

**Project Leadership Competencies, Project Communication, Community Participation And Project Implementation Efficiency: A Study Of Community Based Projects In Rakai District In The Central Region Of Uganda**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between project leadership competencies, project communication, community participation and project implementation efficiency in selected community-based projects in Rakai district in the central region of Uganda.

The study adopted cross sectional survey design to study project leadership competencies, project communication, community participation and project implementation efficiency in selected community based projects in Rakai district. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire issued to the respondents. A sample size of 260 Community based projects was used based on the derivation from the approved sampling table of Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) with 3 people from each selected project. Data was analyzed using statistical package for social scientists (SPSS V 20) package and Pearson correlation coefficient was used to measure the strength of relationships between the variables under study. The findings obtained revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between project leadership competencies, project communication, community participation and project implementation efficiency in selected community-based projects in Rakai district in the central region of Uganda. The findings shown that there was a positive significant relationship between project communication and community participation ( $r=.877^{**}$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This meant that any positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in community participation. In other words, project communication elements like Intra-project communication and Extra-project communication are associated with community participant. The study recommends that community based projects should put in place more measures such as encouraging project communication from low level (subordinates) so that they can easily improve on the forms of project communication since they were found to be more adequate. This will help in the flow of information from the top management of project teams to the other employees within the project.

**Key Words: Community Based Projects, Non-Government Organizations, Small and Medium Enterprises, project leadership competencies, project implementation efficiency**

**Introduction**

Community-based projects (CBPs) are major initiatives to intervene in common problems while promoting development in most communities (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). With this in mind, different projects are formulated and implemented every year with different purposes, such as educational interventions, ensuring clean water supplies, improving community health, promoting human rights and peace, managing natural resources and

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many others (Flavia et al. , 2023 ). These projects seek to provide solutions and hope to communities in need, such as rural areas where the majority of the population lives in developing countries (Christopher et al., 2022). Like other projects, community projects go through initiation, planning, testing, implementation and closure (Rashid et al., 2023). Government authorities and non-governmental organizations have established a number of community development projects in collaboration with communities (Christopher et al., 2022). Despite these numerous support projects, the UNHS Sixth Report 2016/2017 by UBOS stated that Central Region 1, under which Rakai District was classified, still has a high proportion of residents living in poverty estimated at 24.3 percent. The persistence of poverty in Rakai District is partly attributed to the failure to effectively implement community development projects (Zulaikah & Rebecca, 2023).

#### **Literature review**

##### **Project Leadership Competencies and Project Implementation Efficiency.**

Project management competence is an important element of project success (Syed, 2014). The performance and success of a project largely depends on the skilled workforce and how effectively the project is able to utilize this resource and use it effectively (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022). A competent and competitive workforce is therefore essential for projects and organizations to survive in rapidly changing environments. Having a competent and loyal leader in a project increases its potential for success due to increased work efficiency and minimal waste (Paul & Kazaara, 2023). Leaders exercise leadership through relationships (Isaac et al., 2023). Leaders' ability to communicate a clear vision and implement that vision through transformational leadership can positively impact performance and well-being in work contexts. (Victoria et al., 2023) investigated whether leadership skills such as technical skills, conceptual skills, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence have an effect on increasing productivity. Qualified and committed leadership can set good values. Learning and mastering different skills made it easier for leaders to spread and implement high standards in projects (Emmanuel et al., 2023).

##### **Theoretical underpinning of the study**

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This study was modeled based on diffusion theory. Diffusion theory of communication explains how new opinions and ideas spread through cultures (K. Faridah et al., 2023). Information and ideas go through the path of communication to reach the target group and the whole community. The spread of an idea is influenced by the nature of the idea to be spread, the available communication channels, the social system, and the time of communication (Westland, 2007). However, the most fundamental role in diffusion theory is played by the communication channel. The theory emphasizes that; it is difficult to influence or change how individuals behave and adopt their thinking (Pedro, 2017). Some people will embrace change immediately, while others will take time to embrace it. Based on the increasing focus of globalization in project management, the diversity of members has been strengthened to ensure multicultural representation.

