

Enhancing Road Infrastructure Performance in Kisii County, Kenya: The Critical Role of Monitoring and Evaluation Tools

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Abstract

Kenya's vision 2030 identifies infrastructural development as one of the very crucial pillars to economic growth. However, the projects are awash with delays in completion, cost and time overrun an index of their poor performance. Therefore, there is a need for reliance on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to enhance performance of these construction-oriented projects for infrastructural development. In this regard, the purpose of this study was to analyze the Influence of Monitoring and Evaluation Tools on the performance of Road Infrastructural Projects funded by the County Government of Kisii in Kenya. The study sought to analyze the influence of; progress reviews, balanced scorecards, performance contracting and project audits on the completion of road infrastructural projects funded by the County Government of Kisii. The study was guided by program and theory of project management. It adopted a descriptive research design based on samples drawn from across construction projects funded by the county government of Kisii from 2013 to 2022. The target population was 180 respondents. Using Taro Yamane's (1967) formulas, a sample size of 124 respondents was determined and distributed proportionately using Neyman's allocation formula. Data were gathered using structured questionnaires and an interview schedule. Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, it was determined if the instrument satisfied the 0.7 or higher requirement. The study found that regular progress reviews significantly contribute to effective stakeholder engagement in road infrastructure projects. The application of the balanced scorecard in monitoring and evaluating projects has a beneficial impact on multiple dimensions of project management. The use of performance contracting was found to significantly influence the achievement of project goals and enhance individual staff performance. The study also found that project audits play a crucial role in identifying weaknesses in project management processes and recommending corrective actions. The study concludes that the effective implementation and utilization of monitoring and evaluation tools, progress reviews, balanced scorecards, performance contracting, and project audits, are crucial for enhancing the performance of road infrastructure projects. The study highlights how important it is to keep refining these methods and instruments in order to close the gaps and variations in stakeholder views that have been found. The results of the study support the adoption and improvement of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as a top priority for the Kisii County Government and the construction industry in order to improve stakeholder trust, support project outcomes, and guarantee the county's road infrastructure is developed sustainably.

Key Words: *Monitoring and Evaluation Tools, Progress Reviews, Balanced Scorecards, Performance Contracting, Project Audits,*

Introduction

Projects globally are the fundamental building blocks of national development and therefore their performance is a source of public and private concern. The significance of measures to improved project performance in every sector has now been acknowledged at different levels of socio-economic development in several countries (Ofori, 2012). Construction and infrastructure projects frequently struggle to produce results by not fulfilling their required functional requirements (Murwira and Bekker, 2017). This call for proper planning, control and monitoring to affect the scheduling, expenditure and quality outcomes of the projects of project managers (Sandeep, 2019). In the conversely, developing countries would stagnate or return to development. This guarantee ensured project performance and monitoring and assessment are basic to financial turn of events. Maendo, James and Kamau (2018) revealed that monitoring and assessment (M&E) frameworks are a basic segment of Result Based Management (RBM), which encourages upgraded performance of foundation projects, as they structure the reason for predictable and exact announcing of project results.

Project performance is defined in terms of the effect of the recipients and whether the initiatives are sustainable (Ofori, 2013). Thus, an organization that is able to achieve the end-user goals within the time, budget and output limits needed is considered to be a success. The project achievement is an action that can be estimated as far as including esteem or improving the association's profitability (Onukwube, Iyabga and Fajana 2010). The key inquiries posed to while assessing the project's results are whether the project destinations are in accordance with the beneficiaries' needs and whether the project exercises and results coordinate these targets. Building and infrastructure projects must be delivered for optimum economic benefit, with reduced costs, on schedule and according to the technical requirements, as a metric for project success the use of the 'iron triangle' is justified (El-Maaty, Akal, & El-Hamrawy, 2017). Ogunlana, (2010), argues that conventional iron triangle metrics (on-time, sub-budget, as per requirements) no longer apply to output assessment of major public sector projects.

According to Ballard, Fernandez and Sturtevant, (2010), the monitoring and assessment process is a system that helps program implementations in making educated decisions on program activities, administration conveyance, and program performance, utilizing experimental proof. Project monitoring is the act of administering the plan of the structural assets of a similar project utilizing the best accessible techniques and procedures with the goal that customers don't pass up the project's activity. A greater appraisal is done on the performance and impact of the project. The system or project implementation is typically a periodic review of improvements to the pre-detailed results (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). M&E has caused a variety of government programs to fail rapidly after they were set up (Ashiku, 2014). In addition to project end-users, the full benefit of the project is not realized. Strengthening and execution of M&E standards remains a key element in project success as explained by (Ashiku, 2014; Waithera & Wanyoike, 2015). M&E has a huge influence on project achievement. But the implementation of M&E practices will require an adequate, consistent link between M&E results, and policy planning and budgeting processes to make the investments in M&E more sustainable (Mthethwa & Jili 2016).

