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PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF KENYA NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The main objective of this study was to investigate the influence of project management practices on the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya; and determine project leadership's influence on performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya

Methodology A descriptive research design was used for this study because focus in on the specific predictions, the narration of facts, and characteristics based on road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya, to provide statistically inferable data to test the significance of results on the population. The study targeted 6 road projects in Mombasa County undertaken by KeNHA as described in the KeNHA website. The unit of observation comprised of four categories of participants, namely, KeNHA staff, road contractors and consultants for the five selected KeNHA road projects in Mombasa County making up a total of 140 respondents. The data was analyzed using SPSS 28. Both descriptive and inferential analysis was done.

Findings: The study found stakeholders involvement has a positive ($\beta1=0.066$, sig = .041) significant influence on performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County. Project leadership also has a positive ($\beta2=0.370$, sig = .000) significant influence on performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County

Recommendations: The study recommends that the projects should have clear stakeholder guidelines to ensure that all the end user needs are catered for, and the project is implemented within the set time. The study also recommends for appointment of a project leader who has the skills, competencies, and experience in managing projects.

Keywords: stakeholders' involvement, project leadership, project management practices, performance of KeNHA road construction projects

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few years, Africa has focused on road infrastructure development projects. On average, Africa has, in the past decade, developed its road network by 7500 kilometres. Lesotho and Tanzania are among the African countries leading on the road construction pack in Africa, with an annual road network increase of 24 and 15 per cent, respectively. Nationally, Kenya has also put substantial effort into increasing its road network and connectivity over the last few years. Under the Kenya Roads Act of 2007, Kenya has three significant agencies responsible for managing, developing, maintaining, and rehabilitating different roads. These agencies are the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), The Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) and the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA). KeNHA is tasked with the national roads, KURA the urban roads and KeRRA the rural roads. According to KeNHA's 2016/17 annual reports, Kenya's Vision 2030's second medium plan aims to construct and rehabilitate 5500 kilometres of roads; 3825 kilometres are national trunk roads, while the other 1685 kilometres are county roads. Through the county governments, the Kenyan government has committed to improving the quality of rural roads across each of the country's 47 counties.

Projects go through a series of stages from start to completion. Each project phase is a collection of logically intertwined activities that help complete single or multiple project deliverables (Kerzner, 2019). The project phases are either iterative, sequential, or overlapping. Projects vary in size and complexity, but management practices apply to any project. Some project management practices are essential throughout a project life cycle from the start to the end. In their study, Noorzai (2020) revealed that experience in road construction related conflicts between the project's stated goals and the appropriate costs, quality, and time. This study demonstrated that distinct knowledge in various management areas is essential for project managers to efficiently ensure project goals are achieved within the set costs and time. These management areas include having the ability to set appropriate schedules for project activities.

Like other counties, Mombasa County is a beneficiary of the national and county government development efforts through various road construction projects under the county government. Several road construction projects have been completed within the county, and others are still underway under various road agencies, including the County Government of Mombasa, KeNHA, KeRRA and KURA (Beldinne & Gachengo, 2022). Despite emphasizing the importance of successful project completion, Mombasa County, like other counties in Kenya, is still experiencing delays and under completion of road projects. Karanja and Ruguru (2023) highlighted that most of the road construction in the county has encountered significant time and cost overruns, with others failing to achieve the intended benefits or being abandoned or terminated before or after completion. Moreover, the developments in construction in Kenya lag far behind that of other sectors in the county and their counterparts in most developed countries

Statement of the Problem

A World Bank (2016) study revealed that Mombasa County has repeatedly failed to effectively deliver on various public projects across various sectors to a tune of 57%. These findings show that only 43% of the public projects in Mombasa County were completed as required, with only 21% completed efficiently and effectively. The study further revealed that 45% of the public projects in Mombasa County were on the struggling end, while the remaining 55% were either entirely failed or abandoned (World Bank, 2016). These failures were attributed to poor project management and leadership within the county. For example, the Mombasa-Mariakani Road project had complaints and the complainant was paid 15% (Ksh 30,000) disturbance allowance and KeNHA is yet to settle the 85% of the compensation as reported by the accountability console website. There are cases of forceful eviction of local affected by projects undertaken by KeNHA for example the Mombasa-Kwa Jomvu lot 1 and Jomvu -Mariakani Lot 2. Forced evictions are contrary to the stakeholder management plan and resettlement action plan (RAP)

as reported by Bankwatch network. It is also reported that after 4 years of the project the project promoters still continue to make wrong settle practices around the construction areas despite of having a clear RAP (Antonowicz-Cyglicka & Roggenbuck, 2021). Hussein and Kisimbii (2019) explained, most road construction projects in different counties across Kenya have not been completed within the set time frames due to different factors that adversely affect the performance of these projects.

