

INFLUENCE OF COMMUNICATION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ROADS CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS BY KENYA URBAN ROADS AUTHORITY IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: Numerous factors, all connected to an organizational system, can contribute to a project's failure. These include improperly setting objectives, inadequate project plans, numerous changes, and insufficient control measures, among other things. Projects frequently fail because of a lack of skills or subpar implementation due to poor performance. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the influence of communication on implementation of roads construction projects by Kenya Urban Roads Authority in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The type of research design that was used in this study was descriptive research design. The target population in this study was 5 projects being implemented by KURA from the year 2018 to 2022. The target respondents consisted of 75 respondents including 5 Project Managers and 70 Project Team members. A sample of 75 respondents formed the sample size of the study. Primary data collection was through questionnaires which were sent to all sampled respondents. Validity of the tool was measured through content, criteria and construct validity testing. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e. mean and standard deviation) and presented in tables. The study used inferential statistics, i.e. correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, to identify the relationship between variables. According to the study, communication had a considerable positive impact on the Kenya Urban Roads Authority's road development projects in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study concluded that efficient communication is critical to project management since it allows projects to progress smoothly and on time. The study suggests that for efficient communication during project implementation, the organization should be aware of its team's location, its members' origins, whether or not they have taken any personality tests, and the kind of resource each team member is.

Keywords: Communication, Project Implementation.

1. INTRODUCTION

A project must be actively managed during implementation to ensure that it meets the objectives set forth in the planning phase. Implementation is the stage of a project's lifecycle that links the planning stage with the project's outcomes, according to Schultz, Slevin, and Pinto (2017). In order to keep the project on schedule, during the implementation phase, a project manager assesses how successfully the team is meeting the project's objectives, according to Pinto and Prescott (2020). Project managers must thus keep lines of communication open with their teams in order to establish priorities and adjust them as needed in order to successfully implement a project. Additionally, they must keep clients and other significant stakeholders updated on the project's progress.

The performing organization is the entity in charge of carefully planning and carrying out the project. Producing the desired project outcome is the aim of the project management processes (Melchers, 2017). According to Ford and Randolph (2018), setting up a favorable environment for managing project requirements should be seen as an essential part of the project effort. Project managers must therefore manage projects in accordance with the parent organization's policies, rules, procedures, and guidelines in order to preserve the main workflow of the organization. The project manager should not assume that the members of his assigned team will disregard the company's cultural norms.

The Malaysian public sector continues to report a low-performing sector, despite the fact that project implementation is a crucial goal of projects funded by that sector. Success is measured by a variety of factors that are still incongruous, with the most frequent being time, cost, and quality (Abdullah, Harun, and Abdulrahman, 2019). There are differing opinions on what should be included as performance and success indicators, according to Latiffi, Mohd, Kasim, and Fathi (2020), because there is no agreement on how to measure project performance. The Malaysian government should guarantee the prompt completion of projects with fixed costs, designed quality, and general requirements.

In the states of Anambra, Imo, and River, there are six project locations. Igwe and Ude (2018) contend that environmental factors are more important to project implementation success than project team skill set. Collective accountability among project stakeholders is required for project success, claim Ojoko, Osman, Rahman, and Bakhary (2018). Economic instability will have less of an adverse impact on successful project completion thanks to project professionals' ability to produce accurate designs, cost estimates, and time estimates. As a result, thorough environmental scanning, monitoring, and evaluation are necessary during the project planning stage.

According to Kogi (2018), the performance of government projects is one of the most important issues facing Kenya right now. The success of the project has depended heavily on effective project management. For instance, the Kenyan Postal Corporation's projects should be carried out in accordance with an organization's strategy review, which enables improved customer focus, creative autonomy, and develops an entrepreneurial culture and adaptive performance among personnel. According to Wamuyu (2020), effective project management strategies that monitor progress and hazards, as well as ensuring that the correct projects are delivered in accordance with corporate priorities, are critical for enhanced project implementation. These techniques are also said to be important given the strategic importance of projects to a company.

Converting overarching policy goals or objectives into specific action initiatives is the process of project implementation. The goals and timeline for the project are outlined in a solid project implementation plan (Bryson and Bromiley, 2017). Nguyen, Vantam, Dinh, and Quy (2020) point out that project planners are able to use a time-based framework to address the planned time part of the project goals and what must be described to produce deliverables and meet objectives on time, within budget, and in accordance with expectations. Therefore, a project manager plays a crucial role in the project's execution by supervising a team of workers with a variety of skills and education levels who are each in charge of managing a particular area of the project.

