

**EFFECT OF PROJECT MANAGER'S SOFT SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OF
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROJECTS IN
MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration

This study is the result of my own efforts and has not been submitted for any degree at another university.

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Approval

I certify that this research project was conducted by the student under my guidance.

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DEDICATION

This proposal is a special dedication to my wife Qabale.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Robert Obuba, for his invaluable guidance, academic insights, constructive feedback, and constant encouragement. I extend my sincere thanks to my peers and colleagues for their motivation and inspiration throughout this academic journey. I am also thankful to the community at Mount Kenya University for providing me with the opportunity to earn this degree.

May divine blessings be upon you all.



ABSTRACT

Project managers assume a crucial role in shaping the design, development, and execution of projects. To excel in this capacity, project managers need to equip themselves with a comprehensive skill set, allowing them to effectively manage various stakeholders and guarantee project triumph. Thus, there is a growing emphasis on the acquisition of specialized abilities by project managers. The present study sought to explore the influence of soft skills possessed by project managers on the performance of projects within Marsabit County, Kenya, particularly within the context of NGOs. The present study is driven by the following objectives: to ascertain how project leadership, project communication, stakeholders' management and problem-solving skills impact the performance of projects in NGOs situated in Marsabit County, Kenya. To accomplish these objectives, five prominent theories provide the theoretical framework for the study: Contingency theory, Communication Accommodation theory, Bruce Tuckman theory, Modern theory, and Theory of Constraints. The research design encompasses both descriptive and explanatory elements, with stratified sampling serving as the methodology for selecting the projects under scrutiny. In this endeavor, a sample size comprising 160 respondents has been chosen, with four participants included in a pilot study to fine-tune the research instruments. Structured questionnaires were disseminated to respondents to facilitate data collection, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed to analyze the gathered data. The analysis involved employing statistical measures such as standard deviation, frequencies, mean, and percentages to elucidate the interrelationships between various study variables. Further, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were carried out to unveil the intricate associations among these variables. The study revealed that while project leadership exhibited a positive correlation with project performance, this relationship did not reach statistical significance. On the other hand, project communication, stakeholders' management, and problem solving showed a positive correlation and statistical significance with project performance. Consequently, the study concluded that effective project communication, stakeholders' management, and adept problem-solving skills were significant predictors of project performance. The study recommends implementing robust project communication, engaging stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle, and adopting strategic problem-solving techniques and tools to address project challenges effectively.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CAT	Communication Accommodation Theory
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
KES	Kenya shilling
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMOBK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TOC	Theory of Constraints
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMOBK	Project Management Body of Knowledge

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Any organization, whether governmental or non-governmental, must prioritize continuous improvement in project performance to ensure its sustainability. Successful project outcomes hinge on various factors, with cost and schedule being the primary metrics for assessing performance. A project's success is contingent upon its timely completion within the allocated budget, as noted by Ali and Rahmat (2014). According to Burke (2013), project performance encompasses the successful completion of projects within budget and on schedule, delivering the agreed-upon outcomes satisfactory to the client, all without necessitating a change in the organization's corporate culture. Westland (2015) underscores the importance of multiple factors, including cost, time; stakeholder satisfaction, schedule adherence, and business performance, in determining overall project success. According to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), 6th Edition (2017), projects hold significant significance for organizations as they serve as the means through which organizations execute initiatives, allocate resources, and secure funding.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are crucial in promoting development across various sectors in Africa (Gitau, 2015). Research by Tahir (2019) on the impact of project managers' soft skills on project success in Kigali, Rwanda highlighted the necessity of soft skills such as sensitivity, enthusiasm, delegation, decision-making, and judgment for project success. According to Shi and Chen (2016), project managers must possess a comprehensive set of interpersonal abilities, which include leadership, communication, problem-solving, delegation, and team-building skills.

Over the past three decades, there has been substantial growth in the number of projects initiated by NGOs in Kenya and across Africa (Radley, 2018). This growth is particularly evident in urban settings within Kenya (Achieng, 2016). According to the NGO Board's report in 2019, there are presently 539 registered NGOs headquartered and operating in Marsabit County. Even though there has been a notable increase in both the scale and number of projects within the NGO sector, their success in meeting their goals continues to be less than ideal. Instead of adopting a forward-thinking strategy through partnerships with governments and different stakeholders for their initiatives, numerous NGOs are mostly responding to damaging business practices and social problems (Asfaw et al., 2017). Given the unique characteristics of projects within the NGO sector, their management necessitates specialized knowledge (Barna, 2013). In a pulse study conducted by the Project Management Institute (PMI) (2017), it was emphasized that relying solely on hard skills is insufficient in today's dynamic and competitive job market for project managers. The research suggests that to attain strong project performance, project managers must also possess what are commonly referred to as soft skills or people skills. PMI characterizes soft skills as behavioral competencies or interpersonal skills, encompassing successful communication, resolving conflicts, making decisions, constructing teams, negotiating, and solving problems creatively (PMI, 2014). In various countries, including Kenya, non-governmental organization (NGO) projects serve diverse objectives, and their success is vital for both the organizations themselves and the overall economic growth. Given the significant role these projects play, performance remains a critical factor.

1.1.1 Project Performance

Projects are deemed successful when they accomplish their designated objectives and goals, adhering to the prescribed timeframe and budget while maintaining an agreed-upon performance standard and making efficient use of available resources (Landau, 2019). Pitagorsky (2015) elaborates on assessing project performance as a means of monitoring

progress, enabling project managers to detect early warning signs of potential challenges that could impede optimal project execution. He emphasizes that when evaluating the success of an ongoing project, it is essential to closely scrutinize overall performance in comparison to the established schedule and budget estimates. The research further clarifies that although measuring project performance may initially appear straightforward by tracking time, cost, and scope it entails a more nuanced process. Organizations need to initially decide which elements of the project they aim to assess, followed by the identification of crucial performance indicators (KPIs). Watt (2014) emphasizes that a successful project should be finalized within the designated time, within the budgetary constraints, and achieve the intended results. He considers time, budget, and output quality as the measures for evaluating project success. Furthermore, research by Ondari and Gekara (2013) points out a clear link between project postponements and variables like design specifications, management backing, and supervisory capabilities.

Globally, project performance encounters diverse challenges stemming from shifts in economic, political, or societal norms (Sahi, 2019). The emergence of obstacles like the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted setbacks on project performance, even within the most economically advanced nations. Numerous projects experienced delays and exceeded budgetary allocations due to planning and execution difficulties brought about by COVID-19 protocols. These global project challenges are not novel occurrences. Thanks to outsourcing and technological progress, the world has transformed into a closely interconnected community, facilitating project managers' access to insights and best practices from their peers to enhance project performance in their own regions.

In Africa, the nonprofit sector continues to grapple with project failures, perpetuating a cycle of unfulfilled expectations among project beneficiaries. For instance, many humanitarian

initiatives in South Africa are encountering project delays for various reasons. In his research, Buyani (2015) pinpointed several reasons contributing to project delays in South Africa, leading to below-average project outcomes. These include poor interpersonal skills, scarcity of resources, lack of adequate supervision, inadequate risk evaluation, and limited involvement of stakeholders.

The situation in Kenya mirrors this observation. Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018) contend that project managers strive to enhance the likelihood of achieving favorable outcomes by giving particular attention to elements such as time management, budget allocation, and the final product's quality. The study elucidates the necessity for project managers to enhance their technical proficiency, while simultaneously recognizing the often-underestimated importance of soft skills by many organizations. Various metrics have been employed to gauge project performance, including the quality of the end product, project expenses, client satisfaction, and overall business contentment. However, the predominant performance indicators typically considered encompass quality, cost, and timeliness. Consequently, this study concentrated on the three principal project performance metrics: cost, time, and the quality of the final output.

1.1.2 Project Manager's Soft Skills and Project Performance

Organizations frequently invest considerable resources in training programs, primarily focusing on hard or technical skills (Lewis & Boucher, 2013). Nevertheless, evidence suggests that the effectiveness of project managers extends beyond technical proficiency, encompassing essential soft skills. Especially within the NGO sector, project managers are tasked with leading intricate projects, necessitating adeptness in managing both project teams and stakeholders. Lewis and Boucher (2013) underscore the importance of non-technical abilities for project managers to steer their teams successfully towards project completion. According to Muguchu (2013), an effective project manager excels not just in project oversight but also in team

management. Key soft skills identified for project leadership include project leadership itself, project communication, team building, and conflict management (PMI, 2017).

Managing people effectively requires a deep understanding and deployment of interpersonal skills, such as strong leadership, to ensure that team members perform their assigned tasks timely and with the highest quality. Different leadership styles adopted by project managers can significantly affect team motivation. Nziva (2018) explored how various aspects of project leadership, including skills, experience, style, and control, impact the performance of international projects in Kitui County. Her findings indicated that these dimensions of leadership positively contribute to project outcomes.

Open and transparent lines of communication are essential in every workplace. When team members communicate honestly, openly, and clearly, trust is built, and trust is essential for project execution. Mkutano (2018) investigated project communication and how it impacted the performance of project within Nairobi County. In doing this the study looked at the communication connectivity, the availability of communication channels, the feedback loops and how regular information was being exchanged among different project team members. In his study, Laszlo (2013) conducted an evaluation of the impact of project management soft skills within the Telecommunication sector in Hungary. The researcher evaluated communication using the type of channel used, how often communication occurred as well as the interpersonal skills in the project team. According to the study's findings, having the ability to prioritize, monitor progress, and make clear decisions are essential in the IT and telecommunications industries. The survey also found that other talents were less common but yet vital. Communication skills were included in this area.

Team building involves recognizing the diverse skills of team members and leveraging them, along with mastering integration and delegation techniques. In their study conducted in Malaysia, Ping and Cheng (2015) explored how team-building efforts impact team cohesion,

trust, and overall project performance. The researchers evaluated elements such as the cohesion of the team, the frameworks used for team building, the extent of team participation, and the level of trust among team members. They concluded that project managers should prioritize more frequent and effective team-building activities and sessions. Such initiatives can enhance trust within the team and lead to better project performance.

Ensuring the project team collaborates amicably is dependent on the management and resolution of disagreements. It involves addressing team members' differing points of view and figuring out how to quell any unfavorable feelings that could surface from the project team. It seeks to have a team that manages and resolves workplace challenges and a project environment that avoids conflict. Kagwiria (2015) examined impacts of strategies such as negotiation, third party intervention and compromise to investigate ways of dealing with conflict in the telecommunication industries in Kenya. Her research revealed a strong positive correlation between project performance and the negotiating approach, third party intervention strategy, and compromise technique.

The discussion regarding the essential skills for project managers, whether hard skills or soft skills, also known as people competencies, is increasingly recognizing the importance of soft skills in project performance. Both types of skills are pivotal in enhancing a project manager's ability to plan, execute, monitor, and evaluate projects effectively to ensure their success (Barna, 2013). Belzer (2014) highlights a correlation between interpersonal skills and the project life cycle, noting the historical focus on hard or technical skills and the growing emphasis on the significance of soft skills in a project manager's repertoire. Given the evolving expectations from management and various stakeholders, the value of soft skills has never been more critical. The ability to navigate people dynamics and maximize each interaction is crucial for project leaders to develop and sustain a capable and confident team, which is key to the successful completion of projects (Muguchu, 2013).

According to PMI (2015), a project's success is directly impacted by the project manager's skill set. It also implies that companies with highly qualified project managers have a higher chance of achieving favorable project outcomes than do companies with less qualified project managers.

1.1.3 Non- Governmental Organizations Projects

In rural and informal settlements, where poverty is pervasive and unsustainable behaviors are ubiquitous, NGO programs are essential for promoting development (Benjamin, 2013). Rotich and Karanja (2015) emphasize the value of NGO initiatives in promoting socioeconomic development and economic growth, particularly in regions with limited funding for local government initiatives. Through initiatives that are in line with the Big Four Agenda, NGOs in Marsabit County have significantly boosted Kenya's economy with KES 34.9 billion, according to data from the NGO Coordination Board Report (2018/2019). These NGOs specifically donated KES 3.8 billion to programs connected to nutrition and food security, KES 30.8 billion to health-related initiatives, KES 352.6 million to projects related to industry and manufacturing, and KES 19.6 million to projects related to housing and settlement.

The rapid expansion and development of projects within non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can be attributed to the increasing demands and the diminishing resources available from the government. NGO projects are compelled to achieve more with the limited resources at their disposal. The information above makes it clear that these NGO initiatives are essential to the advancement of sustainable development in a number of economic areas. NGOs address issues pertaining to human rights, social justice, the environment, healthcare, education, and food security, among other local and national concerns.

In Marsabit, numerous projects within the NGO sector operate across diverse fields, such as education, human rights, environment, healthcare, and support for refugees. These projects carry out impactful activities that significantly contribute to poverty alleviation and the

reduction of illiteracy, particularly in informal settlements. A preliminary informal assessment of NGO projects in Marsabit County has revealed that some of them encounter various challenges. For instance, Achieng (2016) reports that the Uwezo Foundation Africa, which aims to create social spaces and foster a conducive environment for youth in Marsabit County, faces obstacles in the form of inadequate political support, misappropriation of funds by project managers, and conflicts within the community. The effectiveness of these programs and their overall performance depend on both internal and external factors that influence the environment in which NGO projects operate. Corruption, financial mismanagement, abuse of power, as well as political and economic instability is among the issues currently plaguing NGO projects in Kenya (Gitau, 2015).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The inability of project teams to effectively utilize their expertise during project execution is a common factor contributing to project failures. According to Alshammari (2020), the presence of a proficient project manager and well-trained team members is crucial for the success of projects. A study on construction projects in Saudi Arabia found that only 30% adhered to their schedules (Assaf & Al-Heiii, 2019). Research on project delays in the construction sector in Nigeria by Owolabi et al. (2018) revealed that approximately 70% of projects faced delays. Similarly, Shanmugapriya and Subramanian (2020) found that up to 60% of NGO projects in India are encountering issues related to cost and time overruns.

In Kenya, projects are encountering challenges such as time and cost overruns, delays in completion, and subpar quality outcomes. Gathoni and Ngugi's (2016) investigation into Constituency Development Fund (CDF) projects in Marsabit County revealed that only 20% of these projects were well-built, completed, and functioning. A third of the projects were poorly completed, and half of them were abandoned despite available funds. Marsabit County Government's urban planning publication in 2017 highlighted challenges, including cost

overruns and delays, faced by various construction projects in the county. Interestingly, these issues persist even when the projects are led by highly trained and qualified project professionals. Further, a study on the energy sector in Kenya conducted by Ndile, (2021) exposed instances where projects failed to meet expectations, experiencing delays, exceeding budget allocations, and resulting in poor quality outcomes. In their 2020 study, Ackel, Kidombo, and Gakuu analyzed World Bank-funded projects in Kenya and discovered that project leaders who combine hard and soft skills significantly enhance the likelihood of project success. Specifically, the research indicated that leaders equipped with both types of skills are three times more successful in achieving project objectives. This finding underscores the importance of a balanced skill set in project management, where technical expertise must be complemented by interpersonal and management abilities to optimize project outcomes.

