

# INFLUENCE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROJECTS; A CASE OF TRANS NZOIA COUNTY GOVERNMENT, KENYA

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study was to explore the influence of monitoring and evaluation strategies on the performance of County Government funded projects in Transzoia County. The specific objectives of the study were to determine influence of skills of M&E team on the performance of County Government funded projects, to establish the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of County Government funded projects, to examine the influence of frequency of M&E on County Government funded projects, to determine the influence of M&E planning on the performance of County Government funded projects, and to find out the influence of organization leadership on the performance of County Government funded projects in Transzoia County Government. The field survey employed self-administered questionnaire instrument as well as random sampling. The study used quantitative research methodology and employ field survey design as well as literature review. The Target population was 159, and the sample size 114. Questionnaires were distributed to employees of project management department in the County Government. The quantitative data and descriptive statistics were analyzed by the use of statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) and results reported in the tables showing percentages, frequency distributions. The data also was analyzed using regression and Pearson product moment Correlation. The findings of the research showed that there was a positive correlation between the specific objectives and the performance of County Government funded projects. The null hypotheses for the specific objectives were nullified with 99% confidence. This implied that the specific objectives were found to have an effect on the performance of county funded projects. Reliability analysis was done using Cronbach's Alpha and the composite  $\alpha$  was 0.828. The study recommends the inclusion of all stakeholders in project M & E in each stage for the sake of sustainability. There is need to carry out studies to determine how to strengthen primary stakeholders' participation in M & E of County funded projects particularly how to ensure the beneficiaries can participate effectively in monitoring and evaluating projects. The study also recommends the introduction of contract management training for relevant stakeholders in County Governments.

**Keywords:** Influence Of Monitoring And Evaluation Strategies On Performance Of County Government Funded Projects.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CIMES: County Government Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System

GOK: Government of Kenya

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PMC: Project Management Committee

PMBOK: Project Management Body of Knowledge

SAMDI: South African Management Development Institute

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

There is need for effective M&E of projects in all sectors of the economy as it is increasingly being recognized as an indispensable tool in project management. Effective M&E systems are those that match the purpose and design of the system with the ability (capacity) of the project to be implemented. This capacity includes the resources that have been set for use in M&E (Cristina, 2012). In order for projects to be successful, adequate allocation of resources is important as it will allow the project team to play to their strength. Allocation of resources in this case refers to the management of tangible assets which includes hardware in order to best use the softer assets which is human capital. Ensuring that the human resources involved in the project possess the necessary skills to effectively carry out their designated tasks is also important. Resource allocation includes managing tangible assets like hardware to form the most effective use of softer assets like human capital.

The adoption of M&E systems as a strategy in project management has become wide spread. This typically involves the collection of data and its analysis in order to gain information that will be useful in guiding the project staff. M&E systems vary with the organization/ project type, its sector and the country of application (Koffi-Tessio, 2002 and Fitzgerald et al., 2009). A successful M&E system is therefore one that has been modified to specific setting that match the project that it will be used in with the allowance for flexibility and imagination (Jha et al., 2010). There should also be consideration of experience from other organizations When establishing an M&E system (Briceno, 2010).

An M&E system that has been well prepared and effectively executed contributes to the project success and compliance to international standards of project management (Jha et al., 2010). The system can be used by donors as it can weigh the various factors of the projects in relation to funding required in order to assess its success probability. The system also helps in identifying where funding needs to be adjusted and strategies need to be improved on. The results of continuous M&E can help in proving to donors that their money is used and allocated appropriately (Alderman, 2011). Monitoring and evaluation in terms of project management basically involves tracking, reviewing and regulation in order to meet the objectives defined in the project management plan. Project performance in relation to M&E looks at compliance to the scope, schedule, cost, resources, quality, and risk standards set by the project plan (PMBOK, 2001). This basically means that M&E helps in assessing if the project implementation progress is in being achieved in line with standards set. Project M&E adds value to the efficiency and effectiveness of project planning, implementation and management as it offers action to project variances.

According to WHO (2008), M&E is an orderly process, used to measure the progress of tasks and identify any limitations for prompt remedial action. It also involves the process of assessing the results achieved and comparing them to the initial objectives of the project (Wagner et al., 2005). Monitoring demonstrates a descriptive image of the happenings at a particular instance. On the other hand, evaluation entails more detailed analysis on whether a program, plan or policy has

accomplished its anticipated results (WHO, 2008). This shows that M&E are inter-linked and have a mutual reinforcement relationship. Ideally, M&E needs to be developed and implemented in advance, forming a clear association to the organizational objectives and strategies (GAVI Alliance, 2011). Hence, an M&E approach is developed to provide an effective M&E framework, which is intended to measure progress towards attainment of the overall goal and objectives of a project (Channa, 2010).

In Africa, different countries have adopted M&E tools. Ghana is an example of this as it came up with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), a regulatory policy that is used to assimilate the principle of M&E operations. The commission adopted the Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation System (RBMES) and Results Based Budgeting (RBB) in M&E. This was done to ensure cost effectiveness, institutional capacity strengthening, promotion of good governance and accountability as well as credibility to the partners and Government (Aaltonen, 2011).

Various Government projects are initiated to transform the social, political and economic well-being of citizens of the country. According to UNDP (2002), there has been increasing demand for development effectiveness in order to improve the lives of the citizens. The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation process has seen significant impact in education, social and political reforms in developed countries as compared to countries in Sub Saharan Africa. The only country in Sub Saharan Africa that has made significant impact changes is South Africa (Jansen and Taylor, 2013). This is justified with the fact after the period of apartheid rule; the Government under Nelson Mandela has achieved notable successes.

Since acquisition of independence of Republic of Kenya in 1963, there have been several attempts to tailor a system of socio economic development best suited for the rural poor population. Towards this, the Government came up with the concept of pooling resources together in the spirit of Harambee consequently many institutions especially schools and other facilities were put up successfully in the spirit of Harambee (Moi, 1986). During the Eighties this idea of Harambee spirit of development was any increased by empowering committees at grass root level. The Government on its part purposed to bring management of projects closer to the people through district focus for rural development, have budgeting process using the district as the focal point for allocation of financial resources.

The Public Expenditure Review (PER) is an analysis tool that has been mostly used in the public sector in Kenya which checks the socio-economic and governance sectors. It covers spending trends and macroeconomic performance and their Implications on the economy. The PER has more recently begun to compare Kenya's economic management system with selected middle income countries that the country looks up to in terms of development. Despite the numerous efforts made on NIMES, PER and APR, Kenya's M&E system is still facing some challenges. The constitution of Kenya 2010 has provided an opportunity of strengthening the country's M&E system. It has provided an opportunity for nation-wide M&E system which eventually also contributes to realization of the Kenya Vision 2030 blue print.

According to Trans Nzoia County Government (2013) themed "Transforming Trans Nzoia through Wealth Creation and Agro-industrialization", the County Government listed a number of the key development projects envisioned to be implemented between 2013-2017 including construction of Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Classrooms, Construction of the County Teaching and Referral Hospital, Construction of outpatient blocks in all Sub County Hospitals, renovation of County Assembly Chambers and speakers residence, Construction of a market and Construction of a modern bus park.

One of the initial strategies undertaken by the Trans Nzoia County Government in line with monitoring and evaluation of the proposed projects was to formulate the County Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Committee, the committee was sensitized and trained on their role and its importance in implementation of the listed projects. The Committee was able to prepare County monitoring and evaluation reports for financial year 2014/15 and 2015/2016 that were then used by the County as a basis of monitoring and implementation.

Achievements by the Trans Nzoia County Government according to the County Annual Progress report 2016/2017 include: Construction of 120 ECDE classrooms in all the wards, construction of outpatient units at Bikeke, Tarakwa, Naisambu, Kiminini, Nabiswa, Birunda and Bondeni health Centres, Construction of 65 motorcycle shades, upgrading of 0.7km backstreet roads to bitumen standards among others. The construction of a referral facility and a modern bus terminus were indicated as 90% complete, Trans Nzoia County Government (2018).

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

According to the Kenya National Bureau of statistics (KNBS, 2015), the construction industry contributed to 4.1%, 4.2%, 4.4, 4.8%, 5.2%, 6.4% towards Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the years 2011,2012,2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively. The failure of any project is especially associated with the issues and failure in performance. Performance of the project is taken into account as a supply of concern to each public and personal sector purchasers. Studies demonstrate that monitoring and evaluation are plethora of factors with the potential to influence the different dimensions of project performance. As such, this research study sought to identify how monitoring and evaluation influence the performance of County Government funded projects.

During the implementation of projects, disconnect may arise between commitments made at different levels and actual implementation on the ground. These commitments are designed to achieve the projects' desired results and would determine the success or failure of the projects. Project success can be defined in terms of timeliness, within budget, stake holder satisfaction and accountabilities. On the other hand, project failure would entail lateness, cost ineffectiveness dissatisfied stakeholders and lack of accountabilities. The implementation of project effectively and within budget would be influenced by the execution of project activities, accuracy of project financial forecasts and the subsequent forces of demand and supply on the project inputs. Stakeholders' satisfaction entails meeting their expectations in the implementation of the projects. Financial accountabilities entail prudence and transparency in the utilization of projects for the purposes they are intended for.

