FACTORS INFLUENCING USE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS ON PERFORMANCE OF COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS IN BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA.

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ABSTRACT
Monitoring and Evaluation is key in every project as it provides information which is used to assess the project effects and impacts to determine if the intended objectives have been met. It also allows those involved in development of activities to be accountable, achieve better results and learn from the experience. Monitoring and Evaluation of projects is critical because government funds, majorly from taxation and donor funds are put into such projects. Despite the National government having transferred colossal amounts to County governments, the Monitoring and Evaluation of the county development programs throughout implementation has not been operational. The main purpose of the research was to establish the factors influencing the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of county agricultural projects in Bungoma County. The study sought to determine the influence of technical expertise, budgetary allocation, stakeholder’s participation and how politics influence the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems on agricultural projects in Bungoma County. The study used qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data was gathered and analysed by use of descriptive research design. The target population was 116 Bungoma county agricultural project employees, who comprised of County Agricultural project consultants/Surveyors, County Agricultural project staff, County Financial and accountant officers, Monitoring and Evaluation officers and Agricultural Project beneficiaries in Bungoma County. The results of the study indicated that there was a strong relationship between technical expertise, budgetary allocation, stakeholder’s participation and political influence and the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County agricultural projects. The study concludes that technical expertise, budgetary allocation, stakeholder’s participation and political influence are important factors influencing the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. The study recommends that Bungoma county agricultural project officers should be allocated sufficient financial resources to enhance monitoring and evaluation of agricultural projects.

Keywords: Technical expertise, budgetary allocation, stakeholder’s participation, political influence.
Background of the Study

A project is a set of activities where resources are used in expectation of returns and which lends itself to planning, financing and implementing as a unit. It has well set out sequence of investment and production of activities and a specific group of benefits that can be identified, quantified and valued either monetarily or socially (PMBOK, 2001). It is moreover defined as a procedure involving group of organized and monitored events with a beginning and end periods dedicated to attain the set aims that are typically associated to exact requests that comprise limits of time, budget and other resources (Nyonje, Kyalo & Mulwa, 2015).

M&E system on the other hand is a set of components which are related to each other within a structure and serve a common purpose of tracking the implementation and results of a project. It is therefore an integrated system of reflection and communication that support project implementation. An M&E system is made up of four interlinked sections which are: setting up of the M&E system, implementation of the M&E system, involvement of the project stakeholders and communication of the M&E results (Guijt et al, 2002). Theoretically, an ideal M&E system should be independent enough to be externally credible and socially legitimate, but also not independent to lose its relevance (Briceno, 2010). It should therefore be able to influence policy making from recommendations and lessons learnt as well as be sustainable overtime for it to be sustainable over time and be responsive to the needs of the stakeholders.

Monitoring is the procedure of gathering, examining and recording information on program or projects contributions, accomplishments, outputs, results and influences as outside elements so as to decide if real project outcomes are actually attained. In a more limited approach Monitoring may focus on tracking projects and the use of Agency’s resources, in broader approach, it also involves tracking strategies and actions being taken by partners and non-partners, and figuring out what new strategies and actions needed to be taken to ensure progress towards the most important results (UNDP, 2009).

Evaluation is a demanding and self-governing valuation of continuing or finished events to find out the degree were they are accomplishing specified purposes and contributing to a choice (UNDP, 2009). It comprises orderly gathering, examination and explanation of project related data that can be used to understand how the project is doing in relation to the set objectives (Mulwa, 2012). The aim of evaluation is to determine how efficient and effective the objectives set out have been fulfilled and assess their impact and sustainability. Lessons learned should be inculcated during decision making (Parker, 2008). Evaluation is employed to ensure that the direction chosen was the right one, and that the right strategies and resources were engaged to get there. Evaluation, which focuses on outcomes and their relationship with outputs, can be one that helps learning and understanding within stakeholders, in this instance is referred to as formative, or one indicating the degree of achievement which is called summative.

