# Stakeholders' Participation in Decision Making in Construction Projects Funded by National Government Constituency Development Fund in Public Secondary Schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

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**DOI: https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2024.1103047**

**Received: 08 March 2024; Accepted: 16 March 2024; Published: 20 April 2024**

## ABSTRACT

Stakeholders' participation in construction projects is key for its success. Decision making is an integral part in a project. This paper purposed to examine influence of stakeholders' participation in decision making on performance of construction projects in Kakamega County, Kenya. The scope of this paper covered construction projects funded by National Government- Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) in public secondary schools in Kakamega County Kenya. Data collection was done by use of a questionnaire and interview which lead to analysis. The main finding is that there is minimized stakeholders' participation in decision making on performance of construction projects funded by NG-CDF. There is minimal stakeholder participation in decision making on performance of construction projects. There is need for more stakeholders' participation in decision making as emphasized by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. There is need to accord stakeholders knowledge and skills on decision making to enable more participation to take place in the public schools' construction projects.

**Key Words:** Stakeholders Participation; Decision Making; Performance; National Government-Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF)

## INTRODUCTION

Stakeholders' participation can be defined as a process by which citizens and other interested parties take part in the control of development initiatives, the decisions and resources that influence these initiatives. The participation in public projects can come in various forms including involvement in decision making, identification of problems, design and application of solutions, monitoring of results or evaluation of performance. A public project is one that is funded using public resources or meant for public utility; while participation approach refers to a particular way by which stakeholders participate in projects which can be consultative, negotiations, consensus, forums, innovative and or adaptive (Boon, Bawole & Ahenkan, 2013).

Stakeholders' participation is paramount in any community-based construction project. Even though minor decisions and emergency situations are generally not appropriate for stakeholders' participation, any complex situation with far reaching impacts warrant stakeholders' participation done proactively, rather than in response to a problem to help avoid problems in future (Maina, 2013). The focus of public participation is usually to share information and gather input from members of the public who may have an interest in a project. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) gives citizens the right to take part in activities that have a direct

bearing on their lives (Mbaabu, 2012). For this reason, a holistic approach to stakeholders' participation is vital to allow the different stakeholders to meaningfully participate in the decision-making process by balancing their interests, needs and concerns thus achieving a more just built environment. A participatory process should be guided by a dialogue process that enables collaboration and further mutual understanding among the stakeholders is vital to achieve a fair decision-making process. The outcome of the decision-making process should be robust with multiple benefits for the various stakeholders involved. Inness and Booher (2004) argue that participation must be perceived as a collaborative process that engages a wide range of stakeholders through collaborative participation, increases the potential to build social capital and to produce innovative solutions to the complex problems in society. It is therefore imperative that stakeholders' participation enables the success of a project. Inadequate management of the concerns of stakeholders can lead to controversies and conflicts about the implementation of projects (Olander and Landin, 2010). There is need for active participation of stakeholders in project planning and implementation as a means of ensuring project success is a subject over which development actors as well as project managers and scholars are at a consensus (Boon,Bawole & Ahenkan, 2013).

## BACKGROUND

Decision making on CDF include goals in relation to the size of the funds; based on the structure of decision making on the use of the funds at all stages of implementation; oversight of CDF operations; and the relative influence of different individuals and groups in making policy (Kerore, 2007; Kimani, Nekesa and Ndungu, 2009). Achievement of all these factors requires participation of several stakeholders in the operations of CDF (Baskin, 2010). As such, the notion of stakeholders' participation in development has gained momentum in the process of human empowerment and development in Kenya (Bagaka, 2008). It is best to involve key stakeholders such as beneficiaries, Project Management Committees (PMCs), contractors, Boards of Management, and Parents, Teachers Associations (PTA) as much as possible in the implementation and evaluation process since their participation helps to ensure different perspectives are considered so that implementation process can be owned as well as the project (Ramesh, 2013; Fadare, 2013). Engaging stakeholders in decision making about implementing projects often empowers them and promotes meaningful participation by diverse stakeholder groups which avail to them sufficient and relevant information useful for the effective implementation of the projects (Jones & Wicks 2009)**.**

A project performance is guided by certain indicators by which it can be judged as a success or failure. Such indicators according to Toor and Ogunlana (2009) that measure project performance include completion on set time, within the set budget and in the set standards which involve making decisions and striking an agreement by the stakeholders. They further emphasized safety measures, effectiveness as well as meeting the expectations of the stakeholders without many conflicts. For any project's success, the parameters of time and cost are fundamental considerations to avoid overruns or conflicts. All projects are expected to have set specific objectives that guide the expected results, which involve certain costs, and which should be completed within a certain set time frame. Therefore, projects that are deemed successful have to achieve cost, schedule and quality objectives accurately.