Gwaya, Wanyona, and Masu, (2014) in their study stated that there was a proposal to Kenya that it should adopt for an alternate strategy in the utilization of the task the executives' procedure, in the development business, due to ridiculous expenses and time costs in venture exercises attempted. The Results of Project Monitoring and Experimental Assessment in the Construction Efficiency Projects have been explored by Maendo, James and Kamau (2018), Shihemi, (2016) Sialala, (2016). Studies have found that monitoring and evaluation have important consequences for the efficiency of road projects. This likewise has a specific trigger for certain divisions and structures in performing nations (Amid et al., 2012), geological area (Ahsan and Gunawan, 2010), and socio-social settings (Mukabeta et al., 2008). The generalization of the results is influenced by all these variables. In the study of M&E procedures, and not M&E activities, which Algeher provides a void to be resolved by the current research. Tong'i, Otieno and Osoro (2019), examined the effect of monitoring and evaluation strategies on the presentation of Kisii area government construction ventures. The study focused on processes of M&E and not tools of M&E which altogether provides a gap to be filled by the current study which will focus on the influence of monitoring and evaluation tools on road infrastructural project performance in Kisii County, Kenya.

Literature Review

Progress review is a project team meeting to discuss progress towards the project goals. System progress is taken into account at a time when project activity carried out to date is reviewed and the results and impacts of projects are analyzed in relation to the relevant stakeholders (especially project representatives and project management (Kelly, Male & Graham, 2014). The project team will monitor the progress of the project in relation to the draft plan by reviewing the current project status. It basically compares the position of the project to the project and what the project team has to do in the event that the project is out of track. (Kerzner, 2017). At the conclusion of the creation, preparation and implementation phases of a project, project evaluations are carried out. The following areas are subject to project progress assessments according to Wysocki (2011): risk, schedule, scope, effort on the part of the staff and expenditure. To track each section, what is vs. what should be at any time and decide what to do with any differences in the plan.

The project review meeting is a powerful way to provide the executive and other stakeholders with their projects and their status, to refresh the key issues in their vision, to reaffirm their commitment to a vision (or to recognise any emerging issues with a vision). (Biafore, 2011). These important meetings, unfortunately, are all too often ineffective and do not profit the project accordingly. Therefore, it is important to collect detailed input from team members before a project progress meeting to gain updates on projects, identify issues and so on, and be ready for the main questions (Project Management Institute, 2004). Great coordination and discussion of meetings reviews and reports is nevertheless helpful in determining which preventive actions must be taken.

Meetings shall include status meetings, stand-up meeting, retrospective meetings, and other meetings as decided in a plan on Stakeholders' Participation to track and assess the degree of stakeholder commitment (PMBOK, 2018). The initial project performance report should show the baseline indicator for the project life cycle to be monitored. The project performance is often affected by factors including a lack of expertise and experience in a project team, frequent schedule adjustments, communication

hitches and problems with stakeholder management. (Alsulamy, 2015). In this respect, during project progress review meetings, information should also be provided in project performance reports which provide information concerning project implementation as well as progress in the achievement of the project goals at all phases of the project cycle (Ayatah, 2012).

Barnabè (2011) contends that the BSC is a strategic management system with strategic goals and a way to report on those goals. The goal and strategy of an organization are turned into a wide range of performance actions that serve as the framework for strategic management with the help of a tool called the balanced scorecard. Similar scorecards allowed companies to balance actual results with less objective actions and promote future performance, past and existing operations (Joao, 2018). Another approach to the assessment of projects is the Balanced Scorecard. A balanced scorecard is an instrument designed to help control a range of critical success factors by evaluating them (DeBenedetti, 2020).

The balanced scorecard is similar to a modern vocabulary that allows the project manager and FM to collectively focus on what can be done to improve or enhance project success. The benefit of using a balanced scorecard, therefore, is that it allows us to focus on the global vision while considering processes that are important for achieving the overall objective of the project by integrating the functional areas of success of the project as a whole. However, there are many issues in literature with the implementation of the Balanced Scorecard concept. Benková, Gallo, Beáta and Jozef (2020) said that one of the main problems is that BSC is too costly for businesses. This hinders companies who want to incorporate the idea significantly. The second critical element is the difficulty of enforcing it. BSC's implementation is a universal problem for all companies alike and each company has its own unique environment. In fact, the lack of a link between project managers and objectives was established in developing the concept of balancing maps (Hristov, Chirico & Appolloni, 2019). Sahiti, Ahmeti, Sahiti and Aliu (2016) have demonstrated the use of the Balanced Scorecard in this regard.

Ondieki, (2017) has investigated the "impact of the balanced scorecard on Kenya's public sector organisation: a case in the Standards Office in Kenya." The findings of the study have revealed that, despite the lack of profitability, KEBs have a good organization performance, namely finance, internal corporate perspective, innovation and customer perspective, and in general. The study revealed that financial resources that support organizational performance are being used effectively on the financial perspective. From the study of the internal perspective, it is noted that KEBS provided high-quality services to clients not only locally but worldwide and this had promoted organizational performance. However, the study didn't focus on project performance thus providing a gap for the current study.