Despite the previous studies done, there still are some deficiencies along the performance measures that would render projects unsuccessful. The literature available shows that none of the studies focused on influence of monitoring and Evaluation strategies on performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya, hence the knowledge gap. This study sought to fill the existing research gap by conducting a study to determine the influence of monitoring and evaluation strategies on performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To assess the influence of the monitoring and evaluation team skills on the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.
- ii. To determine the influence of stakeholder involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation on the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.
- iii. To determine how frequency of the monitoring and evaluation influence performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.
- iv. To assess the influence of monitoring and evaluation planning on performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.
- v. To assess the influence of organization's leadership on the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for County Government funded projects in Kenya.

### 1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What influence does the skill of the monitoring and evaluation team have on the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya?
- ii. How does stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation influence the implementation of County Government funded projects?
- iii. How does the frequency of monitoring and evaluation influence the implementation of County Government funded projects in Kenya?
- iv. How does monitoring and evaluation planning influence performance of County Government funded projects?

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- v. To what extent does organization's leadership influence the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for County Government funded projects in Kenya?

### 1.4 Research Hypotheses

The study was based on the following null hypotheses:

H<sub>01</sub>: Team skill does not affect the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

H<sub>02</sub>: Stakeholder involvement does not affect the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

H<sub>03</sub>: Frequency of M&E does not influence the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

H<sub>04</sub>: M&E planning does not affect the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

H<sub>05</sub>: The organizations leadership does not impact the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

### 1.5 Significance of the Study

Since the establishment of County Governments in Kenya in April, 2013, the Kenyan constitution stipulates that several public services should be devolved to the County Government. It is therefore expected that the County Government Governments undertake projects that are aimed at economic development of the region. The performances of projects in Kenya have been wanting with a majority of them experiencing cost and time overruns. The fundamental aim of this study was to analyze the influence of monitoring and evaluation strategies on performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya with the aim of coming up with findings and recommendations which if and when implemented would contribute significantly to County Governments being financially self-reliant.

The study if implemented by the various stake holders will be of high importance to both national and County Governments. The research findings will enhance the success of Government project and also enable them to come up with suitable policies that ensure effective project management. The research findings will give guidelines to the Kenya Government in the formulation of appropriate laws and policies that would seal the loopholes that create hindrances to efficient and effective project management. This output of the study will assist formulation of a systematic process of applying M and E strategies on County Government funded projects completion. The outcome will also help in the completion and maintenance of viable projects that have significant impact on the development of communities and viability of institutions.

The study will also benefit Project Managers. It will help them identify and adopt appropriate factors/ activities which will enhance project performance in the Kenya. The general public will also benefit as it will help to improve literacy in matters regarding project planning and management. It will enable them track and audit how public funds are being used and raise their voices in case of fund wastage. With enhanced project performance, the study findings will result in values for money and hence reduce wastage of public funds through reduction of time and cost over-runs. This will enable the Government to channel available resources to other sectors of the economy. This will spur social-economic development in the country.

This research will extend the existing knowledge on project planning and management well as the factors that promote or hinder efficient project performance. The study findings may inform curricular design as a way of ensuring that graduates have the right mix of technical and leadership skills necessary for successful project execution. In addition, with project management being an emerging and dynamic area, the findings may act as a stimulus for further research in the area. It may also contribute to scientific knowledge as a base for academic purpose as well as project planning, implementation and sustainability of regional, national and international levels.

### 1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

<b>Costs:</b>	These are expenses incurred in monitoring and evaluation activities in a project cycle
<b>County Funded Projects:</b>	Refers to all development projects financed by the County Government
<b>Evaluation:</b>	It is a rigorous and independent assessment of an ongoing or completed project its design, implementation as well as results. It gives evidence as to why targets and outcomes are being achieved or not achieved.



<b>Monitoring:</b>	It's an ongoing process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving their goals and objectives.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation:</b>	Refers to the process of collecting information to identify areas that need remedial measures.
<b>Project performance:</b>	The degree of project goal achievement within the stipulated project Period and budget. Project: Is an individual or collaborative enterprise that is carefully planned and designed to achieve a particular aim.
<b>Public projects:</b>	Public facilities and improvements financed by the Government for the public good. Public works include hospitals, bridges, highways, and dams. These projects may be funded by local, state, or federal appropriations.
<b>Results Based Management:</b>	It is a life-cycle approach to management that integrates strategy, people, resources, processes, and measurements to improve decision making, transparency, and accountability.
<b>Stakeholders Involvement:</b>	Involvement of the beneficiaries of the project / constituents who participate in project activities.
<b>Timeliness:</b>	Carrying out monitoring and evaluation at appropriate time in the project implementation cycle.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Review of Literature on M&E Strategies

Monitoring and Evaluation is an integral part of the principles and practices of management and contributes positively to decision making by improving planning, enhancing implementation and accountability of the project undertakings (PMBOK Report, 2010). It involves a routine reporting and assessment of the impact of the project. Monitoring and evaluation helps project managers to Plan for any changes in the project guide and keep track of the changes, their progress and impact. It also helps improve future management practice. Baker (2008) noted that monitoring is an on-going activity which tracks project progress against the planned tasks. It aims at providing a regular oversight on implementation process in terms of work schedules, input delivery and targeted outputs. Monitoring actions should be undertaken throughout the lifespan of the project. Chen (1997) added that monitoring includes activities such as field visits, documentation of project activities & regular reporting. Baker (2008) additionally declared that analysis represents a scientific and objective assessment of in progress or completed comes or programs in terms of their style, implementation and results.

Evaluation deals with strategic issues including project relevance and effectiveness in relation to the specified objectives and the project impact and sustainability (Baskin, 2010). However, periodic evaluations of the progress square measure conducted to review the implementation progress, predict the project's doubtless effects and highlight the required changes in comes style. Mackay (2007) added that, final evaluations also referred to as summative or terminal evaluations are carried out after completion of the project to provide an overall assessment of project performance and impact, in as far as achieving objectives and meeting the overall goal.

A research distributed by Ika et' al (2010) established that project success was insensitive to the amount of project designing efforts however on the opposite hand observed that a significant correlation does exist between the use of monitoring and evaluation strategies and project schedule. He wrote that M&E is even more important than planning in achievement of project success. In project management, monitoring and evaluation is a major contributor to project success. PMBOK (2001) is a set of standard guidelines book which contains generally accepted and consistently applied standards, continually stressing the importance of M&E in achieving project success. M&E of projects is important to various stakeholders such project sponsors as it would ensure similar projects are replicated elsewhere as witnessed in various projects undertaken by the financial sector which revolve around a few areas (Marangu, 2012).

### A. Concept of Effectiveness of M&E System for Projects

Monitoring and evaluation in project management are slightly distinct elements which are highly dependent and have mutual significance to the sustainability of the project (UNDP, 1997). Monitoring involves the tracking of reporting, fund usage, record keeping and the review of the outcome of the project with the aim of ensuring that it is being implemented in accordance with the plan (Mackay, 2007). It is important that monitoring be undertaken on a continuous basis as it acts

as an internal driver of efficiency in the project implementation process and it help in the development of a control mechanism for the project (Crawford and Bryce, 2003). Evaluation on the other hand is a definite and systematic approach that is geared towards the reviewing of an ongoing project so as to ensure that it meets the goals and objectives fundamental to its undertaking (Uitto, 2004).

The results of monitoring and evaluation must offer data that is comprehensive and relevant so as to support decision making (Jody and Ray, 2004). Project evaluation serves the purpose of providing relevant information for decision making and also provides a process of learning (Mulwa, 2008). Project evaluation helps in the creation of future benchmarks that can be applied as guides in the evaluations of other projects (Calder, 2013). Evaluation also helps the project managers in the assessment of how projects faired in regards to efficiency and meeting of the budgetary limits (Spaulding, 2014).

An M&E system is a component that is designed to analyze, track and compare the project outcomes and the stated/planned targets (SAMDI, 2007). It is a comprehensive system that offers guidance in terms of screening and tracking of ongoing projects, recording the subsequent data and systematically evaluating this data and comparing it to the set project goals and objectives (Kerzner, 2013). An M&E system needs to be relevant to the project and the organization in order to ensure its reliable and independent (Gaarder & Briceño, 2010). An effective M&E system is one that offers conclusive information which can be effectively utilized towards better success of the project. The system should also be able to help stakeholders easily identify the potential benefits that the project will offer, ways of improving the tracking and screening of the project and it should also be able to offer an outline of the successes, opportunities and for any future projects undertakings (Briceno, 2010). In order to attract the support of the personnel, an effective M&E system must seek to enhance interaction and communication among the employees which helps in building the spirit of teamwork within the project. Similarly, stakeholder involvement in the project should not be ignored as these are the individuals who own and are directly affected by the project successes and impacts (Blackstock, Kelly, & Horsey, 2007). The use of an M&E system is mainly as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the project delivery processes (Naoum, 1991 and Ling & Chan, 2002).

