

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EFFECTIVENESS
OF PRIVATE RADIO STATION'S PROJECTS
A CASE OF SELECTED PROJECTS OF ENERGY RADIO,
IN MUSANZE DISTRICT, RWANDA (2017-2020)**

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Abstract

The study aimed to examine the influence of project management practices on the project effectiveness of private Radio station Projects in Rwanda. Specific objectives are: (a) to examine the influence of project planning on the project effectiveness of Energy Radio, (b) to investigate the influence of financial management practices on the project effectiveness of Energy Radio, (c) to evaluate the influence of project monitoring procedures on the project effectiveness of Energy Radio. The study adopted a descriptive research design and targeted 926 employees and key stakeholders of Energy radio from which a sample size of 90 respondents was selected using stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected by structured questionnaires and documentary reviews and were analyzed by both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings showed that there exists a project planning policy and the project plans have clear objectives and goals (Mean=3.94), identified risks and measures to reduce their impacts (Mean=3.88), time, costs, and scope were specified at the beginning of the project started (Mean=3.99). However, Project Managers did not adopt the work plans and GANT charts for planning purposes (Mean=3.97, SD=1.241). There was a positive and significant correlation between project planning and the project effectiveness of the selected projects of Energy Radio ($r = .367, p=.009$). Findings demonstrated that funds of every project phase were disbursed on time to perform project tasks (Mean=3.98), the project budget was properly determined and allocated to activities (Mean=3.99), budgeted funds were enough to finalize the entire project on time (Mean=3.71), and the costs of every project phase were maintained in all project phases (Mean=3.87). However, the project personnel failed to maintain accurate books of accounts (Mean=3.88, SD=1.324) and report the yearly financial statements of every project phase (Mean=4.04, SD=1.251). There was a positive and significant correlation between financial management practices and the project effectiveness of the selected projects of Energy Radio ($r=.309, p=.001$). Energy radio has a well-documented plan for assessing and tracking projects (Mean=3.78) and the project progress reports are produced regularly (Mean=3.97). Besides, There was a positive and significant correlation between risk management practices and the project effectiveness of the selected projects of Energy Radio ($r=.439, p\text{-value}=.000<.05$). Findings also indicated that there exists a plan for reporting uncertainties in the projects (Mean=4.01) and potential and identified problems are communicated to stakeholders (Mean=3.97). Project managers effectively manage and evaluates identified uncertainties (Mean=3.68), there is a review process after the application of the mitigation measures for the identified uncertainties (Mean=3.87), and monitoring procedures on progress against project plans to identify variances (Mean=3.98). There was a positive and significant correlation

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($r=0.673$, $p\text{-value}=0.000<.05$) between project monitoring procedures practices and the project effectiveness of selected projects of Energy Radio. The study concluded that project management practices are an important factor in enhancing the project effectiveness of every project phase and ensure the establishment of clear objectives and goals to make sure all employees and project partners are working towards common goals to achieve the desired results and enhanced effectiveness and recommended that managers should adopt the use of project planning tools such as Gantt charts and time plans that assist in running a project successfully achieve the project effectiveness of their projects.

Keywords: stakeholders, project management and energy radio, monitoring and evaluation

The current competitive landscape has led all companies, both public and private, to look for superior ways to become competitive, and the deliberate pursuit of success has led some companies to adopt different management practices and processes on their projects. Commercial Operations (Wachira & James, 2018) Project management is the procedure of creating a plan and implementing project actions to achieve set objectives. Ocharo and Kimutai (2018) noted that project management practices are the fundamental aspects of every project phase that must be maintained for teamwork to be carried out efficiently and effectively, requiring daily attention and performing regular tasks throughout the project, which make up the project management phases of initiation and planning, implementation, monitoring, and control as well as phase-out (PMI, 2017). Atkinson *et al.* (2007) showed that the essential constructs of project management include planning, risk management, monitoring, and control as well as the involvement of stakeholders in all phases of every project phase to achieve project results according to limits of risk, time, and scope, budget, and quality.

Project planning establishes a basis for the execution of activities by providing a roadmap that guides the project team. During the planning process, an initial schedule is created that lists the activities to be performed, the time in which each task must be completed, the people responsible for completing each task, and the expected results (PMI, 2017). Risk management seeks to identify, analyze, and respond to risk management principles and processes (Smith & Jagger, 2010).

Marren (2016) mentioned that risk identification includes risk identification through reflection, market benchmarking, and scenario analysis, as well as risk assessment workshops that may affect the project. Designing a response to risk involves putting in place proactive procedures in the face of risk threats, and identifying and appropriately mitigating the risks that affect road infrastructure to the performance of projects. Moreover, every project must have a system that constantly monitors the project's progress and measures the completed work on the plan, and warns of possible problems in the future (Shapiro, 2011). This happens in project monitoring procedures and is important in projects as it enables the project manager and the project personnel to fully assimilate the project progress and therefore appropriate corrective actions are taken if the performance of

every project phase deviates significantly and deviates from the plan and in this way it is ensured that the project meets all requirements. Besides, project monitoring procedures can help identify problems and their causes and suggest possible corrective actions for these problems, which in turn improve the performance of every project phase.