Although many international studies underscore the importance of soft skills for project success, there remains a notable inconsistency in the literature regarding the impact of a project manager's soft skills on the overall performance of a project. While studies conducted by Zavari and Afshar (2023), Ahmad et al., (2022) and Doan, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2020) suggested a direct correlation between a project manager's skills, such as transformational leadership, and project performance, Den and Keegan (2014) found no such connection. Additionally, other research by Sethole (2020), Podgórska and Pichlak (2019) and Ghorbani (2023) determined that the communication skills, teamwork abilities, and leadership style of a project manager are directly associated with the performance of a project. In contrast, Foss (2020) identified a strong association between soft competencies and successful project execution, while Magano et al., (2020) found no significant link between the two. The inconsistencies in these findings may stem from variations in methodology and data analysis among the studies or could be influenced by the diverse contexts in which the research was conducted.

While significant attention has been paid to identifying the causes of time and cost overruns in Kenya, the exploration and clear articulation of the role of project management soft skills have been notably lacking. Most research efforts have not deeply delved into how project managers and teams apply soft skills during the execution of projects, a gap highlighted by Muhammad (2019). Moreover, the impact and practical relevance of soft skills on project performance, especially within the NGO sector, remain largely uninvestigated and without empirical backing. The specific influence of project managers' soft skills on the successful completion of NGO projects is still uncertain, given the mixed results from existing studies and the overall lack of in-depth research. Recognizing this gap, there's a clear necessity for further investigation to enrich our understanding of soft skills' significance in project management. This study was designed to bridge this knowledge gap and enhance comprehension of soft skills' pivotal role in project management efficacy.

1.3 purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of project manager's soft skills on performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya

1.4 Specific Objectives

The following specific objectives guided the study.

- i. To assess how a project manager's leadership skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya
- ii. To determine how a project manager's communication skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya.
- iii. To assess the extent to which project manager's stakeholder management skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya.
- iv. To establish the extent to which project manager's problem-solving skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study research questions were.

- i. What is the effect of project manager's leadership skills on performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya?
- ii. How does project manager's communication skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya?
- iii. To what extent does project manager's stakeholder management skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya?
- iv. To what extent does project manager's problem-solving skills affect performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of project managers' soft skills on project outcomes within NGOs in Marsabit County. The insights derived from this investigation were intended to serve project management professionals by providing recommendations to enhance the incorporation and evaluation of soft skills in the recruitment of project managers and project teams. Additionally, this research holds value for the management and employees of these NGOs, equipping them with knowledge and best practices for leveraging project communication, team building, and conflict resolution to improve the success rates of NGO projects. For scholars and academics, this study lays the groundwork for further research into the significance of project managers' soft skills and their effect on project performance, encouraging a deeper exploration of this critical aspect of project management.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study focused on exploring the effect of soft skills possessed by project managers on the performance of projects within NGOs situated in Marsabit County. The research spanned for a duration of three months and encompassed the evaluation of 80 projects. The study specifically

concentrated on projects with a lifespan of five years or less. This investigation assessed four key soft skills of project managers, namely project leadership, project communication, team building, and conflict management. The research aimed to include both ongoing and completed projects as part of its scope.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The study anticipated that participants might be reluctant to share information about their leaders, fearing potential repercussions from the leadership. To address these challenges, the researcher employed Google Forms, an online survey tool, for administering the questionnaires. Additionally, the researcher provided respondents with a comprehensive explanation regarding the research's objectives and assured them that their information would remain confidential.



1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Conflict management: a method of reducing the detrimental effects of disagreement in project teams. It involves employing tactics such as negotiation, compromise, avoidance and third-party intervention in addressing conflicts in a project environment.

Hard skills: Technical skills refer to abilities acquired through formal education or training programs, including budgeting, scheduling, and project planning.

Non-governmental organizations: not for profit organization or institution that carries out its operations independent of the government.

Project communication: The process of creating, sending and receiving information. It includes interpersonal skills and effective channels necessary for stimulating understanding between individuals in a project set up.

Project leadership: a combination of skills such as planning, organizing and coordination skills employed by a project manager to oversee the performance of a project.

Project performance: The success of a project is determined by its ability to meet its specific objectives within the allocated budget and timeframe, satisfy the client's requirements, and ensure that quality standards are upheld.

Soft skills: Behavioral competencies or interpersonal skills are non-technical skills essential for effective project management. They include project leadership, project communication, team building, and conflict management.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of theoretical frameworks that clarify the relationship between the soft skills of a project manager and project performance, particularly in the context of non-governmental organizations. It critically evaluates prior research on the impact of project managers' soft competencies on project outcomes, offering an in-depth analysis of how these interpersonal abilities influence the success of projects. Through examining existing literature, this section aims to shed light on the significance of soft skills in project management and their role in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of projects in non-governmental organizations.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

Theory of Constraints, Contingency theory, Communication Accommodation theory, Bruce Tuckman theory and Modern theory supported the current research.

2.2.1 Contingency Theory

The Contingency Theory, developed by Fred Fiedler in 1958, suggests that the success of an organization relies on its ability to continuously adapt to environmental changes. This theory proposes that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for leadership within organizations, as various external and internal factors influence leadership methods (Rodriguez, 2013). Fiedler argued that certain leadership qualities are particularly advantageous in times of crisis, requiring project managers to modify their approaches based on evolving project dynamics. He highlighted the significant impact of a project manager's leadership style on team productivity, a concept supported by research indicating a clear link between specific leadership attributes and project outcomes.

According to the theory, it's essential for project managers to understand that each project presents unique challenges and, therefore, might benefit from different management styles. Fiedler (1967) pointed out the importance of project managers being sensitive to the distinct needs of each project, suggesting that various leadership styles might be more effective under different conditions. The essence of Contingency Theory is that the effectiveness of leadership depends on the alignment of the leader's style with the demands of the situation. Fiedler emphasized the importance of fostering positive relationships between project leaders and their teams, as failure to do so could adversely affect project results.

Despite its widespread application, the Contingency Theory has faced criticism for certain ambiguities, making it challenging to empirically validate its principles fully. While the significance of leadership style in influencing project success is acknowledged, research by Gowan and Mathieu (2015) indicates an ongoing debate regarding the direct impact of specific leadership skills on project outcomes. The academic community, including Kissi et al. (2013), Mishra et al. (2011), and Yang et al. (2013), offers varied opinions on how different leadership styles contribute to project success, pointing out the need for further investigation into this area. In the context of this study, the Contingency Theory serves as a foundation for examining how various leadership styles, considered as contingency factors, affect project performance. Wadongo & Abdel-Kader (2015) argue that for project leaders to excel, they must adopt leadership styles that are responsive to the unique challenges of their projects. Leadership effectiveness is highly context-dependent (Chakrabarti, 2014), highlighting the importance of exploring specific leadership styles that enhance project outcomes in the NGO sector. This research aimed to further understand the dynamic nature of leadership within project management, advocating for project managers to be flexible and open to adapting their leadership approaches beyond traditional norms, policies, and procedures.

2.2.2 Communication Accommodation Theory

Introduced by Howard Giles in 1971, the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) offers an extensive framework for analyzing communication, particularly focusing on the dynamics of interpersonal interactions across diverse cultural backgrounds. CAT seeks to understand how and why individuals alter their communicative behavior during social exchanges and the potential social implications of such adjustments (Dragojevic, Gasiorek, & Giles, 2015). The theory primarily delves into the concepts of convergence, where individuals adjust their communicative styles to resemble those of their interlocutors to reduce disparities, and divergence, where individuals emphasize their differences through non-verbal cues to distinguish themselves from others. Kylie (2013) highlights the natural tendency of people to adapt their communication to match that of their counterparts, advocating for a conscious effort to accommodate others through mindful observation of verbal and non-verbal cues.

Critique of CAT has been voiced by scholars such as Soliz and Giles (2014), Smith (2022), and Gallois, Ogay, and Giles (2005), who argue that communication transcends simple categorization into convergence and divergence. They point out that individuals often blend these strategies within a single interaction, complicating the clear identification of communicative behaviors. Additionally, these critics highlight a gap in CAT's consideration of the complex, sometimes irrational or emotionally charged nature of human communication, particularly in conflict scenarios, suggesting that CAT may not fully capture the breadth of communicative dynamics.

In applying CAT to this study, it becomes clear that project managers' ability to adeptly modify their communication strategies, including non-verbal signals like body language and tone, is crucial for effective interaction with project teams and stakeholders (Hoang, 2013). Such adaptive communication demonstrates a project manager's commitment to mutual understanding, thereby enhancing collaboration and strengthening team cohesion. This theory

provides a valuable lens through which to examine a project manager's communicative proficiency as a soft skill, analyzing interactions with team members and stakeholders. It is imperative for project managers to balance their accommodation efforts to avoid overcompensation, which might lead to diminished project outcomes. CAT emphasizes the significance of versatile communication tactics in navigating the diverse expectations of stakeholders, underlining its importance in improving project communication and, by extension, project success.

2.2.3 Bruce Tuckman Theory

Dr. Bruce Tuckman's influential model, introduced in 1965, serves as a cornerstone for understanding the dynamics of team development. This theory outlines the stages teams typically undergo, including forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning, offering insights into the evolution of team cohesion and functionality (Tuckman, 2001). During the forming stage, team members cautiously interact, prioritizing a positive first impression and often avoiding conflict, which can lead to minimal project advancement as individuals focus on establishing working relationships.

The storming stage is marked by the emergence of disagreements and challenges as team members present and defend their ideas, testing the group's emotional resilience and adaptability. Following this, the norming stage sees the team settling into their roles and starting substantive project work. In the performing stage, the team's synergy and efficiency peak, leading to high productivity and minimal conflict. Tuckman later added the adjourning stage in 1977, where teams disband or transition members to new roles, reflecting on the completion and outcomes of their work.

Critiques of Tuckman's theory, such as those by Norton (2017), argue that its basis on a narrow scope of team experiences might not fully represent the complexity of team dynamics universally. Research by the US military supports this critique, indicating that not all teams

follow Tuckman's sequential stages, with some skipping or rearranging phases. This critique suggests the need for a more nuanced understanding of team development, possibly viewing it as a fluid process rather than a series of linear stages.

In the context of this research, Tuckman's model is invaluable for dissecting the process by which project teams in NGOs transition from formation to project completion. It underscores the importance of recognizing the developmental phases teams undergo, enriching the understanding of team building as a critical factor in project management. This theory provides a framework for project managers to navigate the complexities of team dynamics, facilitating the formation of cohesive and effective teams that are crucial for achieving project success. By examining the stages of team development, this study aimed to offer project managers insights into fostering a collaborative environment that enhances project performance, recognizing the progression from a newly formed group to a highly functional team.

2.2.4 Modern Theory

According to Kirchoff and Adams's Modern Theory, which was published in 1982, conflict is an intrinsic component of the life of an organization. It emanates from the fact that changes are unavoidable and that different people have different points of view. According to this view, conflict, when properly handled, has the potential to serve as a source of development and creativity at the organizational level as well as for the workers of the business. According to Kirchoff and Adams (1982), project leaders play a significant part in the management of team disputes, which helps to create an environment that is both dynamic and productive in the workplace. It is necessary to have an awareness of the underlying problems, interests, and motives that are responsible for the dynamics of the team. According to their hypothesis, the occurrence of conflict is an inevitable consequence in a setting that places a premium on ongoing education and innovation. In the event that they are managed correctly, these disputes

have the potential to serve as catalysts for beneficial organizational transformation, so driving teams toward healthy development.

Providing evidence in support of this position, Gupta (2015) said that it is essential for project managers to actively participate in conflict resolution procedures in order to maintain high levels of productivity and ensure the success of projects. On the other hand, this theory has been criticized for the fact that it places a greater focus on change and conflict than it does on the preservation of social cohesiveness. A viewpoint like this has been criticized for the possibility that it undervalues the importance of unity and collective harmony, so depicting social systems as being primarily conflictual and stressful.

Because it emphasizes the potential for disputes to serve as catalysts for positive change within project teams, this theory is very important for the investigation that is now being conducted. Considering the many different points of view, objectives, and rivalry for resources that exist within teams, it is quite probable that disagreements may emerge. It is the duty of the project manager to use these disagreements in a constructive manner in order to accomplish the goals of the project. It is essential for a project manager to possess important competences such as the ability to effectively anticipate conflicts, comprehend the origins of such conflicts, and implement strategic management techniques. In order to do this, it is necessary to not only resolve disputes as they occur, but also to cultivate an atmosphere of open communication and mutual respect among the members of the team. This, in turn, will ensure that conflict is transformed into a tool for creativity rather than a hindrance to success.

2.2.5 Theory of Constraints

The Theory of Constraints (TOC), a pivotal concept introduced by Dr. Eliyahu Goldratt in 1984 and later applied to project management in 1997, serves as a comprehensive framework designed to enhance organizational efficiency and project success. This innovative approach focuses on identifying and addressing the most significant limitations or 'constraints' that

impede a project's progress towards its goals. Originating in the domain of manufacturing and production control, TOC has since been recognized for its applicability and effectiveness across various sectors, including project management, where it facilitates the identification and elimination of bottlenecks that can derail project timelines and outcomes (Blackstone, 2019).

TOC operates on a systematic five-step methodology aimed at continually improving project performance. The first step involves pinpointing the primary constraints that hinder a project's flow. Following this identification, the second step seeks to develop strategies to exploit these constraints to the project's advantage, ensuring that efforts are maximally aligned towards mitigating their impact. The third step involves subordinating all other processes and resources to the decision made in step two, ensuring that the entire project's focus is on addressing the identified constraints. Elevating the constraint, or permanently increasing its capacity, constitutes the fourth step. If, after these steps, the constraint still exists or a new one emerges, the cycle begins anew, ensuring ongoing improvement and adaptation (Blackstone, 2019).

