

How Monitoring and Evaluation Affects the Outcome of Constituency Development Fund Projects in Kenya: A Case Study of Projects in Gatanga Constituency

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Abstract

Monitoring, Evaluation and Control are very important management functions for ensuring that project objectives are fully achieved and that the project remains on course. The Constituency Development Fund was created in 2003 in Kenya out of the desire to achieve community driven development where the local communities generate their own development agenda and get it funded by the central government. Therefore, this study investigates how monitoring and evaluation affects the success of Constituency Development Fund Projects in Kenya - Gatanga Constituency being a case study. The aim of this study is to establish whether the project monitoring and control efforts of the contractors and project supervisors contribute to an improved project outcome. A field survey was conducted using a sample of 45 respondents who were selected by stratified random sampling. The data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 16.0). The results of the study reveal that contractors and project supervisors apply monitoring tools to a certain level in their project operations consequently producing satisfactory levels of success. The findings further reveal that most constituency development fund projects in Gatanga Constituency were completed within the stipulated time frame and budget and that majority of the respondents considered them a success.

Keywords: Project, Stakeholders, Project control, Monitoring and Evaluation, Project outcome, Project Success, Constituency Development Fund.

1.0: Introduction

Monitoring and controlling the progress of a project is one of the most important management functions of project management because it is a determinant of project success. Every team member needs to know, in a timely and accurate manner, how the project is progressing, where they are currently in comparison with the initially set plans, whether deadlines are met, budgets are safely measured and followed. Monitoring and Control are often regarded as a single activity because they are both project management functions, sequential and closely related. Anthony, (1965) acknowledges their relationship but regards them as separate activities because monitoring leads to control. Ritz, (1994) describes control as the work of constraining, coordinating and regulating actions in accordance with plans to meet specific objectives.

Planning defines the strategies, tactics and methods for achieving project objectives, while monitoring and control provides the required checks and balances for ensuring that the plans and overall project objectives are achieved. Plans cannot bring about the required end results by themselves; they must be complemented by monitoring and control to achieve their goals. Control is, as a process, distinguishable from monitoring by a number of activities through which schedule slippage in project performance is corrected. Arditi, (1985), Mauricio and Carlos, (2002) confirmed that the performance of companies in project delivery depends largely on their control structures as well as their production planning. Kharbanda and Pinto, (1996) maintained that most, if not all, major project failures could be traced to inadequate and inaccurate planning or blind adherence to the originally formulated plans regardless of how the environment changed in the interim.

Traditionally, the definition of good project success was defined by the project team's meeting cost, time and product quality related criteria, in which researchers like Atkinson, (1999) in *'The International Journal of Project Management'*, Vol. 17, No. 6, pp. 337-342 described as Iron Triangle of project management. Until now, this Iron Triangle is still regarded as the measurement for the performance on all types of projects.

In construction, contractors are one of the major parties concerned with the monitoring and control of projects. They are responsible for executing the works that form the contract. These two parties collaborate with consultants in the monitoring and control of projects to ensure that they are delivered within the scheduled time and cost and to the required quality standards.

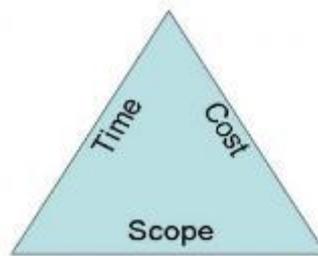


Figure 1: The Iron Triangle

Source: <http://knispower.com/wpcontent/uploads/2011/02/Ion>

Successful project completion requires the concerted effort of the project team to carry out the various project activities, and it is the project manager who at the centre of the project network is responsible for orchestrating the whole construction process. The project manager has to maintain the project network and monitor against slippages in cost, time and quality for the duration of project. In achieving this, the project manager relies heavily on a reliable monitoring system that can provide timely signaling of project problems, whether they are real or potential.

Since independence in 1963, Kenya had pursued her economic development through central planning. This approach has led to unequal and inadequate distribution of resources in the country hence the marginalization of some regions because most of the resources were concentrated at the central government. In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, there was need for a paradigm shift in order to fast track their realization. As part of this strategy, in 2003, the Government of Kenya established the Constituency Development Fund (CDF); a program that seeks to enhance community's participation in the fight against poverty at the grassroots level.