Organizational characteristics are traits that result from an organization's organizational style that is reflected in its framework or policies and reflects the company culture in the way that relationships and leadership are arranged. According to Cavusgil (2019), if development initiatives are to thrive, it is critical to have a deeper grasp of the organizational characteristics that contribute to project success. Several organizational characteristics are required for a project to be properly implemented. Structure, culture, resources, and communication within the organization are a few of these.

According to Tushman and Katz (2017), projects demand a project manager's unique communication skill in order to lead and oversee a unique set of activities and resources for the project to meet its stated performance goals. According to Koskinen (2019), effective communication is about making project information available to project stakeholders in the appropriate way, at the right time, and with the right impact. Because projects include people with diverse personalities and desires, the more communication there is in a project, the better the degree of teamwork and project performance.

Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) is a State Corporation established by the Kenya Roads Act of 2007 with the primary responsibility of managing, developing, rehabilitating, and maintaining national urban trunk roads. Its functions include the construction, upgrading, rehabilitation, and maintenance of roads under its authority. regulating access to roadside development and urban road reserves. establishing highway regulations for city streets. street usage is being tracked and evaluated. Among other things, planning for the construction and upkeep of urban roads includes creating road maintenance plans for all urban roads, coordinating with other road authorities in the planning and operation of roads, and liaison with them.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Kenya Urban Roads Authority, KURA, is responsible for road maintenance in Kenya and receives financing from the Kenya Road Board (KRB). KURA, on the other hand, conducts road maintenance through collaborating with road contractors. According to statistics from Kenya's Urban Roads Agency, more than 90% of construction projects offered by various contractors through KURA experience serious challenges that result in a lack of project completion in the period specified, poor service quality, and consequently increased prices. For example, Interways Construction Company was commissioned to build the Upper Hill-Mbagathi Link Road. Rehabilitation and Upgrading of Eastlands Roads Phase II contracted to Wak Construction Limited, Rehabilitation and Upgrading of Eastleigh Estate Access roads contracted to Baraki International Limited, Rehabilitation of Mathare Roads contracted to Tinfra Engineering Ltd, and Rehabilitation and Upgrading of UpperHill Roads, Phase I contracted to Mattan Construction have not been completed on time, and the majority are still in the planning stages..

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

In 1960, Ross, Ashby, and Norbert Wiener put forth the Cybernetics theory, emphasizing the mathematical theory of communication and control systems via regulatory feedback. When the desired result is achieved, positive feedback is received; however, when the response is delayed or immediate, negative feedback is received. Feedback can also be used to evaluate the success of a particular communication sent or a previous event. Its main emphasis is on the ways in which factors like digital, mechanical, or biological elements control their behavior, convey, react to, and change information, or can be modified to successfully carry out these important tasks.

This theory is important to the study because it shows that in order for employees to be aware of and effectively participate in matters that affect them, project managers must personally inform staff of new rules and changes within the organization's systems. As a result, they must recognize whether to use a formal or casual way of speech, because their major goal is to achieve results from a team of workers. Furthermore, According to the cybernetics theory, it becomes important for any organization that wants to improve employee performance to make sure that the feedback mechanism is adequate in terms of employee attitude toward work, productivity, and better project execution.

Empirical Literature Review

Brodbeck (2016) investigated the link between communication and project performance in software development initiatives. User participation hinders effective software development project performance, while standardization of methods and tools improves it, according to a study of 21 software development project groups using data from 170 participants in various roles and a quasi-longitudinal design. Moderated regression analysis shows that when technique and tool standardization is low and the project is in its late stages, good communication has a stronger positive impact on project performance.

The study by Parham and Li (2018) investigated the impact of communication management on infrastructure projects in Jamaica. In order to gather more data, a quantitative approach was used by distributing questionnaires, which attracted more participants. 140 specialists working on infrastructure projects were included in the sample. The main data was compared to the theoretical data acquired. According to this study, inefficient communication management had a detrimental influence on projects, resulting in delays, cost overruns, and project termination.

Mugo (2018) investigated the impact of organizational communication on building project delivery in Nairobi City County, Kenya. In total, 80 ongoing construction projects in Nairobi City County were assessed. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the information gathered from the respondents. According to the study, to improve project implementation, a well-documented communication plan is needed. Clear roles within the project organization seek to develop successful organizational communication. The study found that effective communication channels foster teamwork, encourage information to reach the right people, and boost trust and synergy.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The type of research design that was used in this study was descriptive research design. The target population in this study was 5 projects being implemented by KURA from the year 2018 to 2022. The target respondents consisted of 75 respondents including 5 Project Managers and 70 Project Team members. A sample of 75 respondents formed the sample size of the

study. Primary data collection was through questionnaires which were sent to all sampled respondents. Validity of the tool was measured through content, criteria and construct validity testing. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e. mean and standard deviation) and presented in tables. The study used inferential statistics, i.e. correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, to identify the relationship between variables.

