

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION IN REFUGEE CAMP IN RWANDA, A CASE STUDY OF ALIGHT'S WASH PROJECT

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**Abstract:** The aim of the study was to determine the influence of project management skills on implementation of SDG projects of WASH in ALIGHT in Kiziba camp. The study focused on establishing how cost management skills, team management, risk management and finally time management skills influences implementation of SDG projects with respect to cost, budget and quality. A descriptive survey research design was used. A total population of project facilitators used. Purposive sampling was used to determine the respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect the data. Both descriptive and SPSS were used for data analysis. The findings indicated on cost management skills, team management skills and risk management skills may be positive or negative and significant influence on implementation of SDG projects in WASH in ALIGHT in Kiziba camp. The study findings also revealed if time management skills had a positive or negative insignificant effect on the implementation of SDG projects. The study findings made different recommends ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp policy makers and the parties involved in project implementation to come up with mechanisms of encouraging managers to sharpen their cost project management skills. Furthermore study recommends that managers should always have documented risk management plans in place. managers should also focus on all aspects of project risk management like risk identification, analysis, responses and risk control and risk monitoring. Finally, the study recommends training managers in time management aspects like project activity definition, time duration estimations and preparation of activity schedules.

**Keywords:** Refugee Camp, management skills, SDG projects, risk control and risk monitoring.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Normally, for every organization to meet its objectives, there are key management tools that are supposed to be used. Project management skills are one of the most important. This research's aim will be to evaluate the relation between project management skills and project implementation of non-profit organization in refugee camp in Rwanda. This chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of study, research questions, scope of the study and significance of the study.

Many countries have invested in water, sanitation and hygiene as a crucial pillar for development. Quality water, sanitation and hygiene translates to reduction in social inequalities and poverty and helps develop a more health citizenry. According to UNESCO (2017), water, sanitation and hygiene is paramount in sustainable development as it helps empower people making them more health. The knowledge acquired in training of water, sanitation and hygiene also increases people's control over their own lives. Water, sanitation and hygiene education prepares learners for higher water, sanitation and hygiene and career choice (Bogonko, 1991). It is for this reason that many nations are heavily investing in their water, sanitation and hygiene sector. In Rwanda, SDG was set apart as a kitty specifically to develop the country at constituency level. According to the SDG Act (2013), 25% of all the SDG allocation should be channelled to the water, sanitation and hygiene sector.

One way through which poor project management manifests in the Water, sanitation and hygiene sector is through failed, stalled or incomplete projects. The water, sanitation and hygiene sector heavily relies on head health facilitators and project manager (Bush & Oduro, 2006). According to The Commonwealth Secretariat (1996), WASH Project need proper management development in order to realize quality and efficient delivery of services. In Rwanda, according to the basic Water, sanitation and hygiene Act of 2013, project facilitators are the accounting officers, team leader for projects, policy implementations and initiators of policy proposals that might be considered by the UNICEF. These roles place project managers at centre stage in all projects implemented in the WASH sector they head, SDG included. However, most of these facilitators lack the necessary project management skills for efficient project implementation. Many high health facilitators in Africa lack any formal training and leadership skills sufficient for the role of a public head (Bush & Oduro, 2006), there has been a great growth in project management discipline in engineering, construction and Information Technology. Project management has in the recent past become one of the key tools for managing efficiency and delivery of quality projects on time and within budget. According to Hwang and Ng (2013), there will be a total of 15.7 million positions requiring project management professionals between 2010 and 2020. These positions are spread

across several industries including oil and gas, manufacturing, Software development, business administration, insurance and finance. Statistics postulate that USA alone will have 6.5 million project management positions by 2020 (Chowdhury, 2013).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The non-profit organization is becoming increasingly global and the role of the project management professional now includes many front-end services, which increases the required skill set of new graduates (Choudhury, 2000; Kay, 2001). Project management is no longer a special-need management (Arain, 2005a). Alternative contractual delivery systems, collaborative partnerships, new management initiatives, and global product markets require professionals and students to have a broader awareness of construction methods and project management issues. Duncan (1996), defined project management as the application of knowledge skills, tools and techniques to project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations from the project. Project management is rapidly becoming a standard way of doing business (Arain and Assaf, 2003). An increasing percentage of the typical firm's effort is being devoted to projects. The future promises an increase in the importance and the role of projects in contributing to the strategic direction of organizations (Arain, 2005b).