The project manager should keep diffusion theory in mind when planning and implementing ideas in the project (Pedro, 2017). Some team members may be disoriented by minor changes in the plan, while others will not be affected (Campbell, 2009). All project plans should be specific to avoid confusion and inability to accommodate some members. The contribution of individual members must be considered to avoid unpleasant decisions that may end up indirectly excluding some members from the project. When the project manager is aware of the diffusion theory of communication, he can create plans and adjust them to meet the needs of all members (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023a).

Diffusion theory in projects promotes openness and feelings of inclusion from both the community and the community

Project team (Pedro, 2017). However, only individual considerations that may not have a negative impact on the health of the project should be taken into account. Project members should determine the best way a particular decision or communication channel will affect members. Some decisions and ideas may be shared online through email and social media, while others may be shared through a telephone conversation (Harrison, & Lock, 2004). However, for decisions that require face-to-face interaction, the project manager should organize a meeting to ensure that ideas are shared and that decisions and conclusions are drawn from a common sense of agreement. Studies have reported cases of project failure when the project leader does not use the correct communication channel to spread ideas (Pedro, 2017). Some ideas that need to be taken seriously may appear less serious based on the communication channel adopted. For example, using social media to communicate information regarding a project management change may seem informal and less serious. However, when ideas are sought based on their importance and communicated using the right channel, project execution becomes inevitable (Carroll, 2012).

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a quantitative approach and cross-sectional survey to draw findings on the relationships between Project leadership competences, project communication, community participation and project implementation efficiency projects in selected community-based projects in Rakai district in the central region of Uganda. With the

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help of quantitative approaches, it was easy to have a clear and scientific view on the opinions by having them on questionnaires and analyze them with Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) (Nelson et al., 2022). The study population comprised of 680 selected Community based projects in Rakai district- in the central region of Uganda (Nelson et al., 2022). The unit of analysis comprised of selected community based projects in Rakai district- in the central region of Uganda, while the unit of inquiry was 3 people from each selected projects. A sample size of 260 Community based projects was used based on the derivation from the approved sampling table of Krejcie and Morgan, (1970). This study adopted a simple random sampling procedure in order to get representative view of the various stakeholders on project implementation efficiency in selected community based projects. After collecting the data using a pre-coded questionnaire, it was edited for inconsistencies. Statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) version 21.0 was used for data entry and analysis. The Pearson coefficient correlation was used to establish the strength of linear relationships between project leadership competencies, project communication, community participation and project implementation efficiency. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to determine variance in the dependent variable that was explained by the independent variables.

### **Presentation of Findings**

**Table 1: Pearson correlation analysis coefficients of the variables**

| Variables                            | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4 |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| Project leadership competencies (1)  | 1      |        |        |   |
| Project communication (2)            | .357** | 1      |        |   |
| Community participation (3)          | .492** | .877** | 1      |   |
| Project implementation efficiency(4) | .254*  | .567** | .599** | 1 |

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

**Source:** Primary data

### **The relationship between project leadership competencies and project implementation efficiency**

The results in table 1, shows that there is a moderate significant positive relationship between project leadership competencies and project implementation efficiency ( $r=.254^{**}$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This means that any positive change in project leadership competencies reasonably increases project implementation efficiency. Thus project leadership is one of the key factors for project implementation efficiency. Therefore, projects should focus on developing leadership competencies among project leaders through training and development (Nelson et al., 2023).

### **The relationship between project leadership competencies and Community participation**

The results in table 1, shows that there is a positive significant relationship between project leadership competencies and Community participation ( $r=.492^{**}$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This means that any positive change in project leadership competencies is associated with a positive change in community participation (Paul & Kazaara, 2023). In other words

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community participation encompassing planning of meetings, sourcing of views, and choice of project from available lots, project location, funding, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stands for partnership which is built upon the basis of dialogue among the various actors.

#### **The relationship between project communication and community participation**

The results in table 1, shows that there is a positive significant relationship between project communication and community participation ( $r=.877^{**}$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This means that any positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in community participation. In other words project communication elements like Intra-project communication and Extra-project communication are associated with community participation (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023b). Communication needs change over time; the project team should adjust the timing of the communication to the stakeholder group as the involvement of the group changes during the project life cycle.