Projects must systematically identify, analyze and respond to risks in a way that ensures continuation of project benefits after completion (Gusfield, 1975). Projects should seek ways to strengthen the capacity of individuals, households, communities, formal and informal institutions that help them cope with future shocks (IFAD, 2005). Projects should cause 'no harm' to the environment and should meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (IFAD, 2005). Monitoring and evaluation helps to determine and measure the impact of an intervention. Impact refers to the direct or indirect, intended or unintended positive or negative changes produced by a development intervention. Measuring the impact involves ascertaining the effects of an activity on economic, social, environmental and other development indicators. Assessment of impact is important because it generates useful information for decision-making process and supports accountability for delivery of results.

## **B. Measurement of Project Performance**

Despite job performance being used as an outcome measure in empirical research, significantly minimal effort has been put into the clarification of the performance concept. Campbell (1990) described the field as a virtual dessert in terms of structure and content of performance. The past decade however has witnessed an increasing in the development of specifications and definitions of performance concept. The process of project implementation is complex as it involves various different activities and participants from the planning phase to the execution phase (Gray & Larson, 2008).

Wang (2013) noted that it's an exception for a project to be completed at this age and era without experiencing cost overruns and schedule delays. While a lot of factors can contribute to this, the two key factors are effective time and change management (Dia, 1996). The costs associated with time management are very important and its effective management are key in order to avoid time and cost overruns (Rojas, 2009). To increase the chances of a project being successful, the personnel involved need to have a basic understanding of the Critical Path Scheduling Techniques, the software used and the associated scheduling specifications (Brown, 2008). Some of the factors that can influence the successful delivery of the project includes complex scheduling specifications, errors and omissions, changes by the user, changes in site conditions and inadequate time and costs (Kerzner, 2006). According to Axson (2003), there are still some

uncertainty and misunderstanding when it comes to defining what acceptable standards constitutes of when it comes to excusable delays and impacts.

Quality is what is mostly used to measure the excellence of a product or service (Wisner, 2005). Quality management is important and needs to involve everyone in the organization. In most organizations the support function personnel never get a chance to experience the products and services provided by the organization. The success of any project is dependent on two features which are very important. These are the service quality that is provided by the contractors and the expectations of the project owner (Al-Momani, 2000). Nitithamyong et al (2004) noted that technology, people, process, procurement, knowledge management and legal issues affects the success of the project and they must be considered equally.

Project success can be defined as the completion of a project within the acceptable cost, time and quality and achieving the satisfaction of the client (Pheng&Chuan, 2006). This success can be achieved through the proper implementation of performance indicators of the project. According to Karim and Marosszeky (1999), a performance measurement system is one of the primary tools that can be used to monitor the effectiveness and outcome of the implementation process of a project. Brown and Adams (2000) used an evaluation framework that used conventional economic analysis tools such as cost, time and quality, to measure the efficiency of project management. Navon (2005), defined project performance measurement as the comparison between the actual and desired performance. That means that when a deviation is detected in the project implementation M&E, the reasons for it can be analyzed. Performance measurement is important as it can be used to not only control the current project but it can also update the historic databases which enables the better planning for future projects in terms of allocation of cost, labor and schedules.

New South Wales Public Works Department in Australia launched a Project Performance Evaluation (PPE) framework, which covers a wide range of performance parameters. These parameters are time, communication, cost, safety, quality, claims and issues resolution, contract relations, and environment. In the UK, a project performance measurement tool commonly referred to as the KPIs. It includes time, quality, cost, client satisfaction, business performance, change orders, health and safety. Other project performance measurement management systems that were developed were by Samson and Lema (2002) and Shen et al (2005).

### **C. Skills of M&E Team and Implementation of Projects**

In Order for the M&E team to add value to the project, the organization needs to provide support and strengthen the team (Naidoo, 2011). A motivated M&E team will provide higher performances. The more the team is strengthened the better their performance will be which will translate to better value addition to the organization (Zaccaro et' al, 2002). The number of monitoring staff, financial availability, staff skills, and teamwork and Information systems are some of the factors that defines the strength of a M&E team.

According to Hassan (2013), constraints relating to human resource are the single most important issue facing a lot of development agencies (Hassan, 2013). The organizations suffer from shortages in availability of technically qualified personnel as they employ many unskilled workers. Poor remuneration also leads to the exit of the competent, experienced staff in organizations. Since the M&E system cannot effectively function without effective and skilled people running it, it is important that organizations understand the skills and capacity of people needed/ involved (Gorgens&Kusek, 2010). UNAIDS (2008) noted that not only is it important to have a dedicated and adequate M&E staff, it is also essential for the staff to have the right set of skills for the work. Human capacity building involves formal training, mentorship, in-service training, coaching and internships (Ika, 2010).

IFAD (2005), stated that M&E capacity building needs to focus on not only on the technical aspects of M&E, but also leadership skills, financial management, supervision, facilitation, advocacy and communication. Formal and on-the-job training are both important in developing the M&E team. When M&E is carried out by untrained and in-experienced personnel, it is bound to be costly, time consuming, and the results that are generated are more likely to be impractical and irrelevant. This will have a negative impact on the success of project (Nabris, 2002).

Finding the right staff with the right skill set is very important when it comes to strategy. Investing in the wrong hiring process will ultimately result in the need for a repeat hiring process and a gap in the capacity of the team. Both of this will ultimately inhibit the achievement of the M&E objectives (Kerote, 2007). M&E activities requires sufficient personnel to



carry out the activities involved including, program design, plan development, designing of M&E tools, evaluations, conducting baseline surveys, monitoring systems and final evaluations (Marangu, 2012).

The qualification criteria for the M&E staff needs to cover qualification in technical and managerial capabilities. The lead staff needs to exhibit a strong background in community organization and institutional capacity building. The M&E team needs to be multidisciplinary, that is, cover both quantitative and qualitative aspects of monitoring and evaluation and these teams should coordinate and interact closely (Musumba, 2013).

#### **D. Stakeholder Involvement and Implementation of Projects in Kenya**

Stakeholder participation is one of the key strategies that is used to manage the project work (Georgieva & Allan, 2008). An effective M&E team is one that has a significant representation of all the stakeholders. A team that embraces stakeholder involvement is stronger and normally has a better performance. The PMI (2013) describes a stakeholder as individuals, organization or groups that can affect or can be affected by the decisions, activities and outcome of the project. The participation of stakeholders benefits the project as it develops a common understanding, enhances accountability, assists in decision making, and contributes to performance and design improvement (Campo, 2005).

Gikonyo (2008) noted that involving stakeholders helps in achieving a common understanding. Stakeholder involvement in M&E helps in identifying problems and developing solutions that face the project and the respective stakeholders. It helps in enhancing accountability as it increases their awareness and motivates their involvement hence protecting the project from any resource misappropriation. Participatory monitoring implies the participation of all the stakeholders in providing the management with information and contributing to decision making. These decisions are more likely to be relevant and accepted by the majority of the population which makes the mobilization of personnel and resources of the project much easier (Papke-Shields, 2010).

Stakeholder involvement provides information that helps in generating information which helps in the prioritization and re-designing of projects to make them more acceptable. Each stakeholder inputs emphasis on different aspects of the project. Chambers (2009) the starting point of evaluation should be asking who gains/ losses and how the results will impact the different stakeholders. It also involves assessing the effectiveness of the project and the likelihood of achieving the project goals and objectives, its relevance and sustainability (McCoy, 2005).

According to Chambers (2009), stakeholder involvement in monitoring is a very demanding process that stretch both the financial resources and the personnel/ human spirit hence there is a need to make the process simple and only focus on the vital elements. It is also important to note that some stakeholders can intentionally provide false information because of project/ community differences. Caution needs to be put into stakeholder engagement as too much involvement could lead to undue influence while less of it may lead to evaluators dominating the evaluation process (Patton, 2008).

#### **E. Frequency of the M&E and implementation of projects**

It is important for M&E efforts to be conducted regularly without fail during project implementation. The most common mechanism used is field visits. The time and purpose of the visit needs to be put into consideration (Yang, Sun & Martin, 2008). M&E continuously tracks the performance against the planned results through the collection and analyzing data of the indicators that are developed for the M&E purpose. M&E continuously provides information on if progress is being made towards the achievement of the results (output and goals) through keeping records and regular reporting. It identifies the strength and weaknesses of the project (Prabhakar, 2008). According to UNDP (2000), monitoring efforts may be oriented toward validation of results and providing the latest information on the implementation progress. Field visits validate the results that are reported by the projects and involve the assessment of the progress, results and problems (IFAD, 2005).

Having frequent engagements with the various players involved in the project brings some degree of assurance in terms of positive progress towards the achievement of the objectives of the project. The frequency of meetings aims at consideration of compliance and performance (Shapiro, 2004). The frequency of M&E meetings depends on any existing specifications in the legislation, guidelines and policies of the organization and the circumstances in which the organization is operating at any time (Taut, 2007). The time for these meetings needs to be set well in advance after the agreement of all the relevant stakeholders.

