

Influence of Managerial Skills on Growth of Projects in Kenya: A Case of Uwezo Funded Youth Projects in Thika Town

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ABSTRACT- The Kenyan Government has committed huge financial resources to youth development projects through the Uwezo fund. Despite establishment of Uwezo fund, Kenyan youths are not utilizing the funds as projected by the government. A report by District Youth Officer in Thika indicates that twenty eight youth groups have taken up Uwezo fund amounting to Kshs 1,560,000 as at 31st December 2016. The total amount repaid as at 30th June 2017 was Kshs 631,890, translating to 40.71 % repayment rate. Only 18.5% of the youth groups have fully settled their loan, 81.5% of the youth groups have not yet fully settled their loan with 40.7% of the youth groups failing to pay any amount on the loan. High default rate and low repayment rate indicates that Youth projects are not running well in Thika. It is in this regard that this study assessed influence of managerial skills on growth of projects in Kenya. A case of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika Town. The study was guided by four objectives to: establish influence of leadership skills on growth of youth projects, determine the influence of marketing skills on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, to assess extent to which financial management skills influence growth of Uwezo funded youth projects and to examine extent to which monitoring and evaluation skills influence growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Descriptive survey design was employed for study. The study targeted 28 youth group projects funded under Uwezo Fund in Thika town with a sample of 150 respondents participating in the study. Data was obtained using two instruments; Interview Schedule and Questionnaire. Quantitative data was analyzed by use inferential statistics and descriptive statistics while qualitative data was thematically analyzed based on specific objectives. From the study, it was established that majority of the youths had not attended leadership courses organized by Uwezo fund and many of them faced challenges in marketing their products. They also faced challenges in repaying their loans due to lack of adequate financial management skills. The study also established that though the youth carried out monitoring and evaluation of their projects they had no clear framework. The findings revealed that managerial skills have a positive influence on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. The study recommends that before funding is done on a group, an elaborate and extensive training

should be carried out in order to prepare youths in advance. The training of youths should focus on the following areas; Business management, market research, market strategies, monitoring and evaluation strategies and business leadership. An elaborate monitoring and evaluation framework of the fund should be set to ensure proper utilization of the funds.

Index Terms: Managerial skills, growth of projects, Uwezo funded projects.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last four decades, the Kenya government has recognized underemployment and unemployment challenge thus the successive government administrations have made employment creation a priority and as the core policy (Republic of Kenya 2008a; 2008b). During the implementation of second medium term plan (2008-2012), policies aiming at employment creation as the main objectives were formulated and majored more the youths. Crucial schemes in the sector include; Labor sector plan, Human Resource Development sector and youth (2008-2012) in addition to Kazi Kwa Vijana programme which was aimed to employ 200,000 and 300,000 young people (UNDP 2013). To address the problem of youth unemployment, the Kenyan government launched Uwezo fund, a vision 2030 flagship, that targeted at helping women youths and persons living with disability get money to grow their business and organizations at their respective constituency stage thus leading to growth of economy and also accomplishment of the MDGs (millennium development goals). On 8th September 2013, the fund was launched and enacted as legal notice No.21 of the Public Financial Management Act 2014 and published on 21st Feb 2014 (PFM ACT, 2014).

According to Njaramba and Ngugi (2014), Managerial skills influence owner's perception regarding their enterprises. Inadequate managerial training and skills lead to failure of an enterprise which is facilitated by inexperience and culture of the organization which act as a hindrance to growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Manager or owners behavior can also influence business growth, in terms of his/her personality,

managerial skill and style. The entrepreneurs' behavior or management attitude on change can adversely affect growth of an enterprise (Leopolous, 2006; Naicker, 2006). A study conducted in Gauteng South Africa, on success factors of an enterprise concluded that inadequate managerial and technical skills affect development of an enterprise (Brink et al, 2003; Rogerson, 2008). Another study in South Africa conducted on SMEs showed that inadequate training and skills in management caused failure of projects. In a sample of 1000 entrepreneurs selected for the study, 90% believed that SMEs failure was caused by inadequacy of managerial skills (Rogerson, 2008). Business managers need learn more and more new skills to manage challenges and also for the growth of their organizations in addition, development of managerial skills is important for an organization to accomplish its objectives. Martin and Staines (2008) in their study on competencies in management of small firms noted that lack of personal qualities; managerial skills and inexperience were the main reasons for failure of small business firms. He further noted that high growth of firms and low growth of firms is determined by education, experience and training of senior manages.

