

DETERMINANTS OF SUSTAINABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) PROJECTS IN MARGINALIZED COUNTIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF ECD PROJECTS IN LAMU COUNTY

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Abstract: The purpose of this research was to examine the determinants of sustainable implementation of early childhood development (ECD) projects in marginalized counties in Kenya; a case of ECD projects in Lamu County. The study was proposed due to a number of reasons that range from the role of ECD (foundation education) on the welfare of the children in the society and its general effect on the education of country, plus the state of poor ECD projects in marginalized counties in Kenya. The study was guided by four objectives namely: to determine the extent to which stakeholders; to establish the extent to which funds allocation; to determine how feasibility study; and to establish the extent to which monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable County Government ECD centers' project in Lamu County. The population of the study was 246 respondents who were Head teachers, County employees and PTA chairpersons. The study used a sample size of 149 respondents. The researcher collected data using a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was then coded to facilitate entry to SPSS software for analysis by the help of statistics expert. Data was analyzed and presented by use frequency tables, means, standard deviation etc. The chi-square was used to test the research hypothesis. Findings indicated that: majority of the respondents supported the idea that ECD projects in the county have been engaging the various stakeholders effectively and these stakeholders influence the implementation of ECD projects. The significance of the influence was confirmed by the chi-square test whereby the alternative hypothesis was adopted after achieving a calculated chi-square value of 14.3 that was greater than the critical chi-square value of 9.488 at 0.05 level of confidence. Also, funds allocation for ECD projects influences their performance in the county; feasibility study influences ECD projects implementation in the county. The significance of the influence was confirmed by the chi-square test whereby the alternative hypothesis was adopted after achieving a calculated chi-square value of 38.7 that was greater than the critical chi-square value of 9.488 at 0.05 level of confidence. Equally, feasibility studies were found to be significant in the implementation of ECD projects. The significance of the influence was confirmed by the chi-square test whereby the alternative hypothesis was adopted after achieving a calculated chi-square value of 46.4 that was greater than the critical chi-square value of 9.488 at 0.05 level of confidence. Also, the study indicated that ECD projects implementation is influenced by monitoring and evaluation significantly. The significance of the influence was confirmed by the chi-square test whereby the alternative hypothesis was adopted after achieving a calculated chi-square value of 35.1 that was greater than the critical chi-square value of 9.488 at 0.05 level of confidence. Finally, it was suggested that a similar study can be carried out in Lamu county or other counties in the country to focus on other issues like influence of political in or government policies on ECD project.

Keywords: ECD projects, stakeholders' engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study, and monitoring & evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to UNESCO (2017), Educational For All abbreviated as EFA and Universal Education are some of the most celebrated advancements made by countries across the globe in order to address socio-economic development. EFA has been integrated into various development strategies like the MDGs and SDGs with the aim of achieving economic development across the globe and reducing the effects of slow economic and social development due to illiteracy. According to World Bank (2014) one strategy of ensuring EFA is achieved by 2020, countries need to strengthen the base of education by ensuring that there is quality early childhood education for all the learners. For quality early childhood education to be achieved there must be well implemented projects that address the needs of the children that takes into consideration both the social aspect of life and the health of the learners; a need for quality implementation of ECD projects.

From the global scene UNICEF (2018) has a report indicating that Cambodia as a country has adopted a number of radical measures to steer its economic performance after recovering from unrests and a series of wars. Some of these radical measures included the introduction of an education system that took care of the immediate and future needs of the school going children and other disadvantaged populations. This gave birth to the introduction of the compulsory elementary education that ran for two years for ages 5 to 7 years. According to the report, there are a number of factors influencing the implementation of the proposed projects that touch on the elementary education in the country. These factors include: government policies, stakeholders involvement, monitoring and evaluation, cultural beliefs, human labour availability and many other factors (World Bank, 2015).

Continently, Africa has been faulted for failing to educate its people with figures indicating over 62% rates on illiteracy in some of the poor countries like Lesotho and Gambia, Sindiswa (2015). A study carried in Lesotho between 2014 and 2014 December indicated that over 75% of the learners enrolled in elementary school classes failed to maintain their continual transition to primary level of education due to the poor state of the ECD programme (Sindiswa, 2015). The World Bank (2015) report indicated that the ECD program in this country is doing poorly due to a number of reasons. According to the report, poorly trained educators, unavailability of the teachers, poor government policies towards early childhood education, poor funding, poor involvement of stakeholders, conflict of interests, cultural practices and poor leadership negatively influenced the ECD program performance. Education Labour Relations Council (2015) in its report indicated that Lesotho's rates of illiteracy could increase by 2020 if the government doesn't revise its policies and strategies addressing the implementation of the ECD program. For example, poor funding, poor policies communication, poor management, corruption, lack of enough trained personnel, deficiency of personnel, poor projects monitoring and evaluation, poor stakeholders involvement, poor cultural practices and many more have been found to negatively influence the performance of the ECD projects (Education Labour Relations Council, 2016).

