. Owner causes included 'delayed payments', 'slow decision-making' and 'contract scope changes'. The top three consultant causes were 'poor supervision', 'slowness to give instructions' and 'lack of experience'.

Project Management Skills

The required project management skills can include: communication and feedback systems, quality, safety, risk and a conflict management system, supervisory skills, experience, coordination and leadership, communication skills, organizational structures, control mechanisms of subcontractors' works, and the overall managerial actions in planning, organizing, leading and controlling (Zami, 2011). Kaliba, Muya, & Mumba (2009) convey that planning and management of a project, irrespective of its complexity require the opinions of a system based on the number of stakeholders involved. Mutual communication between these stakeholders

enhances division of labour, development of individual competencies and responsibilities for effective decision making. Winch (2010) puts competencies into threshold or surface and differentiating or core competencies. Threshold competencies need to be practical while core competencies are yardsticks for top performers. Organizational learning theory develops managerial competencies by incorporating informal practices in the development strategy. The theory has enabled organizations to respond better to competition needs and engage more inclusive employee participation (Siemens, 2014). Through training individual competencies are enhanced and translated to organizational competencies. Organisational learning enhances the interaction between people, vision and pragmatic matter, which is a major challenge to organizations in their quest for competitive advantage.

Procurement is the entire process of acquiring materials, property and services required for a particular project. The process starts with the identification of need, followed by a decision on procurement requirements. The process continues through risk assessment, identification and evaluation of alternative solutions, contract award, delivery and payment of the property or service. World Health Organisation report (2007) explains that an effective procurement process ensures that materials are available at the right time, right quantity, for the right client, and at a reasonable price and quality. Ondego, & Moturi (2016) further emphasizes that it does not merely entail the act of buying, but a wide range of business, operational, information technology, legal systems, safety and risk management, all undertaken to address an organisation's needs. The ability to satisfy desired needs depends on the speed at which the good is delivered; otherwise a negative externality is created on the end users.

Project management skills are the integral of the entire sustainability project functions which include coordination of subcontractors, scheduling, cost control, labour relation, billing, purchasing, expending, and other functions related to the project. In Construction Company, project manager is in charge of these functions. The use of project management techniques is very important in the construction industry, because the coordination and use of the many types of labour, skills, materials, and equipments which are used in construction require daily application of proper project management techniques (Brown, & Phua, 2011).

Project Funding

Although project delivery process does not have a stage called funding, budgetary constraints affect each stage of the process (Rahaman, 2011). The Right of Way to a project is not identified by a project that only fulfils the environmental process, only for the policy makers to disagree with the chosen source of funding. Kaliba et al. (2009) reviewed the correlation between cost overruns and project delays and realized that a good agreement exists between the two factors

Adequate and timely funding is essential for project success. Inadequate funding and untimely funding may interfere with implementation schedule of projects. Brown, & Phua, (2011) identifies contractors' financial difficulties as major causes of delays in government sponsored construction projects. He further defines contractors' financial difficulties as the contractor not having sufficient funds to carry out the construction works. This includes payment for the materials, labourers' salaries and equipment to be used for the construction work. Thornton (2007), in his survey, found that slow collection, low profit margins and insufficient capital or excessive debt are the three major causes of financial difficulties among contractors. Slow collections topped the list in the

years 2007 and 2005, in which the contractor received late payment from the client. This is supported by Akinsiku, Akintola, Ameh, & Ige, (2014) who found that delay in payment from the client would eventually cause financial difficulties to the contractor. Thus, most of the construction works cannot be carried out due to these financial difficulties. El-Behary (2013) found that the owners and consultants considered financing by contractor during construction as the top cause of delay in Egyptian building projects.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring can be defined as the ongoing process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving their goals and objectives while evaluation is a rigorous and independent assessment of either completed or ongoing activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objectives and contributing to decision making (UNDP, 2009). Monitoring and evaluation is conducted for several purposes namely to learn what works and does not; to make informed decisions regarding programme operations and service delivery based on objective data; to ensure effective and efficient use of resources; to track progress of programmes; to assess extent the programme is having its desired impact; to create transparency and foster public trust; to understand support and meet donor needs; and to create institutional memory.

According to UNDP (2009), monitoring focuses on the implementation process and asks the key question how well is the program being implemented while evaluation analyses the implementation process. Evaluation measures how well program activities have met objectives, examines extent to which outcomes can be attributed to project objectives and describes quality and effectiveness of program by

documenting impact on participants and community. Monitoring generates periodic reports throughout the program cycle, focuses on project outputs for monitoring progress and making appropriate corrections, highlights areas for improvement for staff and tracks financial costs against budget (UNDP, 2009).