Empowerment theory postulates that stakeholders' participation in decision making influences individual's sense of empowerment and therefore it is encouraged. Empowering intervention builds capacity of individuals to positively influence their well-being outcomes which in this study is the implementation of construction projects funded by NG-CDF in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. In this case the stakeholders participate when they discover, create, or give voice to a collective narrative that sustains their own contributions in a personal way thus decision making. Processes of implementation are strengthened as well as context where individuals who are stakeholders gain mastery and control over decisions that affect the project. The theory supports such interventions that provide genuine opportunities for individuals to participate and so help them develop a sense of psychological empowerment. Freeman's (1984), stakeholder

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XI Issue III March 2024

theory also emphasizes the need for the managers to articulate the shared sense, the value they create and what brings its core stakeholders together. The theory acknowledges the existence of several stakeholders involved in project implementation. Construction projects in this case potentially can have different sets of stakeholders and for the purpose of this study, they will include principals of public secondary schools, CDFCs chairpersons and PMCs chairpersons, PTA chairpersons related to the identified CDF construction projects in public secondary schools in Kakamega County.

Decision making needs to take into account a wide array of stakeholders and shades of opinions if decisions outcomes are for successful implementation of projects. Maurice (2011) in his support of open systems theory emphasized on involving stakeholders in decision making to provide a conducive working environment and provide implementers with the right tools to enable achieve the desired project results. Stakeholders' participation often prevents marginalization and potentially reduces conflicts. Stakeholders' participation in projects is gaining fast worldwide approval as a mechanism to deal with projects that finally become accepted by the community. Friend and Hickling (2010) in support of collaborative planning theory recommended that decision makers should try to acquire information while deciding what to do and by what means as an approach to reduce uncertainty. That a decision-making process that is conducted in small incremental steps provide better confidence on the merits of each small decision taken for the successful implementation of a project. This therefore emphasizes the need for stakeholders to collaborate in decision making during planning and implementation of construction projects which in this case are CDF projects. It is widely argued that increased stakeholders' participation in decision making produces many benefits. Dissent is rare: it is difficult to envision anything but positive outcomes from citizens joining the policy process, collaborating with others and reaching consensus to bring about positive social and environmental change. Stakeholders' participation is said to have a positive effect on democracy as it increases public engagement, encouraging people to listen to a diversity of opinions and contribute to a higher degree of legitimacy of decisions. Although a project manager could independently decide all factors, until the stakeholders agree to the decision made or the project may not progress to successful implementation (Koning ,2009). Normative stakeholder theory supports the rationale of participation as a democratic ideal that counters the power of incumbent interests and allows all who are affected by a decision to have influence (Freeman, 1994). Therefore, participation plays an important role in producing decisions that are acceptable to all stakeholders.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The construction industry is a complex and dynamic environment that is heavily associated with uncertainties and risks. Unfortunately, the traditional management purely considered the decision making as art or talent that was obtained over a period through experience. Managers used to solely rely on trial and error, a rule of thumb, common sense, intuition, or snap judgment to make decisions. These methods were misleading and may have had severe implications. One single wrong decision could cost a project destruction. Construction projects' failures are increasingly reported around the globe and achieving success of such projects is becoming extremely difficult in today's turbulent environment. Participation of stakeholders in projects is now becoming an international agenda for ensuring full representation of people in terms of their ideas, interests, and decisions on matters concerning development projects in their environment. It has been observed that most projects fail at implementation stage due to poor stakeholders' participation (Wekesa and Wasike, 2012). National Government- CDF as it is referred to present has made a great impact, with numerous beneficial projects coming up in constituencies in various counties in Kenya (Ahmad and Talip, 2011). A study conducted on the effectiveness of implementation of NG-Constituency Development Funds shows that lack of stakeholders' participation reduces efficiency and effectiveness during project implementation (Serra and Kunc, 2014). A number of reports have particularly singled out Kakamega County as one of the many whose constituencies' development funded projects have had issues

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of implementation (Kerote, 2007; Ahmad and Talip, 2011). Chebet (2013) states that performance of NG-CDF construction projects in Kakamega County has done poorly, though without mentioning if stakeholders participated or not.