#### **The relationship between community participation and project implementation efficiency**

The results in table 1, shows that there is a positive significant relationship between community participation and project implementation efficiency ( $r=.599^{**}$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This implies that community participation greatly increases project implementation efficiency among projects. In other words for a smooth implementation of projects, there is need to incorporate all the necessary stakeholders, especially who may impact the project positively (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). The good social or relational project implementation efficiency would doubtless have to stem from high level of community participation.

#### **The relationship between project communication and project implementation efficiency**

The results in table 1, shows that there is a positive significant relationship between communication and project implementation efficiency ( $r=.567^{**}$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This means that any positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in project implementation efficiency (Tasha et al., 2023). In other words communication is a key element, which has to be applied effectively throughout a project's life cycle and it cannot be taken for granted, as it requires preparation and persistence.

#### **Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to determine the predictive power of the separate variables (Project leadership competencies, Project communication, and Community participation) on the dependent variable (Project implementation efficiency). The results are presented in the table 2 below;

**Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis**

|            | Unstandardized |            | Standardized |  | t     | Sig. | Collinearity |     |
|------------|----------------|------------|--------------|--|-------|------|--------------|-----|
|            | Coefficients   |            | Coefficients |  |       |      | Statistics   |     |
|            | B              | Std. Error | Beta         |  |       |      | Tolerance    | VIF |
| (Constant) | .949           | .222       |              |  | 4.274 | .000 |              |     |

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|                                 |       |                |                     |        |       |               |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------|---------------------|--------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Project leadership competencies | .061  | .046           | .083                | 1.310  | .193  | .769          | 1.301 |
| Project communication           | .208  | .051           | .264                | 4.112  | .000  | .744          | 1.345 |
| Community participation         | .505  | .054           | .588                | 9.299  | .000  | .765          | 1.308 |
|                                 | R     | R <sup>2</sup> | Adj. R <sup>2</sup> | F      | Sig.  | Durbin-Watson |       |
|                                 | .781a | .609           | .600                | 66.509 | .000b | 1.602         |       |

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 2 reveals overall  $F=66.509$ ,  $\text{Sig}.<.05$  in relation to project leadership competencies, project communication and community participation. The results signify that the model is statistically significant, valid and fit. The validity of the model signifies that project leadership competencies, project communication, and community participation predict a significant relationship with Project implementation efficiency (Annet et al., 2023). In addition, the model reveals Variance Inflation Factor ( $VIF<5$ ) and tolerance values  $>0.1$  which signifies no issues of collinearity in the observed data. Henceforth, the model was fit enough to be based for making conclusions and recommendations. The regression model reveals Adjusted R Square=.600 which signifies jointly project leadership competencies, project communication, and community participation predict 60% of the variance project implementation efficiency. Furthermore, the standardized coefficients for project communication indicate  $\beta=.264$ ,  $t=4.112$ ,  $p<.05$  and community participation reveals  $\beta=.588$ ,  $t=9.299$ ,  $p<.05$  while project leadership competencies indicate  $\beta=.083$ ,  $t=1.310$ ,  $p>.05$ . Based on these statistics, it is conclusive that the variables which predict project implementation efficiency are Project communication and Community participation (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). Moreover, it is evident that community participation reveals a higher Beta compared to project communication ( $\beta=.588$  compared to  $\beta=.264$ ). In this regard, the results signify that the most important predictor of project implementation efficiency is Community participation.

### **Mediating Analysis of the variables**

Under this sub-section, the study used Sobel's test by conducting a hierarchical multiple regression model to examine the mediating effect of community participation on the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy. The analysis was further used to check whether the conditions suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986), who indicated that a mediating effect occurs when an independent variable influences the dependent through its effects on or as a result of a mediator variable are satisfied. In addition, the med graph was also used to illustrate the significance of mediation role of community participation on the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy.