The Kenyan government commits huge financial resources to the youths since it undertook a policy of financial devolution. Despite establishment of Uwezo fund, Kenyan youths are not utilizing the funds as projected by the government. Youths are still thriving in poverty despite that the fund is available at no interest. Youth that have accessed the Uwezo Fund have not yet come up with entrepreneurial projects that help them engage in income generating Activities (IGA). According to status report released by the Ministry for Public service, youth and gender affairs in June 2016, 19,461 youth group had benefited from the Kshs 5,119,680,571. Thika town was allocated Kshs 17,168,599 where 260 were the beneficiary groups consisted of youths, women and people with disability (GOK 2016).

1.2 Statement of the problem

A report by District Youth Officer in Thika indicates that twenty eight youth groups had taken up Uwezo fund amounting to Kshs 1,560,000 as at 31st December 2016. The total amount repaid as at 30th June 2017 was Kshs 631,890, translating to 40.71 % repayment rate. Only 18.5% of the youth groups have fully settled their loan, 81.5% of the youth groups have not yet fully settled their loan with 40.7% of the youth groups failing to pay any amount on the loan. High default rate and low repayment rate indicates that Youth projects are not running well in Thika. It is in this regard that this study assessed the influence of managerial skills on growth of projects in Kenya. A case of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika Town. The skills that were investigated include leadership, marketing, financial management, monitoring and Evaluation.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To establish influence of leadership skills on growth of projects in Kenya. A Case of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika Town.
- ii. To establish influence of marketing skills on growth of projects in Kenya. A Case of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika Town.
- iii. To assess influence of financial management skills on growth of projects in Kenya. A Case of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika Town.
- iv. To examine the influence of monitoring and evaluation skills on growth of projects in Kenya. A Case of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika Town.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Project growth

The growth of SME can be defined in terms of turnover, income and profit increase leading to an increase in the number of employees or capital investment and increase in the overall worth of the enterprise (Fisher, 1998). National Baseline Survey by Kenyan government in 1999 indicates that there are various indicators that are used to measure growth, size, longevity, employees and entrepreneurial size (GOK, 1999). According to Leldom (1990), enterprise growth can either be vertical or horizontal. Growth of business vertically consists of transformation and graduation to more developed SMEs. Further, horizontal business growth involves formation of many enterprises at the same stage. Growth of business vertically is necessary for any business set-up as it is linked to employment creation. Mundia (2017) indicates that majority of firms in developing countries consist of small and medium sized firms (SMEs). According to Gupta et al (2013), growth is quantified using sales volume of the business. Qualitatively, it can be described using features such as product quality, market share as well as goodwill of the customer. Some organizations have used such ways to realize growth. They use a holistic approach that entails all channels for growth in their strategic planning (Thornton, 2012). For a firm to realize sustainable growth, it should scan the environment for opportunities and allocate resources for successful exploitation of resources. Firms with high growth have a direct contribution to national development and through provision of employment and poverty elevation (Mazzarol and Rebound 2009).

2.2 Concept of Uwezo Fund

Vision 2030 flagship aims for an equitable and socially just society with no extreme poverty and thus one of the main development agendas are poverty reduction and social equity. In order to address inequalities in the society, the Kenyan government has been on task to implement various initiatives which include avoiding gross disparities, average annual incomes, while rewarding talent and investment risks, 46% reduction in poverty, implementation of opportunities and access to social services and increased community empowerment. The vision for youth, gender and persons with disability in vision 2030 is equity of gender in power, resources distribution,

improvement of the livelihood for less fortunate groups and prosperous youths. Specific flagship projects and initiatives that have been identified under the vision 2030 include; poverty reduction and reduced income disparities, regional and gender parity in accessing of education and empowerment of community through increased efficiency and devolved fund impact (www.uwezo.go.ke).

The Kenyan government has come up with various funds to help in accomplishment of the above initiatives. Uwezo fund is among the funds introduced, which is a vision 2030 flagship targeting at aiding youths, women and people living with disability to access finances so that they can promote their business at constituency level, thus leading to growth of economy towards the realization of vision 2030 and sustainable development goals. Uwezo fund aims at giving opportunities for mentoring to the beneficiaries to help them take advantage of 30% government procurement priority through its ability to incubate enterprises catalyze innovation, promotion of industries, and creation of employment opportunities and growth of the economy. The objectives for existence of the fund include; expansion of access to finances in promoting women and youths enterprises and business for economic growth, creation of employment for women, youths and people living with disability and to devise an alternative funding framework which is driven by community (www.uwezo.go.ke).

