



**COLLABORATIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PROJECT PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF KENYA YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROJECT IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This research examined the impact of collaborative project management on the performance of Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study had four goals, all of which pertained to the project's performance: better understanding the impact of communication, project planning, leadership, and change management. The study used a descriptive research design, underpinned on system theory, the theory of constraints, and the theory of contingencies. Project managers (18), project operation employees (117), and project stakeholders (30) served as the units of observation, while the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project (KYEOP) itself served as the unit of analysis. Data was gathered through the use of a standardized questionnaire, and SPSS used to analyze both descriptive and inferential statistics, while content analysis for qualitative data. A response rate of 80.06% was achieved. The results on multi-collinearity and heteroscedasticity on the variables under study revealed no problems hence gives a go ahead to conduct the analysis. Additionally, through Pearson correlation, all variables exhibited a weak positive correlation with project performance with R value indicating a weak correlation between the observed and predicted values which translated to 47.9% of the variability in the dependent variable accounted for by the independent variables in the model. Further, multi-regression analysis result suggested that communication, project planning, leadership and change management were statistically significant and all had a positive impact on the project performance. The study therefore, recommended project manager to prioritize with communication channels, and ensure communication planning are laid down and maintained through the project cycle. Secondly, the study recommended that proper planning were necessary during pre-construction, during construction and post construction and this could be useful for construction stakeholders and professionals. Thirdly, the study recommended that management category, stakeholders, professionals and casual workers to identify, empower leadership, and have self confidence in someone's abilities to enhance project performance. Lastly, the study recommended, further studies to explain pros and cons of change management in relation to firm performance.*

**Key Words:** Communication, Project Planning, Leadership, Change Management

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, youth unemployment has become a global challenge that requires collaborative efforts according to Kluve, Puerto, Robalino et al. (2019). In Europe, on average the unemployment rate stands at 16.8%, and in the US stands at 8.1% (Ristevska-Jovanovska, and Jovanovski, 2022; Schleimer, Pear, McCort, et al., 2022). Low unemployment rates reported in some countries are a result of numerous youth employment projects that have been launched worldwide which focused on promoting the employability and job prospects of youthful generation. According to Bello and Fagbemi (2023); Patel, Graham, and Chowa (2020), for example, the International Labour Organization (ILO) developed the Youth Employment Programme (YEP), which aimed to promote decent work for young people through a range of interventions, including policy support, capacity building, and knowledge sharing across United Nations in partnership with inter-agency cooperation and global peer networks. According to Shehu (2021) so far the project has trained over 10,000 young people, with more than 7,000 of them placed in various jobs or entrepreneurial ventures.

Kenya has not been left behind in curbing the youth unemployment nightmare of its people which currently stands at 13.48 % as revealed by Karanja (2022). Many projects such as Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunities Project (KYEOP), Presidential DigiTalent Program (PDTP), Ajira Digital Project, the Kenya Youth Employment and Skills Program (K-YES), and the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) have been established aiming at creating employment opportunities for young people in Kenya (Omukhango & Etyang, 2022). Despite the effort by the Kenya government and NGOs in implementing projects and programs to increase youth employability, there is still a huge gap as some of the projects such as KYEOP have not fully achieved their KPIs to train 280,000 Kenyan youth, create jobs, and the overall impact on the local economy (Winstead & Wells, 2022). According to Gitau (2022), some of the challenges the project

faced included the limited resources available, and the limited access to finance and market opportunities for young entrepreneurs.

However, according to Menya (2020); Omukhango & Etyang (2022), several efforts have been made such as providing financial support and technical assistance to young entrepreneurs, community engagement, while creating entrepreneurship opportunities to Kenyan youth in Kisumu and Nakuru Counties, although little has been achieved in Nairobi City County, Kenya despite being the center for innovation. This reveals the need to research collaborative project management and performance; a case of KYEOP in Nairobi City County to bridge the gap.

Project performance, according to Cruz, Sastoque, Otegi, et al. (2020), is the capacity of a project to meet its goals and deliverables within scope, cost, time and quality restrictions. Cost performance, time and quality are crucial aspect of project success as it directly impacts the project's profitability and resource utilization (Kerzner, 2022). Project performance is the measurement of how well a project is meeting its objectives and goals as revealed by Kerzner. It involves assessing the project's progress and the quality of its deliverables against the planned schedule, budget, and scope. As per Cruz, Sastoque, Otegi, et al., the scheduled time is one of the project performance indicators which measures how well the project is progressing against the planned schedule. Actual start and finish dates, anticipated start and finish dates, and the proportion of tasks finished on schedule are the essential metrics (Pellerin & Perrier, 2019). The second key performance indicator is the cost which measures how well the project is progressing against the planned budget with key metrics such as actual costs, planned costs, and the percentage of budget spent. Scope indicator on the other hand measures how well the project is delivered against the planned scope.

Collaboration in all kinds of projects is crucial as it allows all stakeholders, i.e. the project team, both governmental and non-governmental agencies, and

private sector actors to effectively have a healthy dialogue to aid project performance (Mutambara & Bodzo, 2020). According to Urbinati, Landoni, Cococcioni, et al. (2021), effective collaboration among these stakeholders is necessary to make sure that the project-set objectives and goals are aligned, and resources are optimized to achieve the desired outcomes. Collaborative project management involves managing projects through cooperation and communication among multiple stakeholders (Sithambaram, Nasir & Ahmad, 2021). Collaborative project management can foster innovation by encouraging creative thinking and the sharing of diverse perspectives which can be revealed by new and novel solutions, greater adaptability to changing circumstances, and improved problem-solving skills (Larsson & Larsson, 2020).