Objective of the study

The study aimed to investigate the influence of project management practices on the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Specifically, the study sought:

i. To establish the influence of stakeholders' involvement on the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya.
ii. To determine project leadership's influence on performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

In the management literature, stakeholders refer to employees, customers, competitors, government, clients, suppliers, and shareholders. Stakeholder Theory (ST) provides a deeper analysis to identify stakeholders, their influence, and their agendas (Sæbø, Flak & Sein, 2011). Accordingly, the stakeholder theory seeks to explain what and who counts in a project. The theory thus demonstrates that a project's value need is not narrowed to the perceived economic benefits but should also incorporate the needs of the stakeholders (Kaluai & Muathe, 2020). Unlike the traditional organizational perception, where only the project owners or proprietors were considered necessary, the stakeholder theory argues that all other parties relevant to the project are essential, including the local communities, political organizations, and funders. Employees, government authorities and the project consumers or users (Mandala, 2018).

The aim of this approach is, therefore, to help project managers to understand and manage the stakeholders strategically. Several research studies have stressed the importance of applying the tenets of stakeholder theory in projects, and the theory has already been used in different sectors despite its origins. The theory is uniquely applied through several evaluation criteria and procedures. The theory applies in this study to support the first objective of the influence of stakeholders involvement in the identification of the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the road construction projects in Mombasa County, the identification of the roles of these stakeholders and their expectations and their engagement in the project management to establish how they could have helped improve the outcomes of the selected projects.

Contingency theories describe how situations influence leadership actions. The Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory, created by Hersey and Blanchard (2009), encourages leaders to choose a style based on the capability of their subordinates. If new subordinates need specific instructions, effective project managers tell them what to do, typically by providing comprehensive step-by-step procedures (Hersey & Blanchard, 2009). When team members know how to accomplish a task, project managers tell subordinates what needs to be done but spend less time communicating how. If the project team members do not require much direction, the project leader motivates the team to produce quality results. When a project team member can operate independently, the project manager delegates authority to him/her (Fielder, 2004). Using this theory, project managers select a style that fits the current situation to work productively. This theory supports the second objective of the influence of project leadership by explaining how leadership styles affect how the project manager manages the project teams.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

The Independent variables (stakeholders Involvement and Project leadership) is conceptualized as the variable that can influence the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Kenya. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