2.3 Leadership skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

Leadership skills in this study refer to how a person can influence a group of people to achieve a common objective. A group of people can be a company or firms own manager. Chambers and Conway (1992) notes that leadership consists of: innovation, employee motivation, creation of a good organization, among others. Project managers' lead by formulating value and ethics of the project, and transform the way projects carry out business in order to scale up its, effectiveness and efficiency (Dana 2001). An effective leadership is one which insists on encouraging over demands and appropriate regulation within a certain group of members. Dana (2001) notes that organizing tasks and workshop for company management helps them become aware of positive leadership styles' effectiveness. When leadership offers feedback that is positive and members of the group respond with good work, results can be beneficial leading to a more content and more successful projects. Entrepreneurs and managers need to be flexible because a group member responds differently to various leadership styles in different manners. Some members simply like being left alone while others need good feedback and encouragement. Great understanding of the effect your leadership has on a person is a sign of a capable manager (Landale, 2006). According to Mundia (2017), an organization should have adequate leadership skills to enhance achieving enterprise objectives. Adequate leadership skills in Planning, organizing, controlling and leading can play a great role in increasing annual profits for an organization. To enhance these skills, business owners can consider enrolling for leadership

courses and also through attendance seminars, workshops, sensitization meetings and reading further. Ongera, Nyakundi and Nyang'au (2016) in their study on factors influencing access to Uwezo fund by citizens in Kenya in Nyamira County found out that leadership conflict in groups had a negative influence on access to Uwezo Fund.

2.4 Marketing skills and growth of Uwezo Funded youth Projects

Marketing means a way of selling services or products and promotion including advertising and market research. Several advertising and methods of delivery include; television banners, commercials, newspapers, logos on cloths, Web sites, magazines, billboards and radio stations. Personal selling is one of the best methods of promotion since it enhances connection between a seller and a consumer. In this technique, a salesman is in position to listen and know the needs of a buyer through inquiry and obtaining information from them. Moreover, activities of personal selling are in a position to produce a long-standing relationship between sellers and consumers that frequently bring up many purchases in repeat. Personal selling may come up through videoconferencing, telephone conferences, and computers. The main challenge that faces personal selling is the high cost entailed. Some of services and products promoted via this method include: life insurance, real estate and automobiles, among many more products (Churchill and Peter, 1995). Muraga (2013) cites lack of market structures and sites for display and marketing of youth enterprise products as a hindrance to business growth. There is also limited international exposure for Kenyan youth entrepreneurs due to lack of sufficient resources to facilitate such exposure. In order for youths to be successful, they need a good capacity building support and training to support them comprehend and understand how to apply a vast range of concepts in business such as value addition, purchasing, risk management, sales on credit, income planning and allocation, basic keeping of records, product pricing and costing, market knowledge, negotiating and bargaining techniques, developing a market plan, processing, production and packaging methods (Makokha 2013)

Karanja et al 2013 notes that SMEs face many challenges that prevent them from reaching their goals. One of the main challenges in marketing is lack of information. Many SMEs depend on traditional forms of information such as business friends and personal contact with the customers. This is caused by lack of skills by SMEs owners, poor network system and lack of understanding of marketing. Most of SMEs do not practice the marketing strategies which recognize the supremacy of Customers. SMEs need to adopt promotional strategies in publicity, sales promotion and advertising in order to influence demand. SMEs can use different media to sell their products for example radio due to its wide coverage and television since it combines visual and audio. SMEs have limited networks to exchange information due to a number of factors. Mumbi, (2011) indicate that Major challenges faced by young entrepreneurs include selling products outside the country,

dealing with competition, keeping up with level of technology, organizing events to market their business and setting aside finance for marketing, designing and promotion. According to Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS 2016), companies normally advertise their products in order to create awareness among the consumers. However a survey by MSME revealed that most MSMEs do not market or advertise their goods and services at all and instead they depended on quality of products and customer satisfaction (KNBS 2016).

2.5 Financial management skills and growth of Uwezo Funded youth Projects

Financial management skills refers to aptness of the youths to manage money given by the fund officers in charge of Uwezo fund or other sources through appropriate records keeping, financial supporting and budget. One of the major resources in project is finance thus attention should be directed to it if projects for youths are survive. Some tasks of finance in youth groups need to be monitored, recorded, and planned. Financial management is a key activity in projects in general and organization due to great demand for a good project planning. Financial planning involves coming up with objectives, examination of resources and assets, estimation of future, determination financial needs and setting up a road map to accomplish monetary objectives (Madison 2009). He further, confirmed that, a procedural approach for attainment of effective financial management performance is budgeting and financial planning. Further, sustainability of any project depends on effective financial management starting from the first stage to the last stage. It is crucial to prepare a budget for any amount of money that is received. Schoonover (2010) notes that project officers understand the project well and are aware of its stages in terms of products, management, finances, competition and market. In spite of well laid plans, some youth groups in Thika town are still experiencing low growth rate and are not in a position to pay back the loan advanced to them by the Uwezo fund. Correspondingly, (Sanga, 2009) indicted that planning of finance begin with evaluation of the current financial position, he further suggested that a person should understand debts, credits and where their financial position stands. Connell (2008) reckon that financial management and planning belongs to all in a project. Further, he stress that everyone is a financial planners and that every person has a plan at particular stage. Comparing the mentioned opinion, some youths in the involved in projects, do not believe they are financial planners thus being isolated in running the project. Therefore, this threatens growth and expansion of their projects.