The Kenya Youth Employment Opportunities Project (KYEOP) has been started by the Kenyan government and the World Bank, aimed at addressing the issue of youth unemployment in Kenya (Gitau, 2022). The project was launched in 2016 with an approved budget of Kshs 2.58 Billion and is set to run until 2021, however, it was later extended to 2023. The objective of KYEOP was to promote job and income prospects for young people in the targeted counties between the ages of 18 and 29. The project seeks to achieve this by providing them with relevant skills training and internships, as well as supporting the creation of self-employment opportunities through grants and mentorship programs.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Project performance is a critical focus for any project team to benefit all stakeholders. In this case, several kinds of projects have been established globally to curb the high unemployment rate in various countries. In Africa, Kenya has been on the front line to create job opportunities and training youths on employability skills through Kenya Youth Employment Opportunities Project (KYEOP), however, unemployment among the youth in Kenya especially in Nairobi City County remains

high which is an indication that project has not achieved their intended objectives (Winstead & Wells, 2022).

Many young people in Nairobi City County, Kenya are still struggling to find employment opportunities and earn a decent livelihood. The lack of employment opportunities not only has affected the financial well-being of young people but also limited their potential to contribute to the country's economic growth and development. Additionally, unemployment often leads to social and psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. KYEOP has performed poorly as it has extended its period to 2023 from 2021, training quality is very low as the unemployment rate stands at 12.1% in Nairobi City County, and the project was added Kshs. 1.5 billion after restructuring dated August 9, 2021.

Besides, extensive research studies have been conducted to identify the challenges hindering KYEOP's success, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies and interventions. For instance, Ruto (2021) did a research to examine the determinants of youth unemployment in Kenya, Kiiru and Barasa (2020) securing youth mentorship, employment and inclusivity in Kenya, and (Winstead and Wells, 2022) youth emergency growth on digital venture in Africa. All looked at KYEOP as a case of the study in different counties such as Kisumu and Nakuru. Additionally, Yakubu et al. (2019) did a study to explore communications problems on project performance but did not explore the potential factors that contribute to communication breakdowns. Unegbu, Yawas, and Dan-Asabe (2022) researched on practices of project management and performance relationship of Nigerian construction industry projects. Murithi and Muchelule (2023) did a researched to explore project planning effect on Kenyan NGO projects performance but did not explore the potential impact of external factors that influences project planning.

Overall, despite the effort to see various project success by various researchers, there still

inadequate literature addressing the importance of collaboration in project management in Kenya, impact of external factors on independent variables, and potential factors that contribute to communication breakdowns. Due to these gaps, there was a need to conduct this study to determine the effectiveness of collaborative project management on project performance; a case of Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study purposed to determine the effect of collaborative project management on project performance; a case of the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- To determine the influence of communication on project performance; a case of the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- To establish the effect of project planning on project performance; a case of the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- To examine the influence of leadership on project performance; a case of Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- To evaluate the effect of change management on project performance; a case of the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **System Theory**

In the year 1940, Hungarian Ludwig developed a System Theory which is a multidisciplinary framework that aimed to understand complex systems, their behavior, and the interrelationships between components within the system. The

theory views a system as a cluster of interdependent constituents that collaborate to achieve a common goal or function. The fundamental concept of system theory postulates that the conduct of a system is governed by the interplays among its constituents, rather than merely the features of the individual constituents. It seeks to explain how changes in one system component can affect the functionality of the entire system.

The theory is widely applicable in many different areas, like engineering, biology, psychology, economics, project management, and sociology (Kline, 2020). The theory is used to analyze and design complex systems, identify patterns of behavior in these systems, and develop strategies for improving their performance. The theory is useful for learning how several systems influences are affected by one another. The main theory concepts include feedback loops, which describe how information is passed between components of a system to regulate its behavior, and emergence, which refers to the phenomenon of complex behaviors and patterns that arise from the interactions between simple components (Badcock, Friston, Ramstead, et al., 2019).

In project management field, system theory helps the project team to understand how the different variables or components of a project fit together as a whole, and how changes in one part of the project can impact the other parts (Kline, 2020). It provides a way to analyze and manage complex systems by breaking them down into smaller, more manageable parts. The theory applicability involves viewing a project as a system with inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback loops. This approach enables project managers to better understand how the various variables of the project interact, and how they complement each other.

#### **The Theory of Constraints (TOC)**

Eliyahu Goldratt (1984) came up with the Theory of Constraints (TOC) applicable to various disciplines such as project management, psychology, and sociology, among others. The theory proposes that

every system, whether it be a manufacturing plant, a hospital, or a service organization, has a constraint that limits its ability to achieve its goal. The goal of any system is to increase efficiency while lowering operating cost. The constraints in any system are the limiting factor that prevents the system from achieving its goal (Dugdale, 2013). The goal of any system is to identify and exploit the constraint to increase its performance. TOC proposes that a system should be in a position to identify constraints, exploit them well by making sure that they are worked on to their maximum capacity, subordinate everything else to the constraints, elevate the constraints by investing in resources to increase their capacity and repeat the process to continually improve the system's performance.

The theory of constraints has been used successfully in several areas including project performance management, however, according to Balakrishnan and Cheng (2019) the theory may oversimplify complex projects. Balakrishnan and Cheng continued to argue that in complex projects is difficult to identify a single constraint because the project is exposed to multiple constraints that limit a project's performance, thus, making it difficult to identify the primary constraint and develop a plan to address it.

Ikeziri, Souza, Gupta, et al., (2019) revealed that TOC is too focused on short-term gains. TOC emphasizes maximizing throughput, which may lead to a focus on completing tasks quickly rather than ensuring that they are done correctly or that they contribute to the project's overall goals; Where the problems with quality, additional work, and delays may result.

While despite the critics the Theory of Constraints is highly relevant to project performance management. In a project, the constraint is often the bottleneck that limits the project's ability to achieve its objectives. By identifying and addressing the constraint, the project team can maximize the project's throughput (i.e., completion of the project) while minimizing the inventory (i.e., work in

progress) and operating expenses (i.e., costs of the project). The rationale behind the TOC in project management is that a project is a system, and it is essential to identify the constraint that limits the project's ability to achieve its objectives as per Kabeyi (2019). Once the constraint is identified, the project team can focus its efforts on exploiting, subordinating, and elevating the constraint to maximize the project's throughput.

