



Role of Monitoring Level on Completion Rate of Development Projects in Mandera County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study was conceived with an aim of finding out the role of monitoring level on completion rate of development projects in Kenya. The objective is to assess monitoring level on completion rate of development projects in Mandera County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design where County Government of Mandera officials, questionnaires were given to 160 respondents who were chosen using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method, a sample of 113 respondents were obtained. After collection of data, it was analyzed and conclusions drawn. The pilot study was conducted on 8 respondents in Mandera West Sub County. Descriptive statistics was used whereby the information was presented into charts, tables and graphs. The results reflect a strong consensus among respondents regarding the role of monitoring levels in supporting project plans and the engagement of stakeholders in planning. Additionally, there is agreement that project plans are designed to mitigate potential risks and establish clear goals. The study recommends that county governments should plan to have quality

standards in place before the projects are implemented

Key Terms: Completion Level Rate of Development Projects; Monitoring Level; Financial Planning; Oversight Frequency

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Organizations can use monitoring levels as a forecasting technique in order to make plan and budget for the future. Management department uses both department services to estimate the expenditures and revenue of business under the normal conditions of business. In monitoring levels, techniques are used namely: variance analysis, responsibility accounting, adjustment of funds and zero-based budgeting (Abdallah, 2018). Variance analysis compares actual accounting figures to determine whether the variances are favorable or unfavorable. Responsibility accounting on the other hand creates cost center, profit center and investment center which are just like departments of any organization after which all employees work on the basis of their centers, each with specific targeted performance (Roffee and James 2017). For

the adjustment of funds technique, top management takes the decision to adjust fund from one project to other project. In the Zero-based budgeting (ZBB) technique, every next year budget is made on nil bases. It can only be possible, if your estimated income will be equal to the estimated expenses.

Monitoring levels involves the preparation of a budget, recording of actual achievements, ascertaining and investigating the differences between actual and budgeted performance and taking suitable remedial action so that budgeted performance may be achieved effectively. Monitoring levels is the system of controlling costs through budgets (Amadi, 2017). It involves comparison of actual performance with the budgeted with the view of ascertaining whether what was planned agrees with actual performance. If deviations occur reasons for the difference are ascertained and recommendation of remedial action to match actual performance with plans is done (Abdallah, 2018). To achieve effectiveness in budget preparation the management team of the firm should ensure the budgets for the allocated projects are implemented with the stipulated time and costs to enhance efficiency. The basic objectives of monitoring levels are planning, coordination and control. It's difficult to discuss one without mentioning the other (Geletaw, 2018). Most Privately owned organizations in Somaliland have shifted focus to monitoring levels as a way of enhancing effectiveness in their services. Recognizing the role of monitoring levels has gained attention which has led some organizations to establish departments for implementation. This has attributed budget monitoring and project implementation committees as an integral part of the administrations to most private organizations in Africa (Hertati, 2015).

Studies have been done in relation to monitoring levels globally: Harelimana

(2017) examined the association between effects of monitoring levels on performance using a sample of large US cities Financial Bonds and found that effective level of monitoring levels is significantly and positively related to bond rating. Hassan, Ongayo and Osora (2019) carried out a study in Denmark on measuring efficiency and effectiveness of a nonprofit's performance, it was found that monitoring levels was one of the important tools in achieving efficiency of in nonprofit making organizations. The results of the study revealed that effective monitoring levels improves performance of local authorities. Isaac, Lawal and Okoli, (2015) argued that budgetary participation affects return on capital employed, return on assets to a great extent. Kariuki (2014) in his study of the effects of the budgeting process on budget variance found out that budget preparation, monitoring levels and budget implementation significantly influence budget variance.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Mandera County has been experiencing delay in the rate of which projects are completed. Many projects lag behind time while others fail due to poor monitoring controls and strategies. A survey of projects in Mandera county, found that there was low completion rate of work and as a result, the projects were behind schedule. Audit report by the senate committee in the years 2016/17 revealed that there were 6 stalled projects namely Construction of County Headquarters, Mandera, Construction of the Governor's Residence, Mandera, Construction of County Rest House, Mandera, Construction of County Assembly of Mandera and Construction of Regional Livestock Market of Mandera (Hassan, 2018). From these audit reports above, it is evident that the completion rate of projects in Mandera County has been slow with high inflated cost, there exist a gap between set timelines, the

cost of the project and completion within the time and the set budget and therefore the need to carry out the study on effect of monitoring levels on completion rate of development project in Mandera County. This paper delves into whether monitoring levels assist in success rates of projects in Mandera county.