Pandey (1997), indicate that the ground for financial analysis, decision making and planning, is information on finance. Information on finance is required to show, contrast and evaluate the sustainability of the projects. Information on finance of an organization is found in financial statements of an organization. They have more information that business leaders can use to analyze project performance in the past. The function of financial statements in an organization is basically to monitor the value of services and goods in and out of an organization in terms of money. Therefore, youths should have a sound financial

management plan to ensure their projects grow (Stoner 2007). Financial accounting is that which entails book keeping that records daily activities of finance and preparing the accounts. Financial information can be given to those individuals who need such data for making decision and purpose of making records According to Chandra (2007), financial management plans are crucial since they give a basis for reports required by banks, governmental agencies and potential funders trust organizations. They further provide a picture of the direction an organization is heading and how it is doing. Some organizations, like the youth projects and small firms, may not achieve good keeping of records for it may be costly and may require qualified personnel and facilities. Good business record keeping helps in sustaining and expanding an organization and in its absence business runs at risk having financial crisis and wastage of money and opportunities to expand (Sanga, 2009). In a study on factor influencing performance of Uwezo fund supported projects in Bomet County Chepkoech (2016) found that majority of beneficiaries who received Uwezo fund were not trained on financial management which led to misuse of project funds.

2.6 Monitoring and evaluation skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) means systematic collection and analysis of information at regular intervals about ongoing projects in order to compare the actual project impacts against the set objectives to factitive decision making. According to UNDP 2009, M & E makes it possible to establish if the intended goals have been achieved or not. If there are deviations, corrective measures are put in place to ensure that the project is on track to attain the desired results. The Global conference on Youth Enterprise Employment and Livelihoods Development (YEELD 2008) identified problems that face M & E and their impact on evaluation as: diverse nature of Monitoring and evaluation process, inflexibility, inability to come up with intended program outcome or impact, adaptability, lack of a well-designed impact evaluation that is characterized to program intervention to ethical consideration, change of beneficiaries and incorporation of Gender in monitoring and evaluation difficulty.

According to Patton (1999) successful implementation of any project depends on monitoring and evaluation which is a systematic collection and analysis of data and which should be continuous on specific indicators in providing stakeholders and management with an indication of project progression and objective achievement. M & E thus forms an important part for success of the project. Lack of accurate and timely information poses a challenge to effective and efficient management of a project or program. M & E of project undertakings provides a project and program managers with good avenue for learning from previous encounters, service delivery improvement, allocation of resources, and demonstration of results so as to accountable to key stakeholders. Sustainability and success of a project greatly rely on constant results on the project continuing activities (Mark, Hanry and Julness, 2002). In the execution of management work in a project, project officers set clear

performance guidelines, check them and record actual performance. By conducting M&E Comparison against the result, plans and standards is carried out. One of the reason as to why project fail is due to lack of monitoring and control. Monitoring helps the management to know and determine pending challenges in a project. Further, it presents a ground for corrective measures, both operative and substantive to help improve a project design or a program, way of implementing and results quality. Moreover it aids in reinforcement of earlier positive result.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The study is based on two theories: Contingency Leadership Theory and Systems Theory of Management.

2.7.1 Contingency Leadership theory

Contingency Leadership theory was put forward by Fred Edward Fiedler Austrian psychologist in 1994. It is based on the principle that an organization is an open system which continually interacts with its environment. It assumes that organization operations efficiency depends on its ability to scan and comprehend situational factors like environment. The strengths of this theory is that managers of organizations can effectively apply it to manage individual differences across organizations which are facing different contingency variables and are in need to be managed differently. It also emphasizes the need for managers to manage their organizations depending on complex varieties of important environmental and internal contingencies. The theory also put a lot of emphasis on the

dynamic nature of organizations, people and situations and how they change over time. This enables organizational management to be tailored to the prevailing circumstances in achieving desired goals and objectives. The main disadvantage of this theory lies in its rigid nature, that is, it looks at a firm as being in a position to add relevance in the environment always thus it remaining at equilibrium. Researcher therefore, adopted this theory since the growth of youth projects will be greatly determined by managerial skills in that particular project.