### **F. Monitoring and Evaluation Planning**

A M&E plan is a plan in paper for the M&E system of a project or a document that details the project indicators and how they will be measured using a matrix of indicators (Chaplowe, 2008). An M&E plan summarizes the program and the program requirements and explains what is needed as far as M&E of each indicator is concerned and also the assumptions that are put into consideration. It gives a complete description of the project information, the key indicators, the projects foundation, the time frames, personnel and the expected audience (IFRC, 2011). The M&E plans also contain information on the human resources requirements, any training schedules and instructional incorporation (Wagner et al., 2005). The M&E plan is a very important document as it ensures there is consistency and continuity of the project's monitoring and evaluation system. M&E planning begins during the project design stage (Chaplowe, 2008). The M&E plan designs the methods of measuring the intended outcomes (Wagner et al., 2005).

Without clear M&E plans and expectations when it comes to anticipated results, how and what to monitor will not be clear which may make M&E to not be carried out appropriately (UNDP, 2009). M&E plans are an important aspect of projects as it helps in monitoring and evaluating the objectives and indicators of the project. M&E planning should be integrated into the project implementation and management systems.

Early planning of the project provides input for the project design and gives enough time to enable planning for adequate resources and workforce that will be needed before the actual implementation of the project. Monitoring & Evaluation planning also involves the incorporation of people into the M&E system and encouraging the participation of the project team and other key interested parties, which ensures ownership, viability, and understanding of the M&E system (Chaplowe, 2008). James and Miller (2007) noted that during the articulation of the M&E plan, it is important to deliberate ways of achieving collaborations with the individuals involved in the process.

Therefore, as the organization plans for a project, the M&E process ought to be factored into the plan before the project begins because it is an essential component. This will ensure that the people involved in the project will own the project as their own and also to help in accountability and learn and ensure that future activities are built from the knowledge acquired.

M&E planning must be put into place to enable the progress work to be judged on if it's moving in the right direction, and whether growth and achievement is visible. It can also help in judging if upcoming determinations can be enhanced. Effective M&E coupled up with good planning plays a key part in increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and projects (UNDP, 2009).

### **G. Organizational Leadership and Effectiveness of a M&E System**

The leadership of organizations is increasingly being considered as a salient theme on the effectiveness of M&E. The leaders of organization's need to support and be involved in the M&E process for it to be effective and successful. Project managers need to be involved directly while the senior management of the organization should be involved indirectly. In fact, they need to be involved in carrying out some of the monitoring activities and from time to time monitor and evaluate their operations. The involvement of management enhances credibility of the M&E process and ensures that the chances of acceptance of the findings are increased (Khan, 2003).

The management plays an important role in designing the system, allocation of resources, communication of results and making of key decisions which affect the projects and the M&E activities. The leadership commitment to the implementation of the M&E system is very paramount. This will help in ensuring that adequate funds and other needed resources are sufficiently allocated to M&E. Lack of sufficient support from the organization's management will lead to poor performance and ineffectiveness of M&E (World Bank, 2011). The leaderships involvement throughout the projects life cycle will ensure ownership and sustainability of results. It also helps in creating effective communication and mobilization of resources to fill existing gaps. This will also ensure that information obtained and lessons learnt are used in future decision making and interventions (Chaplowe, 2008).

An effective M&E system needs to be able to provide information that will be used in short and long term decision making and planning (CARE, 2012). The results from the M&E should be used to improve the strategy and operations of the project. The leadership should also ensure that the progress and problems of the project are shared with all the relevant

stakeholders so that they can learn and find solutions together. Wanjiru (2013) in her study observed that leaders have an important role of ensuring that the M&E process is effective and successful. It's the responsibility of the senior management with the support of the projects leadership to ensure communication of information and results (Nyonje, Kyalo&Mulwa, 2015).

The role of the leadership in the building of the M & E systems involves ensuring the existence of strategic policy frameworks and that the frameworks are combined with regulations, effective oversight, accountability, coalition-building, and attention to the design of the system. The need for better accountability arises from increased level of funding and the growth in demand for demonstrated results. Accountability is an intrinsic aspect of governance which concerns the management of relationships among all stakeholders that have the responsibility to finance, deliver, monitor, and use services (Bloom, Standing, & Joshi, 2006). The credibility of findings and assessments depends largely on the manner in which M&E is conducted in projects (Ben, 2002).

The leadership should focus on results and follow-up (UNDP, 2000). They should look for what aspects of the project are going well and which are not in terms of the progress towards the intended results (Pfohl, 1986). This is then translated into reports and recommendations for follow up action are made. Good and effective M&E largely depends on proper and appropriate design (Ben, 2002). A project that is poorly designed is unlikely to ensure its success. According to a study by Koffi-Tessio (2002) M&E systems are failing to meet their obligatory requirement of being a decision making tool of the management. Instead the system is viewed as a tool used in controlling by a bureaucratic management. Acquisition of the inappropriate M&E systems has also been attributed to the leaderships overemphasis on the physical infrastructures rather than the methodological and conceptual training.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Kothari (2004) defines theory as a set of properly argued ideas proposed to explain a phenomenon by specifying variables of the laws that relate the variables to each other. This study was guided by the theory of change, the logical framework model and the realistic evaluation theory

### **The Theory of Change**

This theory was first published in 1995 by Carol Weiss. It is simply defined as a theory that looks at how and why initiatives work. It focuses on generating knowledge on whether a project is effective and what makes it effective (Cox, 2009). The theory provides a model of how a project should work. That is, it provides a framework of where the project is aiming to reach. M&E tests refine the road map while communication helps to reach the destination through assisting in bringing about change.

The theory also provides the basis for arguing whether or not an intervention is making any difference (Msila&Setlhako, 2013). The theory implies that by understanding what the project is trying to achieve, why and how it aims to achieve them, the staff and evaluators can monitor and measure the desired outcome against the original theory of change (Alcock, 2009).

However, this theory however does not put into consideration that project success is much more complex (Babbie& Mouton, 2006). It is vital to understand success beyond knowing "what works" as experience has shown that blindly copying an intervention has a low success rate (Mackay, 2007). An important task for M&E is gathering enough knowledge and understanding it so as to be able to predict with confidence how a project will work in different situations. It will also identify what needs to be adjusted and how in order to get similar or better results hence influencing the performance of projects (Jones, 2011).

### **The Logical Framework Model**

It was proposed by the U.S. Agency for International Development in 1969. It is based on rationality processes which supports the format and creation that is easily expounded and proved through program logic approach. This includes looking at the ways the various components of a project relate with each other to achieve the desired results (IFC Advisory Services, 2008).

The Model is used as a planning, designing and management tool. It follows a structure that focuses all the elements of project-planning towards the attainment of the projects purpose. A Logical Framework Approach (LFA) is a project policy approach that offers an organized arrangement used in identifying, designing, planning, and managing projects (Jensen, 2010).

The model can also be used as an essential evaluation tool. It identifies the exact times for carrying out M&E in the project and also show the importance of monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment (IFC Advisory Services, 2008). Its main purpose is to provide a clear planning framework for the identified activities and determine the degree of the success of projects, while put into consideration the external factors (Jensen, 2010). It helps in clarifying the project's objectives, programs and policies which enhances the value of M&E in the projects system. M&E provides opportunities at consistent scheduled points for confirming the logic of a project (UNDP, 2009).

### **Realistic Evaluation Theory**

The realistic evaluation theory, propounded by Pawson in 1997, gives a model to be used in explaining the results which come from interventions through projects, how they are produced, and identifying the significance of the conditions surrounding the interventions (Pawson and Tilley, 2004). Realistic evaluation addresses 'what works, for whom, in what circumstances, and in what respects, and how' (Pawson and Tilley, 2004). The model the person evaluating to identify the areas of an intervention that make it effective or ineffective and the necessary contexts for replicating the intervention elsewhere. This helps the implementer to identify valuable lessons (Cohen, Manion, and Morison, 2008). This theory therefore in a big way influences the concept of predicting the outcome of a project although it is not exhaustive on what may affect the performance of a program.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Research design is very important in ensuring that the requisite data can be gathered and analyzed to arrive at a solution. The design chosen in a study should conform to the types of study and investigations as this determines the extent to which the researcher manipulates it. Each choice of design offers critical choice points and the researcher needs to choose a design that is appropriate for the specific purpose with special consideration being given to sampling, measurement and data collection procedures. In this study, a descriptive survey design was used.

This study employed descriptive survey as its design because it sought to explain the M&E strategies that affect performance of County Government funded projects. Ngechu (2004) noted that, the choice of the descriptive survey research design is made based on the fact that in the study, the research is interested on the state of affairs already existing within the field and no variable was manipulated.

### **Target Population**

The study was limited to Trans Nzoia County Government staff attached to project management. The afore mentioned employees are directly or indirectly involved in project management and as such are presumed to be on a vantage position to understand the factors that influence optimal project performance by the County Government. In total, there are 159 employees.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

In this survey study sample size was determined using the Slovin's Formula and sampling procedure was carried out as described below.

### **Sample Size**

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), sampling design involves selecting a representative sample from the research population. The sampling design could either be probability or non-probability sampling. In the formation of a sample for our study, probability sampling was used. This ensured reduced sampling errors and bias and that the sample was a good representative of the entire population. In the formation of the sample, stratified random sampling technique was used since it offered the participating elements an equal opportunity of being selected (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This also ensure less sampling bias and errors.

