

Evaluating M&E Stakeholder Engagement and Its Effect on Public School Infrastructure in Wajir County, Kenya

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Abstract

School infrastructure impacts the quality of education significantly. Integral components like classrooms, science labs, sports facilities, sanitation amenities, and libraries constitute a conducive learning environment. Despite this, students' educational experiences can differ based on varying infrastructure standards across schools. Infrastructure development projects in schools necessitate comprehensive and effective Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) systems for ensuring proper execution and sustainability. Regrettably, issues of mismanagement, project abandonment, prolonged completion times, and exorbitant costs have emerged as significant impediments to these efforts, particularly in the context of public schools in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya. Substandard or abandoned infrastructure projects have been misappropriated or squandered considerable resources, according to the Ministry of Education. Students are deprived of essential facilities by such projects, thereby compromising education quality. M&E systems have been implemented in school infrastructure projects in various studies, but few studies have examined how they affect project outcomes. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the role of M&E systems in shaping public school infrastructure development in Wajir County, Kenya. The study investigated how stakeholder participation affects infrastructure outcomes in the M&E process. The study recommends that local communities and stakeholders should actively participate in M&E activities, including planning and feedback sessions, to ensure their perspectives are incorporated. The study also recommends that beneficiaries should seek training and workshops to better understand the M&E processes, thereby enhancing their ability to contribute effectively.

Key Words: *Stakeholder participation, Infrastructural Development, Public Primary Schools, Monitoring and Evaluation, Wajir County*

Introduction

Projects in schools today are transitory initiatives that are undertaken to generate specific outcomes within a defined period and at a stated cost, much like construction projects in the past. To achieve success in a project, precise scope delineation, baselines, and budgeting are necessary (Aden, 2019). The four primary constraints in project management, namely scope, time, quality, and budget, are interrelated and interdependent, and their effective coordination is imperative in ensuring the successful completion of projects (Agevi, 2018). The initiation of projects, whether they are social or infrastructural in nature, arises from the motivation to address a specific issue, to satisfy a social need, or to capitalize on a prevailing financial prospect, as posited by Ashley and Barney (2020). Since developing countries lack funding, strategic planning, expertise, and adequate monitoring and evaluation, most development countries perform better than developing countries.

Numerous scholars have examined Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) as a determinant of global project efficacy and factors that influence effective M&E implementation on a global scale throughout this discourse. According to Jones et al. (2021), monitoring is a continuous activity that comprises the methodical collection of information relevant to particular indicators in public projects. Project managers are said to gain from the M&E process, which increases their ability to increase output and accomplish desired results. Improving output, outcome, and impact management for the present and future is M&E's ultimate goal. According to Rogers (2019), monitoring is instrumental in keeping management and primary stakeholders of a development intervention abreast of their progress towards the attainment of objectives and allocation of resources. Monitoring provides critical data for analysis. Evaluation, on the other hand, is the methodical and objective appraisal of ideas, plans of action, and outcomes. Giving timely assessments of

the projects' applicability, efficacy, efficiency, impact, and sustainability is the aim. According to Ballard et al. (2020), M&E helps program implementers make data-driven decisions about the administration, efficacy, and delivery of their programs.

Due to the importance of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in project execution, research on issues impacting project success has been carried out globally. Both in public and private domains, China is acknowledged as a major player in M&E. The UNDP (2017), for example, has emphasized Chinese performance. According to PASSIA (2020), a number of variables made the sanitation projects that were put in place in China's central primary schools successful. The research identified monitoring and evaluation as a significant factor for government management, contractors, and school administrators. The study involved the participation of over 230 teachers who were asked to provide detailed information regarding the various variables that they believed influenced the M&E process. The computed values for parameters such as stakeholder participation, financial resources, staff attitudes towards M&E, and the provision of training and education for M&E members were found to be 35.1, 24.1, 43.9, and 54.1, respectively, in a chi-square test, compared to the critical value of 9.49. The same elements have been mentioned as influencing M&E success in New Deli India's current school infrastructure projects.

M&E is new and often overlooked as an essential aspect of organizational undertakings in Africa, although many communities, businesses, and companies have adopted it (Crawford & Bryce, 2020). According to Buerter, Adjei-Kumi, and Amoah (2019) money can be utilized to engage skilled M&E professionals, pay for high-quality M&E education for project handlers, and more. Organizations can incentivize staff to internalize M&E with it. As shown above, financial resources influence M&E and improve its components.

