

Examine How Stakeholders' Participation in Project Identification Influence Project Performance, Case Study: Musanze District

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Abstract: The role of stakeholders in project work cannot be ignored. A review of the scientific literature reveals a strong relationship between the two. This study aims to reveal how stakeholder participation affects the performance of public services. Community participation is handled in three stages within the context of the project cycle; Analysis, planning and execution. This study is guided by the following research objectives; To examine how stakeholder participation in project analysis affects performance in Musanze District, to evaluate how stakeholder participation in project planning affects the work in Musanze District, and to find out which stakeholders are involved in the Project > Business-related studies in Musanze District. Researchers studied the Rwanda WASH project at MINIFRA. The project is a collaboration between the Government of Rwanda, the Government of the Netherlands and UNICEF Rwanda, but implemented in the Musanze region by MNIFRA. Interviewees included program representatives from the three donors, representatives of worker organizations, PICs, and beneficiary representatives. The first three categories of respondents were selected and convenience sampling was used to select the last category (beneficiaries). Surveys were used to collect data from the first three groups of participants. The total sample size used in the study was 43 people. The data was analyzed using a descriptive model using SPSS. While the majority of participants (80.5%) responded positively to the participation of beneficiaries in the WASH program, only 19.5 gave negative and negative comments. The majority of respondents think planning has an impact on productivity (31.7%), 19.5% think it has a very high impact, 9.8% think it has a moderate impact, 17.1% think it has a very low impact, and 22.0% think it has a very low impact. I think. little. Most participants responded that the impact of project success was very good (31.7%), 29.3% responded that it was high, 9.8% responded that it was average, 12.2% responded that it was very low, and 14.6% responded that it was very high. Low Researchers concluded that collaboration with stakeholders impacts projects at three stages of the business cycle. This study recommends that WASH develop procedures to ensure maximum participant participation in most roles during the task, especially thinking and planning, task management and performance. Future research should examine participant engagement on outcome measures other than those examined in the current study. Keywords: Stakeholder Participation, Project Performance, Public projects, Musanze District.

1. Introduction

For any organization's project to succeed, participation of stakeholders is one aspect that cannot be overlooked (Moodley, 2012). There are different types of stakeholders in every project and their levels of impact are equally different. Involvement of stakeholders can take place at different levels of a project (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 2007). There are stakeholders who contribute the planning process through contribution of ideas and also those who participate during the implementation stage through contribution of technical expertise. Some people have argued that stakeholder participation can be a means and an end to successfully carrying out a project. When looked at as a means, it can be said to be the means through which project participants and stakeholders work together to develop a project (Andersen, 2009). The reason why stakeholder participation has gained so much prominence is the growing interconnectedness of the world. Communities have become more dependent on one another and people are increasingly finding the need to involve others in trying to solve some problems affecting humanity. Individual people are increasingly losing control over social issues and there is need for collaboration (Kettler, 2009). It has to be understood that different people have different interests that need to be put to consideration if common goals are to be realized. This 2 therefore, means that a project's objectives have be aligned with the interests of the stakeholders. This further shows how important stakeholder participation is. In a project, there is a need to make the community members feel part of that project. The only way they can feel part of the project is if they get involved actively in the various stages of that project. This would in turn promote dedication to the project because they would have a sense of entitlement and that a project is in their best interests. If stakeholders lose interest in a project as a result of poor level of involvement, there is high possibility that the project may not succeed. It is therefore important to always have in mind that the stakeholders are critical to the accomplishment or letdown of a project (Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010). There are stakeholders who hold skills that are valuable to a project and therefore involving them helps add more resource to the project, further raising the prospect of success. Involving stakeholders is also an effective way of avoiding conflict between the different players in the project. However, stakeholder participation has been criticized as causing delayed decision making. The delay in making decision on important project could come from conflicting interests by the stakeholders. Precious time may be taken to consider the views of different stakeholders and due to people's natural nature of self-centeredness; it can be difficult to reach a consensus (Galaz, 2015). An example of some adverse effects of stakeholders' participation is case of a Swedish water common-pool resource institution that was obstructed by shareholders because they wanted to avoid incurring costs. Therefore, social capital becomes a tool of jeopardizing a project instead of being a valuable addition that helps make the project more successful (Conley & Moote, 2013). Relying on local community participation 3 could also affect the quality and accuracy of science because a compromise has to be made to accommodate their views, at the expense of scientific knowledge (du Toit, et al. 2014). Another criticism of local knowledge involvement has been that is may not fit in the current world where changing is taking place at very fast rates (Briggs & Sharp, 2014). The defense that local community participation raises acceptability of a project and gives it more legitimacy has been refuted on the basis that there still exist power structures in the communities that often sidelines the poor and the less educated members. What this means is that a few elites may have more control over decisions and so may only represent their own interests at the expense of the powerless.