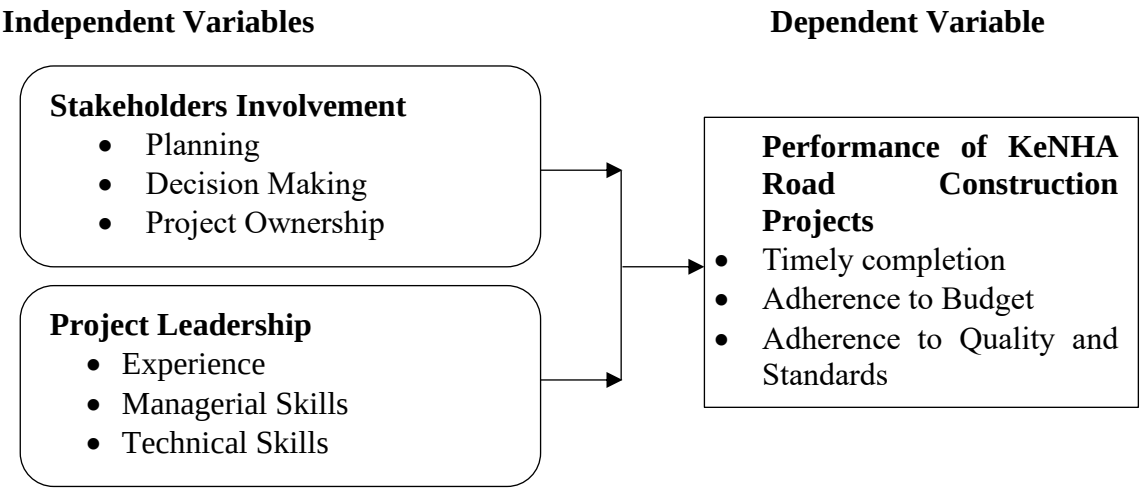

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement in a project's planning and implementation phases is crucial in project management. Involving stakeholders enhances proper and smooth coordination of the available project resources to facilitate the effective execution of the project plan. Stakeholder involvement transforms the project policies and objectives, leading to a logical arrangement of the project activities. There are two ways in which construction projects can enhance stakeholder involvement in the projects, namely decision-making and project ownership. Kobusingye (2017) posited that stakeholders play essential roles in a project, such as in the procurement of project materials, coordinating resources and the people, evaluating project risks, and ensuring the project is implemented within the framework of its plan.

Njue et al (2021) found that the involvement of stakeholders leads to the enhancement of the implementation of these projects. Stakeholders respond positively to the project cost analysis process by ensuring the project budgets are within the limits of the project costs. Njogu (2016), opined that engagement of stakeholders in automobile emission control, stakeholder involvement has led to a positive influence on the project performance through the contribution of the needed raw materials for the projects, such as securing financial support from donors, and assignment of the various project roles and responsibilities to different stakeholder.

Mambwe et al. (2020) revealed that a poor definition of the project's scope will likely arise when the project team does not adequately involve the stakeholders in the critical decision-making processes. Involving stakeholders in making critical project decisions helps ensure that each phase of the project is completed in line with the stakeholders' expectations, thus increasing the chances that the project's final will be satisfactory for all. According to Lehtinen and Aaltonen (2020) project sponsors, implementers, and other stakeholders must agree on the project's goals to improve project performance. The project should have clear stakeholder guidelines to ensure that all the end user needs are catered for, and the project is implemented within the set time. Through clearly defined project plans where roles are assigned to the different participants on respective deliverables, project implementers avoid time and money wastages, ensuring the projects are completed on time and within the set budget.

Project Leadership

Successfully leading projects from planning to completion requires the project leaders and managers to have the right experience to manage and lead the project. Through experience, leaders acquire key project management skills and develop their abilities to develop a clear vision for the project. Zheng et al. (2019) elucidated that the client's decisions are critical to the project's success. However, apart from the client's decisions, several other project parties' decisions are crucial to the project's success. Zaman (2020) revealed that the experience of the project leader is among the primary factors affecting the costs and time overruns in projects. The contractor's decisions, for instance, cannot be ignored since they play an important role in how the project is completed.

Zaman (2020) demonstrated that a project manager's experience significantly impacts the project's costs, quality, and time. Silva et al. (2023) explained that it is necessary to consider the experience of the project contractors and leaders, especially on their past performance on procurement processes, to ensure that individuals with the right skills and experience are tasked with respective project tasks that ensure the project is completed within the set time and costs and meets the required quality measures. Leaders' experience impacts their abilities to deal with challenging situations since they have past knowledge on how to navigate such challenges and prevent possible costs and time overruns compared to inexperienced leaders or contractors.

According to Mithamo and Chowdhury (2022) the style of leadership used by project leaders and leadership skills are inseparable since the leaders' skills determine the employees' perception of the overall project leadership. Considering this assertion, Theophanous (2020) opined that the leaders' qualities influence the motivation of project team members in shaping the attributes, perceptions, and beliefs that, ultimately, determine the success of the organizational projects. Ochola (2018) agreed that the qualities and values of project leaders impact the environment within which the project is completed, which affects the project either positively or negatively. Wang et al. (2022) found that transformational leadership is the most effective and preferred leadership style in most projects because it helps leaders integrate all the project parties towards achieving a shared goal. The available research shows that the type of leadership in any given project impacts the project's performance (Ochola et al., 2022).