Monitoring and Evaluation is a critical component of a management cycle which includes project planning, design, and implementation. Gyorkos (2013) notes that project planners ought to incorporate a well-defined monitoring and evaluation strategy within the overall project plan. The monitoring and evaluation plan should include activities to be carried out to get feedback, people to be involved in carrying out these activities, frequency of carrying out the activities, budget expectations for activities and specific insights expected to be achieved from the monitoring and evaluation feedback.
Monitoring and Evaluation, with the new devolved structures of county governments and the rising fiscal devolution with respect to development policies, programs and projects in Kenya, there is dire need therefore for an effective national wide M&E framework in Kenya. As revealed in this study, achieving an effective national wide M&E system in Kenya has been a key target of the government for a long period of time. Most government programs have had to run into problems due to reasons that would have been averted had there been proper M&E carried out during implementation. This has continued to affect not only the level of services performance in Kenya but also the feedback and intervention mechanisms optimally required to counter wastage of available scarce resources (Musomba, 2013).

Globally, Australia is one of the leading countries in the world in embracing M&E systems in the development projects (UNDP, 2002). The government created a fully-fledged government evaluation system, managed by the Department of Finance (DOF). This provided a spending baseline and freed up the budget process from a detailed, line item scrutiny of spending, to focus instead on changes in government policy and spending priorities in the development projects. The government of Australia advocated the principles of program management and budgeting, with a focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of government programs, through sound management practices, the collection of performance information, and the regular conduct of program evaluation (Mackay, 2011).

Government M&E systems in Africa operate in complex terrain. To some extent they are hostages to other forces in government, nevertheless given a results-driven reform agenda, incentives can be put in place for the evidence generated to support developments in delivery, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation are consistently designed to support valued change in people’s lives, particularly the underprivileged (Nabulu, 2015).

Africa has witnessed rapid changes in the political landscape, stronger governance has risen from relative neglect to top of Africa’s development policy agenda. Weaknesses in governance are increasingly recognized as a limiting the benefits from economic reform. M&E can support sound governance by giving information that can be used in decision making. South Africa’s journey in M&E begun in 1990 when it proposed to introduce the government wide M&E system which was resisted. In 2005 the cabinet approved the system which led to the establishment of the department of performance monitoring and evaluation (DPM&E). This culminated in the approval of policy framework on government wide M&E by the cabinet in 2007 and later establishment of the National Planning Commission in 2009 which is in use to date and it has registered marked improvement in project management (Bosch, 2011).

Kenya has been doing investment and development from the year it achieved freedom from Britain in the month of December 1963. Because of lack of cohesive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system, implementation of development plans over the first four decades of independence was not strong. Absence of execution or accomplishment of highly ambitious development projects were common, data gathering, examination and recording of findings was performed in an unplanned manner. Feedback and decision making at local level was done with no source of verifiable evidence without the presence of a comprehensive M&E structure. (CIMES, 2016).
Statement of the problem

Monitoring and evaluation is key in every project as it provides information and ensures such is used to assess the projects effects and impacts in determining the intended objectives have been met (Mulwa, 2008). It also allows those involved in development activities to be accountable, achieve better results and learn from the experience. The need by stakeholders for transparency, resource usage and effective accountability, performance of the program and learning from the project are the key issues why the projects are managed (Ogolla and Maronge, 2016).

Agricultural projects fail despite heavy presence of monitoring and evaluation activities. This therefore raises serious issues as to whether the monitoring and evaluation employed is effective enough to achieve project success. The monitoring team perhaps may be lacking the necessary capacity or strength to carry out their work effectively, or they may be approaching their work using incorrect methodologies. The project monitoring team may also be lacking the necessary management support.

Despite the National government having transferred colossal amounts to County governments, the Monitoring and Evaluation of the county projects during implementation has not been effective (Ramadhan, 2015). A total of Kes. 1,039,798,882,835 was disbursed by the treasury to the 47 County governments for the period between 2013 to 2017, Bungoma county received Kes. 31,080,735,749 (Commission of Revenue Allocation, 2017).

Among the counties surveyed, 23% lacked M&E units, the 77% that affirmed of having M&E units said they were domiciled in Finance & Economic planning departments. With this arrangement, it is difficult to enumerate and document development achievements (UNDP, 2017). This has caused most counties to experience cost overruns and delays in completion of projects even in instances where there are Monitoring and Evaluation units.