### **Contingency Theory**

Fred Fiedler established the theory in 1964. The theory is a leadership oriented that proposed leader's effectiveness as a contingent upon the fit between their leadership style and the situation at hand. In other words, leader's success depends on their ability to adapt their leadership style to specific circumstances. As revealed by Amanchukwu, Stanley, and Ololube (2015) diverse circumstances necessitate distinct leadership approaches. For instance, during a crisis, a directive leadership approach proved to be more efficient, whereas in a relatively steady environment, a more participatory leadership approach is approved to be fitting. The theory supports that effective leaders can identify the needs of a given situation and adjust their leadership style accordingly.

According to Vasilescu (2019), contingency theory has been influential in the field of management and leadership, as it emphasizes the importance of situational factors in determining effective leadership. However, it has received criticism for being excessively uncomplicated and neglecting to factor in the intricacy of leadership and organizational dynamics. Contingency theory is a management approach that emphasizes the need for flexibility in the organizational structure, and decision-making in specific context or situation. In project management, contingency theory is relevant because projects often face unique challenges and require customized solutions to meet their objectives.

### **Empirical Review**

The journal article on communication problems and project performance in Nigeria by Yakubu et al.

(2019) adds to the increasing collection of written works on project management in Nigeria. The study particularly centered on the repercussions of communication problems on project performance and furnished valuable perspectives into the predicaments encountered by project teams in Nigeria. The authors used a structured question to collect data from supervisors, field workers, project managers, consultants, contractors, governments, and clients. The study targeted 100 construction companies in Nigeria. The study found that communication problems such as poor coordination, inadequate feedback, and ineffective communication channels were the major causes of project failure. The study also revealed that project teams in Nigeria tend to rely heavily on informal communication channels, which often leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. The authors concluded that effective communication is crucial for project success and recommended that project managers in Nigeria should prioritize communication planning and ensure that communication channels are established and maintained throughout the project life cycle. However, the study focused on the impact of communication problems on project performance, it did not explore the potential factors that contribute to communication breakdowns.

Researchers Unegbu, Yawas, and Dan-Asabe (2022) looked into the relationship between project management methods and performance indicators in the Nigerian building sector. The study's authors set out to investigate the relationship between project management techniques and output indicators in the Nigerian building sector. Researchers in this study surveyed 250 Nigerian professionals and clients involved in the construction industry through a questionnaire. To investigate the connection between project management approaches and project performance indicators, the researchers employed statistical analysis techniques like correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The findings of this study suggest a causal link between project management practices and project performance

metrics. This suggests that, in the Nigerian construction business, competent project management practices lead to better project performance. The research found that better project performance in Nigeria may be achieved if construction project experts embraced best practices in project management such better communication and risk management. The research is limited to one building project in Nigeria, thus its results may not apply elsewhere.

In order to better understand the effects of effective construction planning on project performance, Majumder, Majumder, and Biswas (2022) conducted research. Data on construction planning and project performance were gathered from a survey of 250 construction experts and examined using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study found that effective project planning positively affects project performance improvement, with planning in the pre-construction phase having a greater impact than planning in the construction phase. The study also identified resource allocation, risk management, and communication as critical factors for effective project planning. The findings emphasize the importance of proper planning in the pre-construction phase for enhancing project performance and can be useful for construction professionals and stakeholders. However, the study did not explore in-depth the specific strategies or tools that could be used for effective project planning.

Murithi and Muchelule (2023) investigated the impact of project planning on NGO project performance. A survey of 60 NGOs working in Meru County was used to gather data for the study, which was carried out using a descriptive research approach. The study found that project planning significantly influences the performance of NGOs projects within Meru County. Effective project planning was found to result in better project performance, including successful completion of projects, achievement of project objectives, and meeting stakeholders' expectations. On the other hand, poor project planning led to delays, cost

overruns, and failure to achieve project goals. The study recommends that NGOs should prioritize effective project planning to improve their project performance. This includes conducting thorough needs assessments, developing realistic project plans, involving stakeholders in project planning, and ensuring adequate resources are available for project implementation. The study also suggested that NGOs should regularly monitor and evaluate their projects to identify and address any project planning issues that may arise. The study, however, did not explore the potential impact of external factors, such as government policies or economic conditions, on project planning and project performance.

Theophanies (2020) discovered that project leadership significantly impacted both project management and performance. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between leadership experience, skill, and style and construction project management and performance. The study took a quantitative approach and used a questionnaire to glean information from experts in the building trade. The study's results showed that the management of projects and their outcomes were significantly influenced by the level of leadership present. Research shows that a transformational leader's influence improves project management and productivity, while an autocratic leader's influence has the opposite effect. Transformational leadership was found to be the most effective for improving project management and performance, therefore the findings of this study have important implications for the success of any project you may be working on. The study's reliance on a quantitative approach to research, however, prevents us from learning too much about the participants' actual experiences and perspectives on project leadership.

Mazzetto's (2019) research suggested a realistic, interdisciplinary strategy for evaluating leadership potential in the context of project management coursework. The aim of this study was to identify critical leadership abilities for project managers and

create a workable instrument for measuring them in academic settings. The research comprised a literature analysis, in-depth interviews with project management specialists, and a poll of professors who teach courses in the subject. The research confirmed that the proposed multidisciplinary strategy for evaluating prospective leaders' competence in project management is feasible and fruitful. The research also recommended that educators in the field of project management include leadership development in their curricula after emphasizing its significance. The study lacked, however, data crucial to establishing the credibility and accuracy of the proposed tool: the reliability and validity of the self- and peer-assessment questionnaires.