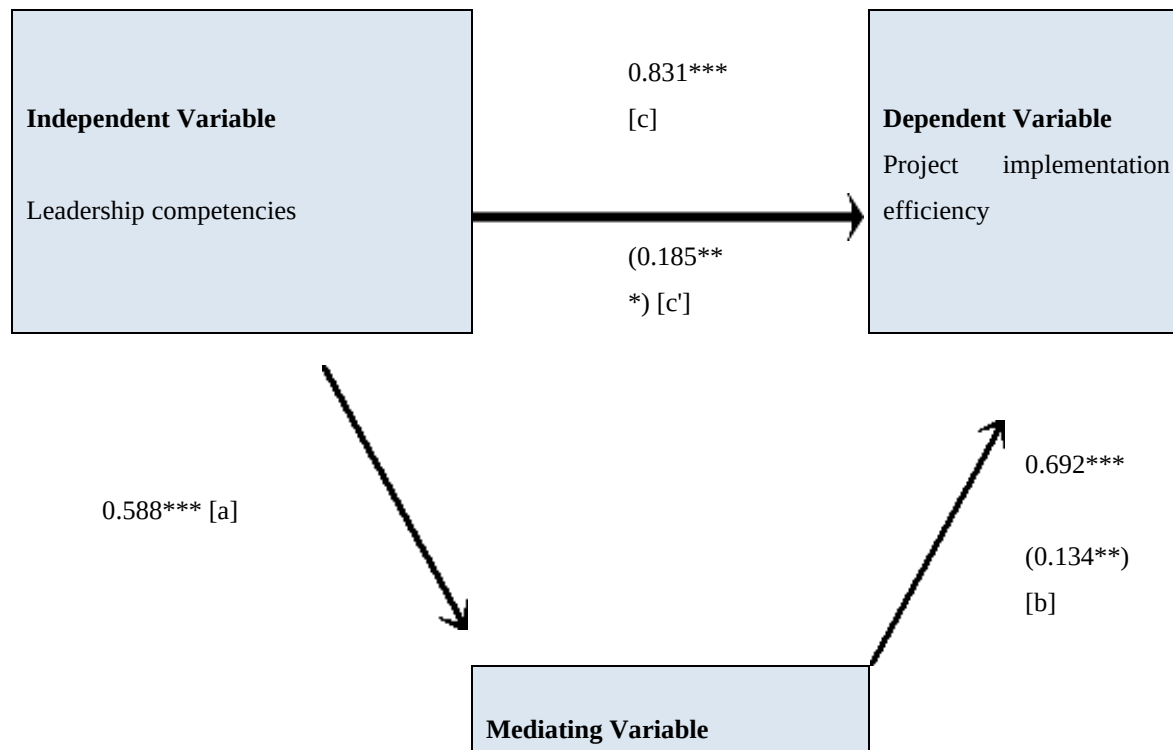
Table 3

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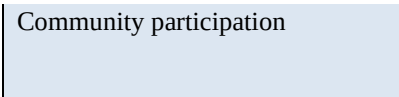
|                                     |          |            |         |
|-------------------------------------|----------|------------|---------|
|                                     |          | Significan |         |
| Type of mediation                   | t        |            | 0.02037 |
| Sobel z-value                       | 2.319303 | p =        | 9       |
| 95% Symmetrical Confidence interval |          |            |         |
| Effective Size measures             |          |            |         |
| Standardized Coefficients           |          |            |         |
| Total:                              | 0.831    |            |         |
| Direct:                             | 0.185    |            |         |
| Indirect:                           | 0.078    |            |         |
| Indirect to Total ratio             | 9.481    |            |         |



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**Note:**  $n=138$ ; Type of Mediation: Partial; Direct= .831; Indirect=.646, \*\*  $p<.01$ , \*\*\*  $p<.001$

**Figure 1: Showing mediating role of community participation on the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy**

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 3 indicates that there exists a significant relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy as reflected in Model 2 ( $r^2=.056$ ,  $F\text{-value}=4.879$ ,  $p<.05$ ). In relation to Model 3, the regression statistics reveal that relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy remains significant, even where the community participation which is presumed to mediate the relationship between the two is included in the Model ( $r^2=.072$ ,  $F\text{-value}=5.315$ ,  $p<.05$ ) (N. Faridah et al., 2023). Furthermore, the Standardized Beta coefficient reveals that community participation is a statistically significant predictor as expressed under Model 3 ( $\beta=.134$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Lastly, the statistics reveal that much as the standardized Beta coefficient for leadership competences remains statistically significant before and after the inclusion of the presumed mediator, it significantly declines as expressed in Model 2 and Model 3 of the statistics ( $\beta=.224$  to  $\beta=.185$ ) (Musaibah et al., 2023). These aspects are in congruence with the conditions stipulated by Baron and Kenny (1986), upon which it is concluded that the presumed mediator is actually a significant mediator.