According to Ngirerea and Nyakwara (2018), Rwanda has made great strides towards implementing the ECD projects since the country recovered from a civil war that led to the loss of over one million lives. The government of Rwanda adopted a new curriculum that laid more emphasis on the foundation education that was run at the ages between 4 to 7 years. The government therefore partnered with various organisations like UNICEF, World Bank, UNESCO, UKAID, USAID etc and sourced for expertise who developed an executive ICT program that integrated training for peace and development concepts (World Bank, 2016). The government together with other stakeholders came up with the required resources for the implementation of the various ECD projects. These resources included financial resources and trained personnel for ECD projects implementation. In their work, Ngirerea and Nyakwara (2018) concluded that government policies, partnerships with other stakeholders, community perception, the training and expertise of the personnel, strategic planning and quality leadership influences the implementation of ECD projects in Rwanda.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the introduction of the new constitution in Kenya in 2010, the county governments were created and given various mandates, among them being the implementation and control of the ECD projects (Republic of Kenya, 2017). This means that budgetary allocation in counties have factored in the concept of the ECD projects implementation since 2013. However, despite the fact that ECD projects in various counties in the country are consuming a lot of monies from the tax payer, a research by World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Auditor General have shown that the projects are

performing poorly (World Bank, 2017; UNESCO, 2017, UNICEF, 2017). This means that there needs to be a research that thoroughly examines the reason behind this poor performance of these ECD projects in the counties despite the massive financial resources they consume.

In a recommendation documented report done by UNICEF about the state of foundation education in East Africa, Kenyan government has been advised to benchmark on the Tanzanian and Rwandese foundation education (ECD) on a number of issues that include patriotism, identity, language development, cohesion, governance and sanity etc (UNICEF, 2017). Being one of the most developed countries in east Africa, Kenya should have come up with much better ECD projects performance than young countries like Rwanda and by extension Burundi. This means that a study has to be done to examine the reasons behind the failure of such ambitious projects that consume many resources from the tax payers.

A number of studies that have been done in Kenya addressing ECD projects implementation have concentrated their efforts in counties that are not marginalized like Lamu county; a need for such a study. For example, Wamuyu (2015) did a study in Lari, Kiambu County and realized that ECD projects implementation for the past five years are challenged by a number of issues that include: poor policies, poor planning, poor resources etc. this calls for much detailed research into the same. Wambui (2015) did a study Imenti and indeed confirmed the need for consented efforts to address to address the concept of ECD projects in Kenya since much deviates results have been witnessed. Therefore, this study is to answer some of these puzzles. This study was carried with aim of examining the determinants of sustainable implementation of early childhood development (ECD) projects in marginalized counties in Kenya; a case of ECD projects in Lamu County.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research was to examine the determinants of sustainable implementation of early childhood development (ECD) projects in marginalized counties in Kenya; a case of ECD projects in Lamu County.

3.1 Objectives of the Study:

The research was guided by the following four objectives:

- i. To determine the extent to which stakeholder's engagement influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County.
- ii. To establish the extent to which funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County.
- iii. To determine how feasibility study affects sustainable County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County.
- iv. To establish the extent to which monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were sought for by this study:

- i. What is the extent to which stakeholders' engagement influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County?
- ii. What is the extent to which funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County?
- iii. How does feasibility study competence affect sustainable County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County?
- iv. What is the extent to which monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County?

4.1 Research Hypothesis:

The study was guided by the following four hypotheses at 0.05 confidence level

H1: Stakeholders engagement influences the sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County.

H2: Funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County.

H3: Feasibility study influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County.

H4: Monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is expected to benefit the county governments in the country that are handling the ECD projects on behalf of the national government. The county government shall get informed research on the various ECD projects sustainability determinants and later on it will be able to make informed decisions on what to adopt so that the projects perform better. The study will be beneficial to the national government that is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that basic education for all in the country is achieved as a basic need for all the children. The government through the Ministry of Education shall get relevant information that will help it understand the grey areas as it pertains to the whole ECD project implementation in the country. Other bodies like the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and AfDB that have been key stakeholders in Kenyan education shall be able to get relevant information that will guide them on where to support the whole process of foundation education in order to achieve better economic development.

6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

6.1 Early Childhood Development Projects:

Studies across the globe have indicated that education program in countries has a number of projects that have to be implemented in order to have it function and give the required results. One of the projects that is very crucial and adds up to the long-term education program performance of any given country in the world is the early childhood development project. It is normally seen as the foundation or the base of any given education system in the country and its role in children development is of more impact than any other level (World Bank, 2016). Manoj (2011) has given a definition of ECD and he states that it is the education that is given to children at their early age. According to him, these years of a child are very crucial in the child's development and hence education given during these years plays a very essential role especially in the development of the child's life. Kendra, (2013), in her journal on the overview of remarkable early childhood development, contends that the early childhood is a remarkable physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. UNESCO Policy Review Report (2005), professes that early childhood development refers to an area of study that concerns the care, development and learning of young children of ages 5+ to 6+ and Mucous, (2013) champions early childhood education and development as the period from age of two years up to six to seven years. Nafungo (2015) has outlined the history of ECD and has traced it back to the ancient Greek philosophers like Plato 428 and Aristotle who argued greatly about children development. He has indicated that children development is very crucial in the development of any given society. Children development is attached to the history of development and then linked to the total development of the child; thus, ECD projects implementation.

The evolution of the ECD program took place very fast and was later incorporated into the formal learning as a major component that gives a learner a good foundation. It spread very fast across Europe, then USA, China, India and later on African countries incorporated ECD into education fully (World Bank, 2018). Among the countries in Africa like Ghana, Libya, Nigeria, Egypt, Somalia and Ethiopia, it is argued that the ECD projects received much funds as the funds allocated to tertiary education between 1999 and 2009 (UNICEF, 2016) and the enrolment in schools in these countries increased by over 45% over a span of 10 years. In Kenya, the concept of ECDE has a long history dating back to the 2nd world war and the first pre-schools for African children can be traced back in the urban areas in African settlements (Republic of Kenya, 2014).