Moyo, Mangore, & Chigara (2014), Zint & Montgomery (2012) argued that evaluation should not be encouraged in the following circumstances: when a programme is unstable, unpredictable and/or has not achieved a consistent routine; when those involved cannot agree about what the programme is trying to achieve; and when a funder and/or manager refuse to include important and central issues in the evaluation. Zint & Montgomery (2012) in their online publication, defined evaluation as the critical examination of a programme. Zint & Montgomery posited that evaluation involves collecting and analyzing information on programme activities, characteristics and outcomes. Zint & Montgomery (2012) saw the purpose of evaluation as making a judgment so as to improve the programme's effectiveness, thus informing programming decisions.

Monitoring ensures that activities are implemented as planned. This helps the PMs to measure how well they are achieving their targets. This is based on the understanding that the process through which a project is managed has a lot of effect on its use, operation and maintenance (Nyakazeya, 2012). An audit is a review of different aspects of a project by an expert from outside of the project. A project audit provides an opportunity to uncover issues, concerns and challenges encountered during the project lifecycle. Conducted midway through the project, an audit affords the project manager; project sponsor and project team an interim view of what has gone well, as well as what needs to be improved to successfully complete the project. If

done at the close of a project, the audit can be used to develop success criteria for future projects by providing a forensic review (Mantel, 2011). This review identifies which elements of the project were successfully managed and which ones presented challenges. As a result, the review will help the organization identify what it needs to do to avoid repeating the same mistakes on future projects.

This stage consists of investigation and reviewing the effects of the completed or ongoing projects to see whether the benefits which were planned to flow from the project have indeed been realized and whether these benefits have had their intended consequences. This phase ensures sustainability of the project or recommends changes in the project to ensure the goals and objectives are achieved (Sambasivan, & Soon, 2010). Monitoring and Evaluation consists of those processes performed to observe project Implementation so that potential problems can be identified in a timely manner and corrective action can be taken, when necessary, to control the implementation of the project. The key benefit is that project performance is observed and measured regularly to identify variances from the project management plan. Monitoring and Evaluation includes: Measuring the ongoing project activities ('where we are'); Monitoring the project variables (cost, effort, scope, etc.) against the project management plan and the project performance baseline (where we should be); Identify corrective actions to address issues and risks properly (How can we get on track again); Influencing the factors that could circumvent integrated change control so only approved changes are implemented (Nicholas, 2004).

According to World Bank definition, monitoring is the routine and systematic collection of information against a plan, while evaluations is assessing as systematically and objectively as possible a

completed project or programme for a phase. Monitoring is usually done to projects and programmes for four main purposes: To learn from experiences to improve practices and activities in the future; to have internal and external accountability of the resources and the results obtained; to take informed decisions on the future on the initiative; to promote empowerment of beneficiaries of the initiative according to Yumi & Beaudry (2007).

Monitoring and evaluation, according to International sport and development toolkit, appraises data and information that inform strategic decisions, thus improving the project or programme in future. Evaluation should help in drawing conclusions about five main aspects of the project or program which include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project notes Fred (2008).

Effective monitoring and evaluation should be built into the project at the planning stage and should not be an 'add on' that happens at the end, but part of a project life cycle concludes Eyke (1993). In some areas there is digitalized construction monitoring (DCM) according to Zubair et al (2006), whereby we have integration of the information from construction drawings, digital images of construction site progress and planned schedule of work. Using emerging technologies and information system the DCM re-engineer the traditional practice for monitoring the project progress by automatically interpreting Computer Aided design (CAD) drawings of buildings and extracting data on its structural components and storing in database.

According to Amoah, Ahadzie&Dansoh(2009), the benefits of monitoring and evaluation to projects includes setting standards of performance, measuring performance against these standards, correcting deviations from standards and plans,

setting milestones based on realistic/compelling needs whereby these milestones can be timely reviewed, compressed and expanded as the need arises and then correcting deviation from the set milestones can be taken in form of deployment of additional funds, etc. According to Ringera(2015), monitoring and evaluation determines whether project objectives are being met as work progresses, ensures maintenance of control over the schedules, evaluates the expenditure of funds in terms of both work accomplished and time and the revision of budget as required to reflect changes in work definition. It involves evaluation of work force adequacy and utilization as the work progresses and evaluates time, cost and work performance in terms of schedules, budgets and technical plans. This study enquired on how monitoring and evaluation was implemented and considered how that implementation had influenced the completion of the government construction projects.