Stakeholders' engagement and management are part of project management practice in many organizations to deliver high-quality products and services and plays a crucial role in the performance of every project phase (Karlsen *et al.*, 2008). Kezner (2009) suggested that in the environment, in which projects are carried out, there are many parties directly or indirectly involved and they differ in the extent to which they can influence the project inputs, initial project expectations, exchange of project information, advice and decision-making. Baroudi *et al.* (2016) point out that the involvement of the user in the execution of every project phase leads to the use of every project phase and the satisfaction of customer needs. Project effectiveness, on the other hand, would then be the degree to which the final goals of every project phase are achieved with certain restrictions. Many scholars have also suggested that the nature of effectiveness is multidimensional and needs to be defined by a complex of stakeholders who may have different and incompatible perspectives (Cameron & Whetten, 2013).

Scientists around the world recognize that adopting effective project management practices leads to improved project effectiveness. For example, Wideman (2011) evaluated the project management practices of Capital Projects in Canada and indicated that project management differs from operating a manufacturing facility or other institution. Berssaneti and Monteiro (2015) analyzed the relationship between project management practices and the project.

Success in projects in Brazil and showed that project management practices were significantly related to all vertices of the iron triangle (time, cost, and technical performance) dimensions of success. Frimpong *et al.* (2013) in Ghana and on the project management practice in Africa revealed the causes of overruns for the delay and cost in Nigerian construction projects. At the regional level, Rogito (2010) examined the influence of monitoring on YEDF projects in Kenya and indicated that projects are poorly implemented because few implementers are trained in M&E, a poorly conducted baseline study that led to the failure of every project phase. Gathoni and Ngugi (2016) examined the drivers of effective performance of every project phase in projects funded by the development of constituencies of the national government in Kiambu County, Kenya, and indicated that stakeholders are barely informed about the progress of various CDF projects.

Locally, Benegahutu *et al.* (2015) assessed the influence of project management practices on effectiveness of the projects in Rwanda in the

case of the Girinka project in the Kamonyi district of Rwanda and indicated that project planning, project implementation, project monitoring, and evaluation practices contributed to the success of the Girinka project in general. Kanyago *et al.* (2017) assessed the role of project management skills in executing construction projects: a case of selected construction companies in Kigali and showed that projects are limited by insufficient planning skills necessary for effective planning for effectiveness of the projects; project planning is complex and risky and requires different skills for successful project implementation and management; the increasing complexity of projects with time and cost pressures has led to the introduction of high-quality software and hardware that requires skillful planning so that most studies place little emphasis on the projects of the radio station. This study was conducted to examine the influence of project management practices on the project effectiveness of radio projects and to fill this gap in the literature.

Research questions

To what extent does project planning influence the project effectiveness of Energy Radio projects? What is the influence of financial management practices on the project effectiveness of Energy Radio projects? And how do project monitoring procedures affect the project effectiveness of Energy Radio projects?

Methodology

Bailey (2004) defined a research design as a plan for conducting research. According to Ackoff (2003), a research design is the plan and structure for conducting research with the purpose of obtaining answers to research questions. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defined a research design as a framework for research that directs and specifies how a research project will be conducted. According to Kothari (2008), research design lays out a strategy for data collection, measurement, analysis, and presentation.

The research problem was best explored in this study through a descriptive research design. A descriptive survey creates an accurate portrait of individuals, events, or circumstances (Ackoff, 2003). According to Sekeran and Bougie (2013), a descriptive survey is a method for gathering information about a group of people through interviews or the distribution of a research questionnaire. This method was chosen due to its cost-effectiveness in reaching a large group of people.

Study population

It is critical for the success of the research project to define the target population precisely, taking into account the researchers' logic and judgment. However, the study population must be defined in relation to the research objectives. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a population as an exhaustive collection of relevant data or analytical units. According to Chandran (2004), a population is a collection of elements, people, events, objects, or individuals that are sampled for measurement. Bartlett *et al.* (2001)

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defined a study population as the collection of elements about which the study wishes to draw a conclusion. The target population for this study consisted of 926 individuals, who are classified and stratified in the table below.

Table 1 : Distribution of the target population

Population category	Population size
Energy Radio Employees	14
Management Team (Director, DAF, PO_1, PO_2, PO_3)	5
Stakeholders	
Loyal audience (Ab'Icyitegerezezo)	887
RMC	1
RURA	2
District Partners representative (Musanze, Gakenke &Burera)	3
MINALOC (MHC)	2
Civil Society Organizations	9
Main Clients/	3
Total	926

The sample size is determined by the Sloven Formula of sample size determination as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}; \text{ Whereby: } n = \text{Desired sample size; } N = \text{Target population; } E = \text{error margin;}$$

By using this formula, the sample size is obtained as $n = \frac{926}{1 + 926 * 0.1^2} = 90$; Hence, the sample size of this study was composed of 90 respondents.

