

**The Effects Of Monitoring And Evaluation On The Success Of Government Projects In Uganda. A Case Study
Of Iganga Municipality**

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Abstract

This qualitative study examined the effects of monitoring and evaluation on the success of government projects in Uganda. The study was guided by the result-based management theory as a resource management strategy. The theory has significant implications for strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. RBM places the measurement of results at the heart of management. There are passionate debates about how useful or appropriate it is within social development. The study was guided by the following objectives; to examine the role of M&E team capacity and skills in successful implementation of projects, to examine the role of M&E transparency and accountability in successful implementation of projects and to examine the role of M&E participatory decision-making in success of projects. The study revealed that 36 (92.3%) of the study's respondents agreed that projects are completed on schedule and on budget, 2 (5%) were not sure with the statement while 1 (2.7%) disagreed with the statement. With respect to skilled monitoring personals encourage diversity of thoughts and opinions, 29 (74.4%) of the respondents agreed to the statement, 8 (20.5%) were not sure however 2 (5.1%) disagreed with the statement. The study was conducted from Iganga municipality with a population of 39 respondents. The study revealed that monitoring and monitoring skills. The study furthermore recommends that in absence of monitoring and evaluation the, Iganga municipality programs will not achieve the set goals. The study observed that majority of the employees at Iganga municipality are female employees, so the study recommends Iganga chief executive officer to always consider gender balance among employees.

Keywords: Monitoring, Evaluation and Government Projects

Background of the study

The Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook (Faith, Kalikola, Ariyo, et al., 2023) defined monitoring as the day-to-day management task of gathering and reviewing information that reveals how an operation is performing and what aspects of it, if any, need to be fixed. I am a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on set indicators to inform management and key operational stakeholders on an ongoing basis of the extent of progress and

achievement of results in the utilization of allocated funds (Ivan et al., 2023). While it defined evaluation as a systematic and objective evaluation of an ongoing or completed operation, program or policy, its design, implementation and results. Evaluation focuses on determining relevance and meeting objectives, as well as effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (Lydia et al., 2023). The evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful and allows for

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the incorporation of acquired knowledge into management decision-making. There is a growing need for project management in various areas. Companies, NGOs and governments are now increasingly using projects in their daily work to achieve their goals. Surprisingly, it is still somewhat unclear in the project management literature what makes a successful project in general, and particularly in terms of the government context or the companies involved (Frank et al., 2023). The concept of project success has not been precisely defined anywhere in the project management literature. Failure is also an imprecise and ill-defined term used by experts and in the literature, without a deeper meaning (Ntirandekura et al., 2022) concluded that there does not seem to be any agreed understanding of the concept of success in business or project management literature. Cooke-Davies (2022) also noted that decades of individual and collective efforts by project management researchers since the 1960s have not led to the discovery of a definitive set of factors leading to project success.

According to the Project Management Institute (F. Christopher et al., 2022), a project is a temporary endeavor that aims to produce a unique outcome. However, (Alex et al., 2023) defines a project as a series of unique and related activities with a goal that must be achieved within a set time, within its cost constraints and in accordance with established specifications. The current study will adopt the project management institute PMBOK guide (2013) definition of a project and this definition will be the basis for

understanding the term project. In Uganda, the monitoring and evaluation of government projects, especially within the Gender Equality Department and the work of the Iganga Municipality, is essential for various reasons: gender equality; Uganda faces gender inequalities in various aspects of life, including education, employment and political representation (Nelson, 2024). Monitoring and evaluation of gender-related projects is essential to track progress towards gender equality. In Uganda, monitoring and evaluation promotes accountability and transparency and ensures that government projects are implemented effectively (Faith, Kalikola, Ariyo, et al., 2023). The Ministry commonly called the Ministry of Gender Equality has one of its main tasks to ensure that all Ugandans have a better standard of living, especially the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The ministry was created by a constitutional requirement in 1995. Chapters 4 and 16 of the Ugandan constitution mandate the government to “empower communities through harnessing their potential in skills development, labor productivity and cultural growth (Paul & Kazaara, 2023). The Constitution promotes protection through the Social Development Sector (SDS), which promotes issues of social protection, gender equality, equality, human rights, culture, decent working conditions and the empowerment of children, unemployed youth, internally displaced persons, the elderly and persons with disabilities (T. Christopher et al., 2022). The Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development (MGLSD) is the lead agency for the sector and is mandated to develop and implement the Social