Alhyari et al., (2013) considered that Jordan's performance and success in IT investment were highly appropriate for the balanced scorecard approach to monitoring and evaluating. The outcomes of the BSC implementation have ranged from positive results to no real results to total failures, but they have been generally acknowledged (Casey & Peck, 2004; Antonsen, 2010; BizShifts., 2010; Parmenter, 2012). As a result, a growing body of scholarly materials has limited the use and practice of BSC (Voelpel, Leivold, Eckhoff, and Davenport, 2005; Basuony, 2014) in particular. This bond has been regulated by the BSC. Similar bonds may either weaken the BSC's efficacy or lead companies to leave BSC in order to find better performance assessment solutions. In addition, few research studies have examined the effect of the balancing card on project performance.

A performance contract serves as a means of measuring performance in relation to agreed-upon performance goals. According to WHO (n.d.), the process of performance procurement contracting involves a specific set of objectives, indicators, and systematic data collecting on the advancement of chosen indicators. It also outlines the potential repercussions for the contractor, including the possibility of a performance-based reward or punishment. Performance Contracting is a management science division called Management Control Systems, which is a service implementation agreement contractually concluded for the specified usage of services that are subject to performance criteria, within the agreed time period (Letangule & Letting, 2012). The private and public sectors defined performance-based contracting as an efficient way to procure and obtain quality products and services within the budgetary resources available. The performance contracting mechanism is observable through the performance assessment metrics adopted from Ogola & Nzulwa, such as targeting and performance evaluation. Efficient measurement of performance ensures the assessment, comparison and improvement of the relative level of organization performance (Parhizgari & Gilbert 2004).

Ngetich (2015) notes that: improves service provision; improves flexibility in resource use; institutionalization of a performance-based public service culture; performance measurement/evaluation; decreases or removes public agencies' reliance on cheque financing and increases overall perfection; performance evaluation; performance assessment; Profit orientation and competitiveness have also required the implementation of performance contracts in the private sector (Omboi, 2011). The fact that the measurements are done cost-efficiently underpins the performance contract. Thus, project success is assured when successfully applied in project management as a control and appraisal activity. This is because project management has to be more efficient, cost-effective, accountable and responsive to users' needs. It can therefore be inferred as a management tool that performance contracting approach ensures accountability for outcomes and transparency in resource management (Ngetich, 2015).

In Kenyan government ministries, Kinyanjui, Gakuu, and Kidomb (2015) investigated organizational performance, performance contracting system, and abilities related to monitoring and assessment. For both correlational and descriptive research designs, a hybrid approach to research methodology was adopted. During a qualitative data interview, a questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. From a population of 103,010 employees in government agencies, 310 respondents were selected using the multiple-stage selection method and Sekaran's (2003) sample size criteria. A study on the effects of road operators in Kenya conducted by Mutai and Aila (2016). Road agencies typically maintain highways, but many of Kenya's roads are either poor and destroyed, which demands that road agencies exert pressure to improve their road management performance. Road agencies have been committed, to phase out the use of a traditional engineering approach, in support of a contracting model, to meet the growing demand for improved road asset terms in which payment to the contractor is linked to the achievement or exceeding the performance objectives set out in the contract. The research was guided by the principle of setting objectives and was studied by 120 employees from four Kenyan road agencies directly involved in the execution of projects. Results showed that the road performance-based contractor elements (PBCs) were high and significant. The above analysis shows that limited performance contracting studies have been carried out in the current study on project results for Kisii County. The study focuses not on building projects but rather on the agencies.

A project audit is a project status assessment against predefined performance necessities and assists with distinguishing existing and future projects issues and openings. This is for the most part performed for huge structure and development projects, building and plan (Williams, Klakegg, Walker, Andersen and Magnussen, 2012). An audit is a checking framework that utilizes quantitative and subjective appraisals apparatuses to quantify performance results (Cross, 2017). At the point when wasteful aspects are distinguished, underlying driver examination can be performed, and remedial or preventive proposals can be remembered for audit reports for future reference. An external audit is carried out by one association on another, whereas an internal audit is carried out by an association on its own. The two audits may be planned or unexpected, focused on money matters or not (Akuaku, 2015). An audit's goals are to identify errors and fabrications as well as determine whether procedures or records provide a true and accurate picture of the events that occurred at the time of the survey (Biegelman and Bartow, 2012).

Audits purposefully and independently examine specific exercises completed by an individual or individuals, in order to determine whether the methods and associated outcomes meet planned schedules, have been carried out effectively, and are appropriate for achieving objectives. Every stage of the project should include proactive technical auditing (Chambers and Rand, 2011). While a financial audit examines financial summaries and reports, a specialized audit concentrates only on the specific aspects of a project, primarily examining the extent to which workers have adhered to agreed-upon forms and gauges and used reasonable and competent professional expertise in carrying out their responsibilities. According to Mwiya (2009), the consistency maintained by specialized auditing ensures that overruns and determination deviations are verified and, if necessary, compensated with cash. Establishing a Technical Audit Unit with enough talented and experienced personnel to oversee projects would be one way to achieve this (National Construction Council, 2019). A financial audit is a legally mandated consistency audit that focuses mostly on evaluating fiscal summaries and records. It also serves as a control mechanism to preserve and detail benefits and assets (Akuaku, 2015). There are published literature, studies, professional associations and supervisory bodies in the fields of assessment and financial audit but restricted in Kenya in terms of project audit and project results. The researcher, therefore, has a very flexible approach to scope and methodology. This variability provides a gap which could be considered by stakeholders to be a deficiency in the audit process is the focus of the study in assessing the effect of project audit on the performance of projects in the construction industry.