The Parliament then established the CDF Act, 2003 and amended it in 2007. The Act was meant to enhance development at the constituency level by channeling resources for the implementation of projects with the long term objectives of improving the social economic well being of the people at the grassroots level, (CDF Act, 2003). Another objective of the introduction of the CDF was to control and reduce imbalances in regional development brought about by partisanship as had been experienced previously in Kenya, Mapesa and Kibua, (2006).

The Fund is administered by an officer under the National Management Committee. It comprises an annual budgetary allocation equivalent to 2.5% of the national revenue, (National Devolved Funds Report, 2007). The CDF Act also provides that 75% of this amount shall be disbursed equally to all the 210 constituencies and the remaining 25% shall be disbursed on the basis of population and the poverty index. (G.O.K, 2005).

Gatanga is one such constituency that received funding from the central government and has been touted as the best performing in project management. According to The CDF Status Report, (2009) prepared by The Institute for Social Accountability, (TISA), CDF contributes over 10% to all development of Kenya though it has been marred by repeated accusation of abuse of funds and poor implementation of projects leaving some incomplete. An evaluation

survey conducted by the National Taxpayers Association, (NTA) in 2012, voted Gatanga Constituency as the best constituency in the utilization and implementation of the CDF projects. The constituency had returned a zero score on badly used funds and did not have unaccounted for money in its account. Neither did it record funds set aside for non-existing projects. The technical part of the report concluded that the completed projects had been well built and were of good quality, further observing that that was good value for taxpayers' money.

The report by the National Taxpayers Association (NTA) revealed that the constituency had properly utilized KSh98million for both complete and ongoing projects. In the 2010/2011 fiscal year, the constituency kitty funded projects worth Ksh.42, 148,000 ranging from construction of schools, security and health facilities to other infrastructural sector like provision of piped water and upgrading of some local roads. In total, during the 2010/2011 fiscal year, the kitty funded 64 projects distributed in different sectors as follows: Health-8, Education (Primary-23, Secondary-20), Security-11, Agriculture-1, and Energy-1. For a project to succeed, several factors normally influence it, monitoring and evaluation being one of them. This research, therefore, critically examines the role of monitoring and evaluation as a factor that influences project outcome in Kenya using Gatanga Constituency as a case study.

1.1: Objectives Of The Study

1. To determine whether there were time overruns in projects implemented.
2. To determine whether there were cost overruns in projects implemented.
3. To determine the role of monitoring and evaluation in influencing project success.

1.2: Model/ Procedure Of Monitoring And Evaluation

Project progress reports are updated on a periodic printed form; issued in most of the cases on a monthly basis. These reports discuss the current project progress against planned schedule of work in terms of time and budget to forecast the project finish date. These reports also mention the constructability problems; quality issues including test results; contract changes including modification in design and increase/decrease in quantities; and pending issues from progress meetings. The photos are attached to these reports to show the achievement of milestones. This management system provides a project manager with the various reports such as progress control, earned value management and resource management.

Most construction projects employ scheduling methods to monitor and control the progress of work and develop a progress report, which involves the recording of construction achievements for detection of deviations from actual plan and for forecasting project performance. The current practice of project control is entirely dependent on cost, schedule, and quality reports and personnel performance reviews. In 2005, the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Planning and National Development commissioned work on the design of an appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluation in the National Development Programme. This was a collective effort by the government, private sector and civil societies. This proposed Monitoring and Evaluation framework has not been fully operational. Therefore, there is a strong case that Constituency Development Fund should come up with participatory Monitoring and Evaluation component in its management.

1.2.1: Monitoring Time Aspects

Monitoring project time is one of the many challenges for the project manager. Time monitoring seeks to assess how well the project adheres to the planned schedule over a period of time. There are a variety of ways in which a construction schedule can be presented. The more common types of construction schedule include: Gantt chart, activity on the arrow, precedence network and line of balance. Bar charts or Gantt charts are a powerful communication tool and an extremely useful, visual and graphical medium in construction scheduling.

1.2.2: Monitoring Costs

Cost monitoring seeks to assess how well the project adheres to the planned budget so as to avoid or reduce cost overruns. This is done by auditing the expenditures and costs incurred at every phase of the project on capital, service provision and labour.