2.7.2 Systems Theory

Systems theory was initially proposed in 1950 by Van Bertalanffy. The theory was later modified by Katazkhan in 1966 to fit diverse organizational settings. This theory indicates that each system has elements that are independent from each other but are interrelated. It is therefore important for the management at the top to understand how the system theory operates. The assumption of this theory is that there is an interdependence between people and also exists an impact of the external environmental on structure of the organization. The relevance of this theory to the study is that it connects a person, group or department within the youth project to work as a one unit. This theory therefore propose that the responsibility of ensuring that the growth of youth projects does not only depend on those in charge, but also to everyone in the organization. Therefore everyone should co-ordinate to ensure flow of information.

Conceptual framework

Independent variables

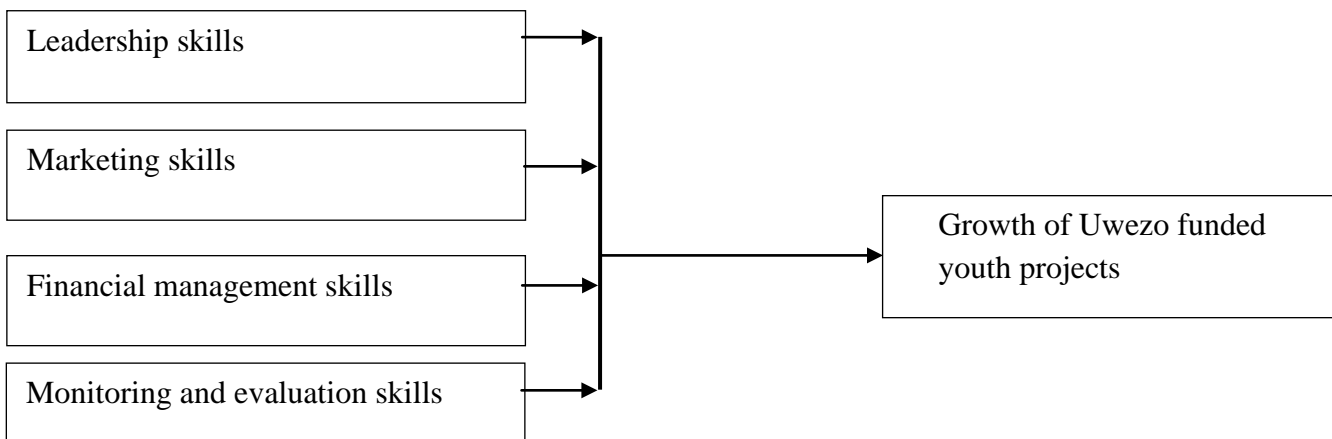


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

III. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was employed for study. The study targeted 28 youth group projects funded under Uwezo Fund in Thika town with a sample of 150 respondents participating in the

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study. Data was obtained using two instruments; Interview Schedule and Questionnaire. Quantitative data from interview schedule and questionnaire was analyzed by use inferential statistics and descriptive statistics while qualitative data was thematically analyzed based on specific objectives. Multiple

regression analysis was also used to predict influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Leadership skills and Growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

This objective sought to determine influence leadership skills on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects in Kenya. Investigation was on whether the beneficiaries had attended any leadership course offered by Uwezo fund, whether they had teamwork in the running of their projects, whether as part of the leadership they had been sorting any consultation over their project and whether they had any networking with other youths. The findings are as presented in subsequent tables

4.1.1 Responses on leadership Courses attendance

The Respondents were required to indicate whether they had attended any leadership course organized by Uwezo fund. Results were obtained and analyzed and shown in Table 1

Table 1: Responses on leadership Courses attendance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	42	28.0	28.0	28.0
No	108	72.0	72.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

From Table 1, 108(72%) respondents reported that they had not attended any leadership course organized by Uwezo Fund while 42(28%) respondents indicated that they have attended a leadership course organized by Uwezo fund. This implies that majority of the youths lacked proper leadership skills to learn their project which may affect growth of their projects.

4.1.2 Teamwork in project operation

The researcher sought to know whether the respondents embraced teamwork in the course of running their project. Results were obtained, analyzed and tabulated in Table 2

Table 2: Responses on whether they had teamwork in project operation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	108	72.0	72.0	72.0
No	42	28.0	28.0	100.0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in Table 2 indicate that 108(72%) respondents had teamwork during the operation of their projects while 42(28%) respondents indicated not to have teamwork in operation of their projects.

4.1.3 Consultation over the project

The researcher was interested to know whether the respondents were consulting over their projects. Results were obtained and tabulated in Table 3

Table 3: Responses on Consultation over the project

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	29	19.3	19.3	19.3
Yes	121	80.7	80.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

From table 3, 121(80%) respondents have been consulting about their projects while 29(19.3%) respondents reported not to have consulted over their projects. Majority consulted over their projects and this helped to run the project efficiently since they got guidance. Those who did not consult may have faced challenges in running their projects.