### **Specific objectives**

- To determine relationship between cost management skills and implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp.
- To assess the relationship between team management skills and the implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp.
- To examine relationship between risk management skills and the implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp.
- To determine relationship between time management skills and the implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp.

### **Research questions**

- How do cost management skills relate to implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp?
- To what extent do team management skills relate to the implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp?
- How do risk management skills relate to the implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp?
- To what extent do time management skills relate to the implementation of projects in ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical review**

#### **Empowerment theory**

One of the theories that will guide this study is the skills-based leadership theory postulated by Robert Katz in 1955. According to this theory, effective leaders have a set of skills adopted in their course of management. Administrators are the people responsible for directing others and ensuring they collectively achieve the objectives of the initiative at hand. As a project administrator, there are three sets of interrelated skills that are necessary for effective direction and success in their mandate. These skills include technical, human and conceptual skills (Northouse, 1997).

The skill based theory was used in guiding the second and third objective of the study. The principals need proper team management for effective communication, motivation and remuneration of the people working on the SDG project. Similarly, principals need conceptual skills to identify, analyse and develop a monitoring and control plan for any risks as hampering the project progress is detrimental to the school holistically. Poor coordination of activities due to lack of conceptual skills can only escalate the risks and cause delays in projects or lower the project quality.