Performance of Road Construction Projects

Performance definition for this proposed study refers to accomplishing and achieving the planned objectives and targets. For instance, Ogbu and Osazwu (2023) defined performance as the outcomes and outputs of a process, product or service, which allows comparison and assessment of relative achievements to set standards, goals and past results or other specifications. Typical road construction projects are multilayered and hence comprise unbound materials. The structural design of a road is essential because it determines the road's ability to carry the intended loads and serve the intended purpose without requiring excessive maintenance. According to Sinesilassie et al. (2018), road performance is the ability of the road to serve transport and traffic purposes over time satisfactorily. Performance is a broad term that generally entails how road conditions serve their intended purposes with accumulated use. Thus, it is essential to ensure that during road construction, all necessary measures are taken to ensure the roads are completed within the required standards to serve the needs of their intended users.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Stakeholder Involvement and Project Performance

Matu et al. (2020) investigated the stakeholder involvement in the project planning processes of construction projects. It revealed that project managers with the highest level of stakeholder engagement from the planning to implementation phases of the project are more likely to deliver the set project goals with less conflicts and resistance. Lehtinen and Aaltonen (2020) explain

that project sponsors, implementers, and other stakeholders must agree on the project's goals to improve project performance. The project should have clear stakeholder guidelines to ensure that all the end user needs are catered for, and the project is implemented within the set time. Through clearly defined project plans where roles are assigned to the different participants on respective deliverables, project implementers avoid time and money wastages, ensuring the projects are completed on time and within the set budgets.

Project Leadership and Project Performance

Ali et al. (2020) investigated the impacts of leadership on project performance revealed that leadership significantly influences employee motivation and improves cooperation and coordination of the project. The consultants and contractors involved in road construction projects have varying capabilities, experience, and management skills, significantly impacting project completion and success. This study will focus on four critical leadership skills crucial to project management: leadership experience, management skills, technical skills, and training.

Alvarenga et al. (2019) found that technical skills help leaders effectively manage the project processes by enabling them to address the ambiguity of projects and unknown factors that may delay the implementation and completion of projects. Another study by Stanitsas et al. (2021) revealed that a positive correlation exists between the technical skills of the project leaders and the project performance since leaders with sharpened technical skills are better placed to handle complex project tasks and ensure that the proper technological techniques are integrated into the project to enhance the effectiveness of the project implementation and execution. Another study by Simmon et al. (2020) revealed that although leadership training might not be the leading factor in influencing project success, it has an essential impact on the overall project performance with numerous indirect impacts on project completion.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research design employed descriptive because the focus in on the specific predictions, the narration of facts, and characteristics based on road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya, to provide statistically inferable data to test the significance of results on the population. The study population in this case was the road projects are Mombasa Southern Bypass-Dongo Kundu (Miritini- Mwache), the Changamwe Interchange, the Makupa Bridge, Bitument Standards of Old Nairobi Road- Jomvi Kuu- Mazeras, Mombasa-Mariakani Road Lot 1: Mombasa-Kwa Jomvu and Magongo Road Phase II undertaken by KeNHA as described in the KeNHA website. The unit of observation comprised of four categories of participants, namely, KeNHA staff, road contractors and consultants for the five selected KeNHA road projects in Mombasa County making up a total of 140 respondents. These respondents form the target population for this study owing to their high knowledge level and understanding of the study's topic since they are involved in the design and implementation of the road projects.

The stratified random sampling and purposive sampling technique were used in this study due to the heterogeneous nature of the targeted study population. This study had a small number of participants hence adopted the census survey thus the researcher completed an enumeration of the whole 140 respondents. This study involved collection of qualitative and quantitative primary data hence the researcher used semi-structured questionnaires as the main data collection tool. Questionnaires allow respondents to give their own views or information regarding the topic under investigation thus allowing detailed responses. The qualitative data was collected using open-ended questions while the quantitative data was collected using close-ended questions using the Likert scale. The data was analyzed using SPSS 28. Both descriptive and inferential analysis was done.

RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

The questionnaires were administered to the sample size of 140 respondents from KENHA in Mombasa County. The respondents dully filled and returned 112 questionnaires with a response rate of 80%.

