

Effect of Stakeholder Engagement on Project Success in Rwanda; A Case of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

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Abstract: *The Project Management Body of Knowledge defined stakeholder as an individual, group, or organization who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected positively or negatively by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project. Referred to the financial and success reports of Gisenyi Youth New Vision (2014), the project used around twenty millions of United States dollars to finance its projects in Rubavu district. However, despite the huge amount of money used, its projects' success has not been very successful in its past twelve years of activities and one of the reasons given by project's consultants and evaluators, is poor engagement of stakeholders specifically the stakeholders of the project whereby they have not been involved in project planning, implementation, in decision making and in evaluations. This study sought to assess the effect of stakeholder engagement on project success in Rwanda and considered Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project as the case study. The study used descriptive survey design. The target population in this study to 43 respondents including project staff and representatives of stakeholders of the Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project. Data for this study were analyzed quantitatively using percentages, frequencies and multiple linear regressions. The findings revealed that 51.2 % of respondents strongly agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engages its stakeholders in determining the project scope, 46.5 % of respondents strongly agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engages its stakeholders in determining the project scope. The findings demonstrated that 55.8% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in determining the project requirements, the findings demonstrated that 46.5% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in adjustment of project plans, the findings further revealed that 60.5% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project accommodates the suggestions of its stakeholders, 69.7% of respondents strongly agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project collects evidence from stakeholders.. The study concluded a significant relationship between stakeholder engagement in project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project. The project implementing team should always engage the stakeholders in project execution so as to ensure that they are executing the right interventions in the right and safe environment.*

Keywords: Stakeholder, Stakeholder engagement, Project Success

1. Introduction

Over the last decades of development, project funders in Africa have demonstrated the failures of development projects. Gohary (2006) described stakeholders as "individuals or organizations that are either affected by or affect the deliverables or outputs of a specific organization", other defined stakeholders as those who can influence the project process and/or final results, whose living environments are positively or negatively affected by the project, and who receive associated direct and indirect benefits and/or losses. The Project Management Body of Knowledge defined stakeholder as an individual, group, or organization who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected positively or negatively by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project" (PML, 2013). Projects can only be successful through engagements from stakeholders, and it is the stakeholders that evaluate whether they find the project successful beyond receiving the project deliverables. One of the major concerns coming forth in the management of projects is the recognition and management of project stakeholders since the stakeholders are a major source of uncertainty in construction project. The successful project management can be carried out only when the responsible managers take into account the potential influence of the different project's stakeholders. More often than not, these criteria are implicit and change during the project course. This is an enormous challenge for project managers. The route to better projects, say lies in finding ways to improve project stakeholder management, i.e., project managers must

consider stakeholder's interests, needs and requirements and manage them ensure project success (Aaltonen, 2010).

2. Statement of the Problem

Stakeholders are "any person or party with an interest in the outcome of the project and/or an ability to exert influence". The need for stakeholder management is a global concern. Africa as revealed by the study of Alen (2014) the main factors leading to effective stakeholder engagements are hiring a project manager with high competency, transparent evaluation of the alternative solution, ensuring effective communication between the project and its stakeholder, setting common goal and objective of the project, and exploring the stakeholder need and expectation. In line with to this case, during the last decade a number of studies have investigated factors which really lead to successful completions of projects. These studies include institutional factors influencing timely completion of road projects in Rwanda (Peter et al, 2016). Critical success factors of project management for Brunei Construction Projects (Salleh, 2009). Factors affecting the timeliness of completion of donor-funded projects in Kenya (Gato, 2014), Factors affecting Timely Completion of Construction Projects (Lee, 2004), Effects of Human Resource Factors on Project Success in Nairobi County in Kenya (Wambua, 2009). Maina (2015) studied the factors influencing completion of construction projects in Rwanda. The findings of his study revealed that the construction contract duration, project delivery method, project planning, project financing

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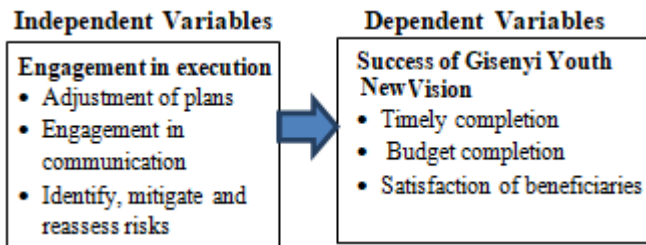
and inspection are the major contributors to project delays. It is evident that the researcher did not anticipate the external stakeholders' engagement as one of the factors that could cause project failure. From all of these studies, few of them have identified Stakeholder engagement as one of the key aspect of project success.