Methods

This study used Program Theory and Theory of Project Management. The program theory was established as stated by Huey Chen, Peter Rossi, Michael Quinn Patton and Carol Weiss in 1995. The program theory includes a number of statements which characterize the program and explains the reasons for the consequences and basic parameters of the preferred consequences in the implementation, how and under what conditions certain system effects occur. (Sidani and Sechrest, 1999). The theory of the system describes how an action (a project, software, reporting, method) can be used to contribute to a set of outputs which are supposed to have real consequences. It can consist of fine (usable) and negative (unfavourable) effects (Funnell & Rogers, 2011). Turner proposed a theory of project management in 1993. A variety of theories and processes for organizing and managing complicated endeavors can be characterized as the theory of project management (PM) (Kerzner, 2017). The philosophy of project administration is prescriptive; it shows how the action advances the objectives. According to Johann (2005), project management is the process of organizing and supervising both people and material resources during a project's duration. This is done by applying tried-and-true management strategies to reach predetermined goals related to budget, schedule, quality, and expansion.

The study was carried out in the County of Kisii. Kisii County is one of the 47 Kenyan counties, thanks to the new Kenya 2010 constitution that formed the new governance structure of the county. It shares common borders with County Nyamira in the North East, County Narok in the South, and Homabay and Migori Counties to the West. The target population for this study were about 180. In particular, the study's sample frame was purposefully created to include Kisii County-based structural engineers, architects,

contractor consultants, and members of the County Executive Committee in addition to construction managers, county procurement officers, quantity surveyors, and Ministry of Works engineers. In order to maximize the benefits and minimize the drawbacks of each research methodology while examining complex phenomena, this study used a mixed-methods strategy that included quantitative and qualitative research techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Deliberate and strategic consideration went into choosing a descriptive research design, which aims to give a quick overview of the conditions and phenomena that are currently under investigation. This design is especially appropriate for the research since it aims to provide a realistic picture of the state of monitoring and evaluation procedures as they exist today and how they affect road infrastructure projects in Kisii County.

The main tool for gathering data in this study was a structured questionnaire, which was chosen specifically to ensure that the results from a wide range of respondents would be consistent and comparable. A specific group of professionals participating in road development projects in Kisii County were the target audience for the carefully crafted questionnaire, which was intended to provide insights into their perspectives, attitudes, and experiences. Architects, structural engineers, construction managers, quantity surveyors, contractor consultants, and county procurement officers were among this group.

The data that was collected was examined for completeness and consistency. The surveys returned were fed into SPSS version 27.0 software for analysis. Researchers carried out initial analysis of the data through scores distribution and simple statistical measures like percentage, average, standard deviation (central tendency measurements) and variation of relations. These contributed to a better understanding of the overall trend in data. With the necessary approvals, permits, and licenses in hand, the researcher entered the field. The investigator ensured that the respondents' dignity was maintained and that the highest ethical standards were adhered to.

Results

The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of Monitoring and Evaluation Tools on the completion of road infrastructural projects in Kisii County Government, Kenya. This was done through the following questions;

Table 1: Stakeholder Meeting

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Progress Review [Stakeholders meetings are held frequently.]	100	2.20	.985
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

The study used a scale where 1 represented strongly agree, 2 represented agree, 3 represented neutral, 4 represented disagree while 5 represented strongly disagree. On the variable progress review when asked to rate the level of agreement of disagreement with the following statement the study found the following; on whether stakeholders' meetings are held frequently, the study got a mean of 2.20 and a standard deviation of 0.985. With a mean score of 2.20, the respondents are generally in agreement, not strongly, that stakeholder meetings should be held frequently. This suggests that most participants see progress review meetings as a reasonably regular aspect of the project management process, and it also reflects a positive assessment of the frequency of stakeholder meetings. The degree to which each response deviates from the mean score is shown by the standard deviation, which is 0.985. This value, in the context of the study, denotes a moderate degree of response variability. Though opinions on how frequently stakeholders should meet are generally in accord, there is still a discernible difference in people's intensity of feeling about this matter. The results point to a generally favorable opinion of frequent meetings as a means of engaging stakeholders. This may be seen as proof that stakeholder meetings and other progress review processes are, for the most part, working as planned to provide regular forums for feedback and updates on project status. The results point to a generally favorable opinion of frequent meetings as a means of engaging stakeholders. This may be seen as proof that stakeholder meetings and other progress review processes are, for the most part, working as planned to provide regular forums for feedback and updates on project status.