Descriptive Statistics

Respondents were requested to give their opinion on how they agreed with statements that measure the study variables. A 5-point Likert scale was used where 1= Strongly Disagreed, 2 =Disagreed, 3 =Neutral, 4= Agreed, 5= Strongly agreed. The study used measure of central tendency i.e. frequency, mean and standard deviation to describe the patterns of responses. The descriptives are as follows based on the study variables.

Status of Performance of KeNHA Road Construction Projects

The study aimed to investigate the influence of project management practices on the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya. In this study performance of KeNHA road construction projects was measured by timely completion, adherence to budget, adherence to quality and standards indicators. Performance definition for this proposed study refers to accomplishing and achieving the planned objectives and targets. Ogbu and Osazwu (2023) defined performance as the outcomes and outputs of a process, product or service, which allows comparison and assessment of relative achievements to set standards, goals and past results or other specifications. Performance assessment has, for several years, been a problem within the construction sector. Different measures and concepts have been tested to establish and measure the construction project performance. According to Rokicki et al (2023), most measures assess the preferred project standards, such as output, costs, and time.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements on performance of road constructions projects as influence by project management practices. Findings revealed that 50.9% of the respondents agreed that the road construction projects undertaken by KeNHA in Mombasa County are completed within the allocated time (M = 3.52, SD = 1.433); while 50% agreed that road construction projects by KeNHA in Mombasa County always completed within the allocated budgets (M = 3.41, SD = .926). Another majority of 80.4% of the respondents agreed that road construction projects completed by KeNHA in Mombasa County meet the quality performance indicators (M =4.21, SD = .753). Findings also show that 60.8% of the respondents agreed that there are few variations of project scope among road construction projects completed by KeNHA in the county leading to upward costs appraisal (M =3.42, SD = 1.499). The findings also indicate that 70.6% of the respondents agreed that there are minimum repairs done on the completed road sections (M =3.91, SD = .945). The majority of 50.8% the respondents agreed that through effective management process the road construction projects by KeNHA are delivered within the accepted standards (M =3.42, SD = 1.360). The findings also indicate that 50.9% agreed that the stakeholders involved in road construction projects have expressed their satisfaction with how the roads projects have been implemented by KeNHA (M = 3.42, SD = 1.205). However, there was mixed opinion on whether effective project management practices by KeNHA there road construction projects have ensured delivery of projects on time. Only 40.1% agreed while 30.4% were neutral (M = 3.21, SD = 1.246).

Table 1: Performance of KeNHA Projects

Performance of KeNHA projects	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	MN	STD
Road projects undertaken by KeNHA in Mombasa County are completed within the allocated time	9.8	19.6	19.6	10.7	40.2	3.52	1.433
Road construction projects by KeNHA in Mombasa County always completed within the allocated budgets	0	19.6	30.4	39.3	10.7	3.41	.926
Road projects completed by KeNHA in Mombasa County meet the quality performance indicators	0	0	19.6	39.3	41.1	4.21	.753
There are few variations of project scope among road construction projects completed by KeNHA in the county leading to upward costs appraisal	19.6	9.8	9.8	30.4	30.4	3.42	1.499
There are minimum repairs done on the completed road sections	0	9.8	19.6	40.2	30.4	3.91	.945
Through effective management process the road construction projects by KeNHA are delivered within the accepted standards.	9.8	19.6	19.6	20.4	30.4	3.42	1.360
The stakeholders involved in road construction projects have expressed their satisfaction with how the roads projects have been implemented by KeNHA.	9.8	9.8	29.5	30.4	20.5	3.42	1.205
Due to effective project management practices by KeNHA the road construction projects have been delivered on time.	9.8	19.6	30.4	20.5	19.6	3.21	1.246
Composite Mean						**3.56**	**.849**