Critics of TOC, such as Trietsch (2005), have voiced concerns regarding its potential limitations. One criticism is that the theory's laser focus on identified bottlenecks may inadvertently neglect other areas of the project that, while not currently constraints, could become critical issues as the project evolves. This perspective argues that an exclusive emphasis on current constraints might lead to a reactive rather than a proactive project management approach, potentially overlooking emerging challenges that could impact project performance. Despite these criticisms, TOC has garnered support for its straightforward and logical approach to enhancing project efficiency and effectiveness. By providing a clear methodology for identifying and addressing project constraints, TOC helps project managers prioritize resources and efforts, leading to more streamlined and focused project execution. The theory's adaptability and applicability across various project types and industries underscore its value as a tool for achieving project objectives more reliably and efficiently.

Moreover, TOC's emphasis on continuous improvement aligns with the agile and dynamic nature of project management, where adaptability and responsiveness to changing conditions are crucial for success. This alignment suggests that, while TOC has its detractors, its core principles offer valuable insights into managing and overcoming the challenges inherent in complex projects. As projects continue to evolve in complexity and scope, the principles of TOC remain relevant, providing a structured approach to identifying and overcoming the obstacles that stand in the way of project success.

In conclusion, the Theory of Constraints represents a significant contribution to the field of project management, offering a systematic approach to identifying, understanding, and overcoming the barriers to project success. While it is not without its criticisms, the fundamental principles of TOC offer a valuable framework for enhancing project performance. By focusing on the critical constraints that limit project efficiency and devising strategies to address these issues, project managers can improve project outcomes, demonstrating the enduring relevance and applicability of TOC in the pursuit of organizational goals and objectives.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

This section provides a critical review of the literature on the four objectives of the study: project leadership, project communication, team building and conflict management. It also aims to identify the research gaps in relation to the objectives.

2.3.1 Leadership and Performance of Projects

Multiple studies have highlighted the significance of project leadership as a critical factor in determining the overall effectiveness of a project. Several studies, including Kariuki (2015) and Kiihoh (2015), have shed light on the significance of leadership in the effective execution and implementation of projects. These studies have also highlighted the importance of leadership. Kariuki (2015) looked at the characteristics of projects, the efficiency of teamwork, and the

project managers' leadership style, and how these aspects affected the development of water projects in Kenya. Project managers provided main data, while project files provided secondary data, for this cross-sectional descriptive analysis. Project managers provided the primary data. The study results indicate that two key aspects that significantly impact a project's effectiveness are the leadership style shown by the project lead and the integration of team management. However, since the data was obtained from project managers a significant amount of time after the projects had been finished, some of the respondents were unable to recollect all of the specifics. Additionally, qualitative measures were not taken into consideration in this research; this may have led to different findings; the only factors that were taken into consideration were time and money. The study that was carried out by Kissi and colleagues (2015) investigated the impact that the transformational leadership style of a project manager had on the overall performance of a project that was carried out in Rwanda. According to the conclusions of the investigation, these outcomes were in agreement with themselves. For the purpose of data collection, the researcher decided to make use of questionnaires, and the sample size consisted of three hundred and fifty project managers. According to the findings, there was a connection between the transformational leadership competency of project managers and the level of performance achieved by the projects they managed. Among the data that was used in this study, which was acquired from project managers, the only thing that was left out was the input of the members of the project team. As a result of this, there was a risk that the findings of the study would not be accurate since they were derived from a common source of data.

According to the findings of a research that was carried out by Kiih (2015), there is a correlation between effective leadership in project management and the achievement of fintech efforts in Kenya. The study was carried out utilising a descriptive technique, and both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used in the process. Consultations were carried out with a target audience of one hundred workers, which comprised senior managers, project

managers, members of project teams, and consultants. These consultations were carried out via the use of a questionnaire. The goal of the study was to ascertain whether or not there is a significant link between the leadership aspects of project management and the accomplishment of information technology projects from a practical standpoint.

A project manager is expected to have strong leadership abilities, as stated by Kiihoh (2015). This is because the project manager is responsible for leading a varied group of team members while exercising only a limited amount of direct authority. Kiihoh (2015) makes the observation that the manner in which various stakeholders are led is directly related to the performance of the project. It is well acknowledged that effective project leadership is absolutely necessary for the successful completion of initiatives. Four components of project leadership are defined based on the results of an investigation by Nziva (2018) on how it affects the way projects administered by Compassion International in Kitui County are carried out. A descriptive design and a sample size of 115 were used in this investigation. There were 180 responders in the population. Nziva's research indicates that leadership characteristics have a positive effect on the project's performance. Nziva (2018) asserts that a project's size often determines the role that leadership plays; the smaller the project, the less significance the leadership style has, and vice versa. Consequently, having strong leadership qualities is more crucial for a project manager than having managerial expertise. However, since this research was based on a single non-governmental organization (NGO), the results cannot be generalized to a wider population. In another study conducted by Ahmed (2018), the researcher used secondary data, which consisted of reviewing a variety of published publications and journals. The study focused on leadership abilities that have an impact on projects in firms located in the United Kingdom. The findings indicate that there is a relationship between transformative leadership and team members' satisfaction levels with the project in question. The main data would have more utility and would more closely represent first-hand experience, however this researcher only used

secondary data sources. One of the reasons it is challenging to generalize the findings is because the environment in which this research was done differs greatly from the one in which the current study is being conducted.

Despite the fact that the findings of all of these studies were similar, there are problems associated with researchers examining a single firm and project managers evaluating their own leadership styles, which makes it impossible to take into account the perspectives of the project team. The findings do not provide a comprehensive perspective on the connection between high project success and effective leadership. In addition, there are context-specific variances in addition to methodological discrepancies, both of which produce gaps that required the present research to be carried out.

2.3.2 Communication and Performance of Projects

According to Olawale and Illu (2014), communication is not the transfer of information but rather the act of building and increasing understanding between two persons or groups as the foundation for progress. Furthermore, they suggest that people should be driven to cooperate and participate rather than adopting new ways and practices based on the knowledge that is accessible to them. During the year 2013, Affare carried out study on several building projects in Kenya. He focused his attention primarily on the impact that communication had on the overall performance of these initiatives. There were 97 people who participated in the survey, and they included a variety of consultants, project clients, and contactors. The identification of facts and casual connections was accomplished by the use of statistical methods. According to the findings of the research, communication plays a significant role in the construction business in Kenya, which is essential to the successful completion of projects. In addition, the findings demonstrated that poor communication was the causative factor behind cost overruns, delays in project completion, and the abandonment of projects. However, the data for this research was primarily acquired from larger companies within the construction sector, and the sample

size was much lower than the overall sample size. If the sample sizes were greater and the companies included both large and small businesses, the findings may be different.

Sackey (2014) carried out study to investigate the ways in which the complexity of projects and the effectiveness of communication affected the way in which projects related to development in Ghana were carried out. The results, which were obtained via the use of a qualitative study approach, demonstrate that overall communication within projects has a favorable influence on the performance of the project. Among the units of analysis that were used, only one was the Abt Associates. Due to the fact that the findings were derived from a single case study, it is not possible to generalize them and apply them to other scenarios. In their 2014 study, Naqvi and Aziz explored the ways in which communication influences the performance of information technology initiatives in Pakistan. A sample of seventy information technology initiatives was analyzed. The project managers were the ones that provided the information on the quality of communication between the stakeholders. Linear regression and the Pearson correlation coefficient were used in the analysis of the data respectively. The study's findings indicated that effective communication is crucial to a project's success. It was hard to rule out the potential of bias resulting from a single source of data since the questionnaires used to collect the data were only delivered to seventy project managers; this might have contributed to the managers' high self-rated performance.

In research that was conducted by Afroze and Khan (2017), the authors evaluated the relationship between the complexity of projects, as well as communication skills and practices, and the performance of foreign development projects in Vietnam. In order to determine the extent of the effect that communication techniques have, a survey was conducted. It was decided to send questionnaires to sixty different organizations. The results of their investigation demonstrated that communication techniques and abilities had a good influence on projects. Considering that this is a developed nation, the setting in which the present research will be

carried out is distinct from the context in which it will be carried out already. An investigation of the impact that communication abilities have on the field of telecommunications in Hungary was conducted by Laszlo (2018). A sample of 95 personnel, mostly project managers and members of the project team, was collected via the use of questionnaires. For the purpose of data analysis, descriptive statistics were used. According to the findings of the research, there is a correlation between effective communication abilities and the successful completion of projects. On the other hand, the research was carried out in Hungary, which presents a contextual difference in comparison to the next research that would be carried out in Marsabit County, Kenya.

2.3.3 Team Building and Performance of Projects

Skills that are necessary for forming a team include, but are not limited to, recognizing the capabilities of team members, motivating them, comprehending the dynamics of the team, fostering teamwork, and having the capacity to delegate tasks (PMI, 2014). Research conducted by Ammeter and Dukerich (2014) investigated the impact that leadership and team traits, as well as the qualities of collaboration and team building, had on the overall success of projects in the United States of America. To assist in the gathering of data, questionnaires and interviews were sent to a total of 150 members of the team. The performance of these projects was evaluated by computing the timetable, the cost, and the overall performance of the project. According to the data, there was a significant relationship between leadership and the performance of the project. There was no correlation discovered between the features of the team, the process of establishing the team, and the performance of the project. There was no research done on the effect of project features on the relationship between team building and performance of projects, which was a drawback of this study. This was despite the fact that the study included a variety of various kinds of projects.

Ping and Cheng (2015) conducted research in which they investigated the ways in which team building and involvement influence the levels of trust, cohesiveness, and project performance in Malaysia. For the purpose of this study, a cross-sectional online survey was administered to 420 project managers who were members of the PMI Malaysia Chapter database. A greater number of team activities should be carried out by project leaders in order to boost both trust and the results of the project. Additionally, excellent work relations should be promoted in order to enhance the cohesiveness of the team. However, the exclusive use of quantitative methods provided limited insights, and the inclusion of qualitative interviews could have enabled deeper understanding of mechanisms behind team dynamics and performance. Additionally, only project manager perspectives were captured, which may have introduced bias and hampers generalizability.

Similarly, Mungeria (2016) adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey approach to assess the influence of professional team building on construction project performance in Kenya. Questionnaires were administered to 80 project managers from public works consultancy firms. Results highlighted team building and collaboration as pivotal for organizational project success. Yet again though, data was only gathered from project managers, likely inducing bias and restricted perspectives. Both studies underscored the importance of team development initiatives, trust, and cohesion on project outputs, albeit from a narrow managerial vantage point. Mixed methodologies and widening the sample to include broader project roles could reduce biases and provide fuller examination of these complex interrelationships

Research conducted by Sanyal and Hisam (2018) investigated the effects of teamwork on the performance of employees and relevant factors within Dhofar University in Oman's workplace environment. This study surveyed 100 individuals from Dhofar University, focusing on variables pertinent to team development and cooperative work efforts, such as leadership dynamics, trust levels, methods of performance assessment, and systems for employee

incentives. Results demonstrated a positive correlation between employee productivity at Dhofar University and the independent variables measured. Key drivers identified were strong leadership and fostering trust among team members. However, the research did not specifically analyze how team building affects project outcomes. Overall, while highlighting important linkages between human resource-related dimensions and employee performance, direct investigation into the influence on project success was lacking. Further examination of team dynamics isolated to project settings could provide additional perspective. Multi-institutional assessments could also offer more generalizable insights across the higher education sector.

In Waweru's (2018) research exploring the influence of team building and a teamwork-oriented approach on road construction project outcomes in Kericho County, Kenya, the methodology involved distributing questionnaires and conducting structured interviews with 60 employees as participants. Data analysis was performed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistical methods. The findings indicated a positive correlation between project performance and factors such as team trust, team spirit, cohesion among team members, and recognition of efforts. However, a noted limitation of this research was its primary emphasis on teamwork, with only a limited exploration of various facets of team building.

2.3.4 Conflict Management and Performance of Projects

Wherever human interactions occur, some level of conflict tends to arise. Workplace conflicts involve differences in perspectives, communication approaches, or methods of task execution (Mitchell, Shen & Snell, 2022). Effective conflict resolution is considered a fundamental leadership skill (Fugate et al., 2021). Conflict management entails implementing systems to mitigate dysfunctional contention among team members and promote group cohesion (Rahim, 2020). A study by Agwu (2015) examined how conflict management impacts employee performance at the Nigerian construction firm Julius Berger PLC. Using a descriptive research design, data was gathered from a sample of 50 respondents comprising 25 line managers and

25 junior staff. Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between utilizing negotiation-based conflict management and employee productivity. However, since the research concentrated solely on one company, generalizability across contexts may be limited. Overall, this initial investigation suggested productive conflict strategies can potentially enhance workplace outputs and team dynamics. Additional research replicated across multiple organizational settings is warranted to substantiate these relationships for broader applicability. Examining a wider range of conflict resolution approaches and performance indicators could provide further valuable insights as well.

Mwangi and Ragui (2015) conducted a study employing a descriptive research methodology to examine the effects of workplace conflicts on the performance of employees within Kenya's transportation sector. The researchers gathered data through questionnaires distributed to managers. The results of the study showed that 47% of project managers concurred that ineffective conflict management had a detrimental impact on employee performance, whereas 25% believed it did not have a negative effect. The remainder was uncertain. A key limitation was the inclusion of only manager perspectives, excluding other employees. This could have led to inflated self-appraisals, and results may have differed with a diverse respondent sample. Additionally, the research examined links between conflict management and employee performance specifically, rather than project performance. There appears to be an underlying assumption that robust employee performance directly translates to strong project performance, which may not necessarily hold true. Overall, while the data suggests poor conflict management impedes employee productivity from a managerial standpoint, additional broad-based research incorporating multiple stakeholder views and assessing direct project outputs could provide fuller understanding of these complex dynamics.

Kagwiria (2015) explored how various conflict management techniques influence project performance within Kenya's telecommunication industry. Specifically, the strategies analyzed

were negotiation, third party intervention, and compromise. The research focused on Safaricom and Airtel Limited. Findings demonstrated that negotiation methods, third party mediation, and compromise approaches had significant positive correlations with project performance. However, since only two companies were included, generalizability of the results may be restricted. Overall, this initial investigation suggested productive conflict resolution strategies can enhance project outcomes in the telecommunication sector. Though, additional research across a wider range of organizations would be valuable to substantiate the relationships and applicability to the industry as a whole. Looking at other conflict management techniques along with impacts on factors like budget, timeline, quality, and sustainability could provide further insight as well.

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Tabassi et al. (2018) analyzed data from 378 project participants and 126 supervisors and project leaders across various multicultural construction projects in their research on conflict management, team coordination, and their impact on project performance within multicultural

temporary projects in Malaysia. The results of this study show that an avoidance-focused approach to conflict management significantly improves the performance of multicultural teams, which is in contrast to earlier studies. While past research typically indicated a negative correlation between accommodating and avoiding conflict management styles and project performance, Tabassi and colleagues observed a positive association. The authors suggest that, in the context of temporary projects, there may be situations where employing accommodating and avoiding strategies is beneficial for achieving superior outcomes. This unexpected result highlights the need for further investigation into how different conflict management styles influence project performance, particularly in diverse and temporary project settings.