2. The Aim of The Study

The study brought to the fore some findings that would be very helpful to development agencies in their quest to carry out projects with the participation of stakeholders. This would be an effective way of reducing the frequent incidences of failures in projects resulting from the lack of stakeholders' involvement. This study would play the role of increasing knowledge in this subject. In addition to contributing to existing knowledge, the study would also provide background information to researchers and scholars who would be interested in studying this subject in future. The study also is a key source of information for researchers and stakeholders who may be interested in assessing the performance of public projects carried out in Rwanda. the study would enable the government to conduct stakeholder participation towards better performance of its projects and ensures that there is much interest of stakeholders on those projects, and meet the expectations from the projects that they have initiated.

3. Scope of The Study

Project managers always wish to see the project they start getting completed in time, within the stipulated timeline and within the allocated budget. This is a quest that guides project managers in the projects they undertake because they aim at nourishing the prerequisites of their customers and achieving their own management objectives (Cooke-Davies, 2012). The reality is however different. A lot of projects in Rwanda have seen timelines missed, budgets exceeded, product quality concerns as well as missed objectives Auditor general's report, 5 2008). Among the reasons attributed to these failures is the failure to involve stakeholders in those projects. Despite wide range of knowledge on project planning and management, project failure is still reported (ICAD, 2010). Stakeholders expect to be involved in decision making process within the project cycle. However, this is not the case as complains of exclusion are still reported. Various studies elsewhere such as Adan (2012) on CDF projects in Isiolo North Constituency in Kenya and Golicha (2011) on NGO'S supporting education projects in Garissa District have been conducted in evaluating stakeholders' involvement in relation to project outcome. There are also cost based challenges as the 30 million allocated is fully exhausted and most of the targeted infrastructures are either inadequate or totally missing. The project was envisaged as a short-term intensive programme to be implemented within a period of six months commencing 1st July, 2009 and was expected to be complete by 31st December, 2009. However, as at April, 2013, the project is incomplete with inadequate physical facilities (Economic Stimulus Programme Handbook, 2009). The researcher would want to find out whether findings in other studies above done in other loci would concur or disagree with those findings of the selected project. Therefore, this study sought to fill the gap of knowledge on stakeholder's participation in WASH Project performance.

4. Review of Related Literature

Previous research work done on the topic was examined and knowledge gaps identified. It is organized into sections that introduce the main concepts of the study; community participation and project performance, the importance of community participation and the various ways communities can participate during different phases of the project cycle. This is followed by the theoretical framework and finally the conceptual framework.

The stakeholder approach us a very powerful method of having knowledge of a firm and understanding it in its environment (Oakley, 2011). The approach is used to look wide into organizational roles and responsibilities that surpass the financial and profitability concepts (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). In the stakeholder model, all people or entities with an interest in a firm participate in the activities of the

organization to derive some form of benefit, regardless of the value of their interest (Karl, 2007). They are all treated equally. Stakeholder's approach includes associated organizations, prospective employees, prospective clients and the public in general and their views and interests should be considered. This serves the role of making it easier for the organization's management to understand the stakeholders and their interests so as to manage them effectively.

5. Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used. A descriptive survey design identifies and explores the characteristics of study concepts (Tromp & Kombo, 2006). This research design allows the researcher to clearly define the variables they want to measure using a clear definition of that population they seek to measure. The research design was appropriate for the study because it allowed data collection from the sample and demonstrated the influence stakeholder participation has on the performance of public projects in Rwanda.

The main aim of the study was to determine the influence of stakeholder participation on performance of public projects in Rwanda; the case study being water, sanitation and hygiene project. The study targeted project stakeholders: donors (the Government of Netherlands, Government of Rwanda and UNICEF Rwanda), the implementing agency (MINIFRA), project implementation committee and the project beneficiaries. The method used to generate the research sample was stratified sampling. This method recognized stratifications in the characteristics of the target population. It also ensures that the sample collected is representative of the population under study by collecting samples from each distinct strata of the population (Kothari, 2004). In this study, there were distinct strata comprising donors, implementing agencies, legislative bodies such as the PIC and the project beneficiaries. Purposive sampling was to recruit study participants based in the judgment of the researcher that the respondents offered adequate responses for the study. A sample was drawn from each of the strata, who constituted the stakeholders. In sampling, the researcher used simple random sampling method to select the beneficiaries of the project from a comprehensive list that acted as the sampling frame. The beneficiaries of the project included 800,000 people, who were organized into 381 households. The 381 households were used as the sampling frame and their heads were the respondents. To collect samples from other strata such as the donors, PIC and the implementing agencies, the researcher used purposeful sampling where specific people working for these agencies were included in the study. Participatory development" as a concept, has been in the picture since the 1980s. Sadly, development practitioners have embarked on applying it before having a clear understanding of what it really is and what it entails. Such approaches to development are growing at a fast rate and they are becoming the channel for conveying development assistance (Mansuri & Rao, 2003). Participatory development has been linked to people desiring to make decisions affecting their own lives. More importantly they desire to take part in the initial phases of projects such as project identification, planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation without interference from outsiders. Community participation in projects is essential as it enhances development at the grass root level which is critical for sustainable development (IJCR, 2013). Citizen participation is a process where people take an active role in projects by giving their views on decisions that affect their lives, respond to public concerns and also take responsibility for any changes that take place in their communities. Citizen participation can be defined as the process where people, either individually or in a 11-group setup such as a community or family take responsibility for their welfare as well as the development of capacity for them to make contributions to the development of their community.