Majority of the respondents agreed with the statement on performance of projects in Mombasa County. The mean of 3.56 clearly indicated agreement while the standard deviatio3.56n of .849 shows that the responses didn't vary much from the mean of 3.56. According to Sinesilassie et al. (2018), road performance is the ability of the road to serve transport and traffic purposes over time satisfactorily. Performance is a broad term that generally entails how road conditions serve their intended purposes with accumulated use. Thus, it is essential to ensure that during road construction, all necessary measures are taken to ensure the roads are completed within the required standards to serve the needs of their intended users. When it comes to road construction projects performance, Delatte (2018) explained that the performance of road projects in most developing countries is faced with a series of performance problems. Most road projects in these countries fail regarding quality, costs, and time performance. In the past, several roads in countries such as Kenya have failed, which is evident through road closures, non-compliance on the road construction materials, changes in handing over the projects, amendment of the road designs and additional work, which are indications that a road has been completed as needed (Jayasinghe & Perera, 2021)

Stakeholder Involvement

The first specific objective of the study was to establish the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study attempted to answer the research question 'To what extent does stakeholder

involvement influence the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya?' In this study stakeholder involvement was measured by planning, decision making, and project ownership indicators. Kerzner (2017) opined that involving stakeholders enhances proper and smooth coordination of the available project resources to facilitate the effective execution of the project plan. Stakeholder involvement transforms the project policies and objectives, leading to a logical arrangement of the project activities. Njue et al (2021) found that the involvement of stakeholders leads to the enhancement of the implementation of these projects.

The findings reveal that 51.8% of the respondents agreed that the stakeholders are involved in development of the project plans during early stages of the projects (M = 3.60, SD = 1.311); while 53.6% of the respondents agreed that project stakeholder are identified and mapped during the initial stages of the project (M = 3.43, SD = 1.243). Further, the results indicated that 45.5% of the respondents agreed that project stakeholders are involved in implementation of the project plans of the road construction projects (M = 3.25, SD = 1.334). The findings also revealed that respondents agreed 51.8% Stakeholder involvement in decision making of the road construction projects affects timely completion of projects (M =3.43, SD = 1.334). The results also showed that 53.6% agreed that stakeholder involvement in decision making of the road construction projects lead to completion of projects within set budgets (M = 3.43, SD = 1.292). The study also found 54.4% of respondents agreed that stakeholders are consulted in making the decisions that will affect the implementation of the success of the road construction projects (M =3.43, SD = 1.292). At (M =3.49, SD = 1.362), 69.6% of the respondents agreed project ownership among stakeholders affect user satisfaction. It was agreed by 50% that the involvement of the project stakeholders in road construction projects has helped developed the sense of ownership in the projects. Thus, there was mixed opinion on this statement (M =3.92, SD = 1.083).

The findings revealed that with most of the respondents slightly agreed with statements on stakeholder involvement (M = 3.46, SD = .953). Kobusingye (2017) posited that stakeholders play essential roles in a project, such as in the procurement of project materials, coordinating resources and the people, evaluating project risks, and ensuring the project is implemented within the framework of its plan. Lehtinen and Aaltonen (2020) elucidated that project sponsors, implementers, and other stakeholders must agree on the project's goals to improve project performance. The project should have clear stakeholder guidelines to ensure that all the end user needs are catered for, and the project is implemented within the set time. Through clearly defined project plans where roles are assigned to the different participants on respective deliverables, project implementers avoid time and money wastages, ensuring the projects are completed on time and within the set budget. Matu et al (2020) found that in involvement of stakeholders in the project planning process of construction project, project managers with the highest level of stakeholder engagement from the planning to implementation phases of the project are more likely to deliver the set project goals with less conflicts and resistance. Kibathi and Nyang'au (2023) revealed that the roles of stakeholders in propelling project success are achieved through their active participation in the project, which improves the project's performance and promotes the project's sustainability.

Table II: Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder Involvement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	MN	STD
The stakeholders are involved in development of the project plans during early stages of the projects.	7.1	17	19.6	21.4	34.8	3.60	1.311
During the initial stages the project stakeholder are identified and mapped.	7.1	19.6	19.6	30.4	23.2	3.43	1.243
The project stakeholders are involved in implementation of the project plans of the road construction projects.	12.5	17.9	24.1	23.2	22.3	3.25	1.325
Stakeholder involvement in decision making of the road construction projects affects timely completion of projects.	9.8	17.9	20.5	23.2	28.6	3.43	1.334
Stakeholder involvement in decision making of the road construction projects lead to completion of projects within set budgets.	8	20.5	17.9	27.7	25.9	3.43	1.292
Stakeholders are consulted in making the decisions that will affect the implementation of the success of the road construction projects	9.8	17.9	17.9	22.3	32.1	3.43	1.292
Project ownership among stakeholders affect user satisfaction	1.8	11.6	17	32.1	37.5	3.49	1.362
The involvement of the project stakeholders in road construction projects has helped developed the sense of ownership in the projects	9.8	20.5	19.6	30.4	19.6	3.92	1.083
Composite Mean						**3.46**	**.953**

