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Linking Project Management Dynamics to Healthcare Projects Outcomes: A Case of Migori County, Kenya

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Abstract: **Healthcare projects in Migori County, Kenya, operate in complex environments with diverse stakeholders, fluctuating external conditions, and reliance on volunteers or temporary staff who may lack project management skills. This study examined the influence of project management team dynamics, stakeholder dynamics, communication dynamics, and risk dynamics on healthcare project performance in the county. Guided by the Balanced Scorecard Model and Stakeholder Theory, a descriptive research design was applied to five major healthcare projects, involving all 138 staff members as the study population through a census approach. Data were collected using semi-structured questionnaires, pre-tested with 14 respondents from a similar project at the United Nations Development Programme. Instrument validity was confirmed through content, face, and construct validity, while reliability achieved a Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.7. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data underwent content analysis. Findings indicated that all four dynamics significantly and positively influenced project performance. Effective team environments—characterized by diversity, trust, clear roles, and collaboration—enhanced outcomes. Active stakeholder engagement, including community members, healthcare professionals, and authorities, improved decision-making. A strong communication culture was vital for operational efficiency. Proactive risk management supported project resilience. The study concluded that aligning team composition, stakeholder involvement, communication strategies, and risk assessments strengthens healthcare project outcomes. Recommendations included clearly defining roles, briefing stakeholders on contributions, respecting local culture and language, conducting systematic risk assessments, and investing in team training for risk management and project execution in Migori County's healthcare sector.**

Keywords: **Healthcare project management, Team dynamics, Stakeholder engagement, Communication strategies, Risk management in healthcare management.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Operational efficiency is central to organizational success, enabling cost reduction, optimal resource use, and improved productivity (Rodrigues & Bowers, 2018; Luo et al., 2022). In project-based environments, effective project management practices are critical for delivering initiatives on time, within budget, and at the required quality standards (Sidwell, 2020; Choi & Bae, 2023). Strong project management dynamics encompassing team, stakeholder, communication, and risk management enhance coordination, reduce delays, and build adaptability in complex environments (Ford, 2019; Bianchi, 2022).

Globally, NGOs in developing countries face sustainability challenges stemming from weak financial systems, poor governance, and limited alignment with stakeholder priorities (Aftab et al., 2020; Irfan et al., 2023). In Sudan, improving NGO performance requires robust financial management, skilled human resources, and strategic leadership (Omran et al., 2023). In Kenya, NGOs and government programs are central to delivering social and health services, often supported by donor funding under principal–agent arrangements (Omolo, 2020; Shani et al., 2022).

Organizational performance encompasses efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation (Selden & Sowa, 2018; Gavrea et al., 2022). Efficiency ensures optimal resource utilization, effectiveness reflects goal achievement and adaptability, while innovation sustains competitiveness and resilience (Yuchtman & Seashore, 2017; Kalkan et al., 2022).

Project management dynamics involve adapting to evolving scope, budgets, resources, and stakeholder expectations (Rodrigues & Bowers, 2019). Team dynamics foster trust, role clarity, and collaboration (Furukawa, 2023). Stakeholder engagement aligns project goals and expectations (Nguyen et al., 2022), while effective communication supports informed decision-making (Pinzger & Gall, 2020). Risk dynamics, when managed proactively, mitigate disruptions and enable timely adjustments (Arena et al., 2023).

In Migori County, Kenya, a rural region with one of the highest HIV prevalence rates nationally (13.3% vs. 4.5% national average) (National AIDS Control Council, 2022) healthcare projects have been initiated to improve maternal health, combat infectious diseases, and strengthen infrastructure (Ministry of Health, 2022). Despite significant government and donor investments, approximately 45% of projects have stalled or failed to meet intended outcomes (Kenya Health Information System, 2022). Contributing factors include poor planning, inadequate resources, political interference, scope creep, weak stakeholder engagement, and insufficient risk management (Transparency International, 2023).