4.1.4 Networking with other youth groups

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they networked with other groups. Responses were obtained and analyzed and shown in Table 4

Table 4: Responses on networking with other youth groups

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	112	74.7	74.7	74.7
Yes	38	25.3	25.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in Table 4 indicate that 112(74.7%) respondents did not have been networking with other beneficiaries while 38(25.3%) respondents indicated that they had been networking with other beneficiaries. Majority of the respondents did not network with other groups which mean that they did not share knowledge and ideas which are crucial for growth of projects. Those who networked may have used ideas and knowledge to grow their projects.

4.1.5 Leadership skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects.

The study sought to establish whether leadership skill led to growth of Uwezo fund youth projects. Data was obtained from the respondents analyzed as shown in Table 5

Table 5: Responses on Leadership skills and Growth of Uwezo funded Youth projects

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	42	28.0	28.0	28.0
Disagree	24	16.0	16.0	44.0
Agree	24	16.0	16.0	60.0
strongly agree	60	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 shows that 60(40%) of respondents strongly agree that leadership skills have led to growth of their projects, 42(28%) respondents strongly disagree that leadership skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, 24(16%) respondents disagree that leadership skills have led to growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, 24(16%) respondents agree that leadership skills have led to the growth of youth projects. District youth fund officer indicated that leadership is crucial in running a projects and advocated youths to enroll for leadership courses so that the can get the right skills before and after funding.

4.2 Marketing skills and Growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

This objective sought to establish the influence of marketing skills on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. The indicators that were investigated include; Method of marketing products they use. The respondents were also to indicate whether they face challenges in marketing their products and whether or not they agree or disagree that marketing had led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects.

4.2.1 Methods of marketing products

The study sought to establish on the method that the youths use to market their products. Results from the respondent were obtained and tabulated in table 6

Table 6: Responses on methods of marketing products

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Advertising	60	40.0	40.0	40.0
Personal selling	42	28.0	28.0	68.0
sales promotion	21	14.0	14.0	82.0
Others	27	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in Table 6 indicate that 60(40%) respondents preferred to use advertising method to market their products, 42(28%) respondents reported that they use personal selling to markets their products, 21(14%) respondents indicated that they use sales promotion as a way to market their products and 27(18%) respondents indicated that they use other methods to market their products. This indicates that youths lack clear marketing structures for marketing their products.

4.2.2 Difficulties experienced in marketing products

The researcher was interested to know whether the respondent faced difficulties in marketing their product. Data obtained was analyzed as shown in Table 7

Table 7: Responses on Difficulties experienced in marketing products

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	116	77.3	77.3	77.3
No	34	22.7	22.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 indicate that majority of the respondents 116(77.3%) reported that they encountered difficulties in marketing their products while 34(22.7%) respondents indicated that they did not face difficulties in marketing their products.

4.2.3 Marketing skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

The study sought to establish whether marketing skills have led the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. The respondents responded and results were analyzed and tabulated in Table 8

Table 8: Response on marketing skills and growth Uwezo funded Youth projects

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	14	9.3	9.3	9.3
Disagree	29	19.3	19.3	28.7
Agree	61	40.7	40.7	69.3
strongly agree	46	30.7	30.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in Table 8 indicate that 61(40.7%) respondents agreed that marketing skills have led to growth of their projects, 46(30.7%) respondents strongly agreed that marketing skills have led to the growth of their projects, 29(19.3%) respondents disagreed that marketing skills have led to the growth of their

projects and 14(9.3%) respondents strongly disagree that marketing skills have led to the growth of the of their projects.

4.3 Financial Management skills and growth of Uwezo Funded youth projects

This objective sought to establish the influence of financial management skills of growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Indicators that were used focused on management of finances in the project, whether they sourced extra funding from Uwezo, whether they faced any difficulties in repayment of the loan. Beneficiaries were also asked to rate their financial management skills and to indicate whether Financial management skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects.

4.3.1 Ways of managing finances in the project

The researcher was interested to know ways in which the respondents used to manage their finances. Responses for the respondents was obtained and tabulated in Table 9

Table 9: Responses on ways of management of finances in the project

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Budget	25	16.7	16.7	16.7
Report	40	26.7	26.7	43.3
Record	85	56.7	56.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in table 9, show that 85(56.7%) respondents reported that they use records to manage their finances in their projects, 40(6.7%) respondents indicated that they reports to manage their finances while 25(16.7%) respondents report they used Budget to manage their projects. Use of records to manage finances indicates that youths have knowledge in record keeping. Minority used budget to manage their finances.