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Table 3:Project Progress Report

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Progress Review [Project progress reports are available for review.]	100	2.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether project progress reports are available for review the study got a mean of 2.00 and a standard deviation of 0.000. On the Likert scale, the average response is 2.00, meaning that respondents generally agree that project progress reports are available for review. This shows that participants in the study had a positive opinion of the project progress reports' accessibility and transparency. In social science study, a standard deviation of 0.000 is extremely exceptional and suggests that each respondent answered the question exactly the same way. Practically speaking, this indicates that all parties agreed that project status reports should be made available for inspection. The standard deviation of 0.000 indicates that there is a high degree of agreement among participants on the availability of project progress reports, as evidenced by the lack of variety in responses. Transparency in project management is demonstrated by regular and easily available project status reports. This agreement can be viewed as a major benefit of the monitoring and assessment procedures that are in place since it promotes accountability and well-informed decision-making. The agreement reached by all parties regarding the release of project status reports has the potential to act as a model for best practices in project management, especially with regard to promoting stakeholder engagement and maintaining transparency.

Table 4:Feedback Mechanisms

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Progress Review [Feedback mechanisms are adequate and appropriate.]	100	2.30	1.193
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether feedback mechanisms are adequate and appropriate, the study got a mean of 2.30 and a standard deviation of 1.193. The average Likert score of 2.30 suggests that most respondents err on the side of agreement about the suitability and adequacy of feedback mechanisms. The mean, however, is more in line with the middle of the scale than with "Strongly Agree," indicating some hesitancy or conflicting opinions regarding the efficacy of these processes. The comparatively high standard deviation of 1.193

suggests a considerable variation in the responses. This diversity indicates a wide range of experiences and perspectives among participants about the suitability and sufficiency of feedback methods. The diverse spectrum of replies indicates that whereas certain stakeholders find the feedback methods in place satisfactory, others can have difficulties or see shortcomings in these mechanisms. The high standard deviation and average score that are almost identical to "Agree" point to a potential need to review and improve feedback methods.

Table 5: Skill Improvement

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Balance Scorecard [There is a continuous improvement of the skills of staff]	100	2.00	.449
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether there is continuous improvement of the skills of staff, the study got a mean of 2.00 and a standard deviation of 0.449. A mean score of 2.00 on the Likert scale indicates that most respondents generally concur that the staff members' skills are continuously improving for the projects. This positive mean score shows that respondents generally agree that staff skill-building initiatives are worthwhile and well-received. The comparatively low standard deviation of 0.449 indicates that the replies have little variation. This suggests that there is broad consensus among participants about the value of skill-building programs. The majority of respondents appear to agree to a similar extent, suggesting that the community under question has a consistent impression. The information suggests that the organizations or projects engaged are dedicated to the ongoing professional development of their employees. This is an essential component in making sure that project teams have the abilities and know-how to fulfill changing requirements and standards. It is clear from the low standard deviation and the high degree of agreement shown by the mean score that skill improvement programs are, in fact, being carried out successfully by respondents. Sustaining a competitive advantage and guaranteeing project success need constant skill development.

Table 6: Monitoring Internal Operations

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Balance Scorecard [Internal operations are monitored for improvement]	100	1.90	.541
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether the internal operations are monitored for improvement, the study got a mean of 1.90 and a standard deviation of 0.541. The average Likert score for responders who agree that internal operations are monitored for improvement is 1.90, which is closer to strongly agreeing. This score indicates a widespread agreement that proactive efforts are being made to continuously monitor and improve internal procedures within the projects. Even though the standard deviation of 0.541 is a little bit greater than some of the other variables that were previously mentioned, it still shows that response variability is generally modest. This implies that, although opinions in this area are a little more divided than in others, participants generally agree on the usefulness of internal monitoring procedures. The average score that is close to "Strongly Agree" indicates that there is an apparent commitment to upholding high standards of effectiveness and quality through routine internal operations monitoring. This demonstrates a proactive management strategy that aims to spot possible problems early on and fix them to improve project performance as a whole. Even though the standard deviation is modest, it does show that respondents' experiences and opinions on how helpful internal monitoring is for improvement differ.

Table 7: Utilization of Financial Resources

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Balance Scorecard [There is efficient utilization of financial resources]	100	1.80	.603
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether there is efficient utilization of financial resources, the study got a mean of 1.80 and a std of 0.603. With a mean of 1.80 and a standard deviation of 0.603, the statistical results for the statement about the effective use of financial resources show that respondents had a very positive opinion of the financial management procedures used in the road infrastructure projects that were the subject of the study. An average of 1.80 on the Likert scale, indicates that respondents generally tilt in the direction of strongly agreeing that financial resources are used efficiently in the projects. This indicates that there is a high degree of trust in the financial management procedures and that money is being spent wisely to accomplish project goals. Although there is significant variation in the responses, the standard deviation of 0.603 is still low, showing that participants' opinions are generally in agreement. Though not very varied, this amount of standard deviation also indicates the existence of different perspectives or experiences with regard to financial efficiency. The projects' strong financial management is highlighted by the favorable mean score, which suggests that resources are allocated and used in a way that participants find efficient.