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Development Investment Plan (SDIP) with a mandate to enable communities to realize their potential through cultural growth, skills. development and labor productivity for sustainable and gender-sensitive

development (Ntirandekura & Samwuel, 2022). Thus, understanding the monitoring and evaluation of these programs in Iganga Municipality is the mandate of this study.

Problem Statement

Government projects aim to improve the standard of living and livelihood of citizens, promote a safe environment, improve transport networks and other network systems, create employment opportunities and promote human rights (Flavia et al., 2023). However, government projects among various communities including Iganga village have not achieved their set goals. Reports of rape, child labor and family conflict are ongoing in Iganga village (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022a). Due to the existence of such vices, the government of Uganda has invested billions of shillings in projects such as promoting and protecting the rights of vulnerable populations, addressing gender inequalities, ensuring cultural growth, work and employment, as well as community mobilization and empowerment (Edgar & Moses, 2023). However, these projects achieved little success as expected. Reasons for project failure can be attributed to cost overruns, time overruns, and substandard quality. However, government projects could achieve their stated goals if proper management practices such as monitoring and evaluation were given first priority (Frank et al., 2023). Monitoring and evaluation could be useful in the implementation of these projects, proper planning, focusing on the planned scope and developing the right communication channel are considered among scholars as the best monitoring and evaluation measures that could enable these projects to achieve their stated goals (Faith, Kalikola, Ariyo et al., 2023). When such factors are considered, that is when government projects in Iganga could achieve their goals and objectives. Therefore, the researcher investigated the effect of monitoring and evaluation in achieving the success of a government project.

Specific Objectives

1. To examine the role of M&E team capacity and skills in successful implementation of projects
2. To examine the role of M&E transparency and accountability in successful implementation of projects
3. To examine the role of M&E participatory decision-making in success of projects

Methodology

(Olanrewaju et al., 2021a) defined a research design as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to the research problem. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative approaches where people's views and opinions will be sought and described accordingly (Lu et al., 2013). The study covered all positions at Iganga municipality. The actual population include 1 town clerk, 20 councilors, 2 council speaker, 5 engineers, 5 education and sports representatives, 6 health and sanitation representatives, 4 police

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officers, 2 mayor of the municipality and 1 town clerk (Rasheed et al., 2022). Determination of sample size is the process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from the population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b). A sample size of 45 respondents was obtained from the population size of the study using different sampling methods as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Showing sample size and sampling techniques

Category	Sample size	Sampling technique
Town clerk	1	Purposive sampling method
Mayor	2	Purposive sampling
Speakers	2	Purposive sampling
Police officers	4	Purposive sampling
Councilors	20	Simple random sampling
Engineers	5	Purposive sampling
Education and sports representatives	5	Purposive sampling
Health and sanitation representatives	6	Purposive sampling
Total	45	

Primary data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview guides which will be administered to respondents since they are the ones to give firsthand information on the subject under study. Questionnaires such as open ended and close ended questionnaires consisting of a series of questions were drafted to collect information in relation to the research objectives or questions. According to (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b), secondary data method collects data from primary sources which can be used in the current research. This method took considerably less time than collecting primary data. Secondary data was got from project reports and stated objectives reports.