6.1.1 Stakeholders Engagement and the Implementation of Early Childhood Development Projects:

Muthoni (2015) did a study on projects implementation in schools and singled out the crucial role of stakeholders' involvement in the performance of projects. In the study that involved 99 respondents where 33 were BOG chairpersons, 33 were school heads and the remaining 33 were PTA chairpersons, it was noted that the stakeholders play a very important roles in ensuring that education projects are implemented effectively and efficiently. Some of the major stakeholders in the study were found to be teachers, learners themselves, the school management (headship), the board of management, the government agencies like the ministry of education, the local community that includes the parents, guardians and local leaders among others. A study by the World Bank (2015) done in Bolivia has indicated the usefulness and the influence of the various stakeholders on the implementation of the various ECD projects in the country since the year 2010. According to the report, the role of stakeholders has been emphasized by the government of Bolivia by bringing on board the community in school activities not necessarily on matters of finances but in raising consciousness and awareness that school building must be kept in good order and also that parents must know and be involved in the functioning of the school.

UNESCO (2015) has findings indicating that stakeholders are very important in ensuring that the education projects in any country succeed. In ECD for example, the stakeholders like the donor agencies, the local community, the parents, teachers and the school's management play each individual role that ensures a general better performance. Stakeholders like the local community gives and allocates land where the various ECD centers will be constructed, they give both the skilled and non-skilled labour required for such projects etc. Others like the donors (NGOs, Religious organisations, development partners) source for funds and allocate funds for the implementation of the various ECD projects, monitor the utilization of these financial resources, give expertise that can be used to have the projects achieve the objectives and at times give direction on the duration of funding these projects (UNESCO, 2017).

The role of primary stakeholders like the funding agents, the teachers, school management and the parents is very important for projects implementation for the ECD projects (Ndani and Kimani, 2015). In this study, the duo have a common finding indicating that the agencies that give financial resources and direction on the construction of the various infrastructure required for the ECD in the country are very important. Ong'uti (2014) has similar sentiments in that, stakeholders like the teachers and parents play an integral role on the implementation of the various ECD projects in the country.

A study has shown that the community plays a very important role as a major stakeholder in the implementation of the ECD projects in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ghana. In Ghana for example, the ministry of education has actively involved the community in construction of education activities in public schools in order to improve the community. The government has introduced a structure of equivalent contributions for societies ready to accept the school development projects. The cost is then estimated on the basis of the project. The government provides two thirds matching grant in two installments to the communities that first completed the buildings foundation. This gives ownership of the project to the community (Wambui, 2015).

6.1.2 Funds Allocation and Sustainable Implementation of Early Childhood Development Projects:

Scholars who are experienced in projects planning and management have defined a project as an undertaking that is out to achieve a given deliverables and is constrained by resources of time, labour and finances (PMI, 2008 and World Bank, 2017). In this definition, it is therefore confirmed that for any given project to give a given desired results, it should be endowed with sufficient financial resources. According to Global Action (2017), in Haiti, after the destructions that were brought about by the 2010/2011 earthquake, the country's education was shaken since the structures like the classrooms and the learning infrastructure were destroyed. It called for the efforts of the president and other leaders to call for support from various agencies like the IMF, World Bank, USAID, Relief international and many more to mobilize funds so as to start the process of constructing new classes and learning structures.

Ngirerea and Nyakwara (2018) argues that financial resources for ECD infrastructure development, funds for teacher's payment, funds for projects managers payments, funds for acquisition of land and other capital resources, funding for training and capacity building influences the implementation of the various ECD projects in countries. World Bank (2015) has similar opinions that financial resources play a crucial role of ensuring that there are expertise for the projects implementation that are hired, the funds ensure that enough teachers are hired for the ECD projects, enough learning materials are procured and the suitable environments are created to ensure better implementation of the projects.

Muthoni (2015) did a study that established the various factors influencing projects implementation in Nyeri county schools. In the study, the school heads, the BOG members and the PTA members were involved in giving the information. SPSS version 20.0 was used and the research findings indicated that school heads management skills, stakeholders' involvement, availability of funds and procurement procedures have significant influence on the performance and implementation of the school development projects in Nyeri. The findings revealed further that school heads are equipped with knowledge of management of projects in schools in spite of the training, most of them continue to encounter challenges as they execute project activities. In this study therefore, it is evident that financial resources availability influences the implementation schools' projects just like any other factor.

Muyoka (2017) confirmed the influence of funding, financial resources and funds on the program performance. In the study where 68 quality assurance officers, 72 school heads and 72 school board chairpersons were involved, it was confirmed that the available monies for school infrastructure development, monies to pay the teachers, monies for the schools and programs managers and monies to hire strategists and expertise significantly influence the implementation of the ECD programs run by the county government. Ndani and Kimani (2015) did a study in Thika and confirmed that financial resources are very significant on the implementation or the performance of education projects. In this study where the 78 known schools gave the respondents, it was realized that the amount of money allocated for given projects, the sources of these funds, the duration of funding, the conditions of funding and many more significantly influence the implementation of various school projects.

A study by Kamene (2015) has indicated that among other factors, financial resources influence the performance of the ECD projects in Kitui County, Kenya. Being a marginalized county, Kitui has a number of challenges that range from adverse effects of climate change to poor employment trends; facts that have forced majority of the families to enroll their children in schools with the hope of a bright future. However, the learners at times never get better education as anticipated in areas like Endau due to the poor state of education enabling projects like the ECD project components. Some of the blames have been tied to poor financing besides the economic hardship that faces the locals.