Table 8: Performance Contracting & Individual Staff Performance

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance Contracting [Performance contracting influences individual staff performance]	100	1.70	.461
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether the performance contracting influences individual staff performance, the study got a mean of 1.70 and a std of 0.461. With a mean score of 1.70, the majority of respondents strongly concur that performance contracting significantly improves the work performance of individual employees. Given the high degree of agreement, it appears that performance contracting is thought to be a useful tool for inspiring and improving employee performance on these projects. The comparatively low standard deviation of 0.461 suggests that participant response variability is minimal. This indicates that there is broad agreement among respondents about the benefits of performance contracting for employee performance. The little variability suggests that respondents' perceptions of this are broadly held, which strengthens the consensus regarding performance contracting's efficacy. The mean score indicates that performance contracting is positively perceived, which highlights its potential as a useful tool for enhancing staff performance. The low standard deviation, which indicates a consensus among respondents, emphasizes a common belief in the advantages of performance contracting throughout the firm.

Table 9: Performance Contracting as a Tool for Efficiency & Effectiveness

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance Contracting [Performance contracting used as a tool for improving efficiency and effectiveness in resource utilization]	100	1.90	.302

Valid N (listwise)	100
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Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether performance contracting is used as a tool for improving efficiency and effectiveness in resource utilization got a mean of 1.90 and a std of 0.302. A mean score of 1.90 indicates that respondents are almost entirely in agreement that performance contracting increases the effectiveness and efficiency of resource utilization. This degree of agreement indicates that performance contracting is seen favorably as a resource-optimization tool, which is critical for infrastructure projects as resource management plays a major role in determining project outcomes. The low standard deviation of 0.302 indicates a great degree of consistency in the answers. This low variability suggests that participants generally agree that performance contracting is a useful tool for improving resource utilization. It indicates that there is little difference of opinion on this point, indicating that respondents' experiences with or observations of performance contracting's beneficial effects on resource efficiency are all positive. The broad consensus about performance contracting's ability to enhance resource utilization justifies its application as a tactical instrument in project management. The respondents' agreement emphasizes how strategically significant performance contracting is inside the framework of project and organizational management.

Table 10: Performance Contracting and Targets

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance Contracting [Performance contracting helps in setting and attaining realistic targets]	100	1.70	.461
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether performance contracting helps in setting and attaining realistic targets, the study got a mean of 1.70 and a std of 0.461. With a mean score of 1.70, it can be shown that respondents are almost entirely in agreement that performance contracting is useful for assisting in the setting and achievement of realistic goals. This suggests that performance contracting is seen favorably as a useful instrument for improving the focus, achievability, and clarity of project objectives. Despite significant variability, the standard deviation of 0.461 is still quite low. This suggests that respondents generally agree that performance contracting is efficient in this aspect, notwithstanding differences in the degree to which respondents agree. The study's participants share a generally positive perception, as indicated by the relatively low variability. There is broad consensus regarding performance contracting's ability to set realistic targets, which implies that it offers a methodical framework for establishing specific, attainable objectives.

Table 11: Identifying Weakness in Project Management

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Project Audits [Identifies weaknesses in project management processes and recommends solutions]	100	2.10	.835
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether the project audits identify weaknesses in project management processes and recommends solutions, the study got a mean of 2.10 and a std of 0.835. With a mean score of 2.10, it can be inferred that most respondents concur that project audits are useful for finding flaws in project management procedures and making suggestions for fixing them. This suggests that the function of audits in improving project management procedures is positively perceived, even though there isn't as much consensus as there could be for other study-evaluated factors. Significant response variability is shown by the relatively high standard deviation of 0.835. The significance of project audits as a tool for ongoing process improvement in project management is acknowledged by the

consensus on how well they uncover flaws and provide remedies. This implies that audits are acknowledged for their ability to improve project outcomes and are a crucial component of the project management system. The standard deviation's illustration of the range in views raises the possibility that there are ways to improve the audit process itself, such as by guaranteeing more uniform procedures, more lucid results communication, or more successful application of suggestions.

Table 12:Skill Employment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Project Audits [Ensures reasonable care and skill have/are been/being employed by personnel in the discharge of laid down procedures and requirements]	100	2.10	.541
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether project audits ensure reasonable care and skill have/are been/being employed by personnel in the discharge of laid down procedures and requirements, the study got a mean of 2.10 and a std of 0.541. With a mean score of 2.10, it can be inferred that most respondents concur that project audits are successful in making sure staff members follow guidelines and procedures with appropriate care and skill. This degree of consensus suggests that audits are seen as an effective instrument for reiterating the significance of quality and compliance in project execution. The moderate variability in replies, as indicated by the standard deviation of 0.541, implies that although opinions regarding the efficacy of project audits are generally agreed upon, there are differences in respondents' perspectives. Project personnel's positive assessment of audits as a means of assuring the application of reasonable care and competence highlights the audits' significance in upholding professional standards and adhering to established processes. Maintaining the integrity and caliber of project outputs depends on this. The moderate variation in answers emphasizes how crucial the audit process's uniformity and thoroughness are.