5. FINDINGS

The descriptive statistics results of communication are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Communication

Statement	M	SD
During project implementation, communication is seen as the glue that holds project stakeholders together.	3.96	0.445
Communication enables project managers to maintain project control and guarantee that all stakeholders receive the relevant information.	4.43	1.219
A robust communication strategy improves the consistency with which the project is managed.	4.78	0.782
Regular communication allows project team members to stay productive.	4.10	1.670
A communication strategy enables the project manager to guide the team to the project's targeted goal.	4.69	0.579

The respondents strongly agreed on the statements that a robust communication strategy improves the consistency with which the project is managed (M=4.78, SD=0.782) and that a communication strategy enables the project manager to guide the team to the project's targeted goal (M=4.69, SD=0.579). The finding agree with Koskinen (2019) who observe that with effective communication relating to how project information is availed in the right format, at the right time, and with the right impact to the project stakeholders influence the performance of the project.

The respondents agreed on the statements that communication enables project managers to maintain project control and guarantee that all stakeholders receive the relevant information (M=4.43, SD=1.219), regular communication allows project team members to stay productive (M=4.10, SD=1.670) and that during project implementation, communication is seen as the glue that holds project stakeholders together (M=3.96, SD=0.445). This finding is consistent with Tushman and Katz (2017), who stated that for a project to lead and manage a particular set of activities and resources and achieve its predetermined performance goals, a project manager must possess a special set of communication skills.

Results of Inferential Statistics

Correlation analysis

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

		Communication	Project Implementation
Project implementation	Pearson Correlation	.841**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	73	73

Table 2 reveals that the Pearson r value of communication vs project implementation is 0.841, which is near to 1 and the level of significance is less than 0.05 at 0.000. As a result, a strong relationship between communication and project implementation was discovered.

Results of Regression Analysis

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.845 ^a	.893	.886	.179

The adjusted R-square value is 0.886, indicating that variations in communication variable account for 88.6% of project implementation by Kenya Urban Roads Authority in Nairobi City County, Kenya. As a result, it is possible to deduce that other variables not investigated account for 11.4% of project implementation.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.964	1	14.964	90.114	0.000 ^a
	Residual	11.790	71	0.166		
	Total	26.754	72			

The value 0.000a indicates that the threshold of significance is less than 0.05. The results also show that at the 5% significance level, the statistical F value (90.114) is greater than the statistical mean square value (14.964), confirming the model's relevance.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	0.646	.223		2.897	.000
	Communication	0.784	.042	4.208	18.667	.000

The data in Table 5 revealed that if communication remained constant, the Kenya Urban Roads Authority's implementation of road construction projects in Nairobi City County, Kenya would be at 0.646 factor. According to the study, a unit improvement in communication would increase road construction project implementation by Kenya Urban Roads Authority in Nairobi City County, Kenya by 78.4%.

The ensuing regression equation was the result of this;

$$\text{Project implementation} = 0.646 + 0.784 (\text{communication})$$

Table 5 further shows that there was a positive and significant association between communication and the implementation of road construction projects by Kenya Urban Roads Authority in Nairobi City County, Kenya, as indicated by t values (t=18.667, 0.05).

6. CONCLUSIONS

In order for projects to advance smoothly and on schedule, the study came to the conclusion that effective communication is a key component. It guarantees that team members are aware of the project's objectives and what is expected of them. Additionally, it promotes the growth of trust, which makes it possible for everyone to work together more successfully from beginning to end. Communication is crucial to keep each expert informed and on task because project teams frequently include professionals with a diverse range of backgrounds and skills. In their role as leaders, project managers speak with their teams frequently in order to guarantee the success of the project.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that for effective communication during project implementation, the organization should understand its team and stakeholders in terms of information such as team location, team members' origins, whether they have taken any personality tests, what type of resource they are, and so on. Seek potential collaborators by determining how

frequently messages will be examined by relevant specialists. Make a communication plan and distribute it to all project participants. Engage with the people involved in the project on multiple levels and at various phases. Make your collaborative atmosphere open and transparent, and encourage frequent contact.

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