Sustainability of Projects

Project sustainability is one of the most critical challenges for all grassroots, national and international development agencies. The concept of sustainability can be seen within time and changing social, economic and political contexts. According to Williams, (2003), sustainability is reflected in the capacity of the community to cope with change and adapt to new situations. A project that is seen as worth sustaining today may not be so in future. In the researcher's perspective, some definitions consider as a criterion of sustainability that the beneficiaries cover all costs after donor assistance has ended. The capacity to implement a program or facility exists and the beneficiaries are self reliant (Bennett & Lynn 2003).

EU (2004) defines sustainability as the likelihood of a continuation in the stream of benefits produced by the project after the period of external support has ended. Mulwa (2010) noted that project sustainability concerns itself with the continuity of a

project until it attains its set objectives. Sustainability is the ability of a community development project to maintain or expand a flow of benefits at a specified level for a long period after project inputs have ceased. In other words, the project is the physical infrastructure established and maintained and operated by the participating institutions. The basic idea of determinacy of sustainability should be designed to produce a continuous flow of outcomes for a long time. This refers to the continuation of benefits after development assistance has been completed because sustainability includes projects effects after implementation, the notion of building resilience to risk is party of the reason for focusing on the determinants of sustainability. Sustainability hence refers to sustainability of donor funded effect rather than any particular project organization which can be dissolved at the end of project implementation (World Bank, 2006).

Sustainability is the ability of an organization to develop a strategy of growth and development that continues to function indefinitely. This implies that organizations need to have proper strategies covering advocacy, foundations and fundraising, governance, management and leadership among others (Dorothy, 2007). Youth empowerment projects play a significant role in the social development process in all regions of the world. They are particularly critical in circumstances where State funds are limited, political situations are fluid, natural disasters resulting from both predictable and unpredictable environmental circumstances occur, ethnic strife is rampant, and the level of per capita income severely restricts the ability to purchase needed goods and services - social, educational and economic.

Empirical Review

Project Planning

The sources and composition of project planning & organizing is another key factor that may influence the success of project implementation. Analysis on a number of researches has shown that planning & organizing have a positive influence on projects. In his study, Kasoo (2010) reiterated in his findings that besides community participation, sources and composition of project planning & organizing has a bearing on project success as well. Ayodele (2011) asserts that when he reported that one major cause of abandonment of donor funded construction projects in Nigeria was due to inadequate planning & organizing. His study report further emphasizes the importance of planning & organizing resources in project implementation. The study is in consonance with Yang and Jackson's affirmation on the stalled pumped-hydro energy storage in the United States that planning & organizing and financial uncertainties could be one of the projects' limiting factor (Yang & Jackson, 2011).

Fortune and White (2006) reviewed 63 publications that focus on critical success factors (CSF) and surmise that there is only limited agreement among authors on the factors that influence project success. They list the three most cited factors as: the importance of a project producing an efficient plan. Bakar, Razak, Abdullah and Awang (2009) also summarize literature review from various authors on project success and failure; pointing to the need for project managers to be more dynamic about the project planning and organizing the project.

Project Funding

Several studies have shown that financial management of youth empowerment projects can determine the sustainability of the youth group projects. Studies in India have shown that it is

necessary the group members are enabled to understand the financial records that are made by the group leadership. Explaining the financial accounts to less educated members are necessary to avoid mistrust and conflicts and misunderstanding among the group members, (Kumar, 2004). However in cases of the managers of these groups' misconduct in funds use, management, and governance, have come to light. This is because it threatens the sustainability of the groups and projects that they are involved in. It is shown that people's participation at every level of decision making within the project transforms group members into participants, from which ultimately everyone benefits, (Ranadive, 2004).

According to European regional development fund report (2007-2013), project sustainability is influenced by factors inherent in the project and factors external to the project. According to the report, sustainability at the project level can be attained through quality project planning, prudent financial management and adequate financing. The report further states that poor financial management in the form of open theft, embezzlement of funds are the major reasons for project failure and most projects that have remained sustainable have strong and prudent financial management.