1.2.3: Monitoring Quality and Scope

This seeks to assess how the project adheres to the project specifications, deliverables and scope. Right from the onset, a project has set targets or deliverables to be met within certain quality expectations. Therefore, monitoring, evaluating and controlling the quality and scope ensures that corrective measures are instituted early in the project when shortcomings are discovered and that the project contractor does not deliver shoddy or substandard work. This is achieved by assessing the project against the project design and specifications.

2.0: Literature Review

Proper monitoring and timely feedback help in controlling the workmanship thus enhancing the quality of a project. If each part of the activity of a project is monitored effectively and instances of poor workmanship and improper usage of resources – be it material, labour or plant and machinery – are reported promptly, it aids in achieving the desired quality level. Monitoring tracks and documents resource use throughout the implementation of the project, Utto, (2004). Evaluation assesses project effectiveness in achieving its goals and in determining the relevance and sustainability of an ongoing project. It compares the project impact with what was set to be achieved in the project plan, Shapiro, (2004). Lawal and Onohaebi, (2010) opine that monitoring of projects by relevant bodies is essential and of greatest benefit because of the improved insight they provide concerning project completion status. The best-laid project can go awry if not properly monitored. Through proper monitoring, delays can be readily identified through periodic reports that are made. Therefore monitoring is a very crucial function in project management that should be executed by qualified personnel.

This study identified four activities to represent project monitoring: site visit, site meeting, interim valuation and financial statement. Interim valuation refer to the report of valuations carried out periodically, such as monthly or bi-monthly, to determine if the value of the work completed by the contractor is satisfactory. Financial statements refer to the statement of the account of a project inclusive of payments received from disposal of assets and expenditures. The level of project monitoring can be considered from the perspective of the regularity or time interval of these activities. Enshassi, (1996) emphasizes the importance of monitoring projects at frequent intervals and on a timely basis.

Odiorne, (1965) identifies three activities that define control as rescheduling activities, reallocating resources and altering project objectives. Kursave, (2003) reflects that monitoring and control ensure that all the changes incorporated into the original plan are implemented as planned. Subramanian *et al*, (2009) focus on the aspects of learning, control, efficiency, and flexibility, identifying potential for improvement in those areas. They observe that appropriate monitoring and control strategies should be put in place so that the project remains on track. Gobeli and Larson, (1987) observe that, early in the process, it is important to identify the key outcomes and outputs of the project and how you will measure whether they have been delivered. Claudia and Oleg, (2011) note that the manager should monitor the processes and measure progress, both qualitatively and quantitatively, throughout the project at individual, team and whole project levels. This ensures that problems can be identified early and successful remedies and tactics can be promulgated throughout the project.

As Faniran *et al*, (1998) stated, the purpose of carrying out this project monitoring and control strategies is to complete a project within a scheduled time and cost and to specified quality standards. This understanding shows that monitoring and control cannot be separated from project performance. (Naoum, 1991., Ling & Chan, 2002., Thomas *et al*, 2002) use project performance as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of project delivery processes. They describe project performance as the assessment of project success and use objective factors, including time, cost and quality objectives, and subjective factors, which are concerned with the assessment of stakeholders' satisfaction.

Successful project managers diligently and regularly review progress against the schedule, budget and quality elements of the project. Regular reviews allow problems to be identified early so that corrective action can be taken to keep the project on track. Review also helps team members to learn and improve their skills. The study sought to establish the various project monitoring, control and evaluation techniques put in place in the in Kenya under the Constituency Development Fund, Gatanga Constituency being a case study; and the extent to which they were achieved and how they influenced project outcome.

2.1: Conceptual Framework For The Study

Site visit, site meeting, interim valuation and financial statement were selected as the variables of project monitoring and evaluation. For project outcome, Hatush and Skitmore, (1997) and Michell *et al*. (2007) maintained that cost, time and quality are the most important parameters of project outcome. For this reason, percentages of time overrun to the initial contract period and cost overrun to the initial contract sum, which were discovered in previous studies (Michell *et al.*, 2007; Idoro, 2008) to be the principal factors for measuring project outcome, were used in this study as the project outcome variables.



Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Naoum, (1991) describes time overrun as the difference between the planned and actual contract periods and cost overrun as the difference between the initial and final contract sums. Faniran *et al*, (1998) assert that the objective of monitoring and control is the same as that of planning: to complete a prescribed amount of work within a fixed time, at a previously estimated cost and to specified quality standards. This study sought to determine whether there were time and cost overruns in the CDF projects in Kenya during the 2010/2011 financial year using Gatanga Constituency as a case study; and how monitoring and evaluation helped in the achievement of project objectives.