Therefore, the unclear indications of stakeholders' participation in implementation of NG-CDF construction projects in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, is an issue that remains a research imperative particularly in relation to participation in decision making. The NG-CDF Act (2013) stipulates clearly that projects shall be community based in order to ensure that the prospective benefits are available to a widespread cross- section of the inhabitants of a particular area, practically the participation of stakeholders still remains a mirage. Thus, the need to carry out this study to find out the influence of stakeholders' participation in decision making on performance of construction projects funded by NG-CDF in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

The objective of this study was to establish how stakeholders' participation in decision making influences performance of construction projects funded by NG-Constituency Development Fund in public secondary schools in Kakamega County.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Stakeholders' participation is a situation where those affected by a project are involved in its implementation where in this case the constituents and their officials get engaged in decision making and encourage citizen participation at all levels of a project with emphasis on implementation (Litvack, Ahmad and Bird, 2008). It places a growing emphasis on corporate social responsibility, transparency and reporting (Corporate, 2007). A key element in participation of stakeholders is the ability to identify their needs, interests, relative power and the potential impact on project outcomes. Stakeholders' participation places a growing emphasis on corporate social responsibility, transparency and reporting (Corporation, 2007). Stakeholders' participation is therefore the process of effectively eliciting the stakeholders' views and support on a project within their environment (Friedman & Miles, 2006). It is increasingly becoming a mainstream business, being used to improve communication, obtain wider community support or buy in for projects, gather useful data and ideas that enhance public sector reputation and encourage more sustainable decision making (Gray, 2002). Without a proper participation of stakeholders, it is impossible to have a common abiding agreement, ownership and support for a particular project. Any organization is likely to benefit if it takes care of the environment in which it operates and aims at meeting the needs of its stakeholders (Gray, 2002). All these justify the need for stakeholders' participation in projects. Stakeholder participation in organizational or project management is always considered from two main perspectives. From a normative perspective, stakeholder participation is regarded as an ethical issue (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Samuels, Greenfield, & Piper, 1996), as it takes into consideration the legitimate interests of the identified stakeholders, necessitating a stakeholder-oriented operational framework policy in the organization. The normative perspective provides an ethical and moral framework that reflects not only economic imperatives but also the human-centered values of the organization in its goals (Mainardes, Alves, &Raposo, 2011).

The instrumental perspective investigates how stakeholders' participation can be used to achieve the performance objectives of an organization (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jones, 2009). The instrumental perspective seeks to find out how stakeholders can be used as a tool in strategic decision making to achieve predetermined objectives (Jones & Wicks, 2009). They stated that a strategic management model requires an organization to address the concerns of their stakeholders for the success of the project. This perspective involves the personalization of the organization's relationships with its stakeholders, the particularization of each stakeholder's interests, thus their opinions to guide decision making through coordination, sharing of information, monitoring and evaluation to achieve the org (Starik, 2007)

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In a participatory development project, stakeholders should be identified and brought in as partners to explore more widely the anticipated development decisions and challenge as perceived by different stakeholders. This will provide a platform to articulate the relationship model required in the decision-making mechanism to achieve the stated goals (Freeman & Parman, 2004). Similarly, the identification of the stakeholders is done early in a project to understand key stakeholders' "positions and perceptions about the proposed change" (Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009). Above all, the involvement of stakeholders makes it possible to seek their views and identify how individual stakeholders can contribute to meeting the identified challenges.