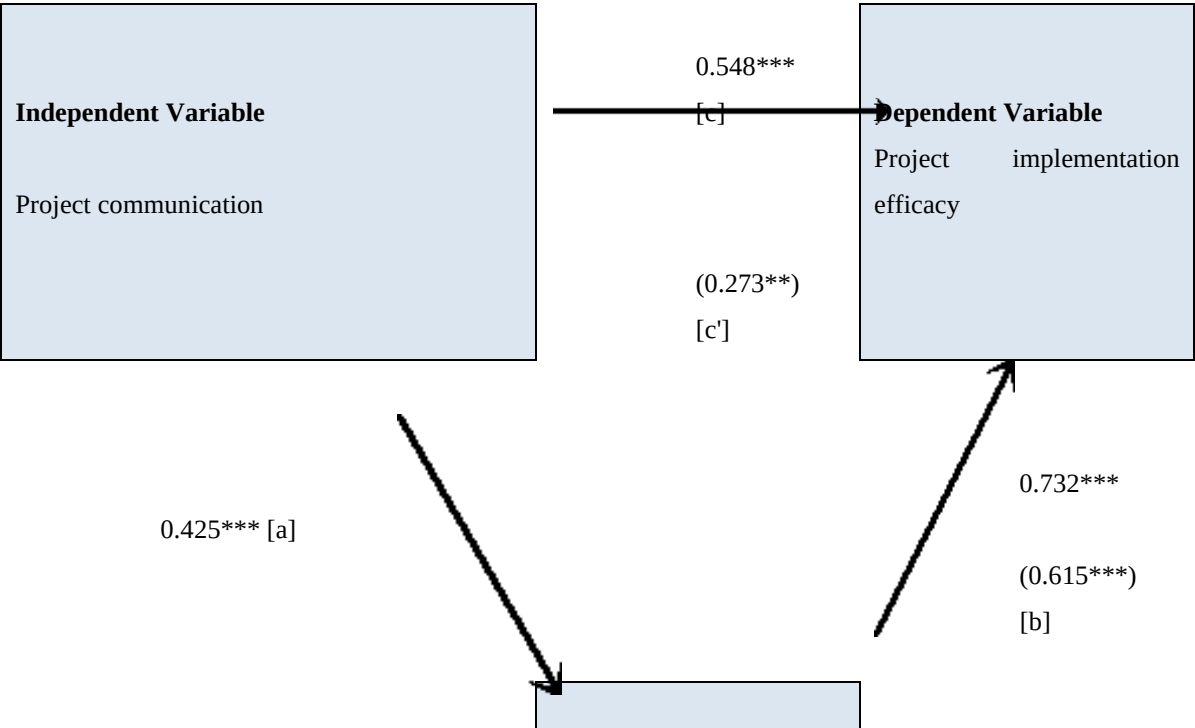
That said, Figure 1 reveals a Sobel  $z\text{-value}=2.319303$  with a  $p\text{-value}<.05$ , which satisfactorily implies that community participation fully mediates in the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy. In addition, it is revealed that 77.7% ( $0.646/0.831$ ) \*100 of the effect of leadership competences towards project implementation efficacy is indirect or stimulated by community participation while 22.3% is the direct (Micheal et al., 2023).

#### **Mediating Analysis of the variables**

We apply the normal theory approach developed by Sobel (1982) and Baron and Kenny (1986). Sobel test was conducted using the Jose's Medigraph for each variable to confirm the mediation. According to (Racheal et al., 2023), four conditions must be fulfilled to conclusively state a significant relationship. First, the variations in the independent variable significantly account for variance in the presumed mediator. Secondly, the variations in the mediator significantly account for variance in the dependent variable. Thirdly, the variations in the independent variable significantly account for variance in the dependent variable. Lastly, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable significantly reduces when the mediator is included in the equation. The results are displayed in Figures 2

| Type of mediation    | Significant          |                          |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
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|                                     |         |     |           |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-----|-----------|
| Sobel z-value                       | 4.98224 | p = | <0.000001 |
| 95% Symmetrical Confidence interval |         |     |           |
| Lower                               | 0.11498 |     |           |
| Higher                              | 0.26412 |     |           |
| Unstandardized indirect effect      |         |     |           |
| a*b                                 | 0.18955 |     |           |
| Se                                  | 0.03805 |     |           |