3.0: Research Methods

The study utilized a case study research design; the researcher chose it because it is considered a robust research method particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation of a particular phenomenon or situation is required. (Kothari, 2004). Data were collected on the frequencies at which site visits and meetings are carried out, interim valuations and financial statements were prepared. Data were also collected on the initial and final contract periods and sums of the projects. Frequencies of site visits and meetings were measured depending on the contract period of the project.

The project monitoring and control variables were recorded in months for analysis purposes. The initial and actual contract periods were obtained in months, while the initial and final contract sums were obtained in Kenyan currency, which is Shilling. Time overrun was derived as the difference between the actual and initial contract periods, while cost overrun was derived as the difference between the final and initial contract sums. These two overruns were used to calculate the percentages of time overrun to initial contract period and cost overrun to initial contract sum, which are the project outcome variables.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents who had been involved in the implementation of the projects. A sample of 60 respondents was envisaged to be a large enough sample to minimize the discrepancy between the sample characteristics and the population characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed to respondents who included contractors, beneficiary clients and consultants (Engineers from the ministry of public works who acted as project supervisors.) Out of the questionnaires distributed, 45 were returned and had been duly filled, giving a response rate of 75.0 %.

The data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaires that were administered by hand to the respondents who were asked to indicate the rank that represented their

assessment of the frequencies at which the project monitoring and control strategies were carried out and the extent to which monitoring and evaluation affects project outcome by rating it on a Lickert scale. They were also asked to state the initial and final contract periods and project sums.

4.0: Research Findings And Data Presentation

4.1: Project Success Parameters

4.2: Project Delays

One criterion for measuring project success is considering if the project was delivered within the stipulated time or if it delayed. The study sought to determine the extent to which this parameter was achieved by looking at the delay period in projects measured in months.

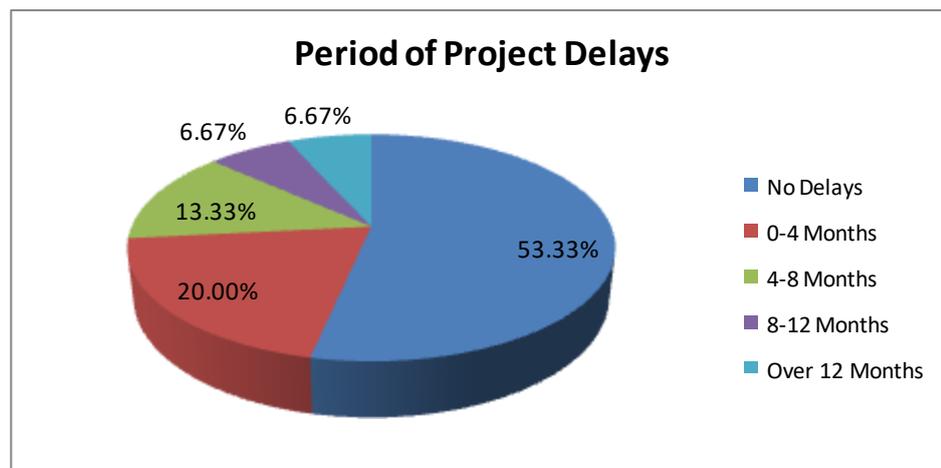


Figure 3: Period of project delays

The findings indicated 53.3% of projects were completed within the stipulated period, while 48.7% of the projects delayed on different time periods. 20% of the projects delayed between 0-4 months; 13.33% has 4-8 months delay period; 6.67% delayed between 8-12 months; while another 6.67% of the projects delayed over a 12-months period. The respondents explained that project delays were caused by a number of factors which were both internal like procurement procedures and external to the projects like adverse weather conditions.

4.3: Project Costs

Project costs is another measure of project success. If a project is completed within the budgetary allocations, then a project can be deemed as being successful from the financial perspective. The study sought to examine whether projects were completed within the budget allocations or went into overruns. The table below gives the summary of the findings.

Table 1: Percentage of extra project costs

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Over 10% extra costs	1	6.7
	5-10% extra costs	1	6.7
	Below 5% extra costs	3	20.0
	Within Budget	10	66.7
Total		15	100.0

The findings reveal that 66.7% of projects were completed within the stipulated budget while 33.3% of the projects went into cost overruns. The extra costs were mostly contributed by the heavy rains and inflation costs. They were however borne by the contractors.