Referred to the financial and success reports of Gisenyi Youth New Vision (2014), the project used around twenty millions of United States dollars to finance its projects in Rubavu district. However, despite the huge amount of money used, its projects' success has not been very successful in its past twelve years of activities and one of the reasons given by project's consultants and evaluators, is poor engagement of stakeholders specifically the stakeholders of the project whereby they have not been involved in project planning, implementation, in decision making and in evaluations. Therefore, this study sought to determine the effect of stakeholder engagement on project success in Rwanda and will consider Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project as the case study.

3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to assess the effect of stakeholder engagement on project success in Rwanda. Specifically the wants to assess the effect of stakeholder engagement in execution on success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

4. Conceptual Framework



5. Research Methodology

- **Research Design:** This study used descriptive survey design
- **Target Population:** The target population in this study equaled to 43 respondents including 34 representatives of stakeholders and 9 staff from Gisenyi Youth Vision Project.
- **Sample Size:** During this study, the researcher adopted a census sampling technique since the population was quite small in number. Since the study used a census.
- **Data collection instruments:** This study was based on first hand data and to collect them questionnaires were used. Questionnaires are documents containing all respondent's answers or reactions. Questionnaires are suitable because with them, it became easier to collect data from the respondents. They are also less expensive since they saved time as well as human and financial resources.

- **Data processing and analysis:** Data for this study were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using percentages, frequencies and multiple linear regressions.

6. Summary of Research Findings

6.1 Profile of respondents

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	31	72%	72%
Female	12	28%	100%
Total	43	100 %	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

The results in Table1 demonstrated that 72% of all respondents involved in this study were male while 28% of respondents involved in this were female. The study concluded that the majority of respondents involved in this study were male.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by their education level

Education level	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Diploma	29	67.40%	67.40%
Bachelor	8	18.60%	86%
Master	6	7%	100%
Total	43	100%	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

Table 2 above illustrates that 67.4% of respondents acquired a diploma, 18% of respondents acquired bachelor degree while 7% of respondents acquired masters' degree. This demonstrates that respondents involved in this study had the capacity to read and answer all questions addressed in the questionnaires as the questionnaire was in both Kinyarwanda and English languages,

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by years of services

Years of services	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
One to five years	11	25.60%	25.60%
Five to ten years	24	55.80%	81.40%
Above ten years	8	18.60%	100%
Total	43	100%	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

The results in Table 3 demonstrated that 55.8 % of respondents have worked for Gisenyi New Vision Project for a period between five to ten years, 25.6% of respondents have worked for Gisenyi New Vision Project for a period between one to five years while 18.6 % of all respondents worked for this project for a period of above ten years; this shows that respondents selected for this study have sufficient experience in the project that enabled them to respond the questions addressed in questionnaires

6.2 Assessment of the effect of stakeholder engagement in project execution on success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

Table 4: Engagement of stakeholders in adjustment of project plans

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	18	41.8%	41.8%
Agree	20	46.5%	88.3%
Strongly Disagree	2	4.7%	93%
Disagree	3	7%	100%
Total	43	100%	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 4 demonstrated that 46.5% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in adjustment of project plans, 41.8% of respondents strongly agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in adjustment of project plans, 7% of respondents disagreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in adjustment of project plans while only 4.7% of respondents strongly disagreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in adjustment of project plans.

Table 5: Engagement of stakeholders in defining project management procedure

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	13	30.2%	30.2%
Agree	26	60.5%	90.7%
Neutral	3	7%	97.7%
Disagree	1	2.3%	100%
Total	43	100%	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 5 demonstrated that 60.5% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in defining project management procedure, 30.2% of respondents strongly agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in defining project management procedure, 7% of respondents were neutral while only 2.3% of respondents disagreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in defining project management procedure. Based on the findings the researcher can conclude by saying Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in defining project management procedure as reported by the majority of respondents which is equal to 90.7%.

Table 6: Encouraging effective communication among stakeholders

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Agree	24	55.8%	55.8%
Strongly Disagree	13	30.3%	86.1%
Disagree	6	13.9%	100%
Total	43	100%	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 6 revealed 55.8% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision encourage effective communication among its stakeholders, 30.3% of respondents strongly disagreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision encourage effective communication among its stakeholders and 13.9% of respondents disagreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision encourage effective communication among its stakeholders.