Discussion

Energy Radio's selected projects ($r = .367, p = .009$) showed a positive and significant correlation between project planning and project effectiveness (Table 4.11). A project's success is closely linked to the careful planning at every stage, so a high score on the project effectiveness scale is a sign that your team is doing a good job planning. Results indicated that there is positive and significant correlation between the effectiveness of selected Energy Radio projects and effective financial management ($r = .309, p = .001$). Both Kioko's (2014) and Mkutano's (2018) findings that the housing market in Kenya has a positive and significant relationship with project planning, as well as the effectiveness and performance of each project phase in Kenya, are supported by the current findings. The current findings confirm that successful project implementation relies heavily on monitoring. Besides, a positive correlation was found between project monitoring procedures and the success of selected Energy Radio projects in Table 4.11 ($r = 0.673, P\text{-value} = 0.05$). This means that as the company implements project monitoring procedures, the more successful and effective the selected projects will be. Mkutano (2018) found that in Kenya, there was a statistically significant link between project monitoring procedures and project implementation. Furthermore, a negative but insignificant correlation exists between the risk management processes and the success of specific Energy Radio projects ($r = .428, p\text{-value} = .211, 05$).

Findings

The study's primary goal was to determine the impact of project planning on the successful implementation of selected energy radio projects. There is a project planning policy that directs all projects and project plans to have clear objectives and goals (Mean = 3.94), identify risks and risk mitigation measures (Mean = 3.88), project duration and scope are defined before the start of the project (Mean = 3.99), and project costs are determined at the start of the project and maintained over time (Mean = 3.78). While project managers used GANTT applications and charts (Mean = 3.97, SD = 1.241), the project planning phase did not include participants before the start of the entire project (Mean = 3.89, SD = .357). Therefore, the findings show that the project staff and management have established clear objectives to ensure that all staff and partners work towards achieving common goals based on global consensus and intended outcomes like project planning and designing outcomes for program success.

The effectiveness of Energy Radio as a project was also evaluated in terms of the impact of financial management practices. According to the results of the study, mean budgeting accuracy (Mean = 4.01) and timely distribution of project funds (Mean = 3.98) have been found. In addition, the project budget was properly determined and allocated to activities (Mean = 3.99) and the budget *allocated* was sufficient to complete the entire project on time (Mean = 3.71), project costs were kept for all project phases (Mean = 3.87) and cash and bank accounts were regularly updated. And project finance management (mean = 3.97) as well. Findings, however, show that project personnel failed to keep accurate accounting records (Mean = 3.88, SD = 1.324) and to report the annual financial statements of every project phase (Mean = 4.04, SD = 1.251). It was thus possible to complete the project in a short period of time and on schedule thanks to existing financial management practices, which ensured the proper use of funds and the proper allocation of resources, which ensured that there were no project stoppages due to lack of resources or resources. Correlation studies show that the efficiency of some Energy Radio projects and the efficiency of their financial management are linked in a positive way ($r = .309, p = .001$).

Energy Radio's project monitoring procedures are examined in the third phase of the study. There was a high degree of confidence in the findings that Energy Radio has a documented project monitoring system (Mean = 3.78) and regular project progress reports (Mean = 3.97). It is possible to keep track of the progress of a project (Mean = 3.88) and make adjustments based on the feedback received from that process (Mean = 3.99). In the same way, procedures and data are recorded and used to provide feedback and help make informed decisions (Mean = 3.77), project monitoring procedures help minimize project risk (Mean = 3.89), and general project analysis and feedback are provided to participants (Mean = 3.57). In order

to help with monitoring activities and provide the best lessons to do when things don't go as planned, an effective system, tools, and procedures for project monitoring are critical decisions. Project monitoring procedures, on the other hand, have been found to play an important role in supporting effective management decisions because they provide information that is both effective and efficient for the project. Risk management processes and effectiveness of the projects were found to be linked in a correlation analysis of Energy Radio projects.

Recommendation

Project managers should use project planning tools such as Gantt charts and timetables that help run the effectiveness of the projects fully. Project managers need to incorporate the use of project monitoring procedures into their tools to ensure maximum performance of every project phase. This would ensure that activities are followed up as they are done, and in the event of a deviation, problems that cause deviations are identified and corrective actions are taken. Energy Radio must develop and adopt effective communication throughout the organization. The project team, employees/organizations, and stakeholders should be allowed as many ways as possible to express their views and opinions and be part of the decision-making process. This ensures that diverse and equally good decisions are made for the betterment of the organization.

Suggestion for further studies

Energy Radio's project management and effectiveness were examined in this study. In the future, researchers may want to conduct a similar study in a different industry or sector to see if there are any differences in responses and to determine how generalizable the findings of this study are. There were five independent variables that contributed to 78.3 percent of the effectiveness of every phase of the selected projects, which included: project planning, financial management and risk management, project monitoring procedures and practices, and stakeholder involvement. The other 22.7% of the people who play a role in the success of the chosen projects haven't been found yet, so this score means that more research is needed to find them.

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