4.3.2 Sourcing extra funding from Uwezo

The researcher sought to know whether the respondents have sourced extra fund from Uwezo. Results from the respondents were analyzed and tabulated in Table 10

Table 10: Responses on whether they had sourced any extra funding from Uwezo

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	58	38.7	38.7	38.7
No	92	61.3	61.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in Table 10 indicate that 92(61.3%) respondents have not sourced for extra funding from Uwezo fund while 58(38.7%) respondents have sourced extra funding from Uwezo fund. Majority had not sourced extra funding; this may be due to outstanding loan balance that they had not cleared.

4.3.3 Difficulties experienced in repayment of the Uwezo fund Loan

The study sought to establish whether the youths experienced difficulties in repayment of their loan. Responses from the respondents were analyzed and presented in Table 11

Table 11: Responses on whether they experienced any Difficulties in repayment of Uwezo fund loan

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	68	45.3	45.3	45.3
No	82	54.7	54.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in table 11 indicate that 82(54.7%) respondents' did not experience difficulties in repayment of the loan while 68(45.3%) respondents reported to experience difficulties in repayment of the loan. District youth fund officer indicated that 18.5% had fully settled their Loan while 81.5% had not fully settled their loans. He further noted that some 40.7% had defaulted their loans.

4.3.4 Rating of financial management skills of the beneficiaries

The researcher asked the respondents to rate their financial management skills. Results were obtained, analyzed and presented in Table 12

Table 12: Responses on Rating of financial management skills

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
very adequate	55	36.7	36.7	36.7
fairly adequate	59	39.3	39.3	76.0
Adequate	23	15.3	15.3	91.3
Inadequate	13	8.7	8.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Table 12 indicate that 59(39.3%) respondents rated their financial management skills as fairly adequate, 55(36.7%) respondents rated their financial management skills as very adequate, 23(15.3%) respondents rated their financial management skills as adequate and 13(8.7%) respondents their financial management skills as inadequate.

4.3.5 Financial management skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

The study sought to assess whether financial management skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Responses were obtained and tabulated in Table 13

Table 13: Responses on financial management skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	85	56.7	56.7	56.7
Agree	45	30.0	30.0	86.7
Disagree	20	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in table13, indicate that 85(56.7%) respondents strongly agree that financial management skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, 45(30%) respondents agree that financial management skills have led, 20(13.3%) respondents disagree that financial management skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. District youths fund officer noted that they have carrying out financial training to the youths. He further indicated that more training is required for them to run their projects well.

4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

The last objective of the study was to examine the influence of monitoring and evaluation skills on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. The study sought to find out whether the beneficiaries had done any monitoring and evaluation of their project and whether they prepared periodic reports on the project. Beneficiaries were required to rate their monitoring and evaluation skills and were also required to indicate whether monitoring and evaluation has led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Results were obtained and analyzed as shown below.

4.4.1 Monitoring and evaluation carried out

The respondent was interested to whether the respondents had carried out monitoring and evaluation of their projects. Responses were obtained, analyzed and tabulated in table 14

Table 14: monitoring and evaluation has been carried out on the project

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	114	76.0	76.0	76.0
No	36	24.0	24.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Results in table 14, indicate that 114(76%) respondents carried out monitoring and evaluation of their projects while 36(24%) respondents reported that they did not carry out monitoring and evaluation of their projects. Carrying out monitoring and evaluation indicate that the respondents kept track of their project and could avert risk that posed a threat to their project.

4.4.2 Periodic report writing

The study sought to find out whether the respondents wrote period report in order to monitor their project progress. Results were obtained and tabulated in Table 15

Table 15: Response distribution periodic report writing.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	105	70.0	70.0	70.0
No	45	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Table 15 indicates that 105(70%) respondents wrote periodic reports on progress of their projects while 45(30%) respondents reported not to have written periodic reports. Reports are important in running of project. Majority wrote periodic reports on the progress of their projects.

4.4.3 Rating of monitoring and evaluation skills

Respondents were requested to rate their monitoring and evaluation skills. Results were tabulated and presented in Table 16

Table 16: Responses on rating of monitoring and evaluation skills

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very adequate	23	15.3	15.3	15.3
fairly adequate	80	53.3	53.3	68.7
Adequate	36	24.0	24.0	92.7
Inadequate	11	7.3	7.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Majority of the respondents 80(53.3%) as fairly adequate, 36(24.0%) respondents rated their monitoring and evaluation as adequate, 23(15.3%) respondents rated as very adequate while 11(7.3%) respondents rated as inadequate.