Table 7: Engagement of stakeholders in identifying, mitigating and reassessing the risks

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	30	69.7%	69.7%
Agree	10	23.3%	93%
Neutral	3	7%	100%
Total	43	100%	100%

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 7 revealed that 69.7% of respondents strongly agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in identifying, mitigating and reassessing the risks, 23.3% of respondents agreed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project engage its stakeholders in identifying, mitigating and reassessing the risks while only 7% of respondents were neutral to this statement.

Table 8: Descriptive statistics on effect of stakeholder engagement in project execution on success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Engaging stakeholders in adjustment of project plans	43	2.79	1.036
Engaging stakeholders in defining project management procedure	43	1.44	.700
Encouraging effective communication among project stakeholders	43	1.30	.599
Engaging stakeholders in identifying, mitigating and reassessing risks	43	1.93	.622

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in table 8 revealed that engaging stakeholders in adjustment of project plans has a large mean which is 2.79 while encouraging effective communication among project stakeholders has the smallest mean of 1.30.

Table 9: Correlation between stakeholder engagement in project execution and project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

Variables		Stakeholder engagement in project execution	Project success
Stakeholder engagement in project execution	Pearson Correlation	1	.903
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	43	43
Project success	Pearson Correlation	.903	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	43	43

The above table findings revealed that the results of correlation stakeholder engagement in project execution and project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project was at the rate of 0.903 meaning that stakeholder engagement in project execution affect success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project at the level of 90.3% hence a significant relationship between stakeholder engagement in project execution and project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project. If the null hypothesis states that there is no relationship stakeholder engagement in project execution and project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project while the alternative hypothesis states that there is relationship between stakeholder engagement in project execution and project

execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project; by taking into account the information provided in table 4.15, the H_1 will be accepted and the H_0 will be rejected. Furthermore, by considering the level of significance which is 0.05, there is a significant relationship between stakeholder engagement in project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project because their p-value (0.006) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

6.2 Success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

In order to assess the effect of stakeholder engagement on success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project; the researcher requested the respondents to rate the success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project based on different attributes including completion of project within time, budget and satisfaction of project beneficiaries.

Table10: Success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Completion of project within set time	43	100%	14.0
Completion of project budget	31	72%	46.5
Satisfaction of project stakeholders	37	86%	100.0

The study findings in Table21 revealed that 100% of all respondents confirmed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project is being completed within set time, 72.0% of all respondents confirmed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project is being completed within the set budget while 86.0% of all respondents confirmed that Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project is satisfying its beneficiaries.

6.3 Estimated parameters for stakeholders engagement in planning process, project execution and in decision making

Table 11: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.953 ^a	.908	.901	.155

Source: Field Data (2018)

a. Predictors: (Constant), stakeholder engagement in planning process, stakeholder engagement in decision making and stakeholder engagement in project execution.

The findings from Table22 An $R^2 = 0.908$, indicates that 90.8% of stakeholder engagement in planning process, stakeholder engagement in decision making and stakeholder engagement in project execution can be explained by Success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision leaving only 9.2% of the variation in the dependent variables being explained by the error-term or other variables other than project management.

Table 12: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	9.249	3	3.083	128.385	.000 ^b
Residual	.937	39	.024		
Total	10.186	42			

Source: Field Data (2018)

Predictors: (Constant), stakeholder engagement in planning process, stakeholder engagement in decision making and stakeholder engagement in project execution

b. Dependent Variable: Success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project

The findings in Table 12 show that these predictors stakeholder engagement in planning process, stakeholder engagement in decision making, and stakeholder engagement in project execution have an an effect on dependent variable which is Success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project. This is statistically significant with a p-value (.000).

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

According to the interpretation of collected and analyzed data during the course of this study; the researcher came up with the following conclusions:

The researcher concluded a strong and positive relationship between stakeholder engagement in planning process and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project because the results of correlation between stakeholder engagement in planning process and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project was at the rate of 0.874 meaning that stakeholder engagement in project planning process influences success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project at the level of 87.4%. The study also concluded a significant relationship between stakeholder engagement in project execution and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project because their p-value (0.006) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The researcher finally conclude a significant relationship stakeholder engagement in decision making and success of Gisenyi Youth New Vision Project because their p-value (0.016) is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

7.2 Recommendations

After analysis and interpretation of data, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

- 1) The project implementing team should always engage the stakeholders in project execution so as to ensure that they are executing the right interventions in the right and safe environment
- 2) The project monitoring and evaluation team should also engage the project stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation of the project activities so as to keep the project on track, time and scope.

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