Research that was conducted not too long ago by Anindo (2021) investigated the influence that conflict management strategies had on the effectiveness of a youth project that was carried out in the Amani Kibera Youth Community in Marsabit, Kenya. As a sample, the study used the full population, which consisted of thirty-six members of the crew. The data was collected via the use of questionnaires, and then it was analysed through the use of descriptive, thematic, and inferential statistics, with Pearson correlation being utilised for the inferential analysis. The findings revealed that conflict management strategies significantly and positively influenced youth project performance to a large degree. However, since the research centered on a single organization, generalizing the conclusions to other contexts may be difficult. Overall, the investigation highlighted the benefits of effective conflict management for enhancing project outcomes within non-profit community youth programs, though additional multi-organization studies are needed for wider applicability.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that follows shows how project leadership, project communication, team development, and conflict management are some of the independent factors that affect project performance.

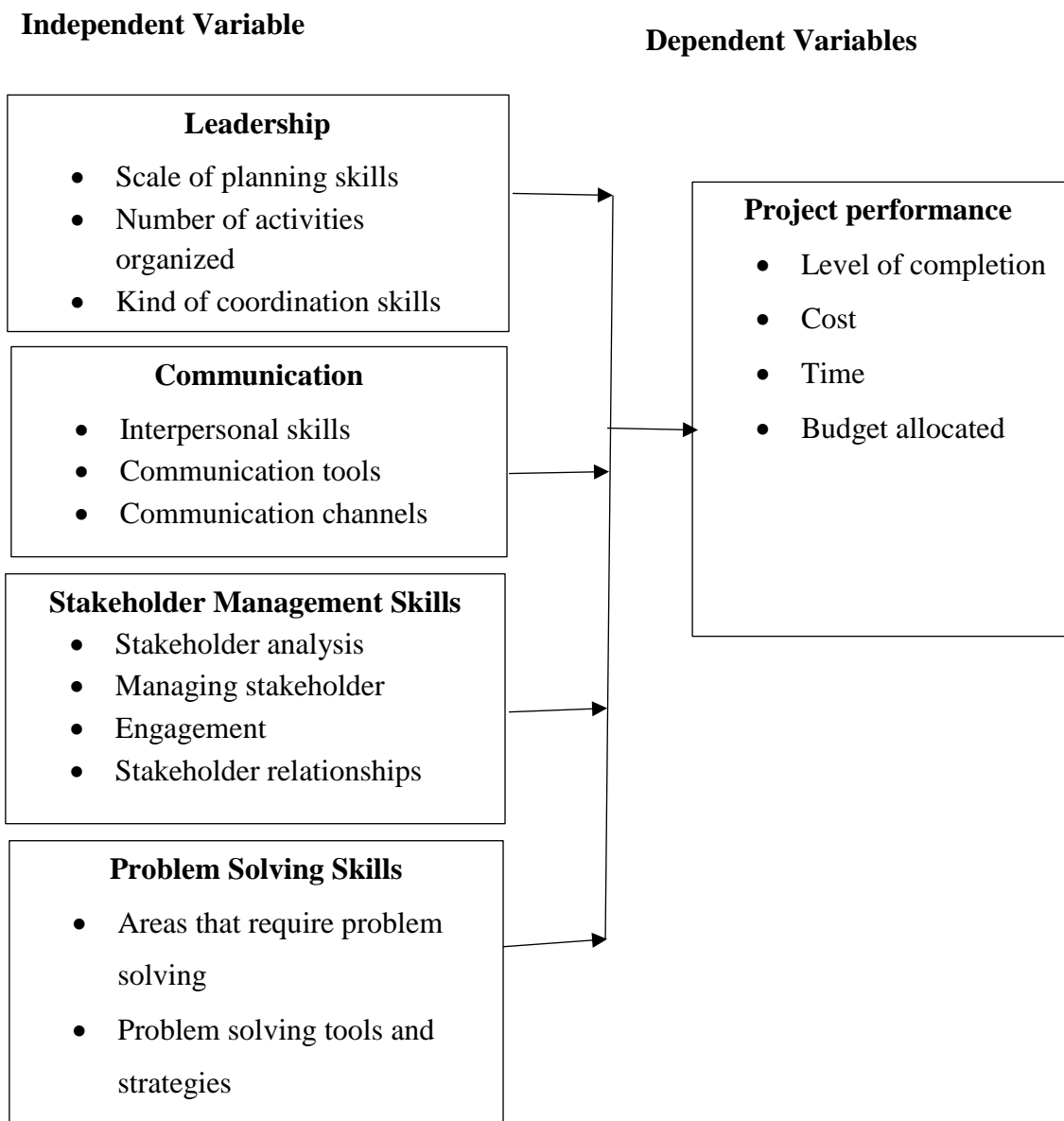


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2024)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology is integral to achieving the aims and objectives outlined in this study. It includes a detailed account of the selected research design, the target population, the sampling methodology for determining sample size, and the intended data collection approach. Furthermore, this chapter describes the forthcoming data collection process, the survey instruments to be used, and the ethical guidelines directing the research. Overall, the research methodology provides a crucial framework for gathering the necessary data to address the research questions and goals. Careful consideration has been given to ensuring appropriate scientific methods, sampling, instruments, procedures and ethical standards. By clearly outlining these research elements, the methodology allows the study's findings to be validated and generalizable.

3.2 Research Design

Research designs are most effective when used in combination to improve validity (Ridder, 2017). This study utilizes both explanatory and descriptive designs for a more comprehensive approach. Explanatory research establishes connections between concepts to understand causal relationships among variables, answering “why” questions. It expands upon descriptive data by providing further analysis and explanation from different perspectives (Saunders et al., 2017). In contrast, descriptive research focuses on capturing the target population's characteristics to enable hypothesis testing (Cooper & Schindler, 2018). Since the researcher lacks control over the variables, there is no manipulation. Kothari (2013) argues descriptive design enhances validity and reliability by minimizing bias. Specifically, it thoroughly depicts a population's attributes within a defined timeframe for comparison (Rice, 2013). This research systematically

describes a situation or phenomenon in a population, addressing “what,” “where,” “when,” and “how” questions (McCombes, 2019). Overall, utilizing both explanatory and descriptive designs provides deeper insight through causal analysis as well as an accurate representation of the study population. Together, they strengthen the validity of the methodology.

3.3 Target Population

The study focused on a target population comprising 539 projects in Marsabit County, categorized into different sectors: health, relief, social justice, education, economic empowerment, and environment, as outlined by Thairu (2014). The distribution across these sectors is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the Target Population of Study

No.	Sector	Target Population	Percentage of Population
1.	Health	97	18%
2.	Environment	59	11%
3.	Education	67	13%
4.	Social Justice	60	11%
5.	Relief	104	19%
6.	Economic Empowerment	152	28%
Total		539	100%

Source: Marsabit County NGO Coordination Board (2023)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Given the impracticality of examining all projects across the 539 NGOs in Marsabit County, this study employed a stratified random sampling technique to select participants. Projects were chosen across the different sectors listed in Table 1: Health, Environment, Education, Social Justice, Relief, and Economic Empowerment, to compile a sample size of 80 projects. This sample represents 15% of the overall target population, aligning with Kothari's (2015) recommendation that an effective representative sample should constitute at least 10% of the

total population. For each selected project, the study aimed to include both a project team member and a project manager as respondents, leading to a total of 160 participants, comprising 80 project team members and 80 project managers. The distribution of the sample and the breakdown of respondents are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample size

No.	Stratum	Population	Sample (15%)	No. of Respondents	Sample
1.	Health	97	14	2	28
2.	Environment	59	9	2	18
3.	Education	67	10	2	20
4.	Social Justice	60	9	2	18
5.	Relief	104	15	2	30
6.	Economic Empowerment	152	23	2	46
Total		539	80		160

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

To gather diverse insights from participants, questionnaires comprising both open-ended and closed questions were distributed to 160 respondents. These questionnaires were designed to include six distinct sections to comprehensively cover all variables under investigation. Section A gathered demographic information about the respondents, ensuring an understanding of the background context of each participant. Section B was dedicated to exploring aspects of project leadership skills, focusing on the leadership styles and their effectiveness within projects. Section C delved into project communication, examining the methods and efficacy of communication strategies employed in project management.

Section D was aimed at assessing stakeholder's management skills and their impact on project cohesion and efficiency. Meanwhile, Section E addressed problem solving skills and their

effectiveness in resolving disputes within project teams. The final section, Section F, evaluated the dependent variable, project performance, to understand how the aforementioned factors contribute to the overall success of the project. The data collected from these questionnaires primarily contributed to the qualitative analysis within the study, offering in-depth insights into the dynamics of project performance.

3.6 Pilot testing

Pilot testing was conducted in Isiolo County, where eight projects were chosen through a random selection process. A total of 16 questionnaires were disseminated among the selected participants, comprising eight project managers and eight project team members. This represents 10% of the overall sample size for the study, deemed sufficient for capturing representative data to support the research. This preliminary phase was designed to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire before it is administered to the larger sample.

3.6.1 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity pertains to the degree of accuracy and effectiveness with which an instrument or assessment measures its intended target. In the process of evaluating or establishing the validity of a research tool, it is advisable for a researcher to collectively assess various forms of validity rather than examining each type in isolation (Yue, 2016). In this study, content validity was employed to identify the specific content, or attributes being measured. To bolster validity, the researcher and supervisor diligently evaluated and scrutinized the questionnaire's questions to prevent any potential biases. Additionally, the researcher ensured construct validity by meticulously aligning all variable indicators with existing knowledge.

3.6.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability refers to whether an instrument like a questionnaire or test produces consistent results (Yue, 2016). Developing a reliable instrument requires extensive piloting and iteration, which can be resource intensive. The reliability of the questionnaires in this study was evaluated

through pre-testing. Pre-testing is useful for identifying potential issues with comprehension or other confusion among respondents. The pilot testing also aims to evaluate the questions for their intended purpose, ensuring they accurately measure the constructs they are designed to assess and that respondents can understand and interpret them correctly. To assess internal consistency, the study employed Cronbach's alpha coefficient, correlating different items within the questionnaire. This method has been widely used in various research studies to verify internal reliability (Li, 2016). An alpha coefficient value of 0.7 or above was deemed indicative of satisfactory consistency. Overall, pre-testing and Cronbach's alpha evaluated the consistency and interpretability of the survey instruments to ensure the methodology yields reliable data.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher initiated the process of obtaining ethical approval from the School of Postgraduate Studies at Mount Kenya University. Additionally, the researcher sought support to obtain a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), which was essential for conducting the study legally and ethically. Once the permit was secured, the researcher approached the respective Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) responsible for the areas of interest to request permission for data collection. This step ensured that all parties were informed and compliant with the research activities. With the necessary approvals in place, the researcher, accompanied by a trained research assistant, administered questionnaires to selected respondents within various departments of the NGOs. Prior to distributing the questionnaires, the participants were given a comprehensive introduction to the research project. They were informed about the purpose of the study and its potential implications, ensuring they understood the importance of their contributions and felt comfortable participating in the research process. This preparatory communication was crucial for establishing transparency and trust between the researchers and the participants. The respondents were given one week to respond to the questions and with the

phone call and text message remainder the researcher organized the picking date to enhance response rate.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The study incorporated both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. For the qualitative aspect, responses were meticulously analyzed to pinpoint key insights and consistent themes. This analysis aimed to identify prevalent concepts, common patterns, behaviors, tendencies, and sentiments within the data (Bhatia, 2018).

On the quantitative side, data were summarized and examined using both descriptive and inferential statistics, with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Techniques such as calculating frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentages were employed. Additionally, correlation analyses were conducted to explore the relationships among variables, and multiple linear regressions were used to predict the interactions between the independent variables (project leadership, project communication, team building, and conflict management) and the dependent variable (project performance).

The results were visually presented through tables, figures, charts, and graphs.

Overall, a mixed methodology incorporating thorough qualitative analysis and descriptive and inferential quantitative techniques enabled robust examination of the research questions. Careful data scrutiny elicited valuable insights.

The model took the below form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

In this case:

Y = Project Performance

β_0 = Constant

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ = Beta coefficients

X1 = Project Leadership

X2= Project Communication

X3= Stakeholder Management Skills

X4= Problem Solving Skills

ε = Error term

The researcher used normality, multicollinearity and homoscedastic diagnostic tests to ensure that the assumptions of regression will not be violated.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Johnson and Christensen (2018) discuss various ethical issues in research, including access, anonymity, confidentiality, consent, and intellectual ownership. To ensure adherence to ethical standards, the researcher implemented several measures. Full consent from participants was obtained through clear verbal communication, providing detailed information about the study's purpose and assuring respondents that their data would be used solely for research purposes. This approach ensured that participants fully understood the study and can make informed decisions about their involvement.

Strict measures were taken to safeguard privacy by ensuring anonymity for both respondents and their associated entities. Every interaction between the researcher and participants was characterized by a dedication to honesty and openness. The questionnaires were formulated using respectful, non-inflammatory language, embracing inclusivity and eschewing any discriminatory language or expressions.

Moreover, the study ensured that all contributions from other scholars referenced in the research were properly acknowledged. This not only respected intellectual property rights but also maintained the integrity of the academic work. These steps were part of a broader effort to adhere to the highest ethical standards and considerations throughout the research process, emphasizing respect for participant confidentiality and academic honesty.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the gathered data and examines the impact of the project manager's soft skills on project performance. It organizes and presents the study findings in various sections. Initially, the chapter discusses the response rate, followed by an analysis of demographic data. It then assesses the reliability of the data and concludes with both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher distributed 160 questionnaires, receiving 142 fully completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 88.75%. According to Fincham (2018), a response rate of 60% or higher is considered acceptable and contributes to the reliability and accuracy of the data while reducing bias. This information is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Response Rate

	Frequency	Percent
Response	142	88.75%
Non-Response	18	11.25%
Total	160	100

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3 Reliability Test

The reliability of the data collected in the study was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Project leadership	0.942	5
Project communication	0.912	6
Stakeholder management skills	0.913	7
Problem solving skills	0.872	7
Project performance	0.704	3

Source: Researcher (2024)

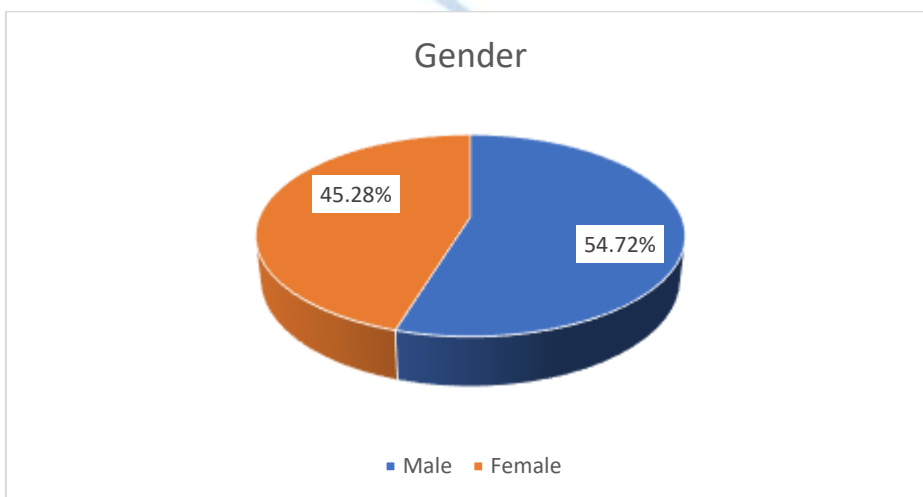
The pilot study results presented in Table 4 reveal that all variables have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7. According to Li (2016), a coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable, indicating the reliability of the research instruments used.