## International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences

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For this study, a sample (n) of 114 was used. This was arrived at by use of the Slovin's Formula:

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

Where:

n=Number of samples, N = Total population (159), e = Error tolerance (0.05)

Thus;

n= 113.7, n= 114

### Sampling Procedure

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), sampling is the process of selecting the subjects or cases to be included in the study as representative of the target population. The sample for this research study was selected using stratified random sampling method. The selected respondents from the members of staff attached to the project management department in Trans Nzoia County were put in strata based on their job groups then a sample selected from each stratum (Kothari, 2004). According to Gay (2010) random sampling is the process of selecting a sample where all individuals in the defined population get an equal independent chance.

### Research Instruments

This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using a

Questionnaire while secondary data was collected from published county reports and documents. The questionnaire had both close-ended and open-ended questions.

### Validity of the instrument

According to (Cherry, 2015) validity refers to the degree to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. To improve the validity, the content of the questionnaire was discussed with the supervisor. The study only considered conclusions that had a relationship with the variables under study (Lune, Parke, and Stone, 1998).

The instrument was pilot tested. This involves checking for the appropriateness of the questionnaire. According to (Alan and Emma, 2011), the quality of a research determines the outcome of the study. The questionnaire was first administered to 5 employees attached to the Project management Department of the Trans Nzoia County to establish whether the instrument provoked the intended information from the respondents. During the pretesting faults identified was revised and corrected before the actual data collection the respondents in the piloting exercise were not involved in the final responding of the questionnaires.

### Reliability of the instrument

Reliability analysis was done using Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency by establishing if certain items within a scale measure the same construct. Gliem and Gliem, (2003) had indicated a value of 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient but lower thresholds are sometimes used in literature (Rousson, Gasser and Seifer, 2002), thus forming the study's benchmark. A Cronbach Alpha was established for every objective. The reliability of the objectives was as shown below, the composite  $\alpha$  was 0.828

**Table 3.1: Cranach's Alpha Values**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Team skills	0.912
Involvement of stakeholders	0.826
Frequency of M&E	0.794
M&E Planning	0.812
Leadership influence	0.796



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**Average**
**0.828**


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### Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining approvals from the University and the Trans Nzoia County Government, the study proceeded in the following sequence: Pilot testing, revision of the questionnaires after the pilot testing, production of the required copies, administering of the instrument, serialization and coding of the returned questionnaires, data entry, data analysis, discussion of the findings, preparation of the conclusion and recommendations

The study used data from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was obtained from past records and reports of the manual systems from the County Government's planning department. A set of structured questionnaires was used to collect primary data from the respondents. This instrument was picked on the basis that it would manage to capture data relevant to the research objectives. In addition, Kothari (2004) asserted that, a questionnaire is one of the most appropriate tools for collecting data from a large number of respondents as is the case with this study. The questionnaire was drafted in a way that it could be employed to objectively collect data that tally with all the study variables.

Closed ended questions were employed for finding out the common aspects in the discussions whereas the open ended questions were for personal information from the respondents that add value to the research.

### Data Analysis Techniques

Once data had been collected, it was analyzed and organized in a way that is easy to understand and interpret. Data analysis refers to the process of rearranging and reducing data so that it can be easily utilized (Kabiru&Njenga, 2009). The main methods of organizing data are frequency tables, graphs and pie charts (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). The information gathered in this study was organized into frequency tables and graphs and this was facilitated by the use of statistical package for social scientists' version 20 (SPSS V.20).

The data also was analyzed using correlation and regression; the level or relationships between the study variables were established using Pearson product moment Correlation. Multiple regressions were guided by the following model

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \epsilon.$$

Where;

Y = Performance of County Government Funded Projects

$\alpha$  = Constant Term

$\beta_0$  = Beta coefficients

$X_1$  = Team skills

$X_2$  = Involvement of stakeholders

$X_3$  = Frequency of M&E

$X_4$  = M&E Planning

$X_5$  = Leadership Influence

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

Permission was obtained from both the University and the Trans Nzoia County Government. The researcher informed the participants that the exercise was voluntary and obtained their consent on the same. The participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable to respond. Participants names were not included in the responses and were assured of confidentiality.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

**Questionnaire Return Rate**

Out of 114 questionnaires which had been administered to the interviewees, 103 of them were returned for analysis. This translates to 90 percent return rate of the respondents. According to Mugenda&Mugenda (2003), a response rate of more than 80% is sufficient for a study. Table below shows the response rate.

**Table 4.1: Questionnaire Return Rate**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned	103	90
Not Returned	11	10
Total	114	100

**Demographic Information**

This section discusses the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study.

These include, distribution of respondents by their gender, age, level of education and years of experience.

**4.1 Gender of the Respondents**

Respondents were requested to indicate their gender and findings are as shown in Table below.

**Table 4.2: Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	69	67.0	67.0
Female	34	33.0	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

From the findings, majority of the respondents, 67% were male while 33% of the respondents were female. The results indicated a slightly larger percentage of men were involved in filling the questionnaires as compared to that of female thus insinuating gender imbalance in staff distribution at Transzoia CountyGovernment.

**Age Bracket of the Respondents**

The respondents were requested to indicate their age bracket. Table below illustrates the findings.

**Table 1.3: Age of Respondents**

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-25 Years	9	8.7	8.7
26-35 Years	14	13.6	22.3
36-45 Years	33	32.0	54.4
Above 45 years	47	45.6	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

The analysis of the findings revealed that 9 (8.7%) of the respondents were aged between 18-25; 14 (13.6%) were aged between 26 -35; 33 (32%) were aged between 36–45 and finally 47 (45.6%) were above 45 years old. These findings imply that the majority of the respondents were people approaching retirement age.

**Level of Education of the Respondents**

The respondents were also requested to give information regarding their highest education level.

**Table 4.4: Education Level**

Education Level	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Secondary	4	3.9	3.9
Diploma	31	30.1	34.0
Undergraduate	53	51.5	85.4

**International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences**

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Post Graduate	15	14.6	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

From the findings, majority of the respondents, 51.5% (53), indicated that they had achieved undergraduate as their education level while, 30.1% (31) attained college level, 14.6% (15) indicated that they had attained postgraduate level. Only four respondents (3.9%) indicated that had secondary as the level of education. The findings implied that most of the employees had the basic knowledge, capacity, skills and management expertise to conduct M&E activities successfully.

**Duration of employment**

Duration of service to the organization establishes the respondents’ degree of familiarity with the organizations operations in terms of project management. Most of the employees were retained when the CountyGovernment took over from the local Government.

**Table 4.5: Duration of Employment**

Duration of Employment	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
More than 20 years	13	12.6	12.6
11-20 years	46	44.7	57.3
5-10 years	29	28.2	85.4
less than 5 years	15	14.6	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

Of the total responses obtained, 13 (12.6%) had worked for more than 20 years, 46 (44.7%) had worked for 11- 15 years, 29 (28.2%) for 5-10 years and 15(14.6%) for less than 5 years and thus a majority of the respondents had sufficient information on the organization’s M&E processes and system.

**Skills of the M&E Team and Performance of County Government Funded Projects**

The first objective of the study was to establish how the skills and effort of the M&E team influences implementation of projects. This section provides the analysis of findings as gathered from the respondents.

**Staff Knowledge on M&E**

The study tested whether the project staff are properly trained and have competencies on M&E and whether that had any effect on strength of monitoring and evaluation hence influence on implementation of projects.

**Table 4.6: Staff Knowledge on M&E**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	89	86.4	86.4
No	14	13.6	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

It was noted that 86.4% of the respondents agreed that project staff are properly trained on project Monitoring and Evaluation. 100% of the respondents agreed that staff training had an effect on the strength of M&E. This are the majority of the participants which implies that both formal training and on-the-job experience are important in developing evaluators with various options for training and development opportunities.

Monitoring and evaluation carried out by untrained and inexperienced people is bound to be time consuming, costly and the results generated could be impractical and irrelevant. Therefore, will impact the success of projects (Nabris, 2002)

**Roles and Responsibilities of M&E Staff**

The study tested whether the roles of the project staff are known and well definedand whether that had any effect on strength of monitoring and evaluation hence influence on implementation of projects.

**Table 4.7: Roles and Responsibilities of M&E Staff**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	87	84.5	84.5
No	16	15.5	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

It was noted that 84.5% of the respondents agreed that the roles and responsibilities of

Project staff are well defined and known. 100% of the respondents agreed that this had an effect on the strength of M&E. These are the majority of the participants which implies that definition of roles and responsibilities to staff is important.

**Importance of Staff training on M&E**

The component of training in strength of monitoring and evaluation of team was addressed; the respondents were asked the importance of training and acquiring the right skills in monitoring and Evaluation team during the project implementation. They responded appropriately using the scales provided in the questionnaire.

**Table 4.8: Importance of Staff Training**

Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
Training and acquiring the right skills is important for the monitoring and Evaluation team during the project implementation and completion.	1.6990	0.95830

The respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with the above statement relating to M&E staff training. Based on the research findings majority of the respondents agreed that staff training and acquiring the right skills is important for the M&E team as shown by the mean of 1.6990. This implies that M&E system cannot function without skilled people who effectively execute the M&E tasks for which they are responsible.