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**Mediating Variable**

Community participation

**Figure 2: Note: n=419, Type of Mediation=Partial, Durbin-Watson=1.602, Direct=.548, Indirect=.275: Mediating Effect of community participation on the relationship between project communication and project implementation efficacy.**

Figures 2 both reveal that community participation fully mediates the relationship between project communication and project implementation efficacy. Overall, the results indicate a ratio index of 68.6 percent given by  $(0.290/0.432*100)$ , signifying that 50.2 percent of the effect of project communication on project implementation efficacy is direct while 49.8 percent is indirect. In other words, the mediation results suggest a partial mediation effect of project implementation efficacy (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023a).

**Discussion of findings**

**The relationship between project leadership competencies and project implementation efficiency**

The findings of the study indicate a moderate significant positive relationship between project leadership competencies and project implementation efficiency implying that any positive change in project leadership competencies reasonably increases project implementation efficiency among community based projects.

These findings are in line with the works of (Seyd, 2014) who said that the competencies are the abilities that help a leader to work efficiently with subordinates, peers, and superiors to accomplish the project's goals. Human skills allow a leader to assist group members in working cooperatively as a group to achieve common goals. It means being aware of one's own perspective on issues and, at the same time, being aware of the perspective of others. Leaders with human skills adapt their own ideas to those of others. The findings are in agreement with Kanungo (2017) who argued that employees can feel comfortable and secure and where they can feel encouraged to become involved in the planning of things that will affect them. In this study, it was established that having human skills implies that a leader is sensitive to the needs and motivations of others and taking into account their needs during decision making (Ronet et al., 2023). According to the different research project leadership is one of the key factors for project implementation efficiency. Therefore, the project should focus on developing leadership competencies among project leaders through training and development.

**The relationship between project leadership competencies and Community participation.**

Statistical results indicate that there is a positive significant relationship between project leadership competencies and Community participation. This means that any positive change in project leadership competencies is associated with a positive change in community participation. These findings are supported by extant findings by Barenboim, (2015) who stated that effective leaders are those who in addition to the above components are able to have a strong vision

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delivery style characterized by non-verbal, emotional communication skills as a key determinant of perceived charisma and leadership effectiveness (Musaibah et al., 2023).

Furthermore, these findings are also in line with the earlier observations made by Barling (2018) who stated that a combination of leadership competencies intertwined with sensitivity to member needs and the community, allowing expression of personal concerns, listening to people complaints and identifying threats, opportunities and constraints will always keep followers rest their confidence in such a leader. The study findings conceded with the earlier observations made by Rodin-Brown (2018), who noted that competent leaders draw their imaginations on how others feel and generate sympathetic feelings on how to comfort and make those in poor state feel happy. Those actions help a leader be viewed as a saviour and not an exploiter of people's energy, there by engaging others in the process of owning and implementing the vision (Innocent et al., 2023).

**The relationship between project communication and community participation.**

Findings from the correlation analysis confirm a significant positive relationship between project communication and community participation. This implies that any positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in community participation. This implies that it is important that communication is factually correct and consistent especially relevant for tribes and communities with a high percentage of minorities (Lydia et al., 2023).

The study findings conceded with the earlier observations made by Rodin-Brown (2018), who noted that communication among the project team members is crucial for the project success where every member of the project team has their specific knowledge, information, skills and motivation of the project. The challenge for project communication increases the bigger and more geographically dispersed the project team is (K. Faridah et al., 2023). Findings also confirmed that Internal communication is among one of the most important factors for project success in managing projects. The role play by internal communications in an organization is tangible as an effective tool in project management hence leading to project success. The most efficient way to plan internal communications for a project is the beginning of the project. It is important to plan which documents need to be informed as well as the tools to communicate during the project.