Stakeholders' participation gives the impression of corporate responsibility, showing commitment through policy and practice to stakeholders' participation by being accountable and responsible (Greenwood, 2007). The interaction with stakeholders is a logically necessary activity for any project to guide appropriate decision making (Noland & Philips, 2010). Effective stakeholders' participation relies on a commitment to engage and communicate openly and honestly with stakeholders which enables cooperation on operations/ activities and even on policy development. As Freeman (1984), argues in his normative stakeholder theory, through stakeholders' participation the shared sense of value created is articulated, bringing the stakeholders together. Here the normative rationale of participation becomes a democratic ideal that calls for full participation by the stakeholders. This model is inspired by post modernism and emancipator school that is interested in the changes that are induced in the minds of people participating. (Renn and Schweizer, 2010). The theory emphasizes negotiations as the mode of dialogue to enable deal with different views among stakeholders. Participation promotes fundamental human rights and values such as democracy, procedural justice, citizenship and equity (Rowe and Frewer, 2000; Larson and Lach, 2008; Reed, 2008). Stakeholders' participation creates a more user-friendly targeted service which in this case are the NG- CDF construction projects. It also helps in improving the access to emerging issues and gaining capacity to handle them, before it becomes too late (Corporation, 2007). Stakeholder participation by governments and public agencies has been referred to as 'collaborative governance' (Huxham and Vangen, 2000), 'public participation' (Rydin and Pennington, 2000), 'deliberative democracy' (Feldman et al, 2006) or interactive decision making (Edelenbos and Klijn, 2006). Stakeholder participation is said to be typically government initiated, consensus based collectively organized and offers stakeholders the opportunity to influence policies (Ansell and Gash, 2008).

Participation as a philosophical and pragmatic framework seeks to overcome alienation, foster communication and stimulate reforms (Taylor et al, 2003). Successful community participation in the Australian context had been conceptualized as processes and practices in which different people work together to achieve shared goals (Measham et al, 2009). According to Ghulam (2007), participation is involvement of stakeholders in the project depending upon their interests. He further argues that stakeholders' interests are expectations which may be financial, social, and or technical. That influence is effect, impact or action of a stakeholder which affects another stakeholder or a project. This study therefore focuses on three types of stakeholders who include: the principals, Constituency Development Fund Committees (CDFCs) chairpersons and Project Management Committees (PMCs) chairpersons.

Empowerment theory postulates that stakeholders' participation in decision making influences individual's sense of empowerment and therefore its encouraged. Empowering intervention builds capacity of individuals to positively influence their well-being outcomes which in this study is the implementation of NG- CDF construction projects in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. In this case the stakeholders participate when they discover, create, or give voice to a collective narrative that sustains their own contributions in a personal way. Processes of implementation are strengthened as well as context where individuals who are stakeholders gain mastery and control over decisions that affect their lives. The theory supports such interventions that provide genuine opportunities for individuals to participate and so help them develop a sense of psychological empowerment. Freeman's (1984), stakeholder theory also emphasizes the

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need for the managers to articulate the shared sense, the value they create and what brings its core stakeholders together. The theory acknowledges the existence of several stakeholders involved in project implementation. Construction projects in this case potentially can have different sets of stakeholders and for the purpose of this study, they will include principals, CDFCs chairpersons and PMCs chairpersons related to the identified NG-CDF construction projects in public secondary schools in Kakamega County.

Decision making basically involves making choices that have consequences. It is a skill that everyone possesses and exercises in different ways at one time or another (Kirton, 1999). With this in mind, the measurement of decision-making mechanism was deemed appropriate as opposed to decision making frequencies or quality. Kirton further establishes that everyone can be placed on a continuum of decision-making style which ranges from adaptive to innovative. That those who view problems as having to be solved within existing paradigms and structures, the more adaptive the solution proposed becomes. Yet those that view existing paradigms and structures as part of the problem itself and agree that changing the structure surrounding the problem is possible, always propose solutions that are innovative. Adaptive decision makers are termed as doing things better whereas innovative decision makers are termed as doing things differently. The adaptor is described in the following ways: an organizational person that works to reduce conflicts, minimize risks and managing to solve problems by proceeding at a disciplined pace in a predictable direction. With stakeholders' participation it's therefore group decision making techniques needed. These therefore include: consensus decision making, negotiation and voting based method. Consensus decision making tries to avoid 'winners' or 'losers' situation. It requires that a majority approve a given course of action but the minority agree to go along with the course of action. In this case every stakeholder is part of the participants in decision making. Then voting based method can also be used which include: majority requiring support from more than 50% of the members of the group, plurality where the largest block in a group decides. Then there is range voting where each member scores one or more of the available options. Here the option with the highest average is chosen as such (Heath, 2007). The central claims for an integrated approach to stakeholder engagement arguably centers primarily on the benefits which is essentially on the view that incorporating stakeholders' views in decision-making processes enhances a project's performance and commitment (Simmons,2008). It is widely argued that increased community participation in project decision making produces many important benefits. With citizens' participation, formulated policies are assumed to become more realistically grounded in citizen preferences, the public becoming more sympathetic evaluators of the tough decisions to be made with improved support thus creating a less divisive, combative populace to govern and regulate (King, Fetey and Susel, 2007). This is supported by systems theory which advocates for open systems for ideas through stakeholders' participation in policies formulation.