4.4.4 Monitoring and evaluation skills and growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

The study sought to establish level of agreement on extent to which monitoring and evaluation skills have led to growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Responses were obtained and tabulated in Table 17

Table17: monitoring and evaluations skills to growth of Uwezo funded youth projects

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	18	12.0	12.0	12.0

Agree	26	17.3	17.3	29.3
Neutral	18	12.0	12.0	41.3
Disagree	48	32.0	32.0	73.3
Strongly Disagree	40	26.7	26.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Analysis in table 17, indicate that 48(32%) respondents strongly disagree that monitoring and evaluation skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, 40(26.7%) respondents disagree that Monitoring and evaluation skills have led to the growth, 26(17.3%) agree that monitoring and evaluation skills have led to the growth, 18(12%) respondents strongly agree that monitoring and evaluation have led to the growth, 18(12%) respondents were neutral.

4.5 Multiple regression analysis

The inferential statistics was used in the study to verify whether a relationship between the variables as well as the strength of that relationship was there. Inferential analysis targeted at reaching to a conclusion that goes further form data obtained between the independent and dependent variables in the study (leadership skills, marketing skills, financial management skills and monitoring and evaluation skills). Results were obtained and tabulated in Table 19.

Table 19: ANOVA

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	2.535	2	1.269	5.456	0.25
Residual	9.308	150	2.328		
Total	3.466	149			

*** ** significant at 5% level

Results in Table 19 indicate that F critical at 5% significance level was 3.466. Calculated F was found to be 5.456 which was greater the F critical, this indicated that the whole model was

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significant to the study. Significance value obtained was 0.25 which is less than 0.5 significance level of the study. This further indicate that model was statistically significant in prediction of how leadership skills, marketing skills, financial management skills and monitoring and evaluation influence growth of Uwezo funded youth projects in Thika town.

Table 20: Significance of the variables in the model

Model	Unstandardized coefficient	Standardized coefficient	T	Sig.	
	B	Std error	Beta		
(Constant)					
Growth of Project	3.026	.733	2.127	.000	
Leadership skills	.269	.225	.202	3.081	.293
Marketing skills	.172	.155	.147	2.578	.433
Financial Management skills	.201	.222	.016	2.960	.939
monitoring and evaluation skills	.233	.153	.232	3.229	.191

The study carried out multiple regression analysis to verify relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. The regression equation was:

$$Y = 3.026 + 0.269x_1 + 0.172x_2 + 0.201x_3 + 0.233x_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:-

Y= Influence of managerial skills

β_0 =constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4 = regression coefficients

X_1 = leadership skills

X_2 = Financial management skills

X_3 = Marketing skills

X_4 = Monitoring and evaluation skills

ϵ =Error Term

In accordance to the regression model employed, considering all determinants into account (leadership skills, marketing skills,

financial management skills and monitoring and evaluation skills) constant at zero, increase in a unit in leadership skills resulted to 0.269 increase in growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, increase in a unit in marketing skills resulted to a 0.179 increase in growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, increase in a unit in financial management skills resulted to 0.201 increase in growth of Uwezo funded youth projects and a unit increase in monitoring and evaluation resulted to 0.233 an increase in growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, hence the most significant determinant was leadership skills. From the analysis Leadership skills had the greatest influence in growth of Uwezo funded youth projects, Monitoring and evaluation skills had a greater influence while financial management skills and marketing skills followed respectively.

V CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

From the finding of the study, it was noted that managerial skills have a positive influence on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Managerial skills have led to the growth of Uwezo funded youth project since working capital of youth projects have increased, employment has been created and also their projects have expanded in terms of their operation. It is also evident that Uwezo funded youth projects are faced with several challenges in attempt to empower youths to be self-reliant. Most of the youths did not attend leadership course that was organized by Uwezo fund. This means that they did not benefit from information and it negatively affected running of their project. Youths should improve their skills in leadership so that they can do better in their projects. Skills should be improved by enrolling for short courses in leadership and further by attending seminars, reading more, and workshops. Marketing challenges that youths faced indicated that they lacked proper skills to market their products and this impacted negatively on growth of Uwezo funded youth projects. Loan repayment challenges were as a result of mismanagement of finances. Youths lacked proper monitoring and evaluation framework that negatively affected their monitoring and evaluation skills. Inadequate training and managerial skills is a great cause of organization failure which is facilitated by inexperience and organizational culture thus hindering growth Uwezo funded youth projects.

5.2 Recommendations of the study

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

- i. Before funding is done on a group, elaborate and extensive leadership training should be carried out in order to prepare youths in advance in project leadership.
- ii. Youth should come up innovative marketing strategies and ideas that will help them to sell their products and avert the challenges they are facing.

- iii. The government should consider training the youth on financial management skill to be able to service their UWEZO fund loans and also expand their businesses.
- iv. An elaborate monitoring and evaluation framework of the fund should be set to ensure proper utilization of the fund and youths to be taken through M & E training in order to establish a baseline against which to measure progress of their projects.

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