6.1.3 Feasibility Study and the Implementation of the Early Childhood Development Projects:

Tim (2018) in his work that focused on the importance of a feasibility study on the performance of projects in the 21st century has given a detailed definition of a good feasibility study besides giving the various components. Tim (2018) has outlined six universal components of feasibility study in any given project. These include: The Project Scope which is used to define the business problem and/or opportunity to be addressed; The Current Analysis is used to define and understand the current method of implementation, such as a system, a product, etc. (the strengths and weaknesses of the current approach are identified- pros and cons); Requirements and how requirements are defined depends on the object of the project's attention; The Approach represents the recommended solution or course of action to satisfy the requirements (Here, various alternatives are considered along with an explanation as to why the preferred solution was selected- redesigning); Evaluation examines the cost effectiveness of the approach selected. This begins with an analysis of the estimated total cost of the project. In addition to the recommended solution, other alternatives are estimated in order to offer an economic comparison. World Bank (2014) did a report indicating that Lesotho is among the poorest countries in the world due to a number of reasons; among them being the poorly structured and performance system of education. Some of the reasons as to why education in Lesotho is not adding up to the required standards for development is due to the poor planning and re-examining of the viable steps in implementing the various education projects. UNESCO (2015) reported that poor feasibility study in Lesotho in 2014 led to the failed 23% ECD projects that were to be funded by the body.

Jackie (2018) has indicated a number of benefits of carrying a feasibility study before implementing or allowing a given projects to continue being run. In this study that was carried out in the east Africa region and extending his findings to Ethiopia, it was discovered that feasibility studies in school projects implementation have a number of advantages that later of ensure proper implementation of the projects. These advantages include: guiding the project implementers on whether they should move forward with their idea, refine it, or scrap it altogether and go back to the drawing board; helps the projects implementers to be specific and focused; they give the big picture of the whole project and propose the communication mode (top to down or vice versa model) etc.

According to Education Labour Relations Council (2016), a feasibility study influences the performance of ECD projects implementation in Pretoria. According to the report, a feasibility study evaluates the project's potential for success; therefore, perceived objectivity is an important factor in the credibility of the study for potential investors and lending institutions. Therefore, a feasibility study can help in explaining the possibility of a given project being successful, the potential of the project of attracting more investors, the power of the project of mitigating the risks associated with its failure etc.

6.1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation and Sustainable Implementation of Early Childhood Development Projects:

According to UNICEF (2015), it calls for action to be engaged to accurate any insufficiencies that are perceived in the monitoring process for general success of the perceived projects. Monitoring therefore encompasses unremitting or ongoing collection and analysis of information about implementation to review progress; Compares actual progress with what was planned so that adjustments can be made in implementation. It is an internal activity that is the responsibility of those who manage implementation procedures, thus representing a good management practice.

Monitoring the quality of learning environments is an integral part of the licensing process for ECD projects across the globe according to the standard requirements by bodies that advocate for the education rights of the children like UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID etc. Vitiello and Kool, (2010) assert that there is need for a holistic, comprehensive ECD monitoring system that covers the multiple facets (education, health social protection and social economic context in which the child is born) of public and private ECD interventions in a country. To them such a system is essential for ensuring that all children can reap the benefits of ECD. Monitoring serves as a means of support and oversight for monitoring the performance and planning of ECD policies and program in a developing country. They believe that good governance of ECD program in developing countries calls for comprehensive monitoring systems of the program.

A number of studies have also given the definition of evaluation and combined monitoring and evaluation together and have outlined their influence on projects implementation. According to UNESCO (2017), It is a periodic valuation of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and/or sustainability of an activity or intervention; Is a systematic search for answers about an intervention (project, program, or policy); and Measures the effects of an intervention and compares them with the goals and objectives of the intervention. Evaluation aims to determine whether the project is achieving the intended results, and to measure the impact of the project. Evaluations are done during implementation. For example, mid- project cycle to evaluate overall project achievements; or studying a specific aspect of the project on its termination and ideally, a few years after project completion to measure the long-term effects.

Mavyala (2015) argues that monitoring and evaluation is very important in education projects implementation. The study that focused on the various indicators of evaluation and then interconnected them with the monitoring process indicated that well planned monitoring and evaluation, monitoring and evaluation that bring forth the formative, continuous and summative elements of monitoring and evaluation. The general trend indicated that monitoring and evaluation influences the implementation of various projects.

6.2 Theoretical Framework:

6.2.1 The System Theory:

In this theory, all the proponents of the theory contend that a system is an assembly of portions combined to complete a complete goal line. According to this theory, all parts of the system coordinate to bring around the results required and if one part of the system fails, the whole functioning of the organization fails. The organization in this case can be equated to the project which has various components that interact to ensure that the projects succeed.

For example, in a project cycle, the employees in various departments perform different roles that at the end of the day combine to bring about the whole functioning of the project in what can be equated to a complete functioning system. Other parts include the resources like finances, the management, the stakeholders and the projects end users who are continuously interacting to produce the results.

According to (Ross, 2015), the systems theory encompasses, the concept of the environment. The environment in this case can be external or internal. Internal environment also can be classified in primary or secondary. Primary environment is the immediate environment that has a direct immediate influence on the implementation of the various projects. Once the

primary environment is taken care of and the rest is assumed, the organization may not achieve much results since there will be a very great delink between the various projects.