Although prior studies in Kenya link project management practices to improved development outcomes (Mkutano & Sang, 2018; Kaluai, 2020), most have been conducted in urban settings or outside the healthcare sector. This creates a contextual and sectoral gap regarding the role of project management dynamics in rural healthcare project performance, particularly in counties such as Migori.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and Stakeholder Theories. Balanced Scorecard (BSC) authored by Kaplan and Norton's (1996) BSC extends performance assessment beyond finance to customer (patient), internal processes, and learning/innovation, offering a strategy-to-operations line of sight for public health projects. In project settings, embedding team coordination, risk management, and communication within the BSC sharpens alignment and execution (Akkermans & Vanoorschot, 2018; Nielsen & Nielsen, 2020). In resource-constrained healthcare, the BSC supports concurrent monitoring of efficiency (cost/time), patient experience, clinical/administrative workflows, and capability building (Bianchi, 2022).

Stakeholder Theory developed by Freeman (1984) posits that value creation depends on balancing multi-party interests. For county health projects, salience varies across government actors, providers, communities, donors, and patients. Transparent, continuous engagement improves coordination, mobilizes resources, and surfaces risks early (Fares, Chung, & Abbasi, 2021). Co-creation with stakeholders enhances creativity and problem-solving and reduces resistance across the project lifecycle (Zhang, Chong, Zeng, & Zhang, 2023).

2.2 Empirical Literature

Team Dynamics and Project Performance

Evidence consistently links team dynamics to outcomes. In Croatia, Juras (2019) showed team dynamics significantly predict organizational performance via competency profiles, though cross-sectional design limits causal claims. Kenyan studies reinforce context-specific levers: Gicovi (2018) found communication and clear role distribution strongly correlated with effectiveness in Embu CBO projects; Muthike (2021) reported positive effects of participation and engagement in a Nairobi NGO (Pact), but generalizability is limited by single-organization scope. Beyond nonprofits, Awuor (2017) showed team cohesion enhances creativity and problem-solving among Nakuru SMEs, while Nyaga (2020) found transformational leadership strengthens cohesion and performance in Nairobi hotels. However, a few studies test team dynamics in public healthcare portfolios under devolved governance. The present study addresses this by examining team composition, trust, and role clarity within Migori County health projects.

Stakeholder Dynamics and Project Performance

In China, He, Zhang, Li, & Piesse (2021) showed synergistic stakeholder orientations (customers, suppliers, competitors, employees) drive performance, with evolving institutions moderating shareholder primacy. In Kenya's health sector, Awuor & Deya (2023) reported sponsor dynamics strongly predict a free maternal healthcare project's success in Homa Bay.

Outside health, Njoroge (2019) (PPP projects, Nairobi) and Ochieng (2020) (road projects, Kisumu) found that early, active involvement of communities and public agencies improves timeliness and completion. From Iran, Jalali, Jaafar, & Ramayah (2020) showed stakeholder ties indirectly boost SME performance via innovation and risk-taking. However, there is limited integrated, longitudinal analyses of stakeholder salience, engagement quality, and decision rights in county-level healthcare, which this study undertakes in Migori.

Risk Dynamics and Project Performance

Risk management improves delivery across sectors. In Nairobi construction, Wachira (2020) linked risk identification/mitigation to fewer delays and overruns. Kioko (2019) showed financial risk controls (budget monitoring, resource allocation) improved scope and schedule adherence in Machakos public infrastructure. Donor contexts matter: Odhiambo (2021) found rigorous risk assessment crucial for donor-funded projects facing political/economic shocks. Sector-specific insights include Gachoka (2018) (Kenya Power) where operational risk controls (supply chain, maintenance) improved outcomes; Kiprotich (2022) (Uasin Gishu roads) highlighted safety/environmental risk practices. It was established that healthcare-specific, embedded risk frameworks (clinical, supply, workforce) under devolved systems are under-documented. The current study tests risk practices and performance links in Migori's health projects.