The study acknowledges existence of various definitions but takes the definition that community participation is a process where people who are targeted by projects have a fundamental role in the various stages of the execution of the project and not just derive benefits from the projects. In this context, participation is in the development project. The study is not concerned about participation in political processes although it acknowledges that participatory forms of government positively influence community participation in projects (World Bank, 1996). Community participation is interactive and entails constant dialogue between key stakeholder groups, project partners and local administration. It cannot happen once as allowing people to voice their opinions takes time. It should be present throughout the project cycle and there should at least be an opportunity for stakeholder input in each phase (Mulwa, 2004). The overview of Kenya's development strategies indicates that Kenya has embraced development paradigm shifts to reflect changes in global thinking; from technocratic, trickle-down strategies of the 1960s and 1970s to more participatory ones in recent times. In spite of these developments, there is inadequate stakeholder participation in the entire process of conception, design, implementation and management (IJCR, 2013). Evidence on the performance of community participation approach is scant, but work that is available suggests that practitioners may be overoptimistic and naïve about the benefits of the approach (Mansuri & Rao, 2003). A review of the empirical literature on participation shows that the experiences organizations have had with the approach do not always match what has been idealized in the textbooks. For various reasons the benefits do not always materialize. Owing to the fact that they are costly and time consuming it is prudent to understand how participation affects project performance. As a matter of fact, Mansuri and Rao (2003) concluded that not much is known about the effects of community participation on projects. They say this is as a result of rigorous assessment of the method. They indicate that facts about the role of community participation and its influence on projects are urgently needed.

Table 1: Sampling Matrix Table

Category	Respondents	Target Population	Sample Size
Donor I	Project Representative	10	1
Donor II	Project Representative	7	1
Donor III	Project Representative	8	1
Implementing Agency	Project Manager	12	1
PIC	Committee members	13	1
Beneficiaries	Household Heads	381	38
Total		431	43

Source: Primary Data, 2018

Thus, the sample size was 43 respondents.

6. Results and Discussion

The researcher distributed the research questionnaire to 43 respondents. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 41 were collected back and 2 were lost. None of the returned questionnaires had errors and were all included in the analysis. Thus, the researcher analyzed 41 questionnaires representing a 95.34% return rate which was above the 50% statistical significance rate suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	21	51.2
Female	20	48.8
Total	41	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2018

Table 2. indicated the distribution of the respondent’s gender which was slightly dominated by the male gender (48.8%). The female gender represented 48.8% of the sampled population. The difference between the representations of the two genders was not statistically significant and hence the study assumed that the responses gained from the respondents had achieved the gender threshold.

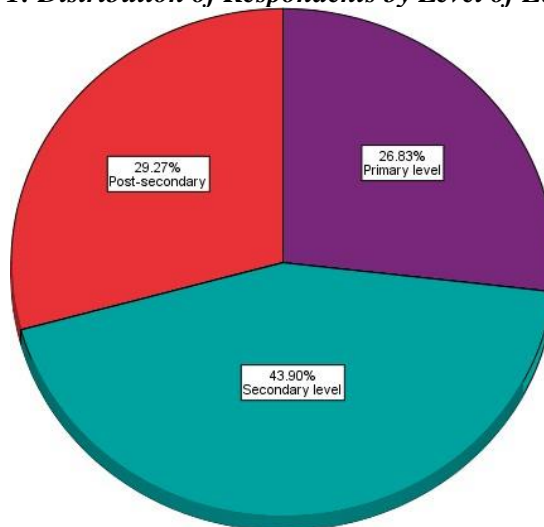
Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-35 years	22	53.7
Above 35 years	19	46.3
Total	41	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2018

Table 3 indicates the distribution of the respondents by age which was dominated by respondents who were between 18 and 35 years (53.7%) followed by those who were above 35 years of age (46.3%). The age gap suggested a mature sample population that was able to understand and grasp the contents of the questionnaire as well as understand the different stages of the project being studied.