Rwanda leads east Africa in internalizing M&E in project completion. Non-governmental organizations-funded (NGOs-funded) health and education programs in Kigali were affected by the staff's skills, availability, attitudes and beliefs towards M&E, financial resources, and geographic locations (Dansoh and Amoah, 2020). Ayarkwa, Dansoh, and Amoah (2020) found that financial resources, organizational structures, organizational culture, stakeholders, and others affect the M&E process in their study on Electronic Management System (EMS) implementation in the construction sector in Ghana and Rwanda. In 2012, a survey was conducted among 69 constructors, school managers, and donor managers from six Rwandan high schools that adopted the international curriculum. Several factors influenced monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including employee knowledge and perspectives, financial resources, project locations, technology level, and M&E regulations and legal procedures.

These factors were not exhaustive and there might be other variables that could potentially impact M&E implementation (Pilcher, 2018). Around 2.7 million kids were enrolled in pre-primary schools in Kenya in 2019, 10.1 million kids were enrolled in primary schools, and 3.3 million students were enrolled in secondary schools. This number has increased as of late. School enrollment increases are directly correlated with additional facilities needed for short- or long-term operations. This includes buildings used for instruction, research, and business, as well as latrines and other facilities for waste disposal (Onderi & Makori, 2022).

Olembo, Wanga, and Karagu (2022) posit that the implementation of school construction projects constitutes a pivotal stride towards the realization of Kenya's Vision 2030, which advocates for the development of social infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and roads. In 2015, governments worldwide pledged to advance gender parity, healthcare, and educational prospects for all, with education taking precedence in the 2030 Agenda. SDG4 aims to promote lifelong learning for all through comprehensive and equitable access to quality education. To develop global citizens and achieve equity, inclusiveness, and gender equality in education. Health, jobs, economic growth, sustainability, and climate change all concern SDG4.

Both developed and developing country governments must meet the SDGs by the deadline. With population growth caused by FPE, secondary school enrollment has to increase either through enlarging existing schools or building new ones. When classrooms, school halls, laboratories, libraries, dormitories, and other amenities are built, many partners support it. Education plays a significant role in Kenya's Vision 2030. Kenya's Vision 2030 for education calls for improving school infrastructure and expanding current facilities (Government of Kenya, 2014) and expanding equipment.

There is still more work to be done, even though the National Government Constituencies Development Fund Board (NG-CDF) published a report in 2021 that showed the Kenyan government and other stakeholders made coordinated efforts to ensure public secondary school infrastructure projects were completed on time. For example, delays and deviance from original plans have been found in the execution of projects in Bomet, Kisii, Kilifi, Wajir, Marsabit, and Turkana Counties due to inadequate planning and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) procedures.

A group of researchers carried out an initial informal review in 2010 on the application of M&E in secondary school construction projects in Bomet, Kericho, Lamu, and Kisii counties. They found that most of the projects were not finished on time, and some were abandoned early on because of a variety of complex performance issues, such as time, money, poor planning, insufficient M&E mechanisms, and safety concerns (Mwangi & Kimenyi, 2021). Ochieng and Tubey (2019) state that a number of factors, such as sufficient funding, meeting deadlines, having a pool of qualified experts in the M&E process, having access to pertinent

technology, using effective information flow channels, and having a positive attitude, determine whether M&E is successfully implemented in projects. Concerns have been raised regarding the implementation of monitored and evaluated (M&E) procedures in educational institutions. The variables influencing how M&E is carried out in support of school development programs are still mostly unknown. This project will investigate how monitoring and evaluation of educational initiatives are implemented in Wajir County, Kenya.

Literature Review

Stakeholders are groups of people, companies, and establishments that the project may or may not impact. An example of a best practice demonstrates how important stakeholder input is to the process of revising evaluations. In the initial stages of the assessment procedure, this engagement needs to involve the endorsement of well-known proponents and the enlistment of political players who are eager to acquire knowledge about or employ instruments to exhibit effectiveness (Musomba et al., 2013). According to Forss and Carlsson (2017), skills are necessary for them to operate at their peak because efficiency, cost effectiveness, and results are becoming more and more important to stakeholders. Talking about the what, how, and why of program activities gives stakeholders power and promotes inclusivity, which enables a large level of participation from a variety of stakeholder groups (Donaldson & Lipesy, 2019). Stakeholder participation entails giving development beneficiaries the authority to recognize needs and resources, allocate resources, and carry out development projects successfully (Chitere & Ileri, 2018).