Therefore, understanding the skills needed and the capacity of people involved in the M&E system is at the heart of the M&E system (Gorgens&Kusek, 2010). This goes in line with UNAIDS (2008), who noted that not only is it necessary to have dedicated and adequate numbers of M&E staff, it is essential for the staff to have the right skills for the work.

**Hypothesis Testing for Influence of Team Skills on Performance of County Funded Projects**

To test the hypotheses, the study utilized the Pearson’s product moment correlation co-efficient to establish if the strength of the influence indicated by the co-efficient of correlation is statistically significant. The value of the coefficient of the correlation ranges from  $-1 \leq r \leq 1$ . A value less than Zero indicate a negative influence. Further a p value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. A p-value ( $p > 0.05$ ) shows that the results are statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected.

$H_{01}$ : Team skill does not affect the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

**Table 4.9: The Influence of Team Skills on performance of County Government Funded Projects Correlations**

		Team Skills	Project Performance
Team Skills	Pearson Correlation	1	0.569**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.010
	N	130	130
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.569**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.010	-
	N	130	130

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficient test in Table 4.9 shows, there is a strong positive influence of Team Skills on performance of County Government Funded Projects at 99% Confidence Level,  $r = 0.569$ . P value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that the null hypothesis of no influence was rejected the conclusion was that there was an influence of Team Skills on performance of County Government Funded Projects.

### Stakeholder Involvement and Performance of County Government Funded Projects

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of stakeholder involvement on the implementation of projects. The questions posed in this section were based on the Likert scale where the respondents were asked to state how much they agreed or disagreed with a query posed to them. 1 –Strongly Agree; 2 –Agree; 3 –Neutral; 4 –Disagree; 5 –Strongly Disagree.

**Table 4.10: Stakeholder Involvement**

Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
Project stakeholders are involved in M&E activities	1.7282	0.92030
Participation of stakeholders is crucial to successful implementation of M&E	2.3786	1.43566
Project stakeholders are known and documented	1.5728	0.88120
Stakeholders have knowledge of M&E practices	3.4854	1.16201
Stakeholders need to be trained on M&E	1.7087	1.00617
Stakeholders have had a negative influence on project activities	4.3010	0.98851

Analysis of findings revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed that stakeholders were very involved in M&E activities as shown by the mean of 1.7282.

This implies that the project members understood the vital role played by stakeholders and their participation in monitoring was resource based and had to be focused on vital project elements as stated by Chambers (2009).

The findings also revealed that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that the participation of stakeholders is crucial to the successful implementation of M&E as shown by the mean of 2.3786. The findings implied that participatory monitoring meant that all stakeholders participate in providing management information and contribute to decision making as emphasized by Papke-Shields (2010).

The third parameter had a mean of 1.5728 which revealed that most of the respondents agreed that the project stakeholders were known and well documented. The findings implied that the various stakeholders who were involved in various stages of project M&E were well known. Gikonyo (2008) stated that involving the stakeholders helped in common understanding of the project requirements.

The findings as shown in the table indicate the majority of the respondents disagreed that the stakeholders had knowledge in M&E activities as shown by the mean of 3.4854. This means that the respondents stated that the stakeholders did not seem to have knowledge in M&E practices.

The analysis revealed that most of the respondents were in agreement that the stakeholders need to be trained on M&E activities. The mean of this parameter was 1.7087. These findings revealed that training of stakeholders in M&E was vital in determining the implementation of development projects in Kenya, as emphasized in the Kenya Vision 2030 blueprint.

The last parameter was whether stakeholders presented a negative influence on the activities of the project. The respondents revealed that they thought the stakeholder involvement did not present any negative influence on the project activities as indicated by the mean of 4.3010. The findings echoed Gikonyo (2008) who asserted that participative



monitoring enhanced accountability and helped to maintain smooth running of project activities since the project committee members were held accountable for their activities.

**Hypothesis Testing for Stakeholder Involvement on Performance of County Funded Projects**

To test the hypotheses, the study utilized the Pearson’s product moment correlation co-efficient to establish if the strength of the influence is indicated by the co-efficient of correlation is statistically significant. The value of the coefficient of the correlation ranges from  $-1 \leq r \leq 1$ . A value less than Zero indicate a negative influence. Further a p value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. A p-value ( $p > 0.05$ ) shows that the results are statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected.

H<sub>02</sub>: Stakeholder involvement does not affect the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

**Table 4.11: The Influence of Stakeholder Involvement on performance of County Government Funded Projects Correlations**

		Stakeholder Involvement	Project Performance
Stakeholder Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	0.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.000
	N	130	130
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.519**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	-
	N	130	130

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.11 shows that the correlation coefficient [ $r = 0.519$ ] is statistically significant since P – value [ $P < 0.01$ ]. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there was no influence of stakeholder Involvement on Project performance is nullified with 99% confidence. P value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there was influence of stakeholder Involvement on Project performance. We can further infer that 26.9% of the variation in project performance was explained by stakeholder involvement [ $r^2 = 0.269$ ].

**Frequency of M&E and Performance of County Government Funded Projects**

The third objective of the study was to determine how frequency of the monitoring and evaluation influenced implementation of projects. This section provides the analysis of findings as gathered from the respondents and will also presents various aspects touching on the frequency of M&E. The questions posed in this section were based on the Likert scale where the respondents were asked to state how much they agreed or disagreed with a query posed to them. 1 – Strongly Agree; 2 – Agree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Disagree; 5 – Strongly Disagree.

**Table 4.12: Frequency of M&E**

Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
The number of M&E staff influence the frequency of M&E process	2.0388	1.17091
The frequency of M&E affect the performance of the project	2.1165	1.45050
The period of engagement with the officers in the M&E exercise is sufficient to exhaust requirements of the tasks involved	1.8641	1.26030

Based on the findings in the table, most of the respondents agreed that the number of M&E staff influences the frequency of the M&E process as shown by the mean 2.0388, the frequency of M&E affects the performance of the project as shown

by the mean 2.1165, and the period of engagement with the officers in the M&E exercise is sufficient to exhaust the requirements as shown by the mean of 1.8641.

The findings imply that the number of monitoring and Evaluation staff in any project is very critical hence it influences effective monitoring and Evaluation process. The findings agreed with that of Taut (2007) who noted that the frequency of project M&E depended on the guidelines and policies of the organization. These findings are also similar to that of Shapiro (2004) who noted that frequent engagement with the various players in the project assures to some degree, positive progress towards achievement of project objectives. Frequency of meetings is aimed at consideration of performance and compliance.

**Hypothesis Testing for Frequency of M&E on Performance of County Funded Projects**

To test the hypotheses, the study utilized the Pearson’s product moment correlation co-efficient. to establish if the strength of the influence is indicated by the co-efficient of correlation is statistically significant. The value of the coefficient of the correlation ranges from - 1≤r ≤1. A value less than Zero indicate a negative influence. Further a p value (p<0.05) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. A p-value (p>0.05) shows that the results are statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected.

H<sub>03</sub>: Frequency of M&E does not influence the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

**Table 4.13: The Influence of M&E Frequency on performance of County Government Funded Projects Correlations**

		M&E Frequency	Project Performance
M&E Frequency	Pearson Correlation	1	0.635**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.000
	N	130	130
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.635**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	-
	N	130	130

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.13 shows that the correlation coefficient [r =0.635] is statistically significant since P – value [P<0.01]. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there was no influence of M&E Frequency on Project performance is nullified with 99% confidence. P value (p<0.05) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there was influence of frequency of M& E on Project performance. Further r<sup>2</sup>=0.403 shows that 40.3% of the variation in project performance was explained by frequency of M&E.

**Monitoring & Evaluation Planning and Performance of County Government Funded Projects**

The study was done to find out the influence of monitoring and evaluation planning on project performance. The questions posed in this section were based on the Likert scale where the respondents were asked to state how much they agreed or disagreed with a query posed to them. 1 –Strongly Agree; 2 –Agree; 3 –Neutral; 4 –Disagree; 5 –Strongly Disagree.

**Table 24: M&E Planning**

Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
The monitoring and evaluation plan defines project indicators and how they was measured	1.6117	0.87708
M&E planning is a vital element of any planned project and should be factored into planning before a project begins	1.0583	0.33797
M&E plans are key in planning and ensuring coherence and continuity of a project from design to its implementation	1.5437	1.2428

Effective monitoring and evaluation planning plays a major role in enhancing the effectiveness of projects	1.2427	0.47416
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The findings showed that majority of the respondents agreed that the project plan defines the project indicators. This was shown by the mean of 1.6117. These findings corroborate with those of Wagner et al. (2005) who indicated that M&E plan helps design projected outcome measures, together with a concept on what way they may impact the currently low prioritized and harder to measure, but desired longer term improvement objectives. These sentiments are also shared by IFRC (2011) who revealed that M&E planning is critical for the program or project to monitor & evaluate the indicators and objectives.

It was also noted that the mean of 1.0583 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that M&E planning is an essential component of any project. The findings corroborate with that of Chaplowe (2008) that in project planning M&E plan is an important document for consistency and continuity in a project’s monitoring and evaluation system and should start during or immediately after the project design stage.