In their 2019 study, Efe and Demirors presented a model for change management and how it may be used in software development projects. The model is divided into four phases: (1) change identification, (2) change assessment, (3) change planning, and (4) change implementation. The authors contend that successful change management is essential for software development projects because it may reduce the negative effects of change while maximizing its positive effects. The article provides a detailed description of each phase of the model and includes a case study to illustrate its application in a software development project. The authors conclude that the model can help project managers to manage change effectively, and suggest that further research is needed to validate the model's effectiveness in other contexts. The study, however, lacked a comprehensive and practical change management model that is not tailored to the software development context.

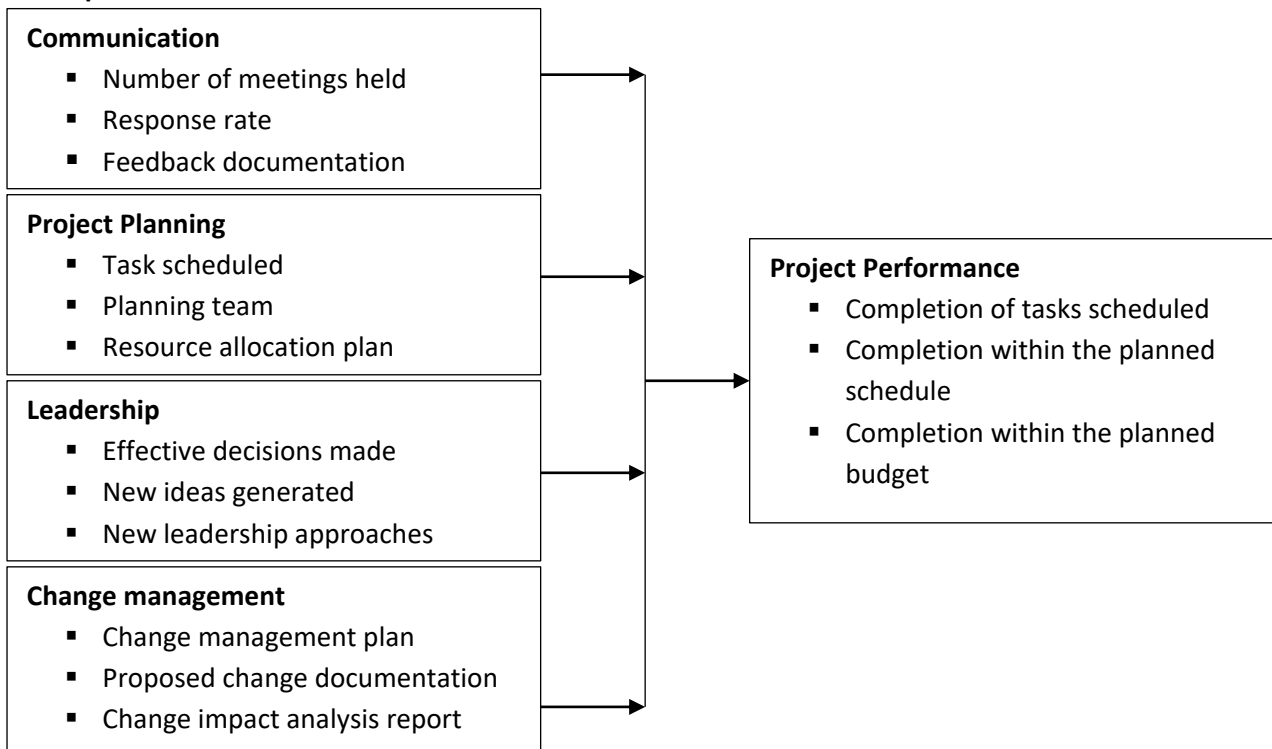
Ulukan's study (2020) provides a framework for coordinating a workplace transformation and refurbishment plan with a cultural change management initiative. The research highlights the importance of considering cultural factors when implementing workplace transformation projects and proposes a systematic approach for managing cultural change within project management. The framework is based on four key components,



including organizational culture analysis, stakeholder engagement, communication planning, and training and development. The study showed that cultural change management had a significant impact on scheduling workplace transformation projects. The study also provided insights into the

importance of cultural change management in workplace transformation projects and offers practical guidance for project managers in managing cultural change, however, failed to highlight KPI set for change management.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Independent Variables**

**Dependent Variable**

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Researcher (2023)

**METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive research design was used to describe and sum up at one time the traits and viewpoints of young people on employability projects. Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunity Project which was ongoing was considered as the unit of analysis while the unit of observation included 30 project managers, 200 project operation staff and 50 stakeholders as per Gitau (2022) World Bank report. Yamane formula was used due to its accuracy on helping to calculate a sample size of 165.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of respondents in a systematic and efficient manner. The questionnaire contains a set of pre-determined open and closed questions that

are asked of all respondents in the same order and format. The structured questionnaire was distributed to the key respondents through online. This study employed internal consistency reliability which involved analyzing the items in the instrument to see if it consistently measured the same construct. This was done by use of Cronbach’s alpha techniques, which measures the degree to which the items in the instrument are related to each other.

Immediately after data collection and entry on SPSS software, data cleaning was done first to check for errors and inconsistencies in the data, and transforming the data into a format that is suitable for analysis. Later, both descriptive and inferential

analysis was conducted. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize and characterize the data, including measures of central tendency (such as mean) and variability (such as standard deviation, variance). Inferential statistical such as Pearson correlation matrix, ANOVA and regression model analysis were used to establish the strength of the relationship among variables. The regression model was as follows.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \mu$$

Where,

Y = Project Performance

$\beta_0$  = Constant of Coefficient

$X_1$  = Communication

$X_2$  = Project planning

$X_3$  = Leadership

$X_4$  = change management

$\beta_1... \beta_4$  = Coefficients of independent variables  $X_1...X_4$ .

$\mu$  = error term

## FINDINGS

### Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistic findings comprise of the standard deviation, the mean, skewness, kurtosis and the number of observations (N) is displayed in terms of the response rate.