6.2.2 Education Production Function:

The study was based on educational production function as advocated by Coleman (1996) and Psacharapolous and Wood (1985). According to this theory education inputs are expensed in given proportions to produce good results. It is therefore clear that the output will be determined by the level of inputs provided how well they are combined for maximum output provided and how well they are combined for maximum output. The inputs in education process range from teaching learning resources, teachers, finances and learners. Internal efficiency is largely considered in terms of examinations scores, retention, competition rate, enrollment and participation. The theory enables a close examination at the cost effectiveness of education. A lot of resources need to be channeled to education process in terms of expenditure on teachers’ salaries, teaching facilities and physical facilities. The resources therefore need to be efficiently utilized for maximum output. Since this theory touches on resources and links them to stakeholders and evaluation measures, it is therefore efficient for this study. It means that the theory is sufficient in examining the various issues surrounding sustainable implementation of ECD projects.

6.3 Conceptual Framework:

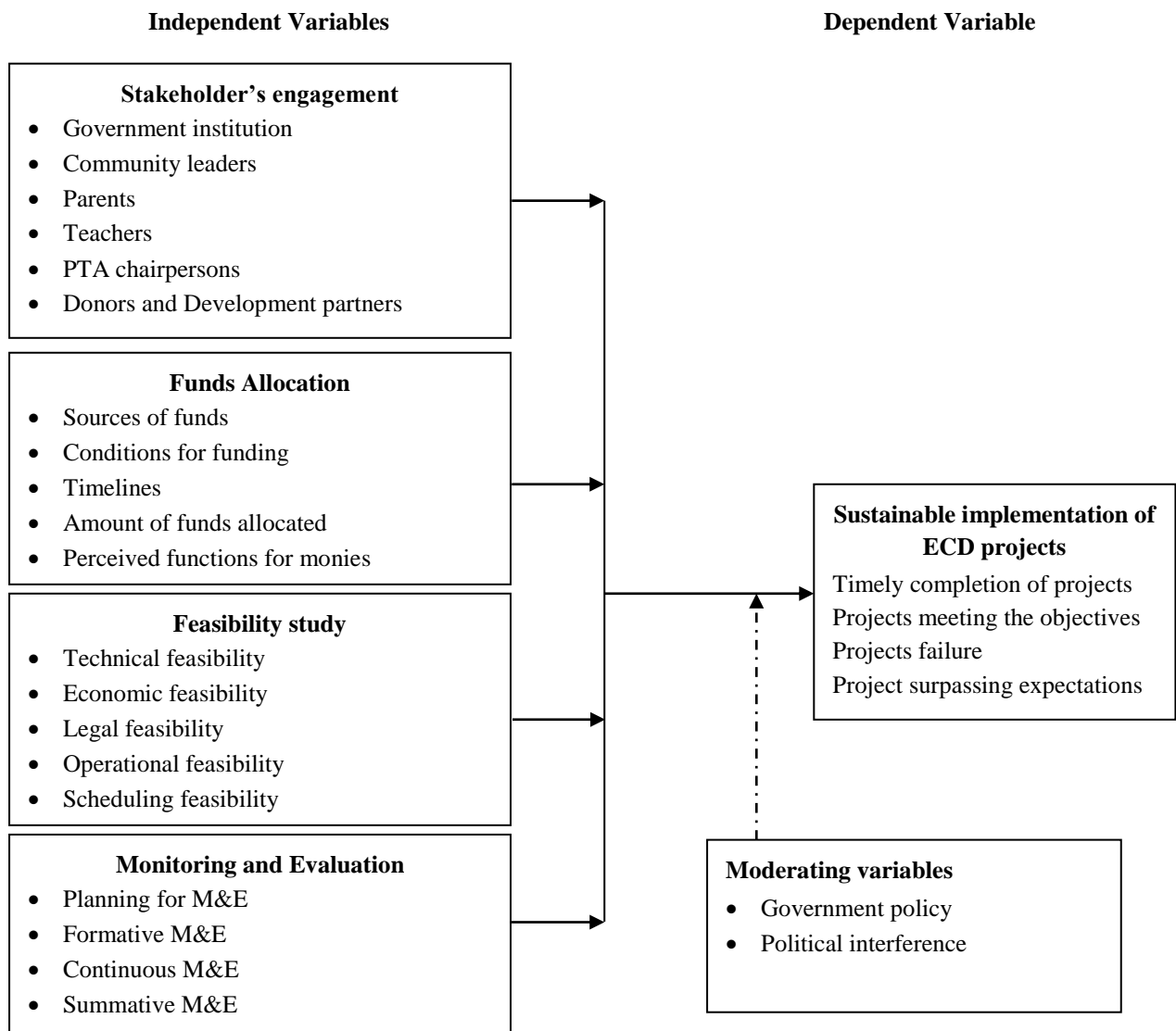


Figure 6.1: Conceptual Framework

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 Research Design:

The study used descriptive survey design because it was descriptive in nature Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). The design enabled the researcher to collect detailed information as respondent noted answers without limitations by the researcher.

7.2 Target Population:

The research targeted all the school heads from the various primary schools in the Lamu county, all the PTA chair people and the 22 employees in the county government of Lamu who have been involved in the management and implementation of the ECD projects in the county for the past five years since the counties were handed over the mandate of managing the ECD projects. According to the report in the director of education Lamu County, there were 112 schools known ECD projects that were taking care of the interests of various learners-including ECD teachers' capacity building. 112 head teachers, 22 county employees and 112 PTA chairpersons were approached making the population of the study to be 246 respondents.

Table 7.1: Target Population

Title	Frequency	Percentage
Head teachers	112	45.5%
County employees	22	09%
PTA chairpersons	112	45.5%
Total	246	100.00

Source (Lamu County Ministry of Education, 2018)

7.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure:

The study applied the Yamane formula proposed in 1967 to calculate its sample population. The formula calculated the sample size at 0.05 confidence level. The formula was given as shown:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where; n is the sample size,

N is the population size,

e is the level of precision.