Communication Dynamics and Project Performance

Communication quality is a recurrent predictor of success. Muriithi (2020) (Nairobi road projects) found timely, transparent exchanges reduce overruns and accelerate completion. In donor-funded water projects, Otieno (2019) showed robust internal channels improve on-time delivery. Tooling matters: Njoroge (2021) (KenGen) reported project software enhanced collaboration, timeliness, and cost control. At the stakeholder interface, Karanja (2018) (Kiambu infrastructure) found regular, open communication with agencies and communities critical for success. In healthcare, Mwangi (2022) (Machakos) showed tailored strategies during planning/execution phases elevate outcomes. Few studies examine culturally responsive, multi-stakeholder communication systems in rural healthcare with volunteer/temporary staff. This study therefore, evaluates communication routines and tools within Migori County projects.

Across contexts, the four project management dynamics—team, stakeholder, risk, and communication, each show positive associations with delivery performance. Yet most evidence is sector- or locale-specific, fragmented, and often cross-sectional. There is a clear need for an integrated model situated in county public healthcare—with multiple funders, shifting priorities, and constrained capacity to test combined effects on project outcomes. This study fills that gap in Migori County by empirically examining how these dynamics jointly shape healthcare project performance**.**

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design to systematically collect, analyze, and interpret data without manipulating variables, thereby offering insights into relationships between project management dynamics and performance (Erickson, 2017; Dulock, 2019). The target population comprised 138 employees across five healthcare projects in Migori County, including managers and staff. A census approach was adopted to include all respondents, ensuring comprehensive representation and eliminating sampling bias (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2018). Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire containing both closed- and open-ended questions to capture quantitative and qualitative information (Barriball & While, 2018).

A pilot study involving 14 project managers from the UNDP tested the instrument's validity and reliability (Vogel & Draper-Rodi, 2017; Hazzi & Maldaon, 2020). Content, face, and construct validity were established through expert review and conceptual alignment (Yaghmaie, 2018; Mosier, 2017; Strauss & Smith, 2019). Reliability, measured using Cronbach's alpha, exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70 across all variables (Ahmed & Ishtiaq, 2021; Taber, 2018; Vaske, Beaman, & Sponarski, 2017).

Questionnaires were distributed in person following organizational approval, with follow-up visits to improve response rates. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, applying descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and inferential methods (multiple regression) to cause and effect. Qualitative responses underwent thematic analysis to identify key patterns. Ethical considerations included informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and approval from an ethical review board to ensure adherence to research standards.

4. STUDY FINDINGS

A total of 138 questionnaires were issued to the responders. The overall rate of response for the research is given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Number of questionnaires	Percentage
Responded	121	87.7
Did not respond	17	12.3
Total	138	100

Survey Data (2025)

Table 4.1, indicate that 121of the 138 questionnaires distributed were completed and sent back, indicating a successful response rate of 87.7 percent. As a result, the above-mentioned response rate was determined to be suitable for analysis. This is endorsed by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), who states that any response which is 70% or higher is considered satisfactory for analysis and drawing conclusions.

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

4.1.1Team Dynamics

The following are the descriptive statistics results obtained on team dynamics regarding the respondents' level of agreement as presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.2: Team Dynamics

Assertions	M	SD
Diverse team backgrounds foster creativity and innovation.	4.56	0.437
Trust among team members promotes shared responsibility.	4.66	0.340
Assigning clear roles enhances team collaboration.	4.53	0.470
Teamwork supports continuous learning and development.	4.38	0.617
Aggregate score	**4.53**	**0.466**

Survey Data (2025)

Respondents expressed strong agreement that diverse team backgrounds foster creativity (M = 4.56, SD = 0.437), trust promotes shared responsibility (M = 4.66, SD = 0.340), and clear roles enhance collaboration (M = 4.53, SD = 0.470). Collaboration was also seen to support continuous learning (M = 4.38, SD = 0.617). The aggregate mean score (M = 4.53, SD = 0.466) indicates broad consensus that strong team dynamics positively influence healthcare initiatives in Migori County, consistent with prior findings by Buffinton et al. (2022), Furukawa (2023), and Juras (2019).