**Table 1: Descriptive summary**

	N Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic	Variance Statistic
Project Performance	142	4.0331	.51003	.260
Communication	142	3.9032	.47648	.227
Project Planning	142	4.0664	.45579	.208
Leadership	142	3.9120	.47120	.222
Change management	142	3.8776	.49833	.248
Valid N (listwise)	142			

The results on the table 1 show that the mean value of the project performance was 4.0331 with the minimum and maximum values of 2.33 and 5.00 respectively. Whereas the average values of communication were 3.9032 with the minimum and maximum values of 2.38 and 5.00 respectively. From the finding also, the mean value of project planning was 4.0664 with the minimum and maximum values of 2.34 and 4.71 respectively while the average value of the leadership was 3.9120 with the minimum and maximum values of 2.25 and 4.88 respectively. Leadership mean value is approximately 4.0 which represent the agree value in Likert scale, this means that at least 50% of respondents agree that leadership is an integral factor to consider for the success of project hence this line with research conducted by Theophanies (2020) who discovered that project leadership significantly impacted both project management and performance. From the study results indicates that a transformational leader's influence improves project management and productivity, while an

autocratic leader's influence has the opposite effect. From the results it is clear shown that project planning is the only with a mean of 4.0664, which implies at least the 50 % number of the respondents agrees with implementation of proper project planning, this corresponds to the research conducted by Majumder, Majumder, and Biswas (2022), which found that effective project planning positively affects project performance improvement, with planning in the pre-construction phase having a greater impact than planning in the construction phase.

Results on communication also reveal a mean of 3.9032 which is approximately to 4.0, hence this means respondents who were involved in the study support effective and efficient communication plays a big role in project performance. This is anchored by a Shad, Shah, Jan, et al. (2019) researcher conducted a case study of the communication and works department in Peshawar, Pakistan. The study utilized a case study approach and collected data through interviews with the 10 project managers

and employees of the C&W Department. The study found that communication is critical to project management, and ineffective communication can lead to project delays, increased costs, and reduced project quality. Lastly, the findings show the mean value of change in management was 3.8776 with the minimum and maximum values of 2.25 and 4.75 respectively. This mean is approximately 4.0 which imply that at least average of the participated respondents agrees with change management as a

factor to consider in project performance. This corresponds with research conducted on dynamic simulation model for project change-management policies by Ansari's (2019) to study employs an engineering project case study. The study postulated that simulation model can be an effective tool for evaluating change-management policies and making informed decisions about project change management and should be embraced.

**Table 2: Communication**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA+A	TOTAL
Communication is clear and concise throughout the project.	57	36.6	6.3	0	0	93.6	100
There is a communication feedback document?	17	65.2	15.6	2.1	0	82.2	100
Communication is timely & effective throughout project.	26.8	60.6	12.7	0	0	87.4	100
Communication played significant role in project success.	18.3	54.9	16.2	8.5	2.1	73.2	100
Communication is collaborative and inclusive throughout the project.	16.2	46.5	31.0	4.9	1.4	62.7	100
Communication barriers are identified and addressed in a timely and effective manner.	13.4	50.7	26.1	8.5	1.4	64.1	100
Communication channels are established and maintained to facilitate efficient and effective communication.	10.6	41.5	42.3	4.2	1.4	52.1	100
All team members are encouraged to communicate openly and frequently throughout the project.	12.7	65.5	20.4	0.7	0.7	78.2	100

Communication statements as indicated in table 2 scores in the range of 52.1% to 93.6 %. This means, a high percentage of the respondents support that communication plays a big role in project performance. Hence, effective and efficient

communication should be put in place from the start to end of a project as suggested by Shad, Shah, Jan, et al. (2019) who conducted a case study of the communication and works department in Peshawar, Pakistan.

**Table 3: Project planning**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA+A	TOTAL
The project team is adequately staffed and skilled for the project requirements.	38	37.3	20.4	4.2	0	75.3	100
The project team members are actively involved in the project planning process and resource allocation.	27.5	47.2	18.3	7	0	74.7	100
The project schedule are realistic and achievable.	11.3	64.8	21.8	2.1	0	76.1	100
The project planning process encouraged open communication and collaboration.	8.5	71.8	18.3	1.4	0	80.3	100
5. The project plan is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure alignment with project goals with the involvement of all team members.	41.5	48.6	8.5	0	1.4	90.1	100
The project plan included input from all team members and stakeholders.	24.6	56.3	15.5	3.5	0	80.9	100
The project plan addressed potential conflicts and challenges and had contingency plans in place.	52.5	36.2	9.2	2.1	0	88.7	100

Project planning statements scores in the range of 74.7% to 90.1 %. This means, a high percentage of the respondents support that project planning plays an integral role in project performance thus proper and sound planning should be embraced for success of a given project. Majumder, Majumder, and

Biswas (2022) in their research suggested effective project planning positively affects project performance improvement, with planning in the pre-construction phase having a greater impact than planning in the construction phases.

**Table 4: Leadership**

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA+A	TOTAL
The project leaders regularly communicates project goals and expectations to team members.	12	64.8	19	4.2	0	76.8	100
The project leaders encourages open communication and constructive feedback among team members.	26.1	54.2	14.8	4.9	0	80.3	100
The project leaders are able to resolve conflicts within the team effectively.	17.6	55.6	21.1	5.6	0	73.2	100
The project leaders recognizes and celebrates team members' accomplishments and contributions.	13.4	53.5	28.2	4.9	0	66.9	100
The project leaders are responsive to team members' concerns and suggestions.	18.3	69	12	0.7	0	87.3	100
The project leaders has a clear vision for the project and communicates it effectively to team members.	33.8	47.9	11.2	4.2	2.1	81.7	100
The project leader ensures that <i>all</i> team members have equal opportunities to contribute to the project.	30.3	43.7	22.5	3.5	0	74	100
8. The project leader is approachable and accessible to team members when needed.	9.2	61.3	21.1	7.7	0.7	70.5	100

Leadership statements as revealed in table 4, score in the range of 66.9% to 81.7 %. This means, a high percentage of the respondents support that good leadership should be adopted in realization of greater project performance hence individuals with best leadership skills should be given the first

priority in the project leadership structure. This has been emphasized also by Theophanies (2020) whose results showed that the management of projects and their outcomes were significantly influenced by the level of leadership present.