Therefore, the sample size was calculated as follows:

N=246:

$$n = \frac{246}{1 + 246(0.05^2)} = 149 \text{ respondents.}$$

Therefore, the study used a sample size of 149 respondents as guided by the above calculations. The sampling procedure involved a stratified sampling method whereby a constant of 0.6 was introduced in each stratum to determine the respondents who were picked. Therefore, 67 PTA and 67 school heads were picked from their various stratum while the remaining 15 respondents were sampled from the county employee's category.

7.4 Data Collection Instruments:

The researcher used a well-structured questionnaire to collect the primary data from the field. Both closed ended and open-ended items were used in this study. The questionnaires were designed to ensure that responses from respondents elicited information on the main issues involved (Sekaran, 2013). The questionnaire was made of two parts i.e part A that sought to examine the bio-data of the respondents and part B that contained questions that were directly linked to the research objectives.

7.5 Data Collection Procedure:

Since the methods of data, collection had been decided upon, the researcher did data collection. A questionnaire was used to collect data from the various respondents (PTA chairpersons, head teachers and the county employees). The researcher obtained a letter of transmittal from the University of Nairobi Malindi and then preceded to ministry of education offices at the county level to get permission to carry out the study.

The researcher then trained four research assistants to help in distributing and collecting the questionnaires. Then the researchers approached the respondents and other relevant bodies and informed them of the intended study. The researcher then dropped the questionnaire with the help of the research assistants and picked them after two weeks. The respondents who were far and had valid email addresses were contacted through their emails. The researcher also designed an online survey monkey for the respondents with a known website like the ones who were working in the county government.

7.6 Data Analysis:

The collected questionnaire was counterchecked for completeness and relevance. The checking and sorting out was carried out by the help of the four trained research assistants. Then the questionnaires were coded to facilitate entry into the SPSS software for analysis. By the help of a statistics expert, the data was computed through descriptive nature to give figures that were presented and explained by use of frequency tables, means, standard deviation etc. The chi-square was used to test the research hypotheses.

8. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

8.1 Stakeholders' Engagement and their Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation:

Respondents were asked to give their degree of support of various indicators of stakeholders' engagement and their influence on the implementation of ECD projects in the county. Results were indicated in table 8.1 below

Table 8.1: Stakeholders' Engagement and their Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
ECD projects in the county have been engaging the various stakeholders effectively	4.003	0.891
Various government institutions play major roles in ECD projects implementation once engaged through various ways	3.912	1.091
Community leaders play a role in the implementation of various ECD projects in the county	3.721	0.679
Parents play a role in the implementation of the ECD projects in the county	3.991	0.928
PTA body plays a significant role in the implementation of ECD projects in the county	4.141	0.782
Donors and development partners play a role in the implementation of ECD projects in the county	4.482	1.271

Majority of the respondents supported the idea that ECD projects in the county have been engaging the various stakeholders effectively as indicated by a mean score of 4.003 and a standard deviation of 0.891. A mean score of 3.912 indicated that majority of the respondents supported the idea that various government institutions play major roles in ECD projects implementation once engaged through various ways. Also majority of the respondents supported the ideas that: Parents (a mean of 3.991); PTA body (a mean of 4.141); Donors and development partners (a mean of 4.482) play a role in the implementation of ECD projects implementation in the county.

Table 8.2: Hypothesis Testing on Stakeholders' Engagement Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Average scores

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
<i>O (observed)</i>	11	15	16	30	28
<i>E (expected)</i>	20	20	20	20	20

Calculated chi-square values

o	e	(o-e)=d	(d)²	(d)²/e
11	20	-9	81	4.05
15	20	-5	25	1.25
16	20	-4	16	0.8
28	20	8	64	3.2
30	20	10	100	5.0
				$\sum (d)^2/e = 14.3$

Tested hypotheses at 0.05 confidence level:

H1: Stakeholders engagement influences the sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ projects in Lamu County.

H0: Stakeholders engagement doesn’t influence the sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ projects in Lamu County.

$$\chi^2_c = 14.3 > \chi^2_{\alpha, 4} = 9.488 \text{ at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of confidence.}$$

Since the calculated chi-square value of 14.3 is greater than the critical chi-square value at 0.05 level of confidence, we accept the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, Stakeholders engagement influences the sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ projects in Lamu County.

8.2 Funds Allocation and the Implementation of the Early Childhood Development Projects:

Respondents were asked to give their degree of support of various indicators of funds allocation and their influence on the implementation of ECD projects in the county. Results were indicated in table 8.3 below

Table 8.3: Funds Allocation and the Implementation of the Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Funds allocation for ECD projects affects their performance in this county	4.532	0.991
Sources of funds influence the implementation of ECD projects significantly	4.012	1.911
Conditions for funding determine the implementation of ECD projects	4.021	0.979
Timelines for funding influences the implementation of ECD projects in Lamu county	4.081	0.928
Amount of funds allocated influence the rates of ECD projects implementation	4.101	0.782
Perceived functions for the money allocated by various development managers influences the direction and rates of ECD projects implementation	3.82	0.971

A higher number of the respondents supported the statement that funds allocation for ECD projects affects their performance in the county (mean=4.532 and standard deviation=0.991). Also, a higher number of respondents supported the idea that sources of funds influence the implementation of ECD projects significantly (mean=4.012) and conditions for funding determine the implementation of ECD projects (mean=4.021, and std deviation 0.979). Further, majority of the respondents agreed that: Timelines for funding (4.081); Amount of funds allocated (4.101); and Perceived functions for the money allocated by various development managers (3.82) influence the direction and rates of ECD projects implementation.