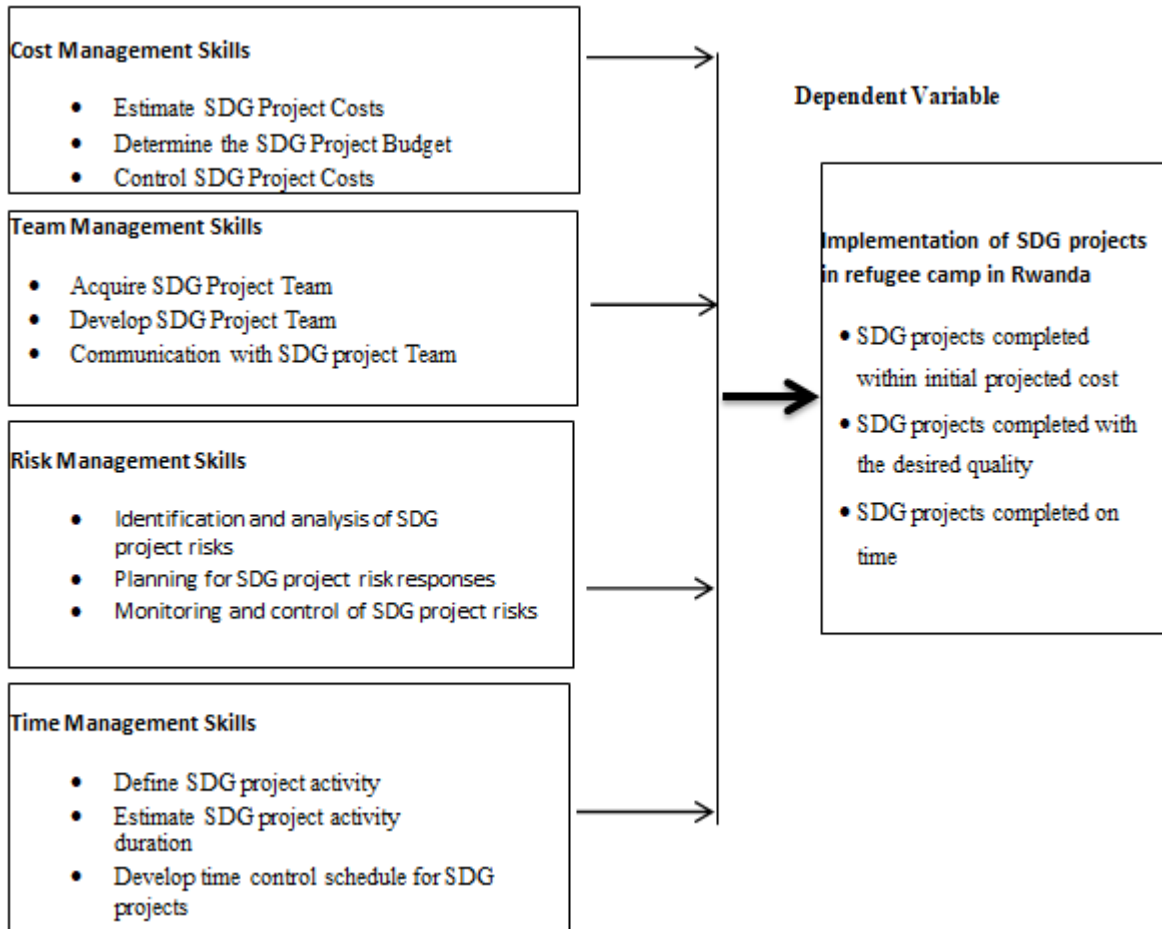
#### **Empirical review**

In an effort to ensure equitable development from the grass root, reduce regional imbalances and ensure resources are distributed across the country, the government of Rwanda introduced the SDG kitty in 2003 as a way of helping each constituency realize their own important needs and address them (Auya & Oino, 2013). According to the SDG Act (2013), the fund is required to have funds not less than 2.5% of the national governments revenue yearly. Unlike other development funds that have numerous administrative layers, SDG funds are channelled directly to the local level. This gives the people on the ground power to make important decisions on their own welfare through establishing projects in the water, sanitation and hygiene and health sectors that have been a great challenge in local community development since independence (Auya & Oino, 2013). There are numerous issues arising in this form of decentralization and devolution approach taken by the Rwandan government. Physical structures, development principles and matters of service delivery and financing are some of the major issues underlying the decentralized economic management (Kibua & Mwabu, 2008). This calls for a need to understanding the pertinent issues underlying project success including the project management cycle to ensure rural development and value for the SDG kitty (Awiti, 2008; Juma 2015).

Despite the heavy financial investment in SDG projects in Rwanda, there are still rampant occurrences of project failure and delays. There are cases of favouritism and exclusion of some communities from development projects. According to Okungu (2006), almost all SDG funding including schools, roads, health projects and even bursaries are diverted to people closely related to the MP of the day. Occurrences where members of parliament give preference to those closely related to them or where they obtained greatest support during elections gives way for fraudulent activities and misappropriation of funds. Lack of knowledge in project management is another major setback in SDG success. Where the people on the ground lack the competence and skills in designing and implementing viable projects, then SDG becomes a big failure. According to Auya and Oino (2013), the incompetence of the executive committees was a major cause for projects taking long to complete and some not starting at all.

**The Conceptual Framework**

**Independent Variables**



Source: Researcher 2021

**Research gap**

The studies discussed in this literature section shows how efforts have been done by scholars to expand knowledge in the area of project management both locally and in the global arena.

**3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Research design**

This study used a descriptive survey research design. This design allowed the study to describe or explain the relationships that exists between variables without altering those relationships. This study used descriptive, correlation and explanatory research design. As it was indicated (Andrews, 2005) the descriptive method allowed the researcher to collect and analyse qualitative data from the selected case project; such as ALIGHT’s WASH project.

**Study Population**

The researcher targeted ALIGHT’s WASH project in Kiziba camp project employees. Therefore; the total target population across the entire constituency was seventy-three (73) project staff according to ALIGHT’s WASH project in Kiziba camp office.

**Sample size and sampling technique**

**Sampling Techniques**

The study used purposive sampling by selecting principals that have been part of at least one SDG WASH project in the constituency.