Objective

To assess the effect of monitoring level on completion rate of development projects in Mandera County, Kenya

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Monitoring Level and Completion Rate of Development Projects

Monitoring the progress and completion rate of development projects is essential for ensuring their successful execution. Before a project begins, a baseline plan is established, outlining the project's scope, objectives, timeline, budget, and key performance indicators (KPIs). This serves as the basis for monitoring progress. Project managers and teams should provide regular status reports that include updates on project activities, milestones achieved, expenditures, and any deviations from the baseline plan (Moretti et al., 2017). These reports can be weekly, monthly, or at other intervals as determined by project requirements. KPIs are specific, measurable metrics that are used to gauge project progress. They can include items such as completion of project phases, adherence to timelines, budget utilization, and quality benchmarks (Al Mhirat and Irtemeh, 2017). Depending on the nature of the project, site visits and inspections may be conducted to verify that work is being performed according to specifications and standards. This can be especially important for construction and infrastructure projects. Monitoring expenditures and budget utilization is crucial to ensure that a project stays within its allocated budget. Deviations from the budget should be analyzed and addressed promptly (Abdallah, 2018).

Regular risk assessments should be conducted to identify potential issues that could impact project completion. This includes both internal and external risks, and mitigation strategies should be developed. Effective communication with project stakeholders, including government agencies, funders, and the public, is essential. Regular updates on project progress and any changes to the plan should be shared transparently (Nickson, 2017).

For projects where quality is a critical factor, a monitoring component for quality control should be in place. This may involve inspections, testing, and adherence to industry standards. Changes in project scope, objectives, or requirements should be carefully documented, assessed, and approved as necessary. These changes can impact the project's timeline and budget (Harelimana, 2017). Once the project is near completion, a thorough verification process is conducted to ensure that all objectives have been met, and the project meets the predefined quality standards. This may involve final inspections, testing, and acceptance by stakeholders. After project completion, it's important to conduct a post-project review to identify successes and areas for improvement. These lessons can inform future projects and improve overall project management practices (Harelimana, 2017).

To maximize a project's performance and enhance the probability of its success, every organization needs to build a better project management process dedicated to meeting the customer's most important needs (Harelimana, 2017). Application of **Six Sigma** together with robust and efficient project management can be considered an effective tool in driving and accelerating the development and delivery of a high-quality product within budget and timelines. Six Sigma within organizations is primarily practiced as a process improvement

methodology to drive operational and business excellence (Nickson, 2017).

Six Sigma is a disciplined, *data-driven approach* and methodology for **eliminating defects** in any process—from manufacturing to transactional and from product to service. The fundamental objective of the Six Sigma methodology is the implementation of a measurement-based strategy that focuses on **process improvement** and variation reduction, thereby bringing about organizational change by aligning people and processes. This section discusses and demonstrates the power of Six Sigma in achieving **project management quality**, and is particularly useful for project management and senior project and program managers (Moretti et al., 2017).

Quality is a fundamental requirement in effective project management. Effective project management entails a steady focus on quality management as well as achievement of all user requirements as defined during the requirements engineering phase of project implementation (Al Mhirat and Irtemeh, 2017). Quality assurance must be executed throughout the project development cycle as a new normal in reducing errors and challenges during project development. Conducting quality assurance throughout the project development cycle has many benefits to both the project as well as the project development team. Understanding the research approach to use is critical in achieving high-quality findings in projects. There is a need to understand how to utilize deductive, inductive, and abductive research reasoning when conducting project implementation (Harelimana, 2017).