Table 8.4: Hypothesis Testing on Funds' Allocation Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects

Average scores

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
<i>O (observed)</i>	8	13	10	40	29
<i>E (expected)</i>	20	20	20	20	20

Calculated chi-square values

<i>o</i>	<i>e</i>	$(o-e)=d$	$(d)^2$	$(d)^2/e$
8	20	-12	144	7.2
13	20	-7	49	2.45
10	20	-10	100	5
40	20	20	400	20
29	20	9	81	4.05
				$\sum (d)^2/e = 38.7$

Stating tested hypotheses

H1: Funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County; H0: Funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County.

$$\chi^2_{c=38.7} > \chi^2_{\alpha=0.05} = 9.488 \text{ at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of confidence.}$$

Since the calculated chi-square value of 38.7 is greater than the critical chi-square value at 0.05 level of confidence, we accept the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, Funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County.

8.3 Feasibility Study and the Implementation of the Early Childhood Development Projects:

Respondents were asked to give their degree of support of various indicators of feasibility study and their influence on the implementation of ECD projects in the county. Results were indicated in table 8.5 below

Table 8.5: Feasibility Study and Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Feasibility study influences ECD projects implantation	4.342	1.091
Technical feasibility influences ECD projects implementation	3.938	0.941
Economic feasibility influences ECD projects implementation	3.859	1.001
Legal feasibility influences ECD projects implementation	3.592	0.761
Operational feasibility influences ECD projects implementation significantly	4.319	0.912
Scheduling feasibility dictates the direction the ECD projects take in terms of completion in the county	4.472	0.782

As indicated in table 8.5, majority of the respondents agreed that feasibility study influences ECD projects implantation in the county as indicated by a mean score of 4.342. Also, majority of the respondents agreed that: Technical feasibility (mean of 3.938); Economic feasibility (a mean of 3.859); Legal feasibility (a mean of 3.592); operational feasibility (a mean of 4.319); and scheduling feasibility (a mean of 4.472) influence the implementation of ECD projects in Lamu county.

Table 8.6: Hypothesis Testing on Feasibility Study’s Influence Early Childhood Development Projects

Average scores

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
<i>O (observed)</i>	7	10	15	45	23
<i>E (expected)</i>	20	20	20	20	20

Calculated chi-square values

o	e	(o-e)=d	(d)²	(d)²/e
7	20	-13	169	8.45
10	20	-10	100	5
15	20	-5	25	1.25
45	20	25	625	31.25
23	20	3	9	0.45
				$\sum (d)^2/e = 46.4$

Stating the tested hypotheses:

H1: Feasibility study influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ projects in Lamu County.

H0: Feasibility study doesn’t influence sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ projects in Lamu County.

$$\chi^2_c = 46.4 > \chi^2_{\alpha} = 9.488 \text{ at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of confidence.}$$

Since the calculated chi-square value of 46.4 is greater than the critical chi-square value at 0.05 level of confidence, we accept the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, Feasibility study influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ projects in Lamu County.

8.4 Monitoring and Evaluation’s Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation:

Respondents were asked to give their degree of support of various indicators of monitoring and evaluation, and their influence on the implementation of Early Childhood Development projects in the county. Results were indicated in table 8.7 below

Table 8.7: Monitoring and Evaluation’s Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
ECD projects in this county are determined by the rates of Monitoring and Evaluation	4.434	1.000
Planning for M&E influences the implementation of ECD projects significantly	4.221	0.841
Formative M&E influences county ECD projects implementation	3.651	1.981
Continuous M&E influences county ECD projects performance	4.561	1.761
Summative M&E is very significant in county ECD projects implementation	3.535	0.612

Majority of the respondents supported the idea that ECD projects in the county are determined by the rates of monitoring and evaluation as indicated by a mean score of 4.434. Majority of the respondents also supported the ideas that: Planning for M&E influences the implementation of ECD projects significantly as indicated by a mean of 4.221, Formative M&E influences county ECD projects implementation as indicated by a mean of 3.651; Continuous M&E influences county ECD projects performance as indicated by a mean of 4.561; and Summative M&E is very significant in county ECD projects implementation as indicated by a mean of 3.535.

Table 8.8: Hypothesis Testing on Monitoring and Evaluation’s Influence on Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Average scores

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
<i>O (observed)</i>	14	6	15	35	40
<i>E (expected)</i>	20	20	20	20	20

Calculated chi-square values

<i>o</i>	<i>e</i>	$(o-e)=d$	$(d)^2$	$(d)^2/e$
14	20	-6	36	1.8
6	20	-14	196	0.8
15	20	-5	25	1.25
35	20	15	225	11.25
40	20	20	400	20
				$\sum (d)^2/e = 35.1$

Tested hypotheses

H1: Monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ project in Lamu County.

H0: Monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ project in Lamu County.

$$\chi^2_c = 35.1 > \chi^2_{\alpha} = 9.488 \text{ at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of confidence.}$$

Since the calculated chi-square value of 35.1 is greater than the critical chi-square value at 0.05 level of confidence, we accept the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, H4: Monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable implementation of County Government Early Childhood Development centers’ project in Lamu County.