According to Proudlock et al. (2019), involving the intended beneficiaries in the impact evaluation process can greatly improve it overall, particularly in the areas of analysis and result interpretation. This is due to the fact that the intended beneficiaries are, in the end, the most significant individuals in their own growth and the most qualified assessors of their own circumstances. Ultimately, it is up to them to grow themselves. Overinvolving stakeholders may give them undue influence over the evaluation, whereas underinvolving stakeholders may allow evaluators to seize control (Patton, 2018).

It noted that participation goes beyond only beneficiary contributions to the project execution. Systems for monitoring and evaluation are explicitly included in this. Participatory monitoring and evaluation can only be built once fundamentals of M&E have been understood and figured out. Project strategies are geared toward achieving their goals and objectives when stakeholders are provided with the knowledge they need. It is possible to evaluate the direction of the project critically by empowering primary stakeholders; and by increasing stakeholders' understanding and capacity (OECD, 2018).

Jones et al. (2019) also emphasize the importance of grassroots groups and community and higher-level organizations as partners in recognizing the role of stakeholders. During the initial planning stages of a project, community members can provide valuable insight on priorities and appropriate methods, and can assist in the implementation and monitoring and evaluation tasks. Collaborating with community members can play a pivotal role in facilitating participation during implementation. This can be achieved through various means such as community-led baseline surveys, local impact assessments, and annual project evaluations. Increasing community investment in the project can increase its likelihood of lasting impact through such collaborations.

The community, according to Ndulu (2019), is the primary human factor that must be taken into account for any initiative to be successful and sustainable. He claims that it is at the community level where development project advantages are implemented and utilized, where resources are obtained, and where public support may be attained. Enhancing the administration and provision of project services at the local levels of towns and villages is often the main goal of monitoring and evaluation. For example, this might incorporate the participation of educators who constitute the community, a consortium of contractors, suppliers, and parents, as well as a management board chaired by members of the community or socially connected authorities like religious sponsors (Mark, 2017). In order to adequately reflect community requirements and foster interest in the project's implementation, oversight, and assessment, a participatory approach must be taken in determining the M&E process. If the project identification process is poorly carried out and disregards community interests, it is likely that communities will not take part in the monitoring and evaluation of carried out activities.

The Indiana Department of Education report entitled "Stakeholders Participation and Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation of School Feeding Programs" as cited by the OECD (2010) enumerates three crucial functions and roles that were undertaken by distinct types of stakeholders in the triumph of an M&E endeavor in schools. This entails locating M&E resources, allocating them, educating employees, establishing rules and a culture, and setting up M&E frameworks. In developing and developed nations alike, school-parent-community partnerships enhance educational systems by planning, implementing, and evaluating actions.

In India, Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania, and Mauritius between 2008 and 2010, the IFC looked at 110 school development projects. A M&E program requires involvement by school staff, parents, students, elected officials, local leaders, and boards of management. Parents manage school food programs, supervise the creation of other projects they feel should come within their purview, and

provide financial support by paying school levies and donations in India and north-eastern Kenya. Programs that involve parents, teachers, and kids in their creation and administration generally have better results, while caution must be taken to avoid abuses.

In conclusion, a number of academics have emphasized the need to include stakeholders in the M&E process for school projects in any organization because they are the major recipients of such projects' effects and outputs. Gyorkos (2015), Katia et al. (2019), and many others are among these academicians. Stakeholders, for example, are crucial in a school context because they determine which resources are required for M&E, who receives them, and who determines M&E policies, mission, and culture.

Methods

This study was primarily grounded in the European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM) as conceptualized by Dubas and Nijhawan (2005). The EFQM is an innovative, rule-free framework composed of nine key criteria, categorized into 'Enablers' and 'Results'. The Enabler criteria take into consideration the actions and strategies implemented by an organization, while the Results criteria focus on the successful outcomes of these actions. The EFQM is underpinned by the principle that outstanding results in terms of performance, customers, people, and societal impact are products of exemplary leadership, strategic planning, people management, and resource allocation, which collectively instigate action through partnerships and processes.

The research study was conducted in Eldas Sub-County, Wajir County, Kenya. Wajir County, in Kenya's North Eastern region, is home to Eldas Sub-County. It is primarily composed of pastoralist communities such as the Somalis and Boranas. Eldas sub-county contains 33 public schools. In most schools, however, there are no sanitary infrastructure and no proper classrooms. The sub-county also has a high teacher to student ratio and several understaffed schools. Despite these obstacles, there have been various initiatives to enhance Eldas sub-public county's elementary school development. Education Ministry has built and renovated schools in the region. Additionally, NGOs and foreign corporations have been working in the Eldas subcounty to develop the public elementary schools. These organizations have been putting into action projects to enhance school facilities, offer teacher training, and expand access to education for underserved groups like girls.