For a decision to be fully acceptable, the stakeholders need to participate in making it which eventually becomes a people's decision. Friend and Hickling (2010) in support of empowerment theory, recommend that decision makers should try to acquire information while deciding what to do and by what means as an approach to reduce uncertainty. Decision making processes conducted in small incremental steps provide better confidence on the merits of each small decision taken for the successful implementation of a project. The empowerment theory therefore emphasizes on the need for stakeholders to collaborate in decision making during implementation of constructions projects supported by CDF in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Engaging other entities in decision making processes of organizations is said to create better social responsibility, improve achievement of organization's goals and enhance relations with the stakeholders (Freeman, 2010). The importance of stakeholders' engagement includes: enhancing achievement of accountability, efficiency in decision making processes and good governance. (Ackerman, 2004; Flak and Rose, 2005; Yetano, Royo and Acerete, 2010).

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The growing popularity of stakeholder analysis reflects an increasing recognition of how stakeholders influence decision making processes (Brugha and Varvasovszky, 2000). Stakeholders are increasingly urged to build consensus before making policy decisions. The process of consensus seeking aims to create an explicit agreement over the substance of regulatory policy among individuals and groups who will be affected by the policy thus stakeholders (Burton et al, 2005). Williams (2009) postulates that collaborative agreements often come together after sessions of negotiations. Successful implementation of projects requires collaborative consensus all through the project's life. All this depends on the commitment of each stakeholder. Collaborative implementation through public –private networks sustain the delivery of many social services, providing emergency responses and creating joint management for large projects' success. The process of reaching consensus agreements depends on defining joint gains for the participants through interest- based negotiations. This has a central process tenet that all interests as presented around the table need to achieve at least some of their priority goals during implementation. Implementation of agreements should continue to meet the shared interests of the collaborating shareholders, having a strong incentive to sustain their commitments to action.

Consensus building is also called collaborative problem solving, it is the mediation of disagreements which involves many parties who in this case are the stakeholders involved in decision making in CDF construction projects in public secondary schools. The mediation of consensus agreements moves through a series of steps which include: participants' identification and recruitment design as a process to be used by involving the stakeholders, problem definition and analysis, identification and evaluation of alternative solutions, decision making and finally implementation. Therefore, consensus building means majority of those involved must agree with the final decision. Negotiators must explain to the stakeholders everything for better understanding and enable conscious participation (Williams, 2012).

Participants create packages of recommended actions through collaborative tinkering. Participants bring to dialogue the experiences, ideas, methods and scenarios that they can jointly piece together to create a strategy on which all can agree. Such help develop new shared meanings, purposes and innovative approaches to otherwise intractable issues. This is based on the theory and practice of interest-based negotiation and mediation. It is grounded on Habermas (2007) concept of communicative rationality and the causal theory. Consensuses building best practices contribute significantly to success and consensus-based decision making that is encouraged. Key project stakeholders in CDF projects include: project managers, contractors, Project management committees (PMCs), Constituency Development Fund Committees (CDFC), CDF Boards among others. The constituents play a critical role in decision making as they are the beneficiaries of the projects. This study will focus particularly on principals of public secondary schools, chairpersons of CDFCs and chairpersons of PMCs. Carley, (2006) argues that the structure of local public private partnerships encourages stakeholder participation as a primary success factor for project implementation. This type of participation reduces partnership fatigue by integrating overlapping policy agendas for modernization and social inclusion. The partners require joint vision objectives, performance measures, resource needs and identification, regular monitoring of objectives and measures and streamlined process improvement. Collaboration occurs when groups and organizations come together to do something

useful. It occurs when an objective is met with joint effort. Conditions for good collaboration include: inclusion of stakeholders, mutual trust, honesty and reliability, shared vision and mutual inter-dependence. It also includes open communication, appropriate distribution of power, appropriate governance structure and support systems.