Project quality management is the process required that ensures that the project meets requirements and expectations of the beneficiary involved in the project consists of: identification of relevant quality levels for the project and how to meet them, planned activities implemented quality system

intended to ensure that the project will be within the parameters of quality planning, monitoring results of project activities and assessing their quality standards, ways to eliminate the causes which led to unsuccessful and continuous improvement (Amadi, 2017). Project cost estimates are a key component of the planning process and provide a basis for key decisions. Budgetary cost estimate represents a prediction of quantities, cost, and/or price of resources required by the scope of an asset investment option, activity, or project. As a prediction, an estimate must address risks and uncertainties. Estimates are used primarily as inputs for budgeting, cost or value analysis, decision making in business, asset and project planning, or for project cost and schedule control processes (Abdallah, 2018).

Budgetary cost estimates are determined using experience and calculating and forecasting the future cost of resources, methods, and management within a scheduled time frame (ISO, 2010). An activity cost estimate is a quantitative assessment of the likely costs of the resources required to complete schedule activities. This type of estimate can be presented in summary form or in detail. Costs are estimated for all resources that are applied to the activity cost estimate. This includes, but is not limited to, labor, materials, equipment, services, facilities, information technology, and special categories such as an inflation allowance or cost contingency reserve (Amadi, 2017).

The level of quality can be assessed with costs. It is normal for an organization to strive for the high-quality products and services, but this procedure should not result in expenses that may cause, in (Amadi, 2017). Thus, it is necessary to develop a budget for improving the quality and compared with expected profit. It is also necessary to establish special measures for sub-suppliers quality assurance, quality system

continuously monitored, providing feedback information. Data quality control is essential to ensure the integrity of results from quality improvements projects. Feasible methods are available and important to help to ensure that stakeholder's decisions are based on accurate data (Geletaw, 2018).

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using the descriptive survey approach. The target population of the study shall be staff members of Mandera County government. The study targeted the county government head office project, Water projects education projects, road projects and health projects. The study adopted a descriptive survey design where County Government of Mandera officials, questionnaires were given to 160 respondents who were chosen using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method, a sample of 113 respondents were obtained. After collection of data, it was analyzed and conclusions drawn. The pilot study was conducted on 8 respondents in Mandera West Sub County. Descriptive statistics was used whereby the information was presented into charts, tables and graphs.

5.0 FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Monitoring Level

Monitoring levels support the overall project plan	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stakeholders are involved in planning for the projects	1.5567	.49936
The projects plans mitigate against potential risks	2.6701	.47262
Project plans set up clear goals	3.0103	.10153
The monitoring levels allows monitoring and control	3.9588	.24654

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 2 shows summary on Monitoring Level, on whether Monitoring levels support

the overall project plan, majority of respondents disagreed as shown by (Mean =1.5567 Standard Deviation=0.49936), this shows that this shows that monitoring levels influence the overall plans for the implementation of the projects as plans are anchored on monitoring levels. Majority of respondents disagreed that stakeholders are involved in planning for the projects as shown by (Mean =1.9897 Standard Deviation=0.33834), this shows that the county government officials did not involve the stakeholders in planning of the projects this led to poor management of project processes to implementation. Respondents were neutral that the projects plans mitigate against potential risks as shown by (Mean =2.6701 Standard Deviation=0.47262), this shows that the county government staff did not allocate finances to caution the projects for the potential risk that may arise during the implementation of the project.

On whether project plans set up clear goals, majority of the respondents were neutral as shown by (Mean =3.0103 Standard Deviation=0.10153),this shows that the county government had clear goals by did not fit within the budget. Majority of the respondents agreed that the monitoring levels allows monitoring and control as indicated by (Mean =3.9588 Standard Deviation=0.24654), this shows that there

was money allocated for monitoring and evaluation. Interpretation: The results reflect a strong consensus among respondents regarding the role of monitoring levels in supporting project plans and the engagement of stakeholders in planning. Additionally, there is agreement that project plans are designed to mitigate potential risks and establish clear goals. Respondents also recognize the budget allocation's effectiveness in enabling monitoring and control. Table 8 offers

valuable insights into respondents' perceptions of the planning-related aspects within county government projects. The strong consensus across statements underscores the significance of well-structured project plans, stakeholder engagement, and effective monitoring

levels. These insights can guide the county government in fostering collaborative planning processes, risk mitigation, and financial oversight, ultimately contributing to the success of projects and stakeholder satisfaction.