The study targeted members of the stakeholders from the following committees; project tendering, project implementation and members of the project M&E officers from the County Education Directorate of Wajir. The school heads are directly responsible for the implementation of development projects, their deputies since they sit in the tendering committees, teachers, BOM chairpersons and PTA chairpersons. PTA and BOM members play an important role in the management and administration of the schools. The M&E systems will provide valuable insight into school infrastructure, education outcomes, and stakeholder participation. Providing quality education to students includes teachers understanding the impact of measurement and evaluation systems on the quality of education at schools. This includes resource allocations. The principal and deputy principal are key stakeholders in school management and administration, providing insight into implementing monitoring and evaluation systems, impacts on building infrastructure, and education improvements. The M&E officers from the education directorate are responsible for measuring the effectiveness of education policies and programs in Eldas Sub-County, and they will provide valuable information on M&E's implementation in schools and its impact on school infrastructure. A total target population of 471 was used for the study.

The study used a mixed approach; a mixed approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative research methods; questionnaires, and statistical analysis was used to collect numerical data on the variable's stakeholder participation and development of infrastructure. This method helped to provide objective and generalizable findings and used to measure the magnitude of the relationship between the monitoring and evaluation stakeholder participation and the development of public schools' infrastructural projects. It used a closed-ended questionnaire with Likert-scale items. Survey questionnaires aim to collect specific information from respondents through standardized questions. Questionnaires were administered to a wide range of stakeholders involved in public schools' infrastructure projects in Eldas subcounty, including school administrators, teachers, and M&E officers. It was designed to collect information about stakeholders' participation and infrastructural development. A demographic analysis of ages, genders, occupations, and education backgrounds could also contextualize the findings. Data collection in this study was standardized and structured, making comparison and analysis easier.

After fieldwork, SPSS software was used to analyze the questionnaire data. Version 27 of SPSS was utilized to evaluate the quantitative data. The results are easy to grasp because SPSS is a systematic program that incorporates the most widely used statistical data analysis. Calculations of frequency, mean, standard deviation, and percentages were made using the descriptive analysis. The results were shown in tables. To help with answering the study questions and to facilitate reporting and interpretation, the data was grouped topically. In the same way that the organization of the quantitative data analysis would be determined by the primary themes of the study. 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 objective of this study aimed to analyze the M&E stakeholder participation on public schools' infrastructural development in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya through the following questions;

4.2 M&E Stakeholder Participation and Infrastructural Development

4.2.1 Stakeholder Participation In M&E Activities

Table 1: Stakeholder participation in M&E activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	60	19.9	19.9	19.9
	Disagree	45	15.0	15.0	34.9
	Neutral	30	10.0	10.0	44.9
	Agree	67	22.3	22.3	67.1
	Strongly Agree	99	32.9	32.9	100.0
	Total	301	100.0	100.0	

Source, Researcher (2023)

There has been stakeholder participation in M&E activities to significantly improve the quality of school infrastructure.