Furthermore, these findings are also in line with the earlier observations made by Barling (2017) who stated that project managers should provide timely and frequent announcements of public meetings through local media and/or flyers and identify the source where interested community members can get more information (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022); develop sponsoring and co-planning relationships with community groups, ensuring them shared roles in developing agendas, setting of goals, and providing leadership and outreach; plan meetings that are accessible and accommodating.

The findings by Ramsing (2019), revealed that community leaders can assist in the communication of information by suggesting appropriate means of informing the community, talking to their respective constituents, announcing meetings, ensuring that participation efforts reflect cultural diversity and communication differences among the ethnic

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groups. In this study, it was established that developing notices that are concise, understandable, and available to the community/communities involved, mapping the capabilities and assets of individuals, citizen associations, and local institutions, and building relationships and alliances to respond to the project challenges; perform active and extensive outreach methods such as programs, presentations in public meetings, workshops/seminars, advertisements in local papers, community newsletters.

**The relationship between community participation and project implementation efficiency.**

The study results indicate a strong significant positive relationship between community participation and project implementation efficiency. This implies that community participation greatly increases project implementation efficiency among projects. In other words for a smooth implementation of projects, there is need to incorporate all the necessary stakeholders, especially who may impact the project positively. The good social or relational project implementation efficiency would doubtless have to stem from high level of community participation. This finding is supported by Argyles' (2015) and Tierce (2016) who confirms that when looking at the; Factors influencing performance of Community Development projects, Observed that "involvement of key development practitioners and the community in policy making and implementation and constant policy updates is central to performance". These findings are consistent with the works of (Winny et al., 2023), who confirms that a positive relationship between community participation and the performance of community development projects. This means that community participation is very crucial in any development process in rural communities (Amangwai et al 2019). Rural people whose development projects are to benefit should be involved and included in the decision making process concerning such projects otherwise such projects would always fail (Bakari and Said, 2018).

**The relationship between project communication and project implementation efficiency.**

The study findings reveal a strong significant relationship between communication and project implementation efficiency. This means that any positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in project implementation efficiency. These findings are consistent with the works of Nooteboom (2017) who confirms that project managers to providing regular progress reports on subproject implementation status. These findings concur with Allen *et al.*, (2016), who submitted that community-based monitoring and evaluation allows communities to make their own analysis, learn from their own mistakes and therefore improve in the future. Rubio (2016), argues that community participation in monitoring and evaluation enables partner communities to identity their own strengths and weaknesses, rather than depending on outsiders to point out deficiencies or corrections to be made. This, he continues, generates ownership among different groups in society, thus increasing the acceptance and use of findings.

Furthermore, according to Babulo *et al.*, (2018), agree that when potential beneficiaries make key project decisions through local language, then participation moves to the level of self-initiated actions. All these promote ownership of project initiatives. However, Mosse (2017) contends that the local knowledge is always confused with the planning context, which conceals the underlying politics of knowledge production and use. He adds that local knowledge is

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always shaped by local relations of power, outsider agendas and local people concurring in the process of problem definition and planning because it creates the space within which they can manipulate the program to serve their own interests.

The findings show that there is need to prepare statements of expenditures, maintain proper accounts, and conduct selective audits, the need for a project initiation process in the success of project accomplishment, prior experience with the community similar communities and they require proper knowledge and skills with clear written goals. This is backed by the works of Bitter (2018), who noted that transparency in monitoring and evaluation is a key element in making operational agencies more accountable. Involving project stakeholders and making reports and evaluations public can achieve it. In modern development thinking, participatory monitoring and evaluation as opposed to external monitoring is a recommended practice because it brings about ownership, sustainability and accountability.

The study by Lehmuskallio (2018), argued internal communication is among one of the most important factors for organizational success in managing projects. In this research study, researcher focuses on internal communications using technology among employees in order to manage projects successfully in an organization through online and offline communication link. The role play by internal communications in an organization is tangible as an effective tool in project success. Every aspect of business requires a good communication network. It is regarded as the foundation upon which organization of business is built. However, it is not exaggeration to say that communication is the means by which organized activities is unified fit oriented organization, the transfer of information from one individual to another is absolute essential.