Project Leadership

The second specific objective of the study was to determine project leadership's influence on performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study was also guided by the research question 'How does project leadership influence the performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County, Kenya?' Successfully leading projects from planning to completion requires the project leaders and managers to have the right experience to manage and lead the project. Through experience, leaders acquire key project management skills and develop their abilities to develop a clear vision for the project. The findings revealed that 60.4% of respondents agreed that the project manager is experienced enough to handle the management of road construction projects (M = 3.52, SD = 1.362). however, there was mixed opinion on whether the leadership experience affects the user satisfaction since only 40.2% agreed while 40.2% disagreed (M = 3.00, SD = 1.185). The majority of the respondents 50.9% agreed that the project manager possesses the managerial skills needed for negotiation with the various stakeholders of the project (M = 3.52, SD = 1.031); while 60.7% agreed that the project manager has the managerial skills to manage conflicts that arise in the project (M = 3.32, SD = 1.436).

The findings further revealed that 80.4% of the respondents agreed that the project leadership has the managerial skills needed to manage the project team (M = 4.11, SD = 1.218); 69.7% also agreed that the project leadership is technical enough to handle the complexity the road construction projects (M =3.89, SD = 1.218). It was also established that 60.4% respondents

agreed that the project leadership is trained frequently to ensure it has the necessary technical skills for successful completion of the road construction project (M = 3.62, SD = 1.202). Lastly, 50.9% of the respondents agreed that the project team is hired based on the technical competence needed for completion of road construction projects (M = 3.32, SD = 1.275).

The study found that majority of the respondents agreed with project leadership statements as supported by the mean of 3.54. The standard deviation of .795 further indicated that here was minimal variation of responses from the mean of 3.54. project leadership indicators were witnessed in KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County. Zaman (2020) revealed that the experience of the project leader is among the primary factors affecting the costs and time overruns in projects. Successfully leading projects from planning to completion requires the project leaders and managers to have the right experience to manage and lead the project. Through experience, leaders acquire key project management skills and develop their abilities to develop a clear vision for the project. Urbanski et al. (2019) revealed that after completing leadership training programs, project leaders are more likely to have an increased knowledge of effective project leadership and management, significantly increasing project performance. Stanitsas et al. (2021) explained that leadership and management skills training facilitated knowledge-sharing opportunities that led to improved work performance. Projects that provide regular training to their leaders have a higher likelihood of reaping positive project outcomes than those that offer no training.

Table III: Project Leadership

Project Leadership	**SD %**	**D %**	**N %**	**A %**	**SA %**	**MN**	**STD**
The project manager is experienced enough to handle the management of road construction projects	9.8	19.6	9.8	30.4	30.4	3.52	1.362
The leadership experience affects the user satisfaction	9.8	30.4	19.6	30.4	9.8	3.00	1.185
The project manager possesses the managerial skills needed for negotiation with the various stakeholders of the project.	0	19.6	29.5	30.4	20.5	3.52	1.031
The project manager has the managerial skills to manage conflicts that arise in the project.	29.5	9.8	0	20.5	40.2	3.32	1.436
The project leadership has the managerial skills needed to manage the project team	0	9.8	9.8	30.4	50	4.11	1.218
The project leadership is technical enough to handle the complexity the road construction projects	9.8	0	20.5	30.4	39.3	3.89	1.218
The project leadership is trained frequently to ensure it has the necessary technical skills for successful completion of the road construction project.	0	29.5	9.8	30.4	30.4	3.62	1.202
The project team is hired based on the technical competence needed for completion of road construction projects.	9.8	19.6	19.6	30.4	20.5	3.32	1.275
Composite Mean						**3.54**	**.795**