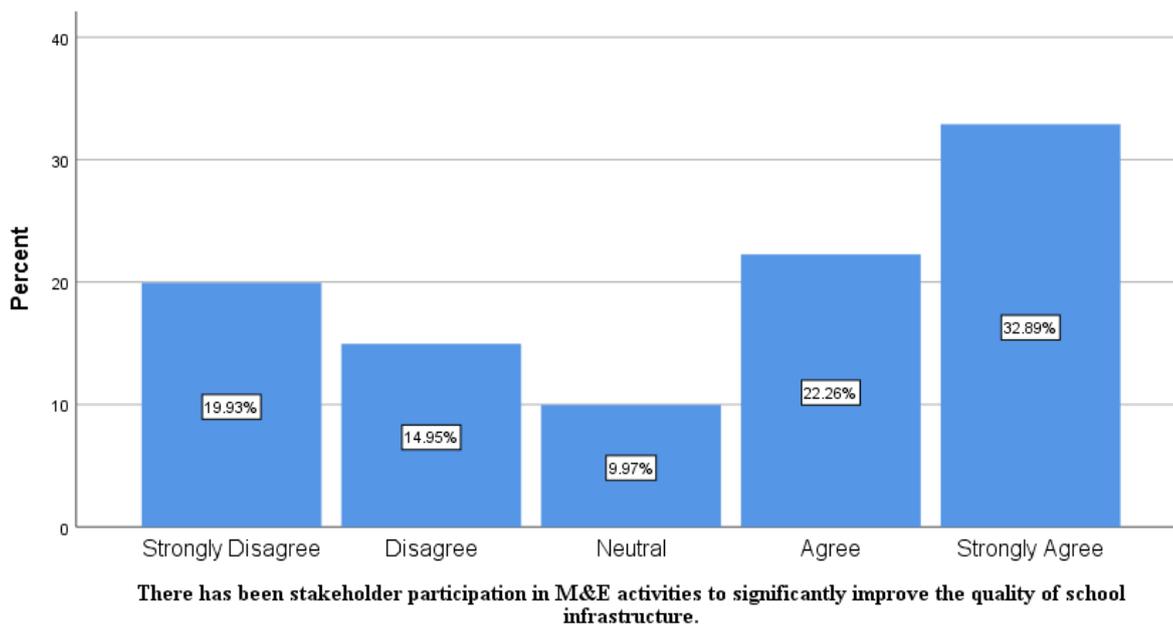


Figure 1: Stakeholder participation in M&E activities

Source, Researcher (2023)

When respondents were asked if there have been stakeholder M&E activities to significantly improve the quality of school infrastructure, the majority (32.9%) strongly agreed. Additionally, 22.3% agreed, making a total of 55.2% of respondents leaning towards agreement. On the other hand, 19.9% strongly disagreed, and 15% disagreed, totalling 34.9% leaning towards disagreement. There were fewer neutral respondents (10%). The majority of respondents perceive stakeholder participation as a positive influence on the quality of school infrastructure in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya. This shows that involving stakeholders in M&E activities could be a critical factor in enhancing public schools' infrastructural development in the region.

Stakeholder involvement is essential in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities, particularly when developing school infrastructure. A majority of respondents, accounting for 55.2%, believe that stakeholder participation has a positive impact on the quality of school infrastructure. M&E processes need stakeholder engagement, which is emphasised in the literature. For instance, Musomba et.al (2013) highlighted that stakeholder participation is crucial for updating evaluations, and Donaldson & Lipesy (2019) noted that engaging stakeholders in discussions about program activities not only endows them with authority but also promotes inclusivity. Furthermore, Proudlock et. al., (2019) posited that the entire impact evaluation process, especially the interpretation of results, is enhanced when intended beneficiaries, who are the primary stakeholders, are involved.

The findings suggests that for school infrastructure projects in regions similar to Eldas Subcounty, stakeholder involvement in M&E activities is not just beneficial but might be essential for the success and sustainability of the projects. This is consistent with the

perspective of Ndulu (2019), who argued that the community is the primary human factor for the success of any initiative. Secondly, while the majority of respondents view stakeholder participation positively, a significant 34.9% lean towards disagreement. This indicates a need for a balanced approach, as Patton (2018) warned against giving stakeholders too much control over evaluations. It is crucial that M&E processes are structured and managed so that stakeholders' engagement, however vital, remains authentic and objective.

4.2.2 The Involvement of Local Communities In M&E

Table 2: The involvement of local communities in M&E

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	71	23.6	23.6	23.6
	Disagree	20	6.6	6.6	30.2
	Neutral	30	10.0	10.0	40.2
	Agree	100	33.2	33.2	73.4
	Strongly Agree	80	26.6	26.6	100.0
	Total	301	100.0	100.0	

Source, Researcher (2023)