**Table 5: Change management**

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA+A	TOTAL
The project team is open to changes and adapts well	15.5	46.5	32.4	4.9	.70	62	100
The project team members are involved in the change management process.	14.1	56.3	21.1	7.0	1.4	70.4	100
The project team is encouraged to provide feedback on the change management process.	11.3	43	40.1	4.2	1.4	54.3	100
The project team is informed of any changes and their potential impact on the project.	18.3	66.2	14.8	.7	0	84.5	100
The change management process is documented and easily accessible to team members.	39.4	35.9	19.7	4.9	0	75.3	100
The change management process is flexible and allows for adjustments as needed.	26.1	47.2	19.7	7.0	0	73.3	100
Project team is provided with the necessary resources and support to implement changes effectively.	24.6	60.6	12	2.8	0	85.2	100
The project team is trained on the change management process and its implementation.	12	64.8	21.1	2.1	0	76.8	100

The analysis in table 5, change management statements score in the range of 54.3% to 85.2%. This means, a high percentage of the respondents support that change management is key whenever the need arises. Ansari's (2019) conduct a research on an engineering project case study to investigate the creation of a dynamic simulation model for project change-management policies hence the

implication of study was that a proposed simulation model can be an effective tool for evaluating change-management policies and making informed decisions about project change management. Since is invertible can be adopted where a gap in the management is realized in order to avoid deepen of the gap which might lead to poor performance of a project.

### Correlation analysis matrix

**Table 6: Correlation analysis matrix**

		Communication	Project planning	Leadership	Change management
Project performance	Pearson Correlation	.293 **	.342 **	.483 **	.641 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	142	142	142	142
	Bias	.003	.004	-.002	-.001
	Std. Error	.080	.097	.086	.057

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

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation finding in table 6 shows a weak and positive relationship between project performance and communication (0.293) that is statistically significance. This relationship links with study conducted by Yakubu et al. (2019) in Nigeria who his concern was on repercussions of communication problems on project performance and furnished valuable perspectives. The study found that communication problems such as poor coordination, inadequate feedback, and ineffective communication channels were the major causes of project failure hence for fruitful project all related communication hindrance should be addressed. Generally, proper communication mechanism in all levels of the project cycle eases the cascading information from seniors to junior's staff.

Further, the analysis results show a positive and fairly relationship between the project planning and project performance (0.342) but statistically significance. The study conducted by Majumder, Majumder, and Biswas (2022), found that effective project planning positively affects project performance improvement, with planning in the

pre-construction phase having a greater impact than planning in the construction phase.

More so, the result reveals a fair and positive relationship between leadership and project performance (0.483) which is statistically significance hence Mazzetto's (2019) conducted a research where he suggested a realistic, interdisciplinary strategy for evaluating leadership potential in the context of project management coursework. The findings confirmed that the proposed multidisciplinary strategy for evaluating prospective leaders' competence in project management is feasible and fruitful, thus, leadership should be considered as a key component for success of project. Adequate leadership skills in all categories within the project reflect to improve time management, cost required in resource allocation.

Finally, findings on change management and project performance indicate a strong positive relationship (0.641) and statistically significance, therefore this is evident by Ulukan's study (2020) that provides a framework for coordinating a

workplace transformation and refurbishment plan with a cultural change management initiative. The study indicated that cultural change management had a significant impact on scheduling workplace transformation projects thus supporting its relationship with project performance.

### Regression analysis

The regression model was applied to investigate the relationship among the variables of the study that is, the dependent variable and independent variables.

**Table 7: Model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.692 <sup>a</sup>	.479	.464	.37349

The model summary results on the table above indicates that R squared (coefficient of determination) is 0.479, which shows that independent variables account for 47.9% of the changes in the dependent variable. The other

52.1% of the variation is explained by the other variables which were not considered in the research and the error term. The overall correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.692 shows a positive high relationship among the research variables.

**Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.568	4	4.392	31.484	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	19.111	137	.139		
	Total	36.679	141			

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Change management, Communication, Leadership, Project planning

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results on the table 8 revealed that the regression model is vital for forecasting the correlation among the study

variables. The F-test value of 31.484 that is statistically significance at 95% level of confidence yields a p-value of 0.001<0.05

**Table 9: Regression coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.954	.332		2.869	.005
	Communication	.439	.057	.495	7.739	.000
	Project planning	.437	.086	.403	5.085	.000
	Leadership	.356	.090	.329	3.941	.000
	Change management	.570	.071	.557	7.988	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

The results on the table 9 led to the regression model as shown;

$$Y = 0.954 + 0.439X_1 + 0.437X_2 + 0.356X_3 + 0.570X_4 + \mu$$

From the regression equation, the constant value of 0.954 indicates that if all independent variables remain constant becomes the expected value for dependent variable. The findings reveal a positive

and statistically significant relationship between project performance and communication (0.439) with p-value (0.000<0.05), this means that an increase in communication increases the performance with 43.9%. This means project management relies heavily on effective communication, which is why Shad et al. (2019)

conducted a case study of the communication and works department in Peshawar, Pakistan.

Also, the results on project planning reveals a positive and significant relationship with project performance (0.437) with p-value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) thus an increase in project planning lead to 43.7 % increase on project performance. These findings are in agreement with Majumder et al. (2022) who conducted study on effects of effective construction planning on project performance, from the study effective project planning positively affects project performance improvement, with planning in the pre-construction phase having a greater impact than planning in the construction phase.

Leadership findings yields a positive and statistically significance relationship between project performance that is (0.356) with p-value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) which is greatly evident by Theophanies (2020) who in his discovered that project leadership significantly impacted both project management and performance, thus an increase in leadership impacts project performance with the same units.