By seeking consensus, regulators who are also stakeholders, are supposed to be able to reduce conflicts, increase compliance, improve public policy and promote public participation and therefore a form of negotiation. For controversial and complex issues, stakeholders are encouraged to enter into good negotiations that satisfy the interests of all parties. Plan out each consultation process by consulting

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inclusively, documenting the process and communicating follow up. Burton, Malone and Huq (2005), argue that stakeholder engagement approaches vary from quite passive interactions where the stakeholders give information to self-mobilization where the stakeholders themselves instigate and design the process. They emphasize on the importance of stakeholders understanding how they are being involved, how the information they provide will be used and whether they have power to influence decisions. Editors (1998), attributes information systems development (ISD), project failure to dissatisfaction of stakeholders with either the way the project is undertaken thus the implementation or ultimate product. Participation of stakeholders is therefore crucial as they give valuable inputs to the successful implementation of a project.

This practice of consensus seeking is supported by stakeholders' theory by Freeman (1994), which emphasizes negotiations as the chief mode of dialogue to enable deal with different views between stakeholders' interests. The theory encourages inclusion of stakeholders in project implementation processes as important in delivering satisfactory outcomes. Normative rationale of participation advocates for promotion of fundamental human rights and values such as democracy, procedural justice, citizenship and equity. It is further supported by empowerment theory which postulates that participation in decision making enhances individual's sense of empowerment and thus involvement. That an empowering intervention builds capacity of individuals to positively influence their well-being and outcome which in this case is the implementation of CDF construction projects to completion in public secondary schools in Kakamega County.

In agreement with this, Bourne (2005) suggests that the process of dialogue and negotiation among stakeholders should be used in a participatory manner as it facilitates reconciliation of different stakeholders' viewpoints. However, difficulties may occur when resolving competing and conflicting stakeholder perceptions especially when certain stakeholders are seen to be powerless as compared to others.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted mixed design which involved both qualitative and quantitative approach because it enabled collect evidence that answered the key empirical question of how one was involved in decision making mechanisms. Qualitative and quantitative aspects of stakeholders' participation in decision making was investigated and thus necessitating the need for pragmatism.

### Sampling Design

This study employed a mixed design to be able to deal with both qualitative and quantitative data analysis as per the objectives. Qualitative analysis involved description of certain qualities in the study while quantitative analysis will deal with statistical data analysis. Correlational analysis was used specifically for quantitative data analysis (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Mixed design is where the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study or a program of inquiry to understand a research problem (Creswell, 2012). He further indicates that correlational research design measures two or more factors to determine or estimate the extent to which the values for the factors are related or not related or even change

in patterns.

### Sampling Procedure

The target population was stratified into various groups which included principals, chairpersons of CDFCs, chairpersons of PMCs, chairpersons of PTA and chairpersons of BOM. Then proportionate sampling was done to get the sample size.

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**Table 4.1: Distribution of the sample sizes**

| Category | Total Population | Proportionate Sample Size |
|---|---|---|
| Principals | 250 | 70 |
| Chairpersons of CDFCs | 12 | 10 |
| Chairperson of PMC | 230 | 55 |
| Chairpersons of PTA | 230 | 60 |
| Chairpersons BOM | 250 | 70 |
| **Total** | **1012** | **265** |

**Sample Size**

The sample size of this study will be 265, consisting of 70 Principals, 10 Chairpersons of CDFCs, 55 chairpersons of Project Management Committee, 60 chairpersons of the Parents and Teachers Association and lastly 70 Chairpersons of Boards of Management. This is as derived from categorization of 1012 respondents targeted by the study using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for sample size determination.

The qualitative approach was used, and data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Measures of central tendency such as the mean was used.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

**Tests for Normality**

Regression analysis assumes that data was collected from normal population (Moriya, 2008). Violation of this assumption would therefore invalidate regression analysis. In this study, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test statistic (KS-test) and Shapiro-Wilk test (SW-test) were carried out to ascertain whether the research data was collected from a normal population. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test statistic (KS-test) determines if two datasets differ significantly without making any assumption about the distribution of data. In addition to calculating the D statistic, KS-test indicates whether the data is normal or lognormal. The test helps researchers to view the data graphically to understand how the data is distributed. The KS-test quantifies a distance between the empirical distribution function of the sample and the cumulative distribution function of the reference distribution, or between the empirical distribution functions of two samples (Corder and Foreman, 2009).