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education



Source: Primary Data, 2018

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents' level of education that was dominated by those that had achieved the secondary level (43.90%), followed by those that had achieved post-secondary level (29.27%) and the least represented were those that had achieved the primary level (26.83%). The findings of the study suggested that all the respondents had achieved the minimum education level (primary school) and were thus able to understand the contents of the questionnaire and respond to the questions from an informed point of view.

Stakeholders' Participation in Project Identification

The research objective was to examine how stakeholders' participation in project identification influenced project performance in Musanze District. The researcher sought to establish how beneficiaries participated in the project. As indicated in Table 4, a significant number of the respondents (80.5%) provided positive responses in regards to beneficiary participation in the project, while only 19.5 were of the contrary opinion and negated that beneficiary participated in WASH project. The findings suggested that the residents of Musanze District were well aware of the project and had been consulted of its existence hence their participation.

Table 4. Would you say beneficiaries participated in the project

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	33	80.5
No	8	19.5
Total	41	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2018

Project identification is the initial steps in project management determine the level of community and stakeholders' participation. It is during project implementation that numerous aspects of the project are identified and a project plan drawn. Thus, the findings suggested that stakeholder participation during the project identification phase was high and hence underlining the importance of their participation. It has also been widely recognized that the maximum stakeholder participation in the project identification phase enhances success of the project given that all stakeholders had the potential of having their views included in the initial stages when designing the project. In addition, the involvement of community members during the project identification phase builds a sense of community and stakeholder ownership and hence a guarantee that there would be maximum support until the completion of the project.

The researcher sought to establish the extent to which community participation influenced a number of project parameters. Responses were based on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 5 suggested Very Great Extent, 4 Great Extent, 3 Moderate Extent, 2 Little Extent, and 1 No Extent. Mean scores of 5 – 4.5 suggested Very Great Extent, 4.4 – 4.0 Great Extent, 3.9 – 3.0 Moderate Extent, 2.9 – 1.0 Little Extent, and 1.9 – 1.0 No Extent. Findings were recorded in Table 5.

Table 5: The Extent to which Community Participation Project Parameters

Parameter	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cost completion	4.2439	.99450
Project sustainability	4.6098	.62762
Time completion	4.3902	.83301

Source: Primary Data, 2018

As indicated in Table 5, respondent responses attracted means ranging from 4.60 to 4.24 and standard deviations ranging from 0.62 to 0.99 suggesting that community participation influenced project parameters to a great extent. Project sustainability was the parameter that recorded the highest mean of 4.60 and standard deviation of 0.62 suggesting that community participation influenced the sustainability of the project more compared to the other project parameters. Cost completion attracted the lowest mean of 4.24 and standard deviation of 0.99 while time completion attracted a mean of 4.39 and standard deviation of 0.83. These findings are similar to that of Mulyungi and Mungatu (2017) which evaluated stakeholder’ involvement in project outcome and established that stakeholder’ involvement in project initiation, planning, implementation, and review contributed to project outcome, This is in line with a study carried out by Edelenbos, &Klijjn, (2006) which established that it becomes very easy for the stakeholder to buy in and to implement the plan if they have been participated in the decision-making process. On the contrary, Dvir et al., (2008) noted that stakeholder may have varying opinions which affect project success.

High stakeholder participation in numerous aspects of project parameters determines the success and sustainability of the project. As such, maximum stakeholder participation leads to successful Planning and execution which in turn leads to successful completion and sustainability of the project. The above findings suggested that that there was a high level of community participation that had consequently influenced the parameters of the project. findings of this study are contrary with Ekambaram (2014) study’s findings who noted that stakeholder engagement might be a challenge to project success in terms of creating disagreements and uncertainties.

7. Conclusion

The research objective was to examine how stakeholders’ participation in project identification influenced project performance in Musanze District. Findings from the study suggested that the residents of Musanze District were well aware of the project and had been consulted of its existence hence their participation and that there was a high level of community participation that had consequently influenced the parameters of the project. most of the respondents (90.2%) suggested that they were aware of the identification of the project while 9.8% suggested that they were not aware. The findings suggested that although a few respondents were not aware of the identification phase of the project, a majority were aware and hence signified high levels of community participation that would have significantly impacted the outcomes of the project. Knowledge is power, and it is through stakeholder knowledge that a project can be implemented successfully without any hiccups. Given that the current project involved the community, it was therefore important to make the beneficiaries aware of the nature of the project and how it would be implemented in order to assure its sustainability. Thus, the findings underlined the importance of beneficiary and stakeholder participation in project identification.

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