Table 13:Decision Making

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Project Audits [Audit report forms the basis for decision making and serves as a communication tool amongst project participants.]	100	2.20	.752
Valid N (listwise)	100		

Source, Researcher (2024)

On whether project audit report forms the basis for decision making and serves as a communication tool amongst project participants the study got a mean of 2.20 and a std of 0.752. With a mean score of 2.20, the respondents seem to be in agreement that project audit reports act as a communication tool and the foundation for decision-making. This degree of consensus shows that audit reports are valued for their ability to direct projects and foster communication among stakeholders. The moderate variability in replies indicated by the standard deviation of 0.752 implies that although there is a widespread consensus regarding the importance of audit reports, respondents' assessments of their efficacy in communication and decision-making differ. The fact that audit reports are positively viewed as being essential for making decisions highlights their strategic importance in project management. This implies that audit findings serve as more than just retrospective evaluations and are actively utilized to influence project strategies and tactics in the future. The acknowledgement of audit reports as a means of communication underscores their function in cultivating cooperation among stakeholders involved in a project. The responses' moderate diversity suggests that there is room for improvement in the way audit results are applied to projects.

Discussion of Findings

Progress reviews are crucial for evaluating a project's present state in relation to its intended course, as stated by Kelly, Male, and Graham (2014) and corroborated by Kerzner (2017). This allows project teams to spot deviations and carry out the required remedial measures. The significance of these assessments in guaranteeing that projects stay in line with their goals throughout the project lifetime is shown by this foundation of literature. The results obtained from Kisii County are consistent with previous research, suggesting that progress review methods are useful when it comes to road building projects. Effective stakeholder engagement is critical to project management in the region, as demonstrated by the study, which finds that a mean score of 2.20 indicates agreement on the frequency of stakeholder meetings. This is consistent with the viewpoint of Biafore (2011), who highlights the ability of project review meetings to renew commitment and vision among stakeholders, even though these sessions' efficacy is frequently hampered by inadequate planning and communication.

The possibility for improving quarterly reports to better meet project management needs is highlighted by the mean score of 2.80, which indicates a moderate assessment of the reports' efficacy in addressing performance deficiencies. This result indicates that there is room for considerable improvement, especially in terms of improving the reports' clarity, relevance, and actionability. This is in line with the findings of Alsulamy (2015) and Ayatah (2012), who stress the value of project performance reports in offering useful insights at every stage of the project cycle. When these results are combined with existing research, it becomes clear that Kisii County's progress assessment procedures for road infrastructure projects follow accepted project management techniques and enhance project performance. Ongoing efforts are necessary to optimize these processes, though, as indicated by the identified areas for improvement and the variation in stakeholder perspectives. In keeping with the goals of strategic planning and the larger objectives of sustainable and inclusive development, improving stakeholder engagement, enhancing feedback mechanisms, and enhancing the usefulness of progress and quarterly reports are essential steps toward attaining greater efficiency, transparency, and overall project success.

The study examines how the balanced scorecard (BSC) influences the completion of road infrastructural projects in Kisii County Government, Kenya. It draws on a wealth of literature that argues that the BSC is an essential framework for converting organizational goals and strategies into a wide range of performance metrics, in addition to being a strategic management system. According to Barnabè (2011) and Joao (2018), the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) provides an integrated perspective that includes both financial and non-financial metrics, allowing companies to strike a balance between current performance and future performance-oriented initiatives. Understanding the BSC's ability to improve project performance through the facilitation of thorough, cross-functional analysis and improved decision-making requires a conceptual foundation (DeBenedetti, 2020; Wanjala et al., 2017).

With a mean score of 1.90, the overall opinion on the ongoing evaluation of internal operations for improvement is consistent with the literature's description of the BSC's usefulness in locating and resolving operational inefficiencies (DeBenedetti, 2020). The disparity in opinions, however, highlights the difficulty of putting into practice and maintaining successful BSC practices, reiterating concerns raised in the literature about the BSC's high cost and implementation hurdles (Benková et al., 2020; Hristov, Chirico & Appolloni, 2019). Moreover, the BSC's contribution to improving financial monitoring and management, a crucial component of project success, is highlighted by the high degree of agreement on the effective use of financial resources, as shown by a mean score of 1.80. This conclusion is especially pertinent in view of the literature's observations regarding the BSC's ability to combine financial and non-financial measurements, providing a more sophisticated method of project performance management and assessment (Davis & Albright, 2004; Ittner, Larcker & Randall, 2003).

Deeply ingrained in the literature on performance contracting as a key instrument for improving project outcomes is the discussion of findings for objective three, which concerns the influence of performance contracting on the completion of road infrastructural projects in Kisii County Government, Kenya. In order to improve service delivery, resource utilization, and overall project efficiency, performance contracting is presented in the literature as a strategic management practice that unites organizational goals with performance objectives (WHO, n.d.; Letangule & Letting, 2012). The theoretical basis of performance contracting highlights its capacity to act as a spur to high project success, especially in the public sector where transparency and accountability are critical (Ngetich, 2015).