4.4 Demographic Characteristics

The demographic data gathered from respondents encompassed gender, age range, organizational role, years of employment, and the annual number of projects managed by the organization. This data was essential for the study, as it connected the soft skills employed by project managers in NGOs in Marsabit with different demographic factors.

4.4.1 Respondents' Gender

Figure 2 below shows the gender of the study respondents



Source: Research (2024)

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by gender

Figure 2 above shows that males constituted 54.72% of the study's participants, making them the majority, while females accounted for 43.17% of the respondents. This suggests a predominance of males in roles such as project managers and project team members within the NGO sector in Marsabit County.

4.4.2 Respondents' Age Bracket

To capture a range of perspectives across different age groups, respondents were asked to specify their age bracket. The outcomes of this inquiry are displayed in Figure 3 below.

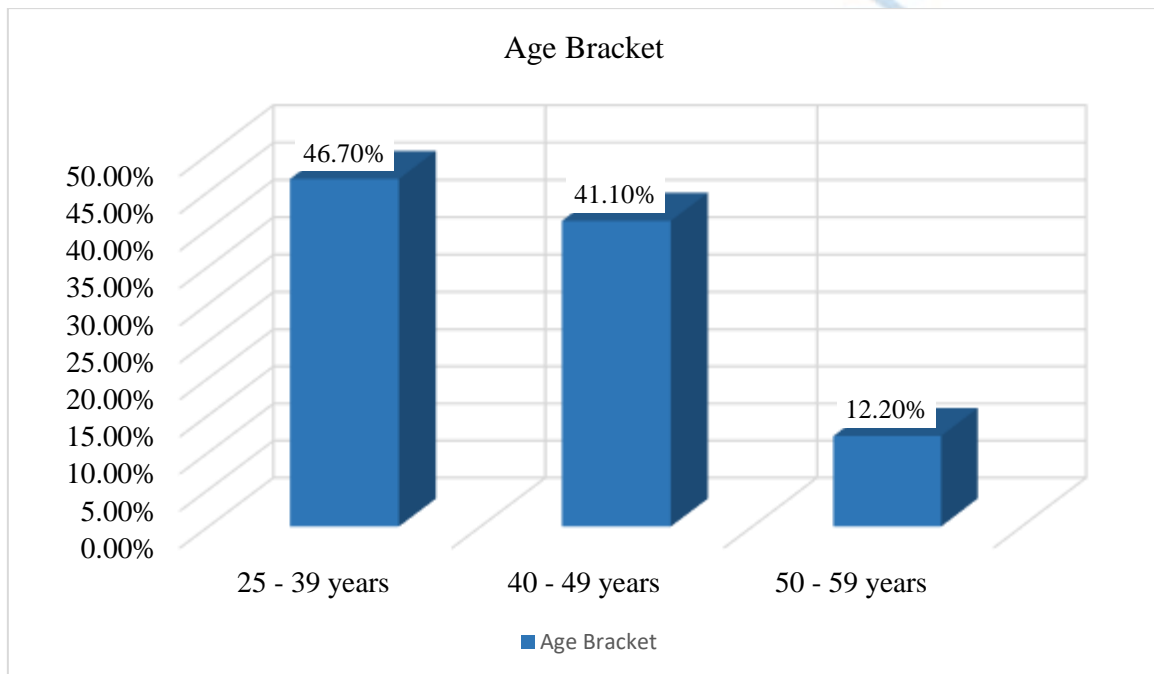


Figure 3: Age Bracket of Respondents

Source: Researcher (2024)

According to Figure 3, the largest portion of the respondents, 46.70%, fell within the 25-39 age range, while 41.1% were aged 40-49 years. Those in the 50–59-year age group comprised 12.20% of participants. These results suggest that NGOs benefit from a diverse workforce that includes both younger individuals and those with significant experience.

4.4.3 Number of Years Worked

The researcher aimed to determine the length of time respondents had been employed in their respective organizations. The results, depicted in Figure 4, provide insights into the tenure of the participants, highlighting their experience levels and potentially influencing the application of soft skills in their roles.

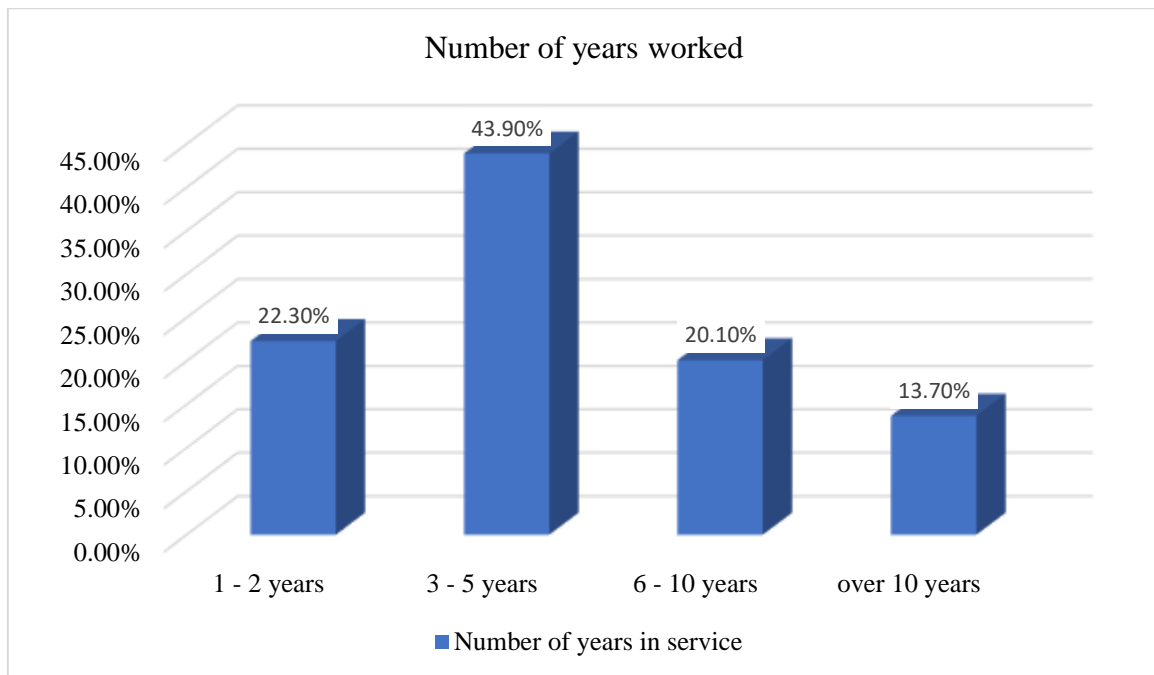


Figure 4: Number of years worked

Source: Researcher (2024)

Based on the findings presented in Figure 4, the largest portion of respondents (43.90%) reported having been with the organization for 3-5 years. About 22.30% had tenure between 1-3 years, while 20.10% fell within the 6-10 years bracket. The remaining 13.70% had over a decade of experience. The duration of employment reflected the respondents' level of experience, influencing the credibility and dependability of the data they provided. Notably, the significant proportion of respondents with 3-5 years of experience suggested that the data mainly came from individuals familiar with the organization's operations, enhancing the data's reliability.

4.4.4 Number of Projects Executed Annually

Respondents were requested to specify the number of projects their organizations undertook annually. The summarized findings are illustrated in Figure 5, offering a comprehensive overview of the project activity levels within the organizations. This information helps to contextualize the scope and scale of project management practices and the utilization of soft skills in varying project volumes.

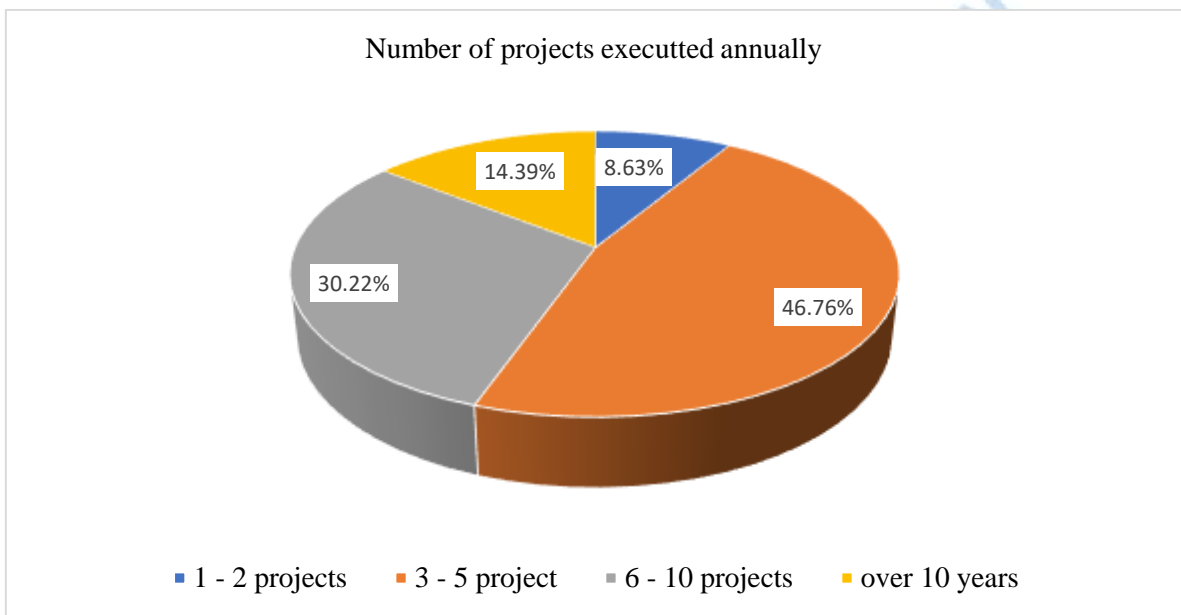


Figure 5: Number of projects executed annually

Source: Researcher (2024)

Figure 5 reveals that the majority of respondents (46.76%) reported their organizations undertook 3-5 projects annually. Additionally, 30.22% indicated managing between 6-10 projects per year, while 14.39% were involved in executing over 10 projects annually. A smaller portion, 8.63%, managed only 1-2 projects each year. These figures provide a clear depiction of the project workload distribution across various organizations, highlighting the differences in project management demands and potentially influencing the application and effectiveness of soft skills among project managers. This indicate that almost half of the NGOs in Marsabit County carry out 3-5 projects annually.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

A comprehensive examination of the variables was conducted, providing an overview of their characteristics. This section presents the outcomes of this examination, utilizing findings from the study. Employing descriptive statistics, the researcher facilitated the presentation of data in a manner conducive to interpretation across various formats (Kothari, 2011; Sekaran, 2008; Cooper & Schindler, 2011). The research primarily employed percentages to illustrate the data, particularly in assessing the impact of manager's soft skills on the performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit county. Furthermore, the study cross-referenced the results derived from the data collection questions with the literature discussed in chapter two.

4.5.1 Project Leadership

Respondents were asked to describe the type of project leadership exhibited within their teams. The results, summarized in Table 5, offer valuable insights into the leadership styles prevalent in various project environments. This data helps to understand the influence of different leadership approaches on team dynamics, project execution, and overall project success.

Table 5: Kind of Project leadership

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Excellent	29	20.5
	Good	58	40.8
	Fair	34	23.9
	Poor	21	14.8
	Total	142	100.0

Source: Researcher (2024)

According to the findings in Table 5, majority 40.8% of the respondents indicated that there was good project leadership, 23.9% of the respondents indicated that their organizations project leadership was fair while 20.5% of respondents indicated that their project leadership was excellent. There were 14.8% of the respondents who indicated that there was poor project leadership.

The following section illustrates respondents' levels of agreement regarding the impact of project leadership on the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County. A 1-5 scale was utilized, where 1 indicated strongly disagree (SD), 2 indicated disagree (D), 3 represented neutral (N), 4 signified agree (A), and 5 denoted strongly agree (SA). The data were analyzed using means and standard deviations, and the results are presented in Table 6. This analysis provides a quantitative assessment of the perceived influence of leadership on project outcomes, offering insights into how leadership styles may enhance or hinder project performance.

Table 6: Responses on Project Leadership

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
During the project design phase, a project manager advises and leads his team in creating acceptable standards.	142	1	5	3.63	0.925
Planning, organizing, assigning, and allocating tasks within the project team are all aided by project leadership.	142	1	5	3.56	0.900
The project manager makes sure that a contingency plan is in place to manage risks that might arise over the course of the project.	142	1	5	3.76	0.914
In order to improve project performance, the project leader sets up an action plan for the project team and oversees the whole project cycle.	142	1	4	3.59	0.810
Project leadership builds and sustain effective communication among different stakeholders	142	1	5	3.65	0.851
Valid N (listwise)	142				

Source: Researcher (2024)

According to the table, the results indicate that respondents generally agreed on various aspects related to project management. They acknowledged that a project manager played a crucial role in setting appropriate standards during the project design phase ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.925$). Furthermore, project leadership was perceived to be effective in tasks such as planning, organizing, and delegating within the project team ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.900$). Additionally, it was noted that project leaders ensured the establishment of a contingency plan for managing risks ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.914$) and monitored the project cycle while providing actionable plans to the team ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.810$). Moreover, project leadership was seen as instrumental in fostering effective communication among stakeholders ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.851$). These findings align with Nziva's (2018) research on leadership's impact on project performance in international organizations in Kenya. Similarly, they are consistent with the conclusions drawn by Kissi et al. (2015), which highlighted a positive correlation between project managers' leadership style and project performance.