Project Management Skills

In a research study of loan repayment in Chepalungu Sub County, Chemwa (2015), observed how education impacts positively growth of youth enterprises. Educated youths are expected to adopt new production technologies that increase returns from the enterprises. For the same reasons, education would be an indicator of creditworthiness, and would increase repayment capacity of the borrowers, (Njoku, 1997). In a study carried out in Naivasha District, males were more educated than females, as males were more

represented in the higher levels of education than females. Majority of the males had secondary level education and a small number with tertiary while there was no female with tertiary level of education in the youth groups. This meant for a long time less women were involved in entrepreneurial activities compared to men. The differences in level of education may have implications on how male and female youth access information necessary in managing their enterprises. Further, education has been found to have a positive impact on business performance, duration, and success (Gachugia, Mutuku, & Wanga, 2014).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Amaka (2011) studied the critical success factors influencing construction project performance in Nigeria. The research survey demonstrated the operating environment has a vital role in determining the critical success factors influencing project performance of a project. The result revealed six critical success factors which can influence project performance in Nigeria. These factors were objective management, management of design, technical factors, top management support and risk management. Project managers often use project plans, milestones and budgets to reduce risks and obtain project control Arogo, (2015). The common thread from the surveys on why construct projects succeeds include among others; clear goals, management support, control mechanism and communicating (Rahaman, 2011). The proposed approach raises a major conflict issue with the role of the project manager as it is very hard for project managers to keep the pace of the project when kept under a constant auditing (Alshanbari, 2010). According to (Chavada, Dawood, & Kassem, 2012) the Gantt chart widely used in project does not capture the visual interaction between the construction activities during the implementation phase. Continuous monitoring and

evaluation have show to produce the desired results.

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research design to establish the drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Kenya. The target population comprised of 162 youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County. The government and NGOs projects implementation period ranged between one year and five years. The Multiple Regression model that aided the analysis of the variable relationships was as follows: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \epsilon$,

Where; Y= Sustainability of Youth Empowerment Projects (dependent variable);

β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept);

X_1 = Project Planning (independent variable);

X_2 = Project management skills (independent variable);

X_3 = Project Funding (independent variable);

X_4 = Monitoring and evaluation (independent variable);

ϵ = Error term; $\beta_1... \beta_4$ = regression coefficient of four variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Project Planning

The study sought to assess the influence of project planning on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area. This section presents findings to statements posed in this regard with responses given on a five-point likert scale (where 5 = Very Great Extent; 4 = Great Extent; 3 = Moderate Extent; 2 = Small Extent; 1= Very Small Extent).

Table 1 presented the findings. The scores of 'Very Great Extent' and 'Great Extent' have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to mean score of 3.5 to 5.0. The score of 'Moderate Extent' has been taken to represent a statement to a moderate extent, equivalent to a mean score of 2.6 to 3.4. The score of 'Small Extent' and 'Very Small Extent' have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to small extent with mean score of 1.0 to 2.5

The study findings in Table 1 indicated that the respondents indicated to a moderate extent that the project prepares an annual project sustainability plan (3.675); The project sustainability plan has

Table 1: Project Planning

Statement	Mean	Std
The project prepares an annual project sustainability plan	3.675	.009
The project sustainability plan has description of the project requirement	3.468	.312
The project sustainability plan has the estimated value of the project requirement	3.982	.345
Project plan details the sustainability method to be used	3.213	.832
The project plan has details the expected duration of the project	3.652	.901
The project management involves the stakeholders in formulating annual project sustainability plans	3.907	.423

Project Funding

The study sought to assess the influence of project funding on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area. This section presents findings to statements posed in this regard with responses given on a five-point likert scale (where 5 = Very Great Extent; 4 = Great Extent; 3 = Moderate Extent; 2 = Small Extent; 1= Very Small Extent). Table 2 presents the findings. The scores of 'Very Great Extent' and 'Great Extent' have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to mean score of 3.5 to 5.0. The score of 'Moderate Extent' has been taken to represent a statement to a moderate extent, equivalent to a mean score of 2.6 to 3.4. The score of 'Small Extent' and 'Very Small Extent' have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to small extent with mean score of 1.0 to 2.5. The study findings in Table 2 the respondents indicated to a great extent that there are adequate financing

description of the project requirement (3.468); The project sustainability plan has the estimated value of the project requirement (3.982); Project plan details the sustainability method to be used (3.213); The project plan has details the expected duration of the project (3.652); The project prepares an annual project sustainability plan (3.907). Lester and Lester (2012), contends that the project plan is the road map that defines how to get to the end. Effective project planning requires particular skill far beyond writing a document with schedules and budget to the sustainability of projects.

mechanisms in the projects (3.400); the project financing mechanisms reduce cost overruns in the projects (3.554); there is effective are the internal controls on the cost overruns in the projects (3.221); there is adequate record keeping on control of capital to run projects (3.506); there is record keeping control capital invested in the projects (3.553); the record keeping control capital invested in the projects (3.609); the project personnel take care of the available financial resources in the projects (3.656); there is adequate financial plans to control project funds for the project (3.332). The study findings are in agreement with literature review by Rendieve (20120 who established that financial management of youth empowerment projects can determine the sustainability of the youth group projects. The financial records and financial accounts to less educated members are necessary to avoid mistrust and conflicts and

misunderstanding among the group members thus

sustainability of the projects.