4.4: Project Achieving Objectives

A project is considered as 'successful' if it is completed within the stipulated time and costs; and meets the scope, quality and client's expectations, Shenhar *et al*, (1997). The study sought to establish whether the project had achieved its objectives and as such was considered a 'success' by considering the view of the respondents based on the success parameters mentioned above. The findings are shown below.

Table 2: Project Success Rate

	Freq	%
Yes	29	64.4
No	16	35.6
Total	45	100.0

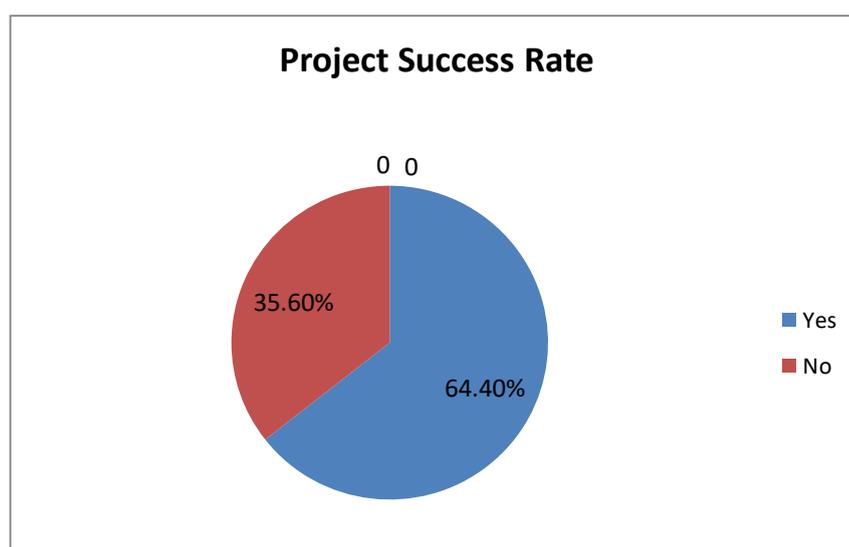


Figure 4 : Projects' Success Rate

From the findings 64.4 % of the respondents answered "Yes" while 35.6 % answered "No" as shown in the table and figure above. This high level of satisfaction is attributed to the fact that all the projects were utility projects and most of them were completed within stipulated

time and budget. The projects in Gatanga Constituency score a percentage of 64.4% as the success rate.

4. 5: How Monitoring and Evaluation affects Project Outcome

4.5.1: Frequency of Monitoring and Evaluation

The study sought to establish the number of evaluations done on projects. The level of project monitoring can be considered from the perspective of the regularity or time interval of these activities. Enshassi, (1996) emphasizes the importance of monitoring projects at frequent intervals and on a timely basis. The table below shows the frequency of evaluation of the projects and their respective percentages.

Table 3: Frequency of Evaluations of Projects

Projected duration of project (Months)	Total. No. of Projects	No. of evaluations per project	Total No. of Evaluations	% of times Evaluation
Less than 2 months	2	2	4	5.6
2-4	2	3	6	8.5
4-6	3	4	12	16.9
6-8	3	5	15	21.1
8-10	2	6	12	16.9
10-12	2	7	14	19.7
Over 12 months	1	8	8	11.3
Total	15	35	71	100