4.5.2 Project Communication

The goal of the research was to determine which communication channels were used in which projects and whether or not project-level communication affected project performance. The results are shown in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7: Channels of Communication Used

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Letters	12	8.45	8.45
	Email	88	61.97	70.42
	Phone call/SMS	21	14.79	85.21
	WhatsApp	21	14.79	100
	Total	142	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

The results shown in Table 7 reveal that the majority of respondents (61.87%) indicated that their organizations primarily used email for project team communication. WhatsApp and phone

calls/SMS were used by 14.79% of respondents. Letters were infrequently utilized, with only 8.45% of respondents reporting their use. Additionally, a smaller segment (6.47%) relied exclusively on email for communication. These findings highlight a diverse adoption of communication channels among NGOs in Marsabit County. While some organizations adhered to more traditional methods, such as emails, letters, and telephone calls, others had incorporated modern communication tools like WhatsApp to facilitate easier and quicker interactions within project teams. This variation in communication practices reflects differing levels of conservatism and openness to new media technologies within the NGOs operating in the region.

Table 8: Responses on Project Communication

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Due to network outages at distant project locations, mobile phone use by project teams is problematic.	142	1	5	3.22	0.724
Various stakeholders often communicate information with one another.	142	1	5	3.57	0.667
In order to bring the many project team members together to work toward a single goal that will result in excellent performance, communication is essential.	142	1	5	3.68	0.796
It is crucial that the project team provide feedback to senior management and the rest of the company.	142	1	5	3.81	0.712
Good project performance is a result of timely feedback and effective communication.	142	1	3	3.72	0.838
Clear expectations are communicated to project team members at every stage of the project cycle.	142	1	5	3.43	0.692
Valid N (listwise)	142				
Aggregate				3.55	0.738

Source: Researcher (2024)

In the table 8 findings, respondents expressed a neutral stance regarding the challenges faced by project teams when utilizing mobile phones in remote project areas due to network disruptions (M=3.22, SD=0.724). However, there was a consensus that clear expectations were communicated to project team members throughout the project cycle (M=3.43, SD=0.692). Furthermore, respondents agreed that there was regular exchange of information among various stakeholders (M=3.57, SD=0.669), emphasizing the importance of communication in aligning project team members towards shared objectives (M=3.68, SD=0.796). Additionally, feedback between the project team and senior management, as well as within the organization, was highlighted as crucial (M=3.81, SD=0.712). The study also found that effective communication and timely feedback correlated with favorable project performance (M=3.72, SD=0.838). Notably, with a mean of 3.55, more than half of the respondents agreed with statements related to project communication, aligning with prior research by Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018), which established a significant association between a project manager's communication proficiency, team cohesion, and project outcomes.

4.5.3 Stakeholder Management Skills

The third objective of the study was to determine the impact of stakeholder management skills on the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The findings related to this objective are presented in Table 9. This analysis provides insight into how effectively managing relationships with stakeholders influences project outcomes, highlighting the importance of communication, engagement, and collaboration in achieving project success.

Table 9: Responses on Stakeholder Management Skills

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is important to establish an atmosphere that encourages communication and mutual assistance between stakeholders by encouraging the sharing of resources and intellectual property.	142	1	5	3.58	1.007
Both the project manager and the other stakeholders should sign agreements, as well as the stakeholders themselves.	142	1	5	3.62	1.002
It is important for project managers to make an effort to satisfy all stakeholders.	142	1	5	3.69	.992
Stakeholders should be identified and included in every stage of the project-by-project management.	142	1	5	3.73	1.058
To keep track of stakeholder interaction, a stakeholder management plan is required.	142	1	3	3.77	1.022
It is the responsibility of project managers to inspire and motivate project stakeholders to engage with the project.	142	1	5	3.95	.920
Valid N (listwise)	142				
Aggregate				3.72	1.000

Source: Researcher (2024)

The results presented in the table 9 demonstrate that respondents agreed on the importance of establishing a conducive environment for stakeholders to engage with one another and offer mutual support through the sharing of resources and intellectual property (M=3.57, SD=1.007). Furthermore, it was indicated that it is essential to formalize agreements between individual stakeholders and the project manager, as well as among stakeholders themselves (M=3.62, SD=1.002). Respondents also emphasized the significance of project managers meeting the expectations of stakeholders (M=3.69, SD=0.992) and actively monitoring stakeholders' interests throughout the project execution phase to ensure progress and success (M=3.82,

SD=0.922). Additionally, there was consensus among respondents regarding the importance of encouraging and motivating stakeholders to participate in the project (M=3.95, SD=0.920). The respondents agreed with all the statements on stakeholders' management skills as supported by an average mean of 3.72.

These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Eskerod and Jepsen (2013), which highlights the contribution of stakeholder management to the successful performance of projects. Moore (2011) reinforces the notion that managing stakeholder expectations entails actively engaging with stakeholders, addressing their concerns, and fulfilling their requirements through effective communication. Similarly, Team FME (2014) supports this perspective by emphasizing that adept stakeholder management enables project managers to synchronize project requirements, mitigate potential implementation obstacles, gauge stakeholders' risk tolerance, and prevent scope expansion. Additionally, Kerzner (2011) further validates these findings by asserting that engaging with stakeholders enables project managers to discern individual stakeholders' interests and preferences regarding performance reporting.

Participants were also requested to specify their actions for ensuring stakeholder satisfaction with projects. Table 10 illustrates the findings.

Table 10: Stakeholder Satisfaction Methods

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Adequate compensation	3	2.3
	Completing projects on time	7	4.7
	Follow ups on affected persons	13	9.3
	Corporate Social Responsibility	23	16.3
	Innovativeness	2	1.2
	Open and regular communication	10	7.0
	Post project audits	2	1.2
	Presenting project benefits to affected persons	2	1.2
	Prompt payment of compensation	10	7.0
	Prompt redress of customer concerns	2	1.2
	Proper documentation	2	1.2
	Public sensitization	5	3.5
	Adhering to quality and safety	5	3.5
	Stakeholder involvement	54	38.0
	Timely communication	2	1.2
	Total	142	100

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 10 illustrates that the majority of participants utilize methods such as stakeholder involvement (38.0%), corporate social responsibility (16.3%), and follow-ups on affected individuals (9.3%) to ensure satisfaction among project stakeholders. These findings align with previous research conducted by Tonnquist et al. (2009), emphasizing the importance of recognizing the diverse stakeholders involved in a project and understanding their expectations for the project manager's success. This notion is reinforced by Kerzner (2011), who suggests that stakeholder engagement enables project managers to grasp the interests of each stakeholder and determine the type of information they desire in performance reports.

4.5.5 Problem Solving Skills

The fourth study objective was to discover the effects of manager's problem-solving skills on performance of NGOs projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. These results are found in Table 11.

Table 11: Responses on Problem Solving Skills

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Project managers should address issues as soon as possible to prevent them from getting out of hand.	142	1	5	3.69	.955
Project managers ought to identify the issue's underlying cause.	142	1	5	3.75	.805
The project manager has to put the solutions into practice and evaluate the outcomes.	142	1	5	3.76	.735
Within the project team, conflict resolution fosters the development of strong connections.	142	1	5	4.11	.704
It is important for project managers to address issues as they emerge to prevent them from becoming worse.	142	1	3	4.43	.842
To maintain order, project personnel should give priority to the current concerns.	142	1	5	4.80	.857
Valid N (listwise)	142				
Aggregate				4.09	.8163

Source: Researcher (2024)

Respondents expressed consensus on several practices regarding problem-solving in project management. They agreed that project managers should address issues promptly to prevent escalation, with an average score of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 0.955. Additionally, they believed identifying the root cause of problems is crucial, scoring this practice at 3.75 with a standard deviation of 0.805. Implementing solutions and evaluating their outcomes also scored high, with an average of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 1.07335. The data suggests that effective conflict resolution can strengthen relationships within the project team, as indicated by a high mean score of 4.11 and a low standard deviation of 0.704. Planning for problem resolution and prioritizing issues to maintain order were also seen as important, scoring 4.2581 and 4.80 respectively, with corresponding standard deviations of 0.90419 and 0.857.

These practices reflect the broader understanding of problem-solving in project management. Billows (2011) noted that problem-solving typically involves collaborative efforts to achieve win-win outcomes for all parties involved in a conflict. Similarly, Bassock & Laura (2012) discussed how visual perception and prior knowledge influence how project teams perceive and approach problem-solving. Ward (2012) emphasized that understanding problem-solving requires an appreciation of the methods used from conceptualizing a problem through to its resolution.

Respondents also indicated the specific areas within their projects where problem-solving skills are most needed, with these insights captured in Figure 6.

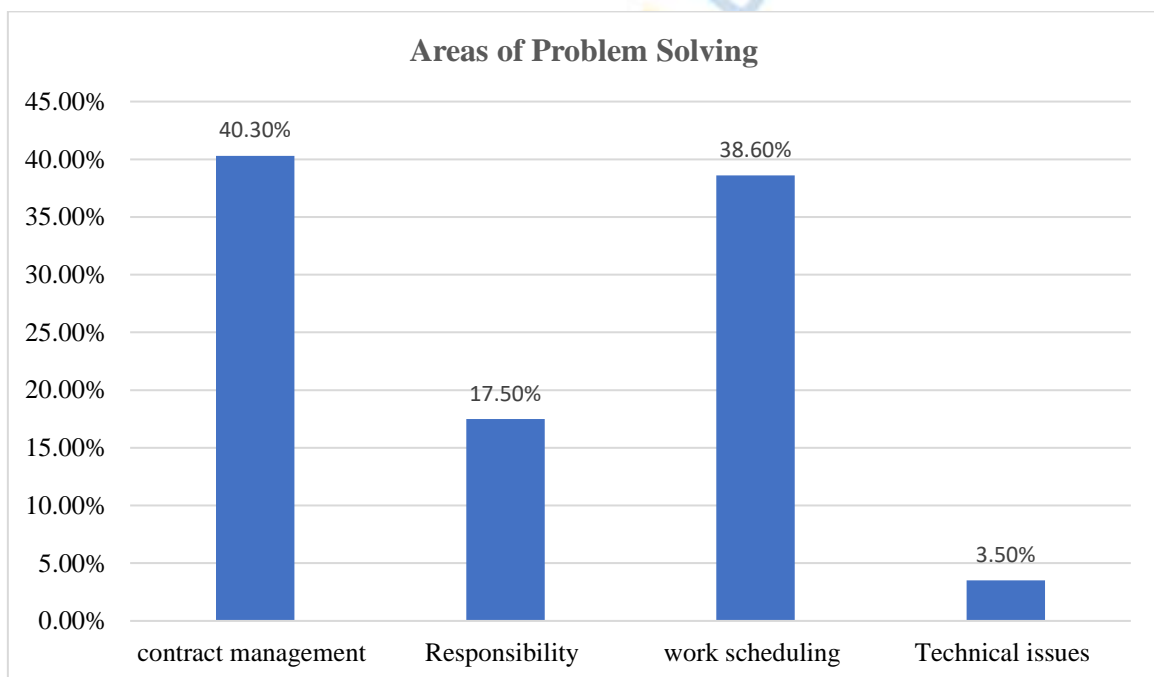


Figure 6: Areas which require problem solving skills.

Source: Researcher (2024)

The data from Figure revealed that 40.3% of the respondents apply problem-solving skills to contract management, 38.6% to work scheduling, 17.5% to handling responsibilities, and 3.5% to addressing technical issues. This aligns with Heldman (2011), who identified that problem-

solving is often necessary in areas such as project scheduling, resource allocation, contract details, roles and responsibilities, and technical or business challenges.

Additionally, respondents were asked to specify the methods they utilize for solving problems within their projects. These methodologies are detailed in Figure 7.

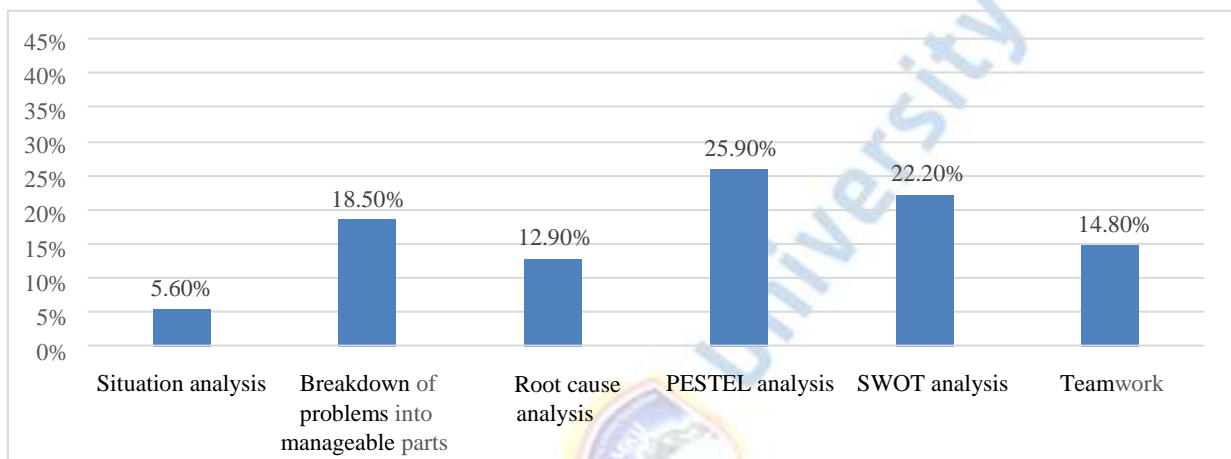


Figure 7: Methods used in problem solving.

Source: Researcher (2024)

Among the respondent surveyed 5.6% reported employing situation analysis, 18.5% engaged in breaking down problems into manageable parts, 12.9% focused on identifying the root cause of issues, 25.9% utilized PESTLE analysis, 22.2% employed SWOT analysis, and 14.8% emphasized teamwork in their problem-solving approaches. These findings are consistent with the observations made by PM4DEV (2018), which emphasize that effective problem-solving entails defining the problem, breaking it down into manageable components, identifying root causes, and analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

4.5.6 Project Performance

To assess the performance of the projects, participants were asked to express their level of agreement concerning various aspects, including the time taken to complete the projects, the budget utilized, and the quality of the output achieved. The summarized findings are presented

in Table 12. This table provides a comprehensive overview of how project performance was perceived by the respondents, offering valuable insights into the efficiency, financial management, and quality outcomes of the projects.