**Table 1 Tests for Normality**

| Tests of Normality | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
| | Statistic | Df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Stakeholder participation in decision making | .130 | 265 | .030 | .953 | 265 | .070 |

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The significant level of stakeholder participation in decision making and regulation of construction projects is all not statistically significant. The values are larger than 0.05. This meant that the variables were not statistically significantly different from a normal distribution. This therefore meant failure to reject null hypothesis of normal distribution hence the conclusion that there was a normal distribution in the variables of interest. Linear assumptions of singularity and multicollinearity were also checked before undertaking regression analysis through correlations and residual tables generated by SPSS. During data analysis, singularity occurs when an independent variable is formed from a combination of other independent variables. On the other hand, multicollinearity is checked by analyzing the tolerance values under collinearity to ensure that the assumption is not violated (Asteriou and Hall, 2011). In particular, 1 – R 2 values should be more than 0.1 which implies low multicollinearity (Shirley et al., 2005). If two variables were perfectly collinear, singularity was said to exist and an exact linear relationship exists between the two predictor variables with a correlation coefficient equal to 1.0 or -1.0. For this study the Pearson Correlation with a 2-tailed significance was 1,0 with a population of 26.

**Descriptive Analysis on Influence of Decision Making on Performance of Construction Projects Funded by CDF**

Research objective of the study was to examine the influence of stakeholders' participation on performance of construction projects funded by CDF in public secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The hypothesis under this objective was that there is a significant relationship between stakeholders' participation in decision making mechanisms and performance of construction projects funded by NG-CDF.

Ten items were developed to measure the extent of this relationship. Item 1 sought to establish the extent to which respondents fully participated in decision making. The results had a mean of 2.5208 and standard deviation of 1.40364. The results indicate that majority of the respondents did not agree that they fully participated in decision making. It means that the stakeholders did not fully participate in decision making. The same results had data values or scores with large variance from the mean as shown by a large standard deviation of 1.40364 which means that data is highly spread out from the mean.

Item 2 sought to establish whether negotiations for decision making were usually free and fair. These results had a mean of 2.3547 and standard deviation of 1.23806. The analysis showed that respondents did not agree that negotiations for decision making were free and fair. This means that negotiations for decision making were neither free nor fair. The same results had data values or scores with a big variance from the mean as shown by a large standard deviation of 1.23806 which means that data was highly spread out from the mean.

Item 3 sought to establish if consensus helped make decisions that were acceptable by respondent. The item was phrased in the affirmative format. From the analysis, the item had a mean score of 3.6868 and a standard deviation of 1.17584. This results indicate that majority of the respondents agreed that consensus helped make decisions that were acceptable. Item 4 sought to establish if the respondents were satisfied with the decision making mechanisms used. The item was phrased in the affirmative format. The mean score was 2.2000 while the standard deviation was 1.28275. This results indicated majority of the respondents did not agree with the decision making mechanisms used. That means that majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the decision making mechanisms used.

Item 5 sought to establish whether the respondent's opinion was usually considered in decision making. The analysis revealed a mean of 3.4264 and a standard deviation of 1.28925. The results indicate that majority of the respondents agreed that their opinions were usually considered during decision making. Item 6 sought to establish if decision making was usually timely. The item was phrased in the affirmative format. The analysis revealed a mean of 2.2868 and a standard deviation of 1.53026. The results indicated that majority

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of the respondents did not agree that decision making was usually timely. This means that decision making was usually delayed.

Item 7 sought to establish if there were forums for decision making. The analysis revealed a mean score of 3.4566 and the standard deviation of 1.19935. This results indicate that majority of the respondents agreed that there were forums for decision making.

Item 8 sought to establish if the respondent had skills for innovative decision making. The analysis revealed a mean score of 2.3358 and a standard deviation of 1.50392. This results indicate that the respondents did not agree that they had skills for innovative decision making. This means that respondents lacked the skills for innovative decision making.

Item 9 sought to establish if the respondents understood adaptive decision making. The results had a mean score of 2.4151 and a standard deviation of 1.21596. The results indicated that the majority of the respondents did not agree that they understood adaptive decision making. This means that respondents did not understand what adaptive decision making meant.