Lastly results on change management reveals a positive and statically significance relationship with project performance (0.570) with p-value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), hence this means an increase in change management corresponds the same increase on project performance as at Ulukan's study (2020) that provides a framework for coordinating a workplace transformation and refurbishment plan with a cultural change management initiative. The study shows cultural change management had a significant impact on scheduling workplace transformation projects hence should be upheld fully.

### **Content analysis**

As per the analysis on potential factors that contribute to communication breakdowns, 56% of the respondent depicted that when team members or departments have different goals or prioritize tasks differently, it leads to confusion and miscommunication. Sixty-six revealed that unclear

or vague communication can easily lead to misunderstandings. In global or diverse teams, differences in language and culture impede effective communication as 89% of the respondents revealed. Misinterpretations, misunderstandings, and language proficiency issues can hinder the flow of information. The choice of communication channels matters as 62% of the respondents indicated. Relying solely on email, for example, when face-to-face meetings or video conferences are more suitable for certain discussions, can hinder effective interaction. Thirty-two lamented that in the digital age, the sheer volume of information can overwhelm team members. Important messages may get lost in a flood of emails, notifications, and updates, leading to important details being overlooked. Lastly, without clear feedback mechanisms in place, team members may not feel comfortable expressing their concerns or providing input, 48% of the respondents lamented. This can result in a lack of constructive feedback and missed opportunities for improvement.

On the other hand, effective project planning relies on a range of in-depth strategies and tools to ensure projects are meticulously organized and executed as revealed by the respondents. Fifty-six of the respondents indicated that defining a clear project scope that outlines objectives, deliverables, and constraints; 45% depicted that creating a detailed Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) to break tasks into manageable components; 67% lamented that employing visual aids like Gantt charts to visualize timelines and dependencies; 76% agreed that judicious resource allocation to ensure the right resources are available; rigorous risk assessment and management to anticipate and mitigate potential issues; utilization of project management software for collaboration and scheduling; systematic communication plans for efficient information sharing; 52% suggested that robust quality management plans to maintain high standards; 84% comprehensive budgeting and cost control mechanisms; and 59% revealed that lessons-learned sessions for continuous

improvement, all within a framework tailored to the project's unique requirements.

More so, project leaders play a crucial role in ensuring that all team members have equal opportunities to contribute effectively to the project. To achieve this, 30% of the participants revealed that leaders must first establish an inclusive and open team culture that values diverse perspectives and encourages participation from all members. Leaders should actively seek input from each team member during discussions and decision-making processes, ensuring that quieter or less assertive individuals have the opportunity to share their insights as 57% support the idea. Additionally, 69% agreed providing regular feedback, recognizing contributions, and addressing any issues of bias or favoritism promptly are essential to maintaining a level playing field for all team members. Clear communication and a commitment to diversity and inclusion principles will foster an environment where everyone feels valued and has an equal chance to contribute their best to the project's success as 82% suggested.

As per the content analysis on successful change adoption within an organization, leadership should champion the change, and aligning it with the organization's broader goals as suggested by 26% of the respondent. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents depicted that a comprehensive change management plan should be developed, including thorough employee training and support mechanisms. It's crucial to engage employees throughout the change process, involving them in decision-making and addressing their concerns. Regular and transparent communication is essential to keep everyone informed about progress and any adjustments to the plan as revealed by 46% of the respondents. Finally, 54% agreed that continuous evaluation and feedback loops should be established to monitor the impact of the change and make necessary adjustments.

Furthermore, to enhance the overall performance of the project and maximize its positive impact on youths, a multifaceted approach is needed. Firstly,

there should be a focus on comprehensive youth engagement and participation, involving them in decision-making processes, and valuing their insights and suggestions as 90% support the idea. Thirty-six percent lamented that providing tailored training and mentorship programs empower youths with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their endeavors. Regular feedback from beneficiaries should be actively sought and used to refine project strategies (78% of the participants responded). Additionally, 58% suggested that fostering a culture of inclusivity, diversity, and respect within the project team and among beneficiaries can contribute to a more positive and impactful project outcome.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study addressed the four objectives which are; to find out the effect of communication on project performance; a case of KYEOP in Nairobi city county, Kenya; to assess the impact of project planning on project performance; a case of Kenya youth employment and opportunity project in Nairobi city county, Kenya; to investigate effect of leadership on project performance; a case of Kenya youth employment and opportunity project in Nairobi city county, Kenya; and lastly, to determine the impact of change management on performance; a case of Kenya youth employment and opportunity project in Nairobi city county, Kenya. This was achieved through; descriptive statistics analysis such as mean, standard deviations, minimum and maximum values was tested and inferential analysis such a multi-regression and Pearson correlation. Before then, the normality test, multi-collinearity test and heteroscedasticity test was conducted. From the descriptive table results the mean value of communication was 3.9032 approximately 4.00, which imply that 50 % of the respondents plays a big role in success of project performance. The average value of project planning was 4.0664. This implies that about 50% agreed that project planning plays a critical role from start to end of a project. Findings on leadership indicates that the mean



value was 3.9120 which is approximately 4.00 which shows that 50% of respondents support that good leadership skills should be embraced in order to realize fruitful project performance. Lastly, the average value of change management was 3.877; the mean value shows that 50% supported that change management should be adopted to attain fully project performance. From diagnostic, the normality test, multi-collinearity test and heteroscedasticity test was conducted. Skewness and kurtosis value reveals that data was normally distributed. The results on multi-collinearity and heteroscedasticity on the variables under study reveals no problems hence gives a go ahead to conduct the analysis. Additionally, the R value of 0.479 indicated a weak correlation between the observed and predicted values which translate to 47.9% of the variability in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables in the model.

Further, person correlation and regression analysis helped to determine the effect of communication on the project performance; a case of Kenya youth employment and opportunity project in Nairobi city county, Kenya. First, through Pearson correlation, communication exhibited a weak positive correlation with project performance ( $r = 0.293$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). Additionally, p-value of 0.000 from multi-regression analysis result suggested that communication is statistically significant and has positive impact on the project performance hence a unit increase in communication increase project performance with 0.439 units.