Table 12: Responses on Project Performance

statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Every job is finished and delivered within the allotted period.	142	1	5	2.95	0.888
Completed projects have made use of the allocated funds and resources.	142	1	5	3.90	0.960
Completed projects are of the required quality	142	1	5	3.50	0.987
Valid N (listwise)	142				
Aggregate				3.216	0.912

Source: Researcher (2024)

According to the data presented in Table 12, respondents were neutral that projects are typically completed and delivered within the designated timeframe ($M=2.95$, $SD=0.888$), while others expressed a neutral stance or disagreed, suggesting that not all projects adhere to their allotted schedules. Factors such as extended project durations contributed to delays in project execution and completion beyond initial projections. However, respondents agreed that projects were completed within the predetermined budget ($M=3.90$, $SD=0.960$) and met the required quality standards ($M=3.50$, $SD=0.987$). The overall mean score of 3.216 indicates a mixed response among respondents regarding project performance metrics.

Despite variations in completion time, more than half of the respondents affirmed that projects effectively utilized their allocated budgets and achieved the desired quality output. These findings align with the research conducted by Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018), who emphasize the importance of project managers' focus on improving technical expertise while also

recognizing the significance of soft skills, often overlooked by organizations, in enhancing project performance.

4.6 Inferential Statistics

The study conducted various inferential statistics to establish the significant and direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study.

4.6.1 Correlation Analysis

To explore the strength of the linear relationships among the study variables, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. This analysis assessed the correlations between the performance of non-governmental organization (NGO) projects in Marsabit County and various project manager skills, including leadership, communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving skills. Pearson correlation is an essential statistical tool as it clearly shows both the strength and direction of the relationships between variables (Warne, 2017). The detailed results of this analysis are presented in Table 13, providing insights into how each of these skills is associated with project performance.

Table 13: Pearson Correlation Analysis

		Leadership skills	Communication skills	stakeholder management skills	problem solving skills	project performance
Leadership skills	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	142				
Communication skills	Pearson Correlation	.825**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000				
	N	142	142			
stakeholder management skills	Pearson Correlation	.825**	.902**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.001			
	N	142	142	142		
Problem Solving Skills	Pearson Correlation	.780**	.798**	.838**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.000		
	N	142	142	142	142	
project performance	Pearson Correlation	.772**	.835**	.846**	.790**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.002	
	N	142	142	142	142	142

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

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

Source: Researcher (2024)

The results from the correlation analysis presented in the table above reveal a favorable association between the soft skills of project managers and the overall project performance within NGOs. Specifically, stakeholder management skills exhibited a notably strong positive correlation with project performance, which was statistically significant ($r = 0.846$, $p = 0.000$).

These findings align with those of Zhang, Chong, and Zhang (2023), who assert that effective stakeholder management contributes to the successful performance of projects. Additionally,

the results are consistent with the research by Ngetich and Gakuu (2019), indicating that adept stakeholder management enables project managers to mitigate scope creep, understand risk tolerance, align project requirements with appropriate standards, and address issues that may hinder project implementation.

The analysis revealed that project communication skills had a very strong positive and statistically significant relationship with project performance ($r = 0.835$, $p = 0.000$). These findings are consistent with studies by Naqvi and Aziz (2014) and Sackey (2014), which concluded that effective communication within the project team and among different stakeholders is crucial for project success. Additionally, problem-solving skills exhibited a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with project performance ($r = 0.790$, $p = 0.000$).

Similarly, project leadership skills demonstrated a strong positive relationship with project performance ($r = 0.772$, $p = 0.000$), although the strength of this relationship was slightly lower compared to communication and problem-solving skills. This suggests that while project leadership is crucial for successful project outcomes, its impact may not be as pronounced as the influence of communication and problem-solving skills. These insights underscore the importance of fostering a well-rounded skill set among project managers to enhance overall project performance.

4.6.2 Diagnostic Tests

Diagnostic tests were carried out to assess if the data met the assumption of regression. In this regard, normality and multicollinearity and homoscedasticity were performed to explore the study variables.

4.6.2.1 Normality Test

The majority of responses for the independent variables align closely with the normal probability distribution line, as depicted in the P-P plot below. This alignment indicates that the

data follows a normal distribution, which is a crucial assumption for the validity of the regression model. Such a distribution ensures that the results of the regression analysis are reliable and that the statistical inferences made about the relationships between variables are accurate.

Normal P-P Plot of Project leadership assists in planning,organising,delegating and task allocation within the project team

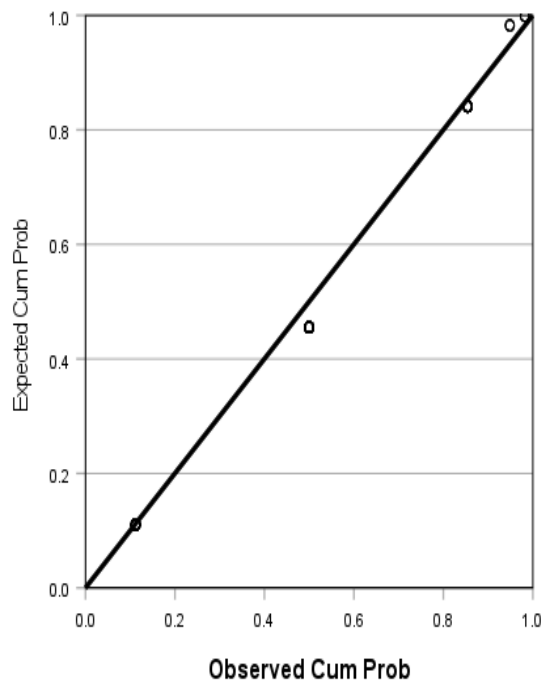


Figure 8: P-P Plot for Normality Test

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.6.2.2 Multicollinearity Test

Table 14 shows the multicollinearity tests for the independent variables:

Table 14: Multicollinearity Test

Mode		Unstandardize		Standardize	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
		d		d			Statistics	
		Coefficients		Coefficients			Toleranc	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta			e	
1	(Constant)	.014	.169		.084	.933		
	Leadership skills	.086	.071	.100	1.223	.223	.267	3.743
	Communication skills	.282	.099	.297	2.850	.005	.164	6.082
	Stakeholder Management Skills	.318	.110	.326	2.892	.004	.141	7.092
	Problem Solving Skills	.234	.094	.202	2.489	.014	.271	3.693

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

Source: Researcher (2024)

The table 14 demonstrates that leadership skills, communication skills, stakeholders' management skills, and problem-solving skills all exhibit tolerance levels exceeding 0.1 and VIF values below 10, suggesting that the assumptions have been satisfied. According to Field (2017), when tolerance values dip below 0.1 and VIF values surpass 10, it indicates a potential issue of multicollinearity.

4.6.2.3 Homoscedasticity Test

The below scatter plot of the residuals shows that the data is homoscedastic indicating that the assumptions were not violated.

Scatterplot

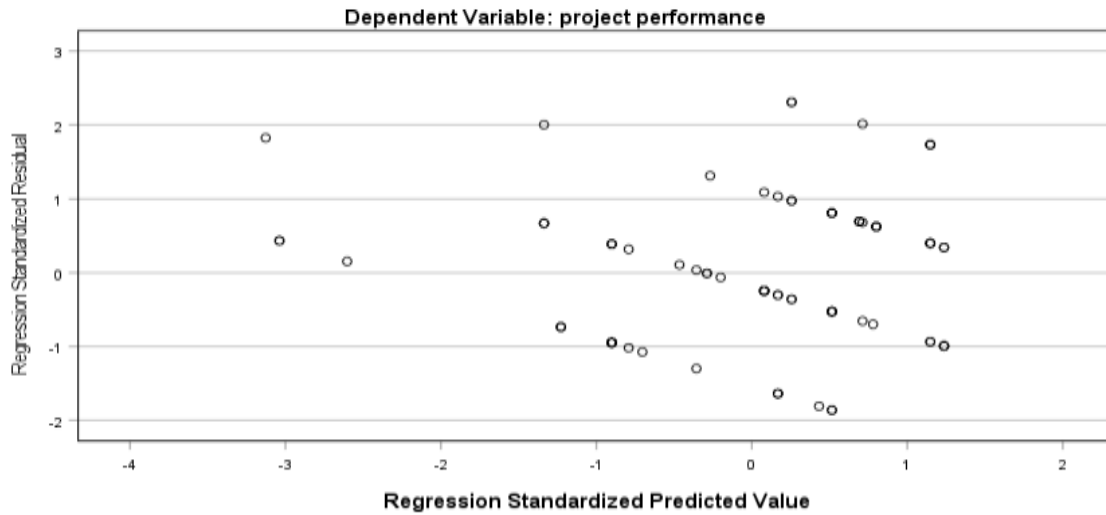


Figure 9: Scatter Plot for Homoscedasticity Test

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.6.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

To evaluate the impact of the predictor variables on the dependent variable, which is project performance, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The independent variables in this analysis were the average scores of project managers' soft skills, while the dependent variable was represented by the average scores of project performance. This approach allowed for a comprehensive assessment of how different aspects of project managers' skills contribute to overall project success.

Table 15: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.849 ^a	0.760	0.753	0.549

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership skills, Communication skills, Stakeholder Management Skills, Problem Solving Skills

b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

Source: Researcher (2024)

The results presented in Table 15 indicate that the regression model is a good fit for describing the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The adjusted R-

square value of 0.753 suggests that 75.3% of the variance in NGO project performance in Marsabit County can be explained by the combined effects of project manager's leadership skills, communication skills, stakeholder management skills, and problem-solving skills.

Table 16 provides the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the regression analysis. ANOVA is instrumental in predicting how project manager's leadership skills, communication skills, stakeholder management skills, and problem-solving skills influence the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County. This analysis helps to determine the statistical significance of each predictor variable in the regression model, offering insights into their individual and collective impact on project outcomes.

Table 16: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	120.844	3	26.948	102.376	.000 ^b
	Residual	148.279	139	0.561		
	Total	169.122	142			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership skills, Communication skills, Stakeholder Management Skills, Problem Solving Skills

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 16 reveals that the regression model holds statistical significance, indicating that the collective impact of project manager's leadership, communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving skills significantly influences project performance ($F= 102.376$, $p= 0.000$). This underscores the model's suitability for forecasting and predicting how project managers' soft skills affect NGO project outcomes in Marsabit County. The p-value of 0.000, lower than the acceptable critical value of 0.05, further confirms this significance.

Table 17: Coefficients of the Regression Model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.014	0.335		10.750	0.933
Leadership Skills	0.086	0.089	0.543	5.823	0.223
Communication Skills	0.282	.099	0.296	2.850	0.005
Stakeholders' Management Skills	0.318	0.091	0.215	2.312	0.003
Problem Solving Skills	0.234	0.094	0.202	3.468	0.014

a. Dependent Variable: Indicate your age bracket

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 17 presents the coefficients for project manager's leadership skills, communication skills, stakeholder management skills, and problem-solving skills as predictors of project performance. The analysis indicates that communication skills ($\beta = 0.282$, $p = 0.005$), stakeholder management skills ($\beta = 0.318$, $p = 0.003$), and problem-solving skills ($\beta = 0.234$, $p = 0.014$) are significant predictors of project performance. These skills show statistically significant contributions to the dependent variable, as their p-values are less than 0.05.

Conversely, project managers' leadership skills ($\beta = 0.086$, $p = 0.223$) do not significantly predict project performance, as evidenced by a p-value greater than 0.05. This suggests that, while leadership skills are important, their direct impact on project performance is not as strong as the other variables examined. The findings highlight the critical role of effective communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving skills in enhancing the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County.

The regression model equation formula is therefore:

$$Y = 0.014 + 0.086X_1 + 0.282X_2 + 0.318X_3 + 0.234X_4 + E$$

Where:

Y= Project Performance

X₁ = Leadership skills

X₂ = Communication skills

X₃ = stakeholders management skills

X₄ = problem solving skills

ε = Error term

The equation presented above illustrates that, while keeping other variables constant, enhancements in a project manager's soft skills—specifically in project leadership, communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving—lead to improved project performance within the NGO sector in Marsabit County. These findings align with various studies. For instance, Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018) established a significant correlation between effective communication, team cohesion, and project performance. Similarly, Peng and Cheng (2015) emphasized the importance of project managers initiating stakeholder management activities and participation sessions, which fostered team trust and enhanced project outcomes. Conversely, the results diverged from those of Kissi et al. (2015), who found a positive and significant association between project managers' leadership style and performance. Contrarily, in this study, project leadership was not identified as a significant predictor of project performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the research outcomes concerning the impact of project managers' soft skills on the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County. It concludes by offering recommendations and proposes directions for future research, building upon the specific objectives outlined in the first chapter.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This research aimed to explore the influence of project managers' soft skills on the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The study specifically examined the impact of project managers' leadership, communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving skills on project outcomes. Utilizing both explanatory and descriptive research designs, the study targeted 160 participants, split evenly between project managers and project team members. Data were gathered through questionnaires, distributed and collected via a drop-and-pick method facilitated by research assistants.

The initial objective was to evaluate how project managers' leadership skills influence NGO project performance in Marsabit County. The results showed that a significant number of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that project managers effectively lead their teams in planning, organizing, and executing projects, while also implementing regular monitoring and contingency strategies to manage risks throughout the project cycle. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a positive correlation between project leadership skills and project performance. However, despite this positive correlation, regression analysis found that leadership skills did not significantly predict project performance, as indicated by a p-value greater than 0.05.

The second aim was to explore the impact of project managers' communication abilities on the effectiveness of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The majority of participants noted that email was the primary mode of communication within project teams. Analysis revealed that most respondents recognized the pivotal role of communication in uniting various project team members toward shared goals, thereby enhancing performance. Respondents highlighted consistent information exchange among stakeholders, timely feedback, and transparent communication of project team expectations as crucial factors driving project performance. Both correlation and regression analyses demonstrated a positive and statistically significant association between project communication and performance.

The third objective of this study examined how project managers' stakeholder management skills impact the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The findings indicated that stakeholder management skills are critical during several phases: stakeholder analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the development of stakeholder relationships. The research highlighted the importance of fostering a supportive environment where stakeholders can interact, share resources, and collaborate on intellectual property. It was also found essential for project managers to facilitate agreements among stakeholders and between stakeholders and the project manager. Additionally, the study emphasized the need for timely resolution of issues and management of conflicting interests among stakeholders. Overall, the findings suggest that project managers should prioritize meeting stakeholder expectations to enhance project performance.