The ineffective or absence of M&E systems on County agricultural projects may be as a result of some factors listed by UNDP M&E Capacity assessment report as technical expertise, budgetary allocation, political goodwill and stakeholder’s participation as some of the major M&E capacity weaknesses. There is need therefore, to carry out a research on the factors influencing the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems on agricultural projects in Bungoma County.

Literature Review

These theories include Fuzzy Set and fuzzy logic theory, Accounting theory, Stakeholder theory and Agency theory.

Fuzzy Set and fuzzy logic theory

Fuzzy is defined as a ranch of modern mathematics formulated by Zadeh (1965, cited in Yeung 2007) to model vagueness intrinsic in human cognitive process and to solve ill-defined and complicated problems because of ambiguous, incomplete, vague and imprecise information characterized in the real world system.

Zheng and Ng (2005, cited in Yeung 2007) opined that the duration and cost of each construction activity could change dynamically as a result of many uncertain variables such as productivity, resource availability and weather.
For this reason, Fuzzy set theory was applied to model manager’s behaviour in predicting time and cost for construction activities thus presenting a range of possible time-cost values and their degree of belief.

Fayek and Oduba (2005, cited in Yeung 2007) applied fuzzy logic and fuzzy expert systems to the modelling of predicting the labour productivity of two common industrial construction activities given realistic constraints of subjective assessment, multiple contributing factors and limitations on data sets. Liu and Ling (2005, cited in Yeung 2007) considered that it is difficult to estimate a contractor’s mark-up because the construction environment is changeable and uncertain. Oliveros and Fayek (2005, cited in Yeung 2007) developed a fuzzy logic model that integrates daily site reporting of activity progress and delays with a schedule updating and forecasting system for construction project monitoring and control. Knight and Fayek (2002) developed a fuzzy logic model to predict potential cost overruns on engineering design projects thus assisting in assessment of possible risk and probability of profit making.

The theory is critical on technical expertise of the project team as they are expected to have a raft of measures that should be in place to guide planning and reporting of key project tasks. It is therefore imperative that the project has people who have the requisite skills and experience to be able to steer the activities that will ultimately ensure that the project achieves its objectives. This theory therefore is in support of the variable that seeks to determine the influence of technical expertise on the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems in County projects.

**Accounting Theory**

Kaplan and Norton (1996) reiterate that accounting theory is aimed at providing comprehensible set of logical principles that form the general frame of reference for the evaluation and development of sound accounting practices and policy development. Otley and Pollanen (2000), the drive in developing a theory of accounting is to establish standard for judging the acceptability of accounting methods. Horvath and Seiter (2009) contend that the accounting approaches that fail to meet the standard must be disallowed. Accounting theory benefits in clarifying and controlling management activities in identifying and locating information essential to be used in financial plan.

The accounting theory in budget control has come up with different models of analysis for example cost volume profit analysis and standard costing which serve as a standard setting in budgeting. The theory has an important normative role in the evaluation of budget and control procedures to be adopted. It has assisted in making predictions of the likely outcome of budget action in a given set of circumstance and effect of any change in circumstances. Horngren (2002) argues that accounting theory view a firm as a separate entity in which its activities are distinct from its owners. These principles serve as an impetus to the general philosophy of budget itself as a tool for effective management (Horngren, Forster, & Datar, 2005). This theory instigates the research variable which is to assess the influence of budgetary allocation on the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems in County projects.
Stakeholder theory
According to Freeman and Phillips (1984) a stakeholder theory considers highly managerial task as a primary driver to manage, influence, or balance the set of relationships that can affect the realization of an institution’s or organization's purpose. Stakeholder theory is generally a managerial concept that focuses on organizational strategy and ethics (Donaldson and Preston, 1995).

Stakeholder participation refers to the act of getting involved in the various aspects and stages in the project or programme management cycle through material contributions and consultation. The 2010 Constitution of Kenya gives citizens the right to take part in activities that have a direct bearing on their lives. One foremost theoretical work on the subject of community participation was by Arnstein (1969). The particular importance of Arnstein’s work stems from the explicit recognition that there are different levels of participation. The significance of stakeholders from a strategy development and provision of service scheduling viewpoint is also recognized (Ackermann and Eden, 2011). The importance of stakeholders and result dimension has been minimally debated. The subject of who is perceived as the final consumer of the information produced has been seen as a small matter and yet is very significance. This theory supports the variable that seeks to examine the extent to which stakeholder’s participation influence the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems in County projects.