Correlation Analysis

Findings from Table IV below, stakeholder involvement and performance of KeNHA road construction projects has a positive weak and significant (r = 0.283, sig value= 0.001<0.05). This implies that improving stakeholder involvement indicators may positively lead to an increase in performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa. The findings of this study echoed the conclusion of Dacha and Juma (2018), who revealed that stakeholders should be effectively involved in the construction project's key processes, such as procurement, to help prevent cost overruns that may result from project delays. The findings further show that correlation between project leadership and performance of KeNHA road construction projects has moderate strong, positive and significant (r = 0.440, Sig = 0.000 < 0.05). This implies that an improvement in the indicators of project leadership positively leads to an increase performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County. The study findings are similar to the findings of Stanitsas et al. (2021) revealed that a positive correlation exists between the technical skills of the project leaders and the project performance since leaders with sharpened technical skills are better placed to handle complex project tasks and ensure that the proper technological techniques are integrated into the project to enhance the effectiveness of the project implementation and execution.

Table IV: Correlation Coefficient

		Stakeholder involvement	Project leadership
Performance of KeNHA road construction projects	r	.283**	.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000
	N	112	112

Regression Analysis

Results in table v below reveal that beta coefficient of stakeholder involvement is (β_1 = 0.066, p-value = 0.041), this implies that there is positive and significant relationship between stakeholder involvement and performance of road construction projects in Mombasa County. The results implied that a unit increase in stakeholder involvement would results to an increase of 0.066 units in performance of road construction projects in Mombasa County. The study findings are consistent with Matu et al (2020) that revealed stakeholder involvement is significant on performance of projects. Project managers with the highest level of stakeholder engagement from the planning to implementation phases of the project are more likely to deliver the set project goals with less conflicts and resistance. Similarly, Kibathi and Nyang'au (2023) revealed that the roles of stakeholders in propelling project success are achieved through their active participation in the project, which improves the project's performance and promotes the project's sustainability.

For the second objective, the beta coefficient of project leadership is (β_2 = 0.370, p-value = 0.000), this implies that there is positive and significant relationship between project leadership and performance of road construction projects in Mombasa County. The results implied that a unit increase in project leadership would results to an increase of 0.370 units in performance of road construction projects in Mombasa County. The study findings are consistent with Ali et al. (2020) who investigated the impacts of leadership on project performance revealed that leadership significantly influences employee motivation and improves cooperation and coordination of the project. The consultants and contractors involved in road construction projects have varying capabilities, experience

Table V: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.761	.270		-2.816	.006
	Stakeholder Involvement	.066	.032	.074	2.063	.041
	Project Leadership	.370	.050	.346	7.416	.000

The regression model was as follows:

$$\gamma = -.761 + .066X_1 + .370X_2 \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (i),$$

The regression model reveals that most significant determinant of performance of KeNHA projects in Mombasa County was project leadership then stakeholder involvement.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The findings conclude that stakeholder involvement significantly influences performance of KeNHA construction projects in Mombasa County. Involving stakeholders in planning of the project, and decision making cultivates the feeling of project ownership. Thus, project managers should ensure the stakeholder all involved throughout the project to help improve the performance of the project and ensure its success. On the second objective, the study concludes that project leadership significantly influence performance of KeNHA road construction projects in Mombasa County. The experience of the project manager is important in ensuring the project team gets direction and also commands confidence in the work. It is also important for the project manager to have managerial and technical skills. Project management is a field where the leadership skills are highly needed since the nature of projects are constrained and thus, decision making should me also prompt. A good manager can handle conflicts, manage time and resource as well ensure the team spirit is high. Similar studies have also found the significance of project leadership in enhancing project performance.

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that the projects should have clear stakeholder guidelines to ensure that all the end user needs are catered for, and the project is implemented within the set time. Through clearly defined project plans where roles are assigned to the different participants on respective deliverables, project implementers avoid time and money wastages, ensuring the projects are completed on time and within the set budgets. The study also recommends for appointment of a project leader who has the skills, competencies, and experience in managing projects. The project manager should also possess technical, managerial, and business acumen. The project manager should also ensure there use appropriate leadership style in managing projects.

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