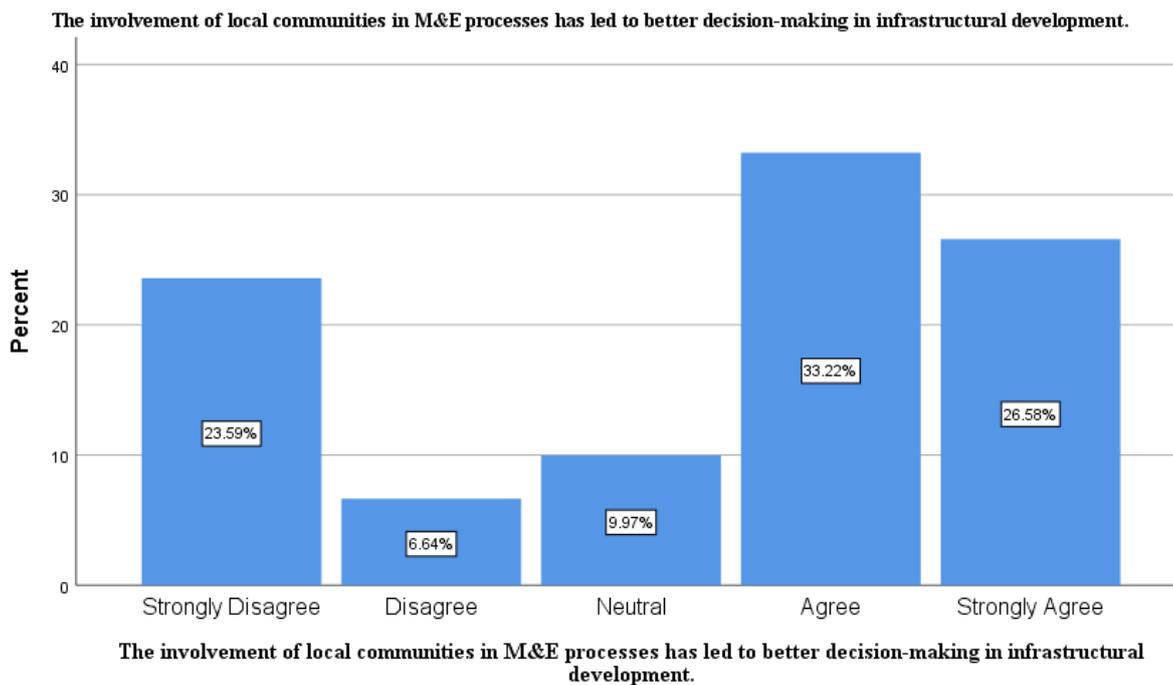


Figure 2: The involvement of local communities in M&E

Source, Researcher (2023)

When respondents were asked whether the involvement of local communities in M&E processes has led to better decision-making in infrastructural development, the majority (33.2%) agreed. Additionally, 26.2% strongly agreed, making a total of 59.4% of respondents leaning towards agreement. On the other hand, 23.6% strongly disagreed, and 6.6% disagreed, totalling 30.2% leaning towards disagreement. A smaller proportion of respondents (10%) remained neutral on the issue. The majority of respondents perceive the involvement of local communities in M&E processes as a positive influence on decision-making in infrastructural development in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya. This shows that community involvement is considered beneficial for making more effective decisions in the area of public schools' infrastructural development.

The findings emphasize the perceived value of local community involvement in M&E processes for infrastructural development decision-making. With 59.4% of respondents leaning towards agreement, it is evident that community engagement is viewed as a catalyst for better decision-making in infrastructure projects. This sentiment resonates with the literature, particularly the insights of Ndulu (2019), who posits that the community is the primary human factor in the success and sustainability of any initiative, especially at the grassroots level where resources are mobilized and public support is garnered. Furthermore, Jones et al. (2019) highlighted the pivotal role of community members in the initial planning stages, suggesting that their insights can significantly influence project outcomes. For infrastructural development projects in Eldas Subcounty, integrating local community perspectives in M&E processes is not just a commendable practice but might be instrumental in ensuring the projects' success and sustainability.

4.2.3 Stakeholder Feedback in Infrastructural Development Plans

Table 3: Stakeholder feedback in infrastructural development plans

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	124	41.2	41.2	41.2
Disagree	100	33.2	33.2	74.4
Neutral	15	5.0	5.0	79.4
Agree	23	7.6	7.6	87.0
Strongly Agree	39	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	301	100.0	100.0	

Source, Researcher (2023)