Agency theory
Authors such as Kiser (1999) and Shapiro (2005) have inventoried varieties of theories of agency in the fields of economics, management, law, political science and sociology. Shapiro (2005) even concludes that the differences between these approaches are so significant that she opposes the very idea of coupling ‘agency’ and ‘theory’. Be this as it may, we shall nevertheless seek to point out that there exists a common principal to different disciplinary varieties of the theory of agency. For all these theories start from the condition that one party ‘acts on behalf of another’ (Shapiro,2005). Agency theory deals with a special case of such contracts, i.e. the situation in which one of the parties delegates responsibilities to another, while the former lacks full information about the efforts of the latter party, and the former’s wealth is dependent on the performance of the latter’s efforts (Kisser, 1999).

In its economic variety, agency theory makes assumptions about people (self-interest, risk preferences), about organizations (e.g., goal conflict among members, information asymmetry; corporate objective function), and about information (information is a commodity which can be purchased). Given these assumptions, it then asks which type of contract is most efficient, a behaviour-oriented contract (salaries, hierarchical governance) or an outcome-oriented contract (commissions, stock options, transfer of property rights, market governance).

In its economic variety, agency theory assumes that actors are fully rational, behave according to stable risk preferences, and maximize their self-interests (Jensen, 2001; Jensen and Meckling, 1976). The agency problem arises here because of the ‘separation between
ownership and control’ (Berle and Means, 1932/2004). The fundamental problem is the differential interests and risk preferences of firm owners and management. Firm owners can spread their wealth across many different firms, and optimal portfolio theory suggests that it is in fact wise for them to do so (Fama, 1980).

Managerial wealth, on the other hand, is tightly linked to the firm by which management is employed. These differential positions make that owners and managers have different risk preferences, and therefore tend to have different interests and subsequently behave differently in similar circumstances. Given that managers are expected to maximize their self-interests; they cannot be expected to abide by the contract after signing it. To ensure managerial compliance with the contract, owners have two basic instruments at their disposal. They can either monitor managerial behaviour to prevent management from making the ‘wrong’ decisions, or when perfect monitoring is not possible, provide management with incentives to act on their behest. Since sub-optimal behaviour by management cannot wholly be avoided, the efficient contract is one that minimizes residual losses for shareholders. In practice, this comes down to finding an optimal (efficient) balance between the costs associated with monitoring and with bonding (Cyert and March, 2011). The theory is in support of the variable that seeks to determine the extent with which politics influence the use of Monitoring and Evaluation systems in County agricultural projects.

**Empirical Review**

**Technical expertise**

In his study on factors affecting time overruns in public construction projects in Jordan, Sweis (2013), the top ten identified factors were: Shortage of technical professionals in the contractors’ organization, improper technical study by the contractor during the bedding stage, presence of unskilled labourers, too many change orders from owner, poor planning and scheduling of the project by the contractor, slow decision making from owner, engineers and staff assigned to the project, poor qualification of consultants, ambiguities and mistakes in specifications and drawings, severe weather conditions on the job site and delay in progress payments by the owner.

Mbaluku and Bwisa (2013) in their study on delay factors in construction project implementation in the public sector, with focus on construction projects found amongst the most important factors causing delay were: poor contractor supervision; insufficient communication between parties; delay in instruction; underestimation of contract time; poor professional management; client initiated variations/change orders; inadequate skill and experience of contractor staff and poor management of the site management; delay by sub-contractors; shortage of skilled labour; and slowness in decision making by client.

**Budgetary allocation**

The project M&E budget can be defined clearly within the overall budget of the project so that the M&E function can be given the recognition it deserves in policy performance, development and management (Gyorkos, 2003). According to Kelly and Magongo, 2004, the M&E budgets ought to be about five to ten percent of the total budget of the projects.
Kenya’s national budget is largely informed by key priorities arising from the consultations. Nonetheless, the central government nature of budget allocation is not well placed when it comes to handling specific priority rankings fronted by local communities, hence for the need to broaden the focus. Local prioritization cannot be measured by the national budget is not an efficient tool to match local prioritization due to the high transaction costs of implementing such an allocation scheme would be extremely high (Mwangi, 2005).

