

Factors Affecting Project Implementation in Non-Governmental Organizations in Tanzania; A Case of Selected NGOs in Arusha City

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Abstract: *Successful implementation of projects generates positive impact to the organization. Traditionally, a project is successful if completed within scope, allocated budget and time, though there projects fail to meet the traditional metrics of success, but still seen as successful to the stakeholders. The study sought to determine factors affecting the successful implementation of projects of NGOs in Tanzania with special focus on selected NGOs in Arusha City. The study adopted an explanatory research design, covering a stratified sample of 30 respondents drawn from 200 employees of NGOs in Arusha City. Questionnaire and group discussion were used to collect data. Data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The study achieved a response rate of 86.66%. The level of project implementation was high and influenced by a number factors; stakeholders involvement with a strongly significant positive correlation 0.531; followed by funding with correlation of 0.362, staff training at 0.35 and organization structure with a correlation of 0.288; all demonstrating significant and positive correlation. In order to improve on project implementation, it is recommended that NGOs should on a continuous basis identify and involve all relevant stakeholders, ensure staff training as part of project management, redesign their structures appropriately to facilitate effective implementation in terms of roles and responsibilities. This should be the centre of focus and attention throughout project life cycle.*

Keywords: Successful Project Implementation, Funding, Staff training, Organization Structure, Stakeholders Involvement

1. Introduction

In the world of current competitive environment, the implementation of project requires a proactive and innovative strategy in order to deliver project objectives successfully, successfully projects generates positive effects in the organization. This is the reasons that every organization which implement projects strive to achieve success.

According to Baccarin [2], for an organization to survive, it is crucial for project to be successful. How does one determine if a project is successful? Traditionally, to be successful, a project must be completed within scope, budget, and allocated time. Are these traditional metrics valid?

Projects can fail to meet the traditional metrics of success, but still be successful to stakeholders; thus creating a quandary for the project manager. Success factors are those that would affect the success of projects (Abu Bakar et al.,[1]).In this regards the factors will influence projects to be delivered within the predetermined scope, within budget, within allocated time and satisfying the stakeholders' needs. Although the process of project implementation does not have a stage called funding, budget constraints affect each stage of the process (Sullivan and Mayer, [11]).

Mansfield et al., [4] reviewed the correlation between cost overruns and projects success and found a relationship between the two factors; availability of funds in time greatly influence project success. The project success factors which were first studies by Rubin and Seeling [9] concluded that success in projects is influenced by training of project teams, project managers' previous experiences has minimum impact

on scope. It has been confirmed by Schultz et al. [10] that factors such as training were influencing successful implementation of project.

According to Ndiomu [5], regardless of the size of the project and how properly the project is planned, proper organizational structure guarantees the success of the project while Nwanko [6] argues that a good manager can take a deficient organizational structure work.

According to PMI [7], project stakeholders are individuals and organizations who are actively involved in the project or whose interests may be positively or negatively affected as result of successful project completion. Projects must meet stakeholders' needs in order to be called successful.

Projects are generally large, expensive, unique, and high risk undertakings which have to be completed by a certain date, for a certain amount of money, within some expected level of performance. At a minimum, all projects need to have well defined objectives and sufficient resources to carry out all the required tasks".

High performing organizations successfully complete 89% of their projects, while lower performers complete only 36%. This means there is a direct relationship between successes of the project and performance of implementing organizations (PMI [8]).

2. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to determine factors affecting successful implementation of projects in Non-Governmental

Organizations in Tanzania. The study focused on funding, staff training, organizational structure and stakeholders' involvement as the major elements that affect successful implementation of projects.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopted an explanatory research design. Explanatory research design was preferred in order to help determine the extent and nature of cause-and-effect relationship between the dependent and independent variables as supported by Kothari [3]. The study used Pearson Product-Moment correlation to determine and explain the relationship between variables.

4. Results and Analysis

The study achieved a response rate of response of 86.66%. Among those who responded, 61.5% were males while 38.5% were females. Majority (57.7%) of the employees in NGOs sector in Tanzania are graduates with bachelor degree, 34.6% with master degree and 7.7% with diploma.