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that M&E plans ensure coherence and continuity of a project from its design to implementation as shown by the mean of 1.5437. The finding is similar to that of Chaplowe (2008) that in project planning M&E plan is an important document for consistency and continuity in a project’s monitoring and evaluation system and should start during or immediately after the project design stage.

The findings of the last parameter showed a mean of 1.2427. This indicated that a majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that effective M&E plays a major role in enhancing the effectiveness of any project. These collaborates with the findings of the UNDP (2009) who noted that effective monitoring and evaluation and good planning can play a key part in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of development programs and projects.

**Hypothesis Testing for influence of M&E Planning on Performance of County Funded Projects**

To test the hypotheses, the study utilized the Pearson’s product moment correlation

Co-efficient. to establish if the strength of the influence is indicated by the co-efficient of correlation is statistically significant. The value of the coefficient of the correlation ranges from  $-1 \leq r \leq 1$ . A value less than Zero indicate a negative influence. Further a p value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. A p-value ( $p > 0.05$ ) shows that the results are statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected.

H<sub>04</sub>: M&E planning does not affect the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

**Table 4.15: The Influence of M&E planning on performance of County Government Funded Projects Correlations**

		M&E Planning	Project Performance
M&E Planning	Pearson Correlation	1	0.423**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.000
	N	130	130
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.423**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	-
	N	130	130

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.15 shows that the correlation coefficient [ $r = 0.423$ ] is statistically significant since P – value [ $P < 0.01$ ]. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there was no influence of M&E planning on Project performance is not accepted with 99% confidence. P value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there was influence of M&E Planning on Project performance. Further  $r^2 = 0.179$  shows that 17.9% of the variation in project performance was explained by M&E Planning.

### Organization Leadership and Performance of County Government Funded Projects

This section illustrates findings on commitment of top leadership and statements on organizational leaderships effect on M&E. The questions posed in this section were based on the Likert scale where the respondents were asked to state how much they agreed or disagreed with a query posed to them. 1 –Strongly Agree; 2 –Agree; 3 –Neutral; 4 –Disagree; 5 – Strongly Disagree.

**Table 4.16: Organization Leadership**

Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
The level of commitment of top leadership determines the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for projects	2.8252	1.30930
The leaderships use of M&E findings in decision making determines the effectiveness of projects	1.0583	0.33797
The leadership always clearly communicates M&E results	1.6505	0.89343
Leadership taking an active part in designing the M&E system affects the project outcome	1.5437	0.76411
Sufficient resources allocation by the management affects the efficiency of M&E	1.0583	0.33797
Leaders need to ensure that the staff are trained on M&E regularly	1.2427	0.47416

From the findings a higher percentage of the respondents agreed that the level of commitment of top leadership determined the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for projects as shown by the mean of 2.8252. A majority of them also agreed that the organizations leadership using M&E findings in decision making determined the effectiveness of the projects as indicated by the mean of 1.0583. This was in line with the recommendations of Chaplowe (2002) that information obtained and lessons learnt should be used in future interventions and in decision making and that results from M&E should be used to improve the project strategy and operations.

From the findings, a high percentage of the respondents agreed that the organizations leadership always communicated M&E results as shown by a mean of 1.6505. This was in line with the literature review which highlighted that communication of information and results is the responsibility of the senior management with the support of project managers (Nyonje, Kyalo&Mulwa, 2015).

The findings also showed that a majority of the respondents agreed that leaders taking an active part in designing the M&E system affected project outcome as shown by a mean of 1.5437. Wanjiru (2013) observed that the role of leaders in designing M&E system is very important in ensuring the process is effective and successful.

The means of 1.0583 and 1.2427 also respectively indicated that the respondents agreed with the statements that sufficient resource allocation by management affected project efficiency and leaders need to ensure that the staff are trained on M&E regularly. Khan (2003) noted that the management plays a big role in allocation of resources which affect projects and monitoring and evaluation activities. They need to ensure that adequate funds and other resources are allocated to M&E.

### Hypothesis Testing for Organization Leadership on Performance of County Funded Projects

To test the hypothesis, the study utilized the Pearson's product moment correlation co-efficient. to establish if the strength of the influence is indicated by the co-efficient of correlation is statistically significant. The value of the coefficient of the correlation ranges from  $-1 \leq r \leq 1$ . A value less than Zero indicate a negative influence. Further a p value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. A p-value ( $p > 0.05$ ) shows that the results are statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis is not rejected.

H<sub>05</sub>: The organizations leadership does not impact the performance of County Government funded projects in Kenya.

**Table 4.17: The Influence of Organization Leadership on performance of County Government Funded Projects Correlations**

		M&E Planning	Project Performance
M&E Planning	Pearson Correlation	1	0.327**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.020
	N	130	130
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.327**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020	-
	N	130	130

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.17 shows that the correlation coefficient [ $r = 0.327$ ] is statistically significant since P – value [ $P < 0.01$ ]. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there was no influence of Organization Leadership on Project performance is not accepted with 99% confidence. P value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that the results are not statistically significant and in such a case the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there was influence of Organization Leadership on Project performance. Further  $r^2 = 0.107$  shows that 10.7% of the variation in project performance was explained by Organization Leadership.

### Performance of County Government Funded Projects

The study sought to establish the extent to which the respondents agreed with statements relating to performance of the County Funded projects within Trans Nzoia County. The statements were based on the Likert scale. 1 –Strongly Agree; 2 –Agree; 3 –Neutral; 4 –Disagree; 5 –Strongly Disagree.

**Table 4.18: Performance of County Government Funded Projects**

Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
The project objectives including user satisfaction and service delivery are achieved on completion of the project	2.8252	1.30930
County funded projects are completed within the scheduled timelines	1.5437	0.76411
County funded projects are completed within budget	1.6505	0.89343

The study established that project objectives including user satisfaction and service delivery are met on completion of the funded projects (Mean=2.8252). The Study also established that the county funded projects are completed within the scheduled timelines (Mean=1.5437). Further, majority of the respondents agreed that the scheduled projects are completed within the budget. This indicates that M&E ensures timeliness of project delivery, general level of satisfaction of project performance and that cost of project. Michell et al. (2007) state that usually, projects are deemed successful by clients, consultants and contractors when they are completed on time.

## 5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary of Findings

The respondents were employees attached to project management in Trans Nzoia County Government. The response rate was 90% and was considered to be adequate for the study. Majority of the respondents were male which represented gender imbalance. The respondents were well educated with a majority of them having attained college education and above which implied that most of the employees had the basic knowledge, capacity, skills and management expertise to conduct M&E activities successfully. The majority of the respondents had worked in the County Government for more than 5 years. This implied that a majority of the respondents had sufficient information on the organization’s M&E processes and system. The study sought to investigate the influence of monitoring and evaluation strategies on the performance of County Government funded projects in Trans Nzoia County Government.

When a team is strengthened, their performances become better and their value addition to the organization also increases. This also applies to the M&E teams in project management. The number of M&E team, financial availability, M&E staff skills, teamwork and Information systems are some of the factors which defines the strength of the monitoring &



evaluation team. The respondents responded appropriately based on the scales provided in the questionnaire. From the research it was also noted that 86.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that project staff are properly trained on project Monitoring and Evaluation and 100% of them agreed that staff training had an effect on the strength of M&E output. These were the majority participants which imply that both formal training and on-the-job experience are important aspects of developing the M&E team. M&E that is carried out by staff that are untrained and inexperienced is bound to be costly, time consuming, and the generated results could be irrelevant and impractical.

Project stakeholders are the people and individuals that have vested interest in the activities and success of a project. Analysis of findings revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed that stakeholders were very involved in M&E activities as shown by the mean of 1.7282. The findings also revealed that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that the participation of stakeholders is crucial to the successful implementation of M&E as shown by the mean of 2.3786. The third parameter had a mean of 1.5728 which revealed that most of the respondents agreed that the project stakeholders were known and well documented. The findings as shown in the table indicate the majority of the respondents disagreed that the stakeholders had knowledge in M&E activities as shown by the mean of 3.4854. This means that the respondents stated that the stakeholders did not seem to have knowledge in M&E practices. The analysis revealed that most of the respondents were in agreement that the stakeholders need to be trained on M&E activities. The mean of this parameter was 1.7087. The last parameter was whether stakeholders presented a negative influence on the activities of the project. The respondents revealed that they thought the stakeholder involvement did not present any negative influence on the project activities as indicated by the mean of 4.3010.

The frequency of M&E tracks the actual performance of the project against what was planned through the collection and analysis of data versus the indicators that were established for M&E purposes. It helps in providing continuous information on whether the progress being made is positive or negative. It identifies the strengths and weaknesses of a project. Most of the respondents agreed that the number of M&E staff influences the frequency of the M&E process as shown by the mean 2.0388, the frequency of M&E affects the performance of the project as shown by the mean 2.1165, and the period of engagement with the officers in the M&E exercise is sufficient to exhaust the requirements as shown by the mean of 1.8641. The findings imply that the number of monitoring and Evaluation staff in any project is very critical hence it influences effective monitoring and Evaluation process and that frequent engagement with the various players in the project assures to some degree, positive progress towards achievement of project objectives. Frequency of meetings is aimed at consideration of performance and compliance.