Creating a budget enables an organization to plan ahead and then to check on its performance against budgeted figures. A budget facilitates planning and resource allocation. It helps you to enumerate, itemize, dissect and examine all of the products and services that you offer to your patrons/clientele. Seer (2008) authoritatively asserts that if you cannot measure, count or quantify it, you cannot budget for it.

**Stakeholder’s participation**

Stakeholders are defined as groups of people, organization and institutions that stand to be affected or may affect by the project. These stakeholders include the community-men, women and youth; project field staff, program managers, donors, government and other decision makers ‘supporters, critics, government and NGO’S (Davies, 2008). According to (Thomas, 2003), people should be involved if they have information that cannot be gained otherwise, or if their participation is necessary to assure successful implementation of initiatives built on the analyses. This therefore clearly indicates that identification is determined by the influence and power the stakeholders have in the process.

Savage et al. (2004) argues that stakeholders are vital sources of information and should always be encouraged to participate in a process, even where they are fundamentally opposed to it. Furthermore, any project can be improved through a process of critical analysis. The World Bank (2008) further noted that when user groups, private sector, advocacy groups, and governments have clear roles, The importance of participation in integrating decision-making involving different sectors and stakeholders are build capacity and ownership of solutions in recognizing the role of indigenous communities and stakeholders (Brenda & Cesar, 2011).

**Political Influence**

Many of the Africa’s ills have squarely been blamed on ethnic favouritism among other factors although it is difficult to find concrete evidence prove these allegations, mostly due to lack of data (Burgess et al., 2013). The basis of political influence assessment will be on ethnicity, economic inequalities and politician’s individualism (number of sacred cow projects) as perceived by the target respondents. Analysis technique that will be employed for this variable will be qualitative. As the Kenya’s constitution (2010) provides, there exists two categories of politicians in the county governments. Both of these two categories of politicians are voted in by the same electorate and may have diverse influences over the projects implemented. These two cadres of politicians will be taken into consideration during analysis of this variable will.
Politicians have the power to decide who is to be given control of a project, and dictate the actions of stakeholders robbing them of the independence to work efficiently; they conspire in deciding which places to develop and which areas to ignore in a constituency based on the political mileage they can get from these places rather that genuine need (Ochoki Nyamori, 2009).

**Performance**

According to Acevedo et al (2010), the litmus test of the success of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system lies in the quality of indicators that are used to capture a dimension or an attribute to show the results in the form of an assessment of the performance in a particular aspect of governance or public service delivery. The classical view of the quality of indicators in M&E systems is to ensure that they are objective and adequate to reliably measure the impact of an input or intervention.

Mackay (2007) asserts that indicators are useful for setting performance targets, for assessing progress toward achieving them, and for comparing the performance of different organizations. They are a relatively inexpensive means of measuring government performance on a frequent basis. Although performance indicators can be used to identify problems, thus allowing corrective action to be taken, a limitation is that they do not usually reveal whether government actions led to improved performance. They can, however, be used to flag the need for a follow-up review or evaluation of an issue. A common danger with performance indicator systems is over engineering the system by including too many under-utilized indicators; this can lead to poor quality data.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are essential components of results based management (Rist, Boily & Martin, 2011). Results based management involves deliberately gathering empirical evidence in order to know the extent to which intended results are being achieved so that modifications to the design and delivery of activities can be made to improve and account for performance in achieving intended outcome.

**Critique of the Literature Review**

A study on the regulation of building contractors in Kenya and Monitoring and Evaluation challenges of enforcing the National Construction Authority mandate on performance of roads project in devolved government in Kenya was done by Gacheru and Dianga (2015). This study can be criticized that it looked at the regulation of building contractors in Kenya and Monitoring and Evaluation challenges and not the determinants that influence the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems.

White (2013) did a study on Monitoring and Evaluation best practices in development NGOs, the researcher writes that NGOs encounter a number of challenges when implementing or managing M&E activities one being insufficient Monitoring and Evaluation capacity where M&E staff usually advise more than one project or Programme at a time, and have a regional or sectoral assignments with a vast portfolio. The study can be criticized that it looked at Monitoring and Evaluation best practices in development NGOs and not the determinants that influence the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects.