The Relationship between Funding and Project Implementation

Objective one sought to determine how funding affect implementation of projects. The analysis revealed a significant and positive correlation 0.362 between effects of funding and implementation of projects with a p-value of 0.007 as shown in Table 1. The finding is consistent with Mansfield et al., [4] and Sullivan and Mayer [11] who contend that budget constraint affect each stage and there is a relationship between funding and successful implementation of projects.

Table 1: Correlations between Funding and Implementation of Projects

		Funding	Implementation of Projects
Funding	Pearson Correlation	1	0.362
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.007
	N	26	26
Implementation of Projects	Pearson Correlation	0.362	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	
	N	26	26

Effect of Staff Training on Project Implementation

The second objective sought to establish the effect of staff training on implementation of projects. As shown in a Table 2, there was a positive correlation (0.357) between staff training and implementation of projects with a p-value of 0.002, implying a positive and significant relationship between training and project implementation. The findings are in line with those of Rubin and Seeling [9] who conclude that success in project implementation is influenced by training of project teams.

Table 2: Correlation between Staff training and Project Implementation

		Staff training	Implementation of Projects
Staff training	Pearson Correlation	1	0.357
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.002
	N	26	26
Implementation of Projects	Pearson Correlation	0.357	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	
	N	26	26

The Influence of Organizational Structure on Project Implementation

Objective three sought to assess how the organization structure affected the implementation of projects. As shown in Table 3, there was a positive correlation (0.288) between organization structure and implementation of project with a p-value was 0.006, hence denoting a high significant relationship between variables. This implies that organization structure had a significant influence on implementation of projects.

Table 3: Correlations between Organization Structure and Project Implementation

		Organization structure	Implementation of Projects
Organization structure	Pearson Correlation	1	0.288
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.006
	N	26	26
Implementation of Projects	Pearson Correlation	0.357	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	
	N	26	26

The Effect of Stakeholders Involvement on Project Implementation

Objective four sought to establish how stakeholder's relationship affected successful implementation of projects.

As shown in Table 4, there was a positive correlation (0.531) between stakeholder involvement and successful implementation of projects. According to PMI [7], project must meet stakeholders' needs in order to be called successful

Table 4: Correlations between Stakeholders Involvement and Successful Implementation of Projects

		Stakeholders Involvement	Implementation of Projects
Stakeholders Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	0.531
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	26	26
Implementation of Projects	Pearson Correlation	0.531	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	26	26

Level of Success in Project Implementation

The study sought to establish the level of success in the implementation of projects in NGOs. From the findings (Table 5), the mean of the rate is 3.81 with standard deviation of 0.801; implying very high level of success in implementation of projects among NGOs in Tanzania.

Table 5: Level of Project Implementation

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
How do you rate the level of success in implementation of projects in your organization?	26	2	5	3.81	0.801
N	26				

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concluded that the level of implementation of projects was high and influenced by a number of factors; funding, staff training, organizational structure and stakeholders involvement. Among the four factors stakeholder's involvement had the greatest influence, followed by funding to see the project implementation to the end. Stakeholders were played a very great role from the initial stage up to the handing over of the projects after completion. Involvement of stakeholders improved the accuracy and speed of project implementation in NGOs. Some stakeholders provided funding while others provided technical support hence their involvement was key for success of project implementation in NGOs. The partners sometimes delayed in availing the pledge of funding support thus dragging the implementation of projects in NGOs. The study also concludes that the NGOs trained their staff on special skills to enable them deliver on their job descriptions. The training was offered through induction process and on the job training where employees worked under someone senior who taught them on what they were supposed to undertake. The study also concludes that the organizational structure of NGOs affected the project implementation process; although organizational structure was lean meant to eliminate duplication of roles and facilitate quick decision making, it in some cases created bureaucracy in the process which delayed project implementation.

6. Recommendations

The project management process is complex, usually requiring extensive and collective attention to a number of factors such as funding, staff training, organizational structure and stakeholder involvement. If these factors are not taken seriously, they might lead to failure in implementation of projects. Based on the findings, the study recommends as follows; NGOs should facilitate and increase awareness on stakeholders including community participation from the initial to the end stage of the project in order to create a clear and common understanding of essences of their contribution in successful implementation of projects. Lastly, NGOs should train their staff on specific skills to enable them deliver on their job descriptions and especially when implementing projects.

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