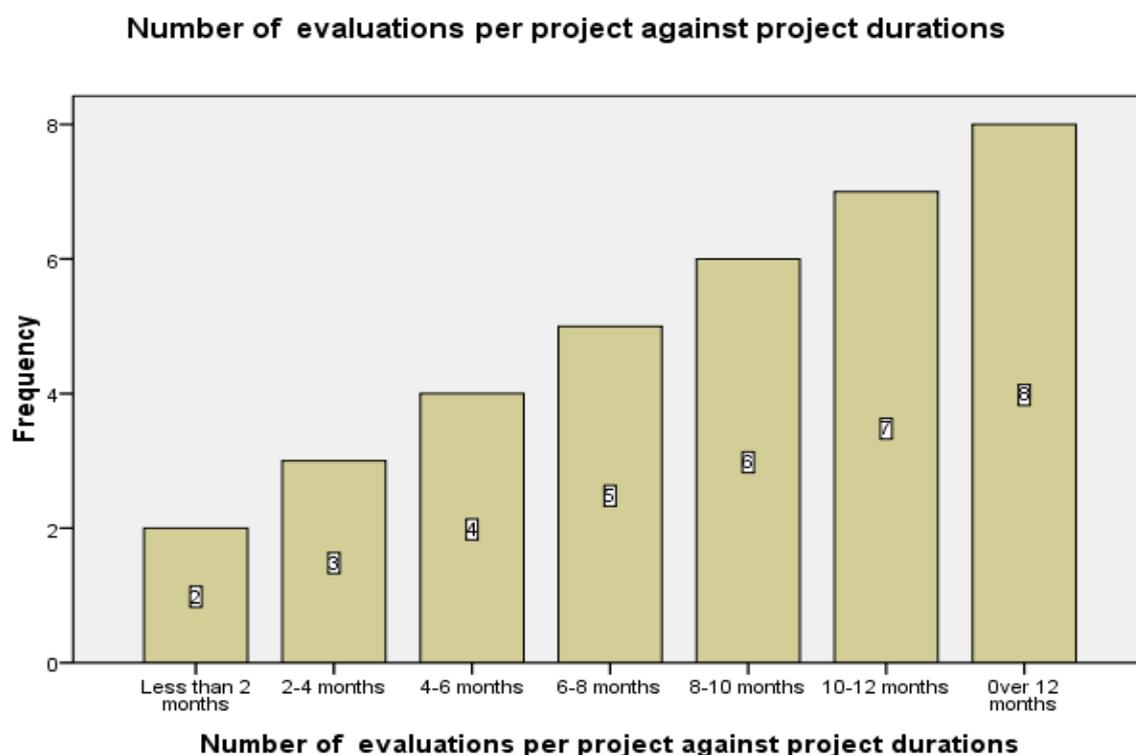


Figure 5: Number of evaluations per project

Monitoring and Evaluation were done frequently as shown in the ranges above with a total of 71 evaluation for all the 15 projects sampled during the 2010/2011 financial year. The small projects like construction of toilets which took less than 2 months had 2 evaluations each. Those projects with stipulated time period of 2-4 months accounted for 8.5% of all evaluations with 3 evaluations per project. Projects whose implementation period was 4-6 months accounted for 16.9% of the total evaluations with 4 evaluations per project. Projects with 6-8 months implementation period accounted for 21.1% of the evaluations with 6 evaluations per project. Projects with 8-10 months implementation period took 16.9 % of the evaluations conducting 6 evaluations per project. The projects with 10-12 months period had a share of 19.7% of all the evaluations with 7 evaluations per project. The longest project time spanning over 12 months had 8 evaluations, and accounted for 11.3% of the total evaluations.

4.5.2: Procedure of Monitoring and Evaluation

The project contract was awarded in phases and the contractor was given the nod to proceed to the next phase only after thorough evaluation has been done by the Ministry of Works. If the work was of sound quality, then he was permitted to proceed to the next phase. If the project is delayed beyond the time provided in the work plan, the contractor will produce new work plan, if and only if the delay is beyond the contractor (But with a warning, since contractor was expected to anticipate any interruption and manage them, as he was required to provide project risk management framework as part of the work plan). But if the contractor's inefficiency delayed the project, then the contract will be cancelled and re-advertised.

Evaluation was both internal and Ex-post (conducted after the completion of a certain phase) to determine performance factors of the project. The Constituency Development Committee also makes periodic visits to the project sites and inspects the project and books of accounts. Line ministries are also involved in monitoring and evaluation of the projects.

4.5.3: The Extent to which Monitoring and Evaluation affects Project Success

The study sought to establish the extent to which monitoring and evaluation affects project success. Respondents were asked to rate this variable by the use of a grading system on a likert scale. The results are shown below.