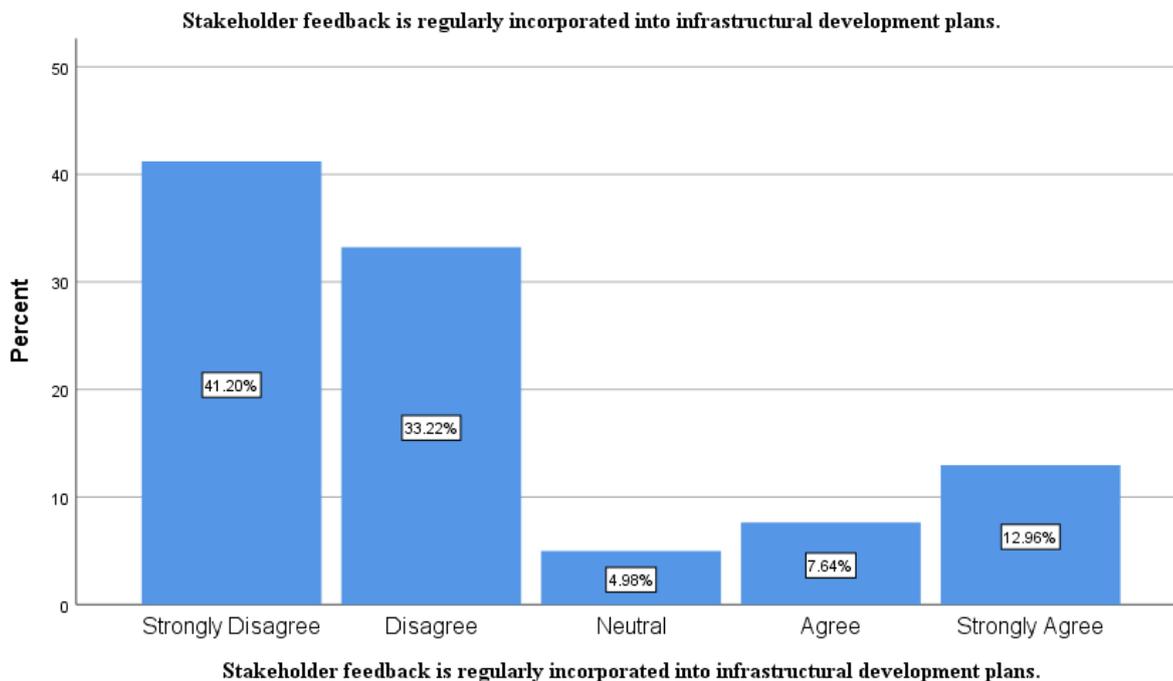


Figure 3: Stakeholder feedback in infrastructural development plans

Source, Researcher (2023)

When respondents were asked whether stakeholder feedback is regularly incorporated into infrastructural development plans, the majority (41.2%) strongly disagreed. Additionally, 33.2% disagreed, making a total of 74.4% of respondents leaning towards disagreement. On the other hand, 7.6% agreed, and 13% strongly agreed, totalling 20.6% leaning towards agreement. The neutrality rate was only 5% among respondents. The majority of respondents do not perceive stakeholder feedback as being regularly

incorporated into infrastructural development plans in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya. A significant gap in stakeholder integration could impact the effectiveness of M&E systems for public schools' infrastructure development in the region as a result.

The findings reveal a concerning disconnect between stakeholder feedback and its incorporation into infrastructural development plans. With a striking 74.4% of respondents leaning towards the belief that stakeholder feedback isn't regularly integrated, it suggests potential inefficiencies in the M&E processes. It is particularly concerning given the literature's emphasis on stakeholder involvement. Musomba et.al (2013) highlighted the necessity of stakeholder participation for updating evaluations, and Donaldson & Lipesy (2019) emphasized that engaging stakeholders fosters inclusivity and authority. Integrated stakeholder feedback, according to most respondents, could hinder infrastructure project effectiveness and sustainability. This gap might lead to missed opportunities for improving project outcomes and could diminish the perceived value and trust in the M&E processes within the community.

4.2.4 Stakeholder Participation In M&E

Table 4: Stakeholder participation in M&E

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	34	11.3	11.3	11.3
	Disagree	20	6.6	6.6	17.9
	Neutral	18	6.0	6.0	23.9
	Agree	130	43.2	43.2	67.1
	Strongly Agree	99	32.9	32.9	100.0
	Total	301	100.0	100.0	

Source, Researcher (2023)