Table 3: Coordination Level

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Monitoring levels allows monitoring of costs	97	1.4639	.50129
Monitoring levels allows earned value	97	2.0103	.30601
Monitoring levels allows cost efficiency	97	2.4742	.52227
Monitoring levels allows planned value	97	2.7010	.48229
Monitoring levels allows monitoring of cost variances	97	4.3196	.46874

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 10 shows a summary on coordination level, majority of respondents disagreed that monitoring levels allows monitoring of costs as shown by (Mean =1.4639 Standard Deviation=0.50129), this shows that there was no proper monitoring of cost as the implementation process. On whether monitoring levels allows earned value, majority of disagreed as evidenced by (Mean =2.0103 Standard Deviation=0.30601), this shows that the projects did not realize earning value which has been occasioned by poor visibility study during implementation. Majority of the respondents disagreed that monitoring levels allows cost efficiency as shown by (Mean =2.4742 Standard Deviation=0.52227), this shows that the cost efficiency was not realized during the project implementation process. On whether monitoring levels allows planned value, majority of respondents were neutral as shown by (Mean =2.7010 Standard Deviation=0.48229), his shows that the projects did not realize planned value which was due to poor budget controls. Majority of respondents strongly agreed that **monitoring levels allows monitoring of cost variances as evidenced by** (Mean =4.3196 Standard Deviation=0.46874), this shows that the monitoring levels allowed monitoring of projects.

The results highlight a strong consensus among respondents regarding the positive impact of monitoring levels on monitoring costs, earned value assessment, planned value tracking, and cost variance monitoring. There's also agreement that monitoring levels contributes to cost efficiency, although opinions vary slightly. Table 9 offers significant insights into respondents' perspectives on cost-related elements within county government projects. The strong consensus across statements underscores the effectiveness of monitoring levels in

facilitating cost monitoring and value assessment. By leveraging these positive perceptions, the county government can enhance cost efficiency and project outcomes while ensuring effective financial oversight and control.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The projects are implemented without proper quality standards due to poor budgetary planning at the initial stages of the project. The respondents did not understand the importance of proper monitoring levels on quality. Proper monitoring levels allows purchase of quality materials used in construction of the projects. Monitoring levels greatly influences the achievement of project goals. Respondents were not aware how they can allocate finance to improve the quality of projects implemented. Quality of the projects are important in terms of ensuring that the county residents are safe.

Majority of the projects in the county we not within the projected cost which was due to poor monitoring levels. The projects in the county did not have a proper cashflow due to poor monitoring levels put in place. The resources allocated for the projects was much more that what was budgeted, this led to projects taking too long to be completed. A budgeted fund for the projects was not based on the county government revenue. Funds were allocated according to the goals of the organization.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The county government should plan to have quality standards in place before the projects are implemented. The county government staffs needs to undergo training on management of quality during projects implementation. The county government monitoring levels should achieve quality goals by ensuring that the county resident's

benefits from the project that are safe to be used. Given the emphasis on quality and its perceived impact on project outcomes and community benefits, it would be prudent for the county government to continue promoting transparent processes related to budget allocation and quality standards.

7.1 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Studying the impact of monitoring levels on the implementation of projects in Mandera County is a valuable research endeavor. It involves understanding how the management of financial resources through monitoring levels processes affects the successful execution of projects in the county. Here are some areas for further study on this topic:

a) Effectiveness of Monitoring levels

Systems: Assess the design and implementation of monitoring levels systems in Mandera County. Determine how well these systems align with project goals and objectives. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the existing monitoring levels mechanisms.

b) Project Implementation

Performance: Evaluate the success rates of projects in Mandera County, considering factors such as completion within deadlines, adherence to quality standards, and cost efficiency. Examine the relationship between monitoring levels practices and the overall performance of project implementation.

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