8.5 Implementation of Early Childhood Development Projects:

In this section, the respondents were asked to respond to the following statements expressing your views on the various independent variables (stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation) on the implementation of ECD projects in Lamu County. The results were outlined as indicated in table 8.9 below

Table 8.9: Implementation of Early Childhood Development Projects Implementation

Description	mean	Std dev
The interaction of stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation has led to timely completion of ECD projects in the county	4.39	1.01
Stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation is associated with the ability of various ECD projects meeting their objectives	4.29	1.11
ECD projects failure in the county is associated with stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation	3.41	0.98
Stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation have led to projects surpassing the expectations in the county	4.02	0.76

Majority of the respondents supported the ideas that: The interaction of stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation has led to timely completion of ECD projects in the county (4.39); Stakeholders’ engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation is associated with the ability of

various ECD projects meeting their objectives (4.29); Stakeholders' engagement, funds allocation, feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation have led to projects surpassing the expectations in the county (4.02). However, respondents did not give support to the idea that ECD projects failure in the county is associated with stakeholders' engagement, funds allocation, and feasibility study and monitoring & evaluation (3.41).

9. DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

In the study, the first objective sought to determine the extent to which stakeholders' engagement influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects in Lamu County. The results indicated that majority of the respondents supported the ideas that: Parents (a mean of 3.991); PTA body (a mean of 4.141); Donors and development partners (a mean of 4.482) play a role in the implementation of ECD projects implementation in the county. UNESCO (2015) supports these findings by indicating that, stakeholders are very important in ensuring that the education projects in any country succeed. In ECD for example, the stakeholders like the donor agencies, the local community, the parents, teachers and the schools management play each individual role that ensures a general better performance. Stakeholders like the local community gives and allocates land where the various ECD centers will be constructed, they give both the skilled and non-skilled labour required for such projects etc. Others like the donors (NGOs, Religious organisations, development partners) source for funds and allocate funds for the implementation of the various ECD projects, monitor the utilization of these financial resources, give expertise that can be used to have the projects achieve the objectives and at times give direction on the duration of funding these projects.

The second objective sought to establish the extent to which funds allocation influences sustainability of County Government Early Childhood Development centers' project in Lamu County. The results indicated that, a higher number of the respondents supported the statement that funds allocation for ECD projects affects their performance in the county (mean=4.532 and standard deviation=0.991). Ndani and Kimani (2015) did a study and confirmed that financial resources are very significant on the implementation or the performance of education projects. In this study where the 78 known schools gave the respondents, it was realized that the amount of money allocated for given projects, the sources of these funds, the duration of funding, the conditions of funding and many more significantly influence the implementation of various school projects.

In relation the third objective that sought to determine how feasibility study affects sustainable County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects, majority of the respondents were in agreement that feasibility study influences ECD projects implementation in the county as indicated by a mean score of 4.342. Sindiswa (2015) has indicated that feasibility study is very crucial in the implementation of projects. The study that focused on comprehensive education in west Cape Town, it realized that education projects in schools are influenced by the various types of feasibility studies including: Technical Feasibility; Economic Feasibility; Legal Feasibility; Operational Feasibility; Scheduling Feasibility etc.

In relation to the final objective that sought to establish the extent to which monitoring and evaluation influences sustainable County Government Early Childhood Development centers' projects, majority of the respondents supported the idea that ECD projects in the county are determined by the rates of monitoring and evaluation as indicated by a mean score of 4.434. Leslie (2014) supports these findings by indicating that monitoring and evaluation is a key component of the success of various education projects due to their sensitivity and complexities. This study that was funded by the world bank and carried out in over 10 countries where the marginalized regions of Kenya (Mandera and Kwale) included, it was discovered that projects M&E significantly influences the implementation various school development projects. Planning for monitoring and evaluation, carrying out a formative evaluation, continuous monitoring and evaluation plus the summative evaluation of projects determines their sustainability.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Conclusions:

Stakeholders' engagement influences the implementation of the ECD projects that are run by the county government in Kenya. The stakeholders who have much influence include the: Government institution; Community leaders; Parents; Teachers; PTA chairpersons; and Donors and Development partners. The various stakeholders perform various roles like offering labour, money resource; some give other capital resources like land etc. Funds allocation by various agencies and

governments influences the performance of ECD projects in Lamu County. The concept of funds allocation goes beyond the money and includes: Sources of funds; Conditions for funding; Timelines; Amount of funds allocated; and perceived functions for monies. The research has conclusions further that feasibility study is a very vital component of ECD projects implementation. Feasibility studies have a number of advantages in projects implementation and performance according to this study. This includes: guiding the project implementers on whether they should move forward with their idea, refine it, or scrap it altogether and go back to the drawing board; helps the projects implementers to be specific and focused; they give the big picture of the whole project and propose the communication mode (top to down or vice versa model); Feasibility studies may also open one's eyes to new possibilities, opportunities and solutions that might never have been otherwise considered. Finally, the conclusion that monitoring and evaluation influences the implementation of ECD projects has been advocated by the research. The main indicators that have significant influence on ECD projects implementation include: Planning for M and E; Formative M and E; Continuous M and E; and Summative M and E.

10.2 Recommendations:

Frist, the researcher recommends that the ECD project implementers and initiators should come up with mechanisms of ensuring that all the stakeholders are engaged at all levels of the project so as to achieve the best performance of the projects. The stakeholders should be brought on board at all levels of the projects including the handing over point so that they can own the projects. The project managers and other stakeholders should ensure that they continuously increase the funds that are used to run the various activities that add up to the general performance of the projects in the county. Feasibility studies should be carried out within the county before the projects are implemented and all the instruments of feasibility study should be applied in the process and experts be involved in carrying out the exercise. Monitoring and evaluation should be adopted as the part and parcel of the project implementation. All the forms of project monitoring and evaluation should be carried out without avoiding any step in the process.

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