4.1.2 Stakeholder Dynamics

The following are the descriptive statistics results obtained on stakeholder dynamics regarding the respondents' level of agreement as presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Stakeholder Dynamics

Assertions	M	SD
Engaging stakeholders provides valuable insights and feedback.	4.06	0.935
Stakeholder engagement fosters ownership and commitment.	4.52	0.475
Stakeholder involvement improves decision-making.	4.57	0.426
Meeting stakeholder expectations enhances organizational reputation.	3.84	1.157
Aggregate score	**4.25**	**0.748**

Survey Data (2025)

Stakeholder engagement was found to enhance decision-making (M = 4.57, SD = 0.426) and foster ownership (M = 4.52, SD = 0.475). Insights and feedback (M = 4.06, SD = 0.935) and meeting expectations (M = 3.84, SD = 1.157) were also valued. The aggregate score (M = 4.25, SD = 0.748) supports evidence from He et al. (2021), Njoroge (2019), and Ochieng (2020) that stakeholder participation improves performance and reputation.

4.1.3 Communication Dynamics

The following are the descriptive statistics results obtained on communication dynamics regarding the respondents' level of agreement as presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Communication Dynamics

Assertions	M	SD
Clear communication between managers and team members enhances collaboration.	4.27	0.728
Effective communication supports problem-solving and decision-making.	4.08	0.817
Transparent communication promotes trust within the organization.	3.61	1.385
Positive feedback strengthens stakeholder relationships.	4.57	0.428
Aggregate score	**4.13**	**0.839**

Survey Data (2025)

Positive feedback was highlighted as crucial for stakeholder relationships (M = 4.57, SD = 0.428). Clear communication enhanced collaboration (M = 4.27, SD = 0.728) and supported problem-solving (M = 4.08, SD = 0.817), while transparency promoted trust (M = 3.61, SD = 1.385). The aggregate mean (M = 4.13, SD = 0.839) aligns with Muriithi (2020), Otieno (2019), and Karanja (2018) on the importance of transparent, timely communication.

4.1.4 Risk Dynamics

The following are the descriptive statistics results obtained on risk dynamics regarding the respondents' level of agreement as presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Risk Dynamics

Assertions	M	SD
Risk identification leads to more informed decision-making.	3.76	1.237
Proper risk monitoring enables innovative risk solutions.	4.09	0.909
Effective risk mitigation improves project outcomes.	4.50	0.499
Risk management strengthens relationships with stakeholders.	4.61	0.386
Aggregate score	**4.24**	**0.758**

Survey Data (2025)

Respondents agreed that effective mitigation improves outcomes (M = 4.50, SD = 0.499) and risk management strengthens stakeholder relationships (M = 4.61, SD = 0.386). Risk identification (M = 3.76, SD = 1.237) and monitoring (M = 4.09, SD = 0.909) were linked to better decision-making and innovative solutions. The aggregate score (M = 4.24, SD = 0.758) supports findings by Wachira (2020), Kioko (2019), and Odhiambo (2021) on the performance benefits of proactive risk strategies.

4.1.5 Project Performance

The following are the descriptive statistics results obtained regarding the respondents' level of agreement on project performance presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Risk Dynamics

Assertions	M	SD
The operational efficiency of the organization has improved.	2.58	2.419
NGOs are able to provide effective services to stakeholders.	3.20	1.799
There is continuous innovation in the organization.	2.86	2.137
Aggregate score	**2.88**	**2.118**

Survey Data (2025)

Participants showed neutral views on organizational efficiency (M = 2.58, SD = 2.419), service effectiveness (M = 3.20, SD = 1.799), and innovation (M = 2.86, SD = 2.137). The aggregate score (M = 2.88, SD = 2.118) suggests mixed perceptions, contradicting Carmeli and Tishler (2021) who associate performance improvements with identifiable enabling factors.