A mean score of 1.70 indicates that most respondents agree that performance contracting is a useful tool for establishing and attaining reasonable project objectives. These theoretical viewpoints are supported by the findings from Kisii County. This supports the claim made in the literature (Ngetich, 2015; Omboi, 2011) that performance contracting helps to institutionalize a culture that is performance-based and improves service delivery and project success. The agreement regarding performance contracting's positive effects on employee performance supports the literature's discussion of the practice's benefits for increasing accountability and responsiveness to users' needs (Parhizgari & Gilbert, 2004). Additionally, with a mean score of 1.90, the study's results on the effective use of financial resources are consistent with the literature's observations regarding performance contracting's ability to

advance both quality and cost-efficiency in service delivery (Schoenmaker & de Bruijn, 2016; Susanti et al., 2016). The aforementioned observation implies that Kisii County's performance contracting mechanisms are efficiently propelling the optimization of financial resources, in line with the objective of optimizing project efficiency and stakeholder value.

Insights from an extensive literature analysis that emphasizes the importance of project audits in the construction sector are integrated into the discussion of findings for objective four, which is focused determining the influence of project audits on the completion of road infrastructural projects in Kisii County Government, Kenya According to published research, project audits are essential tools for evaluating a project's current state in relation to predetermined performance standards, which helps to spot any problems and areas for improvement (Williams et al., 2012; Cross, 2017). This position is essential to ensuring that projects are carried out effectively, follow guidelines, and produce the desired results.

The Kisii County findings are consistent with the literature's description of project audits as indispensable instruments for ongoing enhancement of project management procedures. The study is in line with the literature's emphasis on audits as crucial for improving project outcomes, with a mean score of 2.10 indicating a general consensus on the value of project audits in identifying management process weaknesses and recommending solutions (Akuaku, 2015; Biegelman & Bartow, 2012). The differences in opinions about how effective an audit is, however, indicate areas that need improvement, especially in terms of standardizing audit procedures and making sure that audit recommendations are followed through on. These opinions reflect worries that are similar to those expressed in the literature about the difficulties in putting audit findings into practice.

Furthermore, with a mean score of 1.80 indicating substantial agreement on their importance, the findings confirm the crucial role project audits play in ensuring financial management processes inside projects adhere to accounting rules. The aforementioned discovery aligns with the body of literature that regards financial audits as a compliance tool for assessing fiscal statements and protecting assets (Akuaku, 2015). This suggests that in order to improve financial integrity and accountability in project management, better audit quality and financial management training are required. The study concludes that project audits play a significant role in improving the credibility and accountability of the construction industry, particularly with regard to clients and taxpayers. This finding is consistent with previous research on the wider socio-economic benefits of effective auditing practices (Mwiya, 2009; Susanti et al., 2016). This emphasizes how crucial audits are to fostering confidence in the methods used by the construction sector and promoting greater openness, stakeholder involvement, and unambiguous communication of project goals and results.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that there were effective stakeholder engagement practices due to the frequency of stakeholder meetings and the unanimous agreement on the availability of project progress reports for review indicate. There was a strong foundation of transparency within project management due to the consensus on the accessibility of project progress reports. The study concludes that there is need for refining the adequacy and appropriateness of feedback mechanism. There is a positive perception of progress reviews in providing avenues for remedial action indicating these reviews are important to project management. The quarterly reports are a valuable tool however there is a need to enhance the processes and formats used to create these reports.

Skill enhancement is essential in maintaining high levels of project performance and adapting to evolving challenges within the industry. Internal operations are actively monitored leading to regular review and optimization. An enhanced stakeholder engagement and communication around financial management leads to efficient utilization of financial resources. Project examination by stakeholder leads to a foundation level of accountability. The findings highlight performance contracting as a significant driver of staff performance and motivation. Performance contracting ensures that resources are used efficiently and directed towards activities that offer the highest return, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness and sustainability of projects. Aligning feedback mechanisms within the framework of performance contracting leads to alignment with project targets and effective implementation.

Transparency in performance evaluation leads to setting clear expectations, aligning project participants with project goals. Due to their ability to pinpoint project management flaws, projects audit tools are essential for ongoing project management improvement. It is acknowledged that there is a need for change in the way audits are carried out and handled. Audits play a critical role in maintaining high standards of professionalism and compliance within projects by making sure that staff members follow necessary processes and standards with care and expertise. It is acknowledged that project audits can help improve communication and decision-making within projects. The accessibility and actionability of audit findings, however, may be improved, indicating the need for improved audit report quality and communication. Project audits are essential for making sure accounting standards are followed in financial management practices, which highlights the value of audits in supporting financial responsibility and integrity in project management. Project audits are thought to be crucial for improving the construction sector's reputation and answerability to clients and taxpayers.

The results of the study support the adoption and improvement of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as a top priority for the Kisii County Government and the construction industry in order to improve stakeholder trust, support project outcomes, and guarantee the county's road infrastructure is developed sustainably.

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