Table 2: Project Funding

Statement	Mean	Std
Are there adequate financing mechanisms in your project?	3.400	.213
How do the project financing mechanisms reduce cost overruns in the projects?	3.554	.226
How effective are the internal controls on the cost overruns in the projects?	3.221	.563
Do you have adequate record keeping on control of capital to run projects	3.506	.673
How does record keeping control capital invested in the projects?	3.553	.789
Do the project personnel take care of the available financial resources in the projects?	3.656	.215
Do you adequate financial plans to control project funds for the project?	3.332	.542

Project Management Skills

The study sought to assess the influence of project management skills on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area. This section presents findings to statements posed in this regard with responses given on a five-point likert scale (where 5 = Very Great Extent; 4 = Great Extent; 3 = Moderate Extent; 2 = Small Extent; 1= Very Small Extent). Table 3 presents the findings. The scores of ‘Very Great Extent’ and ‘Great Extent’ have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to mean score of 3.5 to 5.0. The score of ‘Moderate Extent’ has been taken to represent a statement to a moderate extent, equivalent to a mean score of 2.6 to 3.4. The score of ‘Small Extent’ and ‘Very Small Extent’ have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to small extent with mean score of 1.0 to 2.5 From the study

results, majority of the respondents stated to a moderate extent that the project team possess adequate project management skills to enhance sustainability of the projects (3.555); the project stakeholders are satisfied with management skills of the project personnel in the projects (3.711) ; the project team possess planning, communication and technical skills on the management of the projects(3.682); the project resources are managed properly to enhance sustainability of the projects (3.942); the project managers possess ability for budgeting and auditing of the projects (3.742). The project manager does ensure that there is efficiency in the efficient management of the projects (3.511). The study findings are in agreement with literature review by Brown, & Phua (2011) who established that pproject management skills are the integral of the entire sustainability project.

Table 3: Project Management Skills

Statement	Mean	Std
Does the project team possess adequate project management skills to enhance sustainability of the projects?	3.555	.997
Are the project stakeholders satisfied with management skills of the project personnel?	3.711	.705
Does the project team possess planning, communication and technical skills?	3.682	.506
Are the project resources managed properly to enhance sustainability of the projects?	3.942	.876
Do the project managers possess ability for budgeting and auditing?	3.742	.653
How the project manager does ensure that there is efficiency in the management of the projects?	3.511	.009

Monitoring & Evaluation

The study sought to assess the influence of monitoring & evaluation on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area. This section presents findings to statements posed in this regard with responses given on a five-point likert scale (where 5 = Very Great Extent; 4 = Great Extent; 3 = Moderate Extent; 2 = Small Extent; 1= Very Small Extent). Table 4 presents the findings. The scores of 'Very Great Extent' and 'Great Extent' have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to mean score of 3.5 to 5.0. The score of 'Moderate Extent' has been taken to represent a statement to a moderate extent, equivalent to a mean score of 2.6 to 3.4. The score of 'Small Extent' and 'Very Small Extent' have been taken to represent a statement equivalent to small extent with mean score of 1.0 to 2.5

According to Table 4, the study established that majority of the respondents stated to a moderate extent that there was adequate M & E plan for continuous monitoring of project activities to enhance continuity (3.765). The staff working on monitoring and evaluation is dedicated to the function to enhance project continuity (3.875). The roles and responsibilities of monitoring and evaluation personnel have not been specified at the

start of the project (3.543). There are monitoring resources devoted to developing needed data on clinical and cost-effectiveness of medical interventions for comparative, evidence-based evaluations from the projects in the county (4.003). There is a good M & E system in place to ensure it raises timely feedback of the progress of the projects in the county (3.098). The project has an effective plan to allocate enough fund and manage M & E activities in supporting and implementing various sustainable projects in the county (3.754) and the staff is entrusted with monitoring and evaluation have technical expertise in the area (3.654).