4.2 Regression Analysis Results and Discussions

Table 4.7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.899	0.808201	0.785	1.0056

Survey Data (2025)

The regression model demonstrated strong explanatory power, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.785, indicating that 78.5% of the variation in healthcare project performance in Migori County can be explained by team dynamics, stakeholder dynamics, communication dynamics, and risk dynamics. The remaining 21.5% is attributable to other factors not included in the model.

Table 4.8: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	136.487	4	34.122	39.991	0.003
	Residual	98.975	116	0.853		
	Total	235.462	120			

Survey Data (2025)

The ANOVA results (Table 4.9) show a significant F-value of 39.991 (p = 0.003), confirming that the predictors jointly have a statistically significant effect on project performance. This means the observed variance is unlikely due to chance.

Table 4.9: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.703	0.341		2.0616	0.003
	Team dynamics	0.841	0.229	0.0564	3.672	0.002
	Stakeholder dynamics	0.798	0.375	0.0647	2.128	0.004
	Communication dynamics	0.776	0.208	0.0519	3.731	0.003
	Risk dynamics	0.784	0.211	0.0442	3.716	0.004

The study found that team dynamics ($\beta = 0.0564$, $p = 0.002$) had a strong positive impact on project performance, reinforcing the findings of Gicovi (2018), who established that structured team management contributes to higher performance in community organizations. Stakeholder dynamics ($\beta = 0.0647$, $p = 0.004$) were also found to significantly improve outcomes, consistent with Awuor and Deya (2023), who reported that sponsor engagement plays a critical role in the success of maternal healthcare projects. Similarly, communication dynamics ($\beta = 0.0519$, $p = 0.003$) emerged as essential for project success, aligning with Mwangi (2022), who emphasized the importance of effective communication in project planning and execution. Finally, risk dynamics ($\beta = 0.0442$, $p = 0.004$) were found to be significant, echoing the work of Kiprotich (2022), who demonstrated that proactive risk management enhances both safety and efficiency in project implementation. These findings collectively highlight that effective management of team, stakeholder, communication, and risk dynamics is integral to improving project performance across various contexts.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The findings demonstrate that team dynamics, defined by diversity, trust, role clarity, and collaborative culture, exert a significant positive influence on healthcare project performance in Migori County. Strong team structures facilitate effective communication, enhance problem-solving capacity, and foster innovation through the integration of diverse perspectives. Stakeholder dynamics also emerged as critical, with active involvement of community members, healthcare providers, and local authorities improving decision-making, accountability, and the alignment of project interventions with local health priorities. Communication dynamics were found to be indispensable, supporting efficient coordination, knowledge sharing, and the customization of solutions to community-specific needs. Furthermore, robust risk dynamics anchored in proactive identification, assessment, and mitigation—were shown to safeguard project continuity, strengthen stakeholder confidence, and promote sustainable healthcare outcomes.

5.1 Recommendations

To optimize healthcare project performance, organizations should institutionalize structured team management by defining roles, fostering open communication, and promoting trust through regular engagements and collaborative problem-solving platforms. Stakeholder engagement strategies should be systematic, beginning with comprehensive stakeholder mapping and analysis, followed by targeted communication and partnership-building with high-influence actors. Communication frameworks must be clear, inclusive, and culturally sensitive, incorporating feedback loops that enable continuous adaptation to emerging challenges. In risk management, organizations should embed comprehensive and periodic risk assessments addressing environmental, economic, social, and political factors, while strengthening team capacity through training and resource allocation. Finally, integrating strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will ensure early detection of threats and facilitate timely corrective action, thereby sustaining project impact over the long term.

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