Item 10 sought to establish if decision making was done within the budget. The analysis had a mean score of 1.8377 and a standard deviation of 1.00004. The results indicate that majority of the respondents did not agree that decision making was done within the budget.

Cronbach Alpha for the above items was 0.3978. The internal consistency of the items in the variable had a low reliability coefficient as measured by Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient is an indicator that there were some factual statements included in the items measuring the relationship under investigation whose responses were independent of the opinion of respondents. There were factual statements which did not need opinions of respondents. The composite mean score for these items was 2.65207 while the standard deviation was 1.283907. The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for Stakeholders participation in Decision Making and Performance of Construction Projects.**

| NO | Statement | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I fully participate in decision making. | 261 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.5208 | 1.40364 |
| 2 | Negotiation for decision making is free and fair. | 260 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3547 | 1.23806 |
| 3 | Consensus helps make acceptable decisions. | 257 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.6868 | 1.17584 |
| 4 | I am satisfied with decision making mechanisms. | 256 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2000 | 1.28275 |
| 5 | My opinion is considered in decision making. | 257 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.4264 | 1.28925 |
| 6 | Decision making is usually timely. | 258 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2868 | 1.53026 |
| 7 | There are forums for decision making. | 258 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.4566 | 1.19935 |

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XI Issue III March 2024

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | I have skills for innovative decision making. | 256 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3358 | 1.50392 |
| 9 | I understand adaptive decision making. | 260 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.4151 | 1.21596 |
| 10 | Decision making is done within the budget. | 260 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 1.8377 | 1.00004 |

Valid (listwise)

Alpha coefficient = 0.3978

Composite Mean Score = 2.65207

Composite Standard Deviation =1.283907

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study sought to establish the extent to which stakeholders' participation in decision making influences performance of construction projects. The analysis yielded alpha coefficient of 0.3978, composite mean score of 2.65207 and a composite standard deviation of1.283907. The findings suggest that the stakeholders did not participate in decision making. The findings are in disagreement with Zimmerman et al (1992) who argues that participation in decision making by stakeholders may enhance individual sense of empowerment and ownership of a given project. Acquisition of knowledge and skills; self-efficacy and participation in decision making are said to be indicators of empowered stakeholders (Papineau and Kiely,1996)

Decision making for a construction project should take into account the varied opinions of stakeholders for the successful implementation of a project to take place. As suggested by open systems theory, involving stakeholders in decision making enable achieve desired project results thus a likeable project is delivered. With stakeholders' participation in decision making, marginalization is prevented, and conflicts are potentially reduced. If stakeholders participate in decision making in whichever way, the project is owned by all the participants and therefore guarded and sustained. Right information acquisition guides appropriate informed decision making. Samah and Aref (2011) suggest that stakeholders who participate in a project in whichever way are able to learn and gain knowledge which becomes a form of empowerment.

Collaboration in decision making by the stakeholders is vital for the success of a project. Reaching consensus brings about positive social and environmental change with stakeholders on board. Such participation has a positive effect on democracy as it increases public engagement, encouraging people to listen to a diversity of opinions and contribute to a higher degree of legitimacy of decisions. Participation plays an important role in producing decisions that are acceptable to all stakeholders involved. Abbot and Forward (2000) emphasizes that participation in decision making affirms dignity and self-respect as well as creating cohesion among stakeholders.

Stakeholders have interest in the actions of a project and have the ability to influence its successful implementation or failure. Authentic stakeholders' participation enhances the success and sustainability of a community project which can be achieved through a people centered approach to development. Effective stakeholders' participation leads to social and personal empowerment and transformation.

## CONCLUSION

The study concluded that though stakeholders' participation in decision making is important, care must be

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XI Issue III March 2024

taken otherwise this can slow down or totally impede project implementation. The stakeholders must be considered with caution, otherwise as Boon et al (2013) further points out, bringing many stakeholders on board with their varied interests and decisions may lead to inter-personal conflicts that may slow down or impede project implementation. The big issue is not really about who participates in decision making but how appropriate the decision is for the success of the construction project. Therefore, decision making should majorly be based on analyzed information and an understanding of the information.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

More studies can be done on whose decision matters most.

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ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XI Issue III March 2024


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