The study findings were in agreement with literature review by Valadez & Bamberger (2014) who indicated that the systemic and regular collection of data from projects will assist the project team to learn from experience and improve practices, allow for both external and internal accountability of the resources invested and the results realized as well as ensure planned activities are adhered to (O'Sullivan, 2004). Monitoring checks activities and progress against plans allowing documentation of project progress and this improves greatly the chances of project success and sustainability.

Table 4: Monitoring & Evaluation

Statement	Mean	Std
Do you have adequate M & E plan for continuous monitoring of project activities after donors' exit?	2.765	.097
Is the staff working on monitoring and evaluation is dedicated to the function?	1.875	.876
Are the roles and responsibilities of monitoring and evaluation personnel have not been specified at the start of the project?	2.543	.543
Are there monitoring resources devoted to developing needed data on clinical and cost-effectiveness of medical interventions for comparative, evidence-based evaluations from the health projects in the county?	2.003	.009

Is there a good M & E system is in place to ensure it raises timely feedback of the progress of the services delivery from health projects in the county	2.098	.800
Does the project have an effective plan to allocate enough fund and manage M & E activities in supporting and implementing various sustainable projects in the county?	1.754	.654
Staff are not entrusted with monitoring and evaluation have technical expertise in the area	2.654	.345

Sustainability of Youth Empowerment Projects

The study sought to examine the drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects, attributed to the influence of project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation. The study was particularly interested in three key indicators, namely increase number of beneficiaries, reduced unemployment and project continuity. Table 5 below presents the findings.

Findings in Table 5 reveal improved sustainability of youth empowerment projects. Project continuity recorded low positive sustainability with a majority affirming 1-5 years (38.7%) and less than 6-10 years (39.8%), to 10%-20%, 21%-30% (30.9%) then 31%-40% (32.4%). A similar trend was recorded project continuity recorded low positive sustainability with a majority affirming in + 10 years (32.8%) and less than 10% (28.3%), to 10%-20%(28.5%), 21%-30%

(27.3%) then 31%-40% (32.4%). Increase number of beneficiaries recorded low positive sustainability with a majority affirming 1-20 (38.7%) and less than 10% (39.8%), to 10%-20%, 21%-30% (30.9%) then 31%-40% (32.4%). A similar trend was recorded reduced unemployment recorded low positive sustainability with a majority affirming in 20-30 (32.8%) and less than 10% (28.3%), to 10%-20%(28.5%), 21%-30% (27.3%) then 31%-40% (32.4%). It can be deduced from the findings that sustainability of youth empowerment projects indicators have considerably improved as influenced by among other attributes, the influence of project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation. Sustainability of youth empowerment projects have particularly improved by at least 10 percent across most of the projects pointing to the significance of project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation

Table 5: Sustainability of Youth Empowerment Projects

Project Continuity(Years since completion)	0%	Less than 10%	10-20%	21-30%	31-40%	Mode
1-5 years	38.7	39.8	30.9	32.4	30.4	1
6-10 years	32.8	28.3	28.5	27.3	28.5	1
+ 10 years	28.7	32.1	40.3	40.9	41.5	1
Increase number of beneficiaries	0%	Less than 10%	10-20%	21-30%	31-40%	
1-20	38.9	33.8	22.5	32.5	32.8	1
20-30	35.8	35.8	31.9	33.9	30.9	1
+30	25.6	30.8	45.9	35.4	35.9	3
Reduced Unemployment	0%	Less than 10%	10-20%	21-30%	31-40%	

1-20	37.9	35.9	31.2	25.7	33.1	1
20-30	36.2	31.3	35.9	35.3	30.7	1
+30	25.9	32.8	32.9	39	36.2	4

Regression Analysis

As can be observed in Table 6, the regression model of sustainability of youth empowerment projects coefficient of determination R Square was 0.640 and R was 0.800. The coefficient of determination R Square indicated that 64.00% of the variation sustainability of youth empowerment projects can be explained by the set of independent variables, namely; X₁= project planning, X₂= project funding, X₃= project management skills, X₄= monitoring & evaluation. The remaining 36.00% of variation in sustainability of youth empowerment projects can be explained by other variables not included in this

model. This shows that the model has a good fit since the value is 60%. This concurs with Graham (2012) that R-squared is always between 0 and 100%: 0% indicates that the model explains none of the variability of the response data around its mean and 100% indicates that the model explains the variability of the response data around its mean. In general, the higher the R-squared, the better the model fits the data. This indicates that project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation are important factors that need to be enhanced to boost sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area.