Project planning yields average positive relationship with project performance ( $r=0.342$ ,  $p<0.000$ ), which implies that project planning contributes at least 50% to the project performance. The results from multi-regression reveals that project planning in not statistically significant( $p<0.000$ ) and has a negative impact on the project performance hence a change in project planning cause a decrease change on project performance with the same units. This could be results of poor project planning strategies adopted.

The relationship between project performance and leadership reveals a strong positive significance that is ( $r=0.483$ ,  $p<0.000$ ) thus good leadership contributes at least 64.1% to the success of a project. Multi-regression findings show that leadership has a positive effect on the project performance and is statistically significant ( $p<0.00$ ). This means that an increase in unit of leadership increases project performance with 0.356 units hence leadership skills need to be embraced in the project.

Lastly, change management findings indicate a positive but weak relationship with project performance ( $r=0.641$ ,  $p<0.000$ ). Additionally, p-value of 0.000 from multi-regression analysis result suggested that change management is statistically significant and has positive impact on the project performance thus an increase unit change in change management affects project performance with corresponding value.

The study revealed a robust positive Pearson correlation between predicted variables of model and project performance. For a great project performance, factors such communication, project planning, leadership and change management.

First, the relationship between communication and project performance is positive but weak. Effective communication is critical for prosperity and success of a given project. To achieve this effective communication, project manager should prioritize with communication channels and ensure communication planning are laid down and maintained all through the project cycle. to increase the strength of the bond between communication and project performance outcome, the related communication related hindrance has to be addressed timely and fully. This is through laying stable mechanism and strategies to curb such problems. The commonly hindrances of communication that break down the channel include: inadequate and inaccurate feedback, ineffective communication channels and poor coordination. Finally, to address these problems

project stakeholders and project managers all are to get in board since all are the beneficiary.

Secondly, Pearson correlation yields a positive and significant on project planning and project performance. This means with effective and efficient project planning are positively related with project performance. Project planning means: outlining proper communication channel, identifying available resources and plan for management of unexpected risk in project cycle. To attain the effective and efficient project planning, the study recommends that proper planning are necessary during pre-construction, during construction and post construction and this can be useful for construction stakeholders and professionals. Clear, specific and achievable planning guidelines could also be helpful in attaining the sound project planning. To maintain a project planning as continuous process in a project there is need for thorough assessments and development achievable project plans which will get inboard stakeholders, project managers and professionals in the project working scope. Project knowledge integration also plays a key role in the project planning and findings shows that project managers should emphasis on coming up with sound strategies to improve this integration.

Thirdly, results on leadership and project performance show a strong positive and significant relationship. Leadership encompass of skills, experience and style of taking a certain task assigned to. This can be measured by identifying crucial leadership abilities in all the participants within the project, these include: management category, stakeholders, professionals and casual workers with reference to their academics' merits. Identifying, empowering leadership and self confidence in someone's abilities yields a positive value to project performance. Studies shows that state research institution can improve their project prosperity rates by encouraging optimistic attitudes and providing their executives with more power however, further studies need to be done

understand leadership and role it plays in public research centers.

Finally, change management and project performance have a positive weak and significant relationship as shown by Pearson correlation. Project management involves change management in four categories that is; identification change, assessment change, planning change and implementation change. This forms a change management model. The model plays a key role in helping project managers to manage change effectively and efficiently at all levels such as pre-construction, during construction and post construction. To increase the strength of this relationship of change management and project performance as well as effective and efficient application of this factor, further studies are open to explain more on how models are formulated and its pros and cos. Change management can also improve cultural transformation is embraced. This entails institution culture analysis, communication planning, training and development as well as stakeholder engagement. Finally, if sound change management is embraced in project management cost effective, time management and quality of project outcome increase tremendously.

In reference to findings of the study, according to Pearson correlation analysis, there was strong positive correlation between leadership and project performance. to incorporate this relationship within the project cycle, the study concludes by recommend that all the players to join hands to get in order to drive ultimate benefits of leadership. These include; project managers, stakeholders and project professionals. Identifying, empowering leadership and improving self-confidence in someone's abilities yields should also put in practice as it helps to realize the gaps in each participant. The Pearson correlation value for communication and change management reveals a weak relationship. The relationship is also critical to project performance since an increase of unit in each factor have a positive effect on the project success. Effective communication is integral for

prosperity and success of a given project. To achieve this effective communication project manager should prioritize with communication channels and ensure communication planning are laid down and maintained all through the project cycle. On the other hand, change management improves cultural transformation which comprises of culture analysis, communication planning, training and development as well as stakeholder engagement. The study concludes by suggesting also that the cultural transformation be cascaded in change management model: identification change, assessment change, planning change and implementation change. The model cut across all stages of project performance that is pre-construction, construction and post-construction which end with project success.

In a particularly, project planning reveals an outstanding relationship with project performance despite of the positive effects on multi-regression results. A robust strategy need to be laid down to address clear, specific and achievable planning guidelines which could be helpful in attaining the reliable project planning. To maintain a project planning as continuous process there is need for thorough assessments and development achievable

project plans which will get inboard stakeholders, project managers and professionals in the project working scope. This inclusivity of the key players will help also to collect the impact it has to the project as indicated by the multi-regression. This study concludes by put forward a more intensive study to be conducted to address knowledge integration which contribute a little to project planning but with detailed study more insight can be derived from it for success of the project.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

This is study aimed to investigate the impacts of communication, project planning, and leadership and change management on project performance. All these are internal factors that influence project performance. This study therefore, suggests future research to be conduct to find out effects of external factors to project performance which include government policies and environmental happenings. Also the study has acknowledged there has been a great gap in the factors under study in terms of the information regarding the project. Therefore, there is a need for more time and detailed information relating project prospects for future studies.

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