The fourth objective of the study was to determine the influence of monitoring and evaluation planning on performance of projects. The study found out that monitoring and evaluation planning is an essential element of any intended project and ought to be considered into planning at the beginning of a project. The study revealed that monitoring and evaluation planning ensured coherence and continuity of a project from design to its implementation and also defined a project indicator and how they would be measured. The study also found out that to enhance effectiveness of any projects, effective monitoring and evaluation planning played a key part. It enhanced the project design and allowed adequate time to organize for resources and workforce needed prior to project execution and that monitoring and evaluation planning should start during or immediately after the project design stage up to the implementation stage.

The study found that the level of commitment of top leadership in the organization determines to a great extent the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for projects. A high percentage of the respondents agreed that the level of commitment of top leadership determines the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for projects. The findings showed a strong positive correlation between organizational leadership and effectiveness of M & E system. The study also found that leaders do not always and clearly communicate M & E results, leaders don't take active part in designing the M & E systems and the management does not ensure sufficient resources are allocated to M & E despite these aspects playing a great role in effectiveness of the system and process. The organization's leadership is critical to achieving effectiveness of M&E due to the crucial role they play in an organization.

### Discussion of Findings

This section presents the discussion of findings as drawn from the responses provided by the respondents.

### Skills of M&E Team

Based on the responses majority of them agreed that strengthening of the M&E team through staff training is a huge determinant of how the M&E process is carried out. This implies that the M&E systems cannot function effectively without skilled personnel who can effectively execute the M&E. It is therefore very critical that the skills and capacity that is needed by the M&E system be understood and met for the system to be effective (Gorgens&Kusek, 2010).

This also is in line with the report by UNAIDS (2008) who noted that it is important to have adequate and dedicated M&E staff, who have the right skills for their respective work. The third strategy was to establish the extent to which strength of M&E teams influence implementation of projects. From the analysis majority of the respondents agreed that the strength of the M&E team influenced its implementation which implies that monitoring and evaluation team adds value to the project activities. According (Naidoo, 2011), there is need to provide support and strengthen the M & E team. A team that is motivated usually achieves higher performance levels (Zaccaro et' al, 2002).

### Stakeholder Involvement

The findings of this study revealed that the project stakeholders of the County Government were well documented and they are actively involved in the various stages of the project. This was attested by the mean of 1.5728. The continued existence of the County's projects was also attributed to the stakeholders being actively involved in the M&E activities, as the majority of the respondents agreed that the stakeholders were very involved in M&E activities as shown by the mean of 1.7282. The findings also indicated a good understanding of the vital role played by stakeholders. However, the research revealed that even though the stakeholders knew about monitoring and evaluation, they had no adequate knowledge in monitoring and/or evaluation practices. A majority of the respondents stated that Stakeholder involvement influenced implementation of projects.

According to Gikonyo (2008) involving the stakeholders helps in the achievement of common understanding. Participative monitoring helps the stakeholders in achieving a shared understanding of the problems that the project faces, what causes them, their effects, magnitude, and implications. Stakeholder involvement enhances accountability. It increases the stakeholders' awareness of their rights, which makes them want to participate in guarding against the misappropriation of the project resources.

### Frequency of M&E

The third objective was to establish the extent to which frequency of M&E activities influence the implementation of projects. Based on the respondents, majority of them stated that frequency of M&E largely influenced the implementation of projects. This implies that M&E continuously tracks and analyses the actual performance against what was planned through collection and analysis of data. It provides continuous information on whether any progress is being made towards the achievement of results (outputs, outcomes, goals). This is done through record keeping and use of regular reporting systems.

According to Shapiro, (2004) frequent engagement with the various players in the project assures to some degree, positive progress towards achievement of project objectives. Frequency of meetings is aimed at consideration of performance and compliance.

### Organizational Leadership

The study also found a positive relationship between organization's leadership and effectiveness of M & E system. It found that an improvement in organizational leadership lead to effective M & E system. This concurs with World Bank (2011) which states that organizational leadership is a fundamental factor in the production of M&E results. M&E being a new professional field, organizational leadership is paramount in building an effective M&E human resource capacity both in quality and quantity (World Bank, 2011). Numerous organizational leadership manuals, handbooks and toolkits have been developed for staff in order to provide them with practical tools that strengthen M&E awareness. Koffi-Tessio (2002), states that the poor acquisition of the appropriate M&E systems by organizations could be attributed to their lack of emphasis on methodological and conceptual leadership. Jaszcolt et al (2010), recommends that organizations need to have appropriate leaders in order to develop technical skills among the M&E specialists.

The study found out that the organization's policy supports M & E and that senior management recognizes and supports the role of M & E. The management also takes part in some of the M & E activities. This in agreement with Khan (2003) who stated that all organization's leaders and managers should carry out some M&E activities as part of their overall work and from time to time evaluate the operations of M&E. Khan further noted that management involvement enhances the credibility of the evaluation process and ensures increased acceptance of the findings. World Bank (2011) noted that the commitment of management to the implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system is paramount. They ensure that adequate funds and other resources are set aside for M&E. If there is no good and support from organization's management, then the M&E system poorly be designed and operated leading to its ineffectiveness and inaccurate findings.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings it was observed that Involvement of stakeholders during monitoring provides information necessary in making management decisions and that makes human and resource mobilization for project implementation easier; utilization of monitoring and evaluation results helps in the management of project activities; enhance future planning of policies, programs and projects; help in policy analysis and policy and program development and in performance-informed budgeting.

The study also noted that to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation team adds value to the project performance, there is need to provide support and strengthening the M & E team. This ensures a well-motivated team usually achieves high performance and that is done by providing; adequate fund, number of monitoring staff, monitoring staff skills, Information systems and teamwork among the members.

It is important that monitoring efforts are conducted without fail and field visit should frequently be used as a monitoring mechanism since it is common policy to conduct regular field visits. Consideration should be given to the timing of the visit, its purpose in terms of monitoring, and what to look for to measure progress. The study also concludes that budget should be realistic and address actual needs and it should reflect all the components of the expected outcomes.

The study concludes that there is a significant relationship between monitoring and evaluation planning and project performance. Monitoring and evaluation planning is an essential element of any intended project/ program and should be taken into account at the beginning of a project as it ensures coherence and continuity of a project from design to it implementation and also defines a project indicators and how they can be measured. To enhance effectiveness of any project, effective monitoring and evaluation planning played a key part. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation planning should begin during or immediately after the project design stage up to the implementation stage consequently boosting the performance projects.

Finally, the study found out that the level of commitment of top leadership and management in the organization determines to a great extent the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for projects. Leaders need to always and clearly communicate M & E results, take active part in designing the M & E systems, ensure sufficient resources are allocated to M & E. World Bank (2011) which states that the role played by the organization leadership dictates the effectiveness of the M&E system. The organization leadership is like the central nerve to an effective M&E system. It coordinates the processes of the M&E system ensuring its success and manages the M&E human resource. Furthermore, organization leadership as a factor has tremendous effect on how effective M&E practices was successful to a project as it is through these trainings that relevant skills and other M&E gaps are addressed to staff in order to increase their understanding and project performance. Leaders should therefore work closely with employees and all stakeholders to ensure that they provide required support and guidance to ensure the M&E system is effective and operates maximally (Shapiro, 2011).

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that there is need to include all stakeholders in project M & E in each stage as they play an active role since they are the consumers of the project for the sake of sustainability. Cooperation of stakeholders should also be encouraged.

## International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences

Vol. 6, Issue 6, pp: (67-95), Month: November - December 2019, Available at: [www.noveltyjournals.com](http://www.noveltyjournals.com)

All the stakeholders need to be clearly identified and their requirements documented. Each of the stakeholders' requirements needs to be prioritized and focus placed on those that are most critical to success. Strengthening monitoring and Evaluation team through Adequate funding needs to be devoted to implementation of M&E practices for its potential to be realized in a project because insufficient financing is a major factor in poor maintenance which, in turn, is often cited as a reason for project failure

It was established that the M&E strategies had influence on project implementation therefore it is important that further research be undertaken to put in place a framework that would ensure that there are mandatory components of project planning and implementation process. Organization leaders should take active part in designing M & E system and offer timely support and guidance to projects' staff and ensure M&E activities are well executed and results and findings communicated and used in decision making and planning.

The study recommends that though the degree of analytical skills required is considered a critical factor, and has the great influence on Project Delivery Capability (PDC) on this project; more emphasis should be placed on cost of quality. The study recommends critical look into contract management to ensure improved, implementation, effectiveness and quality of work done, sorting out the discrepancies related to the binding contract documents thus minimizing time loss during the project period, and ensuring that costs and timelines are checked and managed for betterment of the project. The study further recommends the introduction of contract management training for relevant stakeholders.

### Suggested Areas for Further Research

There is need to determine how to strengthen primary stakeholders' participation in M & E of County funded projects particularly how to ensure the beneficiaries can participate effectively in monitoring and evaluating projects.

There is also need to establish challenges facing monitoring and evaluation of County funded Projects and influence of technology systems on monitoring and evaluation on County funded projects. There is also need to study the Monitoring & Evaluation tools and techniques in use on projects Life Cycle. the deficiencies in the M&E department may have been carried forward from a previous project stage as M&E is only one part of the Project Life Cycle.

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