#### **The mediating effect of community participation on the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy**

The research results further revealed that community participation does play a mediating role in the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy. This could partly be explained by the nature and the type of community participation mechanisms that are implemented during the implementation of the project. Community participation tends to span a number of personal issues such as information sharing and consultation that are associated with. These aspects are in congruence with the conditions stipulated by Baron and Kenny (1986), upon which it is concluded that the presumed mediator is actually a significant mediator. In addition, it is revealed that 77.7% (0.646/0.831) \*100 of the effect of leadership competencies towards project implementation efficiency is indirect or stimulated by community participation while 22.3% is the direct

#### **The mediating effect of community participation on the relationship between project communication and project implementation efficacy**

This study obtained that community participation is a significant mediator in the relationship between project communication and project implementation efficacy. The mediation effect of community participation is relatively limited, and this study is a potential value adding research. Instead, most of the prevailing literature is for direct

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influence towards project implementation efficacy. Notable, a study by Aaltonen and Kujala (2016) affirms that community participation directly predicts project implementation efficacy. Kivits (2013) also complement that when the community is has participated in the implementation of projects, the project is in position to eliminate conflicts and increase cooperation between the firm and the stakeholders which reduces time redundancy

### **Conclusions**

Project leadership competencies as another construct were noted to be a significant predictor of project implementation efficiency at community based projects. These results were a confirmation of the Pearson correlation coefficient results. This shows that community based projects that implement good Project leadership competencies like abilities; skills and knowledge are more likely to achieve project implementation efficiency than their counterparts that neglect the practice of good project leadership competencies. In other words, Project leadership competencies among community based projects depend largely on good and enhanced project implementation efficiency. Good administrative control and exchange governance may be attributed to good business oriented leadership with visionary people.

Project leadership competencies as a construct in the study was noted to be a significant predictor of community participation among community based projects following the regression analysis results. These results were a confirmation of the Pearson correlation coefficient results. These results show that an increase in project leadership competencies among community based projects is more likely to reduce their community participation in community based projects.

The study also established that positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in community participation. In other words project communication elements like Intra-project communication and Extra-project communication are associated with community participation. Communication needs change over time; the project team should adjust the timing of the communication to the stakeholder group as the involvement of the group changes during the project life cycle. This means that project communication among the stakeholder's acts as a conduit in community participation.

The relationship between community participation and project implementation efficiency showed a significant positive relationship. The results further show that a smooth implementation of projects there is needed to incorporate all the necessary stakeholders especially that may impact the project positively. The good social or relational project implementation efficiency would doubtless have to stem from high level of community participation.

The study findings reveal a strong significant relationship between project communication and project implementation efficiency. This means that any positive change in project communication is associated with a positive change in project implementation efficiency.

Finally, the predictor variables in this study account for 60% of the variance project implementation efficiency. This covers project leadership competencies, project communication and community participation as significant predictors

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of project implementation efficiency at community based projects. The remaining percentage may be associated with other factors outside this study. This is because project implementation efficiency by community based projects is affected by factors which differ from one project to another. Thus, it is important to consider variety of factors as they apply to each project than to generalize the predictors of project implementation efficiency.

The mediating role of community participation on the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy implied that community participation is a conduit in the relationship between leadership competences and project implementation efficacy.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the discussion of the findings, the researcher made the following specific recommendations that can be considered among others in the efforts to strengthen project implementation efficiency in community based projects. The study recommends that community based projects should put in place more measures such as encouraging project communication from low level (subordinates) so that they can easily improve on the forms of project communication since they were found to be more adequate. This will help in the flow of information from the top management of project teams to the other employees within the project.

The study recommends that community based projects should improve on the community participation of the various stakeholders of the project in order to yield high level of project implementation efficiency. There is need for improving community participation systems with help of monitoring team to easily monitor the projects and encourage its effectiveness.

Community based projects for a long time has been deprived of information on the role of their effort in development processes. In this case there is a strong need for awareness on the role of the communities and their project leadership competencies in ensuring community participation. As such there is a need to establish community based information technological centres (ITC) for the exhibit, storage and distribution of community participation related knowledge to communities. County governments, NGOs and other development partners should strengthen community awareness on the value of the role of the locals in sustainable development.

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