Table 6: Model Summary, Multiple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.800 ^a	.640	.610	.002

The results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for regression coefficients in Table 7 revealed that the significance of the F statistics was 0.005 which was less than 0.05 and the value of F-calculated (66.6823) which was greater than the F-table value (12.653) being significant at 0.005 confidence level.

The value of F was large enough to conclude that the set coefficients of the independent variables are not jointly equal to zero. This implies that at least one of the independent variables has an effect on the dependent variable and this shows that the overall model was significant.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Multiple Regression

Model		Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.876	4	14.719	66.6823	.005 ^b
	Residual	22.345	105	.2128		
	Total	79.221	109			

NB: Critical value = 12.653

Table 8 presents the beta coefficients of all independent variables versus sustainability of youth empowerment projects. As can be observed from Table 8, project planning (X_1) had a coefficient of 0.843 which is greater than zero. The t statics is $6.455 > 1.96$ which has a p-value of 0.002 which is less than 0.05 implies that the coefficient of X_1 is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that project planning has a significant effect on the growth sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The coefficient of project funding (X_2) was 0.788 which was greater than zero. The t statistic of this coefficient is project funding > 1.96 with a p value of 0.004 which is less than 0.05. This implies that the coefficient 0.788 is significant. Since the coefficient of X_2 is significant, it shows that project funding has a significant effect on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. Table 8 also shows that project management skills (X_3) had a coefficient of 0.764 which is greater than zero. The t statics is $3.011 > 1.96$ which has a p-value of 0.006 which is less than 0.05 implies that the coefficient of X_3 is

significant at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that project management skills has a significant positive influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects.

Table 8 further shows that monitoring & evaluation (X_4) had a coefficient of 0.679 with a t static of $2.969 > 1.96$ which has a p-value of 0.007 which is less than 0.05. This implies that the coefficient of X_4 is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that monitoring and evaluation have a significant positive influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. Finally, the constant term is 4.671. The constant term is the value of the dependent variable when all the independent variables are equal to zero. The constant term has a p value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This implies that the constant term is significant is thus an equation through the 4.761. If all the independent variables take on the values of zero, there would be 4.671 sustainability of youth empowerment projects.

Table 8: Regression Model (Overall)

Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.671	.874		7.309	.000
X_1 =Project Planning	.843	.087	.752	6.455	.002
X_2 =Project Funding	.788	.156	.645	5.266	.004
X_3 =Project Management Skills	.761	.200	.555	3.011	.006
X_4 =Monitoring & Evaluation	.679	.276	.509	1.969	.007

The general form of the equation was to predict sustainability of youth empowerment projects from project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation is: $(Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \epsilon)$ becomes:

$$Y = 4.671 + 0.843X_1 + 0.788X_2 + 0.761X_3 + 0.679X_4 + 0.874$$

This indicates that sustainability of youth empowerment projects = $4.671 + 0.843 * \text{Project Planning} + 0.788 * \text{Project Funding} + 0.761 * \text{Project}$

Management Skills + 0.679*Monitoring & Evaluation + 0.874

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The general objective of the study was to determine the drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Kenya. The study specifically determined the effect of project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The reviewed literature showed that sustainability of youth empowerment projects plays an important role in curbing youth unemployment in the country. Further, it was revealed that the type of the employed project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation significantly affected sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the county. The major findings summarized from the four specific objectives are as follows:

The study established that project planning affect sustainability of the youth empowerment projects. It was established that the respondents indicated to a moderate extent that the project prepares an annual project sustainability plan. The project sustainability plan has description of the project requirement. The project sustainability plan has the estimated value of the project requirement. The project plan details the sustainability method to be used and has details the expected duration of the project. Rarely does the project prepare an annual project sustainability plan to enhance the sustainability of the projects.

From the study results, majority of the respondents stated to a moderate extent that the project team possess adequate project management skills to enhance sustainability of the projects. The project stakeholders are satisfied with management skills of the project personnel in the projects. The project team possess planning, communication and technical skills on the management of the projects. The project resources are managed properly to

enhance sustainability of the projects. The project managers possess ability for budgeting and auditing of the projects. The project manager does ensure that there is efficiency in the efficient management of the projects to enhance their sustainability of the projects

The study established that project planning affect sustainability of the youth empowerment projects. The study findings indicated to a small extent that there are adequate financing mechanisms in the projects. The project financing mechanisms reduce cost overruns in the projects. There is no effective are the internal controls on the cost overruns in the projects. There is adequate record keeping on control of capital to run projects. There is no record keeping control capital invested in the projects. The record keeping control capital invested in the projects. The project personnel take care of the available financial resources in the projects and there were adequate financial plans to control project funds to enhance sustainability of the projects.