A study on how Monitoring and Evaluation affects success of Projects in public sector that was conducted by Cliff (2013), established that M & E is of a great impact on the success of
public funded projects. This study can be criticized that it did not look at the determinants that influence the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects; A case of Bungoma County agricultural projects but instead looked on Monitoring and Evaluation and success of Projects in public sector. Ogolla and Moronge (2016), conducted a study on determinants of effective M&E of government funded water projects in Kenya: A case of Nairobi County. The study established that managerial skills, budgetary allocation, project team and stakeholder involvement influenced Monitoring and Evaluation of projects. The critique of this study can be criticized that determinants of effective M&E of government funded water projects in Kenya were given prominence as opposed to the determinants that influence the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects.

The literature reviewed revealed several gaps that this study explored. Despite various attempts by studies to look into the role of M&E systems in various development projects, the determinants influencing the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects; A case of Bungoma county agricultural projects is yet to be addressed. This study explored four variables: technical expertise, budgetary allocation, political influence, stakeholder participation and their influence on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects.

Studies done include Nabulu (2015) did an investigation on the elements impacting execution of M&E of government projects in Kenya: a case of constituency development fund projects in Narok east sub-region, Kenya. He found that cost, preparing and time had an effect on the execution of M&E of government extends in Kenya. This examination attempts to fill the hole left by Nabulu’s (2015) which includes the impact of partners’ support, budgetary portion and politics on M&E. From the empirical evidence, few studies have attempted to analyse the determinants influencing the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects. To bridge gap, this study attempt to investigate the factors influencing the use on Monitoring and Evaluation systems on County projects; A case of Bungoma county agricultural projects.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design
Descriptive research design was adopted by the researcher which is employed to describe an event or phenomena as it exists at present and is suitable when the study is concerned in particular predictions, description of facts and features regarding persons or event (Kothari, 2014). The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data was gathered and analysed by use of descriptive statistics method. The descriptive statistical method aided in describing the data and determining the respondents’ degree of conformity with the diverse statements under each factor.

Target Population
According to Cooper and Schindler (2014), population is defined as an entire group of objects/individuals having the same observable features. It’s also explains as a collective of all that conforms to a specification that is quantified (Kothari, 2014). The target population was 232 Bungoma county agricultural projects employees, comprised of County Agricultural...
projects consultants/Surveyors, County Agricultural project staff, County Financial and accounts officers, Monitoring and Evaluation officers and Agricultural Project beneficiaries.
According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a sample of more than 50% is a representative of the whole population, therefore the researcher selected a sample of 50% as a sample representative sample targeted total of 116 sample size which comprised of 22 County Agricultural projects consultants/Surveyors, 25 County Agricultural project staff, 18 County Finance and accounts officers, 21 Monitoring and Evaluation officers, and 30 Agricultural Project beneficiaries.

Data collection is means by which information is obtained from the selected subjects of an investigation (Croswell, 2002). They are tools used to gather data or information for a study, they include questionnaires, observation checklist, interview guide and document analysis (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The choice of data collection instruments depends on the attributes of the subjects, research topic, problem question, objectives, design, expected data and results. The primary research data was collected from county project officers, field staff, financial managers, M&E officers and project beneficiaries using a self-administered questionnaire.

Data Analysis and presentation
Data was gathered and analysed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistical tools assisted in describing the data and measuring the respondents’ degree of agreement with the different statements under each variable. Data analysis was done using SPSS and Microsoft excels to generate quantitative reports which was presented in the form of tabulations, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Data obtained from the open ended questions in the questionnaire was subjected to ANOVA data analysis method. Tables and figures were used to present the data. The relationship between the study variables was established by the use of multiple regression.

Findings of the Study, Conclusion and Recommendations
The study found out that technical expertise has an effect on the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. The respondents indicated that Project managers need to have capacities and attributes that project managers should possess in order to realize projects aims and objectives. The findings further indicated that Project manager continuously applies his knowledge, skills and personal behaviours with the intention of delivering projects that will meet the requirements of the different stakeholders. Further, the analysis of findings indicated that teams should encourage all members to use the skills and practices that make discussions and meetings more effective. The study also revealed that the project manager needs to know what factors are critical to successful project implementation. Finally the study found that Competencies include all the related knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes that form a person’s job.