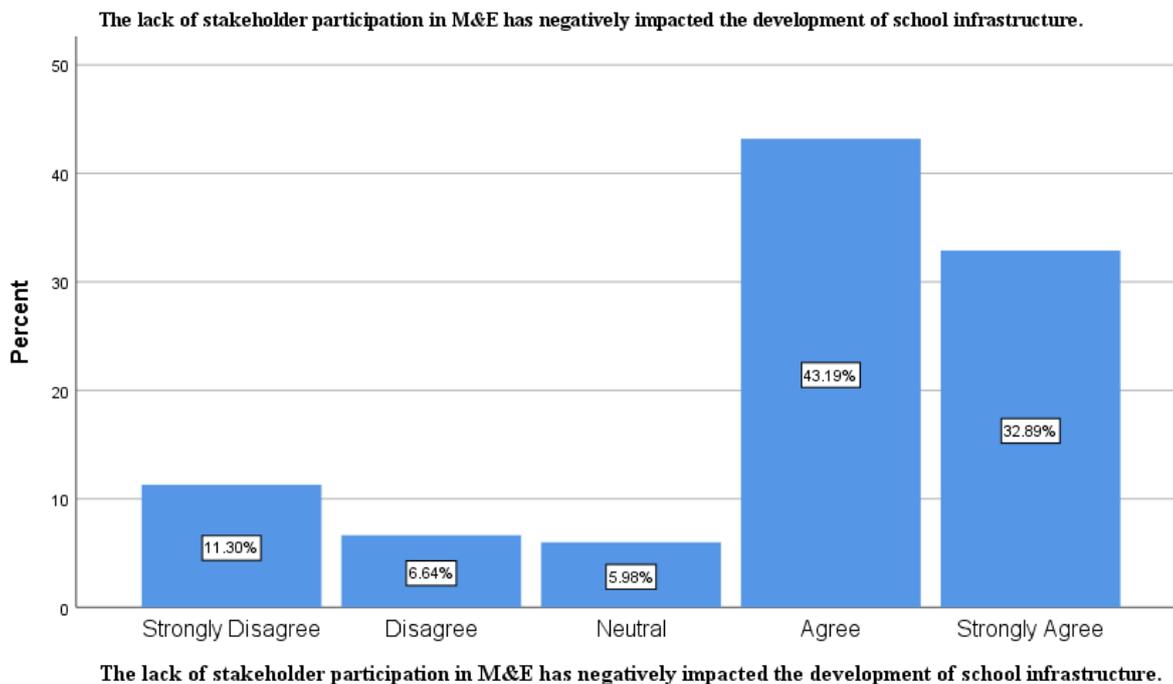


Figure 4: The lack of stakeholder participation in M&E

Source, Researcher (2023)

When respondents were asked whether the lack of stakeholder participation in M&E has negatively impacted the development of school infrastructure, the majority (43.2%) agreed. Additionally, 32.9% strongly agreed, making a total of 76.1% of respondents

leaning towards agreement. On the other hand, 11.3% strongly disagreed, and 6.6% disagreed, totalling 17.9% leaning towards disagreement. The issue remained neutral with 6% of respondents. The majority of respondents perceive the lack of stakeholder participation in M&E processes as having a negative impact on the development of school infrastructure in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya. This shows that the absence of stakeholder involvement is considered detrimental to the effectiveness of M&E systems for public schools' infrastructural development in the region.

The findings underscore the perceived detrimental effects of insufficient stakeholder participation in M&E processes on school infrastructure development. A significant 76.1% of respondents believe that the lack of stakeholder involvement negatively impacts the development of school infrastructure. M&E processes consistently emphasize stakeholder engagement, as per the literature. Musomba et.al (2013) highlighted the necessity of stakeholder participation for updating evaluations, while Donaldson & Lipesy (2019) stressed that engaging stakeholders fosters inclusivity and authority. For effective infrastructural development in regions like Eldas Subcounty, it is imperative to ensure robust stakeholder involvement in M&E processes. The perceived gap in stakeholder participation could hinder the success and sustainability of infrastructural projects, potentially leading to missed opportunities for improvement and diminished community trust in the M&E processes.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings reveal a complex landscape of stakeholder participation in M&E activities related to public schools' infrastructural development in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya. On one hand, the data suggests that stakeholder participation, particularly from local communities, is perceived as a positive force that enhances both the quality of school infrastructure and the decision-making processes that guide its development. This aligns with the notion that stakeholder engagement is not just a procedural requirement but a substantive contributor to effective infrastructural development.

On the other hand, the study uncovers a significant gap in the actual practice of stakeholder engagement. A majority of respondents indicate that stakeholder feedback is not regularly incorporated into development plans, pointing to a disconnect between the perceived importance of stakeholder participation and its actual implementation. This gap is further emphasized by the finding that a lack of stakeholder participation is perceived as a significant barrier to effective infrastructural development.

In conclusion, while stakeholder participation is viewed as a critical element for the success of M&E activities related to public schools' infrastructural development, there is a pressing need to bridge the gap between this recognition and the actual practices on the ground. The findings indicate that for M&E systems to be truly effective in enhancing public schools' infrastructural development in Eldas Subcounty, Wajir County, Kenya, there needs to be a more consistent and meaningful integration of stakeholder feedback into planning and decision-making processes.

Promoting an educated and participative approach is crucial for maximizing the efficacy of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) operations. Planning, implementation, and feedback sessions are just a few of the M&E stages in which local communities and stakeholders ought to be actively involved. Their distinct viewpoints and requirements are fully integrated into the process thanks to their active engagement, which produces more pertinent and significant results. At the same time, recipients ought to be motivated to attend workshops and training sessions centered around M&E techniques. Such programs would improve their comprehension of the procedures while also giving them the ability to make more significant and effective contributions. M&E initiatives can become more inclusive, responsive, and ultimately more successful in accomplishing their goals by fusing community participation with educational empowerment.

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