The research also emphasized the importance of project managers involving stakeholders at every stage of the project. It highlighted the necessity for all stakeholders to agree on common key performance indicators. The findings emphasized the requirement for a stakeholder management strategy to oversee stakeholder involvement. Additionally, the study reaffirmed the significance of project managers consistently monitoring stakeholder interests during

project implementation to ensure advancement and achievement. It also stressed the role of project managers in inspiring and incentivizing stakeholder participation. Moreover, it underscored the importance of project managers understanding stakeholder expectations, encouraging their input, and backing their expectations. Additionally, the findings suggest that ensuring stakeholder satisfaction involves various strategies such as stakeholder involvement, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and follow-ups with affected parties. It was concluded that effective stakeholder management skills among employees significantly impact project performance in the energy sector in Kenya.

The fourth objective of the study aimed to determine the impact of project managers' problem-solving skills on the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The results indicated that successful problem-solving in projects necessitates the utilization of problem-solving strategies and tools. Furthermore, the project team was identified as playing a crucial role in addressing project challenges and solving problems effectively.

The findings also emphasized the importance of project managers expressing their opinions and addressing issues promptly to prevent escalation. Additionally, project managers should investigate the underlying causes of problems and implement solutions, evaluating their effectiveness. The research also highlighted how conflict resolution fosters cohesive relationships within project teams. It underscored the necessity for project managers to identify problems early and employ creativity in generating original and practical solutions. Moreover, thorough research on issues enables project managers to understand and address them promptly, thus preventing escalation. Prioritizing issues is also crucial for maintaining order and focus on project management.

The research also revealed that problem-solving skills are crucial in various aspects such as contract management, delineating authority and responsibility, scheduling work, and addressing technical challenges. The findings suggest that effective problem-solving methods

include situational analysis, breaking down issues into manageable components, identifying root causes, utilizing PESTLE and SWOT analyses, and fostering teamwork. Consequently, it was concluded that the problem-solving proficiency of project managers significantly influences the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya.

5.3 Conclusions

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the impact of project managers' soft skills on the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The research findings revealed that project managers' communication skills significantly influence project performance. Effective communication is crucial for decision-making, strategic dissemination of results, and knowledge management within projects. This underscores the importance of establishing robust communication channels and structures prior to project commencement.

Furthermore, the study found that project managers' stakeholder management skills also significantly affect project performance. These skills are essential during stakeholder analysis, engagement, and relationship-building throughout the project lifecycle. Additionally, problem-solving skills were identified as another critical factor influencing project performance. Successful problem-solving requires the application of appropriate strategies and tools, with active involvement from the project team.

While the study concluded that leadership skills positively impact project performance, it also found that leadership alone may not significantly predict project success. Therefore, NGOs should not solely rely on a project manager's leadership skills to enhance project performance. Instead, the study suggests that project managers should focus on coaching, mentoring, empowering, and inspiring project team members to perform to their fullest potential.

In summary, effective adoption of these soft skills by project managers is crucial for driving the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit County. By emphasizing communication,

stakeholder management, problem-solving, and leadership development, NGOs can enhance their project outcomes and contribute to meaningful impact in the community.

5.4 Recommendations

Project success hinges not only on technical proficiency but also on the cultivation of soft skills, or people skills. Given that communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving skills emerged as significant predictors of project performance, the study recommends prioritizing the development and integration of these soft skills to enhance project outcomes. Specifically, NGOs should place greater emphasis on fostering effective communication among team members. Moreover, the study advocates for creating a supportive environment where stakeholders can collaborate, share resources, and establish agreements to address conflicts of interest. It further suggests that project employees should actively engage stakeholders throughout all project phases, with the implementation of a comprehensive communication plan to sustain stakeholder interest.

Regarding problem-solving skills, the study recommends the adoption of problem-solving strategies and tools to address challenges as they arise. Project teams should play a central role in problem-solving endeavors, with a proactive approach to tackling issues before they escalate. Project managers are encouraged to conduct thorough research to understand and address emerging issues promptly, thereby preventing them from escalating. Problem-solving skills should be applied across various project domains, including contract management, authority and responsibility issues, work scheduling, and technical challenges.

In summary, the study underscores the importance of promoting soft skills alongside technical expertise to drive project success. By integrating effective communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving practices into project management processes, NGOs can enhance project performance and achieve their objectives more effectively.

5.5 Recommendations for policy

Projects play a pivotal role in fostering economic growth in Kenya, aligning with the Government's commitment to national development outlined in its Vision 2030 plan. Therefore, the findings of this study carry significant implications for various stakeholders, including the government, implementing agencies, and the general public. By establishing statistically significant correlations between managers' soft skills and project performance, the study highlights the potential for projects to be completed within stipulated timeframes and budgets when soft skills are effectively utilized.

Consequently, the study's recommendations hold promise for policymakers to consider revising educational policies, with a focus on integrating soft skills into training programs, particularly at the tertiary level. This adjustment would ensure that individuals entering the workforce are adequately equipped with both technical expertise and soft skills, which are essential for success in today's professional landscape. Ultimately, such initiatives can contribute to enhanced project outcomes, bolstering Kenya's economic development efforts and advancing the welfare of its citizens.

5.6 Suggestions for Future Studies

This research investigated the impact of project managers' soft skills on project performance within NGOs operating in Marsabit County. Specifically, it examined the influence of leadership, communication, stakeholder management, and problem-solving skills on project outcomes. The study recommends further exploration of additional variables beyond those examined to gain a comprehensive understanding of how project managers' soft skills affect project performance. Moreover, while the focus was on NGOs in Marsabit County, similar research should be conducted in other sectors, such as public or private organizations, to

validate and generalize these findings or identify potential variations. Additionally, employing intervening variables could offer insights into the variations of the results and enhance the depth of understanding in future studies.



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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Participant's Informed Consent

Title of the study: Effect of Project Manager's Soft Skills on Performance of Projects in Non-Governmental Organizations in Marsabit County, Kenya.

Name of Principal Investigator: JILLO ELEMA GALGALO

Mobile Number of Principal Investigator: +254726147630

Background and Purpose

Presently, I am enrolled as a student at Mount Kenya University, working towards obtaining a Master of Science degree in Project management and Planning. As a component of my academic obligations, I am undertaking a research study, and I am inviting your participation in this endeavor. The aim of this study is to investigate the Effect of Project Manager's Soft Skills on Performance of Projects in Non-Governmental Organizations in Marsabit County, Kenya.

Procedure

If you choose to participate in this research, you will be requested to complete a questionnaire that examines the project leaderships, project communication, stakeholders' management skills, problem solving skills and project performance. The information collected through this research will be summarized and solely utilized for academic purposes.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits for your participation in this study. However, it is anticipated that the insights gained from this research may contribute to enhancing efficiency in your organization.

Confidentiality

All information collected during this study will be coded to ensure confidentiality. Each research form will be assigned a code to safeguard your privacy and identity. The principal investigator will securely store all files and data in a locked cabinet within their office, and only research personnel will have access. Once the data is fully analyzed, it will be securely destroyed.

Voluntary Participation

Your decision to participate in this study is entirely voluntary. Should you choose to take part, you have the right to withdraw at any time without facing any prejudice.

Cost

There is no associated cost for participating in this study.

Questions

If you have any inquiries about the study, please contact the Principal Investigator at +254726147630. Alternatively, you can reach out to the Chairman of the Mount Kenya University Ethical Review Committee at P.O Box 342-01000, Thika.

CONSENT

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and comprehended the information provided in this form. I have had the opportunity to pose questions, and they have been addressed to my satisfaction. I willingly consent to participate in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____



Appendix II : Questionnaires

This questionnaire aims to explore the impact of project manager's soft skills on the performance of projects within non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Marsabit County, Kenya. The information gathered will be used exclusively for research purposes, ensuring complete confidentiality. Respondents are not required to provide their names or the names of their organizations. Your honest and thoughtful responses are highly valued and will contribute significantly to the study's insights on enhancing project performance through improved managerial skills.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please indicate your gender

Male Female Other

Indicate your age bracket

25- 39 years 40-49 years

50-59years above 60 years

Indicate your role in the organization

Project Manager

Project team member

Others (please specify)

How many years have you worked in this organization?

Less than 1 year 1-3 years

3-5 years 6-10 years

Over 10 years

How many projects are executed in your organization annually?

1-2 projects 3-5 projects

6- 10 projects Over 10 projects

SECTION B: PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Please indicate by putting a tick (✓) your level of agreement with the statements about project leadership. Where: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
During the project design phase, a project manager advises and leads his team in creating acceptable standards.					
Planning, organizing, assigning, and allocating tasks within the project team are aided by project leadership.					
The project manager makes sure that any potential risks are managed via a backup plan throughout the project's life cycle.					
In order to improve project performance, the project leader sets up an action plan for the project team and oversees the whole project cycle.					
Project management facilitates and maintains efficient communication amongst various stakeholders.					

How else does project leadership affect project performance in your organization?

.....

.....

.....

.....

SECTION C: PROJECT COMMUNICATION

Please indicate by putting a tick (✓) your level of agreement with the statements about project communication. Where: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
Due to network outages at distant project locations, mobile phone use by project teams is problematic.					
Various stakeholders often communicate information with one another.					
Effective communication is essential for fostering a sense of unity among team members and attaining a shared goal that promotes optimal performance.					
It is crucial that the project team provide feedback to senior management and the rest of the company.					
Good project performance is a result of timely feedback and effective communication.					
Expectations for project team members are communicated clearly at every stage of the project cycle.					

Describe other ways in which project communication affect project performance in NGOs

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D: STAKEHOLDERS MANGEMENT SKILLS

This section invites your feedback on the impact of team building on project performance within NGOs. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements by placing a checkmark (✓) in the appropriate box. Options are: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, and SA = Strongly Agree.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
In order for stakeholders to communicate with one another and provide support for one another via the sharing of resources and intellectual property, an environment that is favorable to such interactions should be developed.					
Individual stakeholders, the project manager, and the stakeholders themselves should all sign agreements. These agreements should also be signed by the project manager.					
A project manager's primary objective should be to fulfill the requirements set out by the stakeholders.					
Project managers are responsible for identifying stakeholders and incorporating them into the project at each and every milestone.					
It is necessary to have a strategy for managing stakeholders in order to keep track of how engaged stakeholders are.					
In order to encourage and motivate project stakeholders to engage in the project, project managers should encourage and motivate them.					

What further steps do you take to guarantee that the people who have a stake in the project are happy?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Which aspects of the project have required the participation of the stakeholders, and why was this necessary?

.....

SECTION E: PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Please put a tick (✓) to indicate the level of agreement to the statements pertaining to problem solving within projects in NGOs. Where: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
It is important for project managers to address issues as soon as they arise so that they do not spiral out of control.					
Those in charge of managing projects need to determine the underlying source of the issue.					

The project manager is responsible for putting the resolved issues into action and evaluating the outcomes.					
Resolution of conflicts contributes to the development of strong connections among members of the project team.					
In order to prevent issues from becoming more severe, project managers should find solutions to problems as soon as they appear.					
For the sake of maintaining order, the personnel of the project should prioritize the challenges at hand.					

Which aspects of your project demand you to develop your problem-solving skills?

.....

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.....

How do you tackle challenges in your project using additional ways other those listed here?

.....

.....

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.....
.....

SECTION F: PROJECT PERFORMANCE


Please highlight to the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below. Where:

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	N	D	SD
Every job is finished and delivered within the allotted period.					
Completed projects have made use of the allocated funds and resources.					
Projects that are finished are of the necessary caliber.					

Thank you

Appendix III : ERC Certificate



Mount Kenya University

REF: MKU/ISERC/3541 Date: 21 March 2024
TO: JILLO ELEMA GALGALO REG: MSCPM/2022/36030

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: EFFECT OF PROJECT MANAGER'S SOFT SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OF PROJECTS IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA


This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **2585**. The approval period is **21/03/2024 - 20/03/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,



✓ The Chairman
Mount Kenya University
Ethics Review Committee
P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika

Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC

Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika.
Cell: +254 709 153 000 / +254 709 153 200
Email: info@mku.ac.ke, Web: www.mku.ac.ke
Chartered and ISO 9001 : 2015 Certified Institution.
Unlocking Infinite Possibilities

Appendix V : Introduction Letter



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MSCPM/2022/36030

4th April, 2024

National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI KENYA

Dear Sir/Madam,

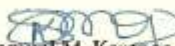
RE: IILLO ELEMA GALGALO- REGISTRATION NO. MSCPM/2022/36030

The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Science in Project Management** in the **Department of Management** in the school of **Business and Economics**.

The title of the research is **"Effect of Project Manager's Soft Skills on Performance of Projects in Non-Governmental Organization in Marsabit County, Kenya."** It has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **April, 2024 and June, 2024**.


Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.



Dr. Samuel M. Karenga, Ph.D
Director, Graduate Studies
Enc.

Mount Kenya University
P.O. Box 342-01000, THIKA
Office of the Director
Graduate Studies

Appendix V : Research Permit




REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: 725750 Date of Issue: 17/April/2024

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Mr. JILLO ELEMA GALGALO of Mount Kenyas University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Marsabit on the topic: EFFECT OF PROJECT MANAGER'S SOFT SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OF PROJECTS IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 17/April/2025.

License No: NACOSTI/P/24/34607


725750

Applicant Identification Number



Director General
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION**

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

Appendix VI : Field entry Authorization



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNAL SECURITY AND
NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

Telegrams:
Telephone:
Email: info@marsabit.go.ke
Fax:

**COUNTY COMMISSIONER
MARSABIT COUNTY
PO.BOX 29-60500
MARSABIT.**

When replying please quote
Ref: ED.12/3/VOL IV/139
and Date:

20th April, 2024.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE:RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION MRJILLO ELEMA GALGALO

This is to inform you that **MR. JILLO ELEMA GALGALO** ID NO **26413754** of Mount Kenya University has reported to this office as directed by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation and will be carrying out research on **“EFFECT OF PROJECT PROJECT MANAGER’S SOFT SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OFNON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROJECTS IN MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA.”**

Since authority has been granted by the said Commission, and the above-named person has reported to this office, he can embark on his research project for a period ending 18th May,2025.

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance he may require.


**BERNARD. K NJENGA
FOR: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
MARSABIT COUNTY.**

Appendix VII : Similarity

**EFFECT OF PROJECT
MANAGER'S SOFT SKILLS ON
PERFORMANCE OF NON-
GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANIZATIONS PROJECTS IN
MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA**

by ELEMA GALGALO

Submission date: 01-Jun-2024 11:15AM (UTC+0300)
Submission ID: 2374139106
File name: ELEMA_JILLO_final_project_1_.docx (379.9K)
Word count: 20675
Character count: 126575

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EFFECT OF PROJECT MANAGER'S SOFT SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROJECTS IN MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA

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Appendix VIII: Summary page

EFFECT OF PROJECT MANAGER'S SOFT SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROJECTS IN MARSABIT COUNTY, KENYA

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Appendix X: Last page