Table 4: Extent to which M & E affects Project Success

	Freq	%
Lesser	2	4.4
Moderate	8	17.8
Greater	35	77.8
Total	45	100.0

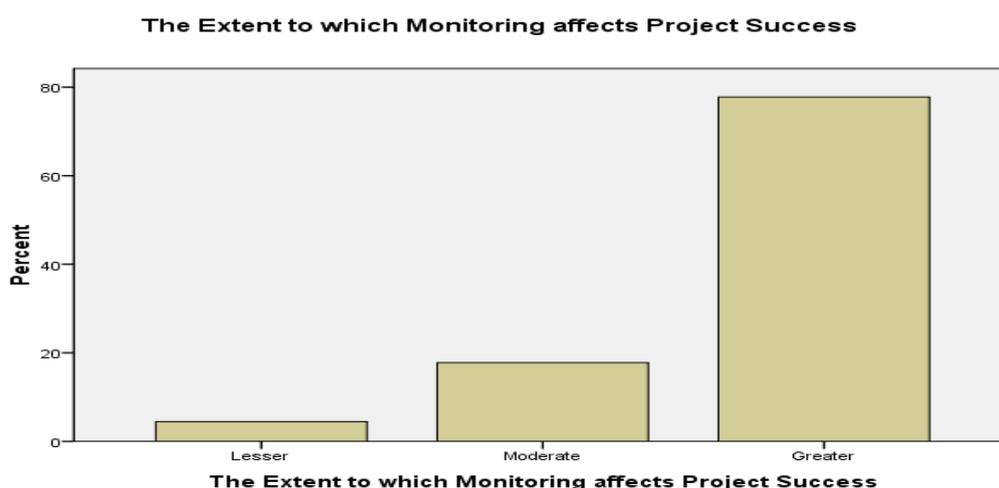


Figure 6: Extent to which M & E affects project success

From the findings, 77.8% of the respondents agreed that monitoring and evaluation affects project success to a great extent, 17.8% to a moderate and 4.4% to a lesser extent. All the project supervisors and majority of the beneficiary clients rated this factor highly, similarly were the project contractors. The findings agree with the views of project management scholars on the role of monitoring and evaluation on project success. Lawal and Onohaebi, (2010) opined that monitoring of projects by relevant bodies is essential and of greatest benefit because of the improved insight they provide concerning project completion status. Subramanian *et al*, (2009) observe that appropriate monitoring and control strategies should be put in place so that the project remains on track.

Table 5: Correlations between M & E and Project Success

		The Project Success Rate	The Extent to which Monitoring affects Project Success
The Project Success Rate	Pearson Correlation	1	.673(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	45	45
The Extent to which Monitoring affects Project Success	Pearson Correlation	.673(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	45	45

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

The Pearson Correlation between the monitoring and evaluation and project success was 0.673** indicating a relatively strong positive relationship between the two variables.

5.0: Summary

The results of the study have revealed that the frequencies at which project supervisors conduct site visits and meetings and prepare interim valuations and financial statements are significant to project outcomes/success. It is important to note that while monitoring activities could be done by the contractors' team alone, control activities require the involvement and approval of other project stakeholders, especially project consultants. The findings revealed that 53.3% of the projects in Gatanga were completed within the time schedule while 66.7% were completed within the budgetary allocations. Monitoring may be done by the contractor, foremen and project consultants, who monitor and sign certificates of performance as well as certificate of completion. Such certificates provide the basis for payments before the commencement of the next phase of the project. A correlation analysis between monitoring and project success gave a value 0.673** which shows a relatively strong relationship between the two variables. Therefore project monitoring affects project success positively.

5.1: Conclusion

The success of a project depends on how it is managed. This study has looked at project monitoring and evaluation as instruments for ensuring the successful completion of Constituency Development Fund projects in Kenya using Gatanga Constituency as a case study. Given the crucial role of these projects to the life of the people at the grass roots, project monitoring and evaluation should be taken seriously to ensure the success of such projects. Monitoring of projects has a positive influence on the performance of projects. The findings have shown that projects in Gatanga Constituency are keenly monitored and evaluated which led to most of them being completed within the stipulated period and budget while meeting stakeholder's expectations. However a framework and monitoring tools should be formulated to make this exercise more effective.

5. 2: Recommendations

Project activities need to be properly documented irrespective of the nature and magnitude of the project. This would provide information necessary for monitoring and evaluating various project challenges and hence prevent recurrence of such project shortcomings. A framework and monitoring tools should be formulated and used consistently in all CDF projects in the constituency.

Projects in Gatanga Constituency were well monitored and evaluated which led to their success. Many other constituencies registered project failures some with a failure rate of over 70%. Therefore, a study should be conducted to establish whether projects in those constituencies were monitored and evaluated effectively and which factors led to their failure. This will help prevent future occurrences of project failures.

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