Concerning budgetary allocation, the study found that budget execution is difficult to control when budget is continuously being revised. The findings further indicated that budgeting process pushes managers to take time to create strategies, targets and goals before activity begins. Further, the analysis of findings indicated that the budgeting process forces managers to assess current operating conditions and aids in forecasting and implementing needed changes. The study also revealed that budget helps managers evaluate performance, locate problematic areas, bottlenecks and provide solutions to these problems. Finally, the study found out that the budget is increasingly recognized as the key tool for economic management.
In relation to stakeholder’s participation, the study found that the Stakeholders would participate depending on the relationship they foster with the top management and not junior workers acting on their behalf. Further, the analysis of findings indicated that the importance of stakeholders from a strategy development and service planning perspective is well acknowledged. The study also revealed that the Stakeholders are individuals, groups or organizations who, directly or indirectly, stand to gain or lose from a given development activity or policy. In addition, the study found out that the Stakeholders participation involves initiation, participation in planning, participation in implementation and participation has a positive and significant effect on performance of projects.

On political influence, the respondents indicated that the scarcity of resources and the interests of the leaders motivate Politics both in the organization and in the country. The findings further indicated that successful project management is directly linked to the ability of project managers and other key players to understand the importance of organizational politics and how to make them work for project success.

Further, the analysis of findings indicated that during monitoring and evaluation phase, political influence should also be reviewed so as to determine whether the project will continue or not. The study revealed that the Politicians use the sacred cow model as one of the entry points in attempt to control projects. The study also shown that Politicians’ personal characteristics and political ties clearly affect project development outcomes.

The study concludes that technical expertise as an important factor influencing the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. Technical expertise is the ability to consistently meet the objective criteria for performance on the job. It is generally agreed that the overall scope of technical expertise include knowledge, skills and attitude. To start with, knowledge is one aspect of technical expertise. Knowledge consists of the general and specific project management theory, concepts, practices, procedures, processes, and methodologies that apply to an industry and the complexity of projects being conducted. The Project professionals must possess knowledge of the technical aspects in this case must possess technical expertise on agricultural projects.

On budget allocation, it can be concluded that budget allocation influenced the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. Inferential statistics indicated that budget allocation had a strong influence on performance of county projects. Overall conclusion deducted from the study is that budget allocation had a statistically significance on performance of county projects in Bungoma county.

In relation to stakeholder’s participation, the study concludes that the stakeholder’s participation has an influence on the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. When user groups, private sector, advocacy groups, and governments have clear roles on the participation in use monitoring and evaluation systems performance of County agricultural projects improves.

On political influence, the study concludes that Politics in projects involve the tactical use of power to retain or obtain control of real or symbolic resources. Findings show that a majority of the agricultural projects experience political interference in the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. Political interference mainly came from external parties such as local politicians. However, a majority of the agricultural projects reported that they had put in place mechanism for mitigating the negative effective of political interference on the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. The political nature of project managers and style of leadership are the main tenets that influence the use of
Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. This shows how political influence is effective in influencing performance of County projects. Based on the findings of this study, the following are the proposed recommendations per objective of study.

All the project technical team should be trained on all factors that influence the use Monitoring and Evaluation systems on performance of County projects. They should be educated on the key metrics of a performance of projects such as budget allocation, scope and timelines. These should be deliberately managed so that a quality project can be realized.

The Bungoma county project officers should allocate sufficient financial resources to enhance on monitoring and evaluation of agricultural projects implemented by county government through organizational policies to enhance the process through community involvement. Stakeholder’s participation should be enlightened on the best way to involve themselves in the project and the extent of participation, without interfering with project performance process. There should be proper engagement of the major stakeholders, on Monitoring and Evaluation to ensure performance of County Agricultural projects.

During monitoring and evaluation phase, political influence should be reviewed so as to determine whether the project will continue or not. Politicians use the sacred cow model as one of the entry points in attempt to control projects. The Sacred Cow Model involves a situation where a project is identified and suggested by a senior and powerful individual in a project.

The researcher suggested that since the study was conducted to examine the factors influencing use of monitoring and evaluation systems on performance of county agricultural projects in Bungoma county, Kenya. Other studies should be conducted in other counties in Kenya and different variables should be employed. The R square of the study was at 76.8%.

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