According to study findings, majority of the respondents stated to a moderate extent that there was adequate M & E plan for continuous monitoring of project activities to enhance continuity. The staff working on monitoring and evaluation is dedicated to the function to enhance project continuity. The roles and responsibilities of monitoring and evaluation personnel have not been specified at the start of the project. There are monitoring resources devoted to developing needed data on clinical and cost-effectiveness of medical interventions for comparative, evidence-based evaluations from the projects in the county to enhance their sustainability. There is a good M & E system is in place to ensure it raises timely feedback of the progress of the projects in the county. The project has an effective plan to allocate enough fund and manage M & E activities in supporting and implementing various sustainable

projects in the county. The staff is entrusted with monitoring and evaluation have technical expertise in the area to enhance sustainability of the projects.

The study sought to sustainability of youth empowerment projects, attributed to the influence of project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation. The increase of number of beneficiaries, reduced unemployment and project continuity recorded low positive achievements in the study area. From inferential statistics, a positive correlation is seen between each determinant variables and sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The strongest correlation was established between project planning and sustainability of youth empowerment projects. All the independent variables were found to have a statistically significant association with the dependent variable at ninety-five level of confidence. Analysis of variance was further done and it was established that there was a significant mean. This is since the p-values of their coefficients were all less than 0.05.

Conclusions of the Study

Based on the study findings, the study concluded that sustainability of youth empowerment projects was affected by project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation as the major factors that mostly affect sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The study concludes that project planning is the first important factor that affects sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The regression coefficients of the study show that project planning has a significant influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. This shows that project planning has a positive influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area.

The study established that project funding influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects. It is

the second important factor that affects sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The regression coefficients of the study show that project funding has a significant influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. This shows that project planning has a positive influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area.

Further, the study established that project management skills influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects. It is the third important factor that affects sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The regression coefficients of the study show that project management skills has a significant influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. This shows that project funding has a positive influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area.

Finally, the study established that monitoring and evaluation influence sustainability of youth empowerment projects. It is the fourth important factor that affects sustainability of youth empowerment projects. The regression coefficients of the study show that monitoring and evaluation has a significant influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects. This shows that monitoring and evaluation has a positive influence on sustainability of youth empowerment projects in the study area.

Recommendations of the Study

The study recommends for enhancement of project planning in the projects to improve their sustainability. There is need to develop project plans that describe the project requirement, the estimated value, details the performance method to be used, the expected project scope, budget and duration of the project. This will enhance sustainability of the youth empowerment projects in the county.

The study recommends for the project management skills to the project team to enhance sustainability of the projects. The planning, communication, leadership and management skills of manager should be adequate. The project should be competent enough to manage the project and project managers should possess ability for decision making and conflict resolution to enhance sustainability of youth empowerment projects.

The study recommends for the adequate funding to enhance sustainability of the youth empowerment projects. There is need for adequate financing mechanisms in the projects. There is need to have effective are the internal controls such as adequate record keeping on control of capital invested in the projects. The project personnel take care of the available financial resources in the projects and there were adequate financial plans to control project funds to enhance sustainability of the projects.

The study recommended for the effective monitoring and evaluation to enhance sustainability of youth empowerment projects. There should be adequate M & E plan for continuous monitoring of project activities to enhance continuity. The roles and responsibilities of monitoring and evaluation personnel should be specified at the start of the project. The monitoring resources should be

devoted to develop needed data and evidence-based evaluations in the projects in the county to enhance their sustainability. There should be a good M & E system in place to ensure it raises timely feedback of the progress of the projects in the county.

Areas for Further Research

The study contributes the body of knowledge by examining the drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Kenya is greatly affected by project planning, project funding, project management skills and monitoring and evaluation. The study contributes to the existing literature in the field of project management by elaborating exiting theories, models and empirical studies on factors affecting sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Kenya. The current study should therefore be expanded further in future in order to determine the other drivers of sustainability of youth empowerment projects in Kenya. Existing literature indicates that as a future avenue of research, there is need to undertake similar research in other counties in Kenya in order to establish whether the explored factors can be generalized.

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