The study used a 5-point Likert scale to measure the variables which are monitoring and evaluation and project success to come up with findings (Jallow et al., 2022). The scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree). Editing of collected data was done to make data ready and simpler for presentation. The filled questionnaires shall be edited one by one to correct errors done by the respondents

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(Nafiu et al., 2012). Data was edited in order to check for accuracy, completeness, consistency and uniformity. The edited data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively as follows; Quantitative data was grouped and statistical description such as tables showing frequencies and percentages were used for better interpretation (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b). However, qualitative data was analyzed in a way of identifying the responses from respondents that are relevant to the research problem. Mainly such data was analyzed by explaining the facts collected from the field under which the researcher was able to quote respondents' responses (Nafiu et al., 2013). Data was analyzed in form of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022)

RESULTS

Table 2: Showing respondents responses on the role of M&E team capacity and skills on successful implementation of projects

Statement	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Project staffs in the county government are trained to equip them with the appropriate M&E skills.	38	97.4	1	2.6		
The management take monitoring teams into seminars and belief about the job, their roles	38	97.4	1	2.6		
The management team prioritizes recruitment of skilled personnel to carry out the M&E functions.	36	92.3	3	7.7		
Evaluation results are integrated in policy formulation at the county level	37	94.8	1	2.6	1	2.6
Projects are completed on schedule and on budget.	36	92.3	2	5	1	2.7
Skilled monitoring team keep their activities organized	29	74.4	8	20.	2	5.1

Skilled monitoring personals encourage diversity of thoughts and opinions	31	79.5	2	5.1	6	15.4
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Source: primary source 2023

Table 2 above shows respondents responses about the role of M&E team capacity and skills on successful implementation of projects and the results shows that all most every respondent 38 (97.4%) agreed that Project staffs in the county government are trained to equip them with the appropriate M&E skills however, 1(2.6%) disagreed with the statement (Faith, Kalikola, Ariyo, et al., 2023).

The study went further and revealed that 36(92.3%) of the respondents agreed that the management take monitoring teams into seminars and believed about the job, their roles while 3 (7.7%) were not sure of the role. The study went further and inquired if Evaluation results are integrated in policy formulation at the county level and 37 (94.8%) agreed, 1 (2.6%) was not sure and (2.6%) of them disagreed. The study furthermore inquired if management team prioritizes recruitment of skilled personnel to carry out the M&E functions and 36 (92.3%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, 2 (5%) of the respondents were not sure while 1 (2.7%) of them disagreed with the effect (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022b).

The study also revealed that 36 (92.3%) of the study's respondents agreed that projects are completed on schedule and on budget, 2 (5%) were not sure with the statement while 1 (2.7%) disagreed with the statement. With respect to skilled monitoring personals encourage diversity of thoughts and opinions, 29 (74.4%) of the respondents agreed to the statement, 8 (20.5%) were not sure however 2 (5.1%) disagreed with the statement. Lastly, the study inquired on whether skilled monitoring personals encourage diversity of thoughts and opinions and the responses shows that 29 (74.4%) of them agreed while 8 (20.5%) were not sure however, 2 (5.1%) disagreed with the statement (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022c).

Table 3: Showing respondents responses on role of M&E transparency and accountability on successful implementation of projects

Statement	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

M& e accountability helps ensure resources are used efficiently	38	97.4	1	2.6		
M& e results in better transparency and accountability	30	77	5	12.8	4	10.2
Transparency and accountability support the management team to develop project outcomes	22	56.4	9	23.1	8	20.5
Monitoring and evaluation of transparency and accountability promotes feedback	19	49	6	15	14	36
M & E accountability result to project accounting practices	24	61.5	11	28.2	4	10.3
Monitoring and evaluation transparency and accountability promotes compliance among management	36	92.3	3	7.7		

Source: Primary source 2023

Table 3 above shows respondents responses on the role of M&E transparency and accountability on successful implementation of projects and the results shows that 38 (97.4%) agreed that M& E accountability helps ensure resources are used efficiently however 1 (2.6%) disagreed with the statement. The study went further and revealed that 30 (77%) of the study respondents agreed that M& E results in better transparency and accountability, 5 (12.8%) were not sure with the role however 4 (10.2%) of the study population disagreed with the role (Faith, Kalikola, Kazaara, et al., 2023).

The third statement thought to investigate whether transparency and accountability support the management team to develop project outcomes and the results shows that more than half 22 (56.4%) agreed with the statement, 9 (23.1%) were not sure however 8 (20.5%) disagreed with the statement. The study went further and inquired about Monitoring and evaluation of transparency and accountability promotes feedback and the results 19 (49%) of the respondents

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agreed with the statement while 6 (15%) of the respondents were not sure however 14 (36%) disagreed with the statement.