### **Data process, analysis and Presentation**

The next step of the researcher was data analysis. After collecting data, the researcher continued to process, analyse and interpret the data. The researcher had to exercise good care to ensure that reliable data are collected because efforts would end in useless if the data was not properly processed and analysed. Thus, the following task takes place during the process of data processing.

#### **Data analysis**

The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) v21 to analyse quantitative data (mean, standard deviation, correlation, regression) and content analysis was used to analyse qualitative collected through questionnaire and interviews.

## **4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary of the findings particularly the descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. It also presents the conclusions and the recommendations to the study. The last section of the chapter contains areas of further study where suggestions are made for future researchers to expand more into the knowledge gaps of this study.

The summary has been presented as per each research objective. From the summary, the study presented conclusions which aided in developing the recommendations to the study. The summary of the findings combined both descriptive and inferential results. The descriptive results such as frequency and percentages as well as the correlations and regression results formed the basis of this summary.

#### **Summary of findings for the first specific research objective**

Results showed a Pearson correlation coefficient between cost management skills and project implementation of .81. Statistical evidence showed that there is a significance relationship between cost management skills and project implementation. The Pearson relationship between cost management skills and effective project implementation indicated that there is a positive high correlation.

#### **Summary of findings for the second specific research objective**

Results showed a Pearson correlation coefficient between team management skills and project implementation of .76. Statistical evidence showed that there is a significance relationship between team management skills and project implementation. The Pearson relationship between team management skills and project implementation indicated that there is a positive high correlation.

#### **Summary of findings for the third specific research objective**

Results showed a Pearson correlation coefficient between risk management skills and project implementation of .92. Statistical evidence showed that there is a significance relationship between risk management skills and project implementation. The Pearson relationship between risk management skills and project implementation indicated that there is a positive strong correlation.

#### **Summary of findings for the fourth specific research objective**

Results from table 8 showed a Pearson correlation coefficient between time management skills and project implementation of .95. Statistical evidence showed that there is a significance relationship between time management skills and project implementation. The Pearson relationship between time management skills and project implementation indicated that there is a positive strong correlation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that cost management skills positively and significantly influenced the implementation of SDG projects. An improvement in cost management skills such as manager budgeting for every task touching on SDG project as well as the manager specifying the individuals accountable for each task leads to positive implementation of SDG projects.

Moreover, the study concluded that team management skills positively and significantly influence the implementation of SDG projects. An increase in team management practices such as manager motivating SDG project team and the manager ensuring that the project team is acquired based on their previous experience in similar projects leads to positive and significant implementation of SDG projects.

Further, the study concluded that risk management skills practices significantly and positively influences the implementation of SDG projects. An increase in risk management skills practices such as the Manager ensuring that risk identification checklists in place for the SDG projects, risk identification checklists are developed based on historical information, helping the PMC to monitor and control risks and the risk probability and impact assessment are carried out for SDG projects leads to positive and significant implementation of SDG projects.

Finally, the study concluded that an improvement in time management skills such as clearly defining all SDG project activities, clearly defining activity durations and establishing a time control schedule for project activities has a positive influence on project implementation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The study recommends ALIGHT's WASH project in Kiziba camp policy makers and the parties involved in project implementation to come up with mechanisms of encouraging managers to sharpen their cost project management skills including proper budgeting, accountability assignments, task division and cost controls. This will help in reducing cost overruns and also ensuring resources are allocated based on the activity importance.
- The study also recommends that the project managers should consider focusing more on essential motivation of their project teams, have proper payment plans in place and ensure those hired have some previous experience in similar projects when implementing constituency development fund projects. Similarly, there is need for acquiring proper communication skills and improving their interpersonal skills for better project implementation experience.
- This study recommends that managers should always have documented risk management plans in place. managers should also focus on all aspects of project risk management like risk identification, analysis, responses and risk control and risk monitoring. There is also need to inform managers in charge on how to prepare and keep risk identification checklists.
- Finally, the study recommends training managers in time management aspects like project activity definition, time duration estimations and preparation of activity schedules. This will help in ensuring that there are no cost overruns due to inflation.

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