The study went further and revealed that 19 (49%) of the respondents agreed that Monitoring and evaluation of transparency and accountability promotes feedback, 6 (15%) were not sure with the role however 4 (10.3%) disagreed with the statement. The study furthermore, revealed that 24 (61.5%) of the respondents agreed that M & E accountability result to project accounting practices, 11 (28.2%) were not sure while 4 (10.3%) of the total respondents disagreed with the statement. Lastly revealed that more than half 36 (92.3%) agreed that Monitoring and evaluation transparency and accountability promotes compliance among management while 3 (7.7%) of them was not aware.

Table 4: Showing responses of respondents on the role of M&E participatory decision- making on success of projects

Statement	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Project Stakeholders were known and documented.	38	97.4	1	2.6		

Stakeholders" engagements in the formulation of M&E promote cost effectiveness.	12	31	13	33	14	36
Stakeholders are involved in identification and tracking of indicators.	38	97.4	1	2.6		
Stakeholders had knowledge of Monitoring and evaluation practices.	14	36	14	36	11	28
The involvement of stakeholder influences the implementation n of M&E.	37	95			2	5

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Stakeholders were involved in Monitoring and evaluation activities	23	59	13	33.3	3	7.7
The involvement of stakeholder influences the implementation of M&E.	35	89.7	3	7.7	1	2.6

Source: Primary source 2023

The third research question was about examining the role of M& E participatory decision making on success of project and the study result shows that all most all respondents 38 (97.4%) agreed that project stakeholders are always known and, while 1 (2.6%) of them were not sure with the statement (Nancy & Prudence, 2024). The role was about an understanding if stakeholders' engagements in the formulation of M&E promote cost effectiveness and the results show that majority 14 (36%) disagreed with the impact while 13 (33%) of them were not sure with the statement however 12 (31%) agreed with the impact. On understanding if stakeholders are involved in identification and tracking of indicators and majority 38 (97.4%) of the respondents agreed while 1 (2.6%) was not sure with the statement.

With respect to an understanding if stakeholders have knowledge of Monitoring and evaluation practices, 14 (36%) of the respondents agreed with the statement while the same number 14 (36%) of the study respondents were not sure with the statement however 11 (28%) of the total study's respondents disagreed with the statement (Okello, 2014).

With respect to if involvement of stakeholder influences the implementation of M&E and the results shows that 37 (95%) of the respondents agreed with it while 2 (5%) disagreed with the statement. The study went further and revealed that 23 (59%) of the study population agreed that stakeholders were involved in Monitoring and evaluation activities however 13 (33.3%) were not sure while 3 (7.7%) of the study population disagreed with the statement. The study lastly revealed that 35 (89.7%) of the respondents agreed that the involvement of stakeholders influences the implementation of M&E however 3 (7.7%) were not sure with the statement while 1 (2.6%) disagreed with the statement.

Conclusion

The effects of monitoring and evaluation on the success of government projects in Iganga municipality. Government projects are masterful in improving the living standards and livelihood of people in Iganga municipality. Monitoring of ongoing projects is essential in promoting safe

environment, improve transport networks, create job opportunities and promote human rights. With the involvement of stake holders, skilled personals and putting much focus on accountability and transparency, is when these programs will achieve their set objective. People from Iganga municipality will only appreciate the outcomes of these

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objectives if they achieve what they were planned to achieve and serve the general public as anticipated. If monitoring and evaluation is not done at the fullest, all government projects and resources will go to waste. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation of these projects is essential in improving the livelihood of people in Iganga municipality.

Recommendations

The study observed that majority of the employees at Iganga municipality are female employees, so the study recommends Iganga chief executive officer to always consider gender balance among employees.

Furthermore, it was observed that at Iganga municipality, engineers are always absent from their places of work such as rehabilitation of roads and the activities are left to be done by tractor operators, therefore these engineers are to be replaced by